



Centre for Advanced Study Sofia

Newsletter

2011-2012



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JANUARY 2011 – JUNE 2012**



External Evaluation of CAS

On the initiative of the CAS Board of Trustees, an extensive External Evaluation Report on the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia was conducted in December 2011, assessing CAS overall academic and administrative management. Completed by Prof. Dr Oliver Jens Schmitt (University of Vienna) and Dr Silvana Galassi (German Council of Sciences and Humanities), the Report's general conclusions are highly positive, emphasising that 'more than other science organisations in Bulgaria, CAS is a real gateway into the European world of the humanities and social sciences'. Its bearing is seen as 'rooted in high quality, intellectual exchange, and comradely competition', which exert a 'substantial charismatic impact' on the native and international scholarly community.

In the face of the severe crisis of contemporary Bulgarian research institutions and the lack of comparable academic establishments in Bulgaria, the Centre is recognised as an institution working 'against the emigration of highly qualified specialists' from the country, and stimulating 'intensive scientific exchange across national borders', thus building 'a rich network of relationships throughout all of Southeastern Europe'. Its true significance surfaces, according to the Report, in its institutional role as a 'true preserver of academic freedom' – a beacon of lively interdisciplinary research, 'free of the influence of third parties and the societally still effective networks of relationships', and

in accordance with 'purely academic criteria of quality'. Its selection practices, performed by the highly qualified Academic Advisory Board, are recognised as enjoying 'trust in competitive procedures oriented toward personal achievement which cannot be taken for granted in the region's science system'.

Amongst the numerous substantial issues which the Report discusses at length are the recommendations to maintain the Centre's multidisciplinary, humanities and social science orientation in the future by retaining a balance between thematically focused research groups and individual research projects, and, possibly, to increase the proportion of the systematic, present-oriented fields of investigation, too.

The Report recommends additional funds to be allocated to ensure the Centre's smooth functioning and hence, successful accomplishments of its goals for academic excellence. Notably, the Report highlights the need to meet the enhanced interest in the Centre's intellectual life by the local and international academic community by setting ca. 10 new workplaces and ca. 7 apartments, which ideally should be located in a special guesthouse, to accommodate scholars from and outside the region.

Enclosed to this newsletter is the full text of the Evaluation Report.

CAS 10 YEARS

Highlights from CAS Tenth Anniversary

In 2011, the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia celebrated 10 years since its foundation. Board Members, high state officials, representatives of partner and donor institutions, many CAS Fellows, Academic Associates and friends of the Centre attended the events on 13 May 2011. The festivities included a welcoming address for the official guests at the Centre's premises and an academic roundtable discussion entitled *Regions, Borders and Identity: Past Questions and Present Relevance* at the Ivan Vazov National Theatre. Fellows who had partaken in various ways and different capacity in the work of CAS since its establishment in 2000 joined the discussion which was moderated by Prof. Vintila Mihailescu (University of Bucharest). It was meant to revisit the concepts and approaches which used to inspire the original research work of CAS. The round-table discussion, followed by a reception dinner, was attended by more than seventy CAS Fellows and guests. The celebration was extensively covered by electronic and press media including some of the most authoritative academic journals in the humanities and the social sciences: *Critique & Humanism* journal, the *Sociological Problems* journal, the *Culture* weekly, Bulgarian National Radio, Sofia University *Alma Mater* Radio, *Public Republic* online cultural platform, etc. The occasion thus served to bring to the attention of a broad public the achievements of the Centre and reconfirm its important place in the national academic environment.



Excerpts from Prof. Diana Mishkova's CAS Jubilee Speech



... The Centre has always aspired to fill in a *particular niche* in the academic environment: at a time of increasing “economization of academia” where market-driven incentives, pragmatism and “monetization” of research strongly prevail, CAS seeks to provide a space and esteem for the **free pursuit of knowledge**, for opening up of horizons, for fostering critical non-conformist thinking.



... CAS is a utopian place – as it provides space and time for thinking, utopian as well as unique in that it is not oriented towards productivity, impacts etcetera “milestones” inherent in contemporary project culture, but invest in quality, originality and talent ... It is a space aimed to re-legitimize scholarship which, in this country at any rate, has largely lost legitimacy (and university professors are ‘legitimate’ by virtue of being not scholars but teachers) – as far as scholarship is about the search for, not about the ‘encoding’ of answers.

Like the other Institutes for Advanced Study, the Centre allows the temporary evasion from the disciplinary structures by involving its fellows into a **cross-disciplinary** work and exchange with researchers from different disciplines. We look at interdisciplinarity not as a shallow etiquette but as a requisite for innovation in our disciplines, for creation of new fields and conceptual improvement, and above all as *supporting creativity*. The form and extent of actual cross-disciplinary interaction may differ – from the necessity to translate your own professional or disciplinary language and concepts into those of other disciplines to an incentive to reformulate your own agenda. Either way the effect is always cross-fertilization of perspectives – namely how similar problems are treated and solved by other disciplines.

As for the **international dimension** of our research, under the conditions of globalization it becomes more and more evident how important communication between different cultures can be.



This is particularly so for the cultures of the region, which have traditionally tended to relate to a certain ‘core’, ‘big’ European culture but remained relatively ignorant of their historical neighbours. For the scholars coming from these countries such a research has an additional value in that it forces us to look at our own national tradition from the vintage point of another. This cross-cultural intellectual socialization has often led our fellows to re-formulate their questions and research designs. As the ratio between Bulgarian (56 %) and non-Bulgarian (44 %) fellowships indicates, the Centre has widely opened towards the outside world thus largely eliminating the space for parochialism and national self-centeredness – something that is also manifested by the thematic range of its research projects.

... In the long run the Centre is seeking to build bridges in two directions: between high-quality research and education and between new knowledge and the broader public. This means that it should continue to focus above all on the cultivation of human resources capable to generate and disseminate such knowledge.

