

# BG AND GB WORKING TOGETHER AGAINST ALL ODDS: THE SOFIA-LEEDS UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE 1968–1999

Michael Holman  
University of Leeds

Fifty years ago, almost to the day, at the beginning of the Leeds University autumn term in 1968, my wife and I were at Leeds railway station waiting to greet Stefana Roussenova and Tatyana Stoicheva, two final year students from Sofia University's Department of English Philology. This was their first 'encounter' with 'the West' – and West Yorkshire! – and they were probably as anxious as we were. There was good reason for anxiety. In August that year, Warsaw Pact forces, including Bulgarian units, had invaded Czechoslovakia, and the Cold War seemed in danger of escalation. Stefana and Tatyana were pioneers, the first to take part in this extraordinary undergraduate exchange scheme that continued unbroken for more than thirty years. The present article provides a brief account of the scheme they bravely helped to launch. It charts the scheme's progress, setting out how it came into being, how it developed and what it achieved. As far as I am aware, there was no exchange like it – certainly not between Britain and Bulgaria – and I like to think that its benefits are still felt in the Department of English and American Studies today<sup>2</sup>.

Exchange is one of the fundamental processes of human existence. It is about evening out inequalities, overcoming imbalance and reducing tension; achieving mutual enrichment through the transfer of knowledge; overcoming barriers, internal and external. It is also about movement

---

<sup>2</sup>The present article draws heavily on responses I made in 2008 to Professor Suman Gupta in connection with his project to detail the historical development of English Studies in Eastern Europe. His findings were published by the Plovdiv University Press in 2009 as *English Studies On This Side: Post-2007 Reckonings*, 239–248. The full history of the exchange remains to be written.

across frontiers, physical and intellectual. The secret of success for academic, as for any other exchange in the social sphere, always lies first in identifying overlapping agendas, individual and collective, private and public, then in devising mutually beneficial projects that can only be fulfilled through cooperation, moving forward together towards their corporate and private realisation.

With these important generalisations out of the way, I can move on to details of the exchange's establishment. Its roots go back to a three-month period of postgraduate study I spent in Sofia in the autumn of 1965 and my early years as assistant lecturer in Russian Studies at Leeds. From copies of correspondence extracted from my numerous files<sup>1</sup> relating to things Bulgarian, I see that even as a postgraduate, I was already thinking how a link might be established between our two universities. While in Sofia I made a number of contacts, both at the University and in other institutions, that later served me well when seeking to set up the exchange.

These contacts alone, however, were insufficient to bring an exchange into being. What was needed, in addition to personal ambitions and private contacts, was a national and institutional framework into which an academic exchange could be slotted. Throughout the socialist period in Bulgaria, the main cultural and academic links with the UK operated within the confines of what was officially known as the "*Programme of cultural, educational, scientific and technological exchanges*", or "*Cultural Agreement*" for short. Successive cultural agreements were negotiated with the Bulgarian authorities by the British Council every two years. In the early 1960s there was no reference to undergraduate study in the agreements. In 1967, however, following pressure from several British Universities, chief among them Sussex and Leeds, for the first time the Cultural Agreement, signed on 26 January by C.E. King, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office and Professor S. Stanchev, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, included direct reference to undergraduates and inter-university academic exchange. Article I.7 read:

---

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from items in my personal archive are listed under **MHA**.

Both sides will examine the possibility of academic exchanges between Sofia University and Universities in the United Kingdom including exchanges at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and of academic staff including assistant lecturers and teaching assistants. (Programme, Art. I.7)

This was just what we needed. Although an expressed agreement to “examine the possibility of academic exchanges” may not have been a firm guarantee, it was an encouraging start. The important thing was that the Cultural Agreement had provided the necessary facilitating framework. That the British Council was not able directly to support undergraduate exchanges, neither financially nor administratively, was made very clear to me in a letter from Mr. P.B. Naylor, Regional Officer of the Council’s East Europe Department, received in February 1967. “The Council’s view”, Mr. Naylor wrote, “[. . .] is that exchanges at undergraduate level, not normally being a field in which we are permitted to operate, might best be left to individual universities to work out for themselves.”<sup>2</sup> Although couched in modalities characteristic for the Council and British bureaucracy, I interpreted Mr. Naylor’s statement as an open invitation to universities to take the initiative and set about doing what they wanted to do. And in Leeds we knew what we wanted. In a letter I subsequently wrote to the Council’s Regional Officer for Bulgaria, Mr. R.F. Budd, I set out very clearly what our administrative and academic ambitions were:

