Communist urbanization and conditional citizenship

Ivaylo Ditchev *

* Cultural Anthropology at Sofia University, Bulgaria
Communist urbanization and conditional citizenship

Ivaylo Ditchev

In this essay, Ivaylo Ditchev plays with the theory and reality of the Eastern European utopian project of the communist period, tracing their effort to create an urban form that erased the spatial contradictions of human settlements, and promote a way of living in line with socialistic values. From the theory, Ditchev uncovers two competing visions for the ideal socialistic territoriality, based on either an ameliorated form of concentration or a decentralization of population to erase the division between core and periphery. Yet as Ditchev illustrates, the daily reality of living under communist spatial organization of population was far from the utopia envisioned by their theoreticians: ‘mobility and urbanization did not become a tool of liberation, but one of tightening control over the population’. We are shown how stringent internal restrictions on travel and settlement shaped complex geometries of citizenship, where the privilege of mobility contributed to definitions of status, appropriate individual behaviour and quality of life. Ditchev concludes that the communist countries of Eastern Europe achieved an internal level of conditional citizenship based on legitimacy of mobility that presaged such trends on the world stage.

Utopia

The big industrial city had been a scarecrow for communist ideology since Engels’s The Condition of the Working Class in England (1844). The task to overcome the opposition between town and village was most often based on Anti-Düring (1878), advocating the idea that the socialist type of production

“makes it possible for its productive forces to dovetail harmoniously into each other and on the basis of one single vast plan can allow industry to be distributed over the whole country in the way best adapted to its own development.” (Engels, 1962 [1878], p. 407)

Two utopias clashed by the end of the 1920s. The so-called desurbanists (Ohitovich, Ginsburg, Barshch, the Vesnin brothers, Miliutin, Pasternak, etc.) wanted to put into practice Engels’s ideas, trying to invent a genuinely socialist attitude towards space. The urbanists (whose principal theoretician was Sabsovich) believed in beating capitalism on its own ground, i.e. by creating even greater urban concentrations than it had. As usual, Lenin was quoted by everyone in the heated debate that took place in 1929 and 1930.

Both groups designed collectivist dwellings, common kitchens and a general communality of life. The difference was in the scale: skyscrapers like those in New York were promoted by urbanists, British cottages were preferred by desurbanists. The basic idea was that architecture should promote the dissolution of the family into the collective body. ‘Housing plants’ (jilkombinaty ) were conceived for 1000–2000 (up to 50,000 for the ‘Avtostroi’ factory workers in Gorki) persons, where
all activities such as eating, reading, sports, etc., were supposed to be carried out in the communal rooms situated on the first or the middle floor, whereas the individual sleeping rooms were boxes of 4–5 m². Here is a glimpse at the utopia of Sabsovich:

“When life is organized on a socialist basis, each worker may be regarded as a potential ‘bachelor’, a potential ‘husband’ or ‘wife’, because today’s bachelor is tomorrow’s husband, and today’s couple may separate tomorrow. In the housing plant you would just have to open a door (or better, slide a partition) to unite your space with the one of your wife. Divorce would be the opposite, closing the door again.”

(Sabsovich, 1930, p. 7)

On the desurbanists’ side, Pasternak celebrates the same fluidity of human relations by designing not super-blocks, but light prefabricated houses:

“Prefabricated houses! ... How fortunate that they are dismantled as easily as they are assembled; no one will object if husband and wife or two close friends build their individual homes side by side, combine them in a single block; each unit will always stay separate, with its own individual access to the garden. But if there is a falling out, if a friend quarrels with a friend or one of them gets married, there will be no problem with ‘living space’, since the units can be separated at any time, or made bigger or smaller, or even dismantled and rebuilt on a completely different spot.” (quoted in Kopp, 1970, p. 177)

This utopia was in a sad harmony with the reality of communal living in big cities where a former bourgeois hall would be divided by plywood into little cubicles, one per family, with common kitchens and toilets. In any case, there was a general dissatisfaction with those projects, and a decree issued in July 1932 made it imperative to build separate apartments for individual families (Bliznakov, 1976, p. 249).

The major difference between the two groups consisted in their attitude to territory. For desurbanists, capitalism is necessarily centripetal, it creates monstrous urban centres; socialism was to create a new type of special equality where there is no longer a difference between centre and periphery.