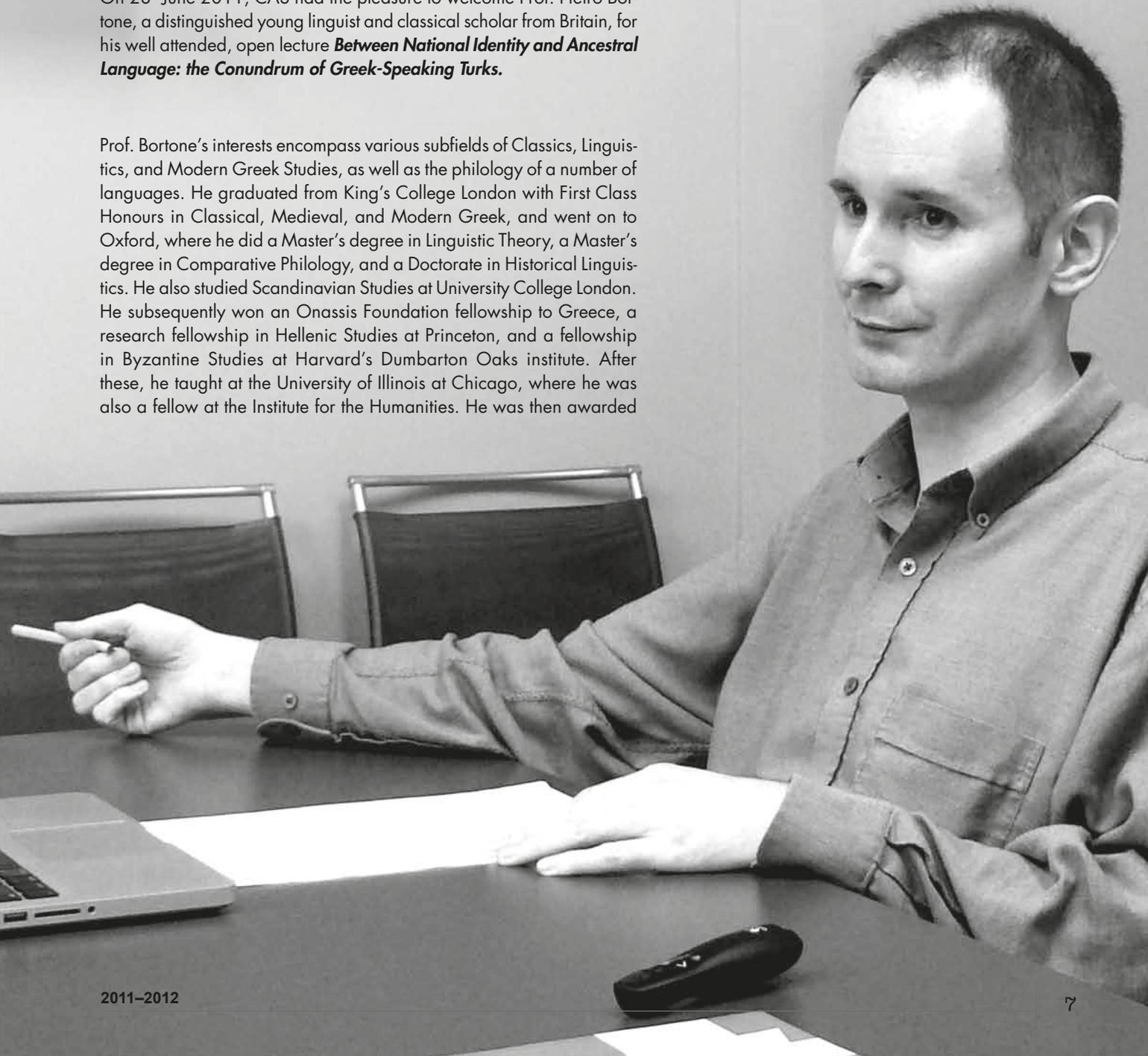
... Ten years ago CAS enquiries began with the question: what frames the discussion of the Balkans beyond the fears of instability and insecurity for Europe? In 2011 the Centre can face up to the ambition to contribute to the rethinking of the fundamental categories of contemporary human and social sciences by effectively incorporating “local knowledges” into comparative analysis and re-establishing the scholarly agency of the local research community on a European and, in time, global scale. The knowledge CAS is thus seeking to bring about does not draw its reputation and legitimacy from proficiency in local exoticism but aspires to partake substantially and fruitfully in the advancement of contemporary internationalized social and human sciences.

You Should Allow the Languages and Cultures You Study to Become a New Part of You

An Interview with Prof. Pietro Bortone

On 28th June 2011, CAS had the pleasure to welcome Prof. Pietro Bortone, a distinguished young linguist and classical scholar from Britain, for his well attended, open lecture ***Between National Identity and Ancestral Language: the Conundrum of Greek-Speaking Turks.***

Prof. Bortone's interests encompass various subfields of Classics, Linguistics, and Modern Greek Studies, as well as the philology of a number of languages. He graduated from King's College London with First Class Honours in Classical, Medieval, and Modern Greek, and went on to Oxford, where he did a Master's degree in Linguistic Theory, a Master's degree in Comparative Philology, and a Doctorate in Historical Linguistics. He also studied Scandinavian Studies at University College London. He subsequently won an Onassis Foundation fellowship to Greece, a research fellowship in Hellenic Studies at Princeton, and a fellowship in Byzantine Studies at Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks institute. After these, he taught at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he was also a fellow at the Institute for the Humanities. He was then awarded



a research fellowship at Rhodes University, South Africa, and a fellowship at Berlin's Institute for Advanced Studies, the Wissenschaftskolleg. All along, he has remained also affiliated to the University of Oxford, where he had been teaching for the Faculty of Classics and the Sub-Faculty of Byzantine and Modern Greek, and working as an etymologist for the Oxford English Dictionary. He is currently a fellow of the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies, at Uppsala.

Prof. Bortone has an impressive command of a wide array of languages, including Greek, Latin, Turkish, Romanian, Swedish, Italian, and Hebrew. Besides writing a number of articles, Bortone has published a book, *Greek prepositions from antiquity to the present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); the book covers the extraordinary timespan of three millennia, and has been praised by critics as 'a very impressive piece of scholarly work that showcases both philological and linguistic analysis at its best' (*Diachronica*).

In 2002 Prof. Bortone began to study an archaic variety of Greek spoken in a few villages in north-eastern Turkey. This has been the initial spark for two books that he is currently completing. One book, now virtually finished, deals with the development and maintenance of ethnic classifications, with the symbolic role of languages in the definition of social categories such as nationality, with the use of rhetoric (e.g. names, metaphors, stereotypes) in the essentialization of ethnicities, with attitudes towards language contact, bilingualism, and language change. The other book deals specifically with the use of languages in Greek identity and in the relations between Greeks and other peoples; it looks at the changing criteria by which Greeks have identified themselves or have been identified as Greeks by other peoples, and at the role of those peoples in the Greeks' self-definition.

Prof. Pietro Bortone has lectured at numerous universities, in the US, Europe, and South Africa, and has received several awards. We are delighted to present to our readers an exclusive interview with Prof. Bortone, as well as an abstract of his lecture at CAS: *Between National Identity and Ancestral Language: the Conundrum of Greek-Speaking Turks*.



Editor: *Historical linguistics is a discipline that flourished in the nineteenth century. What inspired you to study it in the twenty-first century?*

Prof. Pietro Bortone: We do not need to treat classics or historical linguistics as a nineteenth-century endeavour. Historical linguistics has continued to evolve as a discipline, and so has classics. One can study the classics from a critical, contemporary perspective; much of the Greek and Latin classics is anyway strikingly modern and very relevant today. It is true that it is more common nowadays to learn modern languages than classical ones, but studying one subject does not prevent you from studying another. I received a traditional classical education at school – from the age of fourteen, we had four hours of Ancient Greek and five hours of Latin every week – but this is also what led me to do Modern Greek, which I started studying on my own when I was still in school. I then opted for a degree in Ancient, Byzantine, and Modern Greek at university, and later extended my scope to linguistics and to other languages. Now I am very glad I got philological training, and I am also interested in modern languages, in non-Indo-European languages, and in theoretical linguistics. Whatever you learn in one area can inform your thinking in other areas. My current work, for example, draws on various fields to look at the relationship between languages and issues of identity.

Ed.: *What does a classical or historical approach teach us about our present? Or about the way a language currently is?*

P.B.: You can, of course, study something purely as it is, synchronically. If you have some historical knowledge, however, this will help you see how, and perhaps why, certain things came to be the way they are, and it will make you realize that they were, and could again, be different. Knowledge of the diachrony supplements profitably knowledge of the synchrony. It contextualizes it, helps you understand it, and allows you to stand, to some extent, outside it. All this applies also to disciplines other than linguistics.

Ed.: *You published a major monograph on Greek prepositions. I am amazed that such a small particle in language can inspire such great volume of research.*

P.B.: Linguists take the opposite view. When I started my work, fellow linguists often enquired which particular preposition and which particular period my research referred to. And when I replied, 'all Greek prepositions, throughout their entire history', some would tell me I was aiming for the impossible. There are large volumes written on the meaning of a single one preposition in only one language at a single point in history. But I wanted to see how prepositions worked as a system, and how they evolved across a long timespan; I was then able to spot things not known before, relevant also to larger long-standing questions in linguistics.

Ed.: *Did any of your findings surprise you or differ from your initial expectations?*

P.B.: I tried not to have expectations. I started out by collecting data without trying to squeeze them into a preconceived theoretical framework. I wanted to gather information and see what patterns would emerge from it. And my initial interest was, again, both theoretical and practical. This is why my book is now used both by people who just want to understand Greek texts more accurately and by academics interested in theoretical issues.

