

NEWSLETTER of the
**EAST EUROPEAN
ANTHROPOLOGY
GROUP**

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From the Editor

The first order of business is to thank guest editors Mitchell Ratner and Linda Bennett who did such a fine job on the last *Newsletter* while I was off enjoying myself in the field. I am now back at my desk, but it is reassuring to know that such capable hands are available just in case I decide to run away with the Gypsies again.

I also wish to thank the 48 members of EEAG who have sent us checks. As explained in recent issues of the *Newsletter*, the grant from the American Council for Learned Societies that enabled us to initiate publication has run out and we must therefore become self-supporting. We are assisted over this transition period by Slavica Publications and its editor-in-chief, Charles Gribble, who has generously assumed much of the cost of printing and distribution on a temporary basis. The current volume (1984-85) is being distributed to everyone on our 200+ mailing list. But volume 5 (1985-86) will be sent only to those who have paid their subscription fee of \$5.00 per year. In other words, THIS IS YOUR LAST FREE ISSUE. If you are not one of those who has already paid, and if you wish to continue receiving the *News-*

letter, it is imperative that you send us your subscription fee. About half of those who sent us checks, included the fee for 1985-86. But it is clear that we will need more subscribers than this if we are to remain in operation. The *Newsletter* is supposed to be your publication. If you want it to continue, you must pay your share.

We also need your contributions of another sort: anything appropriate to print in the next number of the *Newsletter*. Send us information regarding new or forthcoming publications; notices of grants received or proffered; reviews of books or films; requests for assistance; course syllabi and bibliographies; reports on meetings you have attended; offers to organize symposia; short articles concerning relevant institutions at home or abroad; public announcements of births, deaths, promotions, job changes; criticism; suggestions; or what have you. Send them to the Editor, c/o Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109. The deadline for Volume 5, Number 1, is November 1, but now is not too soon.

The Assistant Editors for this issue are Yvonne R. Lockwood and Eva Huseby-Darvas.

Cooperation

Klaus Roth solicits citations of published material on South Slavic folk cultures for an international bibliography. It will probably be published by Slavica Publications in 1985, and will include folklore, ethnography, anthropology, rural sociology, and ethnomusicology. Write him at the Institut für deutsche und vergleichende Volkskunde, Universität München, Ludwigstrasse 25, D-8000, Munchen 22, West Germany.

An exhibit of Bulgarian folk art is being prepared for the Museum of Natural History, University of Oregon, for 1987 or 1988. Costume, textiles, metalcrafts (including jewelry), and woodcrafts will be included. If anyone is willing to loan handcrafted objects of high quality or relevant photographs, please contact Carol Silverman, Department of Anthropology,

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, telephone (503) 686-5114. Insurance will be provided.

Obituary

In August 1984, the eminent Bulgarian ethnomusicologist Raina Katsarova died at the age of 83. Her scholarship was vast, including many regional song collections, dance studies, folklore analyses and life histories of singers. Katsarova combined a deep love and personal commitment to music and folklore with a rigorous analytical mind. She directed the Institute of Music of the Bulgarian Academy of Science for many years and was active in international folklore circles. Her extensive bibliography may be found in Barbara Krader's article, "Raina Katsarova: A Birthday Appreciation and List of Publications" *Ethnomusicology* 25(2), May 1981, pp. 287-294.

Carol Silverman
University of Oregon



Resources

Book Notes

Paysans et Nations d'Europe centrale et balkanique. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1985. 286 pp., list of authors. 90 francs (paper).

This book is the product of an international conference held in December 1981 on the "reinvention" of the peasant by the state in nineteenth and twentieth century Eastern Europe. The eighteen papers are grouped into three sections: Folklorism (introduced by Claude Karnoouh); Languages, Ideologies, National Identities (introduced by Altan Gokalp and Stathis Damianakos); and Peasants and Politics (introduced by Catherine Durandin and Jean-Paul Szurek). The contributors include anthropologists, sociologists, historians, political scientists and philosophers from Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the United States. The conference was organized and the proceedings edited by a collective of scholars at the University of Paris, Nanterre, centered in the peasant societies of Central Europe and the Balkans (see the *Newsletter*, Volume 1, Number 2, pages 17-24).

Nomads and the Outside World, by A. M. Khazanov. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. (Translated by Julia Crookenden, introduced by Ernest Gellner). xxviii + 304 pp., list of abbreviations, bibliography, index. \$65.00 (hardcover).

This is one of the most significant of a very small number of Soviet studies in Anthropology which have been translated to English. As Tim Ingold notes in his review in *Current Anthropology* (Volume 26, pages 384-387) Khazanov's work is the

"first comparative survey of pastoral societies that can claim to be truly comprehensive, covering their history in Eurasia, the Middle East, and Africa from the origins of pastoralism to the dawn of the modern era". Khazanov's special emphasis on Soviet Siberia, and an excellent extensive bibliography which is usefully divided into "works in Russian" and "works in languages other than Russian" makes this impressive--although very costly--study particularly useful for students of East European societies.

Peasant Classes: The Bureaucratization of Property and Family Relations under Early Habsburg Absolutism, 1511-1636, by Herman Revel. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. xviii + 354 pp., maps, figures, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.50 (hardcover).

Rebel, a historian at the University of Arizona, examines peasant family life and social relations in Upper Austria during the early modern period. The study is based on analysis of 860 peasant household inventories.

Recueil II. Etudes et Documents Balkaniques et Méditerranéens, 7, edited by Paul H. Stahl. Paris, 1984. 188 pp., figures. (paper).

Like volume 6 and unlike earlier monographs in Stahl's series, this is a collection of varied materials: ten articles, twenty-six book reviews, and a lengthy dialogue concerning an earlier publication. The articles (two in English, the rest in French) range in subject from animals in annual cycle cere-

monies of the South Slavs to a reanalysis of Gherea's theories on capitalist penetration to folk architecture in Wallachia, Maramures, Transylvania and Crete. Like others in the series, this book is not offered for sale but is available free of charge to appropriate institutions. For further information, contact Paul H. Stahl, LAS-11, Place Marcelin Berthelot, 75005 Paris, France.

Blood Revenge: The Anthropology of Feuding in Montenegro and Other Tribal Societies, by Christopher Boehm. Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1984. xx + 268 pp., 37 photographs, 3 maps, glossary, bibliography, index. \$25.00 (hardcover), \$9.95 (paper).

The bulk of this book is a detailed ethnohistorical study of feuding in Montenegro, set within the ethnographic understanding of rural Montenegrin society gained by Boehm in his earlier dissertation fieldwork. It is, then, a description of how blood feuds work, in the context of the Montenegrin moral system. This is preceded by a long, very personal, and largely irrelevant chapter on the author's fieldwork experience, and is followed by a description of feuding in other societies (Bedouin, Jivaro, Nuer, et al) and an attempt to generalize.

The Peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands, 1526-1918, by Robert A. Kann and Zdeněk V. David. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1984. xvi + 543 pp., endmaps, bibliographic essay, index. \$30.00 (hardcover).

