

Introduction

*In March 2017, the Department of Sociology organized a two-day conference entitled “**How We Live Together: Communities, Institutions, Networks**” to mark the 40th anniversary of its founding. The conference was conceived as an invitation for a dialogue between social scientists and researchers working various institutions. Thus, besides members of the Department of Sociology, it gathered together representatives from the Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at BAS, the University of National and World Economy, South-West University – Blagoevgrad, and Plovdiv University. In this special issue of the journal *Sociological Problems*, we are publishing some of the papers presented at the two-day conference. While it was impossible – for different reasons – to publish all the papers, we believe the selection offered here is representative of the variety of basic theoretical and research perspectives, and issues formulated and discussed in the framework of the conference. The topics include: interaction with, and community with, the Other under conditions of growing social and cultural differences; the transformations of national and regional identities in the context of the increasingly radical fragmentation of the social; the transformations of life chances and the public sphere, of social inequalities and value attitudes.*