



Council for Bulgarian Studies Abroad,
Bulgarian Academy of Science

Institute of Balkan Studies &
Center of Thracology

Bulgarian Studies Association

12TH JOINT CONFERENCE OF BULGARIAN AND NORTH AMERICAN SCHOLARS

LIVING BRIDGES ACROSS TIME

SOFIA, JUNE 15–17, 2024

Dedicated to the 120th anniversary of diplomatic relations
between the USA and Bulgaria

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Aleka Strezova

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**BULGARIAN DIPLOMATS IN THE USA (1914–1941):
SOCIAL PROFILE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

Although Bulgarian-American diplomatic relations were established in 1903, it was not until 1914 that Bulgaria opened its legation in Washington. Stefan Panaretoff, an experienced professor and a friend of the Americans, but not a qualified diplomat, was chosen to be the first Bulgarian minister plenipotentiary in the USA. He presented his credentials to President Woodrow Wilson on December 10, 1914. His successors, however, were professionals. The paper will present the biographies of four Bulgarian diplomats residing in Washington, focusing on their backgrounds and education. The paper will examine the reasons for their nomination overseas and trace how they were received in the American capital. These were Stefan Panaretoff, Simeon Radeff, Stoyan Petrov-Chomakoff, and Dimiter Naumoff. The main lines of their diplomatic activity will also be outlined. The study aims to highlight their personal contributions in maintaining bilateral relations.

Penka Peykovska

Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

**ETHNO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND ETHNO-CULTURAL PROCESSES AMONG
BULGARIANS IN CANADA FROM THE LATE 19TH TO MID-20TH CENTURIES**

The paper traces the ethno-demographic phenomena and processes among the first generations of Bulgarian immigrants in Canada. They are characterized through a quantitative analysis of Canadian and partly Bulgarian official statistical sources (censuses and current demographic statistics). The volume, dynamics, and ethnic composition of immigration flows, as well as its structure by gender, age, marital status, and literacy are examined. An attempt is made to clarify the relationship between immigration originating in Bulgaria and that coming from among Bulgarians abroad (originating primarily from Macedonia), to identify those who have made a greater contribution to the replenishment of the Bulgarian diaspora in Canada, and to shed light on the ethnic composition of these immigration flows. Integration processes are measured through the analysis of statistics on foreign citizenship admissions, intermarriage, language spoken, and declared Bulgarian ethnicity.

Naoum Kaytchev

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

THE IMAGE OF THE USA IN BULGARIAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS (1878–1944)

All Bulgarian textbooks of general modern history have offered an account of US history, though in a very brief and concise form. They include stories of the establishment of colonies in North America, the War of Independence, and on the subsequent development. Up to the First World War, the attitude of the schoolbooks was determined by their exclusive Eurocentrism and focus on “European values.” The relation to the country was extremely positive and sympathetic because it was presented as a logical outgrowth of the English (i.e. European) civilization. From the same perspective, the textbooks condemned the institution of slavery, which was portrayed as an outdated and counterproductive phenomenon, starting from the Roman empire. For that reason, the southern American colonies were presented as somehow inferior to the anti-slavery northern ones, which were considered as the true ancestors of the present-day North Americans. The same pattern continued in

the interwar period, though the textbooks started to present the US as an emancipated actor at least in political terms.

William Zieske

Independent Researcher

**DECOLONIZATION TO DIFFUSION:
THE CONTRACTION OF OTTOMAN POWER IN THE BALKANS AS A DETERMINANT OF EARLY
BULGARIAN IMMIGRANT TRAJECTORIES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1858–1908 (PART II):**

This paper traces the origins of the first stages of Bulgarian-United States migration to the lengthy process of decolonization of the Bulgarian lands from the Ottoman Empire, beginning in the last two decades of the National Revival leading to the Principality of Bulgaria's independence in 1878, and the continuation of this process through the subsequent unification with Eastern Rumelia and the later Macedonian struggles. The operation of shifting migration push and pull factors during this half century from 1858 through 1908 are explored, including the introduction of state-supported education in Bulgaria, increasing exposure to Europe beyond the Balkans, the arrival of U.S. evangelical protestant Christian missions in northern Bulgaria and Thrace, and flight from conflict and destruction in Macedonia. The paper further identifies how these factors influenced the demographic profiles of the early Bulgarian immigrants to the United States and their migration objectives, and how these in turn translated into the geographic and economic patterns of their settlements in the United States.

Kristian Kafzov

Saint John's University, Queens, New York, NY

**AMERICAN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PROPAGANDA EFFORTS TO CHANGE "HEARTS AND MINDS"
IN A SOVIET SOCIALIST STATE (BULGARIA) DURING THE COLD WAR, 1945–1991**

This research investigates the impact of American foreign policy in the context of its propaganda and public diplomacy efforts in Eastern Europe throughout the Cold War from 1945 to 1991, focusing on Bulgaria as a case study of Soviet foreign policy in the Eastern bloc in the period of the 1970s–1980s, prior to the fall of Communism in 1989. More concretely, the research question will seek to evaluate the role of radio broadcasting aimed at shifting public opinions within this particular Soviet satellite state during this time frame. Additionally, it incorporates a global diplomatic, political, and social approach to the study of history, and in doing so, critically addresses the various historiographical debates within the differing schools of thought concerning the causes for the conclusion of the Cold War.

The case study for this research question focuses on the state and society of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, arguably the closest satellite state to the USSR, which in a number of ways enjoyed more favorable diplomatic relations with the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic than even some of the constituent Soviet republics themselves. In addition to the historical, state-diplomatic, and party-ideological aspects of the Soviet-Bulgarian relationship, this research will ultimately address the contrasting role of American and Soviet public diplomacy and propaganda on Bulgarian society in the context of the Cold War.