This monumental study explores the Croat, Czech, Magyar, Slovak, and Slovene ethnic groups, along with the Romanians of Bukovina, the Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Vojvodina, and the Ruthenians

of Transcarpathia and Bukovina, through various phases of the 400 years development of the Habsburg monarchy. As the authors state "the topic of this volume revolve around two preliminary questions. What do we understand by the term Eastern Habsburg lands? And to what extent --if any--are we justified in conceiving of a bond among the Eastern Habsburg lands beyond the strictly legal one of subordination under the rule of a dynasty?" (p. 3).

Journals

In the Fall 1983 issue of the *Newsletter* we began to apprise readers of the contents of current *Soviet Anthropology and Archeology*, a journal of translations from Soviet sources in anthropology. This publication, the only one other than this newsletter dedicated wholly to East European anthropology, is edited by Stephen P. Dunn and published by M.E. Sharpe (80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, NY 10504). For some time publishing was behind schedule, but has now been brought up to date. Since our last report we have received the following issues:

Fall 1983 (Volume XXII, Number 2) is a special issue devoted to the ethnography and archeology of the Caucasus.

Winter 1983-84 (Volume XXII, Number 3) consists of four studies of folk arts and crafts in the USSR.

Spring 1984 (Volume XXII, Number 4) includes articles on Russian legend, the Mesolithic period of the Western Ukraine, and the role of tradition in the modern Russian city.

Summer 1984 (Volume XXIII, Number 1) has articles on such varied topics as his-

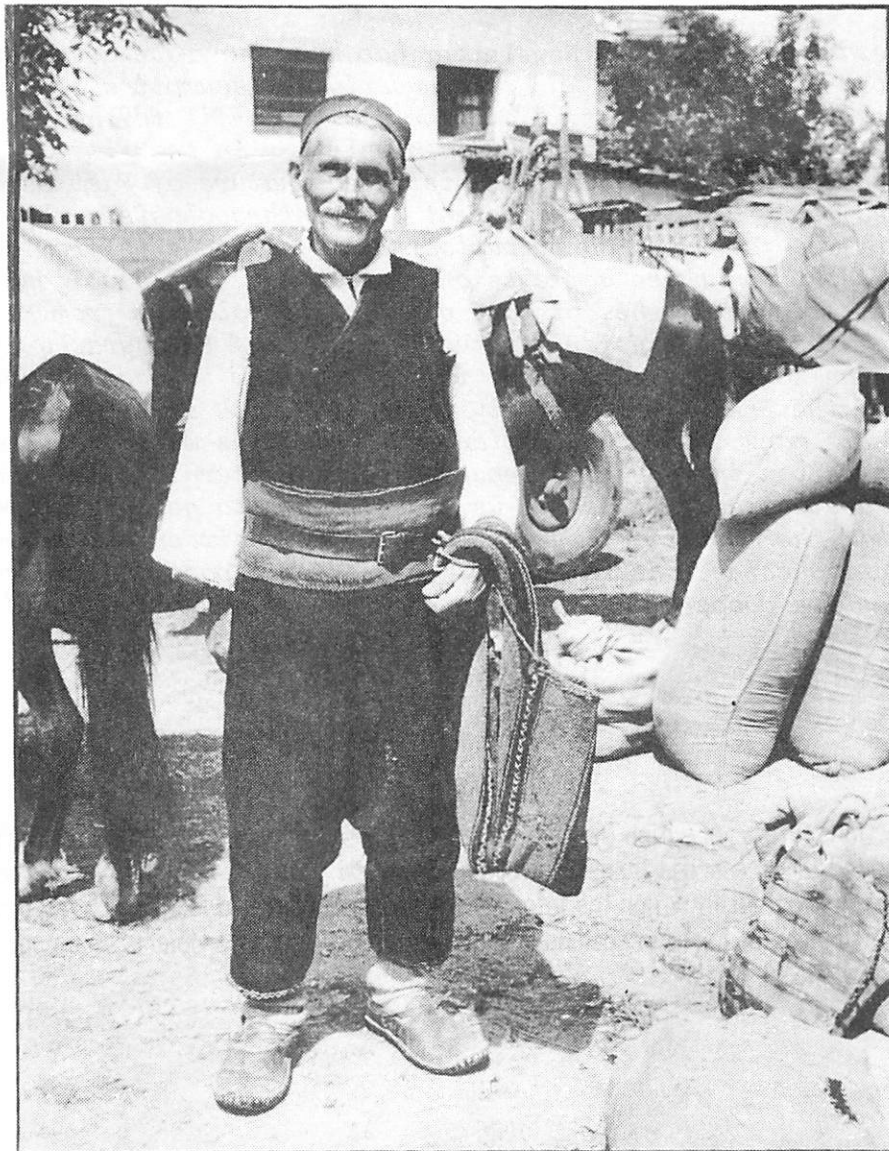
torical archeology in Siberia, cultural interests among contemporary rural Tatars, the aims of Soviet oriental studies, and an open-air museum in Yakutia.

Fall 1984 (Volume XXIII, Number 2) consists of a single article by I. M. D'iakonov on the origin of Indo-Europeans. He argues for the Balkan-Carpathian area.

Winter 1984-85 (Volume XXIII, Number 2) contains articles on Russian oral prose about Ivan the Terrible and the Eleventh International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology.

Personals

Sam Beck has a new job. He recently accepted a position as Assistant Dean of Planning at the New School for Social Research, Eugene Land College, New York. The "planning" part of his position will include the building of a program in East European Studies, and perhaps one in Ethnic Studies. He will also continue to teach one course per term, for this next year a course on Gypsies in the Fall and a seminar on Eastern Europe in the Spring. Congratulations!



TOWARD AN INTERNATIONAL ETHNOLOGY: AN INTERVIEW WITH TAMAS HOFER

A constant theme of the Newsletter has been our role as anthropologists who work in Eastern Europe. The underlying assumption of this on-going discussion (and, in fact, of why we have seen fit to band together into the EEAG and to publish this newsletter in the first place) is that the special political and historical nature of East European societies makes us somehow different than anthropologists who work elsewhere. The following contribution to the dialogue is from Sam Beck. It differs from those comments on the subject that have gone before in that it elicits the opinions of an anthropologist from Eastern Europe, Tamas Hofer. Hofer, at the Institute of Ethnography of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, is already known to most if not all members of the EEAG. His widely read book (with Edit Fel) Proper Peasants, his many other publications in English as well as Hungarian, his participation in many conferences outside Eastern Europe, and his personal assistance to those of us lucky enough to get to Budapest, have made him the most effective cultural broker between ethnologists inside and outside Eastern Europe. His efforts past and present, as well as his cooperation in this interview, are highly valued and much appreciated.

Two sections follow, of which the first is an essay based in part on the second. The second section is an edited tape recorded transcript of an interview with Dr. Tamas Hofer. The first section provides the context in which the interview was carried out and is based on my understanding of the anthropology of East Europe and interpretation of Professor Hofer's comments. Any errors are mine alone.

and even "naive." The result of such labeling is terribly destructive since the quality of explanations for particular problems is not addressed and the real issues are deflected with rhetoric whose purpose is meant to intimidate, coerce, and finally to silence.

