BALKANISTICA
Volume 9 (1996)
General Editor, Donald L. Dyer

Special Edition

BULGARIA
PAST & PRESENT

TRANSITIONS & TURNING POINTS

Studies Prepared for the Fifth Joint Meeting of Bulgarian and North American Scholars, Held at the University of Pittsburgh — 25-27 May 1994

Edited by

DENNIS P. HUPCHICK
Wilkes University

and

DONALD L. DYER
The University of Mississippi

REES administrative assistant Kati Csoman. By October 1993 the situation of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences had stabilized enough to permit its active participation in the Pittsburgh meeting. A delegation of eighteen Bulgarian scholars, selected through a committee headed by Iordan Malinovski, president of the Academy, attended the conference. They were joined by thirty-three American and Canadian colleagues, as well as an additional ten Bulgarian scholars who were affiliated independently with the BSA.

The scholars participating in the Pittsburgh meeting represented an interdisciplinary cross-section of the Bulgarian studies field. Papers were presented in the areas of history, linguistics, women's studies, economics, literature, political science, ethnic studies, sociology, literature, legal studies, music, philosophy, religious studies, demography, folklore, and anthropology. For organizational reasons, these were structured within two tracks of panel sessions that ran concurrently during the conference — panels in the social sciences and in the humanities. The studies that follow represent a selection of those papers prepared for the Pittsburgh meeting, which are here presented in a manner reflecting the conference's organization. Studies in the social sciences are found in the first part of this collection, those in the humanities in the second. All of the studies included herein represent the views and conclusions of their individual authors and do not reflect necessarily those of the editors of this volume, that of *Balkanistica,* or of the sponsors of the Pittsburgh meeting. The editors do take responsibility for attempting to lend them a certain amount of stylistic continuity in presentation.

Support for the conference and for the maintenance of the official Bulgarian delegation while in the United States was provided by the BSA, REES, the Sofia office of the Open Society Fund, Curtis Instruments, Inc., Monsanto Company, Rank Xerox, and the personal donations of a number of individual BSA members. The editors also wish to thank the following for making the conference and this collection of papers possible: the South East European Studies Association and *Balkanistica,* Harold E. Cox and the Wilkes University History Department, J. Michael Lennon and the Wilkes University office for academic affairs, Louise R. Brown, Frederick B. Chary, Catherine Chvany, Alan Cienki, Joe Ellison, Dessi Jordanoff, Nicholas Jordanoff, Elsa Limbach, Thomas A. Meininger, Ognian Pishev, Tatyana Rashkova, Ernest A. Scatton, Joan Scheffler, George A. Tobakoff, Gary H. Toops, Veselin Traikov, and Vladimir Vladov.

DPH

Table of Contents

Editor's Foreword to *Balkanistica* *iii*

Foreword to the Volume *v*

Table of Contents *vii*

Part One: Studies in the Social Sciences

Editor's Preface to Part One 1

The Democratization of Bulgarian Political Life
John D. Bell 3

After Democracy: The Ways of the Post-Totalitarian Bulgarian Intelligentsia
Asen Davidov 17

Armenian Émigré Communities in Bulgaria
Mari Firkatian-Wozniak 24

Bulgarian Social Services in Transition
Anne O. Freed 31

Steps for Law Reform in Bulgaria During the Transition to a Democratic, Market-Economy Society
Roy N. Freed 42

Saving the 50,000 Bulgarian Jews Within the Old Borders of Bulgaria: Was There No Anti-Semitism in Bulgaria?
Anne O. Freed and *Roy N. Freed* 56

The Education of Women During the Bulgarian Reawakening
Peter John Georgeoff 64

A Statistical Overview of Seventeenth-Century Bulgarian Orthodox Society and Culture
Dennis P. Hupchick 74

The Bulgarian Model of Transition to a Market Economy: Stabilization and Structural Aspects
Atanas Leonidov 103