Ed.: *Your talk today was on a small language in northeastern Turkey. I wonder whether you are in a position to predict what the fate of small languages will be in the near future, especially in a globalizing world?*

P.B.: The predictions that linguists make are rather grim. The estimates are that, by the end of this century, half of the languages currently spoken will disappear. This has been the trend for a long time, but it is now accelerating. For linguists this means the loss of invaluable data: data that, collectively, tell us not only what a particular language was like, but what languages in general can and cannot be like, and what this may indicate about the human mind. And since languages are also linked to

a culture, their obsolescence is also a loss of cultural information. There are linguists who strive to fight this: they work for dying languages not only to be recorded but maintained and spread again. Some do this also for political reasons. However, most speakers of dying languages do not feel strongly about their language – not strongly enough to oppose its demise. The average person accepts this as an inevitable process, and has different priorities. Speaking 'stronger' languages is an asset for socio-economic mobility.

Ed.: *Are there any specific qualities of English that have turned it into the most powerful language in the world nowadays? A huge percentage of the world's population is currently bilingual – holding a command of their mother tongue and of English. Could this bilingualism lead to the denationalisation of the world?*

P.B.: English is said to be becoming the world's second language, if not the first – which is, in itself, a somewhat anglocentric view. I don't think that some structural characteristics of the English language caused this. There are some features of English, such as the few endings, that perhaps make it easy for people to acquire a basic knowledge of the language, and to turn nouns into verbs or vice versa, thereby creating quickly transparent new words. But this is true also of other languages. The driving forces behind the increasing popularity of English are essentially political and economic. Will the spread of English denationalise the world? Not necessarily. However, in my view, it may well, to some degree, de-

nationalise *English*. There are multiple varieties of English already considered 'correct' – British, American, etc. – and regional variants are becoming more accepted. So, English is already polycentric. Now, increasing legitimacy is given to Indian English, or Singaporean English, or forms of non-native English. We are coming to consider English as a language that does not belong to anybody in particular.

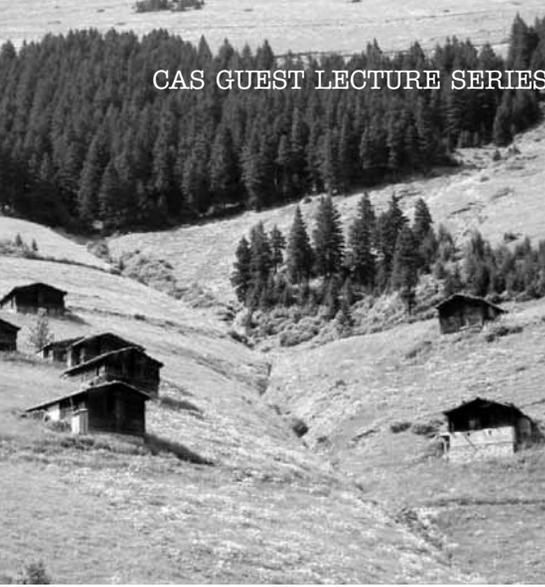
Ed.: *Would you like to share with us something about your current research?*

P.B.: My initial interest was in a small community of Greek speakers in north-eastern Turkey, but then I got interested also in the broader issues that the existence of this community was highlighting: the use of language as a criterion for nationality, other criteria used, and the whole notion of 'identity'. Originally I started to work on one book on these issues, but there will be two books now.

Ed.: *Wouldn't you like to research a Slavic language?*

P.B.: Well, I would like to, of course. People often ask me whether I would be interested in studying also this or that other language. The answer is naturally yes. But at this stage I prefer to deepen my knowledge of the languages I have started already. I have studied some fifteen languages and I am fluent in about half of them. There are, to be sure, languages that I would be particularly keen to add to my list – if not to learn them, at least, to study their structure. Bulgarian would be one of them, also because it is a Balkan language, and has had interaction with Greek and Turkish.





Ed.: According to a popular saying, language is a window to another world. Which world do you currently belong to?

P.B.: It is true that linguistic knowledge is an eye-opener, at several levels. You can study a language because of your theoretical interests, but if you learn it in the full sense – to the point when you can speak it and understand it with ease – you will indeed gain access to a new world. Linguistic work can have this remarkable bonus: you can then travel to the country where the language is spoken, talk with anybody there, read their literature, understand their songs, watch their films, learn their customs, often be treated by the locals as one of them. Instead of just considering a new language as an external object of inquiry, you can also incorporate it into your own way of being. People who speak several languages often report feeling that they have multiple facets to their personality, because with each language they enter a different set of cultural conventions and modes of behaviour. When they switch to a different language, if they let themselves go, they *perform themselves* in a different way. Personally, I think that you should allow the languages and cultures you study to become a new part of you. Perhaps I think so because I have a fluid sense of identity, with porous boundaries, but I think that is a good thing.

Interviewed by the Editor

Between National Identity and Ancestral Language: the Conundrum of Greek-Speaking Turks

Professor Pietro Bortone

The northern coast of Asia Minor (what is now Turkey) was populated by the Ancient Greeks from at least the 7th century BC. The presence of Greek-speakers there continued into modern times, until Greece attacked Turkey and was defeated in 1922. All those identified as Greeks were expelled from the region and forbidden to return. Countless Greeks thus lost their ancestral home; and all Greeks lost the dream that Greece could be restored to the dimensions, power, and prestige of the past – a past upon which modern Greeks had constructed their identity and their international reputation.

Nearly a century after the Greeks were banished, some Greek speakers can nonetheless still be found in a few pockets of northeast Turkey. They do not, however, identify as Greeks, but are, like the other inhabitants of the region, Turkish-identified, devoutly Muslim, and often fervently nationalist. They are in the last stages of a transition from Greek to Turkish culture, religion, and ethnic label – what the traditional narrative describes as ultimate opposites. They speak both Greek and Turkish in what can be considered an ongoing negotiation of their identities. Since they had no contacts with Greece nor with the official Greek language for centuries, their Greek (mostly unrecorded and now on the verge of extinction) is the most archaic form of Greek still spoken anywhere, not mutually intelligible with Modern Greek. It shows influence from Turkish, but also constitutes a goldmine for scholars of Greek because it has ancient features that were not preserved anywhere else – not even in the artificially archaic Greek that in Greece was advocated as a key to truer and purer Greekness. Yet, it is precisely the rejection of a Greek identification that, paradoxically, has kept the Greek of this community so archaic.

In Greece and in Turkey, these Greek speakers (to the limited extent that they are known about) are often the subject of misconceptions and occasionally of hostility, since they do not fit with the current definition of either Greek or Turkish national identity. Their existence raises questions not only about the history of their region and about the survival of unrecognized local languages, but also about the changing construction of Greek and Turkish ethnic categories and, more broadly, about the criteria we commonly use for assigning ethnicity, and about the normative nature of our notion of 'identity'.

Reconsidering Fiction as a Mode of Historical Representation

Professor Hayden White

On 28th October 2011, the Centre of Advanced Study Sofia welcomed Professor Hayden White as a participant in the Conference of the International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography **The Role and the Responsibility of History Today.**

Prof. Hayden White – a renowned historian in the tradition of literary criticism and currently Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) – needs little introduction as his ideas on approaches to history, culture and comparative literature have been informing and inspiring several generations of scholars in the US and worldwide. Amongst his best known works are *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973), *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (1978), *The Content of the Form* (1987), and *Figural Realism* (1999). His seminal essay on historical fiction and witness literature 'The Structure of Historical Narrative' (*Clio*, 1972; later reprinted as 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact' in *Tropics of Discourse*, 1978) has become a must on the reading lists of university courses ever since. Prof. White is also amongst the founders of The History of Consciousness Program at the UCSC back in the 1960s, whose major objective has been the promotion of interdisciplinary and, especially critical and independent academic work.





In particular, Prof. Hayden White has been celebrated for his long-running stance on historical writing as a narrative discourse. Spurred by the rebellious 1960s he has formulated and sustained over the decades his galvanizing belief of history as 'the signifier of a concept' rather than a reference to a thing or domain with material presence. In his interpretation, the past assumes elusive, mysterious outlines as 'what it was that had passed by or what it had done in that place' is 'conjectural' and only 'intuited'. This, however, raises the issue of how historians address history by either recovering the past or – more likely in his opinion – by imposing their own version on the past by selectively choosing what to be remembered and what not.

