

Diary entry from the 18th of April in Bulgaria

by Melissa Seitz

On Thursday we first met in school for breakfast. While we were waiting for the bus to come, we students sat in the assembly hall listening to some music and playing cards. Actually, we played cards very often and this was a kind of the way we started to have some connection with the guys from the other countries. Especially the students from Spain became our friends and we still have contact with them over the internet.



Suddenly the bus to Rila monastery arrived and our journey began. The drive lasted more than two hours and at some part we stopped at a tiny Bulgarian village in the mountains to have a walk. The weather at that day was amazing and so the teachers gave us the exercise to take some pictures of our mascot „Mr. Sambor“, the beaver, in this environment. After this small photo session and after having lunch in the mountains, we walked down again and our bus drive went on. We arrived at the monastery after another thirty minutes. When I left the bus I realized how cold it was up there, because the monastery was situated even higher in the mountains than the village.



This monastery, which is part of the UNESCO world heritage is a huge and beautiful building, surrounded by many large lakes, which we unfortunately didn't see during our trip. Our guide told us some interesting facts about the monastery and we also could see some of the ten monks living there, who all wore beards and long dark frocks. We also went into one of the churches of the monastery, which was extremely gorgeous because of its architecture and design. Inside it was even

colder and people in shorts or T-shirts weren't allowed to enter the church, because of the monks' orthodox religious belief. One of the monks even grumbled with me, because I had my hands in the pockets of my jacket! Nevertheless it was a great experience to see such a beautiful building and I was glad that I had the chance to visit this place.



After we had returned back to school, we first didn't know what to do. Most of the Bulgarian students had to go to school and didn't come to the monastery with us. Because of that we first had to search for them and after finding all of them we played some games in the playground of the school. I played basketball with the Spanish students and some Bulgarian children, who were in a real basketball team. Other students played football or just sat on the ground and talked. It was really great fun!



Later we decided to go to the city and we ate something at McDonalds together with the whole group. In the evening some guys of the group also went to the park, but I and my exchange partner had to go home, where my host mother cooked something typical Bulgarian for us, which was very tasty.

That was it about Thursday in Bulgaria. For me it was the best day of the whole week. I had great fun on the trip and in the evening I was sad about leaving those lovely people I had met at this exchange!