In 1929, Moissei Ohitovich declared that the town should perish in the ruins of the capitalist way of production. In a letter to Le Corbusier he wrote:

“We say: yes, [the city] is sick, morally sick. But we do not want to cure it. We prefer to destroy it and intend to create a new form of human settlement that will be free of internal contradictions and might be called socialist.”

(quoted in Kopp, 1970, p. 253)

The new principles of socialist spatiality called for ‘the freest and most evenly distributed resettlement of both urban and agricultural workers, which would destroy both the “abandonment, remoteness, coarseness” of the latter and the “unnatural herding” of the former’. The goal for Ohitovich was to achieve ‘maximum distance between dwellings based on automobile transportation’ (Ohitovich, 1930, p. 155); critics labelled his vision ‘petty bourgeois automobile socialism’.

Even distribution of the population implied that cities be linear (like Soria y Mata’s Ciudad Lineal), situated along transportation axes. Desurbanists were influenced by the Garden City movement of Ebenezer Howard: the irony is that while Howard spent his time calculating dividends of the shareholders, Soviet architects, with the unlimited power of the State behind them, were concerned by the purity of the utopian project. More importantly, instead of avoiding industrial centres, the Soviet Garden City was in fact supposed to be organized around them, because life as a whole was to turn around production.

As any utopia, this desurbanism had an ominous side. For instance, the rejected plan of Ginsburg and Barsch to transform Moscow into a ‘green city’ called for a systematic resettlement of Muscovites out of the metropolis, along the roads leading to the
neighbouring urban centres, and mixing them with the ‘agricultural proletariat’. Industries and institutions were to be dislocated to the countryside, and all future construction in Moscow prohibited, so that natural degradation could create space for vast ‘parks for culture and rest’ (Rodriges, 1973, pp. 81–82).

Like the debates around free love versus romantic marriage, or avant-garde culture versus 19th-century academism, the debate on the socialist city ended with the defeat of the radicals on both sides. Lazar Kaganovich\(^1\) discontinued the search for socialist spatiality at the June 1931 plenary session of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party, claiming that a city became socialist by the very fact that it is situated on the territory of the USSR. A rather traditional view of urban space was adopted, implying the highest possible density of population and the most profitable housing for the labour force. It is not by chance that the Soviets invited Ernest May, known for his construction of cheap social housing: in 1930–1933 he was consulted about the construction of Magnitogorsk and Stalinsk/Novokuznetsk, and the general plan of Moscow. The model was disseminated to Eastern Europe where the new cities of Dimitrovgrad, Nova Huta, Eisenhuttenstadt and Stalinvaros were planned with a city centre, monumental public spaces and heritage sites, at a time when this classical model seemed obsolete in Western Europe.

The classical Stalin period (1930s and 1950s) was in fact the one of maximum urban concentration. Between 1929 and 1939 urbanization grew at the unprecedented annual rate of 6.5% compared to 2.3% for the last 50 years of the czarist period, and 2.4% for the late 1960s (Blackwell, 1976, p. 320). Most of it was due to migration. In Bulgaria the

This cosy home is what was left of the communist utopia. A propaganda image of a model-interior of a Bulgarian family in the 1960s (BTA).
mechanical growth of the cities from 1950 to 1955 was twice as high as the one in the following five-year plan periods (Kiradjiev, 2003). In fact, the reality of the first and most glorified new city of Magnitogorsk was no better than what Engels had described almost a century earlier (Kotkin, 1995).

Desurbanist ideas, however, did not disappear completely. The plenum did not really crush desurbanism, and people like Ginsburg or the Vesnin brothers remained powerful in the field, even when the term ‘constructivism’ was used as a curse. Stalinist urbanization (10–12 new towns per year!) was concerned with distributing urban dwellings evenly throughout the territory along natural resources for the needs of industrialization (i.e. the military industry). At the 1931 plenum Kaganovich spoke of such planning of the national economy that would be based on even distribution of the productive forces throughout the country, and on maximum use of all natural resources. In other words, the territorial concern was motivated not by the utopia of a specifically socialist spatiality, but by the 19th-century concern for defence and resources. Stalin was particularly obsessed with territory (shall we say—with the wish to transform the Russian Empire into a territorial nation-state?).