Evidence derived from modern historians' traditional instrumentarium, i.e. documents, monuments and other traces of the past's reality, hardly meet, in Hayden White's view, the criterion of coherence. Instead, they appear as fragmentary, leading to 'a great deal of patching up' – a fact that challenges the theory of historical truth 'by way of the misplaced concreteness'. The result is a 'figurative' reconstruction of history whose nature is of a 'fiction-making kind'.

Fiction as defined by Prof. White is 'a construction or conjecture about "what possibly happened" or might happen at some time and some place, in the present, in the past, or indeed even in the future'. Following his idea, history-writing emerges as a mixture of fact and fiction, transcending the nineteenth-century historians' diktat of 'objectivity' and instead, rests on a 'narrative turn' in the study of the past. His CAS lecture further elaborated and illustrated his approach.

Reconsidering Fiction as a Mode of Historical examined the cognitive status of 'fictional' representations of the past in both historical novels and the kinds of modernist novels which, although not counted as 'historical novels', 'have history' or 'the past' as their principal referent.

In Prof. White's opinion, it is a commonplace of literary studies that the modern novel becomes 'realistic' when (with Balzac, Flaubert, Dickens) it takes 'historical reality' as its principal subject-matter (Lukacs, Goldmann, Auerbach, Jameson). One manifestation of this change is 'the historical novel', commonly derogated by historians because it 'fictionalises' history. However, what is not commonly recognised is the extent to which literary modernism has redefined the concept of 'fiction'. Postmodernist novels (Sebald, Adler, Coetzee, DeLillo, P. Roth, etc.) typically reinvent the historical novel in a manner which neither fictionalises nor aestheticises its content. What then are the implications for the representation of historical reality by historians of the postmodernist use of 'fictions' to represent 'history' in a 'literary' mode of writing? ... A question worth considering...

European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History (2012–2014)

The 'spatial turn' in social and human sciences and the recent upsurge of transnational approaches to history have converged to produce a renewed interest in regional history and its premises. The collapse of the two-block system underpinned these intellectual developments: categories previously grounded in the geopolitical system are now being replaced by those derived from historical-structural characteristics of space. From this perspective, European history becomes conceivable only in relation to the variety of discrete historical spaces, as defined by specific *longue durée* features and relative historical uniformity, whose distinctiveness and lost unity it is now the task of history to recreate.

At the same time, the debates about the cultural and political borders of Europe (linked to the issues raised by European

integration as well as by the new developments of European security politics) expose historical regions as basic categories in devising schemes of regional cooperation and legitimising policies of integration and 'distancing'. A crucial aspect of these mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion is the setting of conceptual boundaries in order to delimit given spatial constructs and contrast them to other regions 'beyond their confines'. These constructs of symbolic boundaries can be of different nature – distinct and impenetrable, porous, containing a liminal border zone or, in certain cases, considered imperceptible.

It is against this theoretical background that the Centre's of Advanced Study new project, *European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History*, has been designed. *European*





Regions and Boundaries addresses the notion of historical regions from a conceptual-historical point of view. It is based on a focus-group investigation, and aims at a joint publication on an overarching topic by posing the question: *How have European transnational historical (meso-) regions been and are being conceptualised and delimited over time, across different disciplines and academic traditions, in different fields of activity (politics, economy, international order) and national/regional contexts?*

In its most ambitious scope, *European Regions and Boundaries* intends to reconstruct the historical itineraries of the conceptualisation of regional frameworks and their frontiers in relation to political, historical, cultural usages or discursive practices: historical-cultural, geopolitical, economic, transnational-organisational, etc. This is also expected to help rethink the heuristics of interpretative models based on regional patterns.

As units of investigation the Project identifies conceptual clusters of notions rather than individual concepts, grouping more than one concept together: e.g. Central Europe – East Central Europe – Danubian Europe; or the

Balkans – Southeastern / South-East Europe – Turkey-in-Europe; Scandinavia – Norden. While it predominantly focuses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century usages, earlier registers of a given concept will be taken into account, too.

The following major directions, or coordinates, structure the research:

- Temporalisation of space and/or internal temporal dimensions of spatial categories;
- Territorial vs. non-territorial (or 'qualitative', e.g. 'spiritual-cultural', metaphoric) regions and borders;
- Alternative spatialisations to the national space (e.g. pan-ideologies);
- Boundaries and delimitations, i.e. discourses about where a given region 'ends', the question of in-betweenness, the metaphors of the bridge or the door, etc.
- Discourses of othering through spatialisation such as Occidentalism, Balkanism, etc.

These are to be viewed from, and informed by a wide range of disciplinary perspectives with a focus on history, geography, political science and international relations, sociology, art history, literary history, and economy/political

economy. Public/political discourses partake in this list both as an autonomous semantic constructor and, above all, in fusion with science and art.

The Project rests on the conviction that the establishment of a diachronic map of conceptualisations is only achievable in a comparative trans-regional perspective. Hence the preliminary list of the European meso-regions under investigation includes *Eastern Europe, (East) Central Europe, the Balkans/Southeastern Europe, Northern Europe, Scandinavia/Norden, Western Europe, the Baltic region, Iberia, the Mediterranean, and Southern Europe*. The Project pays attention to not only local usages and regionalist discourses, but to cross-regional conceptualisations (e.g. Iberian images of the Balkans) and the occurrences of cross-references in different conceptual clusters (e.g. the usage of the Balkans as a counter-concept in Central-European discourses, or of Western Europe in East-European discourses, or the Baltic in Scandinavian discourses).

A key feature of the Project is its attempt to go beyond both the usual discussions on the heuristics of historical regions, and expand the toolkit of conceptual history rather than follow a conceptual itinerary *per se*, thus contextualising this itinerary in terms of the changing political, cultural and especially disciplinary contexts. On the whole, it is believed that such an approach will 'temporalise' the current spatial terminology, and in turn, sophisticate the analysis of how historical change is encapsulated by spatial categories. Hence the Project would be at the very core of the general agenda of the *European Conceptual Histories* book series, whose purpose is to turn conceptual history into a useful tool in the historical self-reflection of Europe. As references to regional differences remain central to cultural and political discourse all over the continent, a proper historicisation of these concepts would help scholars understand the underlying logic of regional narratives.

Also, by tackling the problem of conceptualising the boundaries of regions (and of Europe in general) the Project seeks to contribute to a more reflective cultural and political discourse about the mechanisms of symbolic and institutional inclusion and exclusion.

Within a broader frame, the Project transcends the relative seclusion of the academic world and reaches beyond the community of historians dealing with issues of regionalisation and borders. Thematically and especially epistemologically, the Project addresses such hotly debated issues as the internal divisions within the EU, strongly impacted as they are by regional discourses and

historical precedence. The analyses and conclusions are supposed to reach a both political and civil-society audience sensitive to problems of territorialisation and borders, inclusion and exclusion, integration and disintegration. All these issues bear additional grass-root cultural implications. Ideally, the Project aims to undercut the 'innocence' and non-reflexivity with which regional divisions and fault lines have been employed so far as a matter of course in both expert analyses and every-day talk, and spur awareness of the constructed nature – and the history of usages – of regional terminology and borderlines. This means to raise awareness of the integrative and disintegrative quality

of regionalisations, and hence political and ethical responsibility for the consequences of the utilisation of such terminology.

European Regions and Boundaries brings together both senior and junior researchers, i.e. a widely international and interdisciplinary group of outstanding scholars. The project envisages three workshops and a concluding conference which will address a broader audience of decision-makers, journalists and students, and which will mark the launch of the planned collective volume.



Introducing CAS New Discussion Series Existential Policies under Socialism (2011–2012)



In December 2011, CAS hosted the first workshop in a series of meetings that were to lay the foundations of a new seminar *Existential Policies under Socialism*, designed as a joint venture between the Centre and Dr Daniela Koleva, Faculty of Philosophy at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". Its ultimate objective was to unravel the multilayered history of death under Socialism, by visualising its facets (from 'heroic', to 'ordinary', and even 'politically incorrect'), the contrasting interpretations provided 'from below' and 'from above', as well as its functions in the everyday life of the population. The Seminar's ultimate goal was to provide yet another perspective on Bulgaria's highly politicised recent history.