The Spirit of Tragedy: The Bulgarian Case
Vesela Misheva 118

Women's Studies in Bulgaria: Issues and Possibilities
Tatyana Nestorova 140

The Right to Information on the State of the Environment in Bulgaria
Georgi Penchev 148

Ethnicity in Pirin Macedonia: Blurred Categories, Emergent Minority
Bonka Stoyanova-Boneva 156

Traditions of Bulgarian Orthodoxy from Medieval to Modern Times
Olga Todorova 166

Part Two: Studies in the Humanities

Editor's Preface to Part Two 181

Ideology and Mythology: An Attempt at a Culturological and Semiotic Analysis of Modern Bulgarian History
Florentina Badalanova 183

Dispelling the Mystery: The Commodification of Women and Musical Tradition in the Marketing of *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares*
Donna A. Buchanan 193

DISTANCE as a Prototypical Verbal Category in Bulgarian
Grace E. Fielder 211

"That's a nice song, but you can't sing it like that!"
Martha Forsyth 226

Regional and National Music in Socialist Bulgaria: Identity and Adaptation in Two *Gaida* (Bagpipe) Traditions
Mark Levy 249

Rereading Elin Pelin at the End of the Twentieth Century
Lyubomira Parpulova-Gribble 256

The Present State of Scholarly Publishing in Bulgaria: University Presses
Vasilka Shishkova and *Dimităr Tomov* 263

A Contrastive Survey of the German *Konjunktiv* and Bulgarian *преизказно наклонение*
Gary H. Toops 269

Contributing Authors 290

Two of the other papers from Track 2 — those by Fielder and Toops — are linguistic investigations. Both are synchronic in their approach, but while Grace Fielder's study is confined to one language (Bulgarian), Gary Toops's is comparative, analyzing both Bulgarian and German. Interestingly, both contributions discuss the "reported" verb form in Bulgarian: Fielder offers us a new way to classify the reported functionally, and Toops shows us how it compares in form and function with the German *konjunktiv.* The one article in this group which deals with literature is Lyubomira Parpulova-Gribble's contribution. Like Fielder, Parpulova-Gribble offers us a new interpretation — in this case, a new look at the contributions made to Bulgarian literature by one of its most well-known writers, Elin Pelin.

The remaining two contributions from Track 2 are written by Bulgarians. Badalanova examines the cultural history of modern Bulgaria through the use of socialist terminology, and the only co-authored contribution in Track 2, the article by Vasilka Shiskova and Dimitŭr Tomov, discusses the current state of scholarly publishing among the university presses of Bulgaria.

Like Dennis, I too have countless individuals to thank for helping to make Track 2 run smoothly at the conference, and for helping to make the publication of these papers a reality. Among those deserving of my special gratitude are Gary Toops, who served with me as co-director of Track 2 for the conference, Cynthia Vakareliyska, Darla Harris, Yalonda Willhoite and of course Dennis P. Hupchick himself.

Donald L. Dyer
UNIVERSITY, MS, 1996

Ideology and Mythology: An Attempt at a Culturological and Semiotic Analysis of Modern Bulgarian History[1]

Florentina Badalanova

> Allow me, Lord, to take my investigation further. My hope, let not my attention be distracted. If future and past events exist, I want to know where they are. If I have not the strength to discover the answer, at least I know that wherever they are, they are not there as future or past, but as present. For if there also they are future, they will not yet be there. If there also they are past, they are no longer there. Therefore, wherever they are, whatever they are, they do not exist except in the present. When a true narrative of the past is related, the memory produces not the actual events which have passed away but words conceived from images of them, which they fixed in the mind like imprints as they passed through the senses. Thus my boyhood which is no longer, lies in past time which is no longer. But when I am recollecting and telling my story, I am looking on its image in present time, since it is still in my memory. Whether a similar cause is operative in predictions of the future, in the sense that images of realities which do not yet exist are presented as already in existence, I confess, my God, I do not know. At least I know this much: we frequently think out in advance our future actions, and that premeditation is in the present; but the action which we premeditate is not yet in being because it lies in the future. But when we have embarked on the action and what we were premeditating begins to be put into effect, then that action will have existence, since then it will be not future but present.
>
> — *Saint Augustine,* Confessions, XI:XVIII (23).