Central to the argument is the implicit relationship among scholarship, governmentally subsidized research, and policy making. Part of the difficulty in evaluating these relationships has been the fuzziness with which scholars enter the arena of policy-making and the structural parameters of "scholarship," generally perceived to be neutral (i.e., apolitical) and objective. While intellectually understanding the difference between developing public policies and carrying them out, few have attempted to do either. Similarly, it is widely recognized that scholarship, even scientific scholarship, is not neutral and value free. So, scholars sit on the sidelines, frustrated, taking shots at policy makers and implementers with their ideologically laden ammunition, protected by their belief that being a scholar-critic is enough. Only a few scholars in anthropology have made the transition from scholarship to policy making and when they have stepped out of academe, no matter what the rhetoric of those remaining behind, they have crossed a boundary in which a new identity has been created. Hence emerged non-academic specializations of practicing, practical, and public anthropology through which "anthropologists" are stigmatized because they are seen as having stepped out of academic of scholarly arenas resulting in a loss of *objectivity* and *neutrality*. The results of this vicious cycle is that frustrated academics remain trapped in the prescriptions of their own making, rigidly separating the academic from the non-academic and losing the opportunity to impact on policy at the same time.

The contradictions of desiring research funding on the one hand and resenting having to obtain it from certain sources, on the other hand, are also central to the argument. This contradiction emerges from the same level of understanding as the contradictions inherent in the scientific enterprise that claims ideological purity and objectivity. Let's face it, funding for research in East Europe is available almost exclusively as a result of government needs and federal tax dollars. The idea that anyone going to do field work in East Europe without having some formal relationship with governments is unrealistic. The crucial point is that anthropologists should seriously consider their possible roles as operatives or agents of intelligence gathering bureaus. To my knowledge no anthropologist has worked as such in East Europe, although on occasion rumors of such activities among certain anthropologists are destructively rampant. That we publish our findings, interpreted through our own ideological, philosophical, and political biases in publicly available journals and books has become a critical issue in the literature, as scholars vie with each other in *correctly* interpreting East European processes. As a result, people are classified as *pro-* or *anti-communist*, *sympathisers*, *dupes*, and *naive*. Anthropologists can easily recognize these contradictions as elements of group identity development and maintenance, as well as a mechanism of occupational specialization, control, and as a tendency to resinate toward the "safer" interpretations and analyses available in the middle political arena, in the context of increasingly limited resources and in the dominating conservative, "anti-communist" political environment. Through such evaluations, the critical question remains unanswered, how do certain analyses further our understanding of anthropological phenomena and how does such an understanding further humankind cope with its problems and concerns?

In his article of 1966, Dr. Hofer mentioned that the roots of ethnology are in Central Europe. This must mean that the roots of *anthropology* are located there as well. If these propositions are true, anthropological research in East Europe has broader significance than has been previously noted. He observed that a distinction in the related scholarly traditions is that the Anglo-American tradition of *ethnology* is of a "slash and burn" type, expansionistic and conceptual (theoretical), while the East European variant is national, localized, and descriptive. In the present interview, Tamas Hofer indicated a continuing concern for the roots of indigenous ethnology, on the one hand, and the expanded frame of modern ethnological work at the level of *Europe*, rather than *nation states*, on other hand. If we can take this idea one step further, the concern of the present and the future, then, is to generate an ethnology (anthropology) that is not expansionistic, nor chauvinistically localized, that is descriptive, but also conceptual. Through such efforts we can perceive that *European ethnology* is becoming an increasing reality as greater efforts are expended in making it come about.

Dr. Hofer also indicated that Anglo-American anthropology is playing a role in this scheme since many of its social science methods are being used to complement indigenous frameworks and methodologies. Yet, while having the impact of unifying ethnological sciences, the *coming home* of Anglo-American anthropology (Cole 1977), Anglo-American research interest extending into Europe, can bring about the opposite and reproduce the all too realistic scenario of *anthropology, the child of imperialism*, expansionistic and rapacious, seeking out all the *traditional* societies of the globe, the marginalized populations, making them comprehensible to the needs of Western capital, and preparing them for further, more efficient penetration of capital (Gough 1968). For anthropology, "coming home," then, is a *double edged sword* --especially in East Europe.

Carrying out East European fieldwork is part of diplomatic efforts. There can be no doubt that cultural and educational exchanges, are an aspect of international relations and hence an integral part of foreign policy. If we briefly reflect on the history of post-Second World War exchanges, we are easily able to demarcate the *opening* and *closing* of field sites. For those of us interested in conspiracy theories, Soviet hands can be seen manipulating East Bloc puppets. For others of us, each of the countries is working out its own policies and directions concerning cultural and educational exchanges. A chronology of openings and closings unfolds as we peek at where and when anthropologists have been able to carry out field work. Yugoslavia "opened up" first, then Poland; Hungary "opened up" and then Romania. Czechoslovakia and East Germany, for all intents and purposes, made no commitment to Anglo-American anthropology. The conditions under which anthropology has penetrated socialist countries still needs to be explored (such an analysis is forthcoming, see Beck 1981). Yet, the question, *Who is the research for and why are we doing it?* remains unanswered.

The role of anthropology in East Europe has been discussed in earlier issues of the Newsletter. A central issue in this discussion, perhaps oversimplified here, yet retaining a good dose of truth, is whether *communism* in East Europe is *good* for people or *bad*. This particular issue has matured over the years with scholars writing from virtually every political, philosophical, and ideological perspective on the continuum with the result that too easily individuals attempting to explain what is going on in East Europe are labeled, "right wing," "left wing," "in the middle,"

potential for contributions to anthropology and the study of East Europe, though, is being strengthened, particularly in the areas that too often appear as implicit assumptions upon which analysis is constructed. In raising them as central issues of the "anthropology of East Europe," testing the assumptions or questioning their validity or even specifying the hidden agendas or targets of analysis will provide the momentum with which the importance of anthropological research in East Europe will be recognized. As the thoughtful writing of Cole, Pi Sunyer, Halpern, and Kideckel before him, Professor Hofer indicated some of the assumptions. He pointed out that: 1) There is an intrinsic value in studying East European societies and cultures. 2) The study of "socialism," gives the most critical definition to ancient *traditions* that have been *maintained* and can be studied almost as if in a natural laboratory. 3) The existence of rich documentation that provides the historically minded anthropologists with the resources for socio-historical and demographic studies presents unique circumstances for studying the past, comparing them to the present, or discussing continuity, change, and dramatic transformations. Such historical depth can also lead toward a deeper and broader understanding of the world system. We then have 4) the anthropological focus in which anthropologists see themselves as *communicators*, translating sociocultural phenomena and idioms of other people more effectively than other social scientists and humanists, a skill especially critical in providing information on socialist countries. And finally 5) anthropological contributions emerge from our methodology, long term immersion in the society and culture of *the other*, the insights gained from cultural relativism, an attempt to apply holism, increasingly made possible through anthropological focus on the political economy of sociocultural processes, the *objectivity* of the outsider, and the *pig's eye view* of the human condition, which includes an understanding of society and culture based on personalized relationships of small scale interaction. Included in this formulation is the idea that anthropologists, as a result of their privileges of *wallowing in the mud* and holistically seeing what goes on from the bottom up, have a much broader understanding of society than their colleagues in other disciplines who deal with aggregate data and understand humanity to be controlled and directed by its leaders, from above.