Ivajlo Nachev

Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology, BAS

**BULGARIAN–AMERICAN EXCHANGES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
BULGARIAN MEDICAL SPECIALISTS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS**

The paper will elaborate on a field of a fruitful Bulgarian–American cooperation such as in medical education and specializations. Following the end of the First World War, an exceptionally challenging period for the Bulgarian state and society, a number of US organizations launched projects in Bulgaria, particularly in the social sphere. The paper will aim to shed more light to the activities of organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Red Cross, and the Near East Foundation, focusing on their role for development of the medical profession and specialists during the Interwar period.

Elmira Vasileva

Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology, BAS

**AN AMERICAN IN THE BALKANS: THE PROTESTANT MISSIONARY JOHN HENRY HOUSE AND
HIS WORK IN THE EUROPEAN PROVINCES OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, LATE 19TH–EARLY 20TH C.**

In the 19th century, various Protestant societies were active in the Ottoman Empire, the most influential of which was the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), operating since 1819 in the Middle East and the Balkans. Their campaign was a consequence of the religious movement of the Second Great Awakening in the USA, and of the theology of Postmillennialism, prevailing in American religious circles by the beginning of the 19th century, according to which Christians must prepare mankind for the Second Coming of Christ predicted in the Bible. For this purpose, dedicated missionaries were sent to various parts of the globe, seeking the moral regeneration of the world. Various missionary methods were used, chief among which were direct preaching, educational initiatives, and literary activities. The profile of American Protestant missionaries represents highly educated young men and women, graduates of colleges and universities, who devoted their lives to religious service in remote places. A typical representative of American missionaries, but not quite, was John Henry House (1845–1936). He arrived in the Balkans in 1872 and remained for the rest of his life, working as a missionary at the ABCFM's stations in Stara Zagora, Samokov, and Thessaloniki. He also taught for many years at the American Collegial and Theological Institute in Samokov and was an editor of the Protestant newspaper *Zornitsa* for a time, while the crowning achievement of his missionary efforts was the founding of the pioneering Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute. The activities of J. H. House left a lasting mark on the Balkans.

Daria White

Liberty University, USA

**BULGARIAN IMMIGRATION TO THE USA: CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF “HOME,”
NATIONAL NOSTALGIA, AND THE BUILDING OF TRAUMA-BASED IDENTITIES**

This is a conceptual piece exploring the sense of belonging and acculturation of Bulgarian immigrants to the USA. The author will use her phenomenological findings on Bulgarian understanding of melancholy and explore deep rooted archetypes for good and evil, transgenerational trauma narratives, and shifting national identities. One way to define the immigrant dilemma is to understand two psychological concepts: longing and home. Longing is expressed in “intense desires for ideal states: remote and unattainable” (Kotter-Grühn et al., 2009). The longing for home in immigrants is a type of national nostalgia in rebuilding a home in a new place. “Making home” and “feeling at home” are part of connection and belonging as one begins and establishes a new life. In

new places, the natural environments are key to the creation of home, and “homes in limbo” are to be understood as the homes immigrants create when they arrive in a new land and try to settle (Brun, & Fábos, 2015).

Milena Benovska

South-West University Neofit Rilski

SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF “OTHERNESS”

The aim of this paper is to present an analysis and critical overview of the literature on Bulgarian Muslims, accumulated in socio-cultural anthropology over the last thirty years. Initially modest in volume in the early 1990s, the literature on Bulgarian Muslims now includes hundreds, possibly thousands, of titles (cf. e.g. the bibliography compiled by Ali Eminov). At present, international publications on Bulgarian Muslims greatly outnumber anthropological publications on Bulgaria as a whole. What accounts for this unprecedented scholarly interest in a small religious minority? On the one hand, the numerous publications shed light on various aspects of the cultural characteristics of Bulgarian Muslims. On the other hand, both some Bulgarian and many foreign anthropologists have adopted a victimizing approach towards Muslim Bulgarians. Most often they are portrayed as victims, thus the literature constructs a one-sided and essentially false image. There are not a few publications in which obvious errors or omissions are found, and this reveals not only negligence on the part of some authors, but also a lack of respect for the community under study.

In many of the studies, the internal regional and local diversity of the Bulgarian Muslim communities has been ignored in order to generalize the already clichéd themes of the repression suffered and the trauma it caused. Driven by humanistic or human rights defenders’ motives, some researchers actually dehumanize the community they study. Criticism of Bulgarian nationalist policies in the past, while justified in substance, paradoxically leads to the essentialization of the Bulgarian Muslim community. A radical "otherness" is attributed to the latter in the context of Bulgarian society, drawing highly exaggerated boundaries between Bulgarian Muslims and society as a whole.

Ana Luleva

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, BAS

REVITALIZING “TRADITION” – CONNECTING TIMES, PLACES, AND IDENTITIES

In recent years we have witnessed a process of revitalization of tradition. It is expressed in the growing interest among people of different ages and social statuses in Bulgarian folk costumes, dances, songs, and customs. People are organizing themselves into *chitalishte* groups and clubs, both at home and abroad. By making participation in these interest groups a part of their daily life and leisure time, they not only build social relationships with each other, but also create links between times (pre-modern times of the imagined traditional folk culture), places (village – town, Bulgaria –abroad), and identities as Bulgarians (represented by folk culture).

How social actors (professionals, organizers of folklore groups, participants, and ordinary people) imagine, live, perceive, and invent tradition, as well as what needs the revitalization of tradition responds to, are part of the research question addressed in my article.