Historia Sub Specie Semioticae

Toward the end of World War II the political situation in Europe went through a period of immense change — the process was led by the binarily opposed ideologies of the *East-West (Communist-anti-Communist)*[2] conflict, which was expressed through the removing of state boundaries as determined by the interests of three great leaders: Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill. Most of the Central and

East European countries, known as the *socialist camp*, found themselves under the influence of the Soviet Union. Those of the West (Europe and America) were under the influence of America. This major division of the 20th century has become an interesting topic of study through the idiom and methodology of cultural anthropology and the methods of semiotics. This is so because *history is essentially semiotical in nature (i.e.*, rich in its textual and symbolic density) (Успенский 1976, 1988-1989).

This division of the European continent into the poles of East-West (communism-anticommunism) is also embodied in the hieratics of *The Berlin Wall (i.e.*, its physical being connotatively and dennotatively symbolizing both the beginning and the end of this epoch in the contemporary history of European civilization). Many of the world's present-day culturological processes in political history are also embodied within these parameters, the study of which serves as an instrument for a diagnostic evaluation of the process of societal crisis, as well as of the state of cultural and social upheaval which still affects the world today. Such a diagnostic tool not only helps in establishing the ethiology of such events, but also allows for the taking of appropriate steps to overcome certain destructive tendencies in the new evolution of mutual relationships.

One of these parameters, relevant for the period of East-West opposition, is the linking of *ideological strategies with the mechanism of mythological thinking*. Such a linkage was a conscious effort carried out regularly by the Communist authorities and, when studied, it reveals one of the most important tactical components for the functioning of their totalitarian system of government and rules.[3]

The course of the historical process in each separate country of the *socialist camp* over the past fifty years has its own special parameters, revealing a common typological unity embodied in the Soviet political paradigm. The events related to the imposition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat* and the unification of historical and socio-political parameters in the structure of political power in Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Yugoslavia, Albania, etc., were triggered by the march of the Red Army throughout 1944-45, as they effectively expanded the Kremlin's empire.[4] The subsequent history of these socialist camp countries defined the very act of their occupation in an interesting way. This involved an Orwellian process of re-semantization. The term *socialist revolution* became the "buzzword" for a type of *freedom* which was, in actuality, an organized form of mass slavery. This *epoch of a new type* of semantization became the new operating political paradigm with the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1917.

* * * * *

The Epoch of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as an Epoch of a New Creed

The Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 was one of the most powerful socio-cultural explosions of 20th-century European civilization. It became a ubiquitous symbol of a new temporal order, *i.e.*, a reestablishing of an absolute border between past and present. Moreover, after the establishment of the *socialist camp*, this symbol began to function within the new mythical context of Central and Eastern Europe, as designed by the mythopoeic Soviet sphere of influence. Such a new universal cultural category became a *chronotope* (in the sense introduced by M. Bakhtin (1981: 84),[5] as an intrinsic "connectedness" of temporal and spacial relationships), as realized by this most recent period of European civilization.

A powerful cultural symbol, this *new creed* was established consciously as a new mythological model which operated as an alternative to the Christian noetic model that had dominated the *old bourgeois order*. This isomorphic construction was one of the main motivating forces behind the cultural stripping of indigenous religious poiesis. The idea of a ritualized transition of the community of *proletarian neophytes* into a *new terrestrial society (The City of Man)* became a principal motif. History thus was transformed into a mythic/temporal ideology. This *new* system of rituals became a viable illustration of the mechanisms of *les rites du passage*. Such a function of sacral precedent was attributed to the October Revolution. This was subsequently interpreted in the texts addressed to the proletarian neophytes as the absolute point of the sacred beginning of cosmic time and as the isomorphic and the isofunction of the *Creation of the World*. Moreover, the texts describing this seminal event — from history books to odes — were loaded with the maximum of sacral functions and were transformed into specific *equivalents* of the Biblical concept of *Genesis* and the origin of the world.