Embedded in these assumptions is the central and problematic question of, *Who is the research for and why are we doing it?* On the surface this is one of those nagging ethical questions that comes out of graduate seminars and surrounds the issue of anthropological ethics often discussed in carrying out field work. It is a particularly important question to ask because the intensely charged and politicized atmosphere in which the anthropological endeavor is carried out qualifies the work that is being done there. In a different context, Berreman noted that "apart from the relatively overt problems of research censorship are the covert problems of channeling research efforts into problems and places that are acceptable, non-controversial, fashionable and productive by standards of those who give money, review proposals, employ researchers and publish their work (1979:). Efforts to channel research and the publishing of research results are difficult to identify, except in retrospect, and are a product of all people and institutions participating in the process. Critical to East European studies is that research is being carried out in *communist* countries, a fact that does not escape anyone who prepares to carry out anthropological field work in East Europe. That is why the question, *Who is the research for and why are we doing it?* is not only a question to be raised in graduate seminars, but is a critical concern of our area studies.

Tamas Hofer first visited the United States almost twenty years ago. Since then he has been a constant touchstone, host and guide of his society for anthropologists travelling to or through Hungary. During his recent visit to Brown University, I had a chance to speak with him, intending to extend Anglo-American knowledge of anthropology and ethnology as he discussed these in his insightful article, "Comparative notes of the professional personality of two disciplines" (1968). Since the year of his first visit, area studies and anthropological field research in East Europe, but particularly in Central and Balkan Europe, has grown in leaps and bounds (cf. Halpern and Kideckel 1983). The number of published articles and books in the anthropological literature is slowly contributing to the legitimacy of a unique specialty, apart from European studies, distinctly demarcated by historical developments, political and economic forces, and sociocultural characteristics. In our discussion, Tamas Hofer clearly indicated the importance of carrying out research in East Europe and if we read between the lines and consider the global political economic context of American research in socialist East Europe, we may extrapolate further meaning from his words and the critical work being done there.

Tamas Hofer has contributed to the continuing debate carried out in these pages of the Newsletter concerning the explicit value of anthropological research in East Europe and its importance to anthropology (see the contributions by John W. Cole, Oriol Pi Sunyer, Joel M. Halpern, and David Kideckel in earlier issues). In carrying out this interview, I hoped to obtain an answer from "the otherside" concerning how important East European anthropologists and ethnologists deem American anthropological work. The results of the interview demonstrate the necessity of continuing the interchange of anthropologists and ethnologists of East Europe and America and for more and clearer thought concerning the contributions of "anthropology in East Europe."

The role of Anglo-American research in East Europe is ambiguous and reflects the political economic ambiguity of the region in general. Anthropological work in this part of the world is not seen as contributing significantly to theoretical or methodological concerns of the discipline, a matter that is related to relatively little interest in the region as a whole and the diverse research interests of the few scholars who have carried out field work there. The role of anthropologists there has been more or less as hangers-on of theoretical and methodological controversies located in other global arenas. Little success can be measured by anthropologists of East Europe in the disciplines of anthropology and East European studies. References to work by anthropologists of East Europe is rare in the anthropological literature and rarer yet in the literature of East European studies. In great part this has resulted from the perceived lack of coherent and specific research goals of the work so far completed and apparently their lack of relevance to other fields of study. Little success has been experienced in directing research as a whole toward the specific goals of our constituent fields, a problem as much related to the confusion concerning the directions of "anthropology" (see Wolf 1980) as it is to the confusion over East Europe's defining characteristics; its uniformity or variation and the resultant diversity of approaches that are applied to understand the societies and cultures that are located there.

Primarily, it is the relative youth of anthropological research in East Europe that has contributed to the lack of theoretical controversy or conceptual vigor there to date. The

So, *Who is the research for and why are we doing it?* Before we can really broach this question we must further look at our anthropological code of conduct. One of the fundamental characteristics we have inherited in our anthropological methods is our ability to enter into people's communities and justify our doing so based on our duties to our profession, objectivity, non-interference, protecting our informants, and so on. This code of conduct, if correctly followed, prevents anthropologists from direct political participation, despite our other anthropological method of participant observation. Of course there are good reasons for maintaining this code since anthropological analysis requires distancing and separation, while simultaneously engaging informants, obtaining their confidence, support, respect, and even friendship. Because we tend to deal with small scale societies, more often than not minorities within nation states, we take adversary positions, *our people* versus the state. This comforts us and allows us to favor *our* people and look skeptically at the needs and desires of the state. This contradiction emerges as we comfortably slip into identifying with our informants at the local level.

The anthropological research of Europe has led the discipline toward investigating the relationships between communities and states and as a result we have had to confront our own loyalties. Certainly, governments can be mean, cruel, coercive, and severe. All too often governments are responsible for the death and destruction of our traditional anthropological societies. All too often we stand gaping on the sidelines, shaking our heads in disbelief and frustration. While this is true, governments can and do provide opposite services. An anthropological focus must be able to take both points of view into account. Not doing so, limits the degree of our *objectivity* and reduces our ability to account for sociocultural processes, their impact and results. When such a perspective is applied to socialist countries, as a method of analysis, it can no longer be dismissed as merely ideologically or politically motivated. The critical point of the matter should become whether this mode of analysis is able to provide a better, more elegant, explanation for sociocultural and economic phenomena.

Some anthropologists feel what is critical in East European scholarship is the open dialogue among scholars, East and West, in order to improve the human condition. Others counter that such interaction is intellectually compromising and professionally polluting because such work is carried out in the context of the "government enterprise," since scholars are easily identified as working through United States or socialist governments; often expressed as people who *tow the Party line (hacks)*, or those who are working as *government agents (spys)*. Too easily is the problem dichotomized between working for *humanity*, the good of us all, and working for our governments, involved in the struggle between *good* and *evil*.

So, *who is the research for and why are we doing it?* So far, and for the most part, anthropological research in East Europe has been an intellectual exercise. We have had little, if any, impact on national or international policy and certainly we have had no impact in the localities where we research. Inadvertantly, benefit may have emerged, as is the case with Hann's research (see below). Is this enough? I suppose, if the matter remains at the level of intellectual pursuits and furthering our respective understanding of other worlds, it is enough.

For those of us who believe that anthropology has importance and is able to address social, cultural, political, and economic problems better than other disciplines, much more has to be done. Many of us do not believe that studying people and their cultures is purely and only an intellectual exercise in understanding humanity or the subject matter that furthers our professional and scientific knowledge, interests, and careers. I would hope that most of would like to put our knowledge to use. If this is true, then we must make a self-conscious stand to do so.