We in Leeds are certainly most interested in developing inter-university exchanges at undergraduate level. At present there are two main reasons for this interest: firstly, we still find it very difficult to arrange any kind of non-centralised, undergraduate exchange with the Soviet Union and are exploring the possibilities of arranging such exchanges with other Slavonic speaking countries in Eastern Europe. (We hope that the Russians will eventually realise that they are missing out on something and will come around to a less rigid attitude.) Secondly, we are keen to develop the study of Bulgarian [...] and see the setting up of some kind of undergraduate exchange with Sofia University as a *sine qua non* for this enterprise.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> MHA: Naylor to Holman 16 February 1967.

<sup>3</sup> MHA: Holman to Budd 24 November 1967.

To return briefly to the Cultural Agreement. From spring 1967 we had in place the national, inter-governmental accord we needed. In subsequent years, following further pressure from academic institutions in Britain and Bulgaria, the wording of the article became less tentative, and the level of central government commitment increased. The cultural agreements were crucial to the initiative, and over the years I had to engage with the relevant governmental bodies both in London and Sofia to make sure that as new agreements were prepared for signature, they included clauses facilitating links between institutions and the exchange of undergraduates. Eventually, separate, lower-level, written agreements were drawn up and signed by representatives of the University of Sofia and the University of Leeds. These usually covered the overall aims and objectives of the co-operation extending forward over a number of years. Separate agreements covering a year at a time were then entered into by an exchange of letters between the Department of Russian Studies in Leeds, the Ministry of Education in Sofia and the Department of English and American Studies – as the Department of English Philology eventually came to be called – at Sofia University. Sanctions were never discussed, but the ultimate sanction was always withdrawal from the scheme.

Happily, by the time I began my 33-year career at Leeds, the academic framework for the addition of Bulgarian to our university's language offer already existed. Czech was being taught as an optional subject within the Department of Russian Studies, and the Head of Department, Professor Frank Borrás, supported my initiative to begin teaching Bulgarian on the same basis. An additional point in my favour was the fact that Leeds was actively supporting the establishment of new exchange links with European universities so that its students might experience at first hand life in the countries whose languages they were studying. The university had recently embarked on an undergraduate exchange with the University of Brno, and it made sense to support the establishment of a similar link with the University of Sofia.

A key factor in making the exchange financially and administratively feasible at university level was new British educational legislation introduced in the early 1960s. This made it mandatory for undergraduate students of modern languages to spend an extended period studying

abroad. A period of foreign residence, therefore, became an integral part of modern language courses without which students would not be eligible for their degree. All students were already eligible for the payment of academic fees and a means-tested grant towards their living costs. These were paid by their LEAs (Local Education Authorities) and covered not only the period of home study, but also the period spent abroad. It was these new regulations, welcomed by all teachers of modern languages and supported by university administrations reaching out to universities outside the United Kingdom, that provided the financial and course-linked framework for the establishment of exchanges. The detailed mechanics of the Leeds/Sofia link, however, still had to be worked out. We needed not only to devise attractive academic offerings both in Leeds and Sofia, but also to put in place a financially self-contained system in which no money crossed national frontiers. The Bulgarian lev was not convertible, and the pound sterling could not easily be exported.

In Bulgaria the Cultural Agreement may have been in place at national level, but I still needed institutional agreement. Somehow I had to interest and win the support of the Head of the Department of English Philology, Professor Marco Mincoff. It was his department, after all, that would be asked to make arrangements for the proposed incoming students from Leeds. My initial explanation to him of my 'vision' – I do not remember there being much of a discussion – did not end encouragingly. Although I cannot now recall his exact words, the burden of Professor Mincoff's parting statement to me in the main entrance to Sofia University was that although I may be prepared to do battle with the bureaucracy, he wasn't. Mincoff clearly did not wish to get involved himself, but neither was he going to stand in my way. His own position, I realise now, was a politically delicate one. He was not a member of the Communist Party, and although out of sympathy with the Socialist regime which regarded him as uncooperative, he had held on to his position as Head of Department since the end of the Second World War. He was, therefore, vulnerable and understandably not prepared to experiment. What I needed was someone willing and able to operate within the system and take advantage of what an exchange with Leeds might be able to offer, for both personal and institutional

benefit. This person turned out to be Senior Lecturer, later Professor, Jana Molhova, without whom the exchange would never have come into being. As the leading Communist Party member within the Department and Sub-Dean of the Philological Faculty, she was well-placed within the university's Party apparatus to win support for initiatives she chose to adopt. Moreover, she had the drive and energy not only to 'get the show on the road' but also to keep it there! She was an enthusiast, a person of strong emotions with only thinly veiled likes and dislikes. Luckily for me, the idea of an exchange appealed to her, she and I found a common language, and through our joint enterprise we became close friends.