Such texts also have the vital function of *training* and *educating* the younger generations and of *brainwashing* them to conform to concrete cultural reactions and mechanisms. This new *mythic-creed* functioned as the official state *religion* and was inherently linked with a belief in the *bright Communist future*. It even had its equivalent to the *Holy Trinity* in *Marx, Engels, and Lenin*. This substitution of the new mytho-noetic model was the epitomy of the new cultural paradigm and was vigorously propagated by the Communist press.

The Communist Leader as a Sacramental Person

Parallel to this sacral origin of the socialist revolution, interpreted as an isomorph and isofunctional substitute of the Biblical creation of the world, was the

image of the demiurge, the image of the *Soviet creator*. The time *before him* (the eras of Lenin, Stalin, Dimitrov, etc.) was described as a period of *chaos*. The *leader*, a person with sacral characteristics ensuring *order* and *harmony* played the part of the *deity creator*, imposing his paradigm and ethos on the cosmos. *He* was authorized to dictate the everyday (and all other) ritual parameters within the state as well as unlimited authority over the life of each citizen. These ritual parameters of the totalitarian state are based on the assumption that the life of each individual citizen and society in general do not belong to the individuals themselves but to a *person* who is the hypostasis of authority. It is this leader's prerogative to ritualize time as well as to transcend it by the manipulation of the temporal order that elevates such a leader/creator to the symbolic status of *timelessness*.

A good example of the interiorization and materialization of this *eternal* symbol are the mausoleums in certain socialist countries. The tombs of Lenin, Stalin, Dimitrov, Ho Chi Minh, etc., are a specific kind of architectural text in which the idea of immortality exists in a literary/architectronic sense, as when, for example, the elite color guard change position by a highly regimented and ritualized use of gesture and body language. In this way, the mausoleum becomes a sacral emblem of the Communist concept of eternity.

The Creator/Leader as Forefather of the State

This creator/leader also subsumed the deific status as progenitor of the state and its citizens. All Bulgarian youths, for example, who were members of the Pioneer organization were called *children of Georgi Dimitrov*. Thus his position as mythopoiesis also becomes ideopoiesis in the "divine marriage" of leader and *country*. Another good example of this was the *Pavlik Morozov syndrome* in which the aforementioned young boy was considered a hero for denouncing his biological parents for their anti-Soviet activities. The *mother-state* and the *father-leader* were the only family which Pavlik Morozov recognized as a legitimate family. So for the system of *political metaphors* inherent in the Communist context the Pavlik Morozov syndrome became emblematic. Some Bulgarian Pioneer troops are named after him. This is a particularly good example for explaining the ethic paradigm of the manipulation of Bulgarian youth.

Such a paternalistic function — the leader as a *forefather of the state* — echoes the concept of *homo duplex* (Gruenwald 1983: 286) in which the *homo sovieticus* (Tischner 1991: 11-12) had to function on two levels — the private and the public. The new socialist man "is afraid to voice his real opinions in public life, which subverts his private life by politicizing all life" (Gruenwald 1983: 285, Wrobel 1992: 148). Such a schizophrenic *semantic symmetry* (Wrobel 1990: 75-80) was taken for granted on all levels of Communist predominance, from the simplest individual to the leader/creator himself.

