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OCTOBER 2013 – JULY 2014

# Bordering, Political Landscapes and Social Arenas: Potentials and Challenges of Evolving Border Concepts in a Post-Cold War World (2012–2016)







## Project Description

EUBORDERSCAPES, an acronym standing for *Bordering, Political Landscapes and Social Arenas: Potentials and Challenges of Evolving Border Concepts in a post-Cold War World*, is a new international research project that tracks and interprets conceptual changes in the study of borders. It addresses such changes in relation to fundamental social, economic, cultural and geopolitical transformations that have taken place in the past decades. In addition, major paradigmatic shifts in scientific debate, and in the social sciences in particular, are also considered. State borders are the frame of reference, rather than ethnographic/anthropological boundaries. However, this approach emphasises the social significance and subjectivities of state borders while critically interrogating 'objective' categories of state territoriality and international relations.

Furthermore, EUBORDERSCAPES does not merely focus on the more general, at times highly abstract, level of conceptual change, but also allows for drawing comparisons and contrasts between the ways in which different and often contested conceptualisations of state borders (in terms of their political,

social, cultural and symbolic significance) resonate in concrete contexts at the level of everyday life.

## Project Objectives

EUBORDERSCAPES explores different areas of conceptual change that can be assumed to have concrete impacts on the ways borders both condition and are conditioned by different institutions and actors. In progressing beyond the currently held views in the field, we therefore argue that important connections can be uncovered between borders as a 'challenge' to national (and EU) policies and borders as potential elements of political innovation through conceptual (re-) framings of social, political, economic and cultural spaces. This requires a nuanced and critical re-reading and understanding of borders as resources in terms of the exercise of power, the management of conflict, cross-border co-operation, and the everyday negotiation of borders by 'ordinary' citizens and non-citizens. State borders also reflect and thus help us interpret tensions as well as points of connection within intercultural and interstate relations. In a very direct manner, these tensions are reflected in the practical consequences of controlling borders through security policies, border and visa regimes and immigration policies, at a time when global interdependencies require more forceful international co-operation.

The project studies the evolving concepts of borders in two ways: 1) as an important reflection of political, social and cultural change and 2) as an indicator of possible responses to this change. We also express concerns regarding the difference that state borders make in societal terms – to the opportunities, aspirations, dignity and recognition of groups and individuals. EUBORDERSCAPES thus focuses on the emerging epistemologies of how state borders are perceived, understood, experienced and exploited as political and social resources. Drawing from various sources, such as key academic debates, political discourses, ethnographic research, media representations and shifting cultural understandings of the construction of national borders, the project aims to shed light especially on tensions between national understandings in terms of demarcations

based on ethnicity, citizenship, language and socio-cultural characteristics, etc., and broader supranational/transnational understandings which address borders as areas of contact (and, to an extent, transition) between civilisations, religious and cultural spheres. In doing this, the project also attempts to illuminate the consequences of restrictive and securitised border regimes for interstate and intercultural dialogue.

EUBORDERSCAPES opens several different but largely inter-linked research dimensions suggesting an agenda for a more complex understanding of state borders. Indeed, it is important to link several social, political and methodological issues that at first glance might appear rather disparate. These include:

- Socio-cultural dynamics and strategies that inform (and link) regional, national, and supranational/transnational notions of borders (e.g. understanding European borders as symbolic representations of different degrees of cultural affinity, familiarity and 'otherness');
- Questions of governance, democracy, territoriality, solidarity, and the legal bases of state sovereignty that are raised by the 'securitisation' of borders both between Schengen and non-Schengen EU as well as at the EU's external frontiers;
- In a similar fashion, the practical consequences of hardening EU external borders at the same time that new regional co-operation mechanisms (such as the European Neighbourhood Policy) and more open regional economic spaces are being negotiated;
- The development and consequences of everyday forms of transnationalism, border transcending, border negotiating and networking, both within the EU and between the EU and 'third countries'. Everyday transnationalism is closely linked to issues of intersectionality (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality) as part of the negotiation of borders for work, family, emotional and other reasons. This also has direct impacts on work, welfare and immigrant rights that could challenge national welfare systems;
- Processes of conceptual change that condition the production of geographical knowledge and representations of regional and cultural spaces that are used to frame social arenas and political landscapes;
- The 'mapping' of borders as a methodological challenge that incorporates new ethnographic insights, everyday experience, tacit knowledge of borders and border regions and cultural/emotional encounters at borders into the techniques of border research;
- The potential of borders as resources in the development of different forms of cross-border co-operation and conflict resolution.



The common denominator in these research dimensions is the fact that shifting concepts of borders are challenging received notions of how states, state territories, citizenship and identity relate to each other. As a consequence, new ways of thinking of and dealing with borders as tools for framing social and political action are required in order to more genuinely reflect their impacts at various levels of socio-cultural, political and economic interaction.

### Policy Aspects

EUBORDERSCAPES reflects very different ways in which political and social borders condition our understandings of Europe. Accordingly, policy-relevant aspects of the project involve different levels of political and economic agency and a variety of social spheres. These policy-relevant aspects centre on issues such as the contradictions between security concerns, European values of tolerance and respect for cultural difference and tendencies towards national 'consolidation'. The implications of borders and 'bordering processes' understood in political and socio-cultural terms have a direct bearing on the development of a greater sense of European citizenship and participation. Our EUBORDERSCAPES consortium aims to formulate specific policy-relevant reports that target:

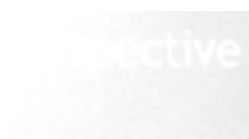
- Gender and Intersectionality;
- Migration and Borders;
- Europe, Borders and Identity Politics;
- local forms of cross-border co-operation;
- use of borders in conflict.

In this way, and informed by case studies and cross-sectional analysis, EUBORDERSCAPES explicitly focuses on the following policy-relevant deliverables:

1. Issues related to the EU's internal bordering (for example, labour migration, illegal immigration, asylum issues, border management, the Schengen visa rules and border regime) that represent a challenge to deeper European integration and the EU's future social and economic development;
2. Issues related to European and national integration policies and the challenges of multiculturalism;
3. Issues related to the impacts of the European Union on its regional neighbours. This includes the direct impacts of border management policies as well as other broader aspects of border-related conditionality that the EU is applying as part of its regional co-operation policies;
4. Based on synergies with EUBORDERREGIONS, we will develop policy considerations regarding the potentials and limits of cross-border co-operation as a tool of conflict resolution, post-conflict confidence building and in promoting local/regional social development.
5. Last but not least, this list is to be supplemented by other issues as our work progresses.



## RAGE (2013–2015): Hate Speech and Populist Othering in Europe: Through the Racism, Age, Gender Looking Glass



RAGE (Hate Speech and Populist Othering in Europe: Through the Racism, Age, and Gender Looking Glass) is a comparative research project that examines populist political discourse and its effect on those 'othered' by such discourse, particularly in the context of economic austerity and dwindling opportunities for young people. Eight academic institutions representing nine EU member states (UK, France, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Denmark, Austria, Finland and Slovenia) are participating in the project consortium.

The research work takes as its starting point contemporary debates on 'hate speech and behaviour' and focuses on particular movements, groups or political parties in the respective countries, as well as the opposing organisations that are the protagonists of such debate. It examines the definition, production and perception of 'hate speech' and 'hate crime', and how young people in Europe engage with or oppose these politics and actions. Through engagement with civil society organisations, the researchers also study the effects of such populism and the discourses of those who seek to challenge 'populist othering'

The project is being developed through three interlocking workstreams, implemented through an integrated multi-method approach (content analysis of online sources, digital ethnography, participant-observation and biographical interviews). Furthermore, round tables and conferences are organised within the framework of the project, in order to make a larger impact on civil society by addressing the sources of 'othering' speech (racist, xenophobic or homophobic) in terms of societal trends, political action and communication, generational problems and subjective perceptions.

The project implementation is being coordinated by the University of Leicester and runs for two years (from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013 until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015). On behalf of CAS Sofia, two senior (Prof Diana Mishkova and Prof. Anna Krasteva) and four junior researchers (Ildiko Otova, Evelina Staykova, Vanya Ivanova, and Denitza Kamenova) are involved in RAGE.





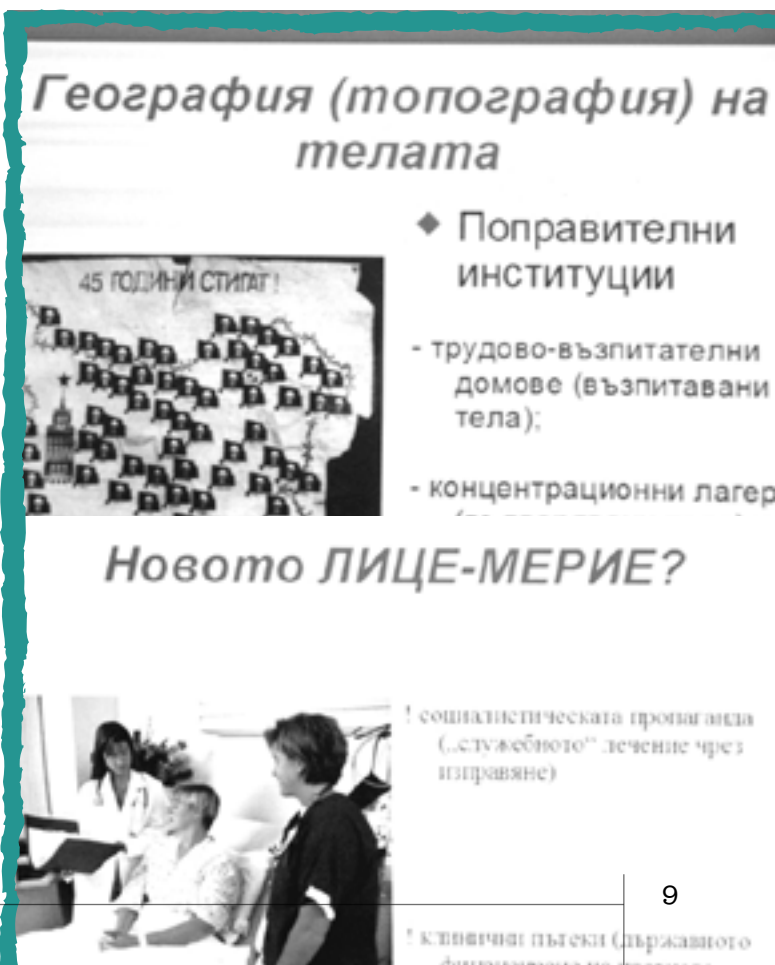
ОБРАЗНОСТ  
НА ЕДНО  
ДРЕСНО  
ЕБЛАГАРСКО  
ИЗКУСТВО

## Existential Socialism III: The Body under Socialism

*The Body under Socialism* is a continuation of the highly successful CAS Discussion Series, *Existential Policies under Socialism*, initiated by CAS Academic Associate Dr Daniela Koleva in 2011–2012,\* and follows three earlier seminars, *Childhood under Socialism* (2008), *Death under Socialism* (2011–2012), and *Love under Socialism* (2013). It is a further scholarly attempt to reconstruct the multifaceted history of Bulgaria's recent yet highly contested past, aiming to reassess the country's history in the second half of the twentieth century by examining the communist regime's attempts to intervene and colonise the private domain and thus forcefully engender, breed and institutionalise 'a socialist way of living'.

Meeting on a monthly basis, *The Body under Socialism* sheds additional light on how official Party ideology and policies in the field of intimacy intersected with the everyday practices of Bulgarian citizens, to be eventually 'domesticated' in the longer run. The seminar focuses on a variety of states and representations of the body, visualizing how the latter was perceived but also subjected to attempted discipline by the authorities. The topics of interest are best summed up by popular, ideologically

\* For more detailed information on the CAS Discussion Series *Existential Policies under Socialism*, as well as Dr D. Koleva's corresponding interview, see *CAS Newsletter 2011–2012*, pp. 16–21.



sanctioned slogans of the period under investigation, and include among others:

- 'A Sound Mind in a Sound Body': the healthy versus the sick body, medical discourses, hygiene, healthy lifestyle, and disabilities;
- 'Mass Sports, Healthy People': professional and mass sports, gymnastics;
- The Body and Gender : sexuality, sex education, homosexuality, prostitution;
- Bodily Care and Related Practices: diets, gyms, nudism, tattooing, fashion (clothing, hairstyles, makeup );
- 'Ready for Work and Defence': control and normalisation, strategies and tactics for positioning the body; normality and abnormality, regimes of hierarchical monitoring, violence and sanctions;
- The Articulation of the Body in legal, aesthetic, medical, etc., discourses;
- Armpits and Fists: bodily metaphors of socialism;
- The Alien Body: racial discourses, international marriages;
- The Individual and the Collective Body: regimes of linking, adjustment, and separation; modes of measurements and evaluation; biopolitical effects of the management of individual bodies.

Amongst the seminar's keynote speakers so far have been Anelia Kassabova, who discussed certain continuities and changes in the Regime's attitude towards the physically impaired (*The Visible and the 'Invisible' Body: Visualisation Policy under Socialism*); Margarita Karamihova, Miglena Ivanova and Svetla Kazalarska, who elaborated on clothing and everyday aspects of the body (*Underwear under Socialism, Sewing Techniques and the Shaping of the Body; The Clad Body under Socialism: Fashion and Anti-Fashion*); Nadezhda Galabova and Elina Venelinova, who explored the challenges of beautification of the female body (*From Supply to Pleasure: the Aesthetisation of the (Female) Body in the Socialist Discourse on Cosmetics, 'A Healthy Spirit in a Beautiful Body': Recommendations in Manuals for Housewives*), as well as Kristina Yordanova, who surveyed editorial attitudes towards various sex- and youth-related issues – marriage, abortion, sexual violence and rape – as discussed in



the pages of the journal *Family and School (Can Youth Sexuality be Taught?)*. An interesting approach to investigating Communist existential policies towards the sick body was adopted by Stojan Stavru, who explored the numerous restrictions and limitations of sick citizens' legal rights in Communist labour legislation (*The Sick Subject – the Scorned Body*).

Other participants in the Discussion Series, such as Evelina Kelbecheva and Violeta Decheva, analytically outlined the representations of the body in the arts and on stage (*The Body on the Monument; The Actor's Body in the Aesthetic, Biographic and Institutional Discourse of the Early Communist Era*), while Todor Hristov and Nikolai Vukov applied a Foucauldian discourse analysis to what used to be the expected (i.e. politically 'correct') female sexuality under Communism (*The Hysterisation of the Socialist Female Body – Biopolitical Scopes of Reproduction*), and highlighted the Regime's political considerations of early *in vitro* fertilisation methods and techniques.