Over the years, Jana's pioneering work was stalwartly continued by a succession of Departmental Heads and staff members at every level, each doing their bit to maintain and develop the scheme's operation. I was not privy to Sofia University's internal discussions, but successfully steering the exchange proposals through its academic and Party hierarchy will have needed some skillful and sustained diplomatic maneuvering. Also, no doubt, some firm string-pulling and sustained elbow-twisting! Numerous allies were needed within our two systems. Highly-placed Party functionaries who were also parents of students who stood to benefit from the exchange, will certainly have played a part in the scheme's establishment and continued operation. In Sofia, allies were needed not only within the higher echelons of the University administration and the Party machine, but also in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Committee for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and, last but not least, the British Embassy. In Leeds, parents played no part, but I needed support from colleagues in my own and other academic departments. And in London I needed the co-operation of the British Council, the Great Britain East Europe Centre and a succession of Ambassadors and Cultural Attachés at the Bulgarian Embassy. Year on year, a variety of individuals and institutions had to be engaged, involved, regularly informed and kept on side. The administrative machine had to be kept oiled and operating efficiently with countless letters, telephone calls, telexes, faxes and meetings with important people in imposing offices. I may have been the scheme's chief roving engineer, but without active support from all its other moving parts, it would surely have seized up and ground to an early halt.

At Sofia University there was always the potential for a variety of interdepartmental jealousies, for as far as I know, students writing final year dissertations in other language departments did not have the opportunity to spend three months studying abroad, and in a Western country, to boot! In addition, the exchange was by its very nature imbalanced, for we were not exchanging like with like. In Leeds, although responsibility for the exchange's overall organisation rested with me in the Department of Russian Studies, I had to negotiate with other departments to provide the academic back-up required for the incoming exchange students. I did hold regular Bulgarian to English translation classes for them, but that was hardly sufficient. What Bulgarian students wishing to gather material for their final year dissertations<sup>4</sup> primarily wanted was access to lectures and research supervision from specialists in English language, phonetics and English and American literature. These subjects were based in three separate Leeds departments. Each had to be engaged in and enthused for a project that did not naturally fall within their sphere of responsibilities. In Sofia, while Bulgarian classes were laid on by members of the English Department whose students were the immediate beneficiaries, it was members of the Russian Department who provided the Russian classes. I never knew what *quid pro quo* was offered by the English Department, but the Russian classes were of a very high quality, provided largely by enthusiastic Russian native-speakers. They contributed hugely to the attractiveness of the exchange and, as I will explain later, eventually made possible its extension to other British universities beyond Leeds.

Together with academic and administrative colleagues in Leeds and Sofia we worked out a *modus operandi* that functioned well across the ideological divide. In Sofia I was lucky in my overtures, for I chanced upon people who had the necessary political credentials to feel confident in taking risks for the benefit of their students – and themselves! For if the students were to travel to Britain and study there, then the officials and academics responsible for the exchange would be more likely to be able to travel too. And this they did, to their and the students' advantage. Having a link with Leeds meant that Leeds University could

---

<sup>4</sup> In addition to having excellent marks, only students working on their 'diplomna rabota' (final year dissertation) were eligible for participation in the exchange.

issue invitations to members of Sofia University, and on the basis of these invitations, visas could be more easily issued for travel to the UK. Similarly, invitations issued by the University of Sofia enabled students and staff from Leeds to obtain visas for travel to Bulgaria.

