

# newsletter

No 1-2 // 2010



Centre for Advanced Study Sofia

## 10 YEARS

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Editor: Dr Svetla Baloutzova  
Design: Vesselin Pramatarov  
Printed by: Artgraf

## Contents

4	<b>INSTITUTIONAL IMPETUS</b>
	<b>CAS TEN-YEAR RETROSPECT</b>
5	CAS Projects Overview
8	CAS Fellows' and Associates' Snapshots
	<b>CAS FELLOWS</b>
10	The Advanced Academia Programme
19	The Modernity and Identity Project
	<b>PROJECT NURSERY</b>
23	Pop-Nationalism: The Recycling of National Passions Through Cultural Practices
24	The Tolstoy-North Research Hypothesis
	<b>WORK IN PROGRESS</b>
26	Negotiating Modernity: History of Modern Political Thought in East-Central Europe (Mid-Term Progress)
28	Interview with Balázs Trencsényi, Negotiating Modernity Principal Investigator
	<b>PROJECT ROUND-UP</b>
30	Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900–1945, in East-Central, Southeastern and Northern Europe (Annual Colloquium)
31	Looking Back. Regimes of Historicity Fellows' Comments
	<b>CAS GUEST LECTURE SERIES</b>
33	Prof. Galin Tihanov: Cosmopolitanism in the Landscape of Modernity
	<b>CAS DISCUSSION SERIES</b>
34	The 1930s Club
	<b>CAS BOOK LAUNCHES</b>
36	Dimitar Bechev: Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia
37	Dimitris Stamatopoulos: The Problem of Continuity in Balkan Historiographies
38	Interview with Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos: Better Knowledge of the Past is a Prerequisite for a Better Future...
40	Vesseline Vachkova: Blank Spaces in Bulgarian Cultural Memory
41	Ivan Elenkov and Daniela Koleva (eds.): Childhood Under Socialism: Political, Institutional and Biographical Perspectives
	<b>CAS AS A HOST VENUE</b>
43	Religion and the Public Sphere: Interdisciplinary Approaches
44	Establishment of National Legal Systems in Post-Ottoman Southeastern Europe (Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt/Main, Germany)
45	<b>ADVANCED ACADEMIA PROGRAMME: INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS 2011–2012</b>
50	<b>CAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2010</b>
52	<b>2010 IN PICTURES</b>





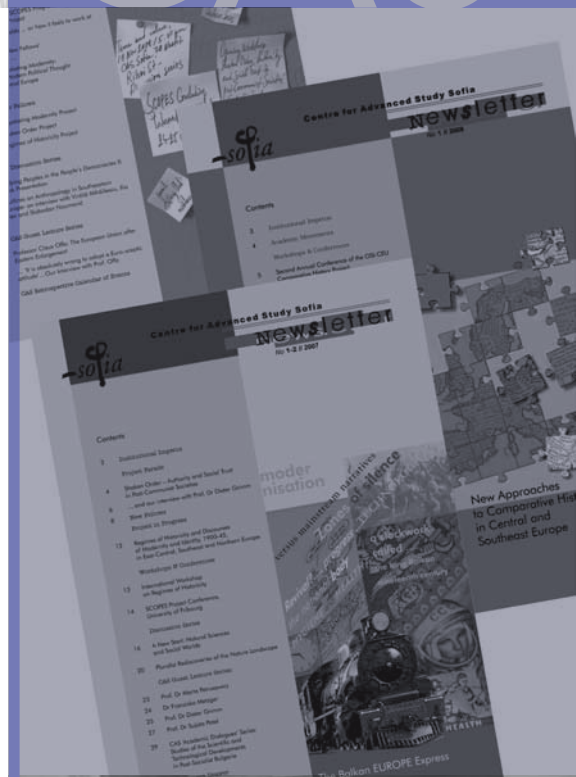
CAS

In 2011, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia will celebrate 10 years since its foundation. During that period CAS has been established as an important research 'hub' whose influence extends well beyond the region, and is recognised as a reliable partner of scholars and funders alike.

At a time when an academic career involves an ever increasing teaching and administrative burden and diminishing opportunities for undistracted research, the Centre provides opportunities for free investigation, cross-disciplinary interaction and professional growth in a stimulating intellectual environment. Since its establishment, CAS has supported the work of over 200 researchers from over twenty countries representing a plethora of disciplinary fields.

During the first decade of its existence, CAS research focused on the history, culture and development of Southeastern, Eastern and Central Europe in a comparative perspective, and on the improvement of higher education and academic research in the country and the broader region. After ten years of successful operation, the Centre is now expanding its geographic and scholarly scope by opening up to participation and themes far outstripping East-Central Europe and Europe itself. It thus seeks to partake in the advancement of contemporary internationalised social and human sciences by effectively incorporating 'local knowledges' into cross-cultural research, by fostering multidisciplinary scientific communities, and by contributing to the conceptual improvement in these areas. Already an outreaching institute, it aspires to effectively bridge various regions, countries and academic traditions.

Building upon the collaborative (focus-group) research mode, the Centre's long-pursued aspiration – to provide thematically-independent fellowships to talented researchers – became reality in 2009/2010. With the support of two important funders, CAS launched the Advanced Academia Fellowship Programme in two complementing modalities: fellowships for Bulgarian scholars and in-residence fellowships for foreign researchers. This step tallies with CAS underlying philosophy which upholds that the freedom of research and the responsibility of the researcher are crucial for creating important new knowledge. The value of the independent research fellowships rests on the assumption that, while Fellows receive the chance to focus on their individual projects for the duration of the fellowship, their inclusion in the interdisciplinary international intellectual milieu at CAS provides them with unique opportunities to exchange – and thus perfect and enrich – ideas across national, disciplinary and cultural borders.



# 10 YEARS IN NUMBERS

## CAS Projects Overview

For the **10 years** since its establishment, CAS has implemented **14 long-term research projects**, supported over **200 researchers**, designed, launched and maintained **3 academic online portals**.



### **Negotiating Modernity: History of Modern Political Thought in East-Central Europe**

2007–2012

Funded under the ERC Starting Grants Scheme

The project maps the history of East-Central European political thought from the late eighteenth to the early twenty-first century. Paying attention to both the intra- and extra-regional interferences, and breaking the duality of Western 'core' and Eastern 'periphery', it is meant to contribute to the emergence of a truly European perspective of intellectual history. The researchers attempt to answer questions about the key components of European political thought, formulated on the basis of a regional and trans-regional comparative analysis.



### **Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900–1945, in East-Central, Southeast and Northern Europe**

2009–2011

Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, Germany;  
the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Germany  
and the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation

The project focuses on the comparative analysis of the various ideological traditions thematising the connection between modernity and historicity – a connection lying at the core of modern identity-narratives in the post-romantic era (1900–1945) – in three 'small-state' regions: East-Central, Southeastern, and Northern Europe.



### The Advanced Academia Fellowship Programme

since 2009

Funded by the America for Bulgaria Foundation;  
a donor within the Stifterverband für die Deutsche  
Wissenschaft and the Fritz Thyssen Foundation

The project stimulates excellent scholarship at the highest international level by providing individual fellowships to promising young and established researchers. It ensures possibilities for conducting independent research in an international, interdisciplinary environment, without restrictions in the selected areas of study.



### The Modernity and Identity Programme for Independent Research Grants

2008–2010

Funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund

The programme supported research projects of excellent Bulgarian scholars from the social sciences and the humanities.



### Shaken Order: Authority and Social Trust in Post-Communist Societies – Case Studies in Law

2007–2009

Funded by the Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe; Rule of Law Program South East Europe of Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research, Austria

The project investigated the tendency towards deterioration of authority and social trust in the field of law in the overall context of globalisation, placing a special accent on the (European) post-totalitarian societies.



### SCOPES: Institutionalisation of Scientific Networks and Scholarly Activities for the Promotion of Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Approaches on Nationalism in the Europe of Small Nations (in cooperation with Fribourg University, Switzerland)

2006–2009

Funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation

Within the framework of the SCOPES Programme, CAS and its Swiss partner – *the Seminar für Zeitgeschichte*, Fribourg University, fostered international network cooperation between scholars and institutions in order to promote excellent cross-cultural research and develop a new curriculum in studying modern nationalism in the 'small states' of Europe.



### Roles, Identities and Hybrids. Multiple Institutional Cultures in Southeast Europe within the Context of European Unification

2003–2006

Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, Germany

The goal of this collective research project was to explore the zone of intersection, interaction and hybridisation between institutional roles and collective identities. These intersections are of special importance for the countries of Southeastern Europe. The analysis of the various and specific types of their 'hybridisation' sheds light on the modalities of functioning of democratic and market oriented institutions in Southeastern Europe.



### DIOSCURI: Eastern Enlargement – Western Enlargement. Cultural Encounters in the European Economy and Society (in cooperation with IWM, Vienna, Austria)

2004–2007

Funded by the European Community

The project focused on current encounters in Europe to predict the convergence between the twin economic cultures of the 'East' and the 'West'. The research fields – entrepreneurship, governance and economic knowledge – were explored in four East-Central European countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) and in four countries of Southeastern Europe (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and (the then) Serbia/Montenegro).



**We, the People. Visions of National Peculiarity and Political Modernities in the 'Europe of Small Nations'**  
(in cooperation with Collegium Budapest)

2004–2006

Supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe); Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation and Volkswagen Foundation, Germany

The project excavated and compared various texts crucial for a range of European national traditions of political and social thought, which had been left out of the 'core' European canon since the age of the Enlightenment. It sought to 'put on the map' the intellectual traditions of 'small nations' which were in many ways important parts of the European circulation of ideas, but remained outside of the mainstream of scholarly thematisation. The project was implemented in partnership with Collegium Budapest, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Wassenaar, and the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences.

**Visual Seminar**

(in cooperation with the Institute for Contemporary Art, Sofia)

2003–2005

Funded by the Federal Cultural Foundation, Germany

This two-year programme was dedicated to the debate on the visual interface of contemporary culture and life as manifested in the urban milieu. The project constructed a context where experts in contemporary visual arts (artists, curators, critics) and the world of academia and theoretical research came into a working fusion with representatives of the mass media (journalists, reporters, columnists) dealing with culture, art and the everyday life of the city. The long-term goal of the *Visual Seminar* was to increase the level of visual awareness of the public through open debates, artistic projects and civic initiatives.

**The Sofia Academic NEXUS Project: 'How to Think About the Balkans: Culture, Region, Identities'**

2000–2003

Supported by the Volkswagen Foundation; the European Cultural Foundation and the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Wassenaar

The project sought to re-think the histories of the region in terms of their diversity and common base and to reconstruct the complex interaction of various identity-patterns. NEXUS was part of the 'Blue Bird' project which was carried out by the Center for Liberal Strategies, Sofia and the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia.

**Regional Identity Discourses in Central and Southeast Europe (1775–1945)**

2001–2003

Funded by the Prince Bernhard Cultural Foundation, the Netherlands

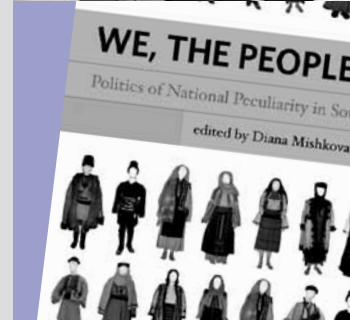
The project was carried out by a core group of 7 junior scholars from different Central European and Balkan countries, working in various research fields, and a wider circle of over 30 contributors. The Fellows collected and prepared for publication fundamental identity-building texts from the region. The outcomes of the project are been published in four volumes (three already in print) by Central European University Press.

**After the Accession... The Socio-Economic Culture of Eastern Europe in the Enlarged Union: An Asset or a Liability?**

2002–2003

Supported by the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The project was carried out with the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (IWM) in Vienna. It focused on strategic problems of the post-accession period: the cohabitation of 'Eastern' and 'Western' socio-economic cultures in the enlarged European Union and the likelihood of their convergence. It examined current cultural encounters between 'East' and 'West' and tried to predict future patterns of cultural compromise.



**Tanya Chavdarova:** 'For the past 10 years, which proved difficult for Bulgarian science, CAS has established itself as the only reputable institution in the country which upholds world standards in providing opportunities for independent research. It is incredible that so much could be achieved in such a short period!'

**Albena Hranova:** 'My participation in CAS projects allowed me to practice (for the first time in my academic career) an institutionalised interdisciplinary approach to different issues in the humanities and the social sciences. This meant overcoming the inherited traditions of "disciplinary patriotism", and experiencing the endeavour of not competing but sharing methodological paradigms and tools.'

**Bojan Aleksov:** 'The benefits of working as a CAS fellow extend far beyond the published outcomes. My knowledge of the nineteenth century ideological emanations and implications of nationalism, as well as the variety of theoretical and methodological avenues of reading them, all expanded in the course of my research period.'

## CAS Fellows' and Associates' Snapshots

**Gergana Mircheva:** 'It will not be an exaggeration to say that my CAS fellowships were among the most important and most inspiring academic events for me, as a young researcher. It was actually the first great opportunity I was given to do research under an international project hosted by a centre of academic excellence. It is always a challenge and an intellectual pleasure to be part of the vivid academic life of the Centre.'

**Ina Dimitrova:** 'My CAS fellowship encouraged me to embark upon a type of research which I have always dreamt of, and revitalised my belief that after all, social science is a worthwhile effort. Up to this point, I had worked on a purely theoretical level, but during my stay at CAS I was once again convinced of the importance of the historical dimension for the shaping of social reality. Thus the flesh of the historical narratives was imposed on the naked bones of social philosophy. I am certain that this shall prove to be beneficial for my future work.'

**Ivan Elenkov:** 'The opportunity to work on topics outside the framework of the strictly national academic canon, get acquainted with new people and new methodological approaches, and last but not least, the peace and safety during my stay at CAS greatly stimulated my research.'

**Nikolai Vukov:** 'CAS projects opened my research to processes in other East European countries and exercised a strong impact on my subsequent publications... They had a positive impact on my research in terms of opening new venues of exploration. The vivid discussions that we had in the course of the project and the generous feedback that I received from project conveners and other Fellows helped me enormously

**Calin Cotoi:** 'My fellowship was a great opportunity in terms of networking and also in rethinking and rewriting, in the framework of the project, my research on the history and sociology of social sciences. The aspects of CAS I liked best and I would like to see continued and enhanced are its comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, the continuous and sometimes painful attempts to come to terms with different theoretical and methodological backgrounds, and the flexibility and understanding of the staff – academic and administrative alike – concerning the scholarly needs of the fellows.'

**Daniela Kalkandjieva:** 'During my CAS fellowship I was able to not simply accomplish my individual research project, but develop a network of Bulgarian and foreign scholars, thus widening my academic horizon. It was also important for my further career development.'

**Merih Erol:** 'I found a fertile ground and a very distinguished academic environment to deepen my already existing interest in analysing the discourses which have shaped the national and regional historiographies in Southeastern Europe, and learned more about the conceptions of temporality and space in different history writing attempts. Furthermore, I can easily say that I owe my first readings on certain new research fields/methodological perspectives (i.e. "conceptual history") to the CAS project.'

**Dimitar Vatsov:** 'CAS is a creative and flexible academic institution with tangible development over the years. I can only take the chance to wish further increase of CAS academic and financial capacities which, no doubt, will be a benefit for the international academic scene.'





an open academic exchange. CAS is a centre of excellence that sets high standards in the social sciences and the humanities. It is a privilege to be a CAS Fellow.'