Dilyana Ivanova Zieske

The Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, IL

MIGRATION AND PRECARIETY CORRELATION: ETHNOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

This paper aims to highlight the expressions of precarity in the ethnographic sources of Bulgarians in the United States with a focus on the Bulgarian community in Chicago. The ethnographic data collected over the past 18 years draws from oral history and biographical interviews, published and unpublished memoirs, visual materials such as photographs and photo albums, social media information from Facebook groups of Bulgarians in the United States, participant observation notes, and archival sources.

I intend to analyze how precarity motivates migration; to what extent the experience of migration renders more complex and nuanced the migrant's reactions and perspectives toward precarity; and their political, social, and cultural levels. In the process of discussing these individual and group responses of Bulgarian immigrants in the United States to precarity, cultural shock, alienation, and anxiety, the paper will identify how precarity turns into an opportunity for migrants to break with the past and create their world anew.

Yana Hashamova

Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE BULGARIAN DIASPORA: SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND THEIR DISCONTENTS

This presentation investigates how the insecurities and uncertainties of arriving in a new country and settling in a new community impact Bulgarian immigrants' national and cultural identity. One's own language and home culture become a crucial element for the way immigrants adjust in their adopted country. The analysis is based on unstructured interviews with teachers in Bulgarian Sunday schools in the European Union and in the U.S. Employing psychoanalytically informed research methods, the interpretation of the responses is combined with content analysis of the course materials teachers use in their classrooms. The strong nostalgia and cultural identification with the home country and native language, caused by the sense of loss, manifest themselves in conflicting impulses and desires to find a master-signifier, which can negotiate their place in the symbolic network of adoptive and home cultures.

Desislava Tiholova

Rousse Regional Museum of History

THE CASE OF EBERHARD UNDZHIYAN – PATTERNS OF MIGRATION & MOBILITY

This text will analyze the biographical interview of Eberhard Undzhiyan, a third-generation descendant of Armenian refugees in Bulgaria and the son of an Armenian man and a German woman. The intention of the study is to place his life story within the complex historical, political, social, and cultural processes of the 20th and the early 21st centuries. The Armenians who fled the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century (1915–1916) and found refuge in Bulgaria recognized their host country as a sanctuary; in Bulgaria they encountered migration not only as a way of survival but as a means for personal advancement and new opportunities. Shaped by his Armenian migrant family experiences, Eberhard had a predisposition to mobility. He survived the Second World War, lived through the turbulent times of the Cold War and post-Cold War period in Eastern Europe, and became increasingly open to changes and shifts. Eberhard's case study reveals how the transition from migration to mobility is experienced on individual level and how mobility shapes a new mentality – the mentality of a citizen of the world.

Irina Gigova

College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

THE SOCIALIST CHILD IN 1980S BULGARIA, OR COMICS AS AN IDEOLOGICAL INSTRUMENT

This paper examines the Bulgaria comics magazine *Daga: Razkazi v kartinki* (*Rainbow: Stories in Pictures*), popular in 1980s. Claiming inspiration by UNESCO's International Year of the Child (1979), the magazine used a hitherto discredited "bourgeois" mass art – comics – to popularize the late socialist regime's cultural messages among young Bulgarians. Until 1991, 42 issues, with sold-out runs of 130,000-180,000 copies, captivated the imagination and shaped the worldview of at least two generations, with a range of topics, storylines, and artistic styles. This paper will focus on the messages in the five years of the comics. I examine how the serialized "stories in pictures" bridged time and space to encourage children and youth to see themselves in the lineage of several disparate traditions – medieval greatness, a continuous struggle for independence in the 1800s and 1900s, a social and value revolution under the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party, and a socialist vision for technical and scientific progress. Through this analysis, I seek to understand the image of the ideal child in late socialist Bulgaria and the extent to which the Communist Party retained a monopoly on the social imagination.

Ivan Hristov

Institute for Literature, BAS

REUBEN MARKHAM'S CONCEPT OF TOTALITARIANISM

Reuben Henry Markham was born 1887 in Kansas. In 1927, he became the Christian Science Monitor's correspondent for Bulgaria and later for the Balkans and Eastern Europe. He is the author of the books *Meet Bulgaria* (1931), *The Wave of the Past* (1941), *Tito's Imperial Communism* (1947), and *Rumania Under the Soviet Yoke* (1949). He was known as the leading expert on that part of the world. Markham also was one of the first to warn the US about the danger of collaborating with communists. He became familiar with the nature of the Communist movement during his stay in Bulgaria in the 1920–30s. The expected result of the research will be to reach a greater clarity of the concept of totalitarianism, to describe what place the concept of totalitarianism has in Reuben Markham's books, and to make a comparative analysis between the implications of totalitarianism in Eastern Europe around the Second World War, described and analyzed by Reuben Markham and today's Eastern Europe. The main task of the paper will be to draw the whole picture of what Reuben Markham understood by the concept of totalitarianism.

Dimitar Kambourov

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

GEORGI GOSPODINOV'S *TIME SHELTER*: THE CRAFT OF ALLEGORY AND THE ART OF THE MISTAKE IN THE ORIGINAL AND ITS ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The text discusses the place of the novel *Time Shelter* in the literary biography of Georgi Gospodinov from the perspective of the time bridges the author constructs here and everywhere else in his works. To do this, it recalls the general characteristics of his prose, as well as the central place of the novel *The Physics of Sorrow* in it, with its interest in the temporal bridge of memory. By explaining the paradoxical fullness of recollection as a temporal bridge combining the two voids of the present and the past moment, the text identifies it as Gospodinov's literary manifesto. *Time Shelter* inherits and builds upon this manifesto, but renews it through a consistent allegorical plot that turns the power of the past into a totality, into evil. At the same time, the text traces the moves and measures the novel takes to resist the power of the allegory of the past over itself. Ultimately, the text concludes that this attempt is only partially successful, but that the great message of the novel comes from its determination to

suicidally perform the allegory of the power of the past through its very development and structure. In the final analysis, human errors and weaknesses in the novel become its lifeblood and salvation beyond the gesture of self-sacrifice. The main focus of the text will be a comparative analysis of the original with its American translation, with special emphasis on the techniques and tricks that the translation undertakes to give density and intelligibility to the realities of an unknown and exotic past, temporally and spatially distant.

