

Olomouc historian and archivist Pavel Urbášek attempted to describe the relation of the regime to college teachers and the composition of their profile in the '50s, in the '60s and in the years of normalization when a new generation of teachers allegedly understood the party membership card pragmatically, like a workbook.

The concluding session of the conference, called *After college*, was opened by Prague anthropologist Blanka Soukupová with the paper "The role of intellectuals in post-war public opinion." It was followed by Jana Švehlová's (read by Eva Bláhová) emotional paper about the daughters of farmers in the '50s. The subject was the psychic world of women who could not, for political reasons, study and still feel the handicap today. Today a group of them made up of 100 members work under the patronage of their benefactor, Meda Mládková.

In conclusion let us add that the Hradec conference, which was to have been linked to a conference in Olomouc in 2011, brought out a large quantity of data, methodical and civic stimulants. Open and in places explosive discussions clarified the fact that the topic is scientifically and socially enormously topical and stimulating; and this especially today, when again there is strong influence of the incompetent powerful, who would gladly get rid of the true mission of the university: scientific work and the training of intellectuals and competent specialists. Thanks for the exemplary organization of the conference go mainly to the historian Sylva Sklenářová of the university archive in Hradec Králové.

Blanka Soukupová

Conference THE POLITICS OF CULTURE. PERSPECTIVES OF STATELESS NATIONALITIES AND ETHNIC GROUPS.

April 9-10, 2010, Warsaw, Poland.

The international conference with almost thirty speakers was organized by Professor Nowicka-Rusek under the patronage of the Institute of Social Studies of the University of Warsaw. The aim of the conference was to focus, from various points of view, on stateless ethnic groups and nationalities which try to negotiate and vindicate the legitimization of their very existence and their (mostly cultural-language) demands in today's world. The conference had seven thematic sessions in which scholars from several social science disciplines, mostly sociology, anthropology, ethnology and political science, addressed the audience.

The first, opening session, called "Theories and Perspectives," outlined key themes and concepts which all the researchers into stateless ethnic groups and nationalities have to deal with in their research. Ewa Nowicka-Rusek presented her ideas on the so much-discussed concept of ethnic identity which in her interpretation can encompass three different variants: "multi-story" identity ("sandwiched"), "additive" identity ("assembling" identity when to an A identity another B identity is added as an equal one) and "anti-ethnic" identity, which stands for a situation when a person refuses to express his/her identity in ethnic terms. Professor Szpociński discussed in his paper topics of historical memory and politics of its keeping,

which are key factors in construction of ethnic identities. After that Katarzyna Warمیńska focused very interestingly on researchers themselves, who via their research not only describe, analyze and interpret ethnic groups – but also co-create them. Besides the performative character of social science research, she came to think of the fragility of minority research at home (“anthropology at home”), which cannot avoid the dangers of folklorization, exoticization and the loss of “sensitivity to difference.” She talked about the Internet as a relatively new and, at least in Central Europe, unsurveyed phenomenon and its impact on both the formation of ethnic groups and minorities and on the formation of their image: unprecedented possibilities of spreading information forms both images and knowledge of majority in minority and self-understanding and self-presentation of given groups. The session ended with a paper by Przemysław Nosal: “Flag, Anthem, Sports team. Sports as a tactic of stateless nations and ethnic groups,” in which, inspired by Michel de Certeau and his concepts of strategies and tactics, he conceptualized minority ethnic group constituting as tactics, i.e., acting beyond official institutions and structures of power. Further, he interpreted this way performances connected with sports events as possible (and very persuasive) public representations of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Thereby he introduced to the discussion another two topics connected with the politics of culture and stateless groups: power and representation.

The second session of the conference was devoted to the Aromanians. The

most interesting point of the session was possibly the fact that in one session scientists (Dimitris Michalopoulos, Markéta Vaňková) and minority activists (Nikola Minov, Vlatko Dimov) met, so the conference participants had the occasion to compare on one hand a self-presentation of Aromanian activists and their vision of desirable and effective cultural politics – and on the other hand scientific interpretation and a critical analysis of these activists’ efforts. Moreover, the papers covered a wide range of a paradigmatic scale of points: from significantly primordial and essentialist points (Minov) to clearly constructivist ones, emphasizing the performative and processual character of ethnic identity forming (Vaňková).

The next session (and in the Central European context the expected one) regarded the Romani people. Identity politics of the Roma was researched both in the wider context of post-socialistic transformation (Jennifer Mitchell) and also in particular minority politics of nation states (Malgorzata Glowacka-Grajper, Izabela Bukalska). Different concepts of the Roma were very inspiring: Izabela Bukalska concentrated mainly on what she called “Romani culture and tradition” and researched possibilities of realization and performing of the culture and traditions within the limits given by Hungarian cultural (minority) politics. On the other hand, Malgorzata Glowacka-Grajper doubted understanding of Romani identity as based primarily on shared culture features and pointed to the fact that it is social position rather than culture which defines the Roma and their identity politics in Central Europe.

