

**Expectations and predicaments:
the Socialist regimes and pan-European cooperation in the 1970s**

FIRST PUBLIC WORKSHOP of ERC Project PanEur1970s

LIST OF ABSTRACTS

Max Trecker (Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin)

The 'Grapes of Cooperation?' Bulgarian and East German Plans to Build a Syrian Cement Industry from Scratch

My paper deals with a joint cooperation project in Syria under the auspices of the CMEA. The erection of a Syrian cement industry was the second most important target of the country's five-year plans in the 1970s. East German know-how and engineers should deliver plans for eight cement factories that were to be erected by Bulgarian builders. The project was financed by credits handed out by the GDR. The project – originally meant to show the benefits of socialist cooperation – didn't work out as smoothly as planned. The East German authorities were repeatedly in danger of losing the contract and had to swap their Bulgarian partner for a Lebanese one at a critical juncture. Nevertheless, the factories got built and made Syria independent from the world cement market. This case study illustrates the problems of socialist development projects in the Global South and highlights the agency of all actors involved. Despite the problems of economic cooperation inside the CMEA and the allure of the West, the 1970s were a decade of (economic) détente with the West as well as of stepped up East-East(-South) cooperation attempts.

Victor Petrov (EUI)

The Porous Curtain: Bulgarian Scientific-Technical Intelligence, Electronics, and Technology Transfer Between East and West 1964-1990

This paper examines the actions and scope of Bulgarian State Security's Scientific Technical Intelligence section, which became a key avenue for technology transfer across the Iron Curtain. This organization served the needs of the civilian economy, especially in its drive to acquire Western electronic technology to be implemented within its industry. The paper examines this in the context of the regime's increasing debt and need for convertible currency, where the high technology needed in order to raise productivity had to be acquired in other ways if the industry was to flourish. Using State Security and governmental archival documents, the paper shows how the intelligence apparatus became an arm of civilian enterprises and institutes, and ensnared thousands of researchers in a symbiotic relationship, arguing that the socialist security apparatus has to be seen as more than just a tool of political oppression, and rather as an important channel for the transfer of technology and know-how to the East.

Elitza Stanoeva (EUI)

Bulgaria, Western Europe, and the EEC: The Entanglement of State Diplomacy and Economic Cooperation

First, I outline my case studies (FRG, Denmark and Greece) along with the areas of economic cooperation I analyse (foreign trade and international tourism). Then (section 2), I present my research questions pertaining to the level of policy making, the level of policy implementation and the intersection of the two. In section 3, I discuss the research timeframe stressing the importance of 1968 as a temporal halt of Bulgaria's opening to the West starting in the early 1960s. In section 4, I discuss the fallacies of Bulgarian historiography on socialism stemming from the totalitarian paradigm and the blank spots they generate in research on economic policies, arguing myself for the need to decouple the party-state entity. The next section (5) makes such an attempt when charting the institutional terrain of the Bulgaria elite. It discusses actors' prerogatives and divergence in interests, and briefly sketches the relevant debates within each elite group ('political top brass', 'technocratic establishment', 'field operatives', 'expert non-practitioners'). The last part (6) presents preliminary findings – concerning the entanglement of intergovernmental diplomacy and economic cooperation in Bulgaria's opening to the West as well as the peculiar standing of those actors who built cooperation on the ground and maintained direct contact with foreign partners.

Benedetto Zaccaria (EUI)

Yugoslavia and Western European integration: research hypotheses and questions

The present paper aims to illustrate the main research hypotheses and questions concerning the Yugoslav case within the framework of the ERC project *Looking West: the European Socialist regimes facing pan-European cooperation and the European Community*. Addressing an early-stage research started in October 2017, it will first assess the existing literature on Yugoslavia's attitudes towards Western European economic integration. It will then outline the intended research project and offer a preliminary chronology which will be critically discussed in light of a preliminary archival research at the *Arhiv Jugoslavije* in Belgrade.

Maximilian Graf (EUI)

Desire, Dependence and Demarcation: The GDR and the West in the "long 1970s"

This paper assumes that the East German "long 1970s" can be regarded as the period from 1971 to 1984. Even though, the FRG was the by far most important partner and opponent of the GDR, the existing common narrative on the East German economic and détente policies within the international context is too narrow. Not only West Germany, but the West in general was an object of desire on which the GDR continuously became more and more dependent and from which it demarcated in certain ways. Hence, my approach explicitly aims at broadening our perspective to a pan-European view. A case study on the "failure of non-recognition" reviews the changing East German perception of European integration on various levels and argues that the GDR, although hardly admitting it, was indeed much more affected by the EEC's development and policies during the 1970s than previous assumptions suggest.