**Tanja Petrovic:** 'I highly benefited from the friendly and stimulating atmosphere at CAS. I am still in contact and cooperate with many Bulgarian and international scholars whom I met at CAS. The research I have done there is a solid basis for my present research activities.'

**Kristina Popova:** 'I don't know of any other scientific place like this (at least in our country) with such a friendly and creative atmosphere.'

**Damir Jelic:** 'The Centre for Advanced Study Sofia? One can't help falling in love with this small, friendly island of academic excellence in South-eastern Europe. No more words.'

**Ayse Parla:** 'The atmosphere at CAS managed to strike that delicate and delightful balance between academic rigour and extremely congenial interpersonal relations. Commentary on each other's work during the meetings was at times relentlessly critical but always constructive.'

**Boyan Manchev:** 'The Centre is not only an administrative body but a really flexible location for our activity. I believe it is precisely its welcoming informality that is the most precious result of the huge intellectual and emotional energy invested by all the different people who make it possible for the Centre to function.'

**Wouter Hugenholtz:** 'The institute's record is certainly one of extraordinary success. CAS is an active, dynamic centre with a series of very successful activities.'

**Michael Herzfeld:** 'Universities, paradoxically, are becoming increasingly hostile to research and preoccupied with humdrum matters like numbers of students; the paradox of the situation is that the more staff are forced out of research the worse the deal their students are getting. Because CAS is part of a large network of such centres, because it is very well connected, it can help reverse the global hierarchical structure and give Bulgarian and regional students, who are not toeing the line, a voice. There are many good reasons to be involved in CAS and I am happy to be part of it...'

**Wim Blockmans:** 'Sofia as a whole, and CAS in particular, has a leading role to play towards a better understanding between East and West in Europe, a deeper knowledge of the different heritages of Western Europe and of Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire. It is interesting to see that there is still an increasing need for this type of institutions as breeding grounds, hothouses for new ideas across established disciplines, experimental fields for new ideas across all kinds of boundaries – national boundaries, linguistic boundaries, and disciplines.'

not only in the successful accomplishment of my research agenda, but in making substantial steps towards a larger research, probably resulting in a monograph in the near future... I hope that CAS will remain the high-profile institution of scholarly research and will continue being an example of innovative ideas and academic excellence.'

**Marija Pandevska:** 'The inspiring work and cooperation with the CAS team was a great professional turning point for me. Through the regular interactions with my fellow colleagues and with leading academics I acquired a lot of knowledge in the field of sociology and cultural studies.'

**Rumiana Stoilova:** 'I found the excellent quality of the Centre's library very beneficial. The environment of the Centre is shaped by the intelligent, highly motivated people working there as permanent staff and provides the basis for





## Advanced Academia Programme (2009–2014)

Initiated in 2009, the *Advanced Academia Programme* provides opportunities for conducting independent research in a multi-cultural, interdisciplinary environment, without restrictions with regard to the thematic areas of study. We believe that the individual fellowships enable CAS to further contribute to academic excellence on a national and international scale. The programme is closely attuned to CAS institutional philosophy which upholds that the freedom of research and the responsibility of the researcher are crucial for creating important new knowledge. The special value of the individual fellowships rests on the assumption that the Fellows receive a chance to focus on their own research project, while their inclusion in an interdisciplinary and international intellectual milieu provides them with unique opportunities to exchange – and thus perfect and enrich – ideas across national, disciplinary and cultural boundaries.

The *Advanced Academia Programme* falls into two modules – *Independent Fellowships for Bulgarian Scholars* (since 2009) and *Independent Fellowships for International Scholars* (since 2010). The programme is based upon the established international practice of the network of Institutes for Advanced

Study and follows a rigorous selection procedure set for the promotion of scholarly excellence. Fellows are selected by the international Academic Advisory Council of CAS, which is comprised of renowned scholars from different fields. Within the social and human sciences all fields are eligible, the sole criteria for the Fellows' selection being the academic record of the researcher and the intellectual quality of the proposed project. The Fellows actively participate in CAS scholarly life, benefiting from the intellectual and disciplinary variety of the Centre's community and networks, seminar and guest-lecture programmes. CAS is the first, and as of today, the only Bulgarian institution that provides such conditions for research in the country.

We would like to thank the funders of the programme – the *America for Bulgaria Foundation* ([www.americaforbulgaria.org](http://www.americaforbulgaria.org)); a donator within the *Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft* and the *Fritz Thyssen Foundation* – for their generous assistance that made possible its launch.

For Calls for Applications under the programme, please visit our website at [www.cas.bg](http://www.cas.bg) (Current Programmes).



### Urban Life in the Balkans: Population, Social Structure, Poverty and Wealth in Ottoman Sofia, Vidin and Ruschuk (1699–1839)

**Hristiyan Atanasov, PhD**

Central State Archive,  
Archives State Agency, Bulgaria



The analysis of the urban, economic and social system, as well as the activities of its main components – the *reaya* and the *askeri* – have proved to be of prime importance in the broader study of the history of the Ottoman society. While both the ‘classical’ and Tanzimat periods (15th–17th centuries, and 19th century respectively) are well covered from various perspectives (administrative, economic, demographic, fiscal, etc.), especially due to the availability of numerous historical sources for the nineteenth century, vital issues regarding the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire seem to have escaped the attention of present-day researchers.

Thus little is known about the size of its population, its social and economic differentiations, the social and professional activities of its citizens and their subsequent changes, the level of prices and the cost of living then.

Dr Atanasov’s project hopes to spark further interest in the history of the immediate pre-Tanzimat period and thus overcome the paucity of scholarly work on it. His research focuses on previously neglected issues, such as the level of urbanisation within the Ottoman Empire and the economic state of its urban population in the period of investigation, through case-studies of the towns of Sofia, Ruschuk and Vidin. The suggested case-studies address the social and economic history of the three towns under examination, and thus hope to contribute to delineating the economic model of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century.

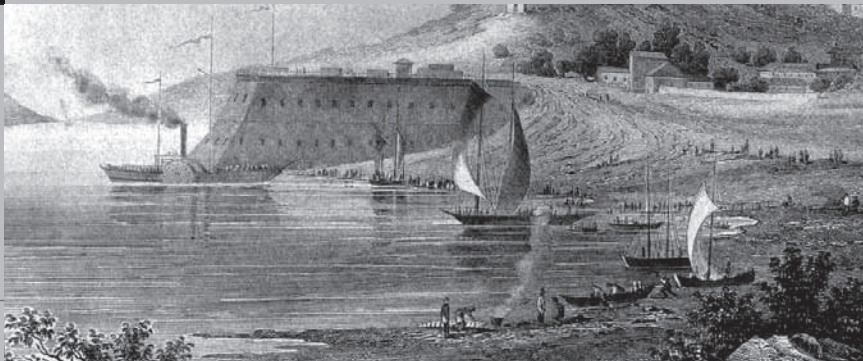
The towns of Ruschuk, Vidin and Sofia prove to make some especially interesting case-studies because of their significant role in the Ottoman political and economic history of the late eighteenth

and early nineteenth centuries. While Vidin and Ruschuk used to be governed by influential *ayans* (Ismail Trusteniklioglu, Bayraktar Mustafa Pasha and Osman Pazvantolu), Sofia was a strict supporter of the central authority in Istanbul and was home of the Sultan’s forces, summoned against Osman Pazvantoglu at the end of eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.

It is Dr Atanasov’s intention to examine the demographic potential of the three towns, the ethnic, religious as well as professional composition of their population (i.e., Muslims and Christians, soldiers and artisans, etc.). His major aim is to reconstruct the professional and ownership profile of the population and to recreate a ‘portrait of property’ for the different social groups – the *askeri* (the Ottoman ruling class), the *reaya* (the tax-payers), the artisans, the women, etc. He also hopes to elucidate the social groups’ role and importance in the urban economic and social life, their activities in agriculture, as well as their involvement in the crafts respectively.



*The pharmacy.  
Edirne Medical Museum Beyazit II.  
Photo: Dick Osseman*





## The Passions of Belonging: The Role of Emotions in The New Media Constellation

**Prof. Dr. Ivaylo Dichev,**

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski',

Faculty of Philosophy, Department of History and Theory of Culture, Bulgaria



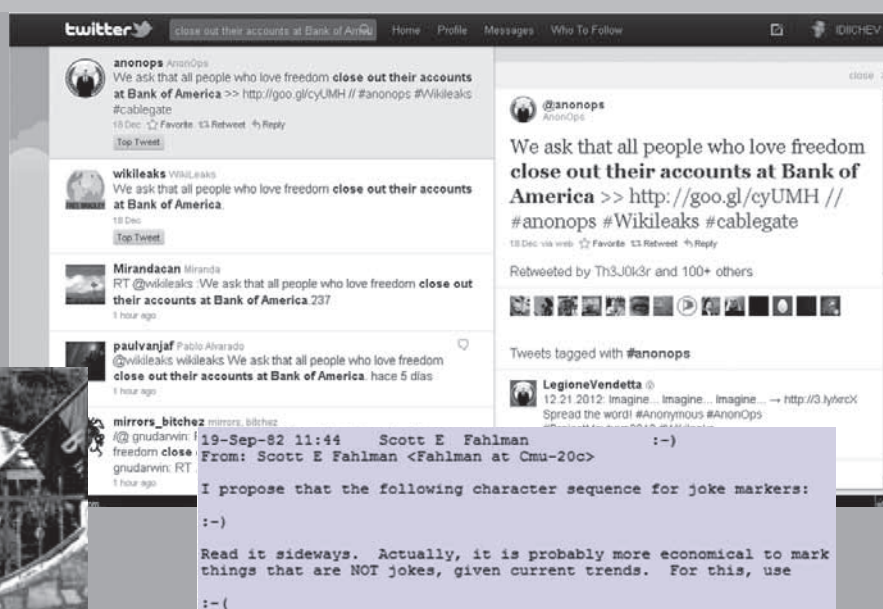
Prof. Dichev's project intends to analyse the role of emotions in the production of new forms of belonging and citizen mobilisations in the age of the Internet. Rather than being caught, in the words of Weber, in the 'iron cage' of rationality, the modern world tends to become ever more dominated by mass affects which explode unexpectedly, spread at the speed of electromagnetic impulses, and disappear as suddenly as they made their appearance.

Prof. Dichev's main argument in his project work is that practices of citizenship seem to have been changing over the last decades. The old types of

political and civic engagement based on fidelity, discipline, self-limitation or ideological choice are gradually being replaced by mobilisations triggered directly by emotions. Reality shows have become occasions to raise social questions in the public field; politicians address the feelings of the private person by personalised profiles, blogs and photos; social solidarity is generated not by arguments, but by compassion produced by images of suffering and is impulsively expressed through SMS-aid contributions.

Alongside other factors, such as the ascent of consumerism and the frag-

mentation of contemporary societies, Prof. Dichev argues that an analysis of the role of the new media constellation would be especially helpful to understand the changes in progress. An interesting aspect of contemporary populism is the volatility of indignation since the new media constellation privileges short-term concerns about the immediate effects on the politician's rating (monitored in real time) to long-term strategies of decency and public prestige. In such a perspective, populism is not a marginal anti-systemic position, but characterises the mainstream of Bulgarian (though also Polish, Italian, Romanian, etc.) politics.





## Popular Culture in Bulgaria in the Era of Communism

**Prof. Dr. Ivan Elenkov,**

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski', Faculty of Philosophy,  
Department of History and Theory of Culture, Bulgaria



Prof. Elenkov's research objective is to investigate the institutional structures and cultural forms that encompassed and penetrated all sectors in the 'deep rear' of the 'cultural home front' in the Bulgarian Communist Era; to shed light and understanding on the ideological uniformisation of communist everyday life, and elucidate the political takeover in the life-worlds of the people who happened to live in the period under investigation.

In particular, Prof. Elenkov seeks to apply a comprehensive, systematic and consistent approach to Bulgaria's popular culture under Communism, by focusing on research and analysis of hitherto uninvestigated phenomena, such as:

- The consensual campaign for creating 'a people's culture' as the nucleus of the new official Bulgarian culture, the latter being gradually dominated by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism in the second half of the 1940s. This campaign was meant to end the inherited, so-called 'bourgeois cultural particularism'.
- 'Bulgarian Television' and the broad TV audience: the permanence of programme messages and the expansion of cultural audiences: Structural peculiarities of television programmes in the 1960s and 1970s and their orientation towards new 'active culture consumers'.
- Leisure time and the problem of 'the cultural recreation of the working people'.
- Socialist fashion institutions and periodicals related to their activities.
- The problem of the so-called 'intonational ("sound") environment': Regulations regarding sound-recording practices and music distribution in the 1960s–1980s, and subsequent statutory regulation of the video industry in the 1980s.
- Extreme forms and efforts of control of the life-worlds of the people: The new communist civil rituals.
- The new sites of public cultural exchange as the main site of manifestation of the current Socialist cultural policy.
- 'Amateur art activities' (*hudozhestvena samodeynost*) and 'the creativity of the masses': What was the genre and institutional structure of the system of those 'amateur art activities' like?

It is Prof. Elenkov's general hypothesis that due to the forcefully implemented and executed Utopian project of modernisation, the history of popular culture under Socialism is also a history of the inability of the Communist ideology to deal with the unpredictable and the destructive, and manage their impact on the popular culture in the era under scrutiny.

## The Chances of Rule of Law in Contemporary Bulgaria

**Ivo Hristov, PhD**

Plovdiv University 'Paisii Hilendarski',  
Department of Sociology, Bulgaria



Prof. Hristov has focused his scholarly interest on researching and identifying the chances for the establishment of a legal society in Bulgaria. His new study builds on his former investigations in the Bulgarian legal sphere and hence can be regarded as continuation of his earlier work, commenced with his monograph, *Law and Modernity*, and further reinforced in his *Bulgarian Legal Metamorphoses*.

This time Prof. Hristov turns to the period, politically and popularly known as 'transitional' in Eastern Europe's history, covering the 1990s through the first decade of the twenty-first century. His objective is to outline the essence of the time and social framework, which contributed to the institution (or the failure) of the new modern law as the supreme social regulator of the Bulgarian society. His project employs the analysis of secondary sources and interpretation of results, reached by the author in his previous empirical sociological research in the legal field.

Prof. Hristov has formulated several major research hypotheses in his project, based on the assumption that in the post-1989 transitional period, a political and economic structure was introduced that functioned as a natural continuation of the earlier political system of 'real socialism'. This new structure was characterised by a dominant, hierarchically-constituted political and economic symbiosis whose major

mechanism for generation, distribution and redistribution of resources became the organic adhesion between the state (understood as a specific clientelist 'network of social networks') and various groups of different structure, scale and personnel. These new agents originated from their mutation from the economic, administrative or repressive structures of the former regime, whose economic emancipation had started long before the watershed of 1989. Any politico-economic symbiosis, however, excludes the genesis of autonomous legal subjects and mechanisms, whose activities are principally motivated by the social reality of capitalist economic forms and political publicity. Hence the questions:

- Could corruption, nepotism, and massive social criminalisation be broadly viewed as the system's organic mani-

festation rather than as its external deformation?

- What would be their impact on the legal system's proper functioning and what influence might they exert on the supremacy of any formally implemented European legislation in the country?
- Last but not least, if these hypotheses are validated, an analysis will be needed to determine whether for the last two decades, there might have emerged any 'social players' capable of identifying their own interest with the establishment of a modern legal order. The identification of such players and factors will become a key topic of Prof. Hristov's research as it will signal whether there are substantial chances for the establishment of a legal society in Bulgaria as a whole.





