

12.12.2016

The European Union: a bottom up view. Emic interpretations of decline along the Lower Danube (Bulgaria)

Danube Seminar and Pilot Field Studies – Summer 2017
1 – 15 Aug. (Module 1); 3-10 Sept. (Module 2)

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Overview

Objectives:

The principal objectives of the events are:

- to provide opportunities for researchers from a broad range of social science disciplines (e.g. Sociocultural Anthropology, Sociology, Human Geography, Economics) to participate in a seminar discussion of the proposed topic (**Programme**, below);
- to provide opportunities for pilot field-research (**Research Topics and Sites for Pilot Research**, below);
- to prepare the way for designing and submitting a research-project proposal on the proposed general theme of the events, with a possible additional inclusion of Romania and Ukraine as research sites, and targeting the period 1.06.2018-31.05.2020.

Location and logistics:

The events will take part at a Tent Camp of BSRCs at Km 727 on the Bulgarian bank of the Danube (**Google Maps**, below). Nearest town: Lom, nearest villages Stanevo (3 km.), Kovachitsa (7 km.). Arrangements for arrival/departure to and from the Camp will be made individually with each participant. We request participants to get in touch with Yulian for further details.

Board and lodging:

There is tent space for up to 10 people at the Camp. Kitchen, electric generator, other basic facilities. We get food and drinking water from the nearby villages, or from Lom. We use water from the river for cooking and washing.

Warning! Participants should be confident that they are not allergic to insect bites. Daily temperatures in August may get over 40^oC. Thunderstorms and strong gales, lasting for several days, tend to hit the location at least once during the summer.

Financing:

The events are self-financed. While at Camp, participants are expected to contribute to daily expenses (food, mineral water, soft drinks, petrol for transport to and from Kovachitsa, fuel/oil for boat, for electric generator, propane/butane for refrigerators, internet wi-fi (if we manage to install it). Judging from experience this should be not more than EUR 15 per person/day, possibly less according to daily/weekly needs. Wine or other alcoholic beverages are bought individually.

Contacts:

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Seminars: Preliminary Programme

Structure of Seminar

There are twelve topics suggested below. Participants are invited to choose one of them, on which they give a formal presentation (of up to 20 mins), or suggest an own title fitting the slot. In case no formal talk is proposed for a given slot, the conveners shall introduce the topic in up to 10 mins, the rest of the time being devoted to questions and comments.

1st Seminar (10-12.08.2016)

Thu 10 Aug., Arrival at Camp, welcoming dinner

Fri 11th Morning Session

08:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

09:00 – 09:30 1. Historical background of the location – Roman garrison (Pomodiana), village port, cooperative farm, agro-millionaires' estates

09:30 – 10:00 2. From state-socialism to post-socialism: rural-urban migration,

'Romanization', cross-border migration

10:00 – 10:30 General discussion/ coffee break

10:30 – 11:00 3. Informal activities (the informal labour market)

11:00 – 11:30 4. Illegal activities (smuggling, treasure hunting, trafficking)

11:30 – 12:00 5. Illegal taking from nature ('poaching')

12:00 – 15:00 Lunch/siesta

Afternoon session

15:00 -15:30 6. Agricultural dynamics: reclaiming land from the river: the dyke building

programme of the 1950s; irrigation

15:30 -16:00 7. Cooperative farming and plots for personal use

16:00 – 18:00 Boat trip to former port of Stanevo, former floating pumping station, agro-millionaire's vineyard and estate (*Villa 'Pomodiana'*)

19:30 – Dinner

Friday, 11 Aug. Morning Session

08:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

09:00 – 09:30 8. River cargo traffic – post-socialist changes

09:30 – 10:00 9. River passenger traffic

10:00 – 10:30 General discussion/ coffee break

10:30 – 11:00 10. Recreational traffic

11:00 – 11:30 11. TID (*Tour Internationale Danubien*): East/West contacts during the Cold

War

11:30 – 12:00 12. Professional and sports fishing/angling

12:00 – 15:00 Lunch/siesta

Afternoon session

15:00 – 17:00 Towards a research project – brainstorming session

17:00 – 19:00 Walking trip: decline of the immediate hinterland

20:00 – Farewell dinner (for those who are leaving)

2nd Seminar (3-5.09.2016)

The Second Seminar parallels the structure of the first. The topics offered for discussion will be suggested in accordance with results from the First Seminar, as well as from pilot field-study activities around it. A preliminary programme will be circulated by 20 Aug., 2016.

Preliminary titles:

Evgeniya Blagoeva 'Treasure Hunting at Archar (Raciaria)

Pilot field research: Topics

1. History

History and current state of Lom District

From state-socialism to post-socialism: rural-urban migration, 'Romanization', cross-border migration

2. Informal and formal economies

Formal employment and the informal labour market (the 'part-time labour market' paradox)

Illegal activities (smuggling, treasure hunting, illegal migrants trafficking)

Illegal taking from nature ('poaching')

3. Agricultural dynamics

Reclaiming flood plains in the 1950s and its aftermath

Grand-scale irrigation

Cooperative farms, Agro-Industrial Complexes (APKs), plots for personal use

Communal work organization, past and present

4. River traffic/Connected Spaces

Heavy cargo traffic: postsocialist changes and the role of the Rhein-Main-Danube Canal

(1992-)

Luxury cruiser traffic

Demise of passenger services for the local population

Recreational boating: East/West contacts during the Cold War (the TID phenomenon)

Decline of professional fishing

Sites for pilot field-research

Around the Camp itself

At Villages of Stanevo, Kovachitsa, Dolni Tsibar (with Roma), Gorno Linevo (with Roma),

Archar (Roman artefacts hunting)

At Lom (Municipality, Port)

At Kozlodui (Nuclear Power Plant)

Participants (by 12.12.2016)

Module 1 (1-15.08.16)

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