The Myth of Eternal Timelessness and the Strategies of Communist Ideology

In Communist ideology, the time of the *victory of communism throughout the world* is closely linked to the concept of eternal *timelessness*. As the often quoted phrase of the Communist leader Georgy Dimitrov, spoken at the 1933 Leipzig Trial summarizes: "The wheel of history is turning round, and will go on to the final victory of communism throughout the world" *(i.e.*, through the victory of communism, time will be freed from its inherent characteristic — motion). As a result the transition of the category *time* into the category *timelessness* appears as a natural logical phenomenon. The socialist press provides an excellent model of the tactics involved in translating time to timelessness. Also remarkable is the similarity of the headlines of the newspapers — the organs of the various Communist parties (*Работническо дело*, *Трибуна луду*, *Руде Право*, etc.) — with *Правда* as their prototype.

The structuring and layout of the newspapers followed strict rules. It was obligatory that the presence of the *immortal* leader of the Bulgarian proletariat *(e.g.*, Georgi Dimitrov) be "puffed up" through semantic repetition, so that his iconographic image became part of the *everyday rituals* as echoed in the canonical structures of radio and television news. This block of everyday rituals influenced the people's thinking to the point of accepting his authority as the only legitimate structure of time and human order. In addition, the placement of a leader's iconographic image in the highest, and hence the most important sacral place — the title page of each newspaper — reinforced the image of the immortality of the leader *(i.e.*, his supernatural abilities beyond time).

In this way, the perception of time demonstrated by the Communist press became specific and analogous to the perception of timelessness and was articulated by the personification of immortality within the mausoleums and media encodifications.

There is also the curious fact that the evolution of the historical stages of human history is simultaneously marked by the changes in the portraits of the *leading immortals*. Thus the period of de-Stalinization was *triggered* by dropping the portrait of Joseph Visarionovich from the title pages of the Soviet press. At the same time the body of the immortal Stalin was removed from the mausoleum and buried in the earth. These acts were also isofunctional in that they demonstrated his desacralization in the ritual context of the community and operated as a record in the iconic idioms (markers) which revealed their semiotic value. (The end of the Communist era in Bulgaria was marked by the desecration of Georgi Dimitrov's mausoleum by graffiti, as well as urination on the empty tomb. Simultaneously his portrait was dropped from the title pages of the Communist press.)

In the epoch of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, daily newspapers were part of the everyday ritualistic life demonstrating participation in the *system* as well as the unification of the populace within the parameters of the new cosmogony. The very act of *reading* the newspaper had an *everyday ritualistic* dimension and in its essence reinforced the concept of social timelessness. Thus the daily newspaper turned into the hypostasis of eternal timelessness, and the act of reading it signified the establishment of this *eternity* through the mechanisms of *les rites du temps*

The Communist Leader and the Creator of History

There is a striking parallel between the ritual parameters of time in social Communist structures and the Christian cosmology. Like the Christian approach to history, a significant structure of events whose essence and succession are the divine strategy of the Lord — the Supreme Creator of the visible and invisible world who alone is aware of the causal links within this structure — Communist ideology employs the idea of the leader as the creator of the outline of history, as well as the link between causal social events. Just as divine providence is ultimately mysterious and striving to understand that it is unnecessary and even presumptuous, the postulates of the ideological strategists of communism foster a view of history as a series of planned events by the leader, with an understandable causality available only to him. Any attempt of the common man to penetrate its essence and understand its chain of causation is unnecessary and wrong.

This strict regulation of the ritual parameters of time in socialist countries is perfectly embodied in the use of the word *plan*. The breaking up of historic time into five-year plans both embodied and revealed the hypostatic *wisdom* of the leader of the party and the state.

The Past, Present and Future Tenses in the Grammar of Communist Strategy

The quotidian *rites du temps* in everyday Communist life also contains a very important characteristic of the perception of time important to the totalitarian states of the analyzed period. It calls for a more detailed explanation as it constitutes a core element of the system of values in Communist societies.