The paradox: it was freedom that created repression. The Manifesto’s assertion that ‘working men have no country’ could also mean that a person is not bound to the place he/she lives in; and The Capital depicts a society where the machine makes human beings interchangeable: ‘substitution of persons can take place at any time without interruption of the work’ (Marx, 1958 [1867], p. 421). Utopia creates desire. The fantasмагoria of freedom born in the 1920s fuelled Stalinist urbanization based on mass migration and gradual colonization of territory. New dwellings emerged near steel plants and coal mines instead of around parks and automobile highways. Moreover, mobility and urbanization did not become a tool of liberation, but one of tightening control over the population.

Reality

Communism was sadly famous for sealing borders. But it was not easy to travel even in czarist Russia where one needed to pay for a permit issued by the College for International Affairs; only aristocrats could travel for more than a year; pilgrims to the Holy Land needed the sanction of the Synod, whereas peasants needed authorization from their landlords each time they left the region. International isolation made communist borders even less permeable. As a general rule, citizenship was conditional; it had to be deserved and could be lost. There were thus two circles of mobility: (1) internal: one could have or not have an internal passport (even after peasants got passports they were withheld by the management of the co-operatives); and (2) external: one could have or not have an international passport, which as a general rule, was kept by the police (militia).

In the years after the revolution control was wielded at the working place according to the principle of Lenin’s Constitution: ‘He who does not work, shall not eat’. In 1918, an employment record document was introduced; its first goal was to control the ‘parasite’ classes.

In 1932, a new territorial dimension was added to the system with the Decree For the Introduction of the Passport System. Passports were a privilege because they made mobility easier: the лишенц (people deprived of citizen’s rights) were not entitled to them, and neither were peasants who started acquiring equal citizen’s rights as late as the 1960s and became officially equal to urban dwellers as late as 1974. The main objective of the passport system was said to be

“[keeping] a better account of the population in the cities, workers’ dwellings, and new construction sites and relieving them of persons not related to production, or not carrying out socially useful work in the institutions and schools (with the exception of disabled and retirees), as well as cleansing of the dwellings from hiding kulaks,
criminals and anti-social elements.” (quoted in Liubarski, 2004)

From a sociological perspective communism created more, not less, social freedom and this is what made political repression necessary. How do you keep a worker somewhere when most traditional social regulators such as property, difference in income, religious or ethnic links are undermined? Human beings tend to become interchangeable as in the utopia, and the individual worker tends to change repeatedly the place looking for better conditions. Indeed, the fight against fluidity of labour is an important clue to understanding the system.

Stalinism thus applied ever-tightening measures to control home territory. The introduction of residence permits, issued by the police (propiska), for settling down in the bigger cities, became its most efficient instrument. The official reason echoed the desurbanists’ concern about the overcrowding of the big cities; unofficially, a powerful machine of conditional mobility was created that consolidated the Soviet regime. The year 1940 was the climax in this process, when, with a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet from 26 June 1940, leaving or
changing one’s working place without permission was incriminated and offenders were to be sentenced to two to four years of imprisonment. Directors that would employ such persons were also brought to court.4

It is curious that Eastern Europe had to go through similar stages of control: first purely political, centred in the working place, then gradually more and more bureaucratic, based on territory. Robert Sack defined territoriality
as a way to ‘control people and things by controlling area’, as ‘a strategy to establish different degrees of access to people, things and relationships’, naturalizing power relations (Sack, 1986, pp. 5, 20 et passim). Territoriality came to supplant direct political control along with the gradual settling down of initially nomad communism. The model was surprisingly successful in a brother country like Bulgaria, as different as it was from Russia: there was no tradition of aristocracy and serfdom in the small Balkan state, no imperial policy, no natural resources, no radical utopianism comparable to the Soviet 1920s (another parallel would be China, where in 1958 the regime introduced the hukou, household registration that is still in place).

Internal residence permits were introduced to Bulgaria as a temporary measure under war legislation in 1942 to prevent housing crisis in the capital. Communists took up the war-time arrangement and developed it according to the Soviet example. In 1955, the restrictive principle of residence was applied to four other big cities, the following year—to two more. Little by little it spread to all areas that attracted migrants. The arrangement survived until 1990, when the newly elected democratic president abolished it.