Petranka Nedelcheva

Bulgarian National Historical Museum

**ENDANGERED CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE CASE OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF
THE MEDIEVAL MONASTERY OF ST. YANNI, AHTOPOL**

Evidence available from the historical record shows that during the period when the Dioceses of Agatopolis and Sozopol were unified, and until 1829, the Metropolitan of Agatopolis very likely was in residence at the Monastery of St. Yanni in Ahtopol. According to historical narratives, the interior of the Monastery's church was covered with frescoes, which survived until the years 1936–38. During the second half of the last century the Monastery was looted, and later, the land was presented to the Army for its use. Unfortunately, the buildings of the historical site were completely destroyed by the communist government. A border fence was built over the building's former location, and fortified concrete trenches were dug along the edge of the peninsula. In 2019, the Border Police relinquished the property to the Ministry of Culture, which handed it over in 2020 for management by the National History Museum. The archaeological site is of local significance and is treated by the locals as representative of the history, origin, and identity of their community. The future transformation of the place to an in-situ museum offers additional tourism development and preservation opportunities for the cultural heritage of the local residents.

Morena Stefanova

Metropolitan Museum, New York, NY

**BULGARIAN MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE:
POST-COMMUNIST TRANSITION AND DECOLONIZATION PROCESSES**

After WWII, the Bulgarian communist state was politically, economically and culturally under control of the Soviet Union as its "most faithful ally". As Bulgarian museums encapsulated historical memory and embodied national identities, they increasingly became a focus of the communist political narrative. Especially in the 1970s, museum collections were blooming throughout the country and the treasures and splendors from antiquity traveled around the world, exhibited in the world's largest museums. This paper explores the power relations between communities and the State, and the importance of historical memory to the nation. My work aims to confront these tangled legacies through a decolonial lens, while questioning the place of museums in modern Bulgarian society.

Veselina Uzunova

Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

AMERICA THROUGH THE BULGARIAN PRESS IN THE 1970S

"America through the Bulgarian press in the 1970s" is not only an interesting and exciting topic for modern historians. The period itself is tied to some specific international phenomena, such as the Detente and the oil

crisis, which were strongly represented in the Bulgarian press as the main propaganda organ of the then totalitarian state. In its pages, America was presented ambiguously and depending on its current attitude to Moscow. Particular attention was paid to topics such as crime rates in the USA, the economic situation and unemployment, and foreign policy. The posted headlines were usually tabloid-shouting and foreshadowing critical texts, and the op-eds featured tendentious commentary. It is almost comical to interpret cultural manifestations (film productions, modern novels, visual arts), and they drew my attention to the subject. In the examples found, it is said that American culture was in decline and was therefore looking for alternative fields of expression.

Mila Maeva

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, BAS

LABOR MOVEMENTS OF MEDICAL STAFF UNDER THE SOCIALIST REGIME

The study is focused on the labor movements of medical personnel from Bulgaria and their families during the period of socialism. The research is based on archival and ethnographic fieldwork materials tracing the policy of sending skilled migrants to the USSR (especially in Komi) and the countries of the Arab world from the 1960s to 1990s, the possibilities and motives for departure, the situations of their families, the accumulation and exchange of knowledge and skills, and the results of work abroad. The study also explores and analyzes the problems of medical personnel working outside Bulgaria in professional development and practices, accommodation and everyday life. The situation of the children living with their families abroad is also in the research focus. The study will trace the reflections of mobility on different perceptions of the family experience gained abroad, which affected further development and professional growth after returning to the homeland. The transformations that occurred as a result of working abroad on the way of life and increasing its quality among doctors are also explored.

Ivanka Petrova

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, BAS

FROM LABOR MIGRANTS IN THE USA TO ENTREPRENEURS IN BULGARIA: “BRIDGES” BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BULGARIAN LABOR CULTURE

The “Work and Travel” youth short-term labor migration program also has a cultural dimension – it gives many international students the opportunity to have direct contact with various aspects of US culture, including the labor culture. In their workplaces, young migrants encounter social rules, forms of expression, ideas, attitudes, relationships, cultural strategies, and ways of behaving that are formed during regular joint work. To a greater or lesser extent, students are influenced by this labor culture. The research object in the paper is the family of a Bulgarian man and a Russian woman who participated as students in the program in the first decade of the 21st century and remained in the USA for three years, working as labor migrants. Settling in Plovdiv in 2010, they established a small family business that gradually grew. The paper presents an anthropological study of the cultural encounter of the knowledge, work habits, skills and attitudes acquired by young entrepreneurs in the conditions of labor migration in the USA with the labor culture in Bulgaria. The research examines the dynamics of the process of applying the models and norms of work and behavior learned in the USA in the sphere of small entrepreneurship in Bulgaria and problematizes the transformations in the perceptions and expectations of the family regarding doing business in Bulgaria.