In her introductory exposé to the Seminar, Dr Daniela Koleva underlined the vital role which the rationalisation of the recent socialist past of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe played in the contemporary social sciences and the humanities. However, she also emphasised how this academic endeavour confronts researchers with manifold problems and controversies as long as their honest and unbiased scholarly findings may be challenged – albeit indirectly – by the accounts and memories of the witnesses alive.

As pointed out by Dr Koleva, there is a broad consensus amongst academics that the former communist regimes invested consistent efforts in colonising the private lives of their citizens. The ideological importance of the scenario meant to shape and institutionalise 'a socialist way of living' can hardly be challenged. Hence most contemporary studies focus either on the projects



elaborated by the State (the Communist Party, respectively) to mould its citizens' lives, thoughts and behaviour, or, conversely, on 'the weapons of the weak', i.e. the everyday practices and discourses of the population adopted as a form of resistance. These practices would quietly bend the imposed rules, though never openly challenge them. While the first approach, known as the 'totalitarian paradigm', concerns itself with the political and philosophical explanations of the nature of communism 'from above', the second, 'revisionist', approach has been developed by social historians and anthropologists less interested in the system than in the everyday operations of the people 'from below'. These two approaches embrace different methodological perspectives, research paradigms, and conceptual instruments to examine the macro-and micro-realities of what is nowadays referred to as either the *socialist* or *communist* experience in the Region's recent past. Frequently, they touch upon the problem of a scholar's ideological self-positioning and the nature of the national culture of memory within the post-socialist context.

CAS new seminar *Existential Policies under Socialism* is based on the presumption that despite the propaganda and repressive apparatus available to the totalitarian state, the latter has been

unable to fully implement the matrix of its social-engineering project because of numerous reasons, ranging from faults within the very design and methods of execution, to the presence of different types of resistance (alternative ideologies, traditions, everyday tactics). Following a *post-revisionist* approach, it attempts to capture the junctions and discrepancies between the ideological models and real-life experience, and investigates the points of tension between the public and the private, between the collective and the individual, between ideology and practice by visualising the tension between the system and everyday life. These dichotomies are additionally problematised and subjected to scrutiny as the practices turned out to be ideologically informed.

Taking on board some of Ulrich Beck's and Anthony Giddens' insights, the seminar delves into the field of existential situations that cross the border between formal systems and real life, and highlight concept of the self in late modernity. The interest is focused on topics related to childhood, old age, intergenerational relations, sexuality, death, mourning, illness and physical disabilities, deviance, marginality and otherness, or to issues absent from the ideological models and alien to people's everyday practices. The seminar builds upon the presumption that the

above mentioned situations do also constitute the individual as an agent in a society that, by textbook, resolutely favoured the collective over the personality. The numerous microscopic activities of the individuals (re-)define the situations, appropriate the ideologically underregulated spaces, navigate in or amongst them, and renegotiate them in order to reconcile them with other, divergent interests. Simultaneously, they need to be researched in the context of their political legitimation via their social and moral meanings. Hence the study of the existential practices in the recent East/Central European past does not approach the grand narrative of Socialism as yet another form of modernisation, but it also illuminates the less visible side of the historical drama, namely the administrative utopia to achieve full control over the everyday practices of the population. By contrasting ideological, institutional and biographical perspectives, and focusing on the topics of Death, Love, the Body, Sexuality, and Ageing, *Existential Policies under Socialism* seeks to decode the ways, in which the ideological scripts were recreated and lived by the individual actors in Bulgaria's recent history, and shed more light onto the conflicting or harmonizing interactions between the people and its political elite.



Existential Policies under Socialism: Research Papers and Participants

First Workshop (2 December 2011):

- Ivan Elenkov, 'Insights into the Introduction of Mourning and Festive Rituals in the Socialist System (1969–1971)'.
- Kristina Popova, 'The Civil Commitment to "a Proper Burial". Social Relief and Charity Activities of the Neighbourhood Posthumous Organisations in Sofia in the 1920s and 1930s'.
- Milena Angelova, '"The Immortal Hero" as a Co-worker – the Collective Ritual "The Hero is Always in our Lines" (1977–1989)'.
- Emilia Karaboeva, 'Obituaries under Socialism: Models and Messages'.

Second Workshop (20 January 2012):

- Nikolai Vukov, 'The Posthumous Remains of the "Special Dead" and Their Collective Burials: Memorial Monuments and Memorial Mounds in Bulgaria, 1944–1989'.
- Valentina Vaseva, 'Communist Symbols and Rituals Associated with Death and Mourning: the Death of the "Leader" and the Death of an "Ordinary Citizen"'.
- Iskren Velikov: 'The "Anna Ventura" Case and the Theme of Heroic Death'.
- Miglena Ivanova, 'Life in the Valley of Slow Death'.

Third Workshop (24 February 2012):

- Mikhael Gruev, 'Funerals and Mourning Practices Among the "Revived" Muslim Communities in Bulgaria in the 1970s and 1980s'.
- Anastasia Pashova and Petar Vodenicharov, '"At Daytime We Bury Them According to Your Rites, at Nighttime We Exhume Them and Bury Them According to Our Rites": Death and Power Amongst the Bulgarian Muslims under Socialism'.
- Daniela Koleva: '"The Ways Hooligans Died in There": the Death of the "Fascists" and Its Regenerated Memory'.
- Galina Goncharova, 'Personal Ideologies of Death'.

Fourth Workshop (30 March 2012):

- Ivaylo Dichev, 'The Cosmic and Communism: the Sci-fi Expulsion of Death in Ideology'.
- Nadezhda Galabova: 'Calculating Death: Calories, Nutrition and Consumption in Socialist Bulgaria'.
- Todor Hristov, 'Death as a Biopolitical Risk: Bioactive Substances and Management in the 1980s'.
- Anelia Kassabova, 'Abortion in Socialist Bulgaria – Policies, Practices, Stories'.

Fifth Workshop (20 April 2012)

- Alben Hranova: 'Death and Love: the Mistaking of Allegory'.
- Vessela Nozharova: 'The Iconography of Death in the Life of Socialist Art'.
- Biljana Kurtasheva: 'Death in the Early Poetic Anthologies of Socialism'.

How Death Imposed Itself as a Research Subject ...

An Interview with
Dr Daniela Koleva,
Coordinator of *Existential Policies
under Socialism*



Dr Daniela Koleva is Associate Professor in Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University *St Kliment Ohridski*. Amongst her fields of academic interests are Oral History, Biographical Methods, Comparative Cultural Studies, and the Anthropology of Socialism. For the last five years, she has taught graduate courses in *Oral History and Biographical Methods*, *Intercultural Interactions and Cultural Stereotypes*, *Biography and Normality*, and undergraduate courses in *Basic Concepts of Cultural Studies*, *The Fundamentals of Cultural Studies*, *Intercultural Relations*, *The Politics of Memory*, *Individual Narratives and Public Discourses*, *The Theory of Culture*, and *The Anthropology of the Life Cycle*.