What made residence permits dramatic was the division of the territory into ‘belts’: the capital and several tourist resorts, the big cities, the smaller towns, the villages of urban type, the villages, the mountain and border regions. Those were treated in a rather different way not only with respect to public works and cultural events, as it is the case with most nation-states where resources are centrally redistributed, but also with respect to supply with goods. In fact, internal trade was considered a social activity, goods were ‘given’ to the people, despite the fact they had to pay for them (prices were politically, not economically motivated and, in 1982, the Ministry of Internal Trade was made part of the Social Council, together with the Youth and Sport Ministry, whereas Foreign Trade was grouped elsewhere). State monopolization of trade came as a ‘natural’ continuation to the rationing system (abolished in 1951) and the forced agricultural consignments to the state during the war.

Thus a number of circles of citizenship were de facto created within the nation-state. They were the result of negotiations and power struggles, of territorial, as well as of corporate factors. Here is an excerpt from a discussion in the municipality of the town of Tarnovo from 1954:

“We have officially 20,000 inhabitants, but in fact there are 30,000. And everything the town is granted depends on the number of citizens. That is why we cannot achieve much. We should put an end to this practice when persons run away from elsewhere and settle down here to look for an easier job: he comes here, settles down, and starts to look for housing without a residence permit, even when we have local people for his job. An exception could be made only if the institutions have asked for him.” (Central State Archive (CSA) 136/19/477)

Note the idea that jobs in town are ‘easier’, and that they should be reserved for the locals. Note also the ambiguous position of the new settlers: should the non-registered migrants appear on official documents, the town would do even better since it would obtain more funding, infrastructure, housing etc., commensurate with a population of 30,000. And keep in mind that under this regime figures were not a matter of statistics, but of political bargain.

There was a steady conflict between the two tendencies throughout the entire communist period: protecting local privileges and standard of living by limiting growth, versus expanding cities and letting them pass into a higher category.

“Many local leaders try to exaggerate population data in order to raise the category of their towns and cities, which determines the salaries, the staff, the terms of supply, etc.” (Report for the Council of Ministers from 1966, CSA 136/42/42)
In a memo by the first secretary Jivkov from 1966—besides the usual criticism of ‘deformations’, i.e. using connections to obtain residence permits—we feel the power struggle hidden behind urban development:

“Many leaders ... instead of taking the trouble to find workers among the locals, prefer to go the easier way and employ persons from other areas, who are all out to get jobs and come alone to ask for them.”

(CSA 1/6/6118)

Migrants are more submissive as they strive to pass into a higher category of citizenship. Until the end of the regime the residence permit was an instrument for recruiting staff for unattractive jobs such as dustmen, construction workers, tram-drivers, etc.

Residence permit quotas were centrally allocated in the overall political bargain between centre and periphery, between technocrats advocating urban expansion and party officials who needed political stability and defended the quality of life (you could see here some sort of right and left within the apolitical bureaucratic party). Note also that during the Stalinist period a high percentage of forced labour was used in the new cities; Stephen Kotkin (1995) relates the resettlement of ‘enemies’ in the new communist city of Magnitogorsk; in Bulgaria, imprisoned evangelical priests took part in the construction of Dimitrovgrad in 1946–1947.

Back to Bulgaria, the majority of the repressed were not political enemies: the category included criminals and various persons conceived as being out of place in a socialist city: ‘beggars’, ‘persons of dangerous influence on public morals’, ‘persons with a scandalous behavior’ (Law for the Peoples Militia, 1948, art. 52–55); ‘hooligans’, ‘worshipers of the foreign’ and ‘parasites’ were added later.

Young people and ethnic minorities gradually became the particular targets of those measures, as they tended to stick out. In the big cities, the militia carried out social profiling the way the US police does in some rich quarters. The young were supposed to comply with urban aesthetics, minorities were supposed to keep their atavistic practices in the lower-class circles of territory or get assimilated.6

officially, the main motive for granting residence permits was the shortage of labour force. Nevertheless, from a memo to the Council of Ministers in 1966 we learn that only 32% came to Sofia because they were needed by some institution. The highest percentage, 47%, got residence permits through marriage; some 16% were elder parents of city residents, officials, academics (those categories were grouped together to hide the actual percentage of the officials); and finally 5% became residents of Sofia because of ‘various family reasons’ such as adoption—as if the former two had not been family reasons! (CSA 136/ 42/42).7

As one could see, the first effect of the socialist resettlement was the distortion of the bridal market in giving the city residents from the inner circles of citizenship an automatic advantage, shall I say, a kind of dowry. Let me also mention the curious reversal of the relations between generations linked to the third category. In 1962, alarmed by the swelling figures, the authorities abolished permanent residence permits for elder parents that came to the cities to be looked after by their children. However, living under the (termless) temporary permits they were then given, they could no longer buy...
real estate. Parents had to sell out the house in the village, give all the money to the children, and fall into a dependence upon them that this culture had never known before.