## Internet Politics in Bulgaria: Citizen Participation, Representation and Democracy

### Orlin Spassov, PhD

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski',  
Faculty for Journalism and Mass Communication, Bulgaria

Prof. Spassov's research is focused on the central issue of how the new information and communication technologies transform the political process in Bulgaria. His three main zones of interest include the ways in which internet policies influence citizen participation, political representation and democracy. These fields build the structure of Prof. Spassov's analysis and are the basis for his organising the key hypotheses as:

- Online activity ('living' online) rarely develops into real political commitment and activism. The opportunities for mobilising less politicised groups by resorting to the Internet remain relatively limited;
- There is a real danger for the above-enumerated activities to remain demonstrative in character. Changes

in political publicity in the new online medium tend to be mostly cosmetic. Party presence on the Internet often degenerates into a mere utilisation of the new technology as yet another channel for the traditional needs of political marketing;

- The Internet is a field where different policies – democratic and anti-democratic – clash. That is why any chances of the Internet to form active and democratic citizens should not be overestimated. Such opportunities ought to be cultivated and defended in the conditions of political, social and cultural conflicts reproduced on the Web.

Prof. Spassov's research seeks to provide the answer to several key questions, including:

- What is the efficiency of internet politics?
- What is the potential of politically oriented electronic initiatives for mobilisation and support?
- Can the new media help overcome the weaknesses of traditional politics?
- What influence does the Internet exert on elections?
- What are the dominating voices on the Internet and how is public opinion formed online?

Prof. Spassov admits that the latest technological developments have encouraged an active debate on the opportunities offered by internet politics. In his opinion, while this debate is global in scope, it also has its own local peculiarities. Hence his belief that the dynamics of the changes in the field requires an on-going process of retheorising basic concepts and political practices.





## Small Business and Entrepreneurship: The Social Embeddedness of Economic Action (Bulgaria in the Comparative Light of Central and Eastern Europe)

**Tanya Chavdarova, PhD**

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski',  
Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Sociology, Bulgaria

Prof. Chavdarova's project attempts to analyse from a sociological perspective the social embeddedness of economic action on the example of the small entrepreneurship in Bulgaria in the post-communist context of 1998 – 2009. The project views markets as fields (Fligstein 2001) characterised with a 'self-reproducing role structure of producers' (White 1981). The role of the small entrepreneurs and their power in the market fields are assumed to substantially differ from that of the large businesses. Hence Prof. Chavdarova has focused her interest on the owners of small-sized enterprises and the self-employed as her major objects of research.

The research analyses how the social structures of markets shape the entrepreneurial economic action. The entrepreneurial action on the capitalist markets is interpreted in terms of its motivation,

rationality, ethics, and risk inclination. The social structures of markets are conceptualised through the social relations, belief systems and economic institutions. They create the social context of socio-structural (network), cultural and institutional embeddedness respectively as different forms of the social embeddedness of the entrepreneurial action.

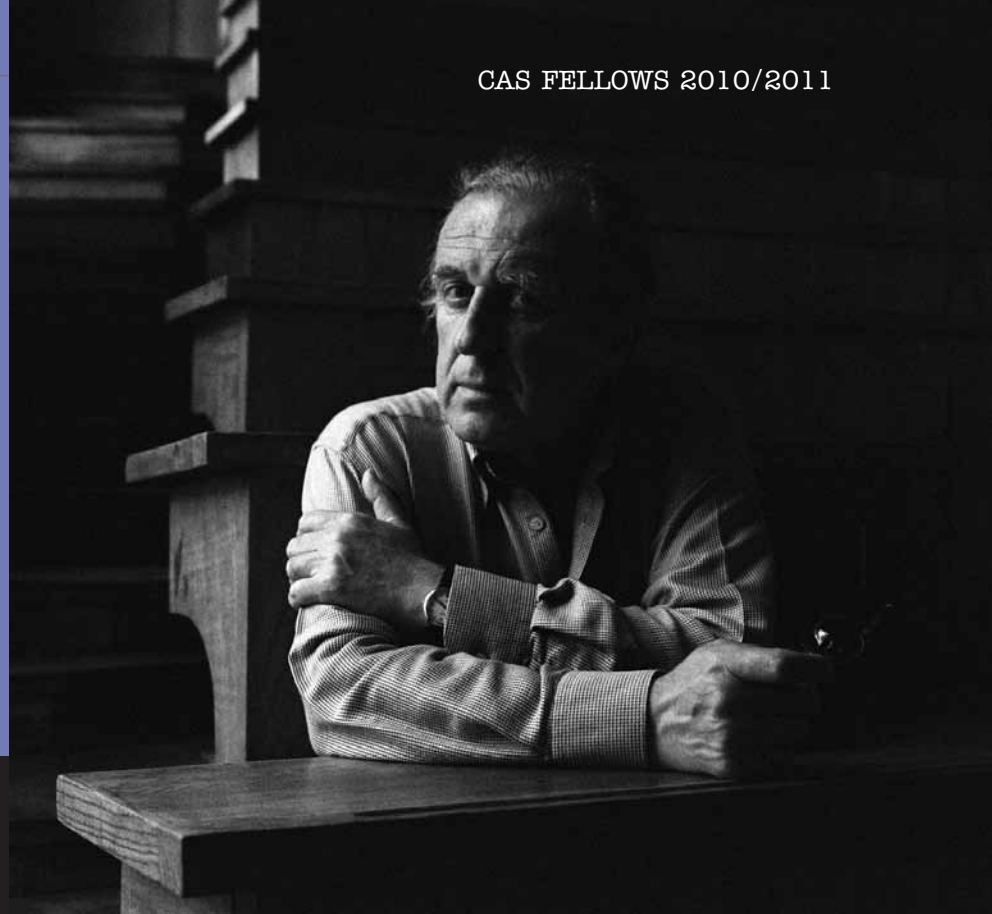
Theoretically, Prof. Chavdarova's central research thesis draws on the assumption that these three forms are tightly intertwined. In her view, the entrepreneurial action cannot be understood if, following its traditional treatment, it is considered as merely structurally, culturally, or institutionally embedded. Hence Prof. Chavdarova develops an integrated theoretical approach as a synergy from network, culturalist and new institutionalist approaches in the contemporary economic sociology.

Empirically, she tries to verify her approach by studying: (1) the social relations of the small entrepreneurs in Bulgaria with their employees, competitors, suppliers, clients and with official authorities; (2) the culturally determined cognitive frames that guide those relations and make the agreements between the actors possible; (3) the institution of contract between the mentioned market participants understood as a totality of institutionalised conventions and practices. Prof. Chavdarova's central research hypothesis maintains that there is no single legitimate model of entrepreneurial action (as related to its motivation, rationality, ethics and risk inclination of small entrepreneurs) in Bulgaria and generally in CEE. Depending on the levels of social embeddedness and on its specificity, in the post-socialist varieties of capitalism one can find opposite patterns of entrepreneurial action as socially legitimate modes: profit maximising vs. traditional motivation, economic vs. social rationality, ethical vs. opportunistic behaviour, and risk-taking vs. risk-aversion. The empirical data which the analysis is based upon are collected with qualitative, as well as quantitative methods.



## The Philosophy of Photography

**Prof. Dr. Tsotcho Bojadjiev,**  
Sofia University 'St.Kliment Ohridski',  
Faculty of Philosophy, History  
of Philosophy Department, Bulgaria



age of digitalisation, when it becomes increasingly difficult to stay within the boundaries of the traditional, quasi-etymological definition of photography as a 'drawing with light'.

There has been a tendency in the relatively meager theoretical literature of the last decades to either treat the essence of photography rather incidentally, or, as a rule, to bypass this issue. Instead, numerous relevant works, despite their occasionally alluringly deceptive titles, have focused mostly on the functioning of the photographic image in a globalised and utterly technicised social and media environment.

Contrary to these tendencies, Prof. Bojadjiev's present study sets itself an initial question – 'what is it?' (*ti esti*), i.e., what is photography as such? His Socratic question provokes further scholarly curiosity about the means used and the ways of functioning of photography. He seeks his answers by searching for those common traits of a photographic image that define its uniqueness and principally distinguish it from other visual representations, such as painting or cinematography. The leading assumption of his research is that the inclusion of a photographic representation in a fundamentally

syncretic visual environment could only be justified if the image manages to preserve its peculiarities and reconfirm them. As Prof. Bojadjiev would argue, despite the whirl of an endless variety of transmissions, overflows and merging, the image should remain 'just that' – a photographic representation.

Prof. Bojadjiev organises his study around the following initial hypothesis: In spite of being a comparatively novel art (its origin dating back to Dominique François Arago's 'discovery' in 1839), photography is based on and legitimised through competing pre-modern and hyper-modern world views, the latter transcending the boundaries of classic European modernity. These *Weltanschauung* attitudes address the status and value of the world around us; inquire into its defining framework of time, space, movement, light; pose questions regarding the regulative characteristic of truth and the acceptable limits of deviation from the truth; question authorship and the role of the creator; ponder over the nature and purpose of art, and the role of the technical intermediaries between man and the world; look at the dynamic interaction between the image and the verbal narrative; peer into the vitality of memory images; and closely explore the justifiability of 'archives'.

Prof. Bojadjiev's project is an extension of his belief that theoretical reasoning on photography should necessarily include a philosophical discourse on the topic. This, in his opinion, is particularly imperative when undetermined and hard to define phenomena are discussed. Due to the elusive nature of photography itself (Is it a technical means for reproducing images; a tool of knowledge; a kind of media; a form of art; or manipulative strategy, perhaps?), its study requires some basal philosophic questioning regarding the essential nature, or *quidditas*, of the object. The significance of this question has been additionally enhanced in the



## Post-socialist Youth Subculture Identity: Westernised Punk and Immigrant Punk

**Vihra Barova, PhD**

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,  
Institute of Ethnography and Folklore Studies, Bulgaria



Youth subcultures (in this particular case, defined by music and style) have the potential to erase or enhance the distinctions between class, ethnicity and gender. They could also be understood as units of adolescent problem-solving and as specific forms of resistance.

Dr Barova's project centres on the generational rupture after 1989 and explores several types of subcultural ways of life which are inherent to the generational cohorts they represent. She argues that different generations – as social constructs formed by historical conjunctures (Mannheim 1970) – have to solve different social problems and by doing so they may produce different types of subcultures. Hence Dr Barova's interest in studying young adults in their search for identity and their struggle for status in the post-socialist society 'under construction' – even when the major societal ideas have been rejected by the alternative group whose member the person is.

Dr Barova's research focuses on the changing group identity of the Punk sub-

culture in Bulgaria, which is shaped by the controversy between old (pre-1989) and new (post-1989) perceptions of the West. The main objective of her research is to capture the generational identity change in the Punk subculture caused by a period of rapid social change and instability. Her preliminary results lead to the conclusion that the change of social order may have affected the continuity amongst the different generations of Punks. Social changes, however, may have also led to the redefinition of the subculture, which made an impact on its abilities for resistance.

Dr Barova draws most of the evidence from fieldwork among groups of young Punks carried out in specific urban areas of Sofia. The recent labour migration of some of the respondents has turned the study into a comparative one as well. Barova has observed a new Bulgarian subcultural network residing in UK, and hence has complemented her research with a social network investigation carried out in London and South East UK.



# Modernity and Identity Programme (2008–2010)

The *Modernity and Identity* project is a two-year programme supported by the Bulgarian Science Fund – a recently established body to the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Research providing financial support for frontier and ground-breaking studies in all disciplines.

Stretching over 2008–2010, the *Modernity and Identity* Project offered annually three nine-month research fellowships to young Bulgarian scholars from the fields of the humanities and the social sciences. In view of its loosely defined thematic scope it was conceived as an opportunity for the Centre to introduce a new mode of organising the work of the selected Fellows freed from the strict thematic requirements characteristic of previous CAS projects. The academic portfolio of the applicants and the quality of their proposals were the prime criteria in the selection.

The two calls for applications rendered fifty-two candidatures by young Bulgarian researchers representing a broad range of social-science disciplinary fields. CAS Academic Advisory Council granted six scholarships:

- Ina Dimitrova: *Security and Identity: Contemporary Regimes of Interaction*
- Martin Ossikovski: *Aristotelian Contributions to Political Theory: Contemporary Aristotelians and Scholastics in Comparison*
- Martin Ivanov: *East of Eden: The Internal Borders of the Bulgarian Modernisation*
- Emiliya Karaboeva: *Vehicles of Modernity – Metamorphoses of Identity (International Truck Drivers during the Cold War)*
- Mila Mancheva: *Experiences of Home, Belonging and Self (Identification) among Bulgarian Return Migrants*

Specifically, the programme addressed and benefited Bulgarian researchers. True to its mission to help create a viable international community of scholars and multidisciplinary cooperation the Centre for Advanced Study sought to offset this limitation by integrating the *Modernity and Identity* Fellow seminars with those of the *Regimes of Historicity* international research team. This not only ensured

the international embedding for the Bulgarian Fellows but gave them the opportunity to broaden their disciplinary, methodological and thematic horizons. The results of the Fellows' research will be published in a special issue of the CAS Working Paper Series and disseminated through the C.E.E.O.L. – Central and Eastern European Online Library ([www.ceeol.com](http://www.ceeol.com)), one of the leading CEE online resources.

The *Modernity and Identity* programme was the first Bulgarian-funded fellowship programme of the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia which came close to supporting research on the basis not of pre-defined themes and outcomes but of scholarly excellence, creativity and innovation. As these same criteria serve to steer the on-going programmes of reform in research and higher education in the country, it is our great hope that the Bulgarian government will continue to see the Centre as a reliable partner in upholding these standards and raising the international prestige of Bulgarian scholarship.

- Galina Goncharova: *Medical Men vs. Wise Women: Negotiating the Professional Identity of Physicians in Modernity – The Debate on Bulgarian Folk Medicine (late 19th to Early 20th Century)*



## Experiences of Home, Belonging and Self (Identification) among Bulgarian Return Migrants

**Mila Mancheva, PhD**

Free-lance researcher, Bulgaria



Dr Mancheva's study aims to investigate the complexities of the phenomenon of return migration in Bulgaria as experienced and narrated by return migrants from various educational, social, professional and migratory backgrounds. These will serve to question official policy discourses that approach return in the framework of protecting the ethnic and cultural homogeneity in the country. The study focuses on the personal accounts of Bulgarian return migrants in the context of return expectations, lived integration, and home and belonging experiences. The preferred research method is the conduction of in-depth semi-structured interviews with officials from relevant Bulgarian migration management institutions, whereas the suggested methodology employs the discursive analysis of government strategy papers, action plans and official reports in the area of migration and return.

Current research on return migration tends to focus on the pro-economic approach, limiting the analysis to questions of financial investments and accumulated labour skills outside Bulgaria. Dr Mancheva's study hopes to circumvent this minimalistic research approach. Instead, she prefers to focus on the return phenomenon *per se*, and investigate the relationship between migratory experiences of returnees and their civic, cultural and ethnic self-identifications. In particular, she centres on the return migrants' lived and imagined experiences of home and belonging that are often assumed unitary and homogeneous by the official political discourse. In this respect she attempts to analyse the relationship between migrants' host and home country experiences, thus hoping to identify modes of continuity or discontinuity, and their link to the migrants' sense of belonging and experiences of home.

A special accent of Dr Mancheva's research is the subjective perceptions and objective experiences of the home as the migrants' lived and imagined reality, as well as their bearing on the migrants' subsequent return adaptation. Thus the study hopes to shed light on the complexities of return migrants' identities, suggesting viewing them as socially and culturally anchored in multiple places of their past and present being.