Dr Koleva has been a welcomed guest lecturer at a number of international academic establishments, including *Friedrich Schiller* University of Jena, Germany, the American University in Bulgaria, the *Péter Pázmány* Catholic University in Budapest, Hungary, and the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. She is the author of numerous articles on memory, the recent socialist past, and women's history from a Bulgarian perspective, including:

'Remembering the Collective, Imagining Rurality', in: François Rugg, Andrea Boscoboinik (eds.), *From Palermo to Penang/ De Palermo à Penang: A Journey into Political Anthropology/ Unitinéraire en anthropologie politique* (Wien, Münster, 2010); 'Is there place for hope', in: D. Koleva (ed.), *Belene – A Place of Memory* (Sofia, 2010); 'The colour of memory', in: Julia Obertreis and Anke Stephan (eds.), *Erinnerungen nach der Wende. Oral His-*

tory und (post)sozialistische Gesellschaften [Remembering after the Fall of Communism. Oral History and (Post-) Socialist Societies] (Essen, 2009); 'A quest for Jewish identity: Personal memory and collective forgetting', in: Kristina Popova, Marijana Piskova, Margareth Lanzinger, Nikola Langreiter, and Petar Vodenicharov (eds.) *Women and Minorities: Ways of Archiving* (Sofia-Vienna: 2009); 'Histoire orale et mémoire du communisme', *Divinatio*, vol. 27 (spring-summer 2008); "'My life has mostly been spent working": Notions and patterns of work in socialist Bulgaria', *Anthropological Notebooks*, XIV, No. 1 (2008); 'Telling women's lives: ideology and practice', *L'Homme. Europäische Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft*, 18. Jg., Heft 2 (2007); 'The Memory of socialist public holidays: between colonization and autonomy', in: Ulf Brunnbauer and Stefan Troebst (Hg.), *Zwischen Amnesie und Nostalgie. Die Erinnerung an den Kommunismus in Südosteuropa* (Köln, Weimar, 2007); (with Ivan Elenkov), 'Historical studies in post-communist Bulgaria. Between academic standards and political agendas', in: Sorin Antohi, Balazs Trencsenyi and Peter Apor (eds.) *Narratives Unbound. Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe* (Budapest: CEU Press 2007), etc.

Daniela Koleva (in co-authorship with Prof. Ivan Elenkov) is also the editor of the seminal volume on *Childhood under Socialism: Political, Institutional and Biographical Perspectives* (Sofia: CAS/Riva, 2010) which has been widely acclaimed in Bulgarian social science reviews for its depth, critical analyses, and novelty.



Editor: How was the idea for the Existential Socialism Seminar born?

Daniela Koleva: The seminar is directly related to two earlier initiatives of the Centre for Advanced Study – the History Club and the Atelier for Biographical Research. These two forums gathered a number of colleagues working in the field of oral history and utilising ego-documents for their research, including written sources such as correspondences, diaries, memoirs, etc. Naturally, most of the issues that were approached via those sources belonged to the fields of social history, the history of everyday life, historical and social anthropology, and gender studies. Then, in 2008, the idea for a seminar on childhood under socialism was formulated which bridged the academic media of the History Club and the Atelier for Biographical Research. Its theme of interest combined ‘traditional’ history, social history and anthropology as it attempted to reconsider the very recent past through oral history sources and ego-documents. Our idea was to approach the topic of childhood under socialism from different perspectives, and especially from an ideological and existential point of view. Initially the seminar was conceived as a one-day venture, but due to the enhanced

interest in the subject and the number of volunteering new contributors, we opted for yet another, second workshop. Eventually, all revised seminar papers were collected in one volume for publication. The book launch of *Childhood under Socialism* took place here, at CAS, just a year ago. There was something in the very atmosphere of the Centre that kindled the spark to continue our work and take it onto the next level. Apparently, the interdisciplinary format of the seminar, with its manifold research paradigms and textures, had enjoyed a very positive reception. Thus the idea emerged to broaden the frame of exploration and focus on the existential policies under socialism – very much along the mode of Beck and A. Giddens, and the sociology of life-politics. Our choice rested on the topic of death as it proved to be close to the research interests of a number of scholars who, so far, hadn’t had a real opportunity to come forth with their studies and findings in public. This is how ‘death’ imposed itself as the research subject of the seminar in the first year.

The seminar is novel and pioneering in its essence: there are numerous studies on everyday life under socialism, yet research on the existential situations of childhood, sexuality, gender, coming of age and old age is incidental,

unbalanced and has no uniting focus. Consequently the seminar charts a new field of study, and constructs socialism in a new way, i.e. seen from the point of view of its historical practice.

Ed.: Has there been previous research on ‘death’ done in the former socialist countries or is the seminar charting a completely fresh scope of exploration with us?

D.K.: To the best of my knowledge, death and funeral rites have been the focus of Gail Kligman’s studies of traditional death rituals in Romania. The British scholar Catherine Merridale, too, has conducted research on death and memory in Russia in the context of World War II. However, none of the research so far has looked into the ideological context of death as combined with its corresponding existential practices.

Ed.: The seminar ‘Death under Socialism’ has been going on for a while. Have there been any interesting or unexpected findings by now? Can you already trace any dynamics in the interaction between the ideological diktat and the purely human experience of death over time?



D.K.: There is dynamics in the picture coming from all disciplinary and thematic directions, and there is more than one line of development evolving. On the one hand, there is the ideological construction of death as a heroic demise; on the other hand, there is death in the concentration camps devoid of any meaning. This cannot be contextualised as a sacrifice... Actually, there are different ways emerging of how death was sacralised. To invoke Philippe Aries' brilliant metaphor, 'wild' death may be 'tamed' in various manners. At the institutional level, the sacralisation of death, that is ideologically justifiable, was followed by an ongoing process of desacralisation, i.e. the secularisation of death and funeral rites in the private sphere. There are practices and discourses coming up that are associated with the rationalisation of death in different – religious, bio-political, or bio-social – perspectives. There is the perspective of the scientific taming of death; there is also the angle of the medicalisation of death which was meant to contravene Death by extending Life's horizon and postponing the End... Not to forget, there is also the context of domesticating death through religion – especially practised by minority groups. We are also facing the taming of death in socialist literature and art. Hence there has been a very complex and colourful, i.e. a truly vibrant mosaic visualising so far, that challenges our perceptions of the past and takes us back to events and socialist heroes that have been marginalised and pushed into oblivion over time. Therefore, the seminar transcends the historical realm of socialism, and raises a more encompassing issue, namely: how do we currently conceptualise the past? I

believe that a published collection of the seminar's papers will throw additional light on many aspects of both our past and present.

Ed.: Have you considered popularising the seminar's findings and conclusions outside Bulgaria, too?

D.K.: I haven't given it a serious thought yet. However, there has been an increasing interest in the topic of death among the international academic community recently. Our seminar on *Death under Socialism* coincides with the upsurge of scholarly attention to thanatology and its problematics. Two years ago, in 2010, the Third International Conference on Dying and Death was held in Alba Iulia, Romania; a few weeks ago, two colleagues of ours participated in a similar conference in Munich, Germany; in November 2012, the Ninth Global Conference on Making Sense of Death and Dying will take place in Salzburg, Austria ... Our seminar *Death under Socialism* falls into this internationally developing trend. We haven't explicitly planned any publications outside Bulgaria yet, though we highly encourage our seminar contributors to popularise their scholarly results in international journals and worldwide. However, we do have ideas for a joint cooperation on the topic with New Europe College, Romania.

Ed.: What other topics besides 'death' are to be expected in the seminar sequence on Existential Socialism?

D.K.: This has been already decided: 'Death' will be followed by 'Love' in the academic 2012/13 year. Two other topics, the Body, Bio-politics and Sexuality,

as well as Age and Aging under Socialism, are also awaiting their contributors. It will be important to see how the Body under socialism was perceived and constructed, what *Coming of Age* meant under socialism, how generations were conceptualised. And if we do not tire of this research topic, other new themes may surface in the future, too.

Ed.: Finally, why did you choose CAS for your seminar venue?

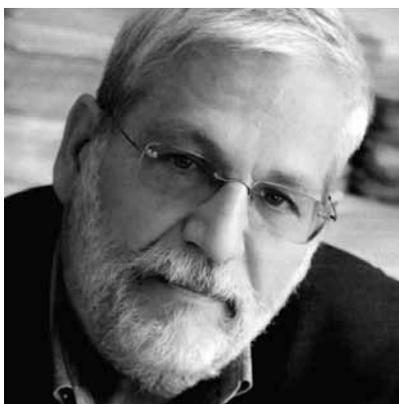
D.K.: The very history of the seminar suggested CAS as its best location. The Centre already hosted the forums of the History Club, of the Atelier for Biographical Research, the *Childhood under Socialism* Seminar. I would also like to thank the Centre's Director, Prof. Diana Mishkova, who has been especially encouraging in promoting it, too. Last but not least, we have also received the Centre's heartening logistic and financial backing. I would like to believe that a published collection of our seminar papers, gratefully supported financially by CAS, will soon hit the academic market, hopefully by the end of 2012 or early 2013. This will be a great incentive to continue our studies and our collaboration.

