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Social Behaviour and Family Strategies in
the Balkans (16th – 20th Centuries)

Comportements sociaux et stratégies
familiales dans les Balkans
(XVIe-XXe siècles)

Actes du colloque international
9-10, juin 2006
New Europe College Bucarest

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La publication de ce volume a été rendue possible par l'appui accordé au NEC par l'Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

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ISBN 978-973-88304-2-4

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Family and Migrations in the Balkans (19th and 20th century)

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In the study of the socio-cultural characteristics of family life in the Balkans as a part of the history of everyday life in Europe a number of theses and categories are still subject to discussion. Historians, anthropologists, ethnologists and sociologists of the Balkans all face a difficult question when choosing an interpretative strategy: whether “private life” is a consequence of a civilization process, fixed in time and space, that began during the Renaissance of Western Europe (Norbert Elias), or whether it is a constant in human society that appears in various guises in different cultures and historical periods (Hans Peter Duerr).¹ The few works on everyday life in Southeast Europe² – for example, that of Evelyne Patlagean on Byzantium in the 10th and 11th centuries – show how in the Balkans, from the Medieval period onwards, the intimate world of the individual was not secluded in the space of the home and the family as we are used to believing.

Similar problems also arise in the complex research into labour mobility in the Balkans in its historical and modern aspects insofar as it does not represent an exception from the common tendency for international migrations to become the focus of political debate rather than an object of analysis in respect of their underlying dynamics and socio-cultural

characteristics.³ Scholars rarely ask themselves to what extent the motivation in (temporary) labour migration is a personal decision, part of the “private sphere” and the family relations, and to what extent it is the result of tradition and inherited collective models of behaviour in whole regions.

The purpose of this article is more to focus attention on the social phenomenon of temporary male migration (*gurbet* and/or *pechalbarstvo*) in its socio-cultural and ethnological contexts, showing its historical roots in the example of the Central Balkans, rather than to give precise definitions and generalizations on the issue of “labour migrations in the Balkans”. I will present here briefly the results of my fieldwork in 2001 and 2005 in those regions of the peninsula where today the borders of three states meet – those of the Republic of Bulgaria, Republic of Serbia and Republic of Macedonia – as well as in the mountain regions of Western Macedonia. This issue became even more topical in the last decade of the 20th century, the “decade of transition” in Eastern Europe, given the new waves of labour emigrants and *gastarbeiters* to Western Europe and America.

The seasonal and temporary labour trans-frontier⁴ migrations of large groups from their home area to other (“foreign”) regions within the confines of the peninsula (characteristic of the second half of the 19th century) and to Europe and America (from the beginning of the 20th century) are known traditionally in the Balkan languages as *gurbet/gurbetluk*⁵ and/or *pechalbarstvo*. In general, the temporary migrations (*gurbet*) during the final decades of the Ottoman Empire, as known from historical sources, can be connected to a broad range of economic activities in the agricultural sector and in a number of specific crafts. In the agricultural sector, seasonal migration meant mainly the movement of labour from

the mountains (according to Fernand Braudel these areas were known for their archaism and poverty) to the rich lowlands and river valleys during the harvest season (in Bulgarian “*slizane na Romanya*” – “going down to Romanya” [‘at harvest’]), a process typical of the entire Balkan and Mediterranean area.⁶

Also typical of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century was seasonal hired herding/shepherding (fixed in the calendar between the feasts of St. George and St. Demetrius), combined with different kinds of agricultural labour. These seasonal migrations for agricultural work came with different age and gender characteristics in different parts of the Balkans, but in their female variant (“at harvest”) they were exclusively female.⁷ Traditionally, after marriage, the female would live with her husband’s family in his home. The final point of these migrations was marked by the Balkan Wars and the new political frontiers crossing the territory of the former Ottoman Empire.

In the mountain regions of the central and the eastern part of the peninsula, working outside the home area (*pechalbarstvo*) was popular with male craftsmen and traditionally attracted a high level of prestige.⁸ This was especially true of the region in the heart of the Balkans known from the literature as *Shopluk* – a denotation not yet sufficiently defined in terms of its range.⁹ Legends has it that this population “*can shoe the flea and split the sole-leather into nine*”.¹⁰ However, the traditionally best-known migration streams of temporary/seasonal workers came from the western part of the Republic of Macedonia (the *Miyak* region), where the whole socio-cultural milieu gradually transformed over the centuries due to the temporary absence of men from the village. This region was therefore also included in the research for purposes of comparison.