The last session of the first conference day was devoted to minorities and emigrants. The first paper summarized the complicated situation of the Chinese Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Martyna Weronika Duda). The next two papers focused on the situation of working migrants in Europe, in particular Polish female emigrants in London (Marta Bierca) and Chechen emigrants in Poland (Karolina Lukaszewicz). In their presented research, the authors inquired into the topic of transnationalism and they were interested in the possibilities of identification with the receiving society as well as in the influence of the original, sending country and the relationship network mainly rooted there. Chechnya was also the topic of Jan Kruszyński, whose presentation provoked a heated discussion – however, as an explicit critique of the Russian aggression in the Chechen war from the point of view of human rights it was not a scientific analysis of the conflict. Hence, the discussion had two courses – on one hand the historical background of the conflict and “justification” of the speaker’s point were debated; and on the other hand the question whether such a presentation is acceptable at a scientific conference was being solved. The debate is all the more interesting in that activist and as well “non-scientific” presentations of the Aromanians did not cause similar critical response – evidently because they did not evoke any negative emotion in the audience contrary to the painful and bloody Chechen conflict.

The second day of the conference had three thematic sessions. The first one, called “The Ruthenians and the Kashu-

bians” was, as is clear from its name, devoted to the situation of two minorities in Poland – the Ruthenians (the Lemkos) and the Kashubians. The common theme of the papers was the topic of identity and status of the minorities in the Polish society and the question of their recognition as a minority or a regional group. Jacek Nowak was interested in the crucial role of (de)territorialization of the Polish Ruthenians’ identity and in his paper he stressed the importance of place, memory and civil society in the processes of Ruthenians’ ethnic identity forming. Sławomir Łodzyński talked about the Kashubians and the Silesians, whose different situations were presented via the prism of state institutions’ influence. He aimed his analysis at classification strategies through which the state creates categories as “ethnic minorities,” “regional groups,” “minority language,” “indigenous people,” etc. – he analyzed the National Population Census and the Law of National Minorities from 2005. The last paper of the session dealt, for organization reasons, with the Silesians: Grażyna Kubica-Heller in her presentation drew attention to the importance of local and regional identities which, in the case of some groups, can play a more important role than ethnic identities.

The following session called “Various situations, various answers” was on one hand more heterogeneous – however, on the other it brought a possibility of a very interesting comparison of differences of the situations of several minorities, as well as differences of theoretical backgrounds to their research. The rather general presentation of Katarzyna Środa-Wieckowska about “using and abusing of

a tradition" in the construction of ethnic groups was followed by a nicely empirical study by Marta Petryk, who in her research describes the process of forming and negotiating of not evident identity of the Norwegian Kvens and their minority status in Norwegian legislation. Adam Stepień also pursues his research in the Northern Europe. He is interested in the Saami people (the Sami) and in his presentation he focused on the Pan-Saami trans-border cooperation and integration processes, which he presented from the point of view of political science with an accent on the legislative background for international cooperation of trans-border minorities. In the following paper, Kristin Pfeifer dealt with the question of cultural preservation strategies which she presented on the example of the Moroccan Amazigh Movement and she, as well as previous speakers, pointed out the importance of official recognition of the status of a minority. Dominika Michalak, author of the last paper of the session, talked on a rather different topic. The presentation, called "The Trouble with Recognition: What Do the Jazz School Handbooks Teach Us About the African American Roots of Jazz" summarized the results of her content analysis of jazz textbooks.

The last panel was devoted very symptomatically (regarding where the conference took place) to Silesia and the Silesians. The three presented papers concurred and in a complex way they introduced the situation of the Silesians, whose identity varies on the scale from ethnic indifference via regional identity (based on historical-geographical features of the region) to identity evi-

dently ethno-national. An interesting presentation by Kazimierz Wódcz and Maciej Witkowski dealt with the public discourse of Silesian regional identity, which is formed by public visual representations and performances. Elżbieta Anna Sekuła and Marek S. Szczepański focused rather on political aspirations of local actors and their relationship to various traditions of Upper Silesia which are the basis of current collective identity. Robert Geisler's presentation was the most theoretical one in the session – backgrounded by interpretative anthropology, it tried to view Silesia and its development in the 20th century as a parallel to the (post)colonial situation.

Two things must be said at the end. Willingness of the conference participants and the speakers to discuss was a very beneficial aspect of the conference. Discussions usually mediated communication within the panels and they changed the sessions into meaningful and coherent units. On the other hand, it cannot pass unmentioned that the scope of the conference (almost 30 papers in two days) demanded much attention of the conference participants and their ability to absorb the presentations. On the whole and according to talks among the participants, I guess that the conference was generally understood to be very successful and stimulating. Even though it did not offer a particular prognosis of *perspectives of stateless nationalities and ethnic groups*, it enabled an intensive discussion about a wide range of culture politics of ethnic groups and minorities.

Markéta Vaňková