Interviewed by the Editor

Advanced Academia Programme: Individual Fellowships 2012–2013

Bulgarian Participants

March – July 2012



Roumen Avramov

PhD in Economics (Higher Institute of Economics, Sofia)

Field of study: Economic History

Affiliation: Centre for Liberal Strategies

Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:

The Economics of the Revival Process

The proposed project focuses on a facet of a specific ethnic conflict in Bulgaria. The dimension under scrutiny is the *economic incidence* of the tensions, while the minority concerned is the Turkish community during the second half of the 1980s.

The ethnic minority of the Turks in Bulgaria has captured scholars' attention for years. A vast stock of knowledge was built concerning very different aspects of the history and existence of this community. The Revival Process (the euphemism coined by the Bulgarian communist regime to indicate the campaign initiated in 1984 for a mandatory change of the ethnic

Turks' Muslim names with Bulgarian ones), that set out in November 1984 and culminated in 1989, is an unparalleled event occupying a unique place in the ethnic annals. This large-scale operation triggered a massive exodus in the summer of 1989 and exerted a dramatic impact on the Bulgarian society by interfering with the terminal stage of the totalitarian rule. Ultimately, it contributed in a decisive way to the collapse of the communist regime.

So far, the growing academic concern with this episode in Bulgaria's recent past has been oriented mainly to the mechanics of the political decision-making, the emigration wave and the return migration, to the anthropology of the cohorts that established themselves in Turkey. As for memory preservation, a number of relevant memoirs, oral histories and collections of archival documents have been published.

The *economics* of this round of compulsory assimilation has remained largely underexplored. The purpose of the project is to contribute to filling this gap. The basic aim is to investigate issues ranging from the microeconomics, micro-statistics and micronarratives of the events to its macroeconomic impacts. The research work is expected to gather new evidence and data concerning these features of Bulgaria's governmental ethnic policy. The main sources to be exploited are the relevant archival collections. Other potentially insightful sources are the files of human rights activists whose organisations were established during and after the 1989 crisis.

In light of the precedents, it is likely that the story to be told will once again confirm the permeability of the boundary between good and evil, and illustrate the frailness of the threshold to intolerance. This is worth to be remembered as the recent past, of the Balkans in particular, testifies that the old demons of the inter-ethnic

hostilities are easily aroused from their latent state and under specific circumstances can break out anytime...



Miglena Nikolchina

PhD in Philosophy (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 1984) and in English (University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, 1993), BA in English (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Field of study: Philosophy, History of Ideas

Affiliation: Professor, Department for Theory and History of Literature, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria

Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:

The Humanism-Antihumanism Divide: the Concept of 'Man' between the End of World War II and the Fall of the Berlin Wall

The project focuses on the divergence of humanist/antihumanist trends from the end of the Second World War until the beginning of the changes in Eastern Europe. It brings into consideration the various levels and facets (social, political, cultural, etc.) of this phenomenon, and deals with its philosophical dimensions. It pays special tribute to some

diverse proponents of antihumanism in Western thinking (Heidegger, Althusser, Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze, Kojève and Koyré) and examines a specific unorthodox turn to humanism in Russian philosophy, especially in the work of Merab Mamardashvili and Evald Ilyenkov. While man and humanism were declared dead and finished one way or another in a number of theoretical perspectives by various Western thinkers, humanism and the turn to the problem of man became a more or less oblique stratagem for undermining the official Marxist dogma in Eastern Europe. The chasm becomes apparent in a short talk delivered in French by Russian-Georgian philosopher Merab Mamardashvili at a conference in Paris, in 1988, i.e. on the eve of the political changes in Eastern Europe. In this talk entitled "The European Responsibility," Mamardashvili claims, "You Europeans have stopped thinking about what is the essence of your existence.... You no longer possess the keen awareness that the human being is in the first place a constant effort to become a human being, and that this is not a natural state but a state that is continually created." And he goes on to outline how he, the outsider, inherited this awareness from Cartesian philosophy, from the Renaissance that made us "irreversibly modern," from the Gospels, from the Greco-Roman world... "But a fatigue and a forgetfulness of one's beginnings might set in. Herein lies the danger for Europe..."

How and why did this gap open? While studying the logic of the two disparate trends and providing a more consistent genealogical account of the shifting ideas of man in European history might throw some light on on-going theoretical preoccupations today, a telling intersection appears in the friendship between Merab Mamardashvili and Louis Althusser. Taking advantage of a visit to Italy in the 1960s, Mamardashvili made a detour to Paris where he met Althusser. For Mamardashvili, this had dire consequences: after this audacious act he would not be allowed to leave the Soviet Union for two decades; in fact, until the perestroika set in. In spite of the distances and the obstacles, however, the two men stayed in touch while ever more clearly moving away from each other in their philosophical orientations.

Seen in this perspective, Althusser's text "Marxism and Humanism" published for the first time in 1964 seems to pinpoint a decisive moment. In it, he criticizes the Soviet Communist party for its "humanist" turn which, according to him, is at variance with Marx's mature theory. His invective thus marks two important developments. On the one hand, it highlights Althusser's own interest in the "mature" Marx and his antihumanist thrust, arguably the most logical and theoretically consistent one in the context of French antihumanism. On the other hand, it provides a curious reminder that humanism and the turn to the "young Marx" as a viable stratagem for undermining the official Marxist dogma in Eastern Europe had its counterpart in official party documents. Confronting Mamardashvili's 1988 speech with Althusser's 1964 analysis might hence provide the optics for understanding the divide between humanism and antihumanism as produced by their function and ethos as critique in two contrasting situations, which made the dialogue between the two positions desirable but ultimately frustrating.

Metodiy Rozhdestvenskiy

PhD in Philosophy (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2011), MA in International Relations (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria)

Field of study: History of Rhetoric, Theory of Argumentation, History of Mentalities

Affiliation: Independent scholar

Country: Bulgaria

Project Working Title:

**'To Take and not to Return':
The Barbarian Rhetoric in Late Antiquity
and the Early Middle Ages**

The contrast upon which a person, a culture or a civilisation builds its self-identification and confronts concepts of good and evil is the inherent task of rhetoric. Despite the burgeoning research on otherness and imagining the other, including Barbarians and Barbarism in the Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the perspective of the Barbarian rhetoric itself remains still unexplored.

The project attempts to approach from a rhetorical perspective the clash of what has been known as the Barbarian culture and its way of thinking with the classical Greco-Roman and Byzantine civilisations. It attempts to investigate the presentation of the Barbarians not simply in the descriptions of ancient historiographers but also through the prism of their own words and deeds. The project's research hypothesis rests on the assumption that the true demarcation line between the Empire and the Barbarians was mainly behavioural, based on a higher culturally sanctioned level



of violence in the societies north of the *limes*. That contrast was nurtured by values that supported the necessity to survive in an inimical environment in the *Pax Barbarica* rather than by political, ideological, or institutional unconformities between the cultures in question.

Methodologically, the study is of interdisciplinary nature, bringing together approaches from the history of rhetoric, theory of argumentation, *histoire des mœurs*, and cultural studies. Using a systematic interpretative analysis of the Greek and Roman rhetorical treatises and standard reconstructive methodology as a background, the project utilises a complex discursive rhetorical analysis to interpret practical argumentation in the speeches and passages chosen for case-studies.