What are some of our options? Anthropologists must take a more active public role. Anthropologists should be involved in public speaking and writing and play an active role in forming public opinion. Providing legislators with the information that they need to make proper decisions is another critical option. While consulting for the government is not well received by our discipline², an open dialogue with policy developers and implementers, through writing, lecturing and discussions can be of utmost benefit in demonstrating that anthropological insights are relevant to issues with which they are concerned. While lack of access to policy makers appears to be a difficulty, difficulties may be overcome through perseverance and joint effort. Advocating for *our people* and for those government policies in our host countries that benefit them is yet another option through which we utilize our research potential and responsibility to constructively contribute toward the needs of the people whom we study. Expanding anthropological pursuits, outside of academe, is yet another critical direction that must be followed in order to further legitimize anthropology a discipline and generate an environment in which anthropologists are perceived by employers as professionals who have skills applicable to a variety of tasks, not only working with bones, esoteric subjects, and exotic cultures. And finally, we must support our colleagues who are involved in public anthropology, rather than cast them aside for having fallen from grace and of their professional and scientific roles (cf. Higgins 1984).

Other considerations that need to be given are in planning and cooperation. This includes participation of anthropologists in East European standing committees and projects as a central goal. Some of us have been participating in such periodic conferences as the International Congress of Southeast European Studies. Others are involved in organizing conferences and meetings that bridge the boundaries separating scholars. A few attempts at cooperative research projects have been made in which East European colleagues play an active and critical role, both in their homeland and ours. Expansion in these activities is central to anthropologists of East Europe who desire to increase their role in the discipline and legitimize East European culture studies as a valuable contribution to anthropology as a whole and to initiate our influence in governments. Some anthropologists also have taken the admirable step toward sympathetically translating East European (pre-socialist and socialist) publications, making them accessible to a broader audience and as a result allowing more dialogue to occur. With the expansion of anthropology into fields outside of academe, the role of professional anthropologists could easily become another strong link in demonstrating the need to use theory and method for practical problem solving. That rural transformations and urban change have brought about the involvement of anthropological analysis and solutions is commonly accepted in the "West" and the "Third World," but that such work is of utility in East Europe remains unthinkable (the

work of Dyckman and Fisher, 1977, could easily serve as a model for further development).

Tamas Hofer's contributions have been formidable in providing the avenues for understanding Hungarian society and in becoming a mediator in the internationalization of ethnology/anthropology. He stands as an example to us who are involved in furthering this dialogue. Some of us believe with him that in understanding history, we are able to understand the present, and with such understanding we will be able to help in shaping the future. We can only agree with him on the matter that societies and their governments have problems that need resolution. That these problems are also based in a global arena and conditioned by a world political economy makes their resolution a global affair. American anthropologists have been studying agrarian, industrial, ethnic, social, and political issues of East European development. We now have an opportunity and an obligation to not only provide insights into these issues, but also to generate practical solutions to the problems that face *our people* and the countries that host us. Joel Halpern, correctly stated in a previous Newsletter that in the end adversary relationships between anthropologists and governments serve no fruitful purposes.



An Interview with Tamas Hofer

How long have you been involved in the exchanges with the United States?

I can answer this question by looking at my personal life. Practically, I started to take interest in not only American but Anglo-Saxon anthropology already in the early 1950's when I graduated from Budapest University in 1952. From this time on, I pursued my interest in literature and was reading books by anthropologists.

The first time I was able to meet American anthropologists was through my Ford Foundation grant in 1967. At that time, I carried out a participant observation project while I was studying at the University of Chicago. This resulted in my article that was published in *Current Anthropology* (1968).

Keeping my eyes on these kinds of relationships with American anthropologists after this experience was not an official task. It was an informal development that happened because I had many friends in the United States. They passed on my name and address to those who came to Hungary and so I made new friendships. For a long time, I was affiliated with the Ethnographic Museum in Budapest, and later with the Ethnographic Research Institute of the Academy. Both of these institutions are a kind of central organization that maintain international relations. As a result, it is quite natural that I have been in touch with Americans who visit Hungary.

I was glad to receive invitations from overseas. For example, John Honnigman invited me to come to Chapel Hill as a guest lecturer and Visiting Professor in 1971. I spoke about European peasants and led a graduate seminar, both rewarding experiences for me. At this time, I also had the opportunity to travel. The National Science Foundation supported me and made it possible for me to lecture at Berkeley for a couple of days.

I was with American anthropologists in other places, too. For instance, before the 1973 International Congress in Chicago, Sol Tax organized a preparatory meeting in Cairo which I attended. With the help of American anthropology, I attended the International Congress in New Delhi and afterwards a conference on the Social Anthropology of the Peasantry.

So, in fact, the relationship you have had with American anthropologists has been international in scope since you were able to travel to different conferences.

The projects of the Smithsonian Institution's Center for the Study of Man, which sponsored my trips to India and Cairo have a world-wide range and so it was possible for me to be included.

Were your associations with other areas, or countries, of the world as intense as with America and Americans?

My position, in relationship to anthropology, also improved in Europe. Somebody could think that capitalist countries and wealthy European countries (wealthier than Hungary) have greater opportunities to maintain relationships with the Anglo-Saxon world and anthropology, but this is not true. I was sometimes invited to Germany and Scandinavia, partly because of my relationship with American anthropology. Curiously, I was a kind of mediator, who was asked to give some behind-the-scenes-type of information as to how anthropological research is going in the United States. The little article published in *Current Anthropology* was very well received among the Scandinavians. So, I received an invitation to go there and give some lectures in Lund, Stockholm, and Copenhagen. And I was very glad to see that they read it and they agreed with my position. For me, it was funny to see that I, who came from a socialist country, was reporting to them the novelties and news of American anthropology.

I do not want to say that this was something new, especially for the Scandinavians. For instance, the Professor of National Ethnography at Oslo University studied in Chicago and in Lund. The Swedes have very good connections with American anthropology. These relationships are partly based on kinship. So, for instance, Jeremy Boissevain in Amsterdam has a Swedish wife. Therefore, he is regularly visiting Stockholm giving lectures. I attended such a lecture. May Dias is of Swedish descent. She visits Sweden. So, kinship among anthropologists is not only studied, but also it is acted out.

You said your interests evolved rather informally with scholars, instead of through formal channels between countries. Did government institutions take interest in these matters latter on?

I do not want to say this was my influence because there is a general tendency, not only in Hungary, but in Europe generally, for ethnographers and folklorists, who have been trained in a tradition—developed in the humanities framework, using philological interpretations, and maintaining an historical perspective—are turning more and more to social science type approaches and this brings with it a growing interest in anthropology. This does raise some questions of scientific identity. In Hungary we do not have a tradition of extra-European type research and we never had a special chair at the University for anthropology or ethnology, in the German sense. Yet, in Stockholm, for instance, or most German Universities, there are some special chairs for non-European research, originally anthropology or ethnology. If ethnographers are changing their profile more along the lines of anthropology, a question arises about how to differentiate them. Some of these anthropologists working outside of Europe are turning to their own cultures. So for instance, at Stockholm University, Ulf Hannert is involved in research concerning Swedish society. There is also another chair, for Swedish Folklife research which is also adapting anthropological models and doing research concerning their own society. So, it is not easy to give definition to these disciplines as they change.

At the end of the 1960's, when in Europe a wave of critical reconsideration of research tasks and strategies and social responsibilities of the social sciences rose up, severe criticism was levied against the tradition of national ethnography, partly because it was too nationalistic, or ethnocentric; partly because, from a social science perspective, it was felt to be

epistemologically unsound. The name of national ethnography was not changed, but *Volkskunde*, in the German speaking areas was abandoned. It was not changed into anthropology because it would have given the impression that somehow people were going over to another camp. Generally, though, the term European Ethnology was adopted - *European* and *Ethnology*, not national, not exclusively German for example, and not *Volkskunde*, which is a little bit unscientific. But *Ethnology!*

Is Hungary following this movement?

In Hungary there is also a growing interest for the social science type perception of processes. On the other hand, there is a growing interest for investigating contemporary social processes also because the traditional task of national ethnographers was to investigate the forms of life in rural areas before the impact of industrial and urban transformation was started. This meant that research became more and more historical as peasant life styles were fading away. A large number of my colleagues in Hungary are doing historic reconstructions of the stages that are now receding into the past. Still, there also is a growing interest in on-going, present-day processes.

So, a large number of people are looking at *tradition*, as such, and are discovering the conservative elements of Hungarian society.

We perceive this peasant culture as a historic phenomenon and I think that this task will not disappear. Somehow, we have to interpret what it was. We have to publish texts. A lot of texts about rituals and oral traditions are preserved in manuscripts in archives and they are going to be published. There still are storytellers who can tell fairy tales, folktales, and they are collected and I think this is fine. This means that even when we no longer have storytellers, there will remain the task of interpreting this body of traditional folk tales faithfully recorded. Simultaneously, a growing interest has emerged in the study of urban speech events and their formulae. There is an interest, too, in the village scene and to find out the impact of mass media and perceive what kind of new culture is taking shape there.

Let me return to some questions that we started on and which I was hoping we could develop. To me, it is obvious that you have been influenced -or I feel you have been influenced- by your American visits, especially your Chicago period, since that was your most extensive one. Could you elaborate on what that influence might be and how you feel, or if you feel it is still valid for you.

Well, I do not think I turned into an anthropologist. On other hand, I think that by maintaining my basic identity as a national ethnographer, who is writing for an Hungarian audience and recording mostly facts about Hungarian peasants, I could really enrich my work tools and my theoretical perspective by getting a deeper knowledge of what is going on in social anthropology. My stay in 1966 - 1967 in Chicago was in a very intense period there. I got in touch with Barney Cohen and found his approach to historic anthropology very stimulating. It was just to this historic field, which is so important at home, that the use of anthropological approaches is

critical.

I think one good lesson to learn is that we need to look at national ethnography as it developed in Hungary as an institution of Hungarian society and not only to discuss the history of national ethnography in Hungary. We need to learn about our own background in terms of how knowledge increased and how scientific results have been achieved. We need to look at national ethnography as a kind of organ of Hungarian society which functioned to create symbols and understanding which were needed to articulate relationships, between different social strata. It was needed to articulate the historic self-perception of the society. And I think in this respect I am sometimes in heated discussion with my national ethnography colleagues and in agreement with colleagues who are historians.

Let me reverse the question now. It is also obvious to me that you have been important to -had an impact on- American anthropologists. And related to this, I was wondering whether you might have reflections on what you think is so important for Americans to be studying in East European cultures, specifically Hungarian cultures?

.... You mean whether I feel I have had some influence on these Americans who do work in East Europe?

Yes, and whether you can evaluate the importance of American anthropologists doing field work in East Europe.

East Europe is part of a more general term, Europe. After studies of the Mediterranean and East Europe, the growing number of East European studies and studies of the Balkans, I think created a shift (this is not entirely true) from more industrial and urban areas of Europe to more peasant type, historically seen as, societies more in change.

Is there anything special that American anthropologists are getting from studying East Europe, or are these just more peasant studies?

Well, really I was not thinking of that. At least three phenomena are perhaps much more conspicuous in East Europe than in other parts of Europe. These are the: 1) existence in a not-so-remote past of these classical peasant traditions -so a kind of "proper peasants"- or self-sufficiency, these kind of honor and shame concepts and morality, and so forth; 2) very big role of ethnic groupings, boundaries, and tensions because East Europe is a grand ethnic mosaic because of the delay of the development of national states compared to more western parts of Europe. So, I think it offered itself to be a kind of laboratory to interpret these things. Then there is 3) the planned change introduced by socialist reconstruction.

Even in Hungary we had the feeling that this [socialism] is a kind of uniform development that is imposed on all these countries, but it turned out that from several levels all these countries took their separate paths, willing or not willing -partly because of the given situation.

concerning industrialization, urban development and the development of agricultural production in each country was in a different stage of transformation. On the other hand, existing social and cultural traditions imposed limits or suggested specific solutions in different countries. The interplay of interethnic tensions and brotherly feelings as, for instance, with the Bulgarians and Russians, and so forth, also had critical impact. The more or less flexible adaptations of individual governments to changing international situations are constantly generating new mechanisms which, in their totality, practically are experiments in social, cultural, and economic development.

What do you mean by the international relations?

For instance the oil crisis comes and these [socialist] countries have to figure out how to adapt to it and the general financial difficulties. They have to adjust to international trade relations and learn how they should react to one or the other. That is what I mean. So, momentarily, I think the economic policies and the cultural policies inside the country are impacting differently in all the socialist countries.

There are Hungarian Americans who are going to Hungary to carry out research there. I was wondering if they are considered by Hungarians to have a specific role in interpreting Hungarian processes?

I think that from the point of view of cross-fertilization from these two branches of knowledge, it does not matter too much that they are of Hungarian background. Of course, it helps them establish rapport in Hungary with their knowledge of the language and culture. All this depends on how young they were when they left Hungary to go to the United States and how thoroughly they were socialized as "Hungarians." From an historical context, practically and officially -from the point of view of our Academy- Hungarian-born Americans are very welcome to return and carry out field work in Hungary. Let me say that we are even more eager to have other Americans, who take the trouble to learn Hungarian, to come as well.

The role of these researchers is important in Hungary. Some of their writing is published in Hungarian and sometimes remarkable attention is paid to what they say. For instance, one chapter of Chris Hann's thesis for Cambridge was published in our journal *Ethnographia* and when the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party's organization for the county in which he studied organized a national conference on changes in the agricultural population and the impact of agrarian policy, they asked for several copies of offprints of Hann's study.

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Did this have an impact? Were policy changes made?

Oh no! But, in any case, it was discussed! Some papers by Michael Sozan were also published. For example, the Hungarian Literary Weekly had an interview with him where he compared the social anthropologist view with that of ethnographers. Then Eva Hewsby published several things out of her recent field work.

Hungarians are then interested in what American [and English] scholars are learning?

They are interested in obtaining realistic knowledge of what is going on in the country, especially in rural areas. Since these anthropologists are doing meticulous observations on the present situations, it is very valuable --not because they are Americans [or English], but because they have the data!

I do not believe that there is a basic change in the interests of Hungarian ethnographers and how they carry out their work, but there is a gradual shift taking place. Perhaps it is better described as an *addition* to other new methodological tools and theoretical concepts. This shift is taking place as a result of exchanges between anthropologists and ethnographers. American

anthropologists have been involved in several conferences and meetings with Hungarian ethnographers and other scientists, like you have, where we have had an exchange of ideas and discussions.

Do you see these disciplinary variations and distinctions as contiguous -as a continuum?

At the Budapest University there are two chairs; one for so-called material culture, a sort of historic approach to peasant society and economy and another chair for folklore. The chair of folklore is lead by Vilmos Folt and carries a semiotics, theory of science, and genre theory orientation. So the incorporation of modern developments occur mostly in semiotics, literary criticism, and folkloristics. Yet, for about ten years, for instance, regular lectures in economic anthropology and political anthropology are offered. It is a part of the curriculum that students have to take. So, students are exposed to these subject areas in addition to courses that they may chose. Mihai Sarkany gives these anthropology courses, having received one and one-half years of theoretical training under Jack Goody at Cambridge.

I also have taught anthropology courses. I once gave a course on the peasantry. The students were terrific, but the course was not an obligatory part of their curriculum.

During your talk [in the Department of Anthropology, Brown University,] you mentioned a *European ethnology that broke away from national boundaries*. I was wondering whether you feel this to be a continuing trend?

Yes, it manifests itself in Europe. Until the Second World War, nearly all material published about national ethnographies was published in national languages. So, in Poland it was in Polish; in Hungary it was in Hungarian, and so forth. Now there are several journals in Europe which are published in English. Mostly English, German, or French are the languages of these "international" journals that try to bring together scientists from different nations. So, there are these forms of regional cooperation within Europe. The Scandinavian countries have meetings every one or two years and they have *Ethnologia Scandinavica* which is published in English. Such regional cooperation is present in other parts of Europe. The committee for the investigation of the area of the Carpathians and the Balkans, in which the Soviet Union participates, is quite active. There are a number of projects under way, such as the comparative investigation of the songs about highwaymen and peasant rebels, or house construction types in East Central Europe, or the pastoral economy of the high mountains. Every country plans its contributions and a publication results.

I am familiar with some of these. Some countries do not participate, like Romania for instance?

Romanians are not there many times, but in principle they do not avoid the meetings and

projects.

Are these on-going?

Yes! There is also a committee in East Europe meeting to investigate the impact of the socialist transformation on social life. They are concentrating now on how family life is changing. I believe that this year's meeting to be held in Budapest will discuss family ritual. These are not open meetings, but are attended by invited committee members. There are other committees that meet. For instance, Professor Froeletz from Brno, Czechoslovakia is the Secretary General of the Carpathian-Balkan Cooperation group. Other regional forms of cooperation include the Alpes Orientalis, in which the Slovenes, Austrians, and Italians are involved. Ethnographia Pannonica meetings also take place and include the Pannonian Plain regions in which Austrians, Croats, Slovenes, and Hungarians participate. These meetings change location and are topical. So, for instance, the last time we met in Croatia the topic was *the role of women in peasant society and change*. An overall, European organization is also in existence and publishes the Journal *Ethnologica Europa* with an international editorial board. The last time we met, the concept of popular culture in historical perspective was discussed. Here, I did not wish to create a clash between the traditionalists, the older generation of scholars, and the younger generation and that is why this topic was chosen. We are honored to have participating with us some living classics of European scholarship and the more modern oriented people, such as Jerry Boissevain and Lofgren. It was an exciting meeting where we discussed the relationship between class structure, social stratification and the different layers or forms of culture in a given society.

Thinking about this just a bit, I can come up with other European organizations that meet around specific topics. All kinds of cooperative research is going on, on food, on ballads, on the folk narrative. There is the Societee International de Ethnologie e Folklore -the European Ethnological Association, started by the French and based on a French-Russian alliance. Unfortunately, the Germans and Scandinavians felt left out and so it collapsed. After about eight years of dormancy, the Russians have revitalized it. Bringeus from Lund is now President and is working hard to resuscitate the organization.

There is yet another expression of broad European character. Scholars seem to be traveling more. Universities are organizing group tours for students and scholars. In Hungary, not one year passes without a Scandanavian, German, or some other group visiting with busloads of twenty to forty students. In some places, such as in Germany, it is compulsory for students involved in international relations to participate in such tours of foreign countries. Otherwise, they will not matriculate. Hungary is seen as a good country to visit.

How long do they stay?

About two weeks, more or less.

Is it seen as an exotic tour?

No. Their visits are brief and when they come in such large numbers, field work is not possible. I have organized several such tours, tailored to their specific interests. Usually they are interested in getting the *feeling* of a way of life and an understanding of the scientific approach in Hungary in studying this. We organize visits to appropriate institutions and they participate in discussions where they ask questions and obtain information about present day activities of basic Hungarian institutions.

We take them to specific places. For instance, many of the groups want to see Atanyi because they could read *Proper Peasants* and the other two books on Atanyi written in German. To go from one house to another with such a group is impossible. Instead, we have developed an understanding with the local authorities and the community. The local cooperative is willing to cooperate. In fact, they feel honored that these foreigners are coming. We first make a tour of the village and then we go out to see some work units in the cooperative. This gives people, who have never seen a cooperative farm, a direct experience with which they can associate when they read about such institutions.

Atanyi cooperative is not anything special; I think it is a little bit lower than the national average for many elements of its production. The people can see how tobacco leaves are stretched out by hand, still being done in the old way. On the other hand, they can see the tremendously large tower that dries wheat and barley grains in the modern way, an indispensable adaptation to harvesting grain with combines. They also visit the small factory that makes nylon brushes for export.

Then, the leaders of the cooperative give their account of the work organization and the cooperative's decision making process. They discuss how their activities are influenced by state regulations and what range of freedom they have to adapt to these. Questions are asked with the Secretary usually answering. Since Party membership is accorded through place of work, the agricultural cooperative in the village has its own Party organization, just as village industrial workers are members of the Party organization at their place of employment. The visitors are pleased to see a real live Party answering questions.

Does the village get anything out of it except for the visit?

They exchange photos that were taken during the visit. The cooperative always prepares sandwiches and so on.

Why that's wonderful. So, the visit is not commercialized?

No, not at all! We adapt the tours to the interest of the students and the current events. The Lund students came in the period of the May Day. We went out to see the May Day Parade in Budapest. We discussed the symbols, how people gathered and what sorts of refreshments were available. At that time they studied a piece of socialist political symbolism on the one hand and a

piece of urban folklore, on the other. They were taken out to visit artisan workshops and to the fields to see the "past" as well as the present.

Usually, local colleagues of local museums are willing to host such visitors and prepare sightseeing tours in local ethnographic centers. They are in good relations with the local peasants who very willingly receive such guests.

Hungarian students still do not have the facility to go abroad. Some study tours, though, have been organized to other socialist countries such as Poland and Chekoslovakia. We also receive students from socialist countries, such as a recent visit from Soviet Armenians.

Somehow, a first hand experience, if not field research, is already regarded as a critical part of this European approach. It is important to have at least some experience of the way of life in other parts of Europe, besides your own.

What do you see as the future of American anthropologists in Hungary, more research on peasant societies or socialism?

Do not think that research needs to be restricted to rural areas alone. In Hungary, there are many more questions to be answered and research sites than research personnel.

Do you think that American researchers would have an opportunity to study the anthropology of work in Hungarian factories and to look at the lives of working people?

I think so. It really depends on the concrete circumstances, but I do not think it would be excluded from the available possibilities to study an urban neighborhood or working class housing or state farm work conditions since all these are similar to the conditions of workers, whether these are rural or urban.

You do not think that the impact of the current global crisis and the slipping away of detente has had much impact in terms of the relationship between sholars and on scholarship?!

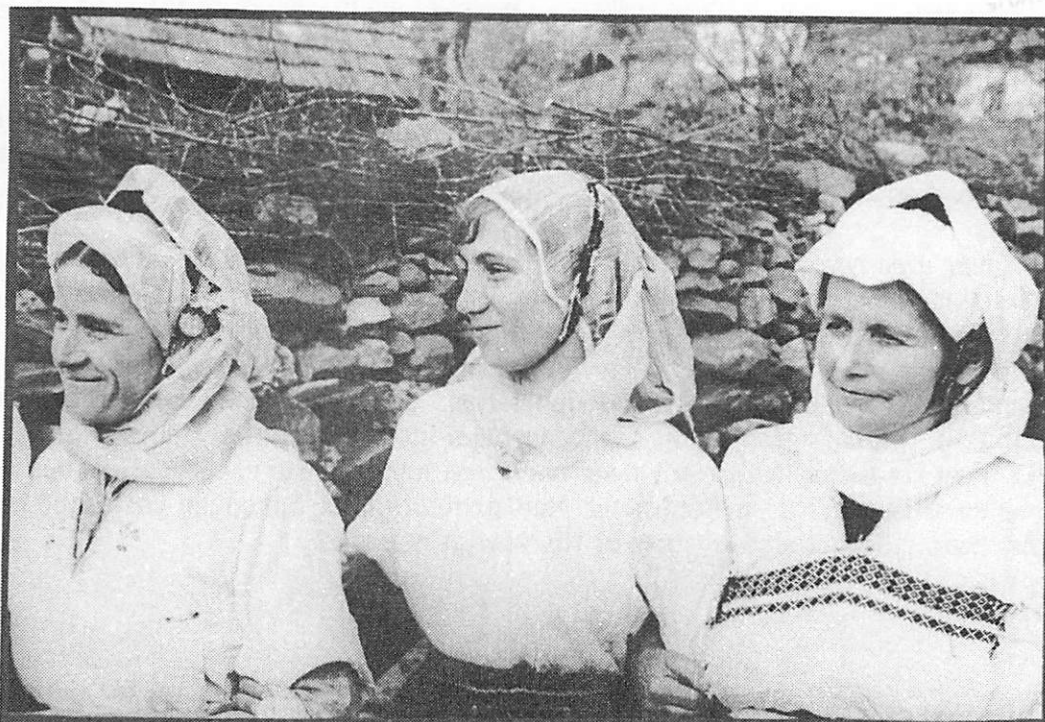
No! It may even have had an inverse effect. My trip over the Atlantic is a good example. Although this is my first trip to the United States, it is the first time the Hungarian Academy has paid for it. The costs of research is really minimal, while the gains are enormous.

Of course, there are some political liabilities. Otherwise, why do most scholars writing in their Forwards or Introductions include the inevitable statement, "well, I write these things but I am sure that my East European colleagues will not agree with me," or a disclaimer that protects East European colleagues who might have collaborated in some of the visitor's work?

I think there is much to this. Still, this is not all the time simply a consequence that governments have, for political reasons, an official picture which is not in accord with reality, but partly because of different approaches and different kinds of sensitivities.

In Hungary we have a lot of critical writing about present day social circumstances. For instance, concerning social inequalities, I can easily quote the book by the Deputy Secretary General for the Social Sciences and Humanities. He was a sociologist and wrote a book on present day Hungarian society. There are lots of problems, so there is great demand on research in Hungary. This does not mean we have to give an optimistic, in-all-detail-positive picture of what has been seen. On the other hand, there are some limited areas where a negative statement could be taken as an offense against the host countries -- particularly if there is an attack on their basic values. For instance, if you were to do an analysis of how the party organization operates and the role of bribery, or that sort of thing, people would not be pleased. Still, even here there are boundaries that can be crossed.

Peter Bell for instance, did a study about how gossip operated and how people in an Hungarian village evaluated each other and how far old norms survive. He worked in a village which at the time of his visit was facing some difficulties in that the president of the cooperative had put some of his own relatives into key positions and developed an illegal kind of personal management meant to benefit himself. Fortunately, before Peter ended his study, this was discovered and the President was removed. The moral lesson of his study was still positive. He had no real trouble starting his research with this approach, nor in carrying it out.



NOTES

* I wish to thank Marida Hollos for reading this essay and for the changes she suggested. I also want to thank Lina and Akos for their hospitality and providing the space and timing in which the interview could take place.

1. A recent report on the reinvigoration of funding of Soviet and East European area studies demonstrates this point. "...grants in support of Soviet [and to a point, East European] area studies, made by several private sources -- the Rockefeller, Mellon, Jonathan M. Olin, Carnegie and Roland and Gladys Harriman Foundations-- have raised academic spirits and brought greater attention to the field. The basic thrust of this support is in studies having to do with national security and arms control.

No less important, in 1983 Congress passed the Soviet-East European Research and Training Act, which established a 10 year program to improve graduate level scholarship" (Goncharoff 1985).

2. Not all would agree with this categorical statement. There is a strong barrier against qualitative and *pig's eye view* analysis, prohibiting anthropological entre into formal public policy development for American or East European governments. One anthropologist recently voiced this issue as, "they don't want us!" While no one has carried out research on the evolution of anthropological East European studies to substantiate an historic break between scholarship and government, according to Halpern this was not always the case (see his discussion in an earlier issue of the Newsletter). This matter merits serious analysis. Fruitful areas to investigate are: 1) how East European public policy development (in the US and abroad) was generated by political scientists and economists, 2) how and when East European and Soviet studies centers were developed in the United States, and 3) where non-academic anthropologists with East European training are employed and why.

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