Zlatina Bogdanova

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, BAS

**YOUTH SHORT-TERM LABOR MIGRATION IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE
“WORK AND TRAVEL” PROGRAM – INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION**

The paper is based on interviews with Bulgarian University students who participated in the Work and Travel program, conducted in Sofia in 2003, and fieldwork material from interviews and observation on the campus of the American University in Bulgaria (AUB), Blagoevgrad, in September 2012. The study focuses on a popular cultural phenomenon accompanying the so called “transition” – the short-term labour migration of young Bulgarians to the United States. Working and traveling abroad within the framework of the Work and Travel program has become a more common and widely accessible cultural experience in recent years. Two main reasons motivate the participants in Work and Travel – the desire to work, driven by economic necessity, and the need to have intercultural experience aboard. The intercultural aspects of the migration discussed in the paper include perceptions of intercultural differences, cultural subordination experienced in a more socially and economically advanced society, behavior models expressing cultural relativism, manifestations of ethnocentrism, culture collision, and culture shock. Identification and adaptation problems experienced by the participants are given special consideration. The research emphasizes the role of intercultural communication in a rapidly expanding work environment in which young people are compelled to endure multiple intercultural interactions and face significant social and personality effects.

Aleksander Donev

Institute of Art Studies, BAS

**FAST-SPEED AMERICANIZATION:
AMERICAN FILMS AND AMERICAN IDEAS IN BULGARIA IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD**

The entering of American films in Bulgaria took place in three relatively clear-cut stages. The first was from the end of World War I to the mid-1920s, when American films arrived on the Bulgarian screen through Western European intermediaries. The second immediately followed and was marked by the founding of the distribution company FANAME, representing the major American studios MGM, First National, and Paramount. The third stage, which began with the final imposition of sound cinema in Bulgaria in the early 1930s, was characterized by the founding of the American distribution companies MGM and Fox's own subsidiaries. These existed almost until the end of 1941, when American films were banned after Bulgaria declared war on the United States.

The paper will present the specificity of the presence of American film culture during the different stages of the period under review and how the print media (newspapers, magazines) helped to promote American cinema and the ideas it conveyed on Bulgarian ground. Special attention will be paid to the newspaper *Nedelno Utro*, which was the first Bulgarian Sunday edition oriented to the widest possible audience and in which news about American cinema and American life found a significant place.

Katerina Lambrinova
Institute of Art Studies, BAS

**AESTHETIC AND THEMATIC INFLUENCES OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENT CINEMA
ON BULGARIAN FICTION FILMS AFTER 1989**

The report examines the aesthetic and thematic influence of American independent cinema on Bulgarian fiction films after 1989, as well the selections of Bulgarian films in prestigious American festivals such as Sundance and SXSW.

During the 1990s, right after the fall of the socialist regime, Bulgarian cinema found itself ideologically free and started to explore existential subjects related to the socio-cultural and political changes in our society. This was also the time when Bulgarian cinema started to address the current aesthetic trends in film art, which are largely set by the artistic practices of American cinema's second generation of independent directors and the so-called Sundance Kids. In this period, the American genre road movie became highly relevant, and travelling (in search of inner meaning and one's place in the world) was one of the main motifs in Bulgarian films.

Various works are analyzed in the context of the thematic references and stylistic influences of independent American cinema on Bulgarian films produced after 1989 such as *Letter to America*; *Emigrants*; *Losers*; *Sneakers*; *The Color of the Chameleon*; *The Father*; *Faith, Love and Whiskey*; *Shelter*; *Avé*; *Light Thereafter*; *Women Do Cry*; etc.

Vessela Warner
The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL

VOICES IN CONFINEMENT: CONTEMPORARY BULGARIAN DRAMA IN THE UNITED STATES

This paper discusses four contemporary Bulgarian plays which were among the several translated works introduced to American audiences between 2012–2018. This “transatlantic export,” significant for Bulgarian theatre, undoubtedly resulted from the creation of higher quality English-language translations, as well as the expansion of global artistic markets after 2000s. It nevertheless warrants further investigation of the plays’ themes and styles that successfully informed two diverse cultural and performance contexts. Did Bulgarian post-communist drama finally arrive at that universal theatrical experience, where it could equally engage local as well as global audiences? This analysis seeks to answer this question by examining ways in which the four plays re-vision the literary techniques of Existentialism – in particular, allegory, absurd, and monologism – in the void left by deconstructive and decolonial discourses. The focus of this analysis is on the reprised tropes of “confinement” and “freedom” as reflecting the specific conditions of Bulgarian post-communism in a shared postmodern space.

Simona Samuilova
Institute for Historical Studies, BAS

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PEACE CORPS IN BULGARIA: GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Peace Corps was created in 1961 to help countries meet their needs for trained manpower. In addition, it was meant to provide a new expression of US character and foreign policy – an idealistic sense of purpose and a means of countering the expansion of communism throughout the world. It was anticipated that through contact at the grassroots level, Peace Corps volunteers would help promote a better understanding of the American

people, who in turn would better understand cultures of other peoples. The end of the Cold war presented the Peace Corps with a historic opportunity: for the first time, the countries of the former Eastern Bloc became open to Western economic and technical assistance. From 1989 through 1993, the Peace Corps established 18 new country programs throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. This report analyzes the implementation and effectiveness of volunteer service activities in Bulgaria from 1991 to 2012. Over a period of 20 years, some 1,300 American volunteers served in Bulgaria and became the face and symbol of US aid.