The seasonal migrations of the men (*pechalbars*) from the central regions of the Balkans are recorded in historical documents from the second half of the 19th century, after the Crimean War.¹¹ These men were mainly involved in the field of construction (*dyulgerstvo*): the men went “from spring until late autumn” around all the Balkan Peninsula, “from Serbia¹² and Wallachia (the settlements along the Danube) up to Istanbul, Asia Minor and Persia”. Some hypotheses state the tradition of labour migration in search of construction work is rooted in the road-fortification obligations of a part of the local population while part of the Ottoman Empire. This population had a specific logistic status in the Sultan’s army, and was known by the terms *voynugan* and *dervendji*.¹³ In my opinion it is more probable that the genesis of the seasonal migration by the male population of these mountain regions was the decline of the well-developed sheep-breeding that was established and encouraged by the state in the early centuries of Ottoman rule to meet the needs of the army. Unlike *Shumadiya* in Serbia, for example, where further economic progress was connected to swine-breeding, in the central parts of the peninsula the Ottoman registers in the 15th to 18th centuries had established a very well-developed network of privileged *dzhelepkehans* – sheep-breeders, predominantly Christian, who supplied the state, the army, and the capital, Istanbul. The decay of the agrarian system in the Ottoman Empire and the socio-economic crisis at the end of the 18th century and start of the 19th century lead to a decrease in pasture land in the mountain regions, the loss of the privileged status of the local population, and a prolonging of the cycle of complexity in family-kin households (*zadruga*).

These processes, together with the expansion of the *chiflik* type of land-ownership, led Maria Todorova to develop the thesis that the *zadruga*, as one of the forms of complexity of

the family/household, is a phenomenon that appeared in the specific ecological niches of the pasture/mixed (animal-breeding and agricultural) regions in the Balkans as a new (or cyclic) response to the specific peculiarities in the development of the Ottoman Empire after the 18th century. In her view, “the geographic frequency of the *zadruga* distribution invariably follows the curve of the mountain regions of the Balkans, regardless of the ethnic borders”.¹⁴ In my opinion, this specific development of the socio-economic situation in the Ottoman Empire was responsible for the following growth in temporary male migrations (*pechalbarstvo*) from the central part of the peninsula after the first quarter of the 19th century. In addition to this, in Western Macedonia the development of stockbreeding enjoyed no security from constant attacks by Albanian bandits. For a number of scholars at the end of the 19th century, this was the reason for the rapid growth in labour migration beyond the home area.¹⁵

In its turn, the seasonal “pouring out” of the male mountain population “for gain” to the other parts of the Balkan peninsula made for the stability over time of the complex households (*zadruga*) and the proverbial strength and effectiveness of kinship networks in these regions. An important condition for the continuous conservation and great significance of the family-kin structure for the entire life of the village was the traditional form of organization in the labour migrant groups. They were based upon kinship and/or a local-village principle and, up until the beginning of the 20th century, knew no written form of regulation (of the guild type) but followed instead the norms of customary practice.

This fact, as well as the lack of statistical data¹⁶ about the extent of seasonal migrations (*gurbetluk/pechalbarctvo*) in Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia, defines the research strategy for historic-ethnographic reconstruction using

predominantly narrative sources, and consequently oral narratives turn out to be the basic source of information. As early as the 19th century, the first attempts were made at centralized regulation of the traditional craft of construction (*dyulgerstvo*) in these regions. As of the 1890s, in Crna Trava (Serbia) special three-month courses were held during the winter to train master constructors¹⁷ and, in 1903, in Tran (Bulgaria) a Construction School was opened that became well known all over the country and still exists to this day.

The directions, destinations and nature of the seasonal labour and temporary migrations of groups of male craftsmen (*gurbetchii/pechalbari*) changed several times during the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century in line with the turbulent historical destiny of these regions. Indeed, over the last 130 years some of these regions changed their state affiliation several times, something which, in the Balkans, often also leads to change in national identity, especially for border regions.¹⁸

Before the Liberation of Bulgaria (1878) the main stream of construction workers used to set out for the empire's capital, Istanbul. These seasonal migrants started their journey on some of the great spring feasts – *Mladentsi* (The Forty Holy Martyrs), *Dzhurdzhovdan* (St. George's Day) or at the beginning of Long Lent; by the Day of St. Constantine and Helen in May they would already be at work ("*u rabotu*").¹⁹ Other important destinations for male constructors performing seasonal work were Wallachia and Serbia, both of which were free at the time. The groups of *pechalbars* heading for Wallachia would gather in the town of Godech. By passing through the Petrokhan pass, the town of Lom and the ports of Turnu Severin and Chetatya on the Romanian bank of the Danube, they would reach the villages in what is today Southern Romania. There they built the famous *bienitsas* (rammed earth houses) that were

especially popular among the local Wallachian population.²⁰ By the end of the 19th century, in a number of villages in Southeast Serbia and Middle Western Bulgaria the male population would speak fluent Romanian – learned during the seasonal labour migrations (“*u pechalbu*”) in Wallachia.²¹

Before 1878, the meeting points for those heading in the direction of Serbia were Smederevo, Parachin, Yagodina and Chupriya. From here the groups of seasonal migrant constructors would spread all over Shumadiya. In the region of Tran (Middle Western Bulgaria), men who practiced the craft of construction in free Serbia were called “*shumadijsi*” to distinguish them from the “*stambuldzhi*”, who migrated to work in the villages around Istanbul.²² One of the first big construction undertakers in Serbia and in the capital, Belgrade, came from the region of Crna Trava (today in Serbia) and Tran (today in Bulgaria).²³

Many of these masters and their construction groups played an active role in the National Liberation struggles of the local population over the course of the 19th century: the assault on the Belgrade Castle in 1862, the *Shop's* uprising (1877) and the *Kresna-Razlog* uprising (1878). It was in Chupriya, in 1862, soon after the formation of the First Bulgarian Legion, and at the request of G. S. Rakovski, that the famous master Grozdan Nasalevski formed three Bulgarian volunteer detachments of construction workers from the region of Tran to take part in the forthcoming Serbian-Turkish War.²⁴ Some of the leaders of these male migrant's groups (*pechalbarski tajfi*) acquired military ranks in the Russian and Serbian armies and participated actively as volunteers in the Corps of the Russian general Chernyaev during the Serbian-Turkish War of 1876-1877 and later in the Bulgarian Volunteer Corps in the Russian-Turkish War that led to the liberation of Bulgaria. In 1877, the detachments of these master constructors under the command

of the famous Simo Sokolov (also from Tran), acting in coordination with both the Russian and the Serbian armies, liberated consecutively the regions of Tran (today in Bulgaria), of Vranje (today in Serbia) and Kriva Palanka and Kratovo (today in Northeast Macedonia).²⁵ They also played an active role in the *Kresna-Razlogi* uprising of 1878, which took place after the Great Powers returned the Bulgarian regions to the Ottoman Empire during the Berlin Congress.

Soon after the Liberation of Bulgaria (1878), the new capital, Sofia, became an attractive centre for the constructors (*pechalbars*) from the regions of Tran and Tsaribrod in Bulgaria, the regions of Crna Trava, Vranja and Pirot in Serbia, and the northeast part of Macedonia, which remained within Ottoman borders. According to some approximate data provided by Jelenko Petrovich, during the last decade of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century (up to 1912), 8,000 people came to Sofia each year, around 2,000 of which were from the region of Pirot.²⁶ In a number of villages in Southeast Serbia, up to one quarter of the male population was “at work” in Bulgaria – mostly in Sofia.