Languages have three main tenses: past, present, and future. The *grammar* of ideological strategy is related to the ritual parameters of time in Communist cultures and has a hierarchical structure resembling these three main tenses. The supreme position is that of the *future*, which as a system of poetics embodied in party slogans, is linked to a series of epithets related to the semantics of

light. The future is *bright, brilliant, radiant*, etc. The present was referred to as *life at present* — the present tense of a given action. The intertwining of these concepts of temporal passage was defined by the formula "life begins tomorrow; today is the antechamber to the beginning." In line with these formulae are the slogans calling for life to become the future well-being of children. In a similar context, the correlation of the categories time and life can be defined through the statement "there is no today; there is only tomorrow." The lack of emphasis on the category of *present tense* reveals the emphasis of the role of pragmatic time in the epoch of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, where *today* cannot exist as a separate category. It was sacrificed in the name of the future.

The past functions as a *defeated darkness* on the one hand, and as the *radiant heroics* of the *martyr/victors* on the other. Because it did not involve the present leaders, the past had no importance other than as instruction of how life should not be lived. In a sense, it involved the oppression of the working class by the ruling wealthy. Of particular interest for these concepts of time was the popular slogan, "They died for us to live." Hence, the past becomes a period of sacral sacrifice, the guarantee of a *bright future*.

New Mythology and New Rituals

In the course of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, the ideological mechanisms of socialism served as a model for a *new mythology and rituals*. The Soviet system was able to take advantage of the traditional folklore calendar of Central and Eastern Europe. On the one hand, there was a tendency to tone down the folklore elements by imposing strict administrative prohibitions which banned the celebrating of important feasts, and on the other, to substitute their own mythological system to supplant traditional rituals. The Communists, for example, substituted the *Day of Shepherds* for the *Day of St. George*. This attempt to deform folklore's most important and meaningful sacral elements contributed greatly to the destruction of classical folklore as a system for viewing the world, behavioral patterns, education and the preservation of values. It was rural cultural life which was affected most in this respect. The effect of this process, which lasted for fifty years, was the loss of a significant number of people from the populations of rural villages in the ex-socialist countries.

Closing the churches was another step in the ideological strategies of the metamorphosis of *les rites du temps* in everyday life in the Communist countries. The promotion of atheism was linked to the introduction of new *socialist rites*. Demonstrations and parades marked the days which were held with the highest degree of sanctity and designated by the structures of authority as a unique focus of meaning. As it is known in the system of mythological thinking, the semantics of *center* are of particular significance. The meaning of the *cen-*

trum inner sanctum also marks the conquest of space *(viz.,* the domination of time and space). Thus the socialist system of feasts succeeded in substituting a theoretical event (the *revolution*) in the temporal sphere as a episode of cosmogonic myth.

The socialist myths fashioned after the *Seventh of November* model *presented* and *enacted* a ritualistic sacral precedent in each of the socialist camp countries. In fact, this was one of the ideological instruments for the permanent declaration of the vitality of communism. For Eastern Europe this became the absolute symbol for the concept of *feast* in general. Usurping the status of *Christmas* and *Easter*, the socialist rituals dealt a lasting blow to their conceptual meanings.

Together with this suppression of the classical Christian martyrologium, a new, *revolutionary*, socialist martyrologium was promoted. It was based on the *cult of the dead* — "those heroes, who have fallen in the struggle for socialism and communism," who have become martyrs for the *new creed*, thus became *canonized* in the thinking of the people. The strategists of socialist ideology tried to turn them into symbols of heroism, a paradigm of dignified behavior, reaching the rarefied pedestal of righteousness and holiness. They thus became spatial and temporal markers, a hypostatic symbol of socialism and *revolutionary space*. Streets and squares were named after them; thus the newly established *martyrologium* had co-opted cultural space and provided new semiotics.

The time of revolutionary transition overran and subordinated the space of the former historical paradigms; the temporal revolutionary sacral precedent was elevated to the status of hypostasis and was transformed into a sacral topology. Physical space was *instilled* with the semantics of revolutionary time, a process rich in semiotic nature.