The study involves in-depth interviews with return migrants, semi-structured interviews with officials from relevant migration management institutions and discursive analysis of governmental strategy papers, action plans and official reports in the area of migration and return.







## Vehicles of Modernity – Metamorphoses of Identity (International Truck Drivers during the Cold War)

**Emiliya Karaboeva, PhD**

Technological University of Eindhoven, The Netherlands  
(Bulgaria)

Dr Karaboeva's project, *Vehicles of Modernity – Metamorphoses of Identity (International Truck Drivers during the Cold War)*, aims to analyse the complex interrelation between identity and modernity during the Cold War, through the lens of a still underexplored group – the Bulgarian international truck drivers. Due to their specific official and non-official activities, Dr Karaboeva approaches international truck drivers as mediators between the West and the East in the Cold War Era. In her study, she argues that it is in their capacity of 'go-betweens' that international truck drivers might have contributed to some particular changes in the everyday perception of the interrelated concepts of modernity, identity and the image of the 'others'.

By outlining the contradiction and the importance of the mediating functions of the international truck drivers during the Cold War, Dr Karaboeva's project analyses the truck drivers' idiosyncratic interpretation of notions, such as *Europe, East and West, democracy, consumption, and technology*. Meticulous attention is paid to the truck drivers' multiple identities – professional, social and personal – as long as they were perceived simultaneously as 'soldiers' and 'ambassadors'; 'traders' and 'diplomats'; 'smugglers' and 'professionals'.

The project explores the possible impact that the drivers' activities and interpretations might have exerted on the popular imagination, on the construction of concepts of modernity, – and last but not

least, – on the ways their own identity was formed at an everyday level. Common people's interaction with the truck drivers and through it with the West is placed in the focus of the research as it is considered a vital vehicle for generating new consumption practices and desires. The thereby promoted 'Western' consumerism is explored as a prism through which an alternative concept of modernity was constructed – competing, as well as complementing, the official one.

Dr Karaboeva examines this newly-emerged concept of modernity in three main directions: consumption, technology and mobility. Western goods, technologies and consumer practices are addressed as a gradually developing reference system for the assessment of common people's own quality and level of modernity of life. They also become a significant reference point for building a specific identity, tightly connected to both consumerism and modernity.

The research is based on information compiled from different sources, including archival documents, objects, travelogues and interviews. Such an approach hopes to create a more nuanced and multi-dimensional picture of the issues analysed in the research.



## East of Eden: The Internal Borders of the Bulgarian Modernisation

**Martin Ivanov, PhD**

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,  
Institute for History, Bulgaria



There is a striking consensus in the literature regarding Southeastern Europe, and hovering around the commonly launched notion of the Balkans as Europe's most backward periphery. Whereas the process of globalisation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seem to have brought growth and prosperity to most of the world, it is argued that the Balkans failed to generate any truly significant progress on their road to modernisation prior the Second World War. However, Dr Ivanov's research argument disputes the currently existing literature on Southeastern Europe as static and sketchy. In particular, he challenges the unspoken corollary that modernisation – merely partial and phlegmatic – could be achieved only within the frames of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes.

The aim of Dr Ivanov's study is to cast new light on the moving internal borders of modernisation in the Bulgarian village. On the basis of a unique archival collection of 588 peasant account books accidentally discovered in the National Archives, it proposes an in-

depth interdisciplinary investigation of the microeconomics of peasant farming in one of the most densely populated regions of peasant Europe, just less than a decade before it was swept up in the maelstrom of collectivisation and forced modernisation. Peasant account books might provide, in Dr Ivanov's view, an extraordinarily detailed glimpse into the day-to-day activities of small peasant farmers in Bulgaria between 1935 and 1945. By 'measuring' the growth potential of rural Bulgaria he hopes to come up with valuable speculations concerning the existing prospects of modernisation and avoid the extremes of the forced collectivisation.



# Pop-Nationalism:

## The Recycling of National Passions through Cultural Practices

While nowadays nationalism might be perceived as the expression of some noble, high culture, it is nevertheless worth remembering that once upon a time, its sentiments were linked to the popular and spontaneous, and even to the vulgar, according to some aristocratic minds. Indeed, masterpieces, such as Verdi's *Nabucco* or Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*, used to mobilise broad audiences, by appealing to their emotions rather than to reason. The fact that a century later, we tend to enshrine them in schoolbooks and museums, seems to have occulted their true role in history, and what is more, has frustrated the identification of similar manifestations of cultural 'pop'-nationalism today.

This pungent assumption made by Sofia University Professor and CAS Fellow Ivaylo Dichev, has triggered further academic interest and also hopes to inspire a new, joint endeavour of the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia and scholars from Fribourg University, Switzerland. Future cooperation between the two institutions would be a natural continuation of their successful prior collaboration in a former CAS project (2005–2008) within the SCOPES programme, *Institutionalisation of Scientific Networks and Scholarly Activities for the Promotion of Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Approaches on Nationalism in The Europe of Small Nations*, sponsored by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

*Pop-Nationalism: The Recycling of National Passions through Cultural Practices* – the working title of the new research concept proposed by Prof. Dichev and co-elaborated with Prof. Christian Giordano (*Seminar für Sozialanthropologie* at Fribourg University), – builds upon the solid partnership between CAS and Fribourg University, and also intends to expand the teamwork by including

academic partners from Georgia, Serbia and further countries of relevance. Its prime objective is to establish a broad international network for the interdisciplinary study of nationalism in popular culture, integrating scholarly activities, capacity-building and active promotion of research in the area.

***Pop-Nationalism: The Recycling of National Passions through Cultural Practices – a research context*** (as outlined by Prof. Ivaylo Dichev)

The proposed project approaches nationalism as a form of popular culture. It attempts to analyse nationalism's present-day role and functions, its strategies for generating mass exultation, the social groups it brings together, as well as the metamorphoses which its old contents undergo within the new channels of modern communication.

Here, 'nationalism' is a consciously chosen term, preferred to Roland Barthes' 'ethnic boundaries' and Michael Billig's 'banal nationalism', in order to underline the aggressive, even voluntaristic aspect of the phenomenon. National emblems are purposefully opposed to other nations' emblems, not because there is a territory or group to fight for, but rather to create the notion of an imaginary territory or group worth standing up for. Thus, as paradoxically as it may appear, nationalism could serve as a form of individualisation.

The research aspects and targets of the project are:

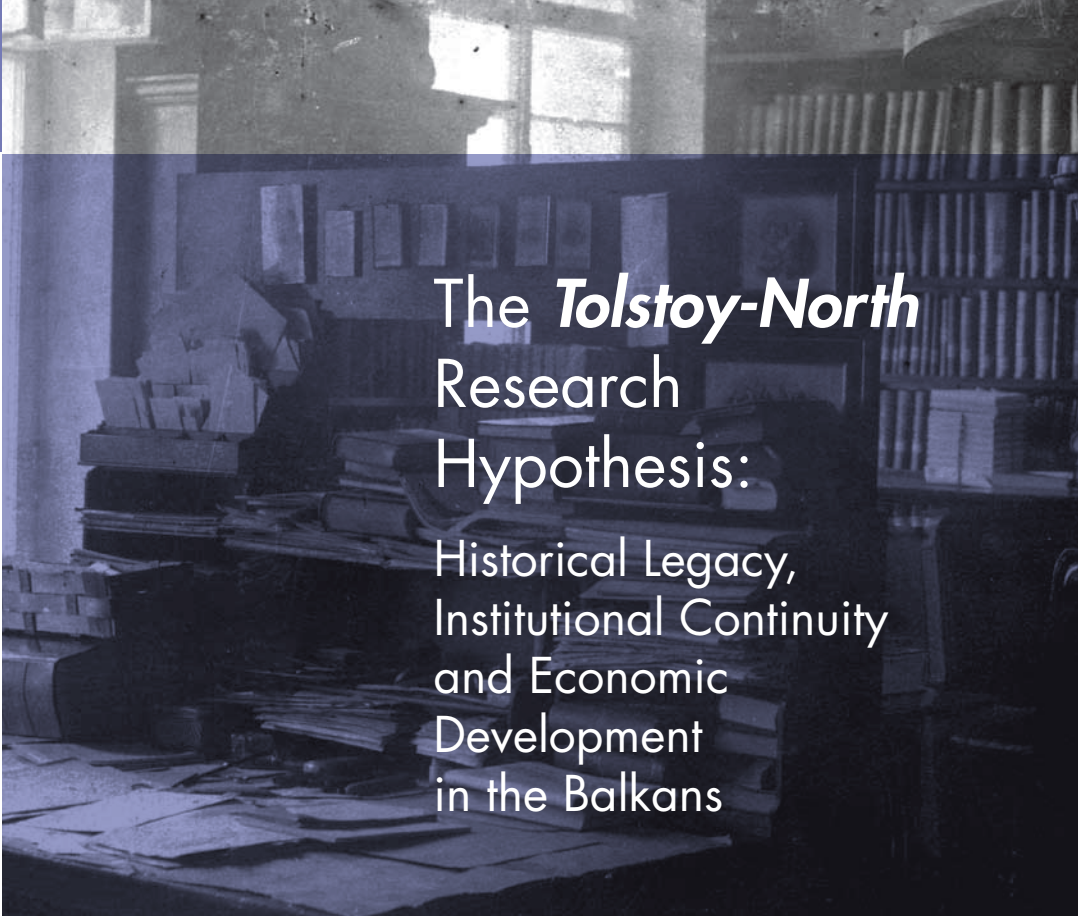
- The new media, i.e., the circulation of national emblems in the digital world. Special attention is paid to video clips uploaded on the Internet (Youtube), to video rituals, and Facebook 'groups' united by national issues;

\* Detailed information about SCOPES 2005–2008 can be found in *CAS Newsletter No.2/2008*, as well as [www.cas.bg](http://www.cas.bg) (Finalised Programmes).



- The new folklore. Research is carried out on live acting role games (LARP), to investigate the combination of national history and fantasy, the real world and its virtual alternatives;
- The new cultures of participation, i.e., TV passions: reality shows, competitions, forms of global mobilisation encouraging the vote for national candidates;
- Global sport, i.e., football fans, their rituals and emblems;
- Other relevant phenomena (cooking, neo-folk music, media-promoted traditions) might be taken under consideration, too.

Like nineteenth-century nationalism, modern-day nationalism, too, is largely a global phenomenon, implying imitation and differentiation, globalisation and localisation. Hence comparative studies are intended between nationalistic developments in the Balkans and similar tendencies in Central Europe and beyond.



## The *Tolstoy-North* Research Hypothesis: Historical Legacy, Institutional Continuity and Economic Development in the Balkans

*'All happy families resemble one another, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way'.* This is perhaps the most famous quote from Tolstoy's masterpiece *Anna Karenina*, and it might not require too vivid an imagination to reinterpret this assertion outside its literary context, by extending it beyond the family unit to other human-related associations, such as firms, markets, economies, and states. If one may dare read Tolstoy in the mood of market economies and their pace of development today, all successful economies seem to possess a large set of qualities in common. Amongst them are a high level of democracy, rule of law, suppression of violence, private property, contract enforcement, competitive markets, and reasonable regulation of numerous activities. As this rather incomplete list indicates, the fundamental, structural features that support the social reality are institutional.

Following this assumption, on 13 February 2010, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia, supported by the *Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office in Sofia*, organised a very successful international workshop under the title – *Tolstoy-North Hypothesis*. The workshop brought together an international panel of high-profile scholars to discuss – from a novel perspective – the different paths of development assumed by those European societies whose economic performances have traditionally been conceived of as a failure of modernisation.



The workshop participants were distinguished researchers with an expertise in the fields of imperial legacies and institutional development from a diverse – economic, historical, anthropological, and political – perspective. Amongst them were Roumen Avramov (economic historian, Center for Liberal Strategies, Sofia), Vladimir Gligorov (political and economic analyst, Vienna Institute for Economic Studies), Rossitsa Gradeva (historian, Institute for Balkan Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Martin Ivanov (economic historian, Institute for History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Georgi Kapriev (Byzantine studies and medieval philosophy, History of Philosophy Dept., Sofia University), Diana Mishkova (historian, Centre for Advanced Study Sofia), Bogdan Murgescu (historian, University of Bucharest, Romania), Vintilă Mihăilescu (anthropologist, University of Bucharest), and Krassen Stanchev (economic analyst, Institute for Market Economy, Bulgaria).

The Balkan societies – as viewed in terms of their economic and institutional organisations within the legacy of the Ottoman and Roman/Byzantine Empires, and the Soviet Union – became the spotlight of analysis. The scholarly interest was channelled towards the modes in which the corresponding historical heritage might have influenced the mental frameworks and interactions of these societies, and the ways and extent to which they shaped the consequent economic culture in the Region and preconditioned a developmental failure there *en masse*.

The central question arising from the discussions, and formulating the core of the *Tolstoy-North* Research Hypothesis is whether, despite the inevitably idiosyncratic development of the Balkan states, their economic underperformance might be attributed to a common institutional heritage. Historically defined as ex-constituents of the Roman/Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and satellites of the ex-USSR (Romania and Bulgaria, in particular), their long-standing legacy might have well exerted a decisive impact on their governance structures and economic institutions over time. It was hypothesised that certain factors, defined by this historical heritage, might have remained operational at the level of traditions, informal relations and the mentalité in the Balkans – broadly grouped under the term ‘economic culture’ – and might hold the key to understanding the failure to achieve modern economic development there.

The emerging potential research agenda draws upon two interrelated insights, which assume that modern-day developed societies are broadly similar in their narrow set of societal change, while the institutional character of the required changes may generate ‘families’ of failure, delineated by a complexity of historically-determined features. The research idea builds on the methodological apparatus of the New Institutional Social Science, whose interdisciplinary framework involves all major social sciences – political science, economics,



sociology, history and anthropology – and hence is uniquely positioned to utilise various methods and approaches from a vast range of fields.

If a link between institutional heritage and patterns of failure is identified, it will have both theoretical and empirical implications. In theory, it will indicate that institutional history might be instrumental to study economic failure in a structured way, thus proposing a distinct alternative to the popular set of explanations embracing cultural determinism. Empirically, the results might generate policies promoting more adequate conditions for a successful transition towards modern economic development.

Further research on the topic envisages looking specifically into the fields of property rights and economic agency, taxation and military power/religion nexus, culture and kin to have the initial assumptions scholarly tested and verified.



In April 2010 the *Negotiating Modernity* Project, funded by the European Research Council – Executive Agency entered its third year of scholarly activity. The Project seeks to map the history of East-Central European political thought from the late eighteenth to the early twenty-first century.\* Paying attention to both the intra- and extra-regional interferences, and breaking the essentialist duality of Western 'core' and Eastern 'periphery', it attempts to contribute to the emergence of a truly European perspective of intellectual history. The Project brings together the experiences of East-Central Europe's manifold cultures into a historical narrative. It aims at creating an analytical framework based on transnational categories, such as 'liberal nationalism', 'integral nationalism', 'agrarian populism', 'national ontology', 'national communism', and thus attempts to transcend the national frameworks and focus on intellectual groups, transnational networks of knowledge transfer, and regional urban contexts.

\* For a detailed outline of the *Negotiating Modernity* Project's academic background, objectives and methodology, see CAS Newsletter 2008 (available online at [www.cas.bg](http://www.cas.bg) (Publications)). For a detailed breakdown of the research team's activities, visit [www.negotiating.cas.bg](http://www.negotiating.cas.bg).





