



Supporters of the ethnic Albanian political party PDK (Democratic Party of Kosovo) celebrating the results of the general elections in Kosovo.

Photo Laurens Aaij

What hope for Kosovo?

REPORT International Relations student Lenneke Sprik, 22, visited Kosovo last week as a member of a student delegation. On the eve of the Serbian general and local elections, they met with politicians and representatives of national and international organizations in the newly formed country.

By ERNST ARBOUW

Where are you now?

"We're currently in southern Mitrovica, a city in northern Kosovo. The northern half is populated by ethnic Serbs and the southern half by ethnic Albanians. It was originally our intention to visit the northern part of the city too, but the security situation in the Serbian neighbourhoods is not that good. We're here with a delegation consisting of Dutch students, ethnic Serbs and ethnic Albanians and it was judged to be unsafe for the Albanians to

visit the Serbian quarters.

Today we spoke to members of VeteveNdosje, a political group which strongly opposes interference by the international community in Kosovo. They are, interestingly enough, in favour of a multi-ethnic Kosovo but they are against any intervention by organizations like the United Nations. They're busy organizing a demonstration for tomorrow, Europe Day (Friday 9 May, EA). We're not going, again because it is judged to be unsafe. Last year, a protester died after he was shot during riots following a Europe Day demonstration.

The aim of our visit, which has been organized by Dutch peace organization IKV Pax Christi, is to start a dialogue on subjects like ethnicity and identity between young people from different backgrounds. Later, our delegation, including the Albanian students, will travel to the Serb Republic and they'll visit the Netherlands in October."

How do students in Kosovo feel about identity and ethnicity?

"Identity in Kosovo means, almost without exception, ethnic identity. When you ask someone 'Where are you from?', the answer is 'Kosovo', but they don't feel they're Kosovars. They feel they're Albanians or Serbs.

I think it will take a very, very long time before there will be anything resembling a Kosovar identity. There's a Kosovar flag and a national anthem, but people don't identify with them. I'm actually quite pessimistic about it."

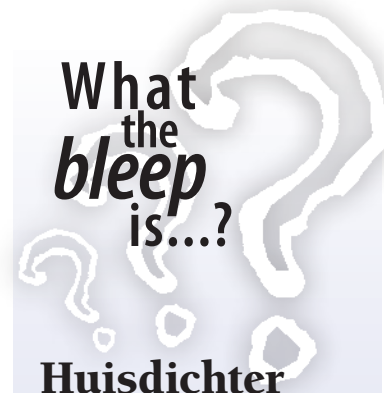
Is it possible for Kosovo to become a multi-ethnic state?

"As I said, I'm rather pessimistic. But the people working for the political organizations we've visited are all very optimistic about the future. We spoke to the country's vice premier yesterday and he's openly playing with the idea of EU membership at the same time as Serbia.

It's important that if the two countries should ever join the European Union, they do so together. If Serbia became an EU member before Kosovo, it would block a Kosovar application, and vice versa."

You said there are political groups like VeteveNdosje that oppose international interference in the country. How do people feel about your visit? It is, after all, also a kind of international interference.

I think they don't really mind. We have a neutral point of view and most people say it's good that we're interested in their country. We've asked whether they get annoyed by all our questions, but the ethnic Albanians in particular see it as a good opportunity to rectify their image. Albanians feel that their image is being distorted by Serbian and international media. They say it's good that we're looking for the truth – as long as it is their truth, I must add.



Huisdichter

Since 2000, the University of Groningen has appointed a *huisdichter* (university poet) each new academic year. This office was initiated by the University, in collaboration with the UK. Each 'huisdichter' publishes some six to ten poems describing or commenting on the academic year, and receives a bottle of wine for each poem from the Rector Magnificus, as well as some funding from the University.

The University of Groningen was the first Dutch university to appoint a 'huisdichter', but over the last few years others have followed. So far, all the poems have been in Dutch. This issue of the UK sees the first English poem, by this year's university poet, International Economics and Business student Menno de Block. His poem 'Shooting lives' is a description of a tragedy like the incidents at Columbine and VirginiaTech that have plagued the US in recent years.

His main reason for writing this poem was that he was actually present at one such tragedy which occurred at Dawson College, Montreal, in 2006. The poem, published on page 12, takes the viewpoint of the perpetrator, not the victims. The disturbed mind of the gunman makes for a very disturbing poem.

[RENÉ FRANSEN]



Pottery sherds shatter timeline ancient Egypt

RESEARCH Discoveries made by University of Groningen archaeologist Dr Jaap van Dijk have caused quite a stir amongst Egyptologists. His findings necessitate an adjustment to the chronology of ancient Egypt and the Middle East.

By ERNST ARBOUW

Dr van Dijk has spent three seasons doing excavation work in the tomb of Pharaoh Horemheb in the Egyptian Valley of the Kings, where he found pottery sherds which strongly suggest that the Pharaoh reigned for a period of fourteen to

sixteen years shorter than is generally assumed. The evidence was found on the labels of broken wine jars, Van Dijk explains.

The Egyptian calendar started counting from zero every time a new Pharaoh was crowned, and in the tomb of Horemheb there are no wine labels with a higher date than year fourteen of his reign. "This makes it highly likely that he died before the harvest of year fifteen. Wine in ancient Egypt had a very limited storage life and the wine jars you find in tombs are usually from the last, or perhaps the last two harvests", says Van Dijk.

"Moreover, when Horemheb died the decoration of his tomb was still

unfinished, whereas King Seti I, who reigned shortly afterwards, managed to completely finish his tomb, which is the same size as that of Horemheb, within 10 years". Up to now, many scholars have assumed Horemheb reigned for 27 to 30 years.

An abstract from Van Dijk's research was published online recently in preparation for the International Congress of Egyptologists on the Greek island of Rhodes at the end of May. The publication sparked off a lively debate amongst his colleagues because the inevitable consequence of the work is a major adjustment to the chronology of ancient Egypt.

The current Egyptian chronology at this particular period is linked to the known lists of Babylonian kings. "At this moment, it is not yet possible to see all the implications, but making an adjustment to the chronology of ancient Egypt could have far-reaching consequences for the history of neighbouring civilizations", says Van Dijk. The archeologist says he's not nervous about presenting his conclusions to his peers at the congress on Rhodes. "Quite the contrary: I'm really looking forward to it."

See also: *The wine of Horemheb*: www.uk.rug.nl/archief/jaargang37/07/20a.php



Conflicts

Former Minister for Development Cooperation Jan Pronk will be giving a lecture entitled *Culture and Conflict* on Wednesday 21 May, 8 p.m. at the Academiegebouw. Pronk, who was the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Sudan from 2004 to 2006, will address how religious, ethnic and cultural conflicts arise and, crucially, the role of the international community in controlling these conflicts. Info: www.rug.nl/studium