We naturally had to modify the system slightly as we went along, but in essence it worked on reciprocity. From the beginning each partner institution made payment in kind by offering incoming students equivalent services. We both, for example, agreed to waive tuition fees. (In Britain tuition fees were paid to universities by the LEAs. In Bulgaria, technically there were no tuition fees, but universities were subsidised by the Ministry of Education.) British undergraduates were allocated shared accommodation for minimal rent in a Sofia postgraduate student hostel, a monthly stipend in levs and tuition in Russian and Bulgarian. In exchange, Leeds University provided access to libraries, tuition and research supervision. The outgoing Leeds students left behind in Leeds a large proportion of their maintenance grant, thus providing the Bulgarian students with a basic allowance for food and lodging in private accommodation or a student hostel. As with the Bulgarian lev stipend, this was paid out monthly in advance to encourage good housekeeping. At various times I was able to obtain from the Bulgarian authorities – usually through the good offices of the Committee for Friendship – a small grant to enable British students to take part in some organised excursions outside Sofia. And in the UK, I was able to persuade the Great Britain East Europe Centre and the British Council reciprocally to provide small travel grants to enable the Bulgarian students to extend their knowledge of Britain beyond Leeds and West Yorkshire!

Our exchange currency essentially became ‘student months’ spent in the partner institution within each academic year. Initially, the number of participating students in any one year always depended on the number of penultimate year Leeds students opting to take Bulgarian for their final two years. These choices were made by successive student cohorts at the beginning of each academic year, so we could never plan very far in advance. Although the two 1968 pioneering Sofia students came for a period of six months starting at the beginning of the academic year, eventually the exchange settled down to periods of three months per student. British students started in Sofia in March or April, while

Bulgarians came to the UK at different times throughout the academic year, usually coinciding with the start of a term.

As the scheme gained in momentum, attracted by the high standard of the Russian language courses at Sofia University – and the prospect of a summer in Sofia! – students from a number of other institutions in Britain gradually began to participate too. From the mid-1970s on, following the signing of a new cultural agreement with the Soviet authorities, undergraduate students of Russian at British universities finally had the chance to spend three months at selected universities in the USSR. Foreign residence being by then mandatory, some of these students opted for Bulgaria in preference to the Soviet Union and thereby boosted the numbers of Bulgarian students able to participate in the exchange. Figures compiled in 1996 by Kalina Filipova<sup>5</sup> – herself an undergraduate participant in 1984 – show that in the academic year 1985-86, for example, a total of twenty-five students from Bulgaria came under the scheme to study at British universities, only eight coming to Leeds. British institutions which at one time or another sent undergraduate students of Russian to Sofia and received students of English from Bulgaria included the universities of Exeter, Heriot-Watt (Edinburgh), Hull, Manchester, Norwich (UEA), Nottingham, Reading, Surrey, Sussex, the Polytechnic of Central London, Newcastle Polytechnic, Leeds Polytechnic and the Buckinghamshire College of Higher Education (High Wycombe). For a brief period at the end of the 1970s, small numbers of Bulgarian students from the University of Veliko Turnovo and the Higher Institute of Economics in Sofia also participated in the exchange. The extended exchange was also administered from Leeds. We aimed at institutional parity year-by-year, but occasionally, especially in the ‘mature’, stable years, small numbers of student months were carried over from one year to the next or were transferred from one British institution to another. As with the number of Leeds students wishing to go to Sofia in any one year, the number of

---

<sup>5</sup> Kalina's figures, extracted from files in the Russian Department in Leeds and the Department of English and American Studies in Sofia, cover the period from September 1968 to June 1996. Files for 1971/2, 1982/3 were – and are – missing. I have since added the lists for 1996/7 to 1998/9, but numbers and names for these and earlier years still need to be checked for accuracy.

potential participants in any academic year from participating institutions only became clear at the beginning of that year, in September.

In 1979 a huge boost to the exchange and the teaching of Bulgarian at Leeds was given by the establishment of a Bulgarian lectorship, funded by the British Council and the Bulgarian Ministry of Education. The lectorship, which was shared with Sheffield University, continued uninterrupted until 2001. From the very beginning of my negotiations with the Council and the Bulgarian authorities prior to the post's establishment, I made it very clear that we needed an energetic young teacher, rather than an established research worker from the Academy of Sciences. The lector needed to enthuse students and make Bulgarian an attractive option in the final two years of their course. Bulgarian was on offer with a range of other optional subjects, the main competition coming from Czech. I was, therefore, very disappointed when the first lector, Todor Kirov, although having previously taught at Sofia University, came to us in 1979 on secondment from the Academy of Sciences. To make matters worse, Kirov pointed out to me that his British visa seemed to indicate that he was not permitted to enter employment, paid or unpaid, and he flatly refused to do any teaching. He was not a success and did not last the year. After this inauspicious start, careful and complicated negotiations ensured that all seven subsequent lectors came from the English Department. All were personally known to me before their selection. Four, Stefana Roussenova, Mira Kovatcheva, Kalina Filipova and Palma Zlateva, had previously taken part in the undergraduate exchange. All seven stayed for three years on contracts renewed year by year. They knew how to teach and played a major part in attracting students to choose Bulgarian as one of their optional subjects. To each and every one of my Bulgarian lectors who stayed the course and are listed below I am hugely indebted.

1980–1983 Stefana Roussenova

1983–1986 Christo Stamenov

1986–1989 Zelma Catalan-Balinova

1989–1992 Mira Kovatcheva

1992–1995 Vladimir Filipov

1995–1998 Kalina Filipova

1998–2001 Palma Zlateva

Their membership of the Russian Department and their participation as young academics in departmental life added a welcome extra dimension, raising the profile of things Bulgarian and providing a living link with Sofia.

Over the years, my close co-operation with Sofia staff members both in the Russian and the English Department, led to a number of joint publications appearing both in Bulgaria and the UK. These were geared primarily to the needs of English-speaking language learners. First was the infamous 'little pink book': *An English Dictionary of Bulgarian Names* (Danchev, Dimova, Holman, and Savova 1989).<sup>6</sup> This I co-authored with Katya Dimova and Milena Savova under the firm direction of Andrei Danchev, then still working 'in exile' so to speak, in the Institute of Foreign Students<sup>7</sup>. Christo Stamenov and I worked together on a paper delivered at the Second Anglo-Bulgarian Symposium held at the School of Slavonic Studies in London in 1988 (Stamenov and Holman 1993). Alla Gradinarova and Rimma Spasova from the Sofia Russian Department teamed up with me to produce *My beseduem, vedem diskussiiu*, a little book of contemporary Russian texts and exercises for use primarily by the British students attending Russian courses under the exchange arrangement (Holman, Gradinarova and Spasova 1990). The most notable achievement, however, was *Teach Yourself Bulgarian*, which Mira Kovatcheva and I worked on during and after her period as Bulgarian lector in Leeds (Holman and Kovatcheva 1993/2011). This was first published in 1993 and went into a number of editions and revisions. To date it has sold upwards of 40,000 copies worldwide. Mira and I co-authored a further Bulgarian course for English language speakers, first published in 2007 as *Teach Yourself Bulgarian Conversation* (Kovatcheva and Holman 2007/2010).

At the scheme's inception, despite the clampdown following the crushing of the Prague Spring, there were in Bulgaria people in key

---

<sup>6</sup> It is worth noting that, with some minor modifications, the system for BG>ENG transliteration promoted by Danchev and his team formed the basis for the current official system for general purpose Latinisation of Bulgarian Cyrillic.

<sup>7</sup> In 1975 Jana Molhova fell foul of the Party for engaging staff of non-working-class origin and was removed from office. Danchev and several colleagues were dismissed.

positions, both in the relevant Ministries and at the University of Sofia, prepared to experiment and take risks in the interest of their institutions. Looking back over the period of my involvement with the exchange, I am amazed at the way in which, despite changes in political direction in Sofia, we were able to keep the link going over such a long period. In part this has to be put down to the fact that we had enduring overlapping agendas. We also enjoyed working together. Both sides recognized the academic benefits of the scheme and, in Sofia at least, many of those who had personally benefited, continued in their subsequent careers to be involved with academic and other forms of exchange with Britain. Some, like Lily Litkova (1970/71) moved into positions of authority in Sofia's ministries where they played a vital role in maintaining the exchange's smooth operation. Others became senior diplomats or successful interpreters operating at the very highest level in Bulgaria and abroad. Even a future Rector<sup>8</sup> of Sofia University himself once briefly came to Leeds as a postgraduate. In academia undergraduate participants became postgraduates, some coming back to Leeds for research, then moving on to become university lecturers, progressing up through the ranks, and, like the two pioneering undergraduates, eventually becoming full professors. Many of the senior academic staff in the Department of English and American Studies, some now retired, at one time or another spent periods in Leeds and acknowledge the benefit of this experience to their academic careers. On returning to Sofia, many of them, especially those who had been lecturers and postgraduates in Leeds, helped with the scheme's operation, participating in the teaching and making the British undergraduates feel at home. The Bulgarian students themselves also played a large part in promoting the exchange. Not only did they all return home – something that could not be taken for granted in the period before 1989 – but on their return they must have reported on their experiences in Britain in terms regarded by the Bulgarian authorities as favourable.

Looking back, I can see that the exchange survived some difficult times. Conceived in the late 1960s during the Prague Spring, and first delivered following the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, it

---

<sup>8</sup> Professor Ivan Ilchev.

weathered the international repercussions following the assassination of Georgi Markov in 1978. Apparently unaffected by the forced name changing and attendant political tensions of the late 1980s, it came through the post 1989 upheaval and subsequent social unrest relatively unscathed. In the English Department too, there were tensions. I think particularly of the Party's purge of 'bourgeois elements' in 1975, the sacking of Andrei Danchev and the removal of Jana Molhova from office, referred to earlier in this article. Despite these international and domestic tensions, it continued uninterrupted for over three decades, more than one third of the total period since the establishment of English as a degree subject at Sofia University in 1929.

The exchange was, however, very much a Cold War construct and could not survive long into the modern period. There is no longer any need for the type of scheme we set up with socialist Bulgaria. Students and staff are now able to travel freely, money – if it can be sourced – can easily and legally be moved across frontiers. Bulgaria is a full member of the European Union and large numbers of Bulgarian students are enrolled on courses in Britain and across Europe. The former centralised political control of funding, a system based on the paternalistic, totalitarian principle of 'we take everything from you and give to you what we decide you need', has thankfully been replaced by something more decentralised and democratic. No longer is there one single provider, one patron, one sponsor. Instead, in our deconstructed, commercialised world, support can be drawn from a variety of sources.

What, then, were the scheme's achievements? Compared with the broad-based operations of, say, the British Council, Erasmus and Fulbright, the Sofia-Leeds University Exchange was very narrowly targeted, a mere minnow alongside their world-wide, big-fish operations. Nevertheless, looking firstly at figures, the tangibles, it did enable upwards of 350 undergraduates from Britain to study for three months in Bulgaria, and an equivalent number of Bulgarian final year students to come to Britain. Without having the papers to hand, it is difficult to estimate the numbers of staff and postgraduates who benefited. I would estimate that in the region of a dozen different British academics from Leeds and other universities visited Bulgaria in connection with the scheme, while upwards of forty different members of Sofia University

came to Leeds. Half a dozen postgraduates will also have spent time in Leeds on a variety of research projects. In addition, as Leeds was the only institution outside London University teaching Bulgarian at undergraduate level, we were frequently on the itineraries of academics from Bulgaria visiting the UK on exchange and other schemes run by the British Council, the British Academy and the Great Britain East-Europe Centre. They too must have reported back favourably on their experience in Leeds.

Less tangible, but of no less importance, the unique experience of an extended study period in Britain and Bulgaria at an impressionable time in students' lives broadened their horizons and contributed to their professional success. At a time when East-West and West-East travel was restricted, and Sofia University's international links were primarily with 'Socialist-bloc' countries, the exchange kept an extra window open to another, different world, a world of which Bulgaria had once been part, but from which it had become separated by ideology and geopolitics. By setting up, maintaining and developing the exchange, in some small way we made it easier, once the ideology had been cast aside, for 'normal' relations to be resumed from one side of Europe to the other.

## References:

- Danchev, A., M. Holman, E. Dimova, and M. Savova. 1989. *An English Dictionary of Bulgarian Names*. Sofia: Naouka i izkoustvo.
- Holman, Michael. 2009. "Interview: Reflections on Collaborative Experience." In *English Studies On This Side: Post-2007 Reckonings*, edited by Suman Gupta and Milena Katsarska, 239–248. Plovdiv: Plovdiv University Press.
- Holman, Michael, Alla Gradinarova, and Rimma Spasova. 1990. *My beseduem, vedem diskussiia*. Sofia: Sofia University Press.
- Holman, Michael and Mira Kovatcheva. 1993. *Teach Yourself Bulgarian*. Sevenoaks: Hodder and Stoughton. New, revised edition 2011, published as *Complete Bulgarian*.
- Kovatcheva, Mira and Michael Holman. 2007. *Teach Yourself Bulgarian Conversation*, London: Hodder and Stoughton. New, revised edition 2010, published as *Speak Bulgarian with Confidence*.

*Programme of Cultural, Educational, Scientific and Technological Exchanges Between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the People's Republic of Bulgaria for the Period 1 April 1967 to 31 March, 1969.* 1967. London: British Council.

Stamenov, Christo and Michael Holman. 1993. "Bulgarian Studies in Yorkshire 1980–1985." In *The Second Anglo-Bulgarian Symposium, Proceedings*, edited by Leslie Collins. London: SSEES, 381–387.