The Autumn of the Peoples (1989) as an Interruption of the Epoch of Cyclical Time

As was mentioned, one of the characteristic peculiarities of the idea of time in the context of mythological thinking was the concept of its cyclical recurrence. One of the paradoxes of this analyzed epoch, in which socialist ideology operated within the categories and strategies of mythology, was the cyclical repetition of socio-cultural and political explosions. This cyclic mechanism seemed to program the events of the socialist camp. Its real historical time was subordinated to the classical mythological segmentation, occurring in twelve-year periods, that came with unchanging permanency in 1944, 1956, 1968 and 1980. To some, these periods reveal the concept of the intervention of *Providence* in the cultural memory of Central and Eastern Europe and, therefore, the hope of deliverance and salvation. For instance, in 1956, twelve years after the establish-

ment of the socialist camp, in Hungary, we saw the beginning of a cyclical wave of resistance movements against the Communist regimes. Twelve years later, it was the so-called *Czechoslovakian Events* (the *Prague Spring* of 1968), and then, in another twelve years (in 1980), in Poland, the *Solidarity* movement began. The next wave of this cycle involved the word of oral and written folklore texts concerning the *new* revelations, visions and prophecies about a possible revolution in Romania, Bulgaria or Russia. The only uncertainty of the time concerned the eventual place of the next explosion. Many predicted the next wave would appear in 1992. But the *neomythological* cycle was unexpectedly interrupted in 1989 with a series of *explosions* that started the collapse of the Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe. This series was described metaphorically as *The Autumn of the Peoples* and was considered parallel to and symmetrical with *The Spring of the People*.

The word *revolution*, however, varies in meaning among the European languages. It ranges semantically, sometimes meaing *circle*, sometimes meaning *cycling*. Similarly, the word *beginning* may range semantically. In the Slavonic languages, начало etymologically means *co-beginning/new beginning* (Фасмер 1986: 310), while in the Romance and Germanic languages, the word *revolution* is translated exactly as "movement in a circle — re-evolution."

The Autumn of the Peoples interrupted this epoch of cyclical time and began a new, linear time which was imposed on the consciousness of Eastern Europeans as not only a new view of history but the beginning and the end of an historic epoch. Seen in such a context *The Autumn of the Peoples* (1989) — which marked the collapse of the socialist camp — can be interpreted in part as an event which was an alternative to the Great October Socialist revolution. It was both isomorph and isofunction. *The Autumn of the Peoples* marked the end of a period. A new epoch was begun, that of post-totalitarism. However, once again, its parameters bear the semantics of the old *beginnings*, which have become updated and situated in each of the countries of the former socialist camp (Wrobel 1992: 139-57). At the same time, the concept of a deep, built-in isomorphism of the events of *The Autumn of the Peoples* (the *Velvet Revolutions* in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Poland) remains at the core of each country and describing a return to the sacral context of the precedent. This is why the reactions of people in Eastern Europe still bear the traces of the mechanisms of cultural behavior which were established in 1917 and which were created by an ideology that functioned as mythology.

Notes

1. The author wishes to express her special gratitude to Professor Janusz Wrobel (Polish Studies Department at Saint Mary's College, Orchard Lake, Michigan) who

prompted her to develop the idea of a semiotic analysis of modern Bulgarian history, as well as to her friend and colleague, Ned Vankevich (Van Nuys, California), for his kindness, patience, and willingness to help with the adaptation of this text into English, and finally, to her friend and colleague, Joan Sheffler (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), for her constant support.

2. *Italics* are used throughout the text in a non-traditional sense. In addition to being used in a normal way for indicating certain kinds of written works, etc., italics are used here to mark terminology of a political, religious or dogmatic nature which the author feels is deserving of special attention by the reader.

3. In this context, Чернышов's monograph (1992) about contemporary Soviet mythology is of special interest.

4. In this sense, the term was introduced by А. Авторханов in his monograph, Империя Кремля: Советский тип колониализма [*The Empire of the Kremlin: The Soviet Type of Colonialism*], 1988.