Tsvetelin Stepanov

PhD in Medieval History and Culture (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 1997), MA in History (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Field of study: Medieval Studies

Affiliation: Associate Professor, Centre for Cultural Studies, Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria

Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:

**Invading in/from the 'Holy Land':
Apocalyptic Metatext(s) and Sacred
and/or Imagined Geography, 950–1200**

Ideas about the 'Holy Land', the Second Coming of Christ and the Year 1000, the Crusades, and Jihad have attracted vast scholarly attention. The same is true of the relevant medieval Christian texts (chronicles, historical apocalyptic texts, etc.) and the symbols found in them such as the four Kingdoms, the beasts, and the 'Gog and Magog' peoples, as well as their connection to phenomena such as 'pilgrims', 'saints', and 'relics'. Also, it has been recognised that ideas about the Messiah's coming around the mid-tenth century appeared not only in the Christian societies in Europe, but also amongst some Jewish literati from the Cordoba caliphate, and amongst the Khazarian elite (Hasdai b. Shafrut and the Khazar king Joseph, respectively). Their roots date back to the Old and New Testament.

However, despite the numerous studies, the linkage between the understanding of the 'own Holy Land' (viewed as 'New Israel(s)') and the geographic locations of the invaders that

attacked it, and the polities before the Second Coming of Christ and the topos (of the original) 'Holy Land' – as seen through the prism of the real and/or imagined geography of both the 'New Israel(s)' and the invading peoples – remains still underexplored. Hence, the present project addresses issues such as the common cultural matrix of ideas of 'invading from/in the Holy Land', the typicality of Christian traditions to follow the *arch*-model of the invading direction known from the Bible (i.e., *north*), as well as the reasons behind the 'manipulation' of the real geography.

Other topics of study are the number and nature of the perspectives to the 'Holy Land' under the period of investigation. While it may be assumed that medieval civilisations bore a similar notion of the 'Holy Land', they seem to have developed and applied different strategies as to both invaders and invasions into and from it. It is the project's objective to address these issues in more detail.

October 2012 – February 2013

Georgi Dimitrov

Doctor of Sociological Sc. (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2001), PhD in Philosophy (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 1988), MA in Sociology (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Field of study: Sociology of Sociology

Affiliation: Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria.

Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:

**Constantly New: Studies in Discontinuities
and Transformations in Social Science**

So far, discontinuities in social science advancement have been generally marginalised as a topic of study. If changes appear in the scope of social science history research, they are supposed to refer to 'the contours' rather than 'the core' of the disciplines (Ross, 2003).

This specific negligence stems from a specific reason, namely: discontinuity seems to contradict the classical and conventional understanding of the essence of science as everlasting accumulation of knowledge.

The current project aims to overcome the bias in the study of discontinuity and transformation mechanisms as a general principle of development in the social sciences. Its main focus is American sociology as a representative case of rapid disciplinary transformation, yet analysed from a comparative perspective and in its intellectual interactions with economics, political science, anthropology, philosophy and history.



Contrary to the classical Kuhnian notion of knowledge accumulation as 'normal science' and of paradigm shifts as sporadic 'scientific revolutions', the project hopes to provide proof that in contemporary social sciences, the qualitative epistemological change is perpetual, concerning the subject-matter studied, the cognitive patterns used and the entire field of disciplinary knowledge.

The study concentrates on two key stages in the development of twentieth-century American sociology, including their transdisciplinary inspirations and repercussions: the interplay of cognitive and socio-cultural contexts of the rise and decline of systematic theoretical sociology (1940–1970), as well as the respective specific socio-cultural premises for the rise of a broad and powerful tide of feminist social science during the end quarter of the twentieth century (1970–2000). The methodological approach is a synthesis of historical sociology

as an 'enthusiastically interdisciplinary' (Adams, Clemens, Orloff, 2005) and incorporates R. Friedrichs's dialectical version of sociology of sociology (1970).

Based on historical evidence, the project hopes to demonstrate the mechanisms of constant epistemic change as an essential feature of social sciences – one that involves qualitative transformations taking place in the very 'rules of change' which govern the 'field of development' in these sciences. It is argued that this principle is neither pertinent to sociology nor to American social sciences only. It concerns the basic understanding of the fabrics and dynamics of contemporary social cognition in general.



Svetla Koleva

PhD in Sociology (Institute of Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, 1990), MA in Sociology (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"), Diploma in Higher European Studies (European University Centre, Nancy, France)

Field of study: Sociology and Political Sciences
 Affiliation: Associate Professor, Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
 Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:
Everyday Citizenship as a Social and Cognitive Challenge: East-West Perspectives

In recent years social practice has brought to the fore certain forms of civic action that are outside the traditional relationships between the individual and government structures, relationships mediated through the mechanisms

of direct or representative democracy. These new forms of civic activeness are a response to the unfair appropriated common good, or to a problem that has not been recognised or respectively, has been ignored by the public authorities. This civic activeness was born and developed in the space of everyday life, of those solidarities in which commitment to others involves mutual trust and perceived collective meaning of the world in which we live. Thus, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, a new set of research problems has crystallised in the social sciences; its core topic are the dependencies between personal investment/commitment, collective forms of action, forms of recognition, on the one hand (Honneth) and forms of trust, on the other (Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam, Stompka, Fukuyama).

The project approaches the newly emerging forms of civic involvement outside and aside from the trajectories/channels institutionalised by public authority, designated as 'ordinary', everyday citizenship. Two societies have been singled out for analysis as to their different historical traditions and different contemporary development – the Bulgarian and the French one – as viewed respectively as the ideal types of a recovering democracy, on the one hand, and an established one, on the other.

The project aims at understanding everyday citizenship as a social phenomenon that calls into question the classical forms of political life and that represents a social challenge both to the traditional actors of political action and to its own promoters, inasmuch as its duration and impact are not ensured by any instruments of an institutionalised power. The theoretical challenge is to rethink the contextual practices of everyday citizenship within the general horizon of Arendt's theoretical legacy regarding the political and the public, in order not to efface but to highlight the particularities of these spheres.



Tonka Kostadinova

PhD in Modern and Contemporary History (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2011), MA in Southeast European Studies (National and Kapodestrian University of Athens) and International Relations (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"), BA in International Relations (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski").

Field of study: Political and Social Sciences, International Relations, Modern and Contemporary History, Southeast European Studies
 Affiliation: Associate Researcher, Southeast European Unit, Institute for Security and Defense Analysis, Athens
 Country: Greece, Bulgaria

Project Title:
International Community's Policy Dilemmas in the Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage as a Society-Building Model in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The research project examines international policy dilemmas in the post-conflict reconstruction of cultural heritage as a model of society and peace building in war-affected states. The study will go beyond well-known civil aspects of society building and analyse international efforts in that field through an innovative perspective, namely: the social construction of collective identities/memories as a process initiated and launched on a supra-national, rather than national level. The research will be based both on the theory of neo-liberal institutionalism and the theory of social constructivism emphasising the adoption of public policy functions by international actors even in what has been

traditionally thought of 'national' fields such as cultural and identity politics.

It will be argued that international strategies on reconstruction of cultural heritage possess the potential to create social frames in which collective memory can be rebuilt/reshaped and therefore could prove a key security factor in war-torn societies. Thus the research hopes to demonstrate how, seeking to reverse war effects and to promote inter-ethnic reconciliation, the international community tried to change the meaning of Bosnian cultural heritage and 'invent' a new, common, multicultural past not only for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but for the entire Balkan region.

The project examines the international community's policies towards the (re)construction of historical sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina as instruments for the invention and fixation of a common past; its function in the (re)construction of museum institutions as centres for preservation of a common past; as well as its strategy towards the (re)construction of libraries and archives as centres for documentation of a common past. The major questions to be addressed are the following: How does the social constructivism approach in international relations interact with theories on collective identity/memory building? Can cultural/national identities be created/reshaped through externally imported policy mechanisms? What are the practical implications of the reinvention of history/past? What will the micro- and macro- political role of cultural heritage be in terms of a potential 'clash of civilizations'?

Darin Tenev

PhD in Theory of Literature (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 2008), BA in Bulgarian Philology/ Japanese Studies, MA in Theory of Literature (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Field of Study: Theory of Literature, Philosophy

Affiliation: Faculty of Slavic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria; Institute for Critical Social Studies, University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, Bulgaria

Country: Bulgaria

Project Title:

Possibