**Fieldwork in Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Cultural Environment in the Balkans: the Case of a Bulgarian Researcher doing field work in the neighbouring Balkan countries**

The lecture draws the attention to the Balkan ethnographic fields. Bulgarian researchers, doing fieldwork in the area (but outside Bulgaria), faces a number of challenges deriving from the specificities of the individual and group (self)identifications, based on cultural traditions and symbols, religion, language, stereotypes about "the other" etc. It raises important questions about the methodology of such studies and provides a basis for discussions about the position of the researcher as “insider” or “outsider”. Simultaneously the Balkan fields hold out interesting new opportunities for the Bulgarian ethnology, diversifying its research scope, creating conditions for accumulation of comparative ethnographic material, and last but not least – stimulating scientific discussions and cooperation among researchers from different Balkan countries.

**Changing Practices of “Being Together” in the Transnational Kin-Relationships among Gorani**

The lecture aims to study and discuss how Gorani manage family-kin relationships across space and time examining the continuities and shifts as they create and experience shared co-presence due to the developments of the migration patterns and increasingly complex transnational modes of living. The dynamics of the political, economic, social etc. environment are also considered when people’s efforts and practices of doing family and maintenance of kinship are analysed. The author proceeds from the assumption that transnational family-kin members seek and find ways to make (imagined, by proxy, virtual and physical) togetherness and to keep up their relationships viable and active across space and time. In this respect, various tools and strategies supplementing each other are used, among them - memories, imaginations, dreams, gifts, souvenirs, remittances, long-distance communication and visiting trips. The article draws on ethnographic data which are gathered due to multi-sited fieldwork in selected villages in the region of Góra (sending area), on the one hand, and the cities of Belgrade and Skopje as labour and living places for many Gorani, on the other.

**Memory and Rituality in a Changing Religious Landscape. Orthodox – Muslim Interactions in the Region of Pole, East Albania**

The paper shall focus on the region of Pole in North-Eastern Albania, situated in the immediate vicinity of Albanian-Macedonian border. The ethnic and religious landscape in this region was extremely variegated and dynamic in the past and it continues to be such at the present as well. The population has lived in a contact zone where the differentiations and contradistinctions in symbolic terms have gone along with the cultural interactions and adoptions. According to the historical sources and collective memory, as we will further see, in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century the villages in the region were inhabited by mixed Orthodox Christian and Muslim population (Sunni Muslims, but also some Shia Muslims, adherents of the Bektashi order). In some of the villages Orthodox Christians still prevailed. In less than a century the demographic picture has been completely changed – Christians have drastically decreased and on their place Muslims have settled. Today a few Orthodox Christians live only in Erbele and Gorno Karchishte.

The aim of the lecture is to examine the narratives about the Orthodox Christian past and present of the region, collected on the field from Christian and Muslim interlocutors. The researcher’s attention is turned especially to the practices, concerning the Orthodox churches which are still maintained in both villages mentioned above (despite the former Enver Hoxha’s atheistic regime), and to present celebrations of the patron-saints’ days as an important “lieux de mémoire”. Christians, who formerly left the villages and currently live in inner Albania or on the other side of the border – in Nord Macedonia, annually come back for the fest along with their descendants. Muslims, who presently inhabit the villages attend it as well, taking part in some of performed ritual practices, and simultaneously, being excluded from others, according to persistent symbolic (ethno-confessional) boundaries.

**Cross-Border Heritage: Regional Cooperation and (Re)Construction of Cultural Traditions in the Bulgarian-Serbian Borderlands**

Nowadays cultural heritage (re-constructed and constructed) is a resource playing an important role in the implementation of various strategies and policies at local, regional, national and supra-national level – it is involved and is used within various projects in the sphere of local development and tourism. Borderlands offer researchers more specific cases of (re)construction of heritage and its use as a resource. The main aim of the lecture is to examine and discuss the process of (re)construction of cultural heritage namely in the context of cross-border cooperation and implementation of various projects in the sphere of cultural tourism aiming to attain sustainable development in a region of Bulgarian-Serbian borderlands: the area along the Erma River’s valley, divided today twice by the border. Who are the main leading actors and initiators of these projects? Which are the chosen cultural elements and how are they (re)constructed and used in the frame of the projects? Do implemented projects receive support and/or disapproval by the local population and to what extent? These are a part of research questions examined in the article.