Further speakers in the Discussion Series *The Body under Socialism* include Khristina Popova, who will discuss aspects of the Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov's biography and the political instru-

mentalisation of his theory of conditional reflexes by the Regime, and Gergana Popova, who intends to delineate the diversity of official attitudes towards mass and professional sports as tools for disciplining and moulding the collective body while endowing it with national/istic feelings and thus subjecting it to the Party's ideological needs. In June 2014, Momchil Hristov, Veronika Dimitrova, and Elena Stoykova will be discussing the biotechnical construction of the socialist residential unit and related communal and personal (female) hygiene, as well as addressing the intersectionality of gender with categories of social denomination in the re/socialization programme during the early stages of Socialism. Finally, Mikhail Gruev will tackle the (then) taboo topic of paid love (prostitution) under Socialism as it emerges from the annals of the Committee for State Security, while Milena Angelova will be illuminating the queuing practices in the bygone era of the state-regulated economy, coupled with chronic goods deficiency.

Continuing the established pattern, the organizers of *The Body under Socialism* hope to effectively sum up and polish the seminar's findings in a forthcoming volume, thus sharing its scholarly outcomes with a wider readership.



# Daniela Koleva (ed) Death under Socialism: Heroics and Post-Heroics

*A Collection of Articles*

**CAS/Riva Publishers, 2013**

The way we die reveals the essential qualities of the way we live. Could there be then something like 'a socialist death' to correspond to 'a socialist lifestyle'? Undoubtedly, death is a universal biological fact free from the impact of ideologies, faiths, and political regimes. However, death gives rise to an incredible number of cultural reactions that do not simply indicate its importance, but also how profoundly it has been enmeshed with conventions, normative expectations, rituals, symbols, etc., which – unlike the biological fact of dying – undergo significant changes over time. How then did the Bulgarian Communist Regime 'domesticate' death? What became the new sanctity; with what new essence was death endowed under the impact of official Communist ideology? How was 'socialist death' thought of, and how was it adjusted to the Communist mega-narrative? And how was 'common', 'unheroic' death considered and controlled by authorities, especially in a society where religion had been pushed to the margins and deprived of its traditional function to provide answers to existential questions? CAS's new publication, *Death under Socialism: Heroics and Post-Heroics*, comprises the academic outcomes of the seminar papers and debates of CAS's first discussion series, *Existential Socialism*, and aims to provide some answers to the manifold ways death under Socialism was conceived and thought of. The book launch took place on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014, in the CAS conference hall, where the collection was presented by Profs. Kristina Popova, Ivan Elenkov, and Vladimir Gradev.



2013–2014

CAS DISCUSSION SERIES



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# Metamorphosis and Catastrophe

**A Joint Venture International Workshop of the University of Tokyo, Centre for Philosophy (UTCP), the Institute for Critical Social Studies, Sofia Literary Seminar, the Cultural Centre of Sofia University and the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia**

November 2013 was a particularly rich month for events. CAS served as a host venue for two very different but equally captivating international workshops, *Metamorphosis and Catastrophe*, and *Digital Creativity in Times of Crisis: Bulgarian Networked Culture in Global Contexts*. Organised by Dr Darin Tenev and Dr Orlin Spassov, respectively – both established Bulgarian University lecturers and former CAS Fellows – the workshops brought together scholars from Japan, Germany, the UK, France and Bulgaria to reflect from various angles on numerous issues of importance for the contemporary world. It was our pleasure to witness and participate in the enthusiasm of the presenters and attendants alike, as well as to follow their heated debates in French and/or English. We would like to warmly thank the workshops' organisers for kindly summarising those scholarly gatherings for us and bringing them to the attention of our reading audience.

**International Workshop *Metamorphosis and Catastrophe*, 1–2 November 2013**

**Venue: CAS Conference Hall**

The international workshop *Metamorphosis and Catastrophe* was a joint enterprise of the Center for Philosophy at the University of Tokyo (UTCP), Japan, the Institute for Critical Social Studies (ICSS), Bulgaria, and the Sofia Literary Seminar (SLS), in cooperation with the Cultural Center of Sofia University and the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia (CAS). Within the framework of the same event, the workshop was preceded on the 31st of October by a public lecture delivered by Prof. Yasuo Kobayashi, a leading expert in contemporary philosophy, culture and representation, and Director of the UTCP, at the University of Sofia. As the University's main building was occupied by student protesters voicing their demands for social justice, Prof. Kobayashi was additionally invited to speak in front of the occupants as a *soixant huitard* – thus recalling the French students' protest movement of May 1968 – and he did so with great success.





## CAS AS A HOST VENUE

The joint Bulgarian-Japanese-French workshop was Professor Kobayashi and Dr Boyan Manchev's idea, and its execution was managed by Dr Darin Tenev, Director of ICSS, Prof. Miglena Nikolchina\* and Kamelia Spassova (President of SLS). It was they who invited CAS Sofia as a partner and facilitator of the event.

The topic of Prof. Kobayashi's lecture, "Never Cede the Void: Thinking the Disaster after the Catastrophe (or the Impossible Metamorphosis Toward the Wise)", served as a conceptual introduction to the problematic of the workshop. He eloquently introduced part of his recent work on the notion of catastrophe and pointed the discussion in the direction of Dr Boyan Manchev's (New Bulgarian University and Collège International de Philosophie, Paris) key concept of metamorphosis. Dr. Manchev's own presentation at the workshop was also focused on the problematic of the catastrophe, and dealt with the topic of 'The Obscure Doppelgänger of Prometheus: disorganisation and catastrophe'. Kamelia Spassova's, Maria Kalinova's, Dimitar Bozhkov's, and Enyo Stoyanov's (Sofia University) papers followed the same line of thought and tackled the issue of catastrophe in a direct way. Other participants, such as Riyako Yamaoka (UTCP), Kei Kiritani (University of Tokyo/University of Strasbourg), Darin Tenev (Sofia University), Hanako Takayama and Shunsuke Minami (both University of Tokyo), addressed the problematic by focusing on particular thinkers, such as Blanchot, Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy. Prof. Camille Fallen (France), one of the world's leading specialists in the field of anomaly, presented a paper entitled 'Anomaly and Metamorphosis, the Anomal Catastrophe' in which she traced the complex relationship between catastrophe theory, as developed by Rene Thom, and anomaly. Futoshi Hoshino, a new rising star on the scene of Japanese philosophy, spoke about the 'Subtraction of Being' in Henri Bergson's work, thus revealing the continuing relevance and applicability of the French philosopher's ideas.

The last two papers were by Bulgarian philosophers Deyan Deyanov (Plovdiv University/ICSS) and Miglena Nikolchina. Deyanov introduced the neologism 'ecollapse' to point to the specificity of arguably the most imminent catastrophe today. Nikolchina, in her 'Inflecting Catastrophe', posed the question of representing catastrophe and what it would mean for a catastrophe to be repeated.

The lively discussions, the dialogical development of ideas, the opening of new perspectives for investigation, and last but not least the friendly, hospitable and stimulating atmosphere generated by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia, transformed the workshop into a wonderful experience, as well as one of the most important events in Bulgarian academic life in 2013.



## Prof. Dr. Andreas Kilcher

### Assimilation and Circulation. A Universalistic Model of Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century

***Assimilation and Circulation. A Universalistic Model of Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century*** deals with the rise of dynamic concepts of knowledge in the nineteenth century. This rise, according to Professor Kilcher, is rooted in an epistemic change around 1800. Rational or empirical predefined objects yield a collective objectification. . Metaphysical constituents such as truth, world, reason, subject, origin, which dominated eighteenth-century epistemes, gradually corrode. This multi-layered dynamisation of knowledge, its order and exchange, is illustrated by the emergence of concepts such as assimilation and circulation. Whereas the Enlightenment devalued mimesis in contrast to originality and autonomy, and considered man as the key actor of writing and knowledge, in the nineteenth century the processual principles of assimilation and circulation emerged as new and versatile parameters of knowledge.

In his lecture at CAS, Prof. Kilcher explored this thesis through two examples from the nineteenth century: Novalis's encyclopedic concept of science and Gabriel Tarde's liberal concept of a society of imitation. Novalis (a poet, author, philosopher and representative of early German Romanticism), conceived circulation within the Romantic notion of universal relation, according to which the most disparate things may be brought together in a complex relationship. With Gabriel Tarde (a French sociologist, criminologist and social psychologist who envisaged sociology as based on small psychological interactions among individuals), the figures of similarity and circulation, in turn, gained their role within the liberalistic idea of a universal 'law of imitation' that manages natural phenomena as well as society.



On 8 October 2013, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia enjoyed a strong start to its new 2013–2014 academic year with Professor Andreas Kilcher's public lecture, ***Assimilation and Circulation. A Universalistic Model of Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century.***

**Andreas Kilcher** is Professor of Literature and Cultural Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, Switzerland. Born in Basel in 1963, he studied German Literature, History and Philosophy in Basel and Munich. He was a PhD student and Fellow at the Franz Rosenzweig Research Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and assistant in the Department of German of the University of Basel, where he received his Doctor of Philosophy in 1996. In 1996–2002 he held an assistantship in the Department of German Philology of the University of Munster, where he became an Assistant Professor in 2002. During the period 2004–2008, he worked as full Professor of Modern German Literature at the University of Tübingen. In 2008 he accepted his current professorship in Zürich.

Professor Kilcher's main research interests are in the fields of the History of German-Jewish Literature and Culture, Literary and Cultural Studies, and Esoteric Studies. His monographs include (in German), *The Language Theory of Kabbala as Aesthetic Paradigm* (*Die Sprachtheorie der Kabbala als ästhetisches Paradigma*, Stuttgart: Metzler 1998); *mathesis and poesis. The Encyclopedia of Literature, 1600–2000* (*mathesis und poesis. Die Enzyklopädie der Literatur 1600 bis 2000*, München: Fink 2003); *Shared Joy. Schiller-Reception in Jewish Modernity* (*Geteilte Freude. Schiller-Rezeption in der jüdischen Moderne*, München, 2006); and *Franz Kafka*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp 2008; *Max Frisch*. Berlin: Suhrkamp 2011.





# Boris Deliradev: Books and Nineteenth-Century Chirpan A Personal Encounter with a Small Library in Fourteen Languages

**Boris, how did you come across these books and what feelings did this collection evoke in you initially?**

**Boris Deliradev:** Initially, it was just curiosity. I heard from the chief librarian in the Chirpan library that there was an unidentified number of Bulgarian and foreign books dating back to the Ottoman era and I wanted to see them. They were mixed with the rest of the library stock and there was no catalogue or list. When we set them apart, it turned out there were 182 of them, in fourteen languages, published between 1801 and 1878.

**How did your investigation proceed?**

**B.D.:** In 2010, I invited my friends, colleagues and family to donate small amounts of money as presents for my birthday and I set out to research the books with the collected sum. By the end of that year I had made 4,500 photographs of the books' title pages, tables of contents, introductions, illustrations,

hand-written notes and everything else that attracted my attention. In the next two years, the books were identified and annotated by staff at the National Library, the Czech Centre and Polish Institute in Sofia, as well as by free-lance translators and myself. I now have a draft catalogue with annotations in Bulgarian and the original languages, and in the meantime, I've also asked the translators from Ottoman Turkish and Greek – Aziz Şakir-Taş and Svetlana Doncheva – to translate some extracts for me.

**What surprised you about this collection, which is extraordinary, at least in linguistic terms?**

**B.D.:** Quite simply, the variety of languages and subjects. I was born in 1970 and spent my first seven years in Chirpan, before moving to Plovdiv, but we continued visiting. From a child's and teenager's point of view, Chirpan in the 1970s and 80s was a monolingual, monocultural

place. Everyone we knew was Bulgarian. People studied and understood Russian, but that was it. There were Roma people in Chirpan, too, but they were a smaller community than they are today and lived away from us, so I didn't see much of them.

Later, when I studied the Ottoman period in school, the emphasis was on Bulgarian language and culture, so I wasn't aware that so many languages had been spoken or at least read in those days.

**What languages are the books in?**

**B.D.:** The main languages are Bulgarian, Greek, Ottoman Turkish, Russian, Church Slavonic and French. There are individual books in Serbian, Czech, Arabic, Persian, Polish, German and Italian. One book is written in the rare Syriac script and we don't yet know what language it is in. I have the address of a university department in Germany that may be able to





2013–2014

help, but I haven't gotten around to writing to them. There is also one book in Ottoman Turkish written with Greek letters.

#### What can be inferred about the community the books circulated in?

**B.D.:** Before they became part of the library, they were individually owned. About a third bear the name of their owners. At least twenty-five belonged to Yanko Kochev, the chairman of a small public Bulgarian library set up in Chirpan in 1867 and closed in 1873. The other names are Bulgarian, too, with the exception of two Greek and one Turkish name, the latter appearing on the fly-leaf of a Greek book. According to a statistical and encyclopedic magazine that is also part of the collection, in 1870, Chirpan and its adjacent villages had a population of '14,232 Bulgarians, 4,151 Muslims and 806 Gypsies'. This was the male population only, as women were not counted in the censuses. Most families made their

living from agriculture and handicrafts.

**What made you embrace the books as a topic of research and public presentation?**

**B.D.:** Going through so many pages in so many languages was a special experience, even though initially I didn't understand what many of them were about. I realized I knew little about the mindset of the people who had inhabited Chirpan in the nineteenth century, as well as those who inhabited present-day Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire as a whole. In the big libraries in Bulgaria, there are many such books from that period in just as many, and probably more, languages. But they are separated according to language and you never see them together. So, unless you have specialised knowledge, you can't tell they existed in a shared environment and were read by the same people. Because the books in the Chirpan library are in one place, comparisons can be made easily: translations in Bulgarian and Ottoman Turkish of the same French novel, *The Adventures of Telemachus* by François Fénelon; collections of Orthodox chants in Bulgarian and Greek; collections of sample letters in Greek and Ottoman Turkish; translations of the Old and New Testaments in Bulgarian, Ottoman Turkish and Persian, etc.

**What did you learn about the mental framework of the people who owned and read these books?**

**B.D.:** The most essential thing I've learned is that you cannot understand our ancestors from that era if you don't think of them as both Bulgarian *and* Ottoman. The way history is taught in Bulgarian schools nowadays – from the completion of *Slavonic-Bulgarian History* by Paisius of Hilendar in 1762, through the movements for Bulgarian-language education and an independent church in the 1830s and onwards, to the revolutionary movement of the 1860s and 70s – places an emphasis on the opposition between Bulgarians and Ottomans. And understandably so: this is the process that gradually differentiated Bulgarians from other ethnic groups in the Ottoman Empire and eventually led to the creation of an independent Bulgarian state. But what is lacking in school history books is an understanding that Bulgarians were also an integral part of Ottoman society. This was common knowledge in the newly established Bulgaria of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: Bulgarians of that era wouldn't have been surprised that their ancestors in the nineteenth century, the well-educated ones, read in Greek, Ottoman Turkish, Russian, Church Slavonic and French, in addition to Bulgarian. But to a general contemporary public, that knowledge has been lost or obscured,

not without the help of communist-era textbook writing.