Adelina Stefan (EUI)

Between East and West: Socialist Romania and the European Economic Community during the 1970s

During the 1960s, socialist Romania gradually drifted from the eastern/socialist bloc to western European countries. As Romania wanted to pursue a program of economic modernization, focused on heavy industry, it needed money and sophisticated technology, which had to be imported either from the Soviet Union, or from the capitalist countries. Hence, in the 1960s and the 1970s, Romania's economic partner second to the USSR became West Germany. But the socialist elites were not content to merely import goods and technology, they also wanted to boost Romania's exports to the capitalist countries. Against this backdrop, socialist Romania took some steps to improve its relation with the European Economic Community. Socialist elites in Romania wanted to learn how the EEC works, how other countries, such as the US, Canada, or Japan negotiated trade agreements with the EEC, and ultimately how Romania itself could reach such an agreement. This paper will offer an overview on the socialist Romania's relation with the EEC in the 1970s, arguing that there was a continuously shifting between the Soviet Union/COMECON and the European Economic Community/capitalist countries during the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. I aim to answer the following questions: what was the Romanian elites' strategy regarding economic modernization? To what extent did EEC play a role in this? How did the socialist elites in Romania view the relation with the EEC? To answer these questions I rely on an array of primary sources, such as the archives of the Central Committee, Economic and Chancellery sections, the Collection of Ministry of Foreign Trade, Import-Export Division from the National Archives and the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Pavel Szobi (EUI)

Czechoslovakia and Western Europe in the long 1970s

The aim of the paper is to define the positions of Czechoslovakia towards the trade and business cooperation with Western Europe on the example of the relations with the European Economic Community in the 1970s. In the first part, the text defines the elites and the institutions during the period of normalization which were responsible for the foreign trade and cooperation policies, as well as for licences and investments. It emphasises the differences between Czech and Slovak parts of the federation. The case study in the second part of the paper deals with the Czechoslovak economic foreign interests in relation to the EEC. It follows the development of the ČSSR-EEC technical contacts, foreign trade issues and first official agreements about Czechoslovak exports to the EEC market.

Pal Germuska (MoD Military History Institute and Museum, Budapest)

East-West Bridge-builders? Hungarian Elites and the European Integration

This paper intends to summarize the first outcomes of on-going research that focuses on Hungarian elitist debates and perceptions throughout the 1970s. The study investigates the Hungarian state apparatus, the managerial elite and the state party. The paper is structured as follows: the first section presents a general overview on détente and the Hungary-EEC relations. The following three sections examine the attitudes of the different elite groups investigating formerly top-secret

governmental and party documents. The paper argues that Hungary's commercial interest was purely one factor in this complex debate, her relation with the Soviet Union and her military and economic allies was likewise important, as to progress or to break off the reform process.

Aleksandra Komornicka (EUI)

Poland opening towards the West, 1970-1980, creating consumer socialism

The case-study deals with the paradox of the massive imports of Western technology to produce consumer-goods in socialist Poland. Through the specific focus on 1971, it investigates the initial decisions, personal changes as well as motivations and discussions behind the economic choices which followed the domestic crisis of December 1970. Against the prevalent assumption concerning the origins of this phenomenon, it argues that the consumer-oriented shift, and opening towards the West, emerged from the renewed understanding of rivalry between capitalism and socialism, whereby the citizens' quality of life became the principal battleground of the systemic confrontation. Those initial considerations will be followed by the presentation of the general framework for the research on the Polish opening towards the West in the 1970s.

Angela Romano (EUI)

Behind-the-Scenes Meetings and Chats between EC officials and Socialist diplomats and experts

This paper is a draft plan for my individual research within the scope of the ERC-funded project *Looking West: the European Socialist regimes facing pan-European cooperation and the European Community* (more briefly called *PanEur1970s*). It will thus present the main research hypotheses and questions I have formulated to date concerning the interactions that took place between some EC Commission officials on the one hand and representatives of socialist bloc countries on the other throughout the 1970s and 1980s. It will first provide an overview of the state of the art on EC-Socialist bloc relations in general and on contacts in particular, and then highlight how the proposed research project would fit in PanEur1970s and what it could contribute to the existing literature. It will then introduce some reflections on the matter under scrutiny, primary sources, and methodology, and highlight possible problems connected with the proposed research.