

Visiting scholar: Cristina Plecadite

National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest

Host: Raluca Nagy

Centre de Recherches en Ethnologie Européenne, Université Libre de Bruxelles

Report on the Visiting Lecture

Place of the visiting lecture: I held a class to Raluca Nagy's colleagues & students: Belgium, Université Libre de Bruxelles- Institute de Sociologie ; the programme "Homo Balcanicus" - CREE (The Centre of Research in European Ethnology)

Period: 19- 23 of April 2004

Content: the issue was: "The Aromanian: Roumanian in Balkans, ethnic minority in Romania. The evolution of the identitary strategies"

General objectives: presentation & analyzing a concrete ethnic group using the social sciences theory. *A pretext to understand the population from Balkans, their problems over the time and the solutions found on the collective level.*

Objectives:

- Presenting an ethnic community from the balkanic area (diachronically perspective)
- Presenting the inter-ethnic relations from the Balkans having as reference the Macedo- Romanian population
- Critical references on the social literature focused on ethnic identity
- The articulation of the identitary processes on the concrete socio- political context in which the group lives
- Presentation the problem of the ethnic and national minorities in Romania

The structure of the lecture:

1. The Aromanians: history, customs, occupations, social organizations

- Problems of their origin and their history
- Geographical localization
- Aromanian's position in the Balkans
- Economical life (nomadic shepherds) and its involvements on the social organization
- The family model: the Aromanian family vs. the Balkan and the Romanian family

2. Theories about ethnic and cultural identity

- Primordialist vs. Interactionalist debates
- Identity important aspects: ethnic name, origine, ethnic frontieers
- The "alterity" role in the process of constructing an identity: ethnic group vs. Ethnic category
- The role of the state as agent of categorization and its impact on self- definition

3. The geo-political context of the Aromanians' arrival in Romania

- Causes and geo- political context (dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Romanian state's action toward "recovering" the Romanian element from the South of the Danube, the nationalistic ideas so on...)
- Describing the way in which the "colonization" was made
- The consequences of the colonization: changing the "alterity", dropping the nomadic shepherding, renouncing the traditional family organization, social and territorial migration.....

4. Presenting the fieldwork results: case studies on the Aromanian communities from Calarasi si Constanta

- methodology
- justifying of the two communities choice: similarities and differences between a "weak" and a "strong" ethnic community

- presenting the actual situation of the Aromanian community from Romania (number, activities, residency ...)
- identity criteria on the discursive levels
- the evolution of these criteria among generations
- identifying the types of frontiers established for interaction of the members with non- members
- identifying 2 type of discourses (“minimalist” and “maximalist”)
- explanation of the types of identity discourses
- the impact of the communist regime
- the impact of the Aromanian organizations that activate outside the country

5. Identity definition vs. “officially” definition

- the evolution of the minority rights in Romania
- the Aromanian’s actions forward getting the ethnical minority statute

6. Discussion, questions...