Together with the men from Tran, the most famous masters and construction undertakers in Sofia at the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century came from Macedonia. The road from Macedonia via Kriva Palanka to Sofia was rightfully called by their contemporaries “the migrants road ‘of gain’” (“*pechalbarski drum*”), since, every spring, more than 10,000 men from Macedonia marched along this road to the capital of the free Bulgarian state.²⁷ More than 3,000 came from the villages around Kriva Palanka alone.²⁸

In the Bulgarian capital, the migrants and seasonal workers from Macedonia, besides construction, also practiced other crafts working as bakers, milkmen, confectioners, traders. The same crafts were practised by the temporary migrants

(*pechalbari*) from Western Macedonia (the regions of Tetovo, Debar, Kichevo, Bitola, Kostur) in Thessalonica and in the capital of the empire, Istanbul.²⁹ The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the new political boundaries in the Balkans put an end to these temporary migrations, closing the traditional routes of the seasonal workers to the south. Their new destinations became the new metropolises of Belgrade (for those from Western Macedonia) and Sofia³⁰ (for those from Eastern Macedonia), as well as Albania (for the Albanian population), which had already been liberated. At the start of the two Balkan Wars and during World War I, many of these temporary workers from the central part of the Balkans emigrated to America in order to avoid military service. After 1900, America became an attractive centre for the free labour force of the region – first from Macedonia³¹ and later also Bulgaria and Serbia. Some of these “Americans” returned during the 1920s, but many stayed on in America as immigrants. Another group of the *pechalbar* workers from Macedonia volunteered to fight in the Balkan Wars in the hope of liberating their homeland from the Ottoman Empire.³²

Organized on a kinship and/or local principle basis, the male groups of temporary migrants (*pechalbarski tayfi*) developed their specific subculture in the big cities (Istanbul, Thessalonica, Belgrade, Sofia). The men (*pechalbars*) had special places where they would meet and discuss, such as the famous “*Znepole*” Hotel in Sofia, where construction workers from the region of Tran would assemble, and the “*Razlog*” Inn, where migrants from Macedonia gathered. In Belgrade there were several “Macedonian” inns in *Chubura*,³³ whose keepers came from Western Macedonia, especially *kařana* “*Struga*”. Their specific dialect became their language marker (and an original “secret” language) both in Bulgaria and in Serbia.³⁴

The local population on both sides of the frontier also accepted the migrant groups from the central part of the Balkans as a separate community: both the constructors from Crna Trava in Serbia and those from the region of Tran in Bulgaria were traditionally called *karkavtsi*,³⁵ and their seasonally moving groups were compared to flocks of migrating birds ('cranes'). These communities of male craftsman remained traditionally closed in their specific subculture: the penetration of workers from other regions in their construction groups being a big exception up until the middle of the 20th century. Even now the masters from Kriva Palanka (today in Macedonia) recollect that during the 1930s-1940s they preferred to work in Skopje with Bulgarian workers from Bosilegrad (today in Serbia) than with constructors from Western Macedonia (Vevchani), who were from a different "school".

Over the course of years, the annual journeys of the men from the central part of the Balkans, "at work" and "for gain", developed the specific features of the feast-ritual system and folklore³⁶ of the population from these regions (songs of the type "*Tugjina idem, ostavyam raj!*" ["I go abroad, I leave paradise"]). Together with prolonging the cycle of complexity of the family-kin households and the liveliness of the extended families, another specific characteristic was the grouping of the most important family-kin feasts (*slava/slouzhba/svetec*) in the autumn-winter period of the festive calendar: from the Day of St. Petka/St Demetrius in October to the Day of St. John/St. Athanasius at the end of January.³⁷ *Mitrovden* (the Day of St. Demetrius), *Rangelovden* (the Day of St. Michael the Archangel), *Nikoulden* (the Day of St. Nicolas) and *Bozhich* (Christmas) became sacred centres in the calendar feast-ritual cycle in the family.³⁸ In the settlements in Western Macedonia with their age-old tradition of seasonal male migration, there exists some interesting "creativity" in the festive ritual process

in the spirit of “invented tradition”;³⁹ in Vevchani, the feast of *Spasovden* (Ascension Day) was celebrated three times a year (in May, September and January). The feast on the Wednesday before St. Athanasius’ Day was called “*pechalbarski Spasovden*”, because on that day the men returning to the village from work “abroad” visited a special chapel in the mountain built by and for the migrant workers.⁴⁰