5. See Michael Gardiner, *The Dialogics of Critique. M.M. Bakhtin and the Theory of Ideology* (1992), 24, 33, 53, 56, 204.

References

Ash, Tymothy Garton. 1990. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of 1989 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague.* New York: Random House.

Saint Augustine. 1992. *Confessions. A new translation by Henry Chadwick.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Авторханов, Абдурахман. 1988. *Империя Кремля. Советский тип колониализма.* Вильнюс. Printed in Germany by Prometheus-Verlag.

Bakhtin, Michail. 1984. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics.* Edited and translated by C. Emerson. Manchester University Press.

Фасмер, Макс. 1986. *Этимологический словарь русского языка.* В. 2. Москва: Прогресс.

Gardiner, Michael. 1992. *The Dialogics of Critique. M. M. Bakhtin and the Theory of Ideology.* London and New York: Routledge.

Gruenwald, Oskar. 1983. *The Yugoslav Search for Man: Marxist Humanism in Contemporary Yugoslavia.* South Hadlej, Massachusetts: J.F. Bergin.

Лотман, Юрий. 1993. *Культура и Взрыв.* Москва.

Tishner, Jozef. 1991. *"Manipulacja Religia." Relax* [Chicago] (21 December): 11-12.

Успенский, Борис. 1976. *"Historia sub Specie Semioticae." Культурное наследие древней Руси.* Москва.

Успенский, Борис 1988-89. *Восприятие времени как семиотическая проблема. Труды по знаковым системам.* В. 22-23. Тарту: Tartu University Press.

Wrobel, Janusz. 1990. *Language and Schizophrenia.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Wrobel, Janusz. 1992. "Capitalist Aspirations and the Communist Legacy in Poland." *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 4, no. 1-2. *The Rediscovery of America and Europe. 1992: Socio-Cultural, Philosophical and Spiritual Roots. Democratization in the Communist World: Promise and Reality.*

Чернышов, Андрей. 1992. *Современная Советская Митология.* Тверь.

Dispelling the Mystery: The Commodification of Women and Musical Tradition in the Marketing of *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares*[1]

Donna A. Buchanan

The Genesis of "Le Mystère"

In 1975 Marcel Cellier released thirteen of his best recordings of Bulgarian songs on a French LP that he entitled *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares* (Cellier 1990). The album, which features what was then called the Bulgarian State Radio and Television Female Vocal Choir (hereafter BSRTFVC), remained virtually unknown to the rest of the world for the next decade.[2] Great Britain's 4AD label reissued Cellier's record in 1986. It quickly became a cult favorite that registered Bulgarian women's singing on the British pop music charts (Fordham 1988; Woodward 1989: 83). In 1987, along with the Choir's successful, initial concert tour in West Germany (Hamburg and Bremen), Nonesuch Records released Cellier's album once more as the first volume in a series of future recordings bearing the name *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares* (Ulrichs 1993). While Cellier's compilations brought Bulgarian music international recognition, the way in which they were marketed also provoked a brisk, transnational trade in the "enchanted" quality of the human voice.

The Nonesuch series sparked an explosion of supplementary and derivative concert tours and recordings that have established the neotraditional choral style associated with state ensembles for folk songs and dances as an authentic, ancient, and mystical vocal tradition both in Bulgaria and abroad. Press releases, concert and record reviews, and liner notes repeatedly trace the roots of this purported feminine vocal magic — and indeed, of Bulgarian musical culture in general — to the oppression and suffering associated by Bulgarians with Ottoman rule, to the mythic musicality of Thrace personified in its favorite son, Orpheus, and to the eroticism of Oriental exotica.[3] Cellier's liner notes (1986) accompanying the 4AD recording *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares* are a good illustration. An excerpt reads: