

is the main criterion of differentiation, but this is not at all an 'essentialist' feature. In the book's conclusions Bengelsdorf argues the *Rudari/Bajaschi* ethnicity is weak and floating. The differences that could become ethnic may be noticed even between *Rudari* and *Bajaschi*.

The book of Jens Bengelsdorf is one good piece of work in the literature of 'Tsiganologie', as well as on a wider scale, in the field of ethnicity in South East Europe. The fieldwork data are accurate and inspiring for the scholars interested in this topic. Still, it lacks one larger theoretical frame. The concept of ethnicity for instance, could be reworked either in the frame of the 'hidden minorities' perspective (Christian Promicer, Biljana Sikimic), or in the limelight of the up to date criticism of Fredrick Barth's ethnicity concept. It has to say also that one comparison with the *Rudari* from Bulgaria could be fruitful for one more valid concept of *Rudari/Bajaschi* ethnicity.

Stelu Șerban

David A. KIDECKEL, *Getting-by in Postsocialist Romania. Labor, the Body, and Working-Class Culture*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2008, 267 p.

In the beginning of the 70s one remarkable range of North American researchers did fieldworks in Romania in order to get their PhD in cultural anthropology. They've joined the West European anthropologists who have added to, their academic background field-researchers in Romania. The broad variety of their interests, the challenging theoretical perspectives as well as the accurate methodologies, are topics still ignored, unfortunately, by the native scholars in Romania. To write down the intellectual history of all these projects is still one need to be fulfilled.

David A. Kideckel did the great part of his PhD field researches in Romania, in Făgăraș area, before 1989, but he has published his work after this date (in 1993; the title's book is *The Solitude of Collectivism. Romanian Villagers to the Revolution and Beyond*). In 1999, following one international conference about labor and unions in Central and Eastern Europe, held in Warsaw, Poland, he retakes the fieldworks in Romania. The perspective is now changed, as he compares two areas in South Transylvania, Făgăraș and Jiu Valley, where he focuses on the cases of chemical workers and miners. The topic is changed, too. Kideckel lays the analysis on the grass-rooted level, by approaching the effects the post socialist transformation in Romania had on the "working-class"<sup>10</sup>. The thread of the analysis is given by the "ethnography of Eastern Europe", as Gerald Creed points out on the back cover of the book. Kideckel records the fall out of the workers after 1990, compares this situation with the higher social position they enjoyed in the Socialist period, and examines the multilayered factors that stand behind this social 'drama'. Words like 'frustration', 'alienation', 'failure' are thus frequent in the book.

The term 'getting by'<sup>11</sup> is not a full concept, yet abbreviates a wide range of social and individual practices the workers use in the time of 1990s' transformation. It means the abandon of the long term life strategies, to adapt day-by-day to the rapid economical changes, one deep sense of insecurity as well as the accent put of the individual goals and incentives (page x). Kideckel rarely reminds the term in the further chapters, so it could be say that he uses it nothing more like a metaphor, an ethnographical one, eventually. In the concluding chapter though, under the title *What is to be done?*, he retakes it in the attempt to widen the reference area to the other former Socialist countries, as well as to focus on schemes and incentives for future adaptive life strategies for the

<sup>10</sup> Although this term finds in the volume's title, I'm using the inverted commas with the intention to wither one's possible impression that the book has a 'leftist' perspective. Though obsolete in the social sciences literature, this term is still viewed with suspicions especially by the scholars from the former Socialist countries. In fact, the author doesn't list it in the volume's index. He discusses its (un)relevance for the post-socialist period in the beginning of the book (pp. 9–11).

<sup>11</sup> The author borrows the meaning of this term from Romanian: to get by = *a se descurca*.

workers. Whereas he displays reluctance to the state intervention as well as to the projects of international organizations, the proactive presence of the local associations and NGOs is seen as the chance to spread an attitude of moderate optimism amongst the people.

I'll not get in the content's chapters. The full of details and the rich analysis couldn't be displayed, not even summarized in this short review. Some ideas have to be noticed yet. The concept of labor, both as a theoretical term (what defines the 'labor' in the Socialist period and what defines it after 1990?) and as value (Kideckel emphasizes its function in getting personal identity and social security), provides for the first half of the book with discursive coherence. Kideckel outlines the change of the labor into one puzzle of getting-by schemes. In the second half of the book, the author approaches the effects this change has on the workers' communities, families, on their gender relationships and not at least, on the perception of their own bodies. In this last respect, the two chapters that foreclose the volume, *Strangers in Their Own Skin: Workers and Gender in Postsocialism* and *The Embodied Enemy: Stress, Health, and Agency*, are challenging and full of fertile hypothesis for the future researches.

Someone could contend the minimum level of the conceptualization the analysis in the Kideckel's book. Still, in my opinion, the stake of the volume is the accurate circumventing of one core issue in the history of the post socialist transformation (What happens with the Socialist greatest part of the active population? Do they matter for today? In which sense they are (in)active?), and its framing through a multifaceted research perspective. In this sense, the Kideckel's book lays down one thorough research program for the anthropology in former Socialist countries.

*Stelu Șerban*

*Ο ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην εποχή του Διαφωτισμού και στον εικοστό αιώνα.* Πρακτικά του Γ' Ευρωπαϊκού Συνεδρίου Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών. Βουκουρέστι, 2–4 Ιουνίου 2006. Επιμέλεια Κωνσταντίνος Δημάδης. Τόμοι Α' – Γ'. Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2007.<sup>12</sup>

The European Society for Modern Greek Studies, founded in 1995, was fast in organizing congresses, whose importance for the contacts, the communication among the specialists in Modern Greek studies, as well as for the circulation of their research work is gradually increasing. The first congress took place in 1998 in the Freie Universität of Berlin, the second one in 2002 in Rethymnon, in the University of Crete and the third in 2006 at the Bucharest University, in the joint organization of the Institute for South-East European Studies of the Romanian Academy, the Faculty for History and the Romanian Society for Modern Greek Studies..

The comprehensive subjects of these congresses: *Ο Ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην Ανατολή και τη Δύση 1453–1981*, for the first one, *Η Ελλάδα των νησιών από τη Φραγκοκρατία ως σήμερα* for the second and *Ο ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην εποχή του Διαφωτισμού και στον εικοστό αιώνα* for the third, i.e. topics structured mainly on time but also on place principles, have in mind as large as possible a participation and to demonstrate how vast a field of research Modern Greek studies are.

And indeed, as Professor Dimadis mentions in his introduction, there were 357 requests for attendance 298 of them with papers. The scientific committee of the conference accepted 195 (1st volume p.56). This participation is obvious from the contents of the Proceedings, three volumes where 167 papers are published.

The Bucharest congress was an outstanding success. I dare say that it was «the scientific event» of 2006 especially for the younger researchers, for whom the European Society shows constant concern. The choice of the place was a good one from several points of view. As K. Dimadis lets us know in his *Preface*, the choice of Bucharest as a place for the congress was decided: a) because in

<sup>12</sup> This review was read at the presentation of the Conference papers in Athens on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2008.