In fact, a man’s entire destiny was pre-conditioned by the life strategy of temporary/seasonal work away from the home area. For the newborn the traditional baptism ritual contained a number of special blessings and symbolic elements aimed at defining in a magical way the destiny of the boy as a good future master-worker. In Western Macedonia, a boy’s first seasonal journey away from the home village (“first *solounche*” in Galichnik) was accompanied by ritual acts and blessings around the idea of “large profit”. In the mountain regions of the Central part of the Balkans and in Western Macedonia,⁴¹ local folk tradition has produced a stable ritual complex for seeing off and meeting the groups of male temporary migrant workers. The women would accompany their husbands and sons far beyond the boundary of the settlement to an established place marking the boundary of the region (*Daschan kladenec* for Znepole, the bridges – *Plachi most* at Zhelino, Tetovo region and Kichevo, *Plachi krusha* near Lazaropole and Vevchani etc.) where the groups of seasonal workers gathered. The toponyms of the “*pechalbar*” spots are most often connected with “lamentation” and describe touching scenes of (temporary) family separation. The origin of the old name of the *Kurbet* Mountain, which separates the region of Nishava from the valley of the Morava River, is probably connected to the traditional migrant’s destinations and rituals of seeing off/meeting is.⁴²

The mass absence of the men (*pechalbars*) from their homes for most of the year leads to transformation in all the major

rituals of the life-cycle. In the mountain regions in the Central part of the Balkans, weddings were concentrated in the winter period, when the male constructors were at home. Among the *Miyaks* in Western Macedonia, weddings would take place only once a year, usually on the feast of the patron saint of the village (St. Peter's Day in Galichnik,⁴³ St. Elijah's Day in Lazarpole), when the young men had returned to their home areas. If a young engaged couple (*verenitsi*) could not get married on that day, they would have to wait another year, until the next patron saint's feast day; the only other possibility was the feast of the Holy Virgin. As late as the middle of the 20th century, these mountain regions were strictly endogamous, and for some villages in Western Macedonia the endogamy was within the bounds of the village: the young men would return to their home villages to find brides among "their own". According to the respondents, even today most local girls get married in summer, when the heirs of the then *pechalbars* and the *gastarbeiters* from America and Australia return to their home areas to look for suitable wives.

Local traditions included a whole ritual complex for the funeral of a seasonal worker who had died abroad; the dead man was buried symbolically and grieved for in his home village. This is a popular practice, but in the village of Mesheishta, however, in the Struga region of Western Macedonia, I came across the "finished state" of such a transformation: at the end of the 19th century, near the village church, an empty grave was dug, where the relatives lamented each of the seasonal workers who had died and were buried abroad. This empty grave stands as a monument to the "unknown *pechalbar*" from the Balkans.

The centuries-old model of seasonal labour migration was reversed after the 1970s. In this period, temporary migrants from the territory of the former Yugoslavia settled with their

families permanently in Western Europe, America (USA, Canada, Argentina) and Australia. This was a consequence of the new policy and the new possibilities offered by the legislation in some European countries, in particular Germany (after 1972). Invited to work legally for a certain period of time due to the demand for labour in certain economic sectors, the *gastarbeiters* from the Balkans soon brought their families with them and emigrated permanently in the accepting country. Germany “shared” the model and the designation “*gastarbeiter*” for the “temporary” labour migrants with the remaining West European countries. This also radically changed the model of the (temporarily) separated families in the regions I studied, especially in Western Macedonia. The traditional “*gurbet*” model of seasonal migrations and working outside the region (the families stay in their home areas and the men earn abroad but send back money and spend what they earn at home), was transformed at the beginning of the 1970s into the “*pechalbar*” model of *gastarbeiter culture*.

Many of these *pechalbar* villages were deserted. Nostalgia for the home area still remains, however – some *gastarbeiters* return towards the end of their lives from all over the world to their villages in order to die “at home”. There are numerous examples from south-western Macedonia of *gastarbeiters*, albeit already naturalized in the “new motherland”, building new houses in their native villages or buying apartments for their children in the main towns of their homeland (Storuga, Ohrid). In a number of villages of the region of Debartsa, *gastarbeiters* have donated money to restoration of old or the building of new Orthodox churches, chapels and public buildings. In the Republic of Macedonia there are also villages that have lain completely abandoned for decades but to which the local people return every year on the patron saint’s feast day in order to make the collective offering (*kurban*) and hold the common

table “as if the village were there”.⁴⁴ However, the break-up of the former Yugoslav Federation with its accompanying wars and ethnic conflicts, the formation of new independent states in the Western Balkans, and the drawing of new state borders that are difficult to cross has changed the traditional *pechalbar/gastarbeiter* model in many respects, giving rise to new life strategies and expectations among the younger generations.

In Bulgaria, in the years of transition of the last decade of the 20th century, the labour mobility of the Bulgarians shows a number of features of the trans-frontier *gurbet* model, but with some new elements taken from the *gastarbeiter* culture of the temporary labour migrants of the former Yugoslavia. At first groups of several men (recently increasingly also groups of women) leave their home areas to work in the countries of Western Europe and send back money to support their families in Bulgaria. In some cases their families come to live with them in the accepting country, but even then, the aspiration to return to the motherland, including the desire to demonstrate their success, achieved “*na gurbet*”, still remains. But what becomes of these temporary labour migrants (*pechalbars*) will be the subject of other research, and the future will show what their perspectives will be under the new conditions of Bulgarian membership of the EU.⁴⁵

In conclusion, I can say in summary that the traditional male temporary migrations from the mountain regions in the central part of the Balkans gave rise to specific transformations in the entire traditional socio-cultural model of the local population – in social organization as well as specific family models and marriage strategies related to prolonging the cycle of complexity of the family households, and in the specifics of gender roles. The Balkan Wars of the beginning of the 20th century changed the destinations for these temporary migrations, and the new policy towards migrants in Europe, at

the beginning of the 1970s, transformed the entire character of social relations in the regions emitting *pechalbars* (*gastarbeiters*) from the Balkans. The changed socio-economic situation on the peninsula in the final decade of the 20th century turned some Balkan countries like Greece from countries that emit migrants into accepting counties for seasonal/temporary labour migrants. At the same time, the *pechalbar* traditions and the specific *gurbetluk* mentality have showed remarkable stability in a number of regions in the Balkans that are a source for new waves of *gurbetchii* (*pechalbars*); these, under the influence of the new circumstances in the region, are settling permanently in the accepting countries, thereby becoming immigrants. The entire socio-economic development in the Balkans and the geopolitical future of the separate states will determine to a great extent whether the *pechalbars* of the region become permanent emigrants or continue to aspire to return to their home areas.

NOTES

- ¹ ELIAS N., *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation: Soziogenetische und psychogeneitsche Untersuchungen*. Bd. 1-2, Frankfurt am Main, 1978; DUERR H. P., *Nacktheit und Schamm. Der Mythos vom Zivilisationsprozess*. Frankfurt am Main, 1988. On this discussion see KASER K., "Privatni život u Jugoistočnoj Europi", in *OTIVM* 2 (1-2), Zagreb, 1994, pp. 48-55.
- ² Cf. ARIES P., DUBY G., *Histoire de la vie privée*. Vol. 1-5, Paris, 1985.
- ³ KEARNEY M., "Migration", in BARFIELD T., (Ed.) *The Dictionary of Anthropology*. Blackwell, Oxford, p. 324.
- ⁴ In the sense of (trans-) ethnic, religious, cultural, and later also state borders in the Balkans.
- ⁵ Denomination in South Slavic languages from Arabian-Turkish *gurbet* – "foreign country". At the end of the 19th century, according to Naiden Gerov's Dictionary the verb "*gurbetuvam*" in Bulgarian means "to go abroad" (cf. GEROV N., *Rechnik na balgarskiya ezik*. T. 1, Plovdiv, 1895, p. 26), and "*gurbetchiya*" = "foreigner" (cf. GEROV N., *Dopalnenie na balgarskiya rechnik ot N. Gerov*. Plovdiv, 1908, p. 83).
- ⁶ BRAUDEL F., *Sredizemno more i sredizemnomorskiyat svyat po vremeto na Filip II*. Kn. I, Sofia, 1998, 30, 40-43, 51-53 (BRAUDEL F., *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. Liv. 1).
- ⁷ HRISTOV P., "The Market and the Piazza for Hired Hand in Sofia as Places to Exchange Cultural Stereotypes", in *Ethnologia Balkanica*, 9, 2005, pp. 87-88.
- ⁸ Cf. BOBCHEV S., *Sbornik balgarski juridicheski obichai*. T. II, Sofia, 1908, p. 197; PETROVIĆ J., *Pečalbari, naročito iz okoline Pirota*. Beograd, 1920, p. 18; CVIJIC J., *Balkansko poluostrvo i juznoslovenske zemlje*. Knj. Druga, Belgrade, 1931, p. 134.
- ⁹ Cf. HRISTOV P., "Granitsite na Shopluka i/ili shopi bez granitsi", in SIKIMIĆ B., *Skrivene manjine na Balkanu*. Belgrade, 2004, pp. 67-82.
- ¹⁰ CVIJIC J., *Osnove za geografiju i geologiju Makedonije i Stare Srbije*. Belgrade, 1906, p. 194.
- ¹¹ MIKHOV N., *Prinosi kam trgovskata istoriya na Balgariya*. T. II, Avstrijski konsulski dokladi. Sofia, 1943, pp. 331-332.
- ¹² On Belgrade and all of *Shumadiya* in Serbia cf. IRECHEK K., *Patuvaniya po Balgariya*. Sofia, 1976, p. 559.