**Is there anything contemporary Bulgarian society could learn from these books?**

**B.D.:** Modern Bulgaria was born out of the Ottoman era. It sounds like a truism, but before coming into contact with these books I wasn't aware of its profound implications. The more we understand the Ottoman era, the more we will understand our ancestors and, to an extent, ourselves. It is certainly not the only component of our cultural heritage, but it is an important one. There is a sense of acceptance and peace that comes with such a realisation.

At the same time, considering the variety and breadth of Ottoman history does not negate the national perspective. It adds depth and substance to it. To give an example from the collection: the presence of a book of seventeenth-century interpretations of Islamic law and a collection of nineteenth-century Ottoman civic laws does not undo the significance of William Gladstone's pamphlet *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, written in defense of the Bulgarian population in the wake of the April Uprising of 1876 or the *Materials for the Study of Bulgaria* printed in Bucharest for the Russian Army on the eve of the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878, which are both also part







erner Orient in Berlin. She has written a thesis on Ottoman travellers' perceptions of the newly independent Balkan states in the period 1870-1918. Apparently, there is a large body of these travelogues, with few if any of them translated into Bulgarian. They were written by well-educated Turks travelling through the Balkans on their way to and from Western Europe. The poet Yahya Kemal was one of them. Leyla told me that any of these writers would have been happy to be present at my talk in Berlin. From historians and librarians who came to the presentations at the Center for Advanced Study and the American Research Center in Sofia I've received a number of ideas and pointers that I intend to pursue.

**Where are the books stored now? And where do you think their place should be in the future?**

**B.D.:** They are in the library, in a better room than the one they had before. I definitely think they should remain in Chirpan. Because of the great earthquake of 1928, the town has few remaining buildings and artifacts dating back to the nineteenth century and earlier. The books are among those few. They would best be kept locally.

**Have you ever considered expanding your findings into academic research?**

**B.D.:** Not really. What I've done so far is the first stage of a bigger project. I intend to make an exhibition that will bring out both the content and context of the collection – local, regional and global – in an engaging contemporary form, with the help of an architect, designer, artists, etc. But to get there, there has to be a further period of study, more work with translators, consultations with a historian, etc. I've almost run out of the original money I gathered. So I must find a source of funding. The problem is that it is a cultural, not an academic project. ... I have one request: would you publish my e-mail at the end of the interview? I would be grateful to receive feedback from people doing similar work in other parts of the Balkans, as well as ideas for funding.

*Interviewed by the Editor*

of the collection. On a deeper level, the knowledge in these books is interrelated, as were the people and institutions that produced them.

**Why would this collection be relevant for Europe today?**

**B.D.:** To answer this question, I must first answer the question why the issues it raises are relevant for the Balkans. From what I understand, the situation in other Balkan countries is similar to that in Bulgaria. History textbooks and museums throughout the peninsula emphasise each nation's literary and cultural tradition from the Ottoman period at the expense, and sometimes to the full exclusion, of everyone else's. Even in Turkey, I am told, the Ottoman heritage is presented simply as a Turkish heritage. I am poorly travelled in the Balkans and I would be grateful to receive information to the contrary. But if what I hear is correct, we can begin to reconstruct that history more fully and eventually come to a shared understanding of the period. It won't be easy, but it seems that after two Balkan wars, two world wars, a cold war and the Yugoslavian wars, the time may have come for the process to begin. Apparently, there is already a movement forward in academic circles, but the penetration of academic work across societies

is limited. If we succeed, it would be an achievement comparable to the shared understanding of history Western Europe has achieved since the Second World War. It would be a transfer of European values to local content and context. I see my work as a small step in this direction.

**What audiences have you presented your work to so far?**

**B.D.:** I have so far talked about it four times: once in Chirpan, to a group of students from Romania, Turkey, Spain and Bulgaria working on an EU project on the history of the book; a second time in Berlin, as part of the exhibition *In Search of Europe* organised by Zentrum Moderner Orient, Germany's federal institute for Oriental studies; and twice in Sofia, at the Centre for Advanced Study and the American Research Center. Later this year, I will present it to a general audience in Chirpan and to the Sozopol Fiction Seminar, whose upcoming theme is 'Literature and History'.

**What feedback have you received so far?**

**B.D.:** The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The most memorable response I've had was from Leyla von Mende, a German researcher of Turkish descent working at the Zentrum Mod-



## ладино / джудезмо

- говорим и писмен език на евреи  
произход
- Какво се случва в края на 15 век
- Какво се случва в Отоманската
- лингва франка
- 20 и 21 век - застрашен език

# Dr Leah Davcheva (BG) and Dr Richard Fay (UK) Linguistic Identity Play amongst Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria: A Narrative Study

*On 16th April 2014, the Centre of Advanced Study Sofia hosted a lecture by Dr Leah Davcheva in which she presented an exploratory research study, collaboratively run with Dr Richard Fay of The University of Manchester. The audience – a diverse mix of fellow researchers, members of the Jewish community in Sofia, and friends – brought forward insightful observations and questions, an overview of which follows the brief summary of Dr Davcheva's talk below. We would like to thank Dr Davcheva for sharing insights about her talk with CAS readership.*

## Ladino – a loss or an opportunity?

Ladino (variously known as Judesmo, Judæo-Spanish, or Spanyol amongst others) is the heritage language of cultural affiliation for many Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria and beyond. It is a Romance language with roots in Old Spanish, which travelled with the Sephardic Jews (*Sephardim*) who were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula by decree in 1492. It contains elements from Hebrew and Aramaic (reflecting its function as a Jewish language) and from languages such as Arabic, Turkish, Greek, French (via schooling) and Bulgarian (reflecting the co-territorial status of Ladino and other languages in the Ottoman Empire, where many *Sephardim* settled). Ladino played an important cultural and communicational role for Sephardic Jewish com-

munities, including those in Bulgaria, the focus of this study. As elsewhere, the community of Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria is now dwindling and Ladino is often discussed in terms of language endangerment and of cultural loss, both for the diaspora and for humanity more widely. However, the Ladino experiences of the Sephardim in Bulgaria, as set against the backdrop of their changing political and social realities, provide rich insights regarding the linguistic complexities of identity. We are interested in how the members of this community draw upon their Bulgarian and Ladino resources to define themselves, to articulate their various identities, and to communicate within and beyond Bulgarian society.





**Dr Leah Davcheva** is an intercultural consultant and facilitator at AHA Moments, a centre of intercultural learning, education and research based in Sofia, Bulgaria. She works with educators, young people and business practitioners to assist them in developing routes for personal and collective achievements. She is interested in the intercultural agenda of mobility (both historically and in the present day), linguistic and cultural diversity in the Balkans, mutuality, and inclusion. She has previously collaborated with Richard on educational projects and narrative research studies.

**Dr. Richard Fay** is a Lecturer in Education at The University of Manchester specialising in TESOL, intercultural communication, and researcher education (including narrative research). He is an ethnomusicologist, klezmer aficionado, and leader of the university's klezmer ensemble, the Michael Kahan Kapelye. His intercultural interests (educational, linguistic, cultural, and musical) are focused on, amongst other contexts, the Balkans.

### The study

Ours is a narrative study through which we initially sought, as influenced by the traditions of oral history, to preserve – in several languages – the Ladino-focused life stories of a largely elderly group of Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria. Subsequently, we expanded it to explore these stories for intercultural insights and to develop a conceptual framework for them.

In terms of its design and methodology, the project involves several languages, i.e. it was researched multilingually as well as focused on multilingual communities. It uses researcher narratives as an additional means for managing the inherent reflexivities in our work as researchers.

### Five zones of interculturality

Through our analysis of the narratives, we explore an earlier, essentially twentieth-century, age of interculturality, of transnational migrations and affiliations. We have developed a five-zoned framework that we use to make sense of the Ladino-foregrounded interculturality of the storytellers. Thus the storytellers can be understood to be performing their identity

in terms of five, to some extent overlapping zones, namely:

- (1) the (intra-)personal, that is, a zone of internal dialogue;
- (2) the domestic, that is, a zone for the family;
- (3) the local, that is, a zone for the Sephardic community in Bulgaria;
- (4) the diasporic, that is, a zone for the wider Sephardic Jewish community; and
- (5) the international, that is, the international community of Spanish speakers.

### Some intercultural implications

The stories in our study remind us that wherever we recognise and value the interculturality of individuals and their contexts, a vast arena of identity performance opens up before us, in which languages, cultures, affiliations, and identities constantly interact. The stories remind us also that intercultural communication – despite discussions of virtual worlds, global villages, transnational flows, and local complexities – is not a new phenomenon, and that whenever and wherever individuals are seen to be culturally and linguistically complex, living in and between dynamic societies and in changing (political, etc)



times, intercultural communication is an omnipresent possibility.

The Ladino stories challenge the still all too dominant essentialising and reductionist discourses and the vision they enshrine. In them, we witness individuals making their way in a changeable world. As they do so, they call upon the various linguistic and cultural resources at their disposal to smooth their passage through life, despite fickle political parameters and other obstacles.

Although these stories seem bound in time and place, we believe they reveal a great deal about the zones in which complex individuals perform their multiple identities as set in ever-changing contexts. As such, they are as relevant today and for the future as they are rooted in the past.

#### Questions and comments from the participants in the discussion

Questions and comments ranged from the very specific to others which were more broadly formulated.

They all provided a stimulus for thought and further development.

One of the participants was interested in what kind of books the storytellers' grandparents read in Ladino and where they got their supply of books from. There was a question concerning the feeling of shame and uneasiness that a storyteller mentions in relation to the telltale traces of Ladino he could detect in his Bulgarian expression, which could be spotted as Jewish. The attention of another participant in the discussion was caught by one of the quotes from the stories, namely, *"If you think of it, we became 'Bulgarian Jews' only 70-80 years ago. Before that we used to be Balkan Jews. Should we have found ourselves among Jews from other Balkan countries, there would hardly have been anything to make us inherently different from each other – except for the language our passports were written out in."* He wondered which historical events brought about the foregrounding of the Bulgarian national identity of the Sephardim. Yet another participant suggested that the researchers consider the possibility of conceptualising another zone of identity performance, namely that of the national.





CAS AS A HOST VENUE



# International Workshop Digital Creativity in Times of Crisis: Bulgarian Networked Culture in Global Contexts

## Venue: CAS Conference Hall

On November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia hosted the International Workshop *Digital Creativity in Times of Crisis: Bulgarian Networked Culture in Global Contexts*. The workshop was organised by Dr. Vlad Strukov (Assoc. Prof. at University of Leeds and editor of *Digital Icons: Studies in Russian, Eurasian and Central European New Media*), Dr. Henrike Schmidt (Free University of Berlin), and Dr. Orlin Spassov (Assoc. Prof. at Sofia University). CAS supported the participation of the foreign organisers of the event.

Digital and networked communication technologies have evolved into a mass phenomenon everywhere in the world in the past two decades. The so called 'new media' continue to be 'new' thanks to the rapid changes in usage patterns and social functions, for example in terms of political mobilisation. At the same time, distinct historical narratives of digital culture and its dynamics have emerged. In Central and Eastern Europe, the proliferation of computer mediated communication (CMC) and information and communication technology (ICT) has coincided with a period of radical political transformations.

The International Workshop aimed to investigate the significance of digital creativity at times of crisis, both in the historical and contemporary contexts, and considered Bulgaria as its main case study. Some of the specific questions discussed during the event were:

- What are the characteristics of the early infrastructural, economic and cultural development of the Internet in Southeastern Europe and in Bulgaria?
- What kind of historical narratives of digital culture in Bulgaria

and the region have emerged?

- To what extent are the specific dynamics of digital communication and ICT development in Bulgaria and in the region informed or shaped by real or imagined political, economical or cultural crises?
- In what ways do digital technologies and creative industries embody reactions to and escape from economic and political crises?
- Are the creative communication techniques used for social mobilisation a reaction to political crises?
- How do digital artistic projects react to the phenomenon of political, economic and cultural crises?

Ten researchers participated in the workshop. Among them, Mariya Ivancheva (CAS Fellow) presented on the theme *Discontent 1.0 and/or 2.0: Notes on the Bulgarian Protests 2012–2013*. Ruzha Smilova (Sofia University) presented a report devoted to *Digital Strategies for Solving Collective Action Problems*. Valentina Gueorguieva (Sofia University) presented a study on *The Role of Social Networking Sites in Counter-Democracy: Bulgaria's Reactive Mobilisations During 2012–2013*. Dessislava Lilova (Southwest University) proposed for discussion the topic *The Birth of the New Bulgarian Republic: The Subcultural World of LARP.bg*.

The workshop successfully combined academic and artistic contributions. Two prominent Bulgarian digital artists were invited to participate at the end of the event. Krassimir Terziev presented his new work in the cycle *Intimate Distance*. Luchezar Boyadjiev discussed the topic *Native Resolution: Questions of Time and Truth in Digital Photography*. Both presentations were followed by animated debate.



Ivan Biliarsky



Bilyana Kourtasheva



Svetla Kazalarska



Ekaterina Nikova



Nevena Dimova



Martin Belov



Gergana Dineva



Anna Krasteva



# 2014





# Advanced Academia Programme: Public Lectures, 2014

## Venue: Sofia City Library

- 
- 4 March**     **Ivan Biliarsky, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences:**  
The Legitimizing Figure: Women and Power, Women in Power  
in Pre-Modern Times
- 
- 11 March**     **Bilyana Kourtasheva, New Bulgarian University:**  
Totalitarian (Quasi-)Translatability: The Case of 1970/1980s Bulgaria.  
Institutions, Mechanisms, Consequences
- 
- 18 March**     **Svetla Kazalarska, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences :**  
Fashioning Fashion in Socialist Bulgaria
- 
- 25 March**     **Ekaterina Nikova, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences:**  
The Withering Away of the Balkan Village
- 
- 1 April**     **Nevena Dimova, New Bulgarian University:**  
"Be Yourself, Become a Peasant":  
Economic Practices and Social Relations  
in a Bulgarian Eco Community
- 
- 8 April**     **Martin Belov, Sofia University:**  
The Development of the Executive Power  
in Balkan Constitutionalism
- 
- 15 April**     **Gergana Dineva, Sofia University:**  
The Birth of the Concept "Personality" and the Problem of Identity,  
and Their Impact on the Transition from Medieval Ontotheology  
to Modern Critical Theory
- 
- 22 April**     **Anna Krasteva, New Bulgarian University:**  
Bordering the Balkans





## Drs Simone Bellezza and Mariya Ivancheva: *Venezuela is not Ukraine?* Reflections on the Emergent Protest Movements in the Post-Socialist World

The idea of the *Venezuela is not Ukraine* seminar emerged spontaneously as a spillover of CAS Fellows' seminar discussions, and may serve as an excellent example of how academic and social bonding amongst our international scholars could diversify their original research ideas and generate cooperation and unexpected enterprises. An *ad hoc* event, this interactive workshop addressed 'hot' topics resonant with current socio-political problems that are still making the headlines. The seminar was convened by CAS Fellows, Dr Simone Attilio Bellezza, Italy, and Dr Mariya Ivancheva, Bulgaria, experts in the field of the twentieth-century political history of Ukraine, and the sociology of social movements in contemporary Venezuela, respectively\*. It aimed to bring together data and details from recent and still ongoing protests in two otherwise distant and unrelated countries in Eastern Europe and Latin America – Ukraine and Venezuela – in order to identify similarities or divergences in their post-Socialist developments, and to endorse a better understanding of modern-day protest movements as a whole.

Could there be any connection between the riots in Ukraine and Venezuela within the period November 2013–February/March 2014, especially given that since 1999, Venezuela has been following initially a *Third Way*, and since 2005 a program of Socialism of the twenty-first century in its socio-economic development and has dramatically reduced its levels of poverty, while Ukraine has been aiming, though less successfully, at building a market economy in a highly economically polarised society? The very theme, undoubtedly, points to the political unrests that swept across the two countries and that soon assumed an anti-governmental

character. In Ukraine, the trigger point was the refusal on the part of the government, headed by ex-President Yanukovich, to proceed with a European Union deal and its substitution by closer bonds with its historical ally, Russia, instead. As a result, desperate, pro-EU (in this context, the EU was understood as European, and in contrast to Eurasian) people from all social layers and of various ethnic communities gathered on Kiev's *Independence Square*, the *Maidan*, to openly demonstrate against their government's foreign reorientation, and to demand an overall reassessment of Ukraine's domestic affairs. In Venezuela, the social riots that burst out in the western states of Tachira and Merida were fuelled by the highway murder of a popular Venezuelan actress and the attempted rape of a female student in early January/February 2014. Initially targeting excessive levels of uncurbed crime, the protests in Venezuela soon escalated in scope and spirit, adding frustration about certain "food shortages" (in effect shortages of certain goods for everyday use, but no significant food deficits), the high levels of inflation and the country's general economic performance to their original intent. (Yet, as Dr Ivancheva observed, crime and a sloppy economy can not be ascribed to the Chavez and Maduro governments only, but were already part of the pre-1990s Venezuelan society). In both cases protesters had grown tired of deepening political corruption and demanded an overall change in their political cultures and their countries' social fabric. Yet, in both cases, the protests mostly eclipsed economic demands on behalf of the poor and the possibility for cross-class alliances. Instead they supported pro-Western values and demands central especially to the politically disenfranchised and downward mobile middle class.

\* For further information on Drs Simone Bellezza's and Mariya Ivancheva's fields of study and CAS project research, see CAS Advanced Fellowships Programme.



Further challenging points between the *Maidan* and *LaSalida* emerged when the obvious bifurcation of the rioters' ultimate goals and long-term perspectives were taken in account – and this was a consequence of the protesters' non-uniform social composition. Mighty financial circles in both Kiev and Caracas attempted to utilise and channel the energy of the protests in order to benefit from a redistribution of political forces, and most of all, of the market. Unsurprisingly, the mass media emerged as instrumental in the presentations of the turmoil. Largely privately owned by members of the financial elites, the media had been turned into tools for public manipulation meant to secure the economic power of their holders (see the case of the Ukrainian TV Channel 5 owned by the country's 'chocolate king', and that of the newspaper media company, *Cadena Capriles*, co-owned by a important oppositional leader).

Governmental reactions towards protesters in Ukraine and Venezuela also appear to share much in common. Official authorities in both countries equally resorted to mass arrests and corporal violence (including killing, though in the Venezuelan case murders were mostly committed by protesters who often killed passers by and civilians), conveniently assisted by the shady, criminal sector (see the active involvement of the 'titushki' in Ukraine). They equally aggressively fought against protest participants by labelling them (rightly so, in the case of Venezuela) 'perpetrators' and adherents of an 'undemocratic agenda' (in the Ukrainian case, referring to them as 'fascists', even though polls revealed rather slender public support for the extreme right-wing sector), thus justifying and legitimating their own brutality. Yet questions regarding the source of the abuse of power in certain Ukrainian and Venezuelan shootings and murders went unanswered.

Importantly, in both Bellezza's and Ivancheva's studies, an identical absence of leadership surfaced in the unfolding protest movements. In Ukraine and Venezuela alike, the oppositional leaders weakened their popularity and reputation – last but not least, in the case of Ukraine at least, because of their inclinations to collaborate with the formal government. Thus, in both countries, the space for a distinct and distinguishable leader was left dangerously unoccupied.

Besides outlining the backbone of the November 2013 – February/March 2014 protests in Ukraine and Venezuela, Dr Ivancheva and Dr Bellezza provided ample historical and economic background to contextualize the events. This included rich photographic illustrations, some of which were taken during the authors' first-hand witnessing of the unrest: see, for instance, Dr Bellezza observing colourful artefacts exhibited by artists on the *Maidan*; or enjoy Dr Ivancheva's shots of life in the lavishly green, wealthy quarters in Caracas contrasted with the poverty-stricken, graffiti-covered, and communal-centred working-class Barrio, which also houses the Chavez/Maduro electorate.

Furthermore, Bellezza and Ivancheva drew parallels with other recent instances of political unrest in their countries of research, like the successful Ukrainian Orange Revolution of 2004 and the failed 2002 *coup d'état* against the Chavez government in Venezuela, thus focusing on historical continuity with the current political events, but also delineating divergences from former social disturbances. Ivancheva and Bellezza refrained from drawing clear-cut conclusions on the emergent protest movements in post-Socialist Ukraine and Venezuela, preferring – rightly so – to leave the final word to their audience by ending their papers with a thought-provoking question: *Is Venezuela not Ukraine?*



## A Talk with Former CAS Fellows:

**Dr. Maria Ivanova,  
Dr. Raluca Grosescu,  
Dr. Sara Barbieri  
and Dr. Konstantina Zanou**



The interviews with Drs Maria Ivanova (Russia), Sara Barbieri (Italy), Raluca Grosescu (Romania) and Konstantina Zanou (Cyprus) were carried out in June 2013, when their fellowships at CAS Advanced Academia Programme, summer term 2012/13, were drawing to a close. We grasped the opportunity to discuss and evaluate their work and stay at the Centre and in Sofia as a whole.

Maria, who holds a PhD from Lomonosov Moscow State University, is an expert in the field of History of Philosophy and Slavic Studies; Sara completed her PhD degree in Contemporary History at the University of San Marino; Konstantina received her PhD degree in European and Mediterranean History from the University of Pisa, Italy; and Raluca was awarded a doctoral degree in Political Science from the University Paris Ouest Nanterre. While at CAS Sofia, their research topics were *The Art of Dissimulation in Early Modern Eastern European Thought* (Maria Ivanova), *Between Two Patriae. Greek Intellectuals in Italy and the Shaping of a Peripheral National Consciousness, 1800–1830* (Konstantina Zanou), *Discussing Non-Territorial Arrangements in a Territorialized World: Historical Models and Contemporary Debate* (Sara Barbieri), and *Transitional Criminal Justice in Post-Communist Societies. Romania and Bulgaria in Comparative Perspective* (Raluca Grosescu). Their interests thus bridge the early modern era, nineteenth-century Romanticism, and the post-Communist, post-1989 past.

## Hidden Messages: Maria Ivanova

**Maria, how would you explain the term *ars dissimulandi*, or art of dissimulation, to those without an expertise in the fields of Cultural Studies and History of Philosophy?**

**Maria Ivanova:** Very generally, *dissimulation* means concealment or hiding. It is a codified branch of knowledge that was fashionable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – to such a degree that some academic schools refer to the early modern period as the age of dissimulation.

**Why was the *ars dissimulandi* so popular in the past?**

**M.I.:** Dissimulation has numerous aspects – religious, political, etc. Typically, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was practiced within minority religious groups, who were forced to hide their beliefs from the dominant Church authorities to escape persecution, for instance, crypto-Protestants, or ‘Nicodemites’ in Italy. Yet the Catholic Church as well, especially the Jesuits, developed an intricate theory of

dissimulation, so that there were Catholic practitioners of this *ars* in Tudor England.

**What is the novel element in your research?**

**M.I.:** I am interested in the theory and practice of dissimulation as a rhetorical technique, rather than in its political and religious sides, or psychological explanation. My study approaches dissimulation as a means to organise narrative and to achieve equilibrium between concealment and revelation in a text. Certain ideas made their appearance in the Proto-Enlightenment period that launched philological, biological, etc., criteria of classification and disciplinarity. This used to be something highly controversial for its time, and dissimulation made the co-existence of the theological and the scientific possible. It became instrumental for allowing those new ideas to be accepted without openly coming into conflict with the official religious establishment.

**Your research on the *ars dissimulandi* focuses on Eastern Europe. However, most of the literature on this topic explores its manifestations in Western Europe. Are the two cases comparable?**

**M.I.:** I am working on dissimulation in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Poland. From a theoretical point of view, I have been consulting the works of numerous Western authors who deal with the subject of dissimulation. Eastern Europe, however, has its own, autochthonous, Eastern Christian tradition connected to the ideas of reticence and silence. This tradition reaches back to older Orthodox traditions derived from Byzantium. My coming to Sofia was very much motivated by the idea of drawing an outline of the distinctions between the cases of Eastern and Western techniques of dissimulations.

**Your topic of academic interest spirals**

**away from the socio-economic problems of the present day. In what way can your study on concealed discourses appeal to a contemporary reader?**

**M.I.:** An interesting question! Overall, history, seen as philosophy, helps us understand ourselves as humans. My research involves two very basic human processes – how we perceive ourselves as humans, and how we act as humans. Dissimulation has always been understood as an act violating human morality, or, referring to Kant, as vice. What I am trying to show is that regardless of the epoch – be it modern, pre-modern or ancient – dissimulation reflects and deals with some basic principles of human thinking that are applicable throughout time. This may occasionally help us understand how to position ourselves in the modern world, and how to successfully remain human.

**How helpful was your stay at CAS for your own work?**

**M.I.:** It was very helpful in several ways. On the one hand, I consulted the wealth of sources at Bulgaria's National Library and the Sofia University Library, which host valuable early printed books and manuscripts. I also gained access to some wonderful sources, such as the 1835 edition of Neofit Rilski's first *Bulgarian Grammar*, located at the Rila Monastery. Neofit Rilski, an early Revival figure in Bulgarian history, was acquainted with the works of the seventeenth-century author, Meletii Smotrycky. While there are a number of copies of the 1755 Serbian edition of Smotrycky's grammar, the one kept at the Rila Monastery Library is unique as it bears notes in Neofit Rilski's original handwriting. I was truly fortunate to study this exemplar alongside the *Bulgarian Grammar*, as it bears witness to the influence of early modern Ruthenian thought on the Bulgarian National Revival and, more generally, on Balkan intellectual culture.

In addition, my contact with Bulgarian experts in my field proved essential. The Bulgarian school of medieval studies has a great, longstanding tradition in studying Byzantium. This helped shape my perspectives to my work. I had excellent opportunities to share the results of my research, both at my presentation at CAS and at a one-day workshop that Dr Gergana Dineva, a Bulgarian co-fellow at CAS, and I organised. We invited scholars from the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy at Sofia University to contribute their perspectives on the history of simulation and dissimulation in the Middle Ages, the early modern era and the Enlightenment, as well as in modernity. We explored medieval concepts of man, the ways different cultures have interacted over time, how *dissimulatio* was interpreted by Kant, as well as the art of reading between the lines. Importantly, the workshop assembled both prominent professors in their fields, and doctoral students. It allowed me observe how different generations in academia held dialogues – very stimulating dialogues indeed – and also how integrative Bulgarian intellectual society is. Actually, at CAS I was given the opportunity to become part of a very vibrant academic environment. Scholars here come from Bulgaria and from abroad. Meeting and sharing with them has enriched my research experience.

**How did you learn about the Centre of Advanced Study Sofia?**

**M.I.:** It came out of my Internet search while I was doing my post-doc at Harvard University. I applied and fortunately I was approved. I am very grateful for it.

**Which three words would you use to describe your experience at CAS?**

**M.I.:** Dynamics, energy, and inspiration.

*Interviewed by the Editor*



# Transitional Justice

**Raluca Grosescu, Romania**



**How did the topic of transitional justice in the post-communist societies become your research interest?**

**Raluca Grosescu:** The trials held against former dictatorial leaders are considered to be one of the most important and spectacular forms of justice in periods of political transition. A few years ago, however, I discovered that apart from the case of the former German Democratic Republic, there had been very little research done on those trials in the communist aftermath. I found few analyses written in English concerning Romania, and all of two articles on transitional justice on Bulgaria. Hence I decided to devote my efforts to this understudied field in the political history of the region.

**Your initial project description referred to a comparative study of transitional justice in Romania and Bulgaria, but your CAS presentation included Germany as a case study too. What motivated the expansion of your research?**

**R.G.:** My initial intention was to explore the relationship between transitional criminal justice, democratisation and collective memory in post-communist Bulgaria and Romania. I planned to reconsider the filters used to interpret the main issues of transitional criminal justice in Eastern Europe after 1989 and look into the relationship between judicial accountability and the rule of law in Romanian and Bulgarian societies since 1989. However, post-1989 Germany is generally considered the classic hallmark case of transitional justice in Eastern Europe. Germany's inclusion in my study offered an important contrast to the Romanian and Bulgarian cases, as justice in Germany was executed after the reunification by West German judges who followed a different legal tradition from that of their Eastern colleagues. In Bulgaria and Romania, the jurists involved in trials held against former communist leaders themselves belonged to the former communist justice system. The introduction of the German case allowed an additional comparison of the different legal cultures

regarding human rights and the nature of the legal interpretation of law in the three countries prior to 1989, and helped identify the differences between socialist East European and West German legal cultures. It also prompted me to include the biographical aspect in my work, i.e. to look into the biographies of the jurists involved in these cases. An important part of my work now shows how the legal frameworks and debates with regard to the application of retrospective accountability in the three countries were influenced and shaped by the legal education of the judicial body in terms of human rights and positivist interpretation of the law. While most of the scholarship on post-communist transitional justice emphasises 'the nature of the former regime', 'the politics of the present' or 'the strength of the civil society' as the main factors that influenced judicial accountability after 1989, I argue that the legal culture and education of the judicial officials, in particular international human rights law, played a major role in adopt-



ing or rejecting retroactive accountability measures after the dictatorship.

You seem to imply that the Romanian and Bulgarian cases of transitional justice are similar, if not the same. But I remember that in the wake of the so-called 1989 revolutions, the Romanian case seemed strikingly different from the Bulgarian one: it suffices to mention how hastily the General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, Nicolae Ceaușescu, was court-martialled in December 1989. In contrast, Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, was sentenced to seven years in prison which he eventually served under house arrest.

### What are the similarities between Bulgaria and Romania regarding transitional justice from your perspective?

**R.G.:** Of course, if we look at the types of regimes before 1989, many differences emerge. To start with, Bulgaria was a much more open society, especially since M. Gorbachov became the leader of the former Soviet Union in 1985. Romania remained closed to such reforms. But there are also many similarities, as both countries suffered under a repressive political regime for decades, e.g. see the atrocities in the forced labour camps in Bulgaria and the political crimes committed in Romania in the 1950s. My research is interested in the type of legal culture and the way the law was applied in Romania and Bulgaria when dealing with justice in such cases. If we analyse the different legal narratives that framed trials regarding state crimes committed under communist rule, and more specifically focus on those cases where the application of retroactive law was necessary in order to prosecute (the Lovech camp trial, Bulgaria, 1959–1962) and those concerning political crimes in Romania in the 1950s, we can identify similar situations. If we compare those cases to the Border Guards' trials in Germany (1961–1989), the approach towards the notion of retrospective justice differs. In Germany, the judges used a creative interpretation of the law, relying on natural law and international human rights law, whereas in Bulgaria and Romania, the judicial approach was closer to the former formalist approach towards law, which

had been borrowed from the Soviet model before 1989.

### How would you compare the public attitude towards the problematic of transitional justice in Romania and Bulgaria now?

**R.G.:** I don't believe that people in either country are very interested in the past, as they are rather preoccupied with present problems, such as the economic crisis or political corruption. Nevertheless, I have the feeling that more has been done in the field of transitional justice in Romania than in Bulgaria. Romania has opened its archives and exposed its communist leaders and their collaborators; a presidential historical commission was appointed to reassess the communist past; and there is also the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile. As for the needs of education, a special high-school textbook, *History of Communism in Romania*, was published in 2008. In contrast, Bulgarian textbooks devote only a few pages to the country's communist past.

### Why should your work be considered relevant today?

**R.G.:** From a research point of view, my study represents an advancement of the academic field. From a social point of view, I believe that our present is highly influenced by the past. We must understand the past in order to understand the present. There is always a risk that the young generations will fall prey to different authoritarian or nationalistic discourses. From the perspective of public policy, it is tragic when 57 per cent of the young people in Romania are unaware that there was repression under communism. These young people tend to reproduce the discourses of their families, who believe that life was better during the communist regime. Therefore it is important to learn about communism and also to talk about the past in class. A 'good memory', if we can talk about such a thing, is a 'wrought memory', a memory shaped by debates and not by silence. In Romania I was a researcher and also the director of the Public Policy Department of the Institute for the Investigation of

Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, and I am proud that we managed to introduce a unit on communism into the history textbooks. Yet here, at CAS, I am not doing public policy but research as a contribution to the field of traditional justice and post-communist transformations.

### Why did you choose CAS as your research venue?

**R.G.:** Without CAS, without my residency in Sofia, it would have been impossible to conduct this study. The main reason why I applied to CAS was to come and work with primary sources. Thanks to CAS I gained access to the archives and the relevant documents of the trials. I don't speak Bulgarian, but I was very lucky to have a friend from the *Hanna Arendt* Centre in Sofia who helped me with their translation. I also conducted interviews that I consider amongst the major achievements of my stay here. CAS is very well-known in Romania. I have friends who have stayed here before and they told me it is a very nice place to be. I trusted them and applied to the Advanced Academia Programme. I was lucky to get a scholarship.

### How did you find your collaboration with the other scholars at CAS? Did it contribute to shaping new ideas?

**R.G.:** The interdisciplinary group of CAS scholars works on all kinds of topics. This can be an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. However, in my case, it was an advantage, because I improved my research due to critiques that came from historians and anthropologists, even if they were working on different topics. Also, they gave me a different perspective about the similarities and the differences between law and the understanding of human rights in Western and Eastern Europe. This type of input helped me give greater nuance to my research.

*Interviewed by the Editor*

# Researching Historical Alternatives to the Territorialisation of Ethnicity

**Sara Barbieri, Italy**



**Sara, you hold a degree in Political Science and East European Studies – a somewhat surprising combination for an Italian. What spurred your academic curiosity in Eastern Europe and why did you choose the Region's history for your MA degree?**

**Sara Barbieri:** My academic background is probably somewhat unusual. Yet, when I look back, I can see quite clearly the line that determined my way to Sofia. I have a BA in International and Diplomatic Sciences, and specialised in European Studies. At that time, my course of study required students to learn three languages. English and German were my first two choices, while my third option was Spanish. However, at the very last moment I decided to give Russian a try instead. And this is how everything started. I became fascinated with Russian language and culture, and from then on, I dedicated my whole curriculum to studying the history and politics of Eastern Europe. Once I finished my BA, I enrolled in a two-year MA degree course to enrich my knowledge of both the political developments and the history of the region and also – most

importantly – to spend one full academic year in Saint Petersburg. That was my first time in Eastern Europe and since then (2005–2006), I can say, I have actually never left! During my MA period, I particularly focused on the study of intra-group relations in multiethnic societies. I believe this choice was driven by my personal interest and curiosity. Combining the two things, I ended up studying intra-ethnic relations in Eastern Europe.

Nowadays interdisciplinary studies have become very fashionable, but in my view, they are not merely a fad, but a necessary approach. Contemporary political developments cannot be understood without a clear picture of their social dynamics and economic trends. At the same time, to understand the roots of our societies and, in most cases, the causes of contemporary social phenomena, one needs to understand their history first. This I believe is especially true when we refer to intra-ethnic relations. People have their own history, which strongly shapes their intra- and inter-group relations. In many cases, history has been distorted for political reasons. At times there is also

a tendency to look at historical experiences from a modern viewpoint. A good example is the incorrect use of terminology which belongs to other historical periods and which is applied to address contemporary realities. This, however, creates misleading interpretations of phenomena that are simply different and, as such, hardly comparable. Responding to a need for completeness, I decided to pursue a PhD degree in history, naturally focusing on Eastern Europe. I do not consider myself a historian. Most certainly I am not. Besides, it would probably have been 'safer' to remain in my field of study. However, without a historical perspective, I am convinced that my understanding would have always been missing important nuances.

**Your interest in the Ottoman Empire and especially your positive (as I understand) approach to the Millet system may also be qualified as unconventional. What qualities of the Millet system do you particularly emphasize in your work and use in your comparative study with the National Cultural Autonomy Principle of the Austro-**

**Marxist School of Thought? What can we learn and perhaps take from the Millet system as a possible role model in our contemporary approaches to minorities?**

**S.B.:** Before getting to your question let me make a preliminary remark: studies of minorities issues generally tend to focus on conflict rather than debatable solutions. Much has been written about the causes and consequences of intra-ethnic tensions and conflicts in Russia and in the Caucasus and, of course, about the war in ex-Yugoslavia. Political scientists engage in analysis of the political arrangements adopted in the different countries after the end of these conflicts, pointing out their achievements and, unfortunately, in most cases, the remaining instabilities. Twenty years after the war in ex-Yugoslavia, the academic community came to question the role of international aid and of the civil society in the Balkans. Political arrangements are under significant scrutiny in Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo (just to mention some examples),

to the detriment of ethnic diversity. According to some analysts, it will reinforce the process of progressive 'russification' of Russia and the consequent recognition of ethnic diversity in the country as a merely cultural phenomenon.

Another consideration addresses the incapacity of the nation-state to deal with multiethnic societies. Much has been written about this issue since the turmoil and conflicts which shook Eastern Europe in the 1990s; yet it is still confronting us today. We can think here of the recent events in Ukraine that brought to the fore, once again, the complex relation between state sovereignty, nations and territory. This results in a need to question, among other things, the difficult relation between civic and ethnic belonging. Scholars and practitioners address all these issues in the attempt to find valid alternatives capable of accommodating diversity and creating social inclusion. Beginning from these considerations and given the lack of convincing solutions, I believe it is worth looking to history and

second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. By referring to the Reform Era, i.e. the Tanzimat period of 1839–1876 in the Ottoman Empire, I intend in particular to depict how reformers aimed to redefine the relations between the religious Millets and the imperial apparatus. In this respect, the very concept of the 'Millet system' is rather problematic. A 'system' is a complex whole composed of connected components that work together as part of the same mechanism. Is it possible to talk about a Millet system before the Reform Era, or was a 'system' conceptualised only as a result of developments in the second half of the nineteenth century? What was the role of Western influence and concurrent reforms in the other European Empires on the whole process?

The comparison of the Millet system with the Austro-Marxist conceptualisation of National Cultural Autonomy (NCA) could lead to those misperceptions that I have mentioned above. Some authors identify the Millet system as the closest example to the formulation of the notion of non-territorial cultural (personal) autonomy by Karl Renner\* and Otto Bauer\*\* at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. However, the conceptual differences between the Millet experience and NCA are dramatic. The first can be seen as a pre-modern arrangement adapted to the era of nationalism. The second developed as a reaction to the rising idea of the nation-state and the request for independence on the part of nationalist movements in Austro-Hungary. They both participated to the attempts on the part of the imperial apparatus to (re)frame the interrelations between minority groups/communities and the state. However, in order to avoid



while the adoption of the new Nationalities Policy Strategy for the Russian Federation signed by President Vladimir Putin last December 2012 went almost unnoticed. The Strategy substitutes the previous Concept of State Nationality Policy adopted in 1996. It works in the direction of strengthening a shared sense of belonging to the Russian political nation

studying the political debates on alternative arrangements for the management of religious/national minorities.

I would define my approach to the analysis of the 'Millet system' as neither positive nor negative. It is primarily institutional and it should be framed within a discussion of the reforms of the Empires in the

\* Karl Renner (1870-1950), Austrian scholar and politician of the Social Democratic Party, who became Head, 'State Chancellor', of the First Austrian Republic in 1918, and first President of the Second Austrian Republic in 1945. Together with Otto Bauer, Renner propounded the legal protection of cultural minorities.

\*\* Otto Bauer (1881-1938), Austrian politician, activist of the Social Democratic Party and leading proponent of Austro-Marxism by theoretically disjoining nation from territory and envisaging it as a non-territorial association.





creating new misperceptions, the analysis of both the Millet system and NCA should depart from a clear understanding of the socio-political environment and traditions within which the two models existed. I believe this exercise is useful in order to think of minorities and groups outside the logic of territory.

**As you may know, mainstream Balkan histories have adopted a conventionally negative attitude to their Ottoman past, especially focusing on the Empire's violent approaches to its Christian minorities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I wonder how those pages would be rewritten from the point of view of an unbiased historian outside the Region?**

**S.B.:** Studies of empires and their structural organisation have been attracting the attention of the scholarly community for decades. This can be explained by the 'imperial' role assumed by the USA in the post-Cold War world. At the same time, the term 'Neo-Ottomanism' has become popular as a designation for the foreign policy adopted by Turkey towards the Balkan countries once part of the Ottoman Empire. We can also see this interest as driven by the recalled limits and dissatisfactions generated by the nation-state's founding principles and structural organisation, and by its incapacity to grant representation to national groups/minorities. In this sense, supra-national constructions assume a positive inclusive connotation which very often stems from the recognition of their multiethnic character, and stands in contrast to the mono-ethnic, almost demonic, character of the contemporary nation-states. Let me be clear:

I am not advocating a return to empires! The clarity of this discourse is striking; the multiethnic character of modern empires was nullified in its validity by the functioning of the system itself as based on centralised bureaucracies and strong inequalities that engendered oppression and discrimination.

To answer your question, I think that the adoption of an institutional approach to the history of Empires and their reforms at the end of nineteenth and the beginning twentieth century could be a possible way to address sensitive issues and thus contribute to our contemporary discussion of nationality questions. The Age of Nationalism was a revolutionary period – not simply because of the complete reconfiguration of the geographic map of Europe, but also because it led to the redefinition of people's identity parameters and ways of thinking. In the Ottoman Empire, nationalist ideas found fertile ground within the 'walls' of the Millets. As a result, the already fragile relations between Muslims and non-Muslims broke down and the Ottoman social system faced the need for an overall reconfiguration.

**Let's move on to your stay at CAS and its impact on your overall academic career: did you benefit from your fellowship with us? What impressions will you take back to Italy?**

**S.B.:** There are many reasons why I appreciate my stay at CAS. It was my first experience on an international fellowship and I strongly value the continuous brainstorming with the other Bulgarian and international fellows there. I learned a lot from their methodology and from

their knowledge. I will list this among my 'interdisciplinary' experiences which I am thankful for.

Besides this, it was difficult to shift the focus of my work and research from Russia and the ex-Soviet space to the Balkans. CAS played a fundamental role in this process, as it gave me the possibility to really focus on my new topic and discuss it with experts on Ottoman history. This rich professional experience soon assumed the shape of an important life experience for me, and I am grateful to the staff and CAS directorship for this.

**What are your future plans in academia? What interesting publications can we expect?**

Academia is going through a very difficult period. Nowadays it is very challenging for young researchers to find resources and opportunities. This sometimes obliges us to move from one project to another and from one country to another. It is quite difficult to predict where I will be in a year. Certainly, I am going to look for new opportunities to continue my research and build on the work done during my stay at CAS. The Centre opened a new door of scientific research for me, and I hope I will have the chance to continue my study of the Millets and, more broadly, of the political engineering and institutional arrangements for the management of national minorities at the turn of the twentieth century in Central-Eastern Europe. Besides finalising my work on the Millet, I am working on a few articles regarding the role of National Cultural Autonomies in contemporary Russia (with a specific emphasis on the Siberian case) and on the institutional arrangement for the management of national minorities in post-revolutionary Russia (1917–1930). This, I hope, will come to fruition in a scholarly monograph based on my doctoral dissertation.

**We wish you good luck and success!**

***Interviewed by the Editor***

# Borders, Identities, and Nationalisms

**Konstantina Zanou, Cyprus**



***Borders, Identities, and Nationalisms:* You combine an unconventional background in performing arts with an academic career in history. What motivated your move from the stage to the archives?**

**Konstantina Zanou:** I grew up in a theatre atmosphere, as my father is a theatre director and everyone expected me to follow his footsteps – something that I initially did. Yet one day I saw a documentary on TV showing archeologists sitting amongst ruins with classical music in the background. The beauty of the picture was impressive and it prompted me to enroll in the Faculty of History at Athens University. There the introductory course was taught by an amazingly charismatic lecturer, Professor Antonis Liakos, who helped me discover what I really wanted to do in life: research. I think I was too analytical and theory-driven for a career in acting, though my theatre degree has greatly assisted me in preparing my lectures and writings afterwards. Just as actors create a different world for their public, so historians, too, construct another world for their audience and readers.

***Historians occasionally project autobiographical elements in their research. Does this hold true for your studies, too?***

**K.Z.:** My research follows the lives of the last generation of Ionian intellectuals, who were raised within the world of the Venetian imperial culture that had united the two shores of the Adriatic for centuries. The decline and eventual collapse of the Venetian Republic in 1797 resulted in the dissolution of the Adriatic cultural continuum and the proliferation of a series of antagonistic nationalisms. Intellectuals had to adjust themselves to that changing world by repositioning themselves in a reality of rapidly shifting loyalties between empires and nation-states. One may find some common links between the plight of those historical figures and Cypriots today. I was born and raised in Cyprus – a country that has undergone dramatic political changes in recent history. I grew up in a divided city – Nicosia – where everything, including one's identity, was under negotiation, challenging one's sense of security. What was I? A Greek? A Greek-Cypriot? My iden-

tity has never been taken for granted... Moreover, there was also the perception of the border cutting through the very heart of the city, erected after the 1974 division of the island and eventually (partially and only symbolically) demolished in 2008. The border was material and real, as we could not cross it; nevertheless, we refused to acknowledge it and I grew up with a public rhetoric of denial. These facts of my autobiography eventually motivated me to devote my efforts to exploring the process of identity construction and nationalism. When I pursued my postgraduate studies in Italy, I focused on the *Risorgimento*, an ideological and literary movement aimed at shaping the national consciousness of the Italian people in the first half of the nineteenth century. I went on a search for materials by which to compare the cases of Italy and Greece. I focused my interest on a group of Ionian intellectuals, born in the last decades of the eighteenth century and living in Italy, yet bearing double, even triple, identities and self-perceptions. These intellectuals did not succeed in becoming part of the newly emerging nations in the early nineteenth century,

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but stayed in the in-between and finally were lost in the course of history. They had some vague sense of having Greek roots, but they learned and spoke Italian. The environment in which they had been raised would not recognise language as a signifier for a different political entity; rather, it had referred to it as a prerequisite for social mobility. Those who spoke Italian had been properly educated, while those who spoke Greek dialects *only* were clearly undereducated. Knowing and speaking Italian in those days was a mark of upper-class belonging.

All this changed under the impact of the Napoleonic wars. Suddenly, my protagonists saw themselves confronted with the need to decide how to position themselves in this new world and reinvent themselves within a universe distinguished by nations and later nation-states. Some became Italian, others Greek. Still others could not adjust and retained their sense of being imperial subjects ... However, even those who eventually embraced a Greek national identity and achieved fame for their intellectual work would not be deterred from writing in Italian. Such was the case of Dionysios Solomos, a Greek poet from Zakynthos, who was educated in Italy and mastered Italian and Italian literature, and who became the author of the *Hymn to Liberty* – the Greek national anthem. Solomos, however, wrote his poems in Italian, which he then translated into Greek. At the end of his life, he resumed writing in Italian once more. Obviously, these are not signs of a national identity we know today... This was something I have been experiencing myself, too, living among different languages and cultures for years. At some point I started feeling like a 'scholar gypsy', suspended among realities...

**The nationalistic idea has invigorated the public space lately, and the term 'nationalism' is used (though it is disputed in progressive intellectual circles) with a clearly positive connotation. But I remember that some decades ago nationalism was a *schimpfwort*, a dirty word, while patriotism was an ideology and feeling worth looking up to. These days the term 'patriotism' seems to have fallen in the shadows. What are the distinguishing traits between these terms?**



**K.Z.:** I believe that the distinction between patriotism and nationalism has to do with the novelty of the concept of nationalism, as it did not exist before the end of the eighteenth century. Initially, nationalism was a revolutionary, democratic movement against absolutism, proceeding on a solidarity basis. On the other hand, patriotism is not exclusively connected to the nation. It can be linked to one's city, one's local environment. The historical figures I am studying lived in a period of transition and experienced the transformation of patriotism into nationalism. Those transformations were not linear. They all started from a joint feeling of patriotism, but not all arrived at the final stage of nationalism. Those who managed to do so reached the destination through such intermediary forms as imperial or transnational patriotism, or even multinationalism. One nationalism did not preclude the other.

In the twentieth century, though, the term 'nationalism' acquired a different meaning, especially after the two wars, as it started being associated with what we know as national socialism, fascism,

etc., today. Nationalism took on a sinister sense connected to crimes against humanity. Nowadays, it still bears a negative implication and hence many people prefer to use 'patriotism' as a kind of positive nationalism...

As a whole, it seems we have not developed an alternative vocabulary to express solidarity and common social demands. Unfortunately, nationalism, with all its exclusivist and racist connotations, still appears to be the most powerful banner of resistance in the minds of most people today.

**How does suffering on a collective scale shape national identities?**

**K.Z.:** Suffering has many manifestations, one of which can be exile. Exile breeds nostalgia, which creates the image of a distant nation in one's mind. Hence nationalism can also be approached as a nostalgic construction.

In the Greek case, but also in many others, the first intellectuals to create the national canon were usually those from the





outside. While they lived outside Greece, they were not necessarily refugees, and yet they exploited the Romantic fashion of the day to link revolutionary rhetoric to feelings of exile and nostalgia for one's native land. What is explored in my research is how a very personal feeling like nostalgia can be transformed into a collective feeling speaking on behalf of all people.

**Romantic nationalism, if I may use this term, traditionally implies a duty of self-sacrifice. How is it possible to overcome one's innate desire for survival, and transform self-denial and even willful death into an honourable must?**

**K.Z.:** Some Italian professors and also my professor, Alberto Banti, at the University of Pisa, have worked on how the idea of self-sacrifice became fundamental to the canon of the *Risorgimento*. This happened after the French revolution, in the first years of the Napoleonic wars, when the new national trend turned into an extension of religious and revolutionary discourse. Exile, too, was seen as part of self-sacrifice, and a link was drawn be-

tween exiles and the people of Israel in the Old Testament, thus relating religiosity to expatriation. The central question that Alberto Banti poses in his studies is how nationalism, in such a brief period of time, managed to develop into a cause people embraced as worth giving their lives for. His explanation is anthropological: he identifies the religious motif with its drive for sacrifice as among the major alluring powers of nationalism that appealed to the very personal and intimate and to the community as well. For example, nationalism metaphorically replicates the vocabulary connected to the family, organic family ties, and the idea of the mother as the homeland by subjecting it to a feeling of religiosity. The same ideas were reproduced throughout the entire culture of the time.

**What is your own contribution to the study of nationalism?**

**K.Z.:** I think that I am proposing a more nuanced approach to the way national consciousness was developed, underlying the open-endedness of the transition from empires to nation-states and its many uneven steps and improbable – to our eyes today – combinations. I also try to understand nationalism as a large historical process, but through the intricate details of individual lives. I see how this process was experienced on an intimate level by the heroes of (my) history.

**Anthropologists and historians tend to 'go native' at times, i.e. to take on and submerge themselves in the culture of their objects of investigations. How close did you get to your protagonists, and have they influenced your views in any way?**

**K.Z.:** Unlike anthropologists, by profession, historians know more about the people they investigate than those people knew about themselves. When reading the letters of Ioannis Kapodistrias to his father while as a young man he was searching for his fortune in Russia, I was amused by an incident he shared: a fortune teller tried to convince him of a glorious career in his future – a prophecy that he dismissed as insignificant and valueless. Yet as a historian I was fully aware that Kapodistrias would become the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the

Tsar and later the first Governor of Greece. I don't think I would ever fall into the trap of the old Greek female historian who, so the anecdote says, fell in love with Kapodistrias and never married because of him. Actually, if I were transferred into the age my protagonists lived in, I would hardly befriend them, as we are so different. However, knowing their biographies, I would grasp the opportunity to interview them and ask them the questions whose answers I am looking for now.

**If some historian one hundred years from now turns to your stay at CAS as their topic of exploration, what would they discover?**

**K.Z.:** The figures I have been studying knew how to create their image because they wrote their letters aware of the fact that they would be read by others. So if future historians went through my emails and managed to deconstruct me, they would find out how I have been constructing myself these days. If they were social historians, they would see how much I have been reflecting on myself as belonging to the lost generation of Europe ... When we were educated and formed as scholars back in the 1990s, we were raised with a sense of Europeaness, i.e. as the 'golden' children of Europe, members of the future European elite. We became a European product believing in a European future, in job stability ... Yet, while we grew up with the identity of European citizens, the common patria of Europe was never created. So a new group of highly educated, yet stateless European intellectuals was shaped – over-prepared, overqualified, and yet always on the go – living with their suitcases packed, ready for yet another trip and yet another short-term scholarship. Future historians may identify me as part of Europe's lost generation at the turn of the twenty-first century ...\*

**Interview by the Editor**

\* For more details of what Konstantina refers to as Europe's lost generation, see K. Zanou, "'Scholar Gypsies' and the Stateless European Ideal", available on <http://www.chronosmag.eu/index.php/k-zanou-scholar-gypsies-and-the-stateless-european-ideal.html>.

## CAS Advanced Academia Programme: Individual Fellowships 2014–2015

### Bulgarian Module

March – July 2014



#### Atanas Slavov

MA (Law, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), PhD (Law, Sofia University), PhD (University of Glasgow, School of Law)

Affiliation: Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'

*Field of Study: Constitutional Law and Theory, Legal Philosophy, Political Theology, Political Philosophy*

Project Title:

**Between Endorsement and Ambivalence: Democracy and Eastern Orthodoxy in Post-Communist Southeastern Europe**

My research focuses on the interaction between Eastern Orthodox Christianity and liberal democracy as developed in Southeastern Europe (SEE) after the fall of the Communist regimes. The central thesis contends that Eastern Orthodoxy has the potential to foster the process of democratisation in SEE societies by requiring an inclusive and participative political framework that corresponds to its basic religious doctrines. In their public statements, Orthodox Church leaders often emphasise values and principles common to both liberal democracy and Orthodoxy – personal liberty, equal justice, responsible and participatory government.

A critical assessment, however, renders a more nuanced picture. Eastern Orthodoxy has a longstanding tradition of reverence towards the secular state and its leadership, often in their non-democratic form. Against the more progressive understanding of Orthodoxy, its rich historical heritage includes periods of cohabitation with empires and modern nation-states that were keen on utilising religion for their own limited and often illegitimate goals. From this interaction, both Eastern Christianity and the secular statehood suffered significant damages to their internal logic. The persisting focus within Orthodoxy either on the concept of symphonia (connected to the imperial legacy), or to the ethno-cultural understanding of Eastern Orthodoxy (related to the nation-state building of the nineteenth century) may hamper its progressive and transformative potential in Southeastern Europe.

In line with recent studies on the public role of religion in society (Habermas, Taylor, Burger), the research project focuses on the idea that religion can be present in the public sphere in a way beneficial to church, state and society. In more conceptual terms, Eastern Christianity is presented as universalistic and personalistic, rather than particularistic and ethno-nationalistic, thus emphasising its hidden participatory potential. This central claim of my research is of vital importance in the context of democratisation and EU integration of the SEE region, as Orthodox doctrines could enhance the values and principles of emerging democratic polities.



#### Boyko Penchev

MA (Bulgarian Philology, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), PhD (Sofia University)

Affiliation: Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'

*Field of Study: Bulgarian Literature, Literary theory, Anthropology*

Project Title:

**Liberal skills, Conservative Values: The Canon and Literary Education in Bulgaria after 1989**

Bulgarian society has undergone profound changes since 1989. How did the teaching of literature change in the transition period, if it changed at all? What happened to the ideological orchestration of canon-reading after 1989? Did it vanish, just like the monuments of Lenin, or has it been transformed into something new?





### Grigor Boykov

BA (History, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), MA and PhD (Ottoman History, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey)

Affiliation: Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'

*Field of Study: History of Architecture, Urban Studies, Ottoman Studies*

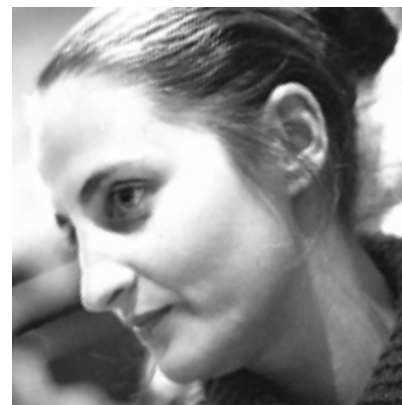
Project Title:

**Building a Capital City in the Balkans: The Spatial Transformation and Urban Morphology of Ottoman Edirne (Adrianople) in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries**

Despite the apparent importance of Edirne in the Ottoman era, the city has received very little scholarly attention to date. All the details of its development and transformation from a major Byzantine urban centre into the capital of a Muslim state have remained understudied. The very few pioneering academic works on Edirne have not exhausted it as a topic; moreover, they have failed to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the transformation of Adrianople into one of the world's most prominent Islamic centres. Therefore, the city still awaits a thorough study of its history, architecture, and urban development that would bring to light and underline its significance and well-deserved place in Southeastern Europe's past.

The aim of the project is to offer a study of the development of Edirne over the course of the first century of Ottoman rule over the city, which will address the existing gap in the related literature. The project focuses on the process of transformation and conversion of Byzantine Adrianople into the Ottoman capital Edirne through a detailed study of the change of the city's spatial hierarchy and urban morphology that was consciously carried out in the early Ottoman era via architectural patronage. While examining Edirne's development in comparison to other major cities transformed by the Ottomans, like Bursa (Prusa) and İznik (Nicaea), the project argues that Edirne's modification significantly contributed to the shaping of a distinctive model of urban planning employed by the Ottomans, which would be replicated in other parts of the Balkans on

a smaller scale. Some of the cities modified or created from scratch by the Ottomans and following Edirne's established model are Dydimoteicho, Plovdiv, Skopje, and Sarajevo, which rank amongst the principal cities of the modern Balkan states today.



### Mariya Ivancheva

BA (Philosophy, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), MA (European Studies, Social Theory, University College London), MA and PhD (Sociology and Social Anthropology, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Affiliation: independent scholar

*Field of Study: Sociology and Social Anthropology*

Project Title:

**From Informal to Illegal: Transforming Roma Housing in Socialist Bulgaria**

Over the last decade in post-socialist Bulgaria, the displacement of Roma people from derelict legal and semi-legal settlements has drastically increased. While Roma property rights on the parcels of land and constructions are often dubious, this is no less the case with the illegal houses, villas, luxury complexes, garages, and balconies that have mushroomed amongst the majority population. But after new legislation on land ownership was passed in 1999 and 2005, it has mostly been shabby Roma settlements that have been destroyed and replaced with bits of infrastructure and new development projects. The inhabitants of these settlements have been displaced often to remote destinations with poor conditions and little infrastructure to allow them to continue their normal life. My study asks what past and present legal regulations and economic and cultural policies make Bulgarian Roma settlements particularly vulnerable to practices of demolition and their inhabitants to displacement. What were the policies in socialist Bulgaria that allowed for the permanent precariousness of Roma housing and contributed to the post-socialist change of status of their settlements from extra-legal to illegal?

To explore these questions, I use archival materials and interviews with high-ranking officials with decision-making power in municipal and national institutions. I analyse the sources by deploying theoretical tools developed by

The teaching of literature in the post-communist school system in Bulgaria could be described as a heterogeneous mixture of "liberal" and "conservative" attitudes. By reading and interpreting literary texts, students are supposed to adopt universal and national "values" and at the same time to learn socially applicable communicative "skills". This mixture is a source of increasing tension, with literary education now looking "too conservative" and "archaic" to the liberal technocrats, and at the same time "too liberal" and "rootless" to the conservative, pro-nationalistic public.

Literary education is a field with agents who acquire and defend their positions in regard to "internal" and "external" sets of criteria. The internal criteria are based on professional expertise in literary studies and pedagogy, while the external criteria are connected with the stakes in the public space - ideologies, public opinion etc. All these competing frameworks should be examined if we want to understand the relation between the reading of literary texts and public debates.

The first level of analysis will be an examination of the normative documents - the curricula and the so-called State Educational Requirements (SER), which are the codified framework for literary education. The next level of interest will be the interpretative machinery, how meanings are extracted from literary works and combined into something we might call "structures of experience." The focus will be on several specific "nodes" - identifiable themes and problems that take part in different discourses and are fiercely debated in public (terms like "slavery", "oppression", "exploitation"; temporal thresholds like the years 1978, 1944, 1989 etc.)

The main objective of the study is to explore the way literature is taught in Bulgarian educational institutions and to provide insights into how it could be taught in the near future. The precarious balance between liberal and conservative elements in the curricula and teaching methodology will most probably be put under public pressure, growing from the general disillusionment of society and the retreat to "national values" - a process already visible in the public space.



scholars who have researched empirically how neoliberal regimes treat communities on the margins of the state (Wacquant 1999; Smart 2001; Das&Poole eds. 2004). Their work has posed questions about how nation states create categories to regulate in favour of the market and to disenfranchise surplus populations and push them out of the urban frontier (Smith 2004). As a result, marginal groups live in a state of exception, subjected to neurotic regimes of citizenship (Isin 2002). Their life and labour become increasingly precarious and their struggles remain invisible (Sassen 2001; Smith 2004; Tayyab 2010). Roma displacement has similar effects. To understand how this process impacts Bulgaria, it needs to be understood vis-a-vis Bulgaria's socialist past.

My research explores policies and practices under state socialism, which allegedly – and unlike its adversary, decentralised *laissez-faire* capitalism – aimed at a centrally planned economy under which housing was provided to all workers (French & Hamilton 1979; Tsenkova 2009). I explore how socialist regimes rationalise their decision to turn a blind eye to informal housing arrangements, and leave marginal communities in an extralegal – if not necessarily illegal – situation.

October 2014 – February 2015



**Evelina Kelbecheva**

MA (History, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'),  
PhD (History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)  
Affiliation: American University in Blagoevgrad

*Field of Study: History*

Project Title:

**Divided Historical Memories in Bulgaria**

The further deepening of the study of historical memories (i.e., following Pierre Nora, the study of historical figures, places and events) in Bulgaria and abroad is both timely and essential for the better understanding of current social and cultural dynamics.

Today, certain aspirations of the Bulgarian majority show a return to clear 'historical models', especially if an urge for 'the strong hand', 'the mighty state', or nostalgia for the 'security' and 'equality' under Socialism comes to the surface. Such aspirations, however, may be indicative of certain social and electoral dynamics. Also at play are changes in the choice of preferences of realms of historical memory within minority groups who may demonstrate a certain adaptation to the new realities (see the Protestant proselytism among the Roma community, or the (re)establishment of a Muslim identity among selected groups of both Turks and Bulgarian Muslims, as well as the spread of nostalgia for the Communist period and especially vis-à-vis the (then) dictator Todor Zhivkov). Current research has pointed to historical education and above all, to history textbooks in circulation, as the prime generator of historical memory.

My research intends to broaden and deepen the study of collective historical memories in Bulgaria and abroad by

- firstly, differentiating the realms of historical memories through detailed interviews with selected representatives from the national majority and the investigated minority or sub-cultural groups;
- secondly, conducting a pilot project among the students from numerous countries represented at the American University in Bulgaria. The University stands for a sui generis laboratory for young people coming from the ex-communist space, and includes students from Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia, Mongolia, etc. Although the results will provide a representative random sample for all these countries, they would nevertheless serve as a good indicator for the current identity and choice of realms of historical memory among the generation which was born after the fall of the Berlin Wall in the larger post-Communist framework;
- thirdly, comparing the answers collected in Bulgaria to those extracted from similar surveys in other European countries (e.g. BBC's survey regarding 'The Greatest Figure' in UK's national history, or similar surveys conducted in Serbia and Romania). My research project, however, adds one significant element – the study of the historical consciousness of the youngest generation in the post-Communist world on a comparative basis.

Furthermore, my study addresses certain theoretical issues, such as the taxonomy of the realms of memory, the politics of generators of memory, and the role of para-history in forming public knowledge, as well as changes in the symbolic functioning of diverse representations of history.



**Kamelia Spassova**

BA (Bulgarian Philology, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), MA and PhD (Theory of Literature, Sofia University)

Affiliation: Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'

*Field of study: Theory of Literature, Comparative Literature, Philosophy*

Project Title:

**Mimesis: The Doppelgänger as a Political Figure**

The proposed study examines the figure of the double in the intersection between the theory of literature and philosophy in order to conceptualise the doppelgänger as a political figure. The genealogy of the doppelgänger is traced back to Plato's mimetic theory.

The approach to the figure of the double is not a literary-historical one, i.e. the motif of the double is not followed from its beginnings in ancient tragedy through its peak in Romantic literature, to its contemporary interpretations in modern and postmodern literature. Such investigations have already been done. My own work on the problem of the double has as its starting point the introduction of Plato's theory of mimesis and the birth of images. In order to explore this, I focus less on more frequently discussed dialogues, such as 'Republic' and 'Laws', than on dialogues such as 'Sophist' and 'Statesman'. An understanding of the double as a political figure can be uncovered in the last two dialogues, where the role of phantasma without a prototype in the sphere of ideas is explicitly formulated.

Vernant and the birth of images, Auerbach and the term figure, and Lotman's conceptualisation of narrative provide the three cornerstones of my research project. The core of my project is formed by philosophical, political and social anthropology, although it also incorporates argumentation from critical theory and deconstruction, and draws on the works of philosophers like Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin and Maurice Blanchot, as well as Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, René Girard, and others. The hypothesis which I hope to argue for in my study is that the double, as a theoretical construct,



emerged as the point of the interrupted conjunction between philosophy and literature. The political, hence, might be claimed to have emerged in this interrupted conjunction, too.



### **Snezhanka Rakova**

Affiliation: South-West University 'Neofit Rilski'  
MA (History, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'),  
PhD (Medieval Balkan History, Institute of Balkan  
Studies)

*Field of study: Medieval history, Medieval Balkans  
14th–16th c., Renaissance Venice*

Project Title:

**Between the Sultan and the Doge:  
Diplomats and Spies at the Time of  
Suleiman the Magnificent**

Venice and Constantinople were major rivals, but also partners in diplomacy, warfare and commerce at the time of the Doge Andrea Gritti (1523–1538) and Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566). The documentation left by the Venetian Republic and its learned men might lead down avenues thus far little researched, and hence, inform new research areas. A basic source upon which the project's research rests is the extensive, fifty-eight volume 'Diaries' of that leading Venetian fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanist, Marino Sanudo, with their notes on the daily activity of the Venetian Senate.

Venetian documents have not been subjected to analysis to show the emergence and development of mutual connections, friendships and acquaintances on both sides. Opening a

new prospect on social history would serve the following research aims:

highlight the network of spies who advised Venetian diplomats and the Republic's Senate, and answer questions as to who they were by origin and social position, what motives caused them to act as spies, and – most important – what kind of information interested the Venetians most. The fate of this information represents a substantial part of the study, and especially, what road it followed from the Senate's secret archives to eventual publication and distribution;

analyse the information left by Venetian diplomats at the conclusion of their Constantinople missions on eminent figures in the Ottoman administration, such as the Sultan, the Viziers and the Court, as well as the mechanism of forming friendships and social networks and indeed, the milieu of daily life in the Ottoman metropolis;

show the image of Ottoman diplomats visiting Venice, thus entering the field of imageology. Here, Venetian papers can only show the Venetian standpoint, leaving much of the question in the shadows. We know only what Marino Sanudo relates concerning Ottoman ambassadors and emissaries visiting Venice, nothing of the information they took back to the Ottoman Court.



### **Teodora Karamelska**

MA (Cultural Studies and History, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'), PhD (Philosophy of History, Sofia University)

Affiliation: New Bulgarian University

*Field of Study: Sociology of Religions; Qualitative  
Research Methods*

Project Title:

**'Mind, Body, and Spirit': Women's  
Religiosity between Spirituality and  
Holistic Practices**

This research project is focused on fluid forms of radically subjective religious attitudes – forms that emphasize religious "experience without intermediaries". My major goal is to analyse from a sociological perspective the segmentation of the religious field in Bulgaria in the post-Communist context, focusing on the most widespread syncretic forms of religiosity of pre- and non-Christian inspiration (neo-paganism, Tibetan Buddhism, Hinduism, and New Age) and the practices aimed at 'holistic well-being'. I deal with the reception of these movements, specifically of their content and practices, among Bulgarian women with high educational and cultural capital. I concentrate on the specific features of holistic spirituality in two age groups: that of women between the ages of 25 and 35, and women between 55 and 65.

My second goal is to study whether and in what respects the new forms of women's spirituality are coupled with modern health technologies of 'spiritual healing and perfecting of psychological potential'. Therefore, I am not simply interested in the choice of religious content that Bulgarian women make, but also in whether their choices actually lead to a change in their way of life.

My first basic hypothesis is the assumption that the new forms of religiosity, of 'searching for oneself', can be fruitfully studied among Bulgarian women in terms of the reflective-biographical dimension of religion. This implies that the scholarly approach is focused on the 'points of religious conversion' in the life trajectories of women, and on the family traditions in which they were formed or from which they diverged. This biographical perspective is expected to show that, in the age of late modernity, self-perfection and self-observation are interpreted not only in terms of the 'dynamics of proving oneself', but also in the context of a re-enchantment of the world. My second hypothesis is that, while in Western countries women's attempts for the sustained, enduring achievement of personal autonomy and freedom from paternalistic control are implicitly taken to be a tool for feminist social critique, in post-Communist Bulgarian society they are rather the result of a 'sense of distinction' with respect to traditional religions, and of the free choice of a lifestyle conceived through the categories of the consumption of religious goods.

## International Module

March – July 2014



### Adriana Placani

BA (International Relations, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest); MA (Political Science, Central European University, Budapest); PhD (Political Theory, LUISS Guido Carli University, Rome)

Affiliation: independent scholar  
Country: Romania

*Field of Study: Political Philosophy*

Project Title:

**Liability for Future Harm**

The law within a liberal democratic order takes the prevention of harm to individuals as one of its stated aims. In furtherance of this, it makes use of harm prevention as a source of justification for criminalising certain conduct which can be said to increase the risk of harm. At the same time, the law claims to respect the rights, liberties, and autonomy of individuals. The precarious balance between achieving the aim of harm prevention while protecting the rights of individuals delimits the broad scope of this work.

The law's orthodox response to harmful action is backward-looking, in the sense that liability is typically imposed on the basis of

past conduct. However, a trend is rising, confirmed by legal theorists, of law being used in order to prevent conduct which poses a future risk of harm. In these cases, the grounds for criminalisation and liability are entirely forward-looking.

My research project aims at exposing the limitations of forward-looking criminalisation. It considers the justifiability of criminalising conduct that increases the risk of harm, and in doing so, it examines the challenges that arise when attempting to balance the apparent necessity of criminal prohibitions against risking harm with the restrictions to individual freedom they pose.

Through philosophical consideration and assessment of the limitations of forward-looking criminalisation and liability, my project hopes to make a significant contribution to legal theory and philosophy. My research would constitute an important step forward towards arriving at a just balance between protecting individual liberties and preventing future harms.



### Bogdan Iacob

BA (Political Studies, University of Bucharest); MA and PhD (Nationalism Studies, Comparative History, Central European University, Budapest)  
Affiliation: Romanian Cultural Institute  
Country: Romania

*Field of Study: Communism Studies*

Project Title:

**A Product of Appropriation. Southeast European Studies during the Cold War (1963–1989)**

This project historicises the field of Southeast European studies in order to shed light on its role in the successful coalescence of trans-ideological Balkan identities in times of bi-polarism. Regional scholarly collaboration was the product of multi-level and -directional appropriation. The process took place both laterally (absorbing contemporary trends in other geographical areas, such as Western Europe, UNESCO, and the postcolonial states) and diachronically (integrating national and European cultures of the past). It became the foundation of the new identity of the local political regimes and of the re-invention of the Balkans from 1960s onwards.

Beginning in the sixties, social scientists from countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Albania, and Turkey (along with representatives of fifteen other countries), under the umbrella of the AIESEE (the International Association for Southeast European Studies), established a milieu of interaction that allowed them to formulate regional scholarly discourses and narratives that could escape the label of the peripheral. AIESEE was funded by UNESCO and local Academies of Sciences (Romania and Bulgaria were its most active advocates). By the early 1970s, this scholarly endeavour even functioned as a model for similar enterprises in other geo-cultural regions (the Scandinavian countries, North Africa, etc.).

The field of Southeast European studies emancipated regional epistemic and political discourses through the integration of validated traditions and international postcolonial cultural practices. It simultaneously projected and legitimised ethnocentric topoi onto the Balkan and European stage. Perceived alterity was addressed by agreeing on what set apart the Southeast in either Europe or the bipolar world; and, by consenting, at least for a while and only to certain extent, not to challenge new, postwar, epistemically-founded





### Kiril Tochkov

MA (Chinese Studies, Economics, Ruprecht Karls University, Heidelberg, Germany); MA and PD (Economics; State University of New York, Binghamton, USA)

Affiliation: Texas Christian University  
Country: USA

*Field of Study: Economics*

Project Title:

### The 'Great Leap Forward' Campaign in Bulgaria and China: A Comparative Analysis

In the second half of the 1950s, China emerged as an ideological rival to the Soviet Union by launching a massive drive in 1958 (the 'Great Leap Forward' campaign) with the goal of speeding up the country's economic development. China's 'Great Leap Forward' campaign is known as one of the major economic disasters of the twentieth century.

The deepening Sino-Soviet conflict, which broke out into the open in 1960, put pressure on the Communist countries of Eastern Europe to take sides. Surprisingly, Bulgaria – one of the most faithful satellites of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe – attempted to have it both ways by adopting a Chinese-style economic campaign, while at the same time following the Soviet political line. However, this strategy proved disastrous, as the 'Great Leap Forward' devastated the Bulgarian economy for decades to come and increased its economic dependence on the Soviet Union. In the face of severe criticism and pressure, the Bulgarian leadership eventually toed the line with the Soviet Union and openly attacked China in 1960.

The current project focuses on the period 1958–1960 and explores China's 'Great Leap Forward' campaign in a trans-regional context.

In particular, it attempts to explain Bulgaria's decision to follow the Chinese development strategy, although this challenged the ideological supremacy of its chief benefactor, the Soviet Union. Moreover, the project seeks to analyse, compare, and contrast the implementation of collectivisation and industrialisation policies and their devastating effect in Bulgaria and China during the campaign.



### Maria Litina

BA and MA (History, History of Byzantium and the Balkan Peoples, Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski'); PhD (Balkan History, University of Ioannina)

Affiliation: Centre for History and Palaeography,  
National Bank Cultural Foundation  
Country: Greece

*Field of Study: Balkan History*

Project Title:

### Attempts towards the Healing of the Bulgarian Schism (1932–1935)

Dr Litina explores the attempts to lift the Schism between the Bulgarian Church (1872) and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople between 1932–1935, considering the involvement of the Bulgarian State in the decisions of the Bulgarian Church on this issue, as well as the involvement of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which had played a crucial role in the efforts to prevent the Schism six decades earlier. She also investigates the role of international diplomacy in these negotiations within the wider context of the British Mandate in Palestine and the Middle East (1922–1948). Dr Litina will mainly consult unpublished documents preserved in libraries and archives in Sofia, including the Central State Archives in Sofia, the Ecclesiastical Historical and Archival Institute of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. She will complement her findings with material from ecclesiastical journals of the Bulgarian Church and articles published in the national and local Bulgarian press. She hopes that the results of her research will shed further light on this subject in particular and on the history of Bulgaria and the Balkans in the twentieth century in general, highlighting the important role of ecclesiastical centres of power in shaping political developments in the region.





October 2014 – February 2015



### Gregory Myers

MA (Historical Musicology, University of Virginia), PhD (Historical Musicology, University of British Columbia); MLIS (Library and Information Studies, University of British Columbia)

Affiliation: independent scholar  
Country: USA

*Field of Study: Historical Musicology*

Project Title:

**Music and Urban Liturgical Ritual in Slavia Orthodoxa, Eleventh - Fourteenth Centuries: The Marian Feasts**

The research project to be undertaken at CAS is to commence an exploration of music and ritual among the Orthodox Slavs, specifically the urban processional and stationary liturgy, and the performance practice of set musical numbers. With the chronological parameters set from the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, the study assumes that full Constantinopolitan cathedral rituals were absorbed and adapted by the medieval Slavs and enjoyed a syncretic transformation and a protracted late flowering on Slavic soil.

While musical manuscripts provide us with the written record of those chants sung at the sacred services (lamentably often in an unreadable form), rarely, with few exceptions, do they include any instructions as to how a musical number was to be rendered or by whom; this supporting information is furnished by our liturgical documents.

The project thus has a threefold purpose: (a) to examine hymnographic settings and their musical style in their liturgical context (i.e., according to the rubrics); b) to trace their origins in the cathedral practices of Constantinople's Great Church of Hagia Sophia; (c) to show how their performance shaped the liturgical ritual.



### Simone Attilio Bellezza

BA (History, University of Turin); PhD (History of Eastern Europe, University Ca' Foscari – Venice); PhD (History of Eastern Europe, University of the Republic of San Marino)

Affiliation: Department of Humanities, University of Trento  
Country: Italy

*Field of Study: History of Eastern Europe*

Project Title:

**Choosing Their Own Nation: National and Political Identities of Italian POWs in Russia (1914-1921)**

During the First World War, about thirty thousand soldiers of the Italian national minority fought in the Austro-Hungarian army. Sent to the Eastern front, around twenty thousand of them were taken captive and remained in Russian prison camps until the end of the Civil War.

My research addresses the question of Russian policies towards the Italian prisoners of war (POWs). Its first task is to comparatively describe the particular policy implemented towards the Italian POWs: from their dispatching to 'better' camps in the European part of the empire to the propaganda and even the attempts to send a few thousand of them back to Italy, so that they could join up with the Royal Italian army.

So far, Italian historiography on this subject has considered the response to these kinds of policies as either absolutely positive or absolutely negative, without paying much attention to the consequences of the experience of the war. The second part of my research intends to decisively challenge these interpretations by focusing on the feelings of national and political belonging of the Italian prisoners. These, I argue, were complex and differentiated.

My research also addresses the question of how the life and options of the Italian POWs changed after the October revolution: the Communist regime considered the prisoners as possible agents of the revolution abroad, and therefore their living conditions and the propaganda towards them significantly changed. The memoirs of former Italian prisoners (those who fought with the Bolsheviks and those who fought against them) provide an interesting opportunity to analyse how national and political identities intersected and to understand to what extent such choices were due to individual agency or to uncontrollable circumstances.

The project is the first step in an ongoing production of a large-scale body of research and a substantial contribution to a field, i.e., music and liturgy that has been insufficiently addressed.



### Mihai Olaru

BA (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania); MA and PhD (Central European University, Budapest)

Affiliation: independent scholar  
Country: Romania

*Field of Study: History*

Project Title:

**Writing Like a State. Recordkeeping and State Power in Eighteenth-Century Wallachia**

My research explores the link between the collecting and storage of social knowledge and the exercise of state power in Wallachia from the late seventeenth century to 1831. By focusing on the emergence, content and especially employment of registers in administration and justice, and on the collection of geographical information, I contend that the nature of the Wallachian state during the above-mentioned period was significantly altered. On the one hand, the development of means of storing information increased the infrastructural reach of the state. On the other, the centralisation of administrative knowledge constituted the state as an impersonal, impartial and objective entity, detached from the person of the prince and from sectional interests. By making these two claims, my study challenges two bodies of literature: the historiography on the Phanariot period and the theories of early-modern state formation.

### Rory Yeomans

BA (History, Economic History and French, University of Glasgow); MA and PhD (Political Science and Southeast European History, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London)

Affiliation: independent scholar  
Country: UK

*Field of Study: Southeast European History*



Project Title:

**Regenerating the Nation: Race, Genocide and Social Mobility in Fascist Croatia, 1941–1945**

This research proposal explores the development of racial politics under the fascist Croatian Ustasha regime, which ruled the Independent State of Croatia between 1941 and 1945, looking in particular at the fate of the State's Serb, Jewish and Gypsy communities. While studies of the Ustasha regime have flourished in the post-Communist era, many of them have been of a relatively nationalistic nature and it is only perhaps in the past ten years that scholars and historians both in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere have embarked, with varying degrees of success, on systematic attempts to explore the dynamics behind the Holocaust in the Independent State of Croatia.

This project is a case study of social mobility and terror in the Independent State of Croatia, exploring the Holocaust and racial politics under the rule of the fascist Ustasha movement through the prism of social, economic and intellectual history. It challenges conventional historiography about an ideologically homogeneous movement, in which power devolved from the centre to the regions and in which the state was governed from the top down. It also rejects the separation between socio-economic and cultural politics and genocide inherent in many studies of the Ustasha state; instead, it considers the extent to which they were part of a wider synthesised process.

The project analyses to what extent the Ustasha state's campaign of mass killing and deportation was instrumentalised from above by state agencies and officials and how far it was a response to pressures from below, a means of negotiating and addressing generational, economic, intellectual and social conflicts. It also considers how mass terror was informed and even driven by ideas about social mobility, economic transformation and cultural revolution present not just in the Ustasha movement but in Croatian society in the 1930s more widely.



### Stefania Costache

BA (Political Science, University of Bucharest), MA (Nationalism Studies, Central European University, Budapest); PhD (History, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign)

Affiliation: independent scholar  
Country: Romania

*Field of Study: History*

Project Title:

**For Profit and Progress – the Politics of European Investments in Ottoman Railways (1850–1880)**

As was the case with railways in Europe, India and America, the first railways in the Ottoman Empire were a business venture that allowed British, French, Austrian and German companies to attract investments from bankers, businessmen, the public and the state. This trend raises a few questions: Why were investments in the experimental infrastructure business on the border of Europe so popular? How did such projects become components of international political and economic agendas despite numerous complications and little evidence of their profitability?

To answer these questions, my project analyses the politics of European business ventures in the Ottoman Empire between 1850 and 1880, a time of risky enterprises that attracted the attention of governments and business milieux alike with the promise of producing social progress and high financial profits. By exploring how such ventures compelled both European and Ottoman partners to readjust their strategies and expectations, the project brings into question conventional assessments about the European origin of development and about Ottoman backwardness. As an alternative, it investigates how such businesses stimulated political elites in Europe and the Ottoman Empire to reconsider their states' power, and the new ventures' impact on the domestic and international political order. To analyse such transformations of vision, the project examines how networks of British, French and Ottoman businessmen and politicians who pursued railway ventures in the Ottoman Empire lobbied for these popular nineteenth century enterprises and dealt with competitors, scandals and failures.





## CAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013–2014 October 2013– July 2014

### October 2013

#### 03 October 2013

Opening of the Academic Year 2013–2014

#### 08 October 2013

CAS Guest Lecture Series:

Prof. Dr. Andreas Kilcher, *Assimilation and Circulation. A Universalistic Model of Knowledge in the 19th Century*

#### 09 October 2013

Book Launch:

*Bulgarian Communism – Debates and Interpretations*

Venue: Sofia City Library

### November 2013

#### 01 November 2013

International Workshop:

*Metamorphosis and Catastrophe*

#### 15 November 2013

International Workshop:

*Digital Creativity in Times of Crisis: Bulgarian Networked Culture in Global Contexts*

#### 28 November 2013

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Gergana Dineva, *The Birth of the Concept 'Personality' and the Problem of Identity, and Their Impact on the Transition from Medieval Ontotheology to Modern Critical Theory*

### December 2013

#### 12 December 2013

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Stephanie Spoto, *William Lithgow (1582–1645) and Early Modern Scottish Journeys to Eastern Europe*

#### 19 December 2013

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Martin Belov, *The Development of the Executive Power in Balkan Constitutionalism*.

### January 2014

#### 17 January 2014

CAS Discussion Series:

*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, First Seminar*

### 23 January 2014

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Nevena Dimova, *"Be Yourself, Become a Peasant": Economic Practices and Social Relations in a Bulgaria Eco Community*

### February 2014

#### 06 February 2014

Fellow Seminar:

Assoc. Prof. Anna Krasteva, *Space, Lines, Borders*

#### 11 February 2014

CAS Workshop:

Boris Deliradev, *Chirpan, 19th Century: Books/A Personal Encounter with a Small Library in Fourteen Languages*

#### 13 February 2014

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Pawel Marczewski, *Political Hybridity – Polish Liberal Republicanism between the West and the Past*

#### 20 February 2014

Fellow Seminar:

Dr Ada Hajdu, *The First Attempts to Create a Bulgarian National Style in Architecture – the Last Decade of the 19th Century*

#### 21 February 2014

CAS Discussion Series:

*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, Second Seminar*

### March 2014

#### 4 March 2014

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:

Prof. Ivan Biliarsky, *The Legitimizing Figure: Women and Power, Women in Power in Pre-Modern Times*  
Venue: American Corner of Sofia City Library

#### 11 March 2014

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:

Dr Bilyana Kourtasheva, *Totalitarian (Quasi-)Translatability: The Case of 1970/1980s Bulgaria. Institutions, Mechanisms, Consequences*

#### 14 March 2014

CAS Discussion Series:

*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, Third Seminar*

**18 March 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Dr Svetla Kazalarska, *The Taming of the 'Charming Dictatress'*

**20 March 2014**

CAS Fellow Workshop:  
Dr Mariya Ivancheva and Dr. Simone Bellezza, *Venezuela is not Ukraine? Reflections on the Emergent Protest Movements in the Post-Socialist World*

**25 March 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Assoc. Prof. Ekaterina Nikova, *The Withering Away of the Balkan Village*

**April 2014****1 April 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Nevena Dimova, *"Be Yourself, Become a Peasant": Economic Practices and Social Relations in a Bulgarian Eco Community*

**04 April 2014**

CAS Discussion Series:  
*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, Fourth Seminar*

**8 April 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Martin Belov, *The Development of the Executive Power in Balkan Constitutionalism*

**15 April 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Dr Gergna Dineva, *The Birth of the Concept 'Personality' and the Problem of Identity, and their Impact on the Transition from Medieval Ontotheology to Modern Critical Theory*

**16 April 2014**

CAS Guest Lecture Series:  
Dr Leah Davcheva, *Linguistic Identities in Action – Exploring the Stories of Sephardic Jews in Bulgaria*

**17 April 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr Grigor Boykov, *Building a Capital City in the Balkans: Spatial Transformation and Urban Morphology of Ottoman Edirne (Adrianople) in the 14th and 15th Centuries*

**22 April 2014**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:  
Assoc. Prof. Anna Krasteva, *Space, Lines, Borders*

**24 April 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr Simone Bellezza, *Choosing Their Own Nation: National and Political Identities of Italian POWS in Russia (1914–1921)*

**May 2014****12 May 2014**

CAS International Workshop:  
*"The State of the Art in Communism Studies"*

**15 May 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr. Adriana Placani, *Risking Harms: On the Boundaries of Forward-Looking Criminalization*

**22 May 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr. Atanas Slavov, *Between Endorsement and Ambivalence: Democracy and Eastern Orthodoxy in Post-Communist South East Europe*

**28 May 2014**

CAS Guest Lecture Series:  
Dr. Biljana Dojčinović, *Documentary Elements in John Updike's Story "The Bulgarian Poetess" (1965)*

**29 May 2014**

Working Meeting:  
Discussion on *Cross-Border Cooperation between Bulgaria and Turkey* within the Framework of the EUBORDERSCAPES Project

**29 May 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr. Bogdan Iacob, *A Product of Appropriation. Southeast European Studies during the Cold War (1963-1989)*

**30 May 2014**

CAS Discussion Series:  
*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, Fifth Seminar*

**June 2014****5 June 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr. Mariya Ivancheva, *From Informal to Illegal: Transforming Roma Housing in Socialist Bulgaria*

**12 June 2014**

Fellow Seminar:  
Dr. Boyko Penchev, *Liberal Skills, Conservative Values: The Canon and Literary Education in Bulgaria after 1989*

**20 June 2014**

CAS Discussion Series:  
*Existential Socialism: The Body under Socialism, Sixth Seminar*

**23 June 2014**

CAS Guest Lecture Series:  
Prof. Dimitris Christopoulos, *Greece in Crisis: What is the Case with the Far Right and Migration*

**24 June 2014**

CAS Re-link Seminar:  
Dr. Raluca Grosescu, *Transitional Trials and Master Historical Narratives in Post-Communist Bulgaria, Germany and Romania*

**26 June 2014**

Fellow seminar:  
Dr. Maria Litina, *Attempts towards the Healing of the Bulgarian Schism*

**July 2014****3 July 2014**

Fellow seminar:  
Kiril Tochkov, *The "Great Leap Forward" Campaign in Bulgaria and China: A Comparative Analysis*



Research Forum **series**

CAS Sofia / Riva Publishers