Sarah Craycraft

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

“MOCT’ WANTED”: GENERATIONS AS BRIDGES IN BULGARIAN VILLAGE REVITALIZATION

How are generations entangled in the problems facing rural Bulgaria? Sociologist Karl Mannheim famously noted that each generation encounters social dilemmas and sociocultural inheritances anew, establishing a “fresh contact” with existing phenomena that can provide a new scope for the imagination. This paper will explore the ways that young Bulgarians newly arrive at the problem of rural depopulation and the processes they utilize to build intergenerational bridges that might address this issue. I will discuss several case studies that enact “bridge building” to various effects, notably considering grant projects that attempt to revitalize spaces of sociality in villages across the northwestern region of the country. By reflecting on the infrastructural opportunities and roadblocks encountered in village revitalization projects, I hope to illuminate what motivates young urbanites to invest time and resources in villages, as well as what older village hosts receive through such projects.

Ben DeDominicis

Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, South Korea

**TENSIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS IN BULGARIA:
THE IMPACT OF EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION**

Efforts to reform the Bulgarian civil service away from a “patronage”-based, partisan spoils system have been relatively slow (European Commission 2020, 2). In contrast, one annual survey of Bulgarian civil servants’ attitudes reported responses that showed a higher level of “engagement” in their occupations than, e.g., in the UK, i.e., they respect their organizations. According to the European Commission 2020 report, Bulgarian public perceptions of the effectiveness of their public administration is relatively low: “Bulgaria ranks in the lower half in EU-27 comparisons on government effectiveness. Also, the tendency to trust in the government has significantly decreased since 2010 (43 %) to 2019 (28 %), placing it in the lower half in the EU-27 ranking” (European Commission 2020, 1). This contrast between civil servants’ own reported job satisfaction with Bulgarian public perceptions of its performance is the focus of this analysis. Explaining this divergence in expectations regarding how Bulgaria’s civil service should perform indicates the challenge of reconciling public attitudes regarding state administration with political participation. Media reports are by their nature case-focused and anecdotal, but a particular case highlighted points to a long-running, systemic pattern. For example, “[f]inancial abuse valued at a couple hundred million euro have been exposed at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The embezzlement is primarily tied to funds from different European Union programs awarded under the law for public procurement. The procedures, however, were conducted in gross violation of the law. The scheme was exposed when two thorough audits were performed in 2021 – 2022. The embezzlement took place over 5 years” (Marchenko 2023, para. 1). The Center for the Study of Democracy estimates that up to 15% of the EU funds allocated to Bulgaria has been regularly misappropriated. It prompted the European Public Prosecutor’s Office to raid Bulgarian homes and offices to seize documents as part of its investigation (Roussi 2023).

Ian MacMillen

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NOT MUCH MELODY: COVID-ERA AMIDAH PRAYERS AT THE SYNAGOGUE IN SOFIA, BULGARIA

Covid-19 reduced Sofia Synagogue's Shabbat prayer and liturgy attendance. Based on fieldwork in 2021 with the few attending men and women, this paper thinks with two formulations of quiet, one marked by minor presence, the other by commitment to a larger community. Amidah prayers are recited "whispering" to God, the lips moving but the voice speaking internally; this avoids assuming that God needs sound, and it doesn't disrupt the group's concentration (which might elevate the individual into a figure in the minority: a shouting false prophet). Concentrating, and remaining quiet, were simpler in the low-density congregation of those who followed vaccination protocols and risked attending, but worshippers regretted there being "not much melody" to bridge between individuals during sung prayers. Conceiving melody (rather than "quiet/strong" dichotomies) as a register of sonic volume allows it to operate in parallel to theories of whispering's intensification of voiced belief. Tracing these theories' practiced relationality demonstrates loudness's dangerously minoritarian resonance, quiet's normalization outside parameters of reduction and constraint, and the situational shifts in attention that reposition minor sounds along alternative registers of sonic practice, spiritually bridging across to congregation members not in the synagogue and marking their absence in ways not neatly aligned with silence.

Svetlina Denova

Independent Researcher

LYUBKA RONDOVA: TO ADOPT SONGS IN ORDER TO GIVE BIRTH TO NEW ONES

This paper proposes a new analytical perspective on the musical repertoire of one of the most-cherished Bulgarian traditional singers, Lyubka Rondova (1936–2016). A semantic analysis of a three-faceted corpus including her four individual albums (*Lubka Rondova* – 1986, *Smilyana* – 2000, *My Songs Are My Children* – 2003, *Daughter of Aegea* – 2008), the two documentaries dedicated to her (*Every Stone Is a Tear* – 2006, *Born in the Air* – 2015), and a dozen of her media interviews is applied to suggest how the transmission of the music tradition operates nowadays. The initial hypothesis is that cultural transmission is most efficient when the person who is transmitter succeeds in investing a real personal meaning into the content that is transmitted. Thus, interiorizing cultural content, the transmitter naturally exteriorizes a personal experience.

The case of Lyubka Rondova's charismatic personal singing style gives an example of how a certain musical repertoire successfully turns into a valuable legacy that the present-day generation appreciates and tries to transmit in its own turn. The folk song competition for children and teenagers from Bulgarian communities abroad, initiated by the Executive Agency for Bulgarians Abroad in 2010 and renamed for Lyubka Rondova after her death in 2016, is only one of the many ways her music legacy continues to nourish the Bulgarian present and future.

Traci Speed

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

FUNERIAL LOGONYMS:
THE ONOMASTICS OF ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS FOR THEIR FINAL PURCHASE

In the field of onomastics, the topic of business names is a relatively new area of study – so new, in fact, that ideas differ on what it should be called. Though some refer to business names as firmonyms, I will use the term employed by Slovakian linguist J. Horecký in 1994: logonyms. My research focuses on a particular type of logonym, the names funeral homes (*погребални агенции*) in Bulgaria, and it is apropos to view this relatively new type of Bulgarian business through the lens of a relatively new area of research.

The funeral home business developed into a large private industry sector in Bulgaria after 1989. Some grieving rituals were rediscovered, or even reinvented during this time, in part with the help of such burial agencies. Because of capitalist competition (not to mention mortality rate surprisingly high for a European country), every larger Bulgarian city has multiple funeral homes. Unlike in the United States, where there has been an unbroken tradition of family-run funeral homes for more than two centuries, there is not an old tradition for how to name one's funeral business, and so the names are often creative and varied. These names are important, however, as people choose the last firm that the beneficiary will ever do business with. With this in mind, I am working on a taxonomy of funeral home names, which tend to fit into certain categories – personal names, Christian-themed, and mythological, as well as a semiotic study of the various types of names, and I propose to present this work at the 2024 Bulgarian Studies Conference, with some comparison of the vastly different tradition in the United States.

Maria Pileva

Institute for Literature, BAS

THE BRIDGES OF TRANSLATION IN THE 19TH CENTURY

The paper explores the role of the first translations into Bulgarian made by American missionaries. They are the ones who established the first connections between the two cultures, almost unknown to each other until the middle of the 19th century – long before the beginning of diplomatic relations between them. Attention is drawn to the fact that right after the arrival of the first missionaries to work among the Bulgarians in 1857–58, they began to study Bulgarian in order to communicate directly with the local people. They soon compiled Bulgarian-English and English-Bulgarian grammars and dictionaries and began to translate pamphlets, treatises, fiction, historical writings, theological literature, with their greatest success being the translation of the Bible into the New Bulgarian language by the Constantinople Commission led by Dr. Elias Riggs and Dr. Albert Long. With these direct translations, without the intermediary role of another language, they affirmed the principles of translation and set a standard for quality translation in the period of the Bulgarian Revival. The paper also mentions missionaries' translations into English – some Bulgarian folk songs, proverbs, historical texts, etc.

Lyudmila Mindova

Institute of Balkan Studies & Centre of Thracology, BAS

THE CULTURE OF IRONY IN *AMERICAN DICTIONARY* BY DUBRAVKA UGREŠIĆ AND *TO CHICAGO AND BACK* BY ALEKO KONSTANTINOV

About eighty years separate Aleko Konstantinov (1863–1897) and Dubravka Ugrešić (1949–2023) and prevent a live meeting between these two famous writers, and 100 years stand between the appearance of the travelogue of the Happy Man *To Chicago and Back* (1893) and the essay book *American Dictionary* (1993) by the Croatian writer with Bulgarian roots. Despite the different poetic strategies of the two authors, they show a strong kinship in their main literary attitude towards irony, parody, and the grotesque. The “culture of irony” (and the “irony of culture”) will be the focus of our attention in this text, and through our reading we will at the same time recall other famous Bulgarian literary “discoveries” of America – by Svetoslav Minkov (*The Other America*), Lyubomir Kanov (*An Arrow from a Reed*), and Vanzetti Vassilev (*Seeds of Fear, New York Library Stories*).

Tanya Ivanova- Sullivan
University of California Los Angeles

**ACQUISITION OF HERITAGE BULGARIAN IN THE UNITED STATES:
STRUCTURAL PROPERTIES AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC FACTORS**

My talk will focus on the acquisition and maintenance of heritage Bulgarian in the US, with a focus on the Bulgarian diaspora in Southern California. My goal is to present heritage Bulgarian in the context of the latest theoretical advancements in heritage language linguistics. Particularly, I will outline the areas of stability and change in heritage Bulgarian, drawing on data collected in naturalistic and experimental settings. My presentation will address theoretical and methodological considerations about examining the multi-dimensional bilingual experience of heritage speakers of Bulgarian. Different sociolinguistic factors, such as language exposure and use, richness of input, onset of bilingualism, and literacy practices will be shown to mediate the variable acquisition outcomes and to have implications for family language policies and heritage language instruction in community schools.

Yovka Tisheva, Marina Dzonova
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

ADVERBIAL PHRASES WITH STATIVE AND ACTIVITY PREDICATES (BASED ON BULGARIAN DATA)

The internal structure of the situations described by the verb determines the *lexical aspect* (or *Aktionsart*) of the particular verb. Following Z. Vendler's classification (Vendler 1957), verbs can be categorized into four aspectual classes: activities, accomplishments, achievements, and states. Activity verbs denote predicates of homogeneous events that take time, but have no inherent temporal endpoint. Duration and lack of change are the main features of states. Stative situations are open-ended, without temporal boundaries. The main goal of our talk is to discuss the basic aspectual distinction of *states* vs. *activities* and diagnostics for aspectual classification of Bulgarian verbs based on verb-adverb selection. Following Dowty's tests for aspectual verb categories (Dowty 1979), we will present the possibilities for temporal and manner modifications of verbal predicates. Statives do not occur with agentive adverbs, with durative temporal *for*-phrases, or with time span *in*-phrases, while activity verbs can be used with adverbs and adverbials from these groups.

Svetla Koeva
Institute for Bulgarian Language, BAS

APPLICATION OF AMERICAN THEORIES FOR EVENTUALITY TYPES TO DESCRIBE BULGARIAN VERBS

Numerous scholars have proposed linguistic tests based on Zeno Vendler's work to detect aspectual classes (also known as eventuality types). While such tests have been extensively discussed and extended for English and some other Slavic languages, attention has currently shifted to Bulgarian, with a focus on states and activities.

One of the main differences between Bulgarian and English verbs is the category of verb aspect, which in English is expressed by various lexical or grammatical means, some of which operate at the sentence level, while in Bulgarian the verb aspect is encoded in the lexical and grammatical structure of the verb. As a result, linguistic tests developed for English may not be fully relevant for Bulgarian due to the inherent differences in the mediation of the Bulgarian verb aspect. We will emphasize this well-known fact by using certain linguistic tests that attempt to distinguish between states and activities on the one hand and activities and accomplishments and achievements on the other.

We will show which combinations of linguistic tests work to distinguish between Bulgarian verbs and to

distribute them to different eventuality types. Bulgarian primary and derived verbs with different lexico-grammatical aspects can belong to different eventuality types. This indicates that the meaning conveyed by the formative affixes can play a decisive role in the classification of eventuality types.

Margaret Dimitrova

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

**19TH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPTS FROM MOUNT ATHOS CONTAINING TEXTS
DEDICATED TO THE THEOTOKOS ACCORDING TO THE RESOURCES OF
HILANDAR RESEARCH LIBRARY AND THE ZOGRAF RESEARCH ELECTRONIC LIBRARY**

The paper discusses late sources originating from Mount Athos that contain texts dedicated to the Theotokos. Special attention is given to a Bulgarian manuscript kept in Hilandar Monastery that describes the story of the Wonder-Working Hilandar Triheirousa icon and miracles of the Theotokos from the second half of the 19th century. The paper juxtaposes early descriptions of the miracles of this icon with the accents in this late source.

Andrej Boyadzhiev

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

Anissava Miltenova

Institute for Literature, BAS

David Birnbaum

University of Pittsburgh, PA

**ON THE HISTORY OF BULGARIAN–AMERICAN COOPERATION
IN THE FIELD OF DIGITAL HUMANITARIAN STUDIES**

This presentation provides an overview of the history and current activities of the Repertorium of Bulgarian Literature and Letters (Repertorium). Projects related to electronic descriptions and editions of sources were rare in the field of Slavic medieval studies when the development of the Repertorium, a Bulgarian-American collaboration, began in 1994 as the first such undertaking in Bulgaria. The first public introduction of the Repertorium took place at the First International Conference on Computer Processing of Medieval Slavic Manuscripts, which was held in Blagoevgrad in July 1995.

The Repertorium is a union catalogue of manuscript descriptions that was conceived as an archival repository capable of encoding and preserving in SGML (and, subsequently, XML) format archeographic, paleographic, codicological, textological, and literary-historical data concerning original and translated medieval texts represented in Balkan and other Slavic manuscripts. The files are intended to serve both as documentation (fulfilling the goals of traditional manuscript catalogues) and as direct input for computer-assisted philological research.

Over the three decades since the beginning of the Repertorium, several other projects, with a variety of specific goals, have chosen to use the Repertorium models and code base as a starting point. These include Slovo-ASO: Towards a Digital Library of South Slavic Manuscripts; The Zograf Electronic Research Library; Manuscripts of Bulgarian Origin X–XIV c., Preserved in Foreign Archives and Libraries; and *Пъснословъць* – Electronic Descriptions of Hymnographic Manuscripts. The participants in the Repertorium project were also active in the creation in 1998 of the Special Commission on the Computer-Supported Processing of Mediæval Slavonic Manuscripts and Early Printed Books to the International Committee of Slavists.

The project continues to develop in three directions: 1. Expansion in size and scope through the addition of

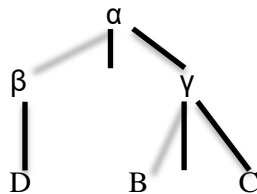
descriptions of new manuscripts, with special emphasis on different types and genres of the texts within them; 2. Visualization of the contents and composition of the manuscripts through their graphic representation with SVG; and 3. Maintaining and updating the electronic model to meet continuing and emerging needs in the description of manuscripts.

Cynthia Vakareliyska

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DOBREJŠO GOSPEL

The 13th-century Dobrejšo Gospel (“D”), from western Bulgaria, was identified as a relative of the western Bulgarian Banica Gospel, on the basis of textual similarities (Conev 1923:25). D has also been shown to compose a manuscript family together with the western Bulgarian Curzon Gospel (“C”) as well as the Banica Gospel (“B”) (Vakareliyska 2008). So far these three manuscripts together form the only known family of Bulgarian gospels. Their relationship is illustrated by this rough diagram, with α representing the hypothetical earliest shared ancestor of all three manuscripts, β representing the branch that D descends from, and γ representing the branch from which B and C descend:



This paper focuses on D not in comparison to C and B, but as a representative of branch β . Identifying patterns in D’s distinguishing features that have not been discussed before, the paper expands beyond earlier studies of D’s distinguishing orthographic and textual features (Conev 1904, Vakareliyska 2010, 2011, 2016, 2917) to attempt, to the extent possible, a rough reconstruction of the distinguishing features of hypothetical ancestor β .

Mary A. Johnson

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HILANDAR RESEARCH LIBRARY AND BULGARIA: 50 YEARS OF SCHOLARLY COOPERATION

The Monks of Hilandar, the Serbian Orthodox Monastery on Mount Athos (Greece), requested assistance from the Very Rev. Dr. Mateja Matejic at Ohio State University for help in creating a copy of their manuscripts for preservation and access. Three photographic expeditions took place in 1970, 1971, and 1975. In May 1974, Bozhidar Raikov (1939-1995), head of the Manuscript Department of the Bulgarian National Library, was the first Bulgarian scholar to work with the manuscripts on microfilm. Thus began fifty years of shared resources, scholarly collaboration, exchanges, and cooperation in the fields of medieval and pre-modern Bulgarian culture, history, language, and linguistics.



The conference is realized with the support of the National Scholarly Program “Development and Promotion of Bulgarian Studies Abroad”, funded by the Ministry of Education and Science.