- 13 Compare the survey made by Galya Valchinova, cf. VALCHINOVA G., "Znepolski pohvali". *Lokalna religija i identičnost v Zapadna Balgariya*. Sofia, 1999, 46.
- 14 TODOROVA M., *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern*. The American University Press, Washington, 1993, pp. 156, 174.
- 15 For example cf. PETROV G., "Emigrantskoto dvizhenie za Amerika v Makedoniya", in *Kulturno edinstvo*, 1909, Sofia, pp. 3-6; CVIJIĆ J., *Balkansko poluostrvo i juznoslovenske zemlje*. Knj. Druga, Beograd, 1931, pp. 134, 162, 169, 199.
- 16 Much to the researchers' pity, the official state statistics in Bulgaria in the entire period of its existence does not report on the number of seasonal workers, hired for less than 6 months (cf. *Economy of Bulgaria*. Vol. 1, Sofia, 1969, p. 408), so we can only make suppositions for the concrete dimensions of the temporary labour migrations.
- 17 Cf. PETROVIĆ J., *Pečalbari, naročito iz okoline Pirota*. Belgrade, 1920, p. 23.
- 18 Cf. HRISTOV P., "The Use of Holidays for Propaganda Purpose. The "Serbian" *Slava* and/or the "Bulgarian" *Sabor*", in *Ethnologia Balkanica*, 6, 2002, pp. 69-80.
- 19 Cf. PETROVIĆ J., *Pečalbari, naročito iz okoline Pirota*. Belgrade, 1920, p. 14.
- 20 MIRONOVA-PANOVA S., *Transkiyat kraj*. Sofia, 1971, pp. 69-70.
- 21 NIKOLIĆ V., "Iz Lužnice i Nišave", in *Srpski etnografski zbornik*, 16, Belgrade, 1910, p. 28.
- 22 Cf. PETRICHEV L., "Transkite dobrovoltsi v Srabsko-turskata vojna – 1876 godina", in *Transki kraj*. Sofia, 1940, p. 150.
- 23 PETROVIĆ J., *Pečalbari, naročito iz okoline Pirota*. Belgrade, 1920, p. 23.
- 24 PETRICHEV L., "Transkite dobrovoltsi v Srabsko-turskata vojna – 1876 godina", in *Transki kraj*. Sofia, 1940, p. 140.
- 25 PETRICHEV L., "Shopskoto vazstanie prez 1877 godina na transkoto opalchenie", in *Transki kraj*. Sofia, 1940, pp. 163-171.
- 26 PETROVIĆ J., *Pečalbari, naročito iz okoline Pirota*. Belgrade, 1920, p. 23.
- 27 Cf. CVIJIĆ J., *Osnove za geografiju i geologiju Makedonije i Stare Srbije*. Belgrade, 1906, p. 197.
- 28 Cf. PETROV G., *Materiali po izuchavaneto na Makedoniya*. Sofia, 1896, p. 593.

- ²⁹ KONESKA E., "Makedonci vo Istanbul", in *Etnolog*, 1, Skopje, pp. 64-72.
- ³⁰ Cf. CVIJIĆ J., *Balkansko poluostrvo i juznoslovenske zemlje*. Knj. Druga, Belgrade, 1931, pp. 135-136.
- ³¹ Cf. PETROV G., "Emigrantskoto dvizhenie za Amerika v Makedoniya", in *Kulturno edinstvo*, 1909, Sofia, pp. 3-6.
- ³² Here is only one example: from 74 construction workers in Sofia from the village of Radibush (Kriva Palanka region) 72 enrolled as volunteers in the Macedonian-Odrin volunteer corps of the Bulgarian Army (Personal fieldwork record).
- ³³ KJUSHKOSKI A., *Pechalbarstvoto vo Vevchani*. Bitola, 1998, p. 21.
- ³⁴ Cf. CVIJIĆ J., *Balkansko poluostrvo i juznoslovenske zemlje*. Knj. Prva, Belgrade, 1922, p. 219.
- ³⁵ In some South Slavic dialects - denomination from Turkish for crane; cf. NIKOLIĆ R., "Krište i Vlasina", in *Srpski etnografski zbornik*, 18, Belgrade, 1912, p. 231; MIRONOVA-PANOVA S., *Transkiyat kraj*. Sofia, 1971, p.65.
- ³⁶ Cf. the folklore song collection of KAROVSKI L., *Makedonski pechalbarski narodni pesni*. Skopje, 1979.
- ³⁷ PESHEVA R., "Edin starinen semeen praznik. Praznuvane na svetec v Severozapadna i Zapadna Balgariya", in *Ezikovedski – etnografski izsledvaniya v pamet na akad. Romanski*. Sofia, 1960, p. 739
- ³⁸ HRISTOV P., "Ahnenkult in Westbulgarien: das Fest des Schutzheiligen", in BRUNNBAUER U., KASER K., (Hg.) *Vom Nutzen der Verwandten. Soziale Netzwerke in Bulgarien (19. und 20. Jahrhundert)*. Böhlau, Wien, 2001, p. 193
- ³⁹ Cf. HOBBSAWM E., "Introduction: Inventing Traditions", in HOBBSAWM E., RANGER T., (Eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, 1-14.
- ⁴⁰ During my fieldwork in Vevchani in the summer of 2005 I visited this chapel together with a former *gastarbeiter* in Germany from Vevchani, who has begun reconstructing it.
- ⁴¹ For the region of Mala Reka in Western Macedonia, cf. PECOVA M., "Obihcai na Mijacite – gurbetchii ot Mala Reka", in *Vesnik na muzejsko-konzervatorskoto drushtvo na NRM*, 1, Skopje, 1955, pp. 7-14; SPIROVSKA L., "Za neкои mijachki pechalbarski obichai posebno ot Galichnik", in *Bigorski nauchno-kulturni sobiri*, I, Gostivar, 1971, pp. 259-263.
- ⁴² IRECHEK K., *Istoriya na balgarite*. Sofia, 1978, p. 48.

- ⁴³ The wedding in Galichnik was transformed into folkloristic performance in final decades of the 20th century. However, the real marriage ceremony can still only be performed on St. Peter's Day; in the summer of 2005, I witnessed three consecutive wedding ceremonies on that day.
- ⁴⁴ HRISTOV P., "Praznikot na pustoto selo (Sliki ot ritualniot proces vo R. Makedoniya i R. Balgariya)", in *Makedonski folklor*, 62, Skopje, 2004, pp. 117-118.
- ⁴⁵ The first historical-cultural and ethnologic observations in this direction for the region of the Rhodopes in Bulgaria are already available in a collection with the beautiful title "Living there, dreaming here. Cf. KARAMIHOVA M., (Ed.) *Da zhiveesh tam, da se sanuvash tuk. Emigracionni procesi v nachaloto na XXI vek*. Sofia, 2003.

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