## Negotiating Modernity: History of Modern Political Thought in East-Central Europe

### Mid-Term Progress

The Project's initial three years were primarily invested into the 'trading' of concepts, i.e., inserting specific historical experiences and analytical categories into a broader regional framework, testing the local applicability of the interpretative models, and building the skeleton of the accumulating empirical material. In the process, work on the individual chapters began: elaborate drafts were created which were further subjected to discussions and 'negotiations' among the whole extended group of five principle investigators and eleven guest researchers, the latter representing topics on Albania, Estonia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Croatia. In 2010, this complex web of scholars met at three core meetings organised in Sofia, Bucharest, and Warsaw, in March, June and October, respectively. Supported by New Europe College Bucharest, the Bucharest meeting was further supplemented by a major international workshop, *Writing Intellectual History in East-Central Europe. Interwar Romania in Regional and European Contexts*.

On the practical side, in the academic year 2009–2010, certain empirical and intellectual

findings of the *Negotiating Modernity* Project were incorporated in the course curriculum of *The Political Languages of Anti-Modernism in Central and Southeastern Europe (1900–1945)*, taught by Balázs Trencsényi with Maria Falina as teaching assistant at the History Department, Central European University, Budapest.

As the host-institution of the *Negotiating Modernity* Project, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia provides all required administrative assistance to ensure the smooth execution of the research work. CAS is in charge of the full infrastructural help, offering a propitious research context and hosting some of the working sessions.

The project has established a new model of highly intensive academic research work of a team of multi-national composition, which we hope will add a new milestone in the development of comparative and transnational historiography in Eastern Europe.

'When handling data comparatively, there is more surprise coming up than one usually expects'...

An Interview with Dr Balázs Trencsényi

Principal Investigator of the *Negotiating Modernity* Project, CAS Sofia; Assistant Professor at the History Department of Central European University, Budapest, and Co-director of Pasts, Inc., Centre for Historical Studies at CEU

How did the idea for writing a history of the political ideas of East-Central Europe originate?

**Balázs Trencsényi:** It goes back to a former endeavour of ours, the 'Identity Reader' project, when we were trying to collect texts on national identities in the Region. We were interested in the amassing of primary sources and while researching, we discovered that we could come up with an underlying agenda of how to interpret our accumulated material. Having accomplished that task, a new research group emerged with the aim of giving synthesis to the unfolding story and telling it – implicitly or explicitly – in a way which would prove useful to scholars working on the Region. We aim at people with little command of the local languages, and yet eager to find certain answers to the convoluted history of East-Central Europe. We thought that our work might provide them with a clue of what had happened in the Region based on local knowledge, and also give in-depth details related to the reproduction of the national and transnational frames of thought. This would make the regional intellectual history comparable with the Western European narratives, which nominally talk about the European legacy but rarely take into account the traditions East of Germany with a partial exception of Russia.

Have you 'stumbled upon' any unexpected ideas during your research?

**B.T.:** When handling data comparatively, there is more surprise coming up than one usually expects. If one wants to conceive of good analytical concepts, one shouldn't define them on the basis of a home micro-perspective only, but test and 'stretch' them across the entire Region. Consequently, one may discover that some concepts that have been expected to work initially are not workable in the East European environment, while others start working in unanticipated, intriguing ways. How would you capture the essence of 'national communism'? The seemingly monolithic communist project in Eastern Europe proves to have manifold national frameworks as there were obvious distinctions among the countries there. Romania and Albania are the most spectacular cases, but one needs to compare them to other contexts with a different dynamism, such as the Czech and Hungarian national Stalinisms of the late-1940s, or the Polish reform communism of the mid-1950s. These peculiarities have to be carefully reconstructed, described and made meaningful. To work comparatively on the exceptionalisms within the Region has become a fascinating experiment in itself.

Have you been confronted with any particular historically-determined sentiment that might be held responsible for the stronger appeal of certain radical ideologies in the Region?

**B.T.:** Working on intellectual phenomena, we are very careful to avoid assuming any sort of path dependency. Even if there were certain economic reasons for communism, we still evade handling the social situation deterministically. Of course, we have to be aware of the fact that mass unemployment – as in



the 1920s – tends to trigger off the radicalisation of ideas. However, how radicalised the masses may become in times of crisis is already a question bordering on how political cultures will operate in such cases. One should consider the available ideological legacies (such as the populist or the Marxist tradition), and also the numerous forms which political mobilisation may take.

*Is there any political thought which is more likely to be ingrained in the East-Central European culture?*

**B.T.:** I don't think we should essentialise the Region as it is too vast. The bonding element here is the common historical experience of being 'off-centre', especially in a period when the notion of 'centre and periphery' became framed in historical terms. It was not a matter of mere geographical distance any more. It became the issue of a perceived time-lag, too. We start our story roughly when the Region's backwardness became conceptualised – this was something that structures the entire period of study, spanning two centuries. There was always a feeling that we were not following the same historical pace and did not share the historical development of the Western civilisation. Nevertheless, in one way or another, they remained part of a – permanent but uneven – dialogue with the West and sought desperately to bridge the gap between their culture and the idealized Occident. This feeling of urgency pushed people to be creative and look for new – often fascinatingly hybrid – solutions. It is this highly ambiguous attitude that keeps somehow the whole lot together.

Interviewed by the Editor





## Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900–1945, in East-Central, Southeastern and Northern Europe

Annual Colloquium, 24–29 June 2010

In June 2010, the two-year *Regimes of Historicity* Project (ROH) entered its final stage. Meant as a comparative analysis of the ideological traditions related to the connection between modernity, temporality and historicity in three 'small-culture' European regions, the project's objective was to reconsider the usual metaphors rooted in temporal dimensions that are traditionally used for noncore Western cultures, such as belatedness, asynchrony, backwardness, and catching-up.\*

The second and final *Regimes of Historicity* Colloquium was scheduled for June 24–29, and took place in the picturesque Bulgarian mountain resort of Ribaritsa, situated on the northern

slopes of the *Stara Planina* Mountain, near Lovech – a town renowned for its history and beauty.

The event brought together about thirty international participants: Fellows from the project's first and second years, CAS Fellows from the *Modernity and Identity* Programme, as well as some guest commentators.

The idea behind the scholarly forum was to spur further intensive exchange between Junior and Senior Fellows, the latter being represented by Prof. Diana Mishkova (Bulgaria), Prof. Antonis Liakos (Greece) and Dr Balázs Trencsényi (Hungary). It hoped to stimulate non-conventional, interdisciplinary academic

thought among researchers with different thematic foci and methodological 'takes', and at different stages of their work. The final Annual Colloquium also aimed to provide external expert contribution immediately prior to the finalisation of the 2009–2010 Fellows' output.

The meeting combined intensive scientific discussions with some precious moments devoted to academic network-building through informal, friendly socialisation and sightseeing tours.

The event was financially supported by the *Volkswagen Foundation*, Germany; the *Fritz Thyssen Foundation*, Germany; and the *Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation*, Sweden.

\* For a detailed outline of the *Regimes of Historicity* Project's academic background, objectives and methodology, see [www.cas.bg](http://www.cas.bg) (Finalised Programmes).

## LOOKING BACK

### Regimes of Historicity Fellows' Comments

Are the results of your research living up to your initial expectations? How do they differ from your original intentions?

'Following our discussions, my research took new directions. I looked at certain aspects of my topic and material in a way I hadn't considered before.'

'The final results of my research completely fulfilled my initial expectations.'

'I deepened my preliminary research hypothesis.'

'I expected a lot and gained a lot in terms of intellectual stimuli and inspiring ideas. I am pleased with my results and with the new venues of interpretation and conceptualisation in my work. I've kept my original idea; yet it was largely expanded and further developed in the course of our project meetings and discussions.'



Do you think that CAS has managed to create a stimulating research atmosphere for its Fellows?

'Yes – CAS atmosphere is an ideal mixture of concentration and relaxation.'

'The considerable amount of time dedicated to informal activities was of great value.'

'I was impressed by the overall atmosphere of team work, collaboration, peer critique and encouragement. The research atmosphere created by CAS was excellent throughout the entire project.'

Do you find the collective form of research an appropriate approach towards the realisation of your project objects? Has the intellectual exchange among the Fellows exerted any impact on your individual research?





'The form of collective work and constructive criticism at sessions significantly affected my personal work. The exchange of ideas was the most important part of the whole research.'

'The collective form of research proved very useful from a methodological point of view.'

'I would not have been able to achieve these results without critical comments and advice from my colleagues.'

'I benefited a lot from the collective discussions and other Fellows' comments. Moreover, the collective form of research agenda and the entire conceptualisation of 'regimes of historicity' were extremely fruitful to generate new ideas regarding my own research.'

**Have you managed to create an effective research network with other CAS Fellows that might promote your future academic work?**

'CAS provides a great forum for identifying potential synergies and gaps in our literature.'

'I think that the established friendship networks could be important for the future sharing of information, research, conferences, or publications.'

'I am pleased with the range of ideas we've discussed together. I would very much like to hope that our fruitful collaboration will continue in the future, too.'

**Is there any experience during your fellowship that you or the CAS Fellows' community may have found particularly valuable?**

'I think our CAS meetings were a valuable vehicle for bringing research results to the end!'

'I had a great opportunity to experience a very intensive and demanding working programme. The discussions at CAS were the best part of the colloquia. In particular, the practice to welcome participants to comment separately and in details on the papers of their colleagues

was very stimulating for me.'

'For me as a "Westerner", the encounter with "Eastern" scholars and perspectives was very important. East European scholars know more about the West than Westerners about the East.'

**What would you like to share with us?**

'The organisational side was superb. A lot of hard work has been invested into planning and setting up the sessions without intruding into the intellectual and research space.'







## Cosmopolitanism in the Landscape of Modernity

Professor Galin Tihanov,  
The University of Manchester, UK

Galin Tihanov is Professor of Comparative Literature and Intellectual History and Founding Co-Director of the Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures (RICC) at the University of Manchester. Professor Tihanov is also Honorary President of the ICLA Committee on Literary Theory and member of the Editorial Committee of Manchester University Press and of the editorial/advisory boards of a number of academic journals (*Arcadia*, *Comparative Critical Studies*, *Journal of Literature and Trauma Studies*, *Slavonica*, *Primerjalna književnost*) and book series (*Brill Balkan Studies*, *The True Twentieth Century*, and *Durham Modern Languages Series*). He holds doctoral degrees from Sofia University (1996) and Oxford University (1998) and has been awarded Research Fellowships by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the George Soros Foundation, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, and Collegium Budapest. In 2007, he was Visiting Professor of Comparative Literature at Yale University. In 2010, Professor Tihanov joined the Academic Advisory Council of the Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia.

Professor Tihanov's work spans an impressive number of diverse research fields: History of Ideas; Continental and American Literary and Cultural Theory; Cosmopolitanism and its Genealogies; Exile and Migration; Comparative Literature and Cultural History, esp. Russian, German, and Central- and East-European Culture and Thought (19th-20th c.). He has published widely in Bulgarian and international academic journals and is the author of several books, amongst which is his celebrated *The Master and the Slave: Lukács, Bakhtin, and the Ideas of their Time* (Oxford University Press, 2000; Polish translation with a new Introduction, 2010; Brazilian edition in preparation). Most recently, he has co-edited *Critical Theory in Russia and the West*, with A. Renfrew (Routledge, 2010); *Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism*, with D. Adams (Legenda, 2011); and *A History of Russian Literary Theory and Criticism: The Soviet Age and Beyond*, with E. Dobrenko (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011). His forthcoming authored books include *The Post-Romantic Syndrome*; *Words in Every Word*; and *Cosmopolitan Adventures*.



**Professor Tihanov's lecture** offered a historical typology identifying three major ways in which the term 'cosmopolitanism' has been understood and used. The lecture then centred on the genealogies of modern cosmopolitanism as a body of discourses and social practices. In dialogue with Seyla Benhabib's work, Tihanov elaborated on his idea of the 'recalibration of the polis', before proceeding to discuss Enlightenment political and aesthetic thought and projects of peace and cosmopolitan right in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century (Kant and Fichte, in particular), as well as their relevance in the twentieth century. The lecture concluded with incisive comments on the resurgence of discourses of cosmopolitanism since the early 1990s, especially during the first decade of the 21st century, in the social sciences, political philosophy, and comparative literature. Professor Tihanov drew on different philosophical traditions to theorise cosmopolitanism as a diverse rather than a uniform political discourse, with multiple, layered meanings. His lecture engaged actively with ideas articulated by Hannah Arendt, Carl Schmitt, Friedrich Meinecke, Ulrich Beck, and David Held, amongst others. Central to his discussion were concepts such as methodological nationalism, distributive justice, and human rights. He also reflected on the notion of *enforced cosmopolitanism*, viewed from the perspective of exile and exilic experiences.

Professor Tihanov's presentation resonated strongly with CAS audience, provoking numerous questions and preparing the ground for further fruitful discussions on how modernity is experienced and conceptualised.

## The 1930s Club

2010 gave 'birth' to *The 1930s Club* – a new discussion forum hosted by and conceived at CAS. The pet project of CAS associates, Dr Georgi Ganey and Dr Martin Ivanov, the *Club* aims to provide an intellectual milieu to scholars from various academic branches working on the 1930s in Bulgarian history. Its establishment was motivated by a generally shared feeling that, despite the bulging studies on Bulgaria's pre-communist past in historiography, the social history of the 1930s is still largely underexplored and remains an important *terra incognita* awaiting its 'discoverers'. Hence rather than cutting clear thematic boundaries, the *Club's* field of interest is loosely defined to embrace a vast array of cultural, social, and economic aspects, which will help illuminate the dynamic processes and changes in Bulgarian society on the eve of the Second World War. The *Club's* purpose is to deepen the knowledge of a turbulent decade (the 1930s) and, through juxtaposing various professional opinions, to try to construct a more cohesive narrative about the roots of the Bulgarian political and social changes occurring at that time. The third decade of the twentieth century, or more precisely the years between the



Great Depression and the imposition of the communist regime in Bulgaria, still needs a thorough examination. Until now, the period has been a field of ideologically conflicting mythologemes. However, the 1930s are important for several reasons. In this relatively narrow chronological span, Bulgarian society seems to have developed the potential for breaking away from its previous social model characterised by unsustainable growth and blocked social modernisation. This decade also emerged as a catalyst for speeding up some earlier social processes such as education. The social experiment, in which Bulgaria was involved in the course of 1944–1947, on the other hand, raises certain counterfactual questions, such as: what would have been Bulgaria's developmental trajectory within a different geopolitical configuration after World War II? The project's ambition is to generate rigorous debates and produce a series of interconnected texts

exploring different views (political, ideological, social, economic, etc.) on the major processes marking the 1930s.

On 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010, Dr Ganev and Dr Ivanov opened the new discussion series with a lecture on *Bulgaria's 1930s from an Economic Perspective*. Based on the 'hard' data of statistical analysis, Ganev and Ivanov presented their results on the agricultural innovations, consumer practices and purchasing power in the 1930s which far surpassed the public's expectations and shed surprising light on the history of Bulgaria's past everyday life.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010, the *1930s Club* organised a half-day seminar dedicated to the social, welfare and demographic policies generated in the 1930s and 'spilling over' to the early 1940s. The seminar centred around the papers of Dr Svetla Baloutzova (New Bulgarian University), Dr Kristina Popova and Dr Miglena Angelova (South-West Universi-

ty, Blagoevgrad), which complemented each other in their choice of topics and methodology. Resting on the alternative perspective of analysing history through the eyes of their contemporaries, the three studies outlined an astounding picture of high state and local government initiatives in the welfare sector meant to ensure relief to the population, and boost its general well-being.

Along this line, Dr Baloutzova's paper, *Bulgaria's Population Policy from an International Perspective*, tied the demographic anxieties about Bulgaria's dropping birth rate to national security and the state's attempts to alleviate poverty – the latter having been recognised as an important factor for the instigated birth decline. Dr Popova's paper, *Bulgaria's State Rural Policies in the Welfare Field*, charted the realm of state activities in the rural countryside following the Public Assistance Act, enacted in 1934 and further modified over the decade. In accord with her colleagues' findings, Dr Angelova's presentation, *The Affirmation of Modern Methods of Work in the Public Welfare Sector*, offered a case-study of a 'typical' Bulgarian model-village of the 1930s, dissecting various aspects of its health sector. Supplemented by visual source material and including a short propaganda trailer from the 1930s, Angelova's paper proved entertaining for the audience and excited comparative debates.

CAS would like to wish the *1930s Club* forum *bonne chance* in 2011 and further stimulating discussion initiatives.



## Dimitar Bechev and his Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia



In January 2010, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia was delighted to host Dimitar Bechev's book presentation to a vast and inquisitive scholarly audience. Dr Bechev's *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia* hit the international book market in 2009 and raised interest amongst both academics and political observers. International reviews have praised his work as 'a very useful addition to the limited scholarship on this small (Macedonian) nation' (2010 American Reference Books Annual), presenting the Balkan complexities of yesterday and today through Macedonia's particularly diverse, rich and turbulent history (Amazon.com).

**Dimitar Bechev** is a well-known name in Bulgarian public life, having made multiple appearances on the Bulgarian National Television and participated in newsreel discussions addressing the Balkans. He has received his D.Phil degree from the University of Oxford, UK, with a thesis on *Constructing Southeast Europe: The Politics of Balkan Regional Cooperation* (2005, published as a monograph by Palgrave Macmillan in 2011), and is Research Fellow at the European Studies Centre, St Anthony's College, Oxford University. He specialises in the politics and modern history of Southeastern and Central Europe, EU external policies and the EU enlarge-

ment. He has published extensively both in English and Bulgarian on various challenging issues related to state-building in the present-day Western Balkans, regional security, the politics of nationalism and identity.

***Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia*** (The Scarecrow Press, Inc.: 2009) was introduced by Dr Tchavdar Marinov, a social scientist and historian, and a former CAS Fellow. The volume spurred a great deal of interest owing to its structure and choice of the over 400 cross-referenced entries on historical institutions, geographical locations and personalities that bear a meaning in a Macedonian, Bulgarian, Albanian and Serbian context. Most questions hovered around some traditionally ignored topics concerning the social, political and identity transformations which Macedonia, the region and the country known by that name, underwent in the twentieth century, and zoomed in on themes such as historical memory and the state of the art in present-day Balkan historiographies.

As put in Dr Bechev's own words, the *Historical Dictionary* reflects his longstanding interest in the modern history of the Balkans, and in the region of Macedonia, in particular, as long as the latter has been the subject of much political and academic contestation over the decades, thus illustrating the complexity if not ambiguity that underwrites the politics and societies in southeastern Europe. Quoting American political scientist Chip Gagnon (*The Myth of Ethnic War*, 2004), Bechev restated that 'if we can learn anything from Balkan history, it is that ethnic identities and the meanings attributed to them are fluid'. Rather than disseminating yet another sore and coloured perspective on what he called the 'perennial Macedonian Question', Bechev expressed hope to have analysed and illustrated 'the shifting and contingent notions of collective belonging, the dilemmas of social and economic modernisation, and the relationship between the tectonic changes of political order and everyday lifeworlds.'



## Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos

### The Problem of Continuity in Balkan Historiographies

On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia had the pleasure to host a presentation of Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos's work, *The Byzantium after the Nation: The Problem of Continuity in Balkan Historiographies*.

**Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos** is Assistant Professor in Balkan History in the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies at the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece. He holds a PhD degree in History from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and has received scholarships and fellowships from the State Scholarships Foundation of Greece, Princeton University, USA, and the University of Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria. For the current academic year (2010–2011), he is member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton USA.

Dr Stamatopoulos has published numerous articles on the history of the Orthodox peoples in the Ottoman Empire: he is the author of *Reform and Secularisation. Towards a Reconstruction of the History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the 19th Century* (in Greek) (2003), and co-editor (with Fotini Tsibiridou) of the collective volume *Orientalism on the Edge: From the Ottoman Balkans to the Contemporary Middle East* (in Greek) (2008). His most recent monograph, *The Byzantium after the Nation: The Problem of Continuity in Balkan Historiographies* (Alexandria: Athens, 2009), has

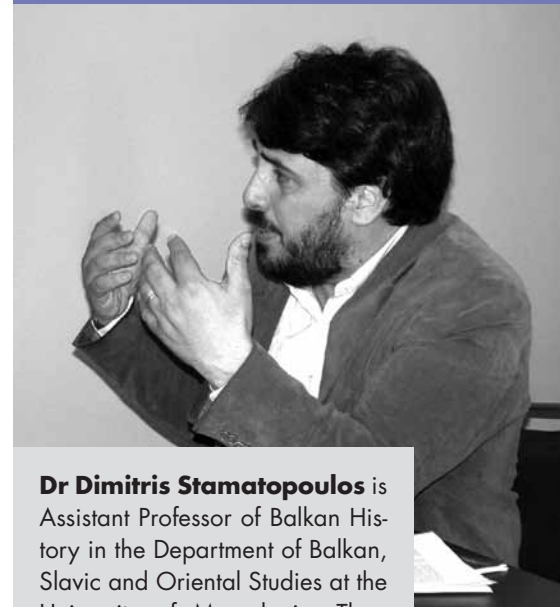
been critically acclaimed as 'the first systematic comparison of the dominant ethnic historiographic models and "divergences" elaborated by Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Albanian, Rumanian, Turkish and Russian intellectuals with reference to the ambiguous inheritance of Byzantium' (<http://www.alexandria-publ.gr/new>).

Dr Stamatopoulos's current interests focus on the relationship between religion and politics in the Balkans and more specifically on the process of secularization and the rise of civil society.

**In his lecture**, based on his latest book and given in front of a packed auditorium, Dr Stamatopoulos explained the significance of Byzantium as seen through the eyes of late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century Balkan historiographers. He elaborated on their scholarly perceptions, interpretations, and also on their purposeful, ideologically-charged utilisation of the Byzantine imperial model in contrast to a later, Ottoman present. 'Byzantium after Byzantium' – an expression coined by Romanian historian and politician, Nicolae Iorga, in the 1930s – was meant to determine the continuity between the Byzantine and the Ottoman empires, and reflected the ambiguous, diverging, and conflicting narratives of the Byzantine legacy in Balkan historiographies and in rival Balkan nationalisms. In particular, Dr Stamatopoulos posed the poignant question whether the medieval Byzantine past had not

been exploited for the reconstruction and even 'correction' and invention of national Balkan histories in an era of fervent nation-building in Southeastern Europe. Moreover, following a genealogical approach, Dr Stamatopoulos showed that the intellectual roots of Iorga's historiographic scheme (which in itself was an endeavour to reconstruct the national Romanian historiography in the beginning of twentieth century, and against which the modern Turkish historiographic tradition emerged) could be traced to the deviational works of Balkan historians of the nineteenth century who spent most of their lives in Istanbul-Byzantium and defended the imperial scheme against the nationalisation aims of their historiographic canons.

A special merit of his lecture was Dr Stamatopoulos's approach to Balkan historiographies *per se*. By merging the methods of comparative history and a cross-national perspective, he chose to explore local national historiographies jointly rather than separately, and thus managed to recreate an image of their coherent regional whole.



**Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos** is Assistant Professor of Balkan History in the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies at the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece. He holds a PhD degree in History from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and has received scholarships and fellowships from the Greek state, Princeton University, USA, and the University of Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria.



## Better Knowledge of the Past is a Prerequisite for a Better Future ...

### An Interview with Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos

*Dr Stamatopoulos, what inspired your interest in the topic of continuity and divergence in Balkan historiographies?*

**Dimitris Stamatopoulos:** I felt there was an absence of interest in a common comparative study of Balkan historiographies. Except for the work of Professor Maria Todorova and some comparisons between contesting Romanian and Bulgarian national ideologies and historiographies noted in Bulgarian bibliography, I could not locate any other *total* approach to this topic. This is especially true for the Greek academic environment. I believe, however, that in the future more historians should address the histories of the Balkan nations in a more cohesive manner. Then they would be able to pose more challenging questions and elaborate more interesting answers and arguments, too.

*What would make a research dedicated to past historiographies appealing to a broader audience today?*

**D.S.:** It is important to eliminate the old national stereotypes as this could help us see a common future in the Balkans. But there is more in this. There is also the will to understand our past better. If we want to transcend the present borders, we have to get a better knowledge of our past. This is a prerequisite for a better future for the Balkan peoples.

*In your lecture, you quoted numerous Romanian, Albanian, Bulgarian authors. Have you read them in the original? How important are multi-linguistic skills for a historian?*

**D.S.:** Languages are instrumental for historical research. In my own work, I have resorted to Greek, Turkish and Bulgarian, besides English, French and some German.

*Your broad field of interest is religion, secularism, and political studies within a historical perspective. Compared to the past, how important is a religious or national identity today, especially*

*when we are facing a rapidly globalising world?*

**D.S.:** I think today we are witnessing a return of the imperial schemes. The recent economic and political integrations have destroyed the borders of the nation-states. In such an environment marked by post/meta-national-identity-formation processes, religious identities might take over easily and prove exceedingly strong. Of course, religion today differs from what it used to be yesterday. I think that the collapse of the European continental empires (Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg) in 1918 generated certain perceptions which tended to dominate the past twentieth century. What I tried to explain today was that the model of national continuity was often influenced by the presence of imperial ideas. It was not only that a nation – understood as a collective subject – had to find a way to move through history. There was also the impact of the imperial scheme on the national ideologies themselves. The





disintegration of the former empires did not facilitate people to start thinking of themselves as part of the new context of the nation-state. For example, take the historical figure of Gavril Krstevic\*, who died alone in his Bosphorus home, alienated from his Bulgarian compatriots. He was left with a sentiment of wistfulness for the imperial past, incapable of understanding the new modernity.

The appearance of various versions of imperial nationalism (a concept we owe to Hans Kohn, employed to describe the ideological movement of Pan-slavism) in the empires of the East, at precisely the period when Renan, Lane, and Sacy were creating (according to Said) the prevailing Orientalist model, is by no means accidental. The empires of the East not only responded by adopting processes of modernisation (or better, 'Westernisation'), but by endeavouring to recreate their legitimate authority on the basis of the only supra-national factor that continued to affect large numbers of people. Or, to be more precise:

the empire adopted versions of imperial nationalism in consideration of its ecumenicalism. Of course, this was not a medieval style of ecumenicalism, where religious identity could once again emerge as predominant, but a discourse of modernity in which religious identity was called upon to overcome the splintering of the world into nations through ecumenicity's invocation. That is, while in the West empires became increasingly identified with the nation via a transitional form of the absolutist state, simultaneously becoming reconciled with the idea of dominance as colonial nations, in the East empires confronted the nation as a necessary evil. However, the problem the East was being called to confront was not merely that of redefining the relationship between ethnos and empire; rather it was an accommodation in which the role of religion was critical. It is important to explore these two opposing perspectives on the issue of religion from the standpoint of both West and East. Religion thus played a

part in redefining relations between East and West precisely because it comprised the liminal point of passage from empire to nation state.

**What is uniting people more – religion or secularism?**

**D.S.:** Speaking of today, this is an intricate question as it is not easy to define a secularised mentality. The separation of church and state cannot determine the way in which ordinary people perceive of and understand themselves. I believe that whenever the process of secularisation takes place on the level of the state, the problem of secularising people's souls is not easily resolved. The most characteristic illustration is the United States of America – an absolutely secular country with eighty per cent of the population believing in God.

**If historians were endowed with creative powers, what kind of world would they create for today and tomorrow?**

**D.S.:** It is doubtful whether we can grasp the authenticity to become real creators. Many times humans have borrowed schemes and models from other peoples, either from the past or the present. It would be very superficial to assume the role of a creator.

**What would you like to wish your friends and colleagues in the wake of tomorrow's holiday?\***

**D.S.:** I'd wish peace for all of us.

Interviewed by the Editor

\* Gavril Krstevic (1817–1898): Bulgarian patriot, intellectual, and politician, whose career unfolded in the high administrative structures of the Ottoman Empire. Krstevic became second Governor-General of Eastern Rumelia (1884–1885).

\* Orthodox Palm Sunday 2010.



## Blank Spaces in Bulgarian Cultural Memory

### Dr Vesselina Vachkova

Despite the heat wave of a typical summer afternoon, on 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2010 CAS welcomed historian Vesselina Vachkova to present her latest scholarly work, *Blank Spaces in Bulgarian Cultural Memory* (Voenno Izdatelstvo: Sofia, 2010), to an intrigued audience.

Dr Vesselina Vachkova is a full-time lecturer in Ancient and Medieval History at the National Secondary School for Ancient Languages and Cultures, Sofia, and an adjunct lecturer at the National Academy of Art in Sofia. She received her doctoral degree from Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski' in 1997, and has been awarded a number of scholarships, including an *Andrew W. Mellon* research scholarship (Paris, 1999). She is the author of five and co-author of three monographs, and of nearly three dozens of articles in Bulgarian and international journals. Amongst her best known works are *Les images et les réalités des frontières en Europe médiévale (III-XI s.)* (Gutenberg: Sofia, 2006), *Simeon the Great – the Way to the Crown of the West* (Kama, Collection Historical etuds: Sofia, 2005), *Traditions of Holy War in Early Byzantium* (Gutenberg: Sofia, 2004, and *Imaginary and Real Boundaries of Early Medieval Europe* (Sofia University Press 'St. Kliment Ohridski': 2001).

Dr Vachkova has been selected as a CAS Fellow under the Advanced Academia Programme (Oct. 2011–Feb. 2012).

**Dr Vachkova's presentation of her *Blank Spaces in Bulgarian Cultural Memory*** provided an exciting trip back in time, taking the audience to antiquity. Vachkova's monograph addresses the so-called 'blank spaces' in Bulgarian cultural memory. It analyses the particular historical prerequisites and temporal dimensions that caused their appearance, and explored the reasons behind their sustained manifestation in Bulgarian history. Its goal is to unearth and explain the grounds and mechanisms that continue to trigger, sustain and re-enforce in the public mind a distancing from certain episodes in the native history, thus incessantly re-conceptualising and reinterpreting them as 'alien'.

In her presentation, Dr Vachkova focused on Sofia's 'golden age', whose historical dimensions overlapped with the 'dark ages' of the early history of Bulgarians in Europe. While traditionally 'blank spaces' have been attributed to the inhibiting activity of factors rooted in Bulgaria's Ottoman past, Dr Vachkova maintains that in fact, the inhibiting agents are to be traced further back in time, and dated before the fourteenth century. Essentially, they are related to the 'blank zones' in the cultural memory of the entire Western (i.e. European) world, provoked by the necessity to erase specific fundamental events in the history of the Church and the State, that took place on the site of Serdica between the fourth and sixth century. In particular,

three central events had to be obliterated from the historical memory: the issuance of the Edict of Toleration (Serdica, April 30, 311); the convening and the decisions of the Second Ecumenical Council (Serdica, 343); as well as the evolvment of Serdica as one of the most important imperial residences of the Roman Empire under Diocletian, Galerius, and Constantine the Great.

Dr Vachkova introduced the term *Byzantine memory machine* whose function is far more complex and precise than the results of a classical *memory erasure* or the *doom to oblivion*. Hence its wide-ranging, long-lasting, and resilient impact over space and time.

Yet, while the memories of Serdica's 'golden age' as a powerful ecclesiastic and political centre were lost a long time ago, the memories surrounding the agents, the time period and the purpose of Serdica's construction continued to haunt the collective mind as late as the sixteenth century, acting as a powerful symbol of the spiritual unification of the Bulgarians. In Dr Vachkova's view, it was the myth upheld by modern historiography, claiming a late Bulgarian settlement in Europe and an 'incomplete', 'belated' christianisation of the Bulgarian population that dealt the final blow and erased the reminiscences of a mighty Serdica from Bulgaria's historical memory.

Furthermore, Dr Vachkova proposed to 'fill in' some of the important 'blanks'



in the Bulgarian cultural and historical memory by extracting the rich information about the Bulgarians and Bulgaria contained in the memory of Constantinople monuments in the period from the last quarter of the fifth to the end of the eleventh century. She interpreted the statues of Constantinople not as 'simple artefacts', i.e. as famous Constantinople 'collections' and 'wonders', but as yet another alternative historical narrative that has preserved the most significant images in the Byzantine cultural memory ever since. In antiquity, all Bulgaria-related monuments had been placed at most significant sites in the sacred topography of Constantinople, connected with its most important religious and political rituals. Thus the name and the image of the 'Bulgars' proved to have been deeply rooted not only in the written and 'monumental' (historical) memory of the Byzantines but also in their ceremonial memory which, in ancient times (and even today), created and reinforced the sense of identity, solidarity and cultural significance of the community.



## Childhood Under Socialism: Political, Institutional and Biographical Perspectives

(CAS/Riva: Sofia, 2010)

2010 proved a prolific year in terms of publication as it witnessed the coming out of the long-awaited volume, *Childhood Under Socialism* – a study of Bulgaria's recent past through the eyes and the experiences of children, edited by CAS associates Prof. Ivan Elenkov and Prof. Daniela Koleva (Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski', Faculty of Philosophy, Dept. of History and Theory of Culture). Based on a former highly successful workshop hosted by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia in 2008, and combining the joint efforts of the members of the Atelier for Biographical Research and the History Club, the collection encompasses ten research papers (including a comprehensive introduction by Elenkov, Popova and Koleva), each illuminating Bulgarian children's history from a unique, innovative perspective. The authors take the reader from the analytical treatment of the Regime's various political projects on children over time, through the interpretation of the ideological visions of former institutionalised and politically-charged practices, and finally, to issues regarding childhood memories linked to the public and private spheres. On the methodological side, it is the book's objective to delineate a new field of study marked by the junction of the two rapidly evolving disciplines – namely, the history of childhood and the history of socialism in recent Bulgarian historiography. Its ambition is to voice the variety of political, social, and existential angles and positions intersecting in the field, and to incite further questions and original research. Each contribution tackles Bulgarian children's childhood under socialism from a different perspective:





'A Friend Who Will Make a "Septemvriचे" out of the Common Child' (Kristina Popova) addresses the profession of the pioneer leader, which following the new Soviet-borrowed model, was designed to organise children's free time along the Communist Party's visions and instructions. As without exception pioneer leaders were female, the study also embarks on a gender analysis of the young women's dimensions of work guided by the centrally administered programmes and directives.

'Cutting New Ores, Creating Worlds of Sound, Radiance and Colour' (Ivan Elenkov) reviews the place of the International Children's Assembly *Banner of Peace* in the political, ideological and cultural context of 'late' socialism in Bulgaria, as well as the country's efforts to promote herself on the international arena.

'The Pre-Socialist Roots of Child Welfare Legislation Under Socialism' (Svetla Baloutzova) explores the denied legacy of state policy towards children and the family by the communist regime and reconstructs the 'eradicated' bits of pre-1944 legal acts and practices which laid the foundations of Bulgaria's legal approaches towards childhood under socialism.

'The State Child. Institutionalisation of Childcare in Socialist Bulgaria' (Anelia Kassabova) outlines socialist policy towards the category of children 'under risk' and 'in need of protection'. Children coming from impoverished, socially disadvantaged families or deprived of parental care and accommodated in

isolated child institutions, become the target of Kassabova's study.

Following Kassabova's paper, 'Learning the Language of the Deaf' (Irina Radeva) takes the study of parentally deprived children further in the immediate post-socialist period. Based on an empirical research, the paper analyses the transformations of the specific state institutions in the light of the new ideas of and requirements for a suitable domestic environment and 'normal parental care'.

'Childhood and the Youth Brigade Movement' (Bilyana Raeva) investigates the organisation of time in the organised voluntary labour movement of 1946–1950. The case-study focuses on the state's strategies designed to emancipate young people from their parental authority and simultaneously to accelerate their process of maturing and integration into the newly-built socialist society.

'Childhood of Mine, Real and Magical' (Svetla Kazalarska) looks into the narratives and memories of childhood under

socialism in a contemporary, post-1989 Berlin museum. The paper examines the discrepancies and complementarities between the staged exhibition, on the one hand, and its reception by the visitors, on the other.

'The Image of the Teacher in the Reminiscences of Sofia English Language School's Alumni' (Nadezhda Galabova) sheds light on the informal daily life in the classroom of an intellectually elite language school in the 1970s. Based on a collection of oral history stories, the paper critically analyses the reconstructed solid, unambiguous image of the teacher in the eyes of the (ex-)students as an unquestionable source of knowledge.

'The Insecure Children in *I Lived Socialism*' (Diana Ivanova) focuses on life-stories collected via an internet-based project ([www.spomenite.org](http://www.spomenite.org)) in the period of 2004–2006. The author – one of the four project initiators – pays special attention to the childhood stories which comprise nearly eighty per cent of all collected website material, and investigates the ways childhood is narrated by people belonging to different generations

CAS book launch was presented by historians Prof. Daniela Koleva and Prof. Mihail Gruev (Sofia University), and writer Dr Georgi Gospodinov. Its thematic focus was welcomed by the enthusiastic audience, stirring memories of bygone days and raising numerous questions and considerations. CAS would cordially like to thank Prof. Daniela Koleva whose devoted efforts made the volume shine.





## Workshop within the International Project Religion and the Public Sphere: Interdisciplinary Approaches

In March 2010 the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia hosted the opening workshop within the framework of the international project *Religion and the Public Sphere: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. The workshop was led by Prof. Dr Dale F. Eickelman (Dartmouth College, USA), a leading anthropologist of Islam and the Middle East in the international scholarly domain and international member of the Project's team.

This project of the Centre for the Study of Religions (CSR) at Sofia University proposes new interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to the research of the policies of diversity management in Bulgarian society through a diachronic and synchronic thematisation of the relationship between religion and the public space. This necessitates a new type of conceptualisation, a new comparative theoretical approach involving a wide range of contexts from the Middle East to Western Europe.

The overall goal of this research project is to advance the elucidation of the content of the Bulgarian policies of diversity management related to manifestations of religious identity in the public sphere. The main objectives are to:

- Develop innovative interdisciplinary methodologies in the study of the relationship between religion and the public sphere with an emphasis on the social experience of Eastern Orthodox and Muslim communities;

- Facilitate the academic integration and establish effective partnership among senior and young scholars, doctoral and master's students from different disciplines through joint research work, seminars and conferences;
- Reveal – within the Bulgarian conditions – the optimal parameters of public policies with regard to the public manifestations of diversity based on religious identity.

The project methodology is innovative on both fundamental and empirical scientific levels and encompasses approaches ranging from history, cultural anthropology and philosophy to sociology and ethnography.

*Religion and the Public Sphere* is funded by the National Science Fund at the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, Youth and Science. The Bulgarian project members include Dr Simeon Evstatiev (project-leader, Sofia University, Dept. of Arabic and Semitic Studies), Dr Vladimir Gradev (Sofia University, Dept. of the History and Theory of Philosophy), Dr Plamen Makariev (Sofia University, Philosophy Dept.), Dr Anna Krasteva (New Bulgarian University, Political Science Dept.), Dr Rossitsa Gradeva (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Balkan Studies), Dr Ilia Iliev (Sofia University, Ethnology Dept.), Dr Daniela Kalkandjieva (Sofia University, Centre for the Study of Religions).

## Establishment of National Legal Systems in Post-Ottoman Southeastern Europe. Deconstruction, Formation and Transfer of Normativity

Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt/Main, Germany



In October 2010, CAS provided hospitality to the Bulgarian team of the international project *Establishment of National Legal Systems in Post-Ottoman Southeastern Europe. Deconstruction, Formation and Transfer of Normativity*, launched by the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt/Main, Germany. The meeting was convened by Dr Jani Kirov, Max Planck Institute, project participant for Bulgaria and member of the project team.

The Project's principal goals are to reconstruct the history of normativity in the post-Ottoman aftermath of Southeastern Europe and outline the dynamics, nature and outcomes of legal transfers, implemented by the newly emerging nation-states through their political programmes and legal mechanisms, to create a new social organisation. The Project builds on the concept that legal transfer represents an approved, almost universal device, which frequently accelerates the production

of norms and the formation of legal regulations. At the same time, legal transfer may also exhibit a 'Janus-face', and affect society in an unforeseeable way. The Project examines the formation of the national legal systems in post-Ottoman Turkey, Greece, Romania and Bulgaria at a particular historical stage, when the countries were confronted with an imagined future seen as 'modern' and 'Western', laying far from the present, and calling for radical transformations.

The Bulgarian project team is represented by Dr Ivo Hristov (Plovdiv University), Dr Nadja Danova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Dr Martin Belov (Sofia University), Dr Ralitsa Kostadinova (New Bulgarian University), Dr Svetla Baloutzova (New Bulgarian University), Dr Teodora Purveva (Brussels), and Dr Rossitsa Gradeva (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Balkan Studies).



# Advanced Academia Programme: Individual Fellowships 2011–2012

## Bulgarian Participants

March – July 2011



**Datcheva, Violeta**

*Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Art Studies*

### Redirecting National Identification by the Communist Regime in Bulgaria 1944–1950

The project aims to study the legitimisation of the communist regime in the so-called era of early communism (Stalinism) in Bulgaria through national identification as one of the actual elements of modern individual identification. The object of study is the theatrical discourse (as a historically constructed expression) from late 1944 to the end of 1950. I am interested in how the symbols of communism were asserted by breaking and transforming the elements of an already existing expression, established in the pre-Second World War period. Such were symbols related to national mythology, which, meanwhile, were ideologically declared 'reactionist' and 'fascist'. Put in other words, I will be looking for the answer of the question how the communist regime redirected national identity.

**Evstatiev, Simeon**

*Sofia University, Dept. of Arabic and Semitic Studies*

### Struggles against Innovation in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Islam in the Arab Middle East (With a Reference to the Balkans)

The project aims at opening up a new academic horizon for grasping the Islamic religious reform in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Arab Middle East as a set of interrelated struggles against 'innovation' (*bid'a*). The research is focused on the dispersion of the Qadizadeli movement (1620s–1680s) by relating it to Bilad al-Sham in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and



to the Wahhabi surge in eighteenth-century Arabia. The movement is pursued as a religious-political force that caused significant and durable changes in the history not only of the Arab East, but of the Ottoman Balkans, too. Why did the Qadizadelis seem so enigmatic and invisible outside the capital city of Istanbul while there is an apparent scholarly 'intuition' of their translocal significance? What were the main channels through which their 'orthodoxy' became part of a more universal process across the Ottoman Empire? Obviously, a more comprehensive understanding of the movement

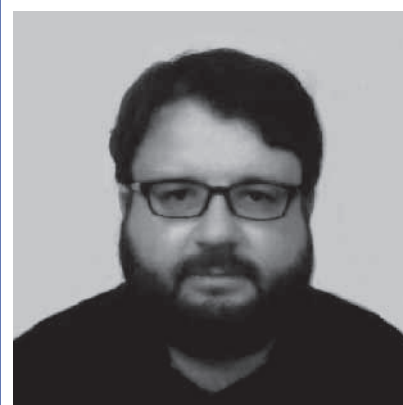
and its cross-cultural role requires a deeper reorganisation of the sources and a new interdisciplinary methodology to foster our analysis of intersecting historical processes between the Arab East and the Balkans.

**Todorov, Boris**

*returning scholar*

### Royal Saints and the Integration of the Medieval Serbian Space (Thirteenth-Fourteenth Centuries)

The project examines royal hagiography un-



der the Nemanjić dynasty in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Serbia – a phenomenon in which the veneration of holy relics and the commemoration of dead rulers overlapped and promoted the idea of a holy dynasty. This idea is best expressed in Lives of Serbian Kings and Archbishops by Danilo II (d. 1337) and the royal genealogical trees in several churches. The present study focuses most specifically on the connection between sacral space and territorial expansion. The working hypothesis is that Danilo's quasi-hagiographical accounts of the lives of Stephen Uroš I (d. 1277) and his family were

not after-the-fact rationalisations of the rulers' pious politics, but the culmination of a policy of connecting their dead bodies to a network of monastic foundations that formed the nucleus of the territorial base of the Serbian monarchy.

### Valtchinova, Galina

*Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Balkan Studies*

#### **Cultures of Pain, Cultures of Salvation: Crisis and Eschatological Beliefs and Discourses in the Balkans at the Turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The project is grounded in the theoretical premise that 'religion' is a specific way of dealing with social and political realities, and addressing both collective and existential anxieties. Its aim is to study the ways in which crises and thinking in terms of an 'end' (of the world, of time, of history), meet and influence each other in the everyday practices and beliefs



of Balkan people at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The ravages of nationalism and national struggles, including wars, the proliferation of religiously fuelled conflicts, and more recently, the painful transition from 'socialism' to democracy and market capitalism have contributed to shaping Balkan cultures as 'cultures of pain' and assorted to high expectation for salvation. My purpose is to explore the relationships between socioeconomic and political changes, popular ideas centred on 'end-of-world' notions and salvation, and some emblematic figures of eschatological beliefs.

October 2011 – February 2012

### Lyutskanov, Rossen

*Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Society and Knowledge Studies*

#### **The Significant Other: The Interactions of Philosophy and Abstract Mathematics in the German Academic Milieu (1870–1930)**

In his *Archeology of Knowledge* (1969), Michel Foucault defined the positivity of discourse as a particular aspect of scientific practice which identifies different oeuvres as belonging to a single discursive formation. Interpositivity was defined as the configuration of several discursive formations, i.e. as 'the law of their



communications'.

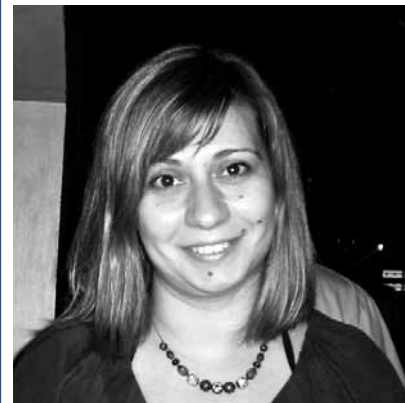
The fully developed sciences generally tend to emphasise the side of positivity at the expense of interpositivity. Mathematics is a paradigmatic case of this phenomenon because it successfully obscures the metaphysical origins of its most vexing theoretical problems. Hence I intend to explore the interactions between the epistemic frameworks of neo-Kantian philosophy and abstract mathematics in the German academic milieu around the turn of the twentieth century. The disclosure of these interactions is important, because the philosophical dimensions of mathematical concepts are part of what Foucault referred to as the 'unsaid', i.e. the background of the enunciative field of pure mathematics.

### Petrova, Velislava

*Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski', Dept. of Theory and History of Culture*

#### **Why Garbage Matters**

While conducting my doctoral fieldwork, I encountered the category of a 'new' commodity – garbage. As part of my research was done on a flea-market, this was not surprising: goods originating from trash were of



structural importance to the marketplace I was studying. They were considered related both to the imagery of the place and to the historical transformations in Bulgaria. My fieldwork experience conditioned my current research interest which is primarily orientated towards the practical and material dimensions of trash.

In my current project, I am looking into the way of how garbage is constructed as a social, cultural and historic category, as well as into the individual practices and discourses of waste disposal as revealing contemporary social transformations. I am interested in both the dynamics of constituting the category (i.e. what is categorised as devalorised, unnecessary, or unclear in a historical perspective) and in the individual practices evolving around garbage constitution.

**Popova, Kristina**

*Southwest University 'Neofit Rilski', Blagoevgrad, Department of Law and History*

**'The Joy of Service'**
**Biopolitics and Biographies between New York, Sofia and Gorna Dzhumaja in the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The research focuses on the biographies, careers and networks of Bulgarian and American nurses as agents of biopolitics in the process of their collaboration for the establishment of modern nursing education in Bulgaria. The main research base is the intensive correspondence between leading American and Bulgarian nurses in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as their publications. Through such networks of 'sisterhoods' women exchanged their experiences and reflections on their professional and personal everyday life. The main goal of this project is to contribute to the history of biopolitics through the eyes of



women's history. It studies women as social reformers and agents of biopolitics, and underscores the importance of their 'imagined societies' and networks.

**Slavova, Petya**

*Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski', Dept. of Sociology*

**The Soviet Type of Profession and Its Local Deviations: A Comparative Study of the Lawyers' Profession in Socialist Bulgaria and the USSR**

According to the official ideology of the socialist regime, the profession of lawyers was doomed to disappear. This prophecy did never come true, though. In this project I will analyse the transformation of a liberal profession into a 'state profession', using as a case-study



the state of lawyers in socialist Bulgaria. The project's goal is to help expand the research scope of the sociology and the history of professions under the conditions of Soviet-type socialist regimes. The legal profession will be analysed as a socio-and-historical construct rather than an objectively existing reality. The project further aims to go beyond the state of the art and review the concept of 'Soviet-type professions', revealing that local specifics and inherited history play their important part and lead to different types of professional, economic, and political practices.

**Vachkova, Vesselina**

*National Academy of Art, Sofia*

**The Byzantine Memories of Sofia**

The main objectives of this project is to reconstruct the medieval cultural identity of one of



the most emblematical sites in the Byzantine oecumene – the city of Serdica – named by Constantine the Great himself *Mea Roma*. The study hopes to contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms behind how the Byzantine memory has been functioning over time. Hence it will challenge the way in

which Sofia's 'golden ages' (between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD) have been conceived and memorised so far, by alternatively viewing their presentation as a historical product subject to the short-term purposes and long-term projects of Constantinople's ideologists. Special emphasis will be laid on the dynamics of the changes in the memory of Medieval Serdica-Sofia in the period following Bulgaria's National Liberation (1878), and after the fall of the totalitarian regime (1989).

**Znepolski, Boyan**

*Sofia University 'St Kliment Ohridski', Dept. of Sociology*

**Sociology as a Social Critique: A Question of Legitimacy and of Efficiency**

The research project aims to study the conditions that facilitate contemporary sociology to assume the role of both a legitimate and an efficient social critique. The hypothesis of the



research is that such possibilities depend on the capacity of sociology to embed its project in the normative expectations of the social actors, thus guaranteeing its legitimacy, and simultaneously to formulate an ambitious critical perspective which would transcend any particular viewpoint relevant to the current complex forms of domination. The hypothesis is to be tested through the example of Luc Boltanski's pragmatic sociology of the critique which will be studied in comparison to other socio-critical projects, such as Zizek's and Badiou's radical social critique, and Honneth's critical social theory. The research implies also the construction of a theoretical model of social critique through the implementation of the conceptual tools of Boltanski's pragmatic sociology to the case of the national strike of the Bulgarian schoolteachers in autumn 2007.



## International Participants



**Angelidou, Alikí**

*Dept. of Social Anthropology, Panteion University, Athens, Greece*

### **Pathways of Anthropology in Southeastern Europe: An Ethnographic Study of the Discipline and its 'Disciples' in Bulgaria and Greece**

This project deals with the formation and transformations of the discipline of anthropology in two Southeastern European countries, Bulgaria and Greece. My aim is to explore in a comparative perspective the institutional and conceptual history of the discipline in the wider context of the establishment of the social and human sciences in the Balkans since the mid-19th century until the present day. My argument is that a comparison between two paradigms developed in the 'peripheries' of the 'Soviet' and the 'Western' epistemological traditions respectively could assist in overcoming the Cold War dichotomies and give a new

perspective to the intellectual history of the discipline. I intend to follow a double methodological approach: a) an ethnographic study of academic and research institutions and texts, and b) an oral history dealing with the accounts of the social actors that played an active role in the organisation and/or proliferation of the discipline in these two countries.

**Macrea-Toma, Ioana**

*Central European University, Pasts, Inc.*

### **Challenging the Moral Economy of Anti-Communism. Actions, Networks and the Critical Rationality across the Iron Curtain**

In my project I intend to focus on intellectual networks activated across the Iron Curtain in order to contribute to the reconstruction of the dynamic of Cold War cultural exchanges and to challenge the conceptual assumptions underpinning the anti-communist taxonomies. My aim is not just to contrast networks of data gathered with the taxonomical processing of the data, but also to analyse the very process of inferring dichotomies and separating the truth from lies as an interdiscursive confrontational practice unfolding along (and not in spite of) informal trade-offs and ideological trespassing. I attempt therefore to enhance a meta-critical

approach to the classifying and documenting of 'resistances' as well as of 'truthful' behaviours under Communism by investigating the practice of 'observing', 'monitoring' and 'commenting' on 'deviances' by external and internal critical agencies during the Cold War (such as Radio Free Europe and the Security Police). The analysis of transnational cultural agents acting as informative collaborators will be confronted with the critical reading of the bureaucratic archival data belonging to the agencies feeding upon their very mobility. System theory and historical epistemology will provide the tools for the understanding of the paradoxical dynamic of the reproduction of classificatory schemes through the systemic and systematic trespassing of cultural, ethical and political borders within an information poor environment.





**Mickunaite, Giedre**

*Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania*

**Maniera Graeca in Europe's Catholic East:  
Picturing Belief and Spreading Faith  
in Late Medieval Lithuania  
(March – May 2011)**

In the 1420s, the Roman Catholic Church of Trakai was painted with Byzantine murals composed typically of contemporary Orthodox churches: images were placed within horizontal registers, while northern and part of western wall contained representation of the Last Judgement. Although Byzantine art was not foreign in medieval Lithuania, analyses of the Trakai paintings suggested to me that this decoration was not only executed by Orthodox hands, but its iconographic programme originated in Orthodox mind, too.

At CAS Sofia, I hope to verify my working hypothesis, relating the Trakai paintings with the activities of Grigorii Tsamblak (1364–1419/20) in Lithuania. I interpret them as an Orthodox mission and treat the paintings as a visual representation of the missionary ideals. During the fellowship, I will search for formal, stylistic, and iconographic parallels for the Trakai paintings, inquire into the epigraphic patterns used in paintings across the Balkans, and attempt to understand the Orthodox mission of the Veliko Turnovo School and in Tsamblak's written heritage.

**Rappas, Alexis**

*Brown University, USA*

**European Colonialism  
at the Margins of Europe  
(October – December 2011)**

The project aims at a comparative and connected history of the Cypriot and Dodecanesian societies in the 1930s, focused on the intercommunal relations between the three main communities, the Greek-Orthodox, the Muslim and the Jewish ones. The research project intends to carve three main lines of inquiry. Its first preoccupation is to investigate the modalities of interaction within the specific context of colonialism between two Western European powers and two Eastern Greek-Orthodox communities. The second line of inquiry addresses the comparative study of British and Italian colonialism, whereas the third line of investigation follows the everyday intercommunal relations between Greek-Orthodox Christians, Turkish-speaking Moslems and Sephardic Jews in Cyprus and the Dodecanese. The purpose is to examine the two dominant perspectives in the existing historiography: the nationalist-inspired perspective with an emphasis on conflict; and the 'irenist' perspective which ascribes the responsibility for the escalation of intercommunal intolerance to the nefarious influence of external factors.



**Schmidt, Henrike**

*Freie Universität Berlin*

**The Creation of the Literary Canon as Art.  
Fictitious Anthologies in (Post) Modern  
Bulgarian Literature  
(October – December 2011)**

Bulgarian Literature in the first decade of the twentieth century is characterised by a specific 'anthologisation' – a result of the synchronous processes of internal canonisation (the constitution of a national literature) and external canonisation (the incorporation into world literature). In the post-communist period of



the 1990s, prominent historical anthologies functioned in turn as a literary-historical matrix for aesthetic reorientation.

The eminent popularity in both Bulgarian modernism and postmodernism of the production of anthologies calls for comparative analysis. The research project analyses a range of literary anthological production including such diverse forms as compilations of foreign poetry, collections of dedication poems or fictitious anthologies consisting solely of literary mystifications.

Theoretically, the project positions itself in the framework of post-colonial genre theory, which allows a shift of focus in comparative Balkan studies from the discursive surfaces of (self)stigmatisation to the underlying structures of creative, subversive genre modification, represented in ideal form in the fictitious anthologies of (post)modern Bulgarian literature.



# CAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2010

January 2010 – December 2010



## January 2010:

### 05 January

Book Launch:

Dr Dimitar Bechev, Centre for European Studies, St Antony's College, Oxford, UK: *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia*



## February 2010

### 09 February

Meeting of 'The 1930s Club'

### 13 February

'The Tolstoy-North Hypothesis' International Workshop

## March 2010

### 11 March

International Workshop: 'Religion and the Public Sphere: Interdisciplinary Approaches', with the participation of Prof. Dale F. Eickelman, co-organised by Centre for the Study of Religions, Sofia University and CAS

### 24 March

The 'Consolidation and Disintegration' Discussion Series: *Presidential Impeachment – A Glimpse behind the Façade*

### 26 – 27 March

Second Working Session: 'Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900 – 1945, in East – Central, Southeastern and Northern Europe'

### 27 March

Public Lecture:

Dr Dimitris Stamatopoulos, Dept. of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Greece: *The Byzantium after the Nation. The Problem of Continuity in the Balkan Historiographies*

28 – 30 March

'Negotiating Modernity' Project: Core Group Meeting (Sofia)

## April 2009

### 26 April

The '1930s Club':

Dr Martin Ivanov, Institute for History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and Dr Georgi Ganev, Center for Liberal Strategies, Sofia: *Bulgaria's 1930s from an Economic Perspective*

## May 2009

### 11 May

'Advanced Academia' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Tanya Chavdarova, Dept. of Sociology, Sofia University: *Small Business and Entrepreneurship:*

*The Social Embeddedness of Economic Action (Bulgaria in the Comparative Light of Central and Eastern Europe*

### 15 May

CAS Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

### 27 May

The 'Consolidation and Disintegration' Discussion Series:

Dr Linka Toneva, Department of European Studies, Sofia University: *Boundaries of Validity of Transition Law*

## June 2010

### 15 – 19 June

'Negotiating Modernity' Project: Core Group Meeting & International Workshop, *Interwar Romania in Regional and European Contexts* (Bucharest)

### 24 – 29 June

'Regimes of Historicity and Discourses of Modernity and Identity, 1900–1945, in East-Central Southeastern and Northern Europe': Annual Colloquium, Ribaritsa, Lovech Region





## July 2010

### 2 July

Book Launch:

Dr Vesselina Vatchkova, National Academy of Art: *Blank Spaces in Bulgarian Cultural Memory*

### 8 July

'Advanced Academia' Fellow Seminar:

Prof. Ivan Elenkov, Dept. of Cultural History and Theory, Sofia University: *Popular Culture in Bulgaria in the Era of Communism*.



### 15 July

'Advanced Academia' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Hristiyan Atanasov, Central State Archive, Archive State Agency: *Urban life in the Balkans: Population, Social Structure, Poverty and Wealth in Ottoman Sofia, Vidin and Ruschuk (1699–1839)*

## September 2010

### 21 September

'Rule of Law' Meeting:

Dr Daniel Smilov, Center for Liberal Strategies, Sofia: *The Rule of Law – Different Conceptions*

## October 2010

### 07 – 10 October

'Negotiating Modernity' Project:

Core Group Meeting (Warsaw, Poland)

### 19 October

'Rule of Law' Meeting:

Dr Jani Kirov, Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt/Mein, Germany, and Dr Ivo Hristov, Dept. of Sociology, Plovdiv University, *Theories of Legal Transfer. Law and Modernisation Processes*

### 23 October

The '1930s Club'

Dr Svetla Baloutzova, New Bulgarian University, Sofia: *Bulgaria's Population Policy from an International Perspective – the 1930s and early 1940s*

Dr Kristina Popova, South-West University, Blagoevgrad: *Bulgarian State Rural Policies in the Welfare Field – the 1930s and early 1940s*

Dr Milena Angelova, South-West University, Blagoevgrad: *The Affirmation of Modern Methods of Work in the Public Welfare Sector – the 1930s and early 1940s*

## November 2010

### 2 November

'Modernity and Identity' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Martin Ivanov, Institute for History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences: *The Internal Borders of Modernisation. The Bulgarian Village on the Eve of the Second World War*

### 11 November

'Modernity and Identity' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Martin Ossikovski, Dept. of Cultural History and Theory, Sofia University: *The Sovereignty of the Many in Some Late Medieval Commentaries of Aristotle's Politics*

### 20 November

*Regimes of Historicity and Regimes of Spatiality Workshop*

### 25 November

'Modernity and Identity' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Emiliya Karaboeva, Technological University of Eindhoven: *Vehicles of Modernity – Metamorphoses of Identity (International Truck Drivers during the Cold War)*



## December 2010

### 02 December

'Modernity and Identity' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Mila Mancheva, free-lance researcher: *Experience of Home, Belonging and Self (Identification) among Bulgarian Return Migrants*

### 03 December

Public Lecture:

Prof. Galin Tihanov, University of Manchester: *Cosmopolitanism in the Landscape of Modernity*

### 14 December

Book Launch:

*Childhood Under Socialism*, CAS/Riva Publishers: Sofia 2010, Presented by Dr Mihail Gruev and Dr Georgi Gospodinov

### 16 December

'Modernity and Identity' Fellow Seminar:

Dr Galina Goncharova, Department of Cultural History and Theory, Sofia University: *Medical Men vs. Wise Women: Negotiating the Professional Identity of Physicians in Modernity – The Debate on Bulgarian Folk Medicine (Late 19th to Early 20th Century)*

### 21 December

'Rule of Law' Meeting:

Dr Petya Kabakchieva, Dept. of Sociology, Sofia University: *Legal and Institutional Practices in the Implementation of the SAPARD Programme*

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## 2010 IN PICTURES