The mentioned category of temporary residence permits is also worth analysing. This sort of a trial period became two years in 1955, three years in 1962 and five years in 1966. A huge number of people lived under such humiliating conditions: in 1961, 11% of the residents in the capital held temporary permits. During this period the migrants could neither change their working place, unless they underwent the whole process of application one more time (with the signature of the Minister and all), nor leave their husband or wife if it was through marriage that they had become residing in the city. Misbehaviour at the working place or at home meant being sent back immediately to the countryside.

**Ritual purification**

The city had thus been constructed as the site of privilege. How can such an inequality be legitimated in a system based on explicit egalitarianism?

One interpretation is to see urban life as dominated by incessant rites of purification. Boris Groys (1993) observed that incessant self-purification was the trait defining both modernism and socialist realism. The socialist city presents itself as modern in a similar way: the constant effort at purifying space, life, morals and ideas, becomes the main form of legitimizing the privileged status of the inner circles of citizenship. The spectacle of purity included massified bodies, public rituals amplified by the media, proofs of class and national homogeneity, etc.

Purity—as once more Mary Douglas (1967) has shown—is formative of identity by separating us from them; similarly, urban rites of purification have thus been essential for the creation of the privileged urban strata. Moreover, self-purification implies an element of sacrifice, of conscientious self-limitation and submission to the common good. Terror in the villages was much less sophisticated; it was the city that presented the stage for exemplary suffering that, like most ancient rites of sacrifice, implied

---

Pioneer, you are a young follower of Dimitrov, be always clean and tidy!
preferably the consent of the victim. Thus the communist elites were supposed to constantly perform public acts of purification and self-criticism. This is how Kotkin describes the purges in Magnitogorsk of the 1930s:

“Communists placed their party membership cards on a red-draped table with portraits of the party leaders in the background, recited their political biographies and prepared to answer questions. Commission members, occasionally joined by an audience of ‘party activists’ and ‘non-party mass’, then explored the depths of the communist’s political sophistication and sometimes challenged the veracity of the autobiographical presentations … In the buildup of the purge special receptacles had been installed at each institution for the collection of signed or more often anonymous testimonies about the communists in that organization. No party member could be certain of what the commission had managed to find out or might ask … Members who passed the interrogation were handed back their party membership cards.” (Kotkin, 1995, p. 300)

The requirement for critique and auto-critique was stronger, the higher you went in the social hierarchy. Show trials usually ended with loudly broadcasted confessions (in Magnitogorsk they were staged in the circus). Many (like Kotkin himself) have compared all this to a religious practice; I would argue that it was part of the overall communist ‘society of spectacle’, of the mass production of urbanity via the media.

Another type of purification was linked to the complex notion of ‘culture’ used in such a way as to unite high and low culture, going to the opera and not beating your wife (Fitzpatrick, 1999, pp. 79–83). The ritual of cultural consumption, disguising the privileges of the inner circles of citizenship,
presented both sides of it: the urban residents entering the museum were supposed to be at the same time well-bred, attentive, speaking softly and controlling their gesticulation.

A massive investment was made in opera houses, theatres, museums, exposition halls, etc., and the city dwellers were nearly organized to participate in those cultural events, unwillingness being considered as next to a political misdemeanour. To give an example from Bulgaria, between 1964 and 1982 (the last good year for the Bulgarian economy) galleries had been constructed by the state in every district city and the visitors of expositions had risen from 1 to 4.5 million. Of course, there could not be such a jump in the interest for visual arts: the major part of the visitors were organized groups of schoolchildren, trade union members, soldiers, etc., for whom the cultural encounter did not differ much from laying wreaths at monuments or standing guard in front of tombs of heroes.

The other target of cultural purification was everyday life and organizations like the trade unions and the Homeland’s Front constantly taught the population (especially women) how to run a family, how to set a home, etc. This larger civilizing effort was sometimes referred to as a fight against the ‘oriental city’ imagined as dirty, with wriggling streets, shouting drunkards, dark private shops and small disorderly houses (Sofia, 1961, p. 23). The aesthetic ideal did not distinguish between things and humans; in the purified urban space there was no place for ‘parasites’, ethnic minorities, beggars and sick people, who were systematically deported and hidden away from the cities, especially in times of international events such as the Sofia International Students’ Games in 1968. Thus instead of being a space of otherness—a sort of fatherland for all strangers’ as Montesquieu notoriously called it—the communist city tended to be the model exhibit of sameness.
The *avant-garde* citizenship of communism

This reconstruction was meant to provoke parallels to the capitalist world economy, with its ‘green cards’, and five-year visas, fake marriages, cheap migrant labour, that more recently has been marked by an ever-tightening police control under the pretext of

Sofia central cemetery. Worshippers have left cherries and food on Todor Jivkov’s tomb according to the orthodox ritual for the day of the dead (Photo by I. Ditchev).
a terrorist threat. I argue here that what the industrialized nations established on a world scale, communism practised at home, prefiguring thus the era of conditional citizenship, where States and cities resemble powerful corporations reconciling paradoxically the urbanist and the desurbanist ideals of the late 1920s.

If you go beyond the communist rhetoric, you see that under those regimes social space as a whole was privatized, so that the citizen was in a permanent state of trespassing and needed to justify him/herself. Contemporary gated communities or middle-class developments in the USA would be an example of the gradual fragmentation of modern public space by private actors (Bickford, 2000): this process had already begun in the Soviet empire due to a centralized, administrative policy.

There is a similitude between communist urbanization and western colonial/post-colonial practices. Russia was often said to have colonized itself—August von Haxthausen (1968 [1856]) seems to be the first to have emphasized it. Colonial power is based on difference and difference is difficult to maintain within a single territorial continuum that existed in Russia (Edkind, 2003): territorial differentiation into circles of citizenship thus differentiates people the way oceans and cultural identities do in the colonial world.

A territorial machine of desire was created that made people strive to migrate from one circle of citizenship to another, complying with the conditions of power. Curiously enough, this worked even in small countries like Bulgaria where there were no raw materials or vast virgin lands to control. It would seem that modernization itself operates as colonization does, through introducing extra-market exploitation based on an irrational differential between those who are closer, and those who are farther from modern life.

Moreover, communism announced the general shift from the unconditional rights of the nation-state to a complex geometry of conditionalities. Consider global migrations today, consider collective strivings to enter organizations like NATO, the World Trade Organization and the EU (Ditchev, 2004), that always imply transitory periods of docility for entire populations. And, as they say, what seems transitory lasts the longest.

Notes
1 Key figure of Stalin’s regime, Politburo member 1930–1955.
2 With the Decree Measures for the Further Improvement of the Passport System in the USSR (some 50 million Soviet citizens got passports between 1976 and 1981). Passports become permanent with Khrushchev’s law but only for people over 40.
3 The category of ‘cities under restrictive regime’ (rejimnye gorody) was created for Moscow, Leningrad, the republics’ capitals, big ports like Odessa or industrial centres like Sverdlovsk and Kharkov. Residence permits rules were especially strict for them, and a decree was adopted to stop further construction of factories there so that populations would not be attracted by them.
4 Stalin’s death was not the end of propiska, tightened by several decrees in the 1940s, 1960s and 1970s; even the dissolution of the Soviet Union was not the end of the story, and after a short break in 1992 it reappeared for Moscow and St Petersburg, and numerous websites would sell one for $200–300.
5 The decree was abolished on 25 April 1956 with another decree of the Presidium.
6 Central State Archive (CSA), Sofia, followed by: number of file, register and archive unit.
7 According to the archives, about 20 persons per year are said to have lost their Sofia residence permit between 1955 and 1959, and the number constantly decreased (they were only eight in 1960).
8 One thing that strikes you while reading such documents is how often you meet various forms of ‘etcetera’.
9 The practice, at its strongest in the 1930s and 1950s, goes on until the late 1960s, and then fades away.
10 Herzen wrote about him that he discovered the Russian people as Columbus did America. See also Groys (1993) who speaks about Peter’s reforms as a unique act of self-colonization of the Russian people.
11 I refer here to the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1985).
References


Ivaylo Ditchev is a Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Sofia University, Bulgaria. E-mail: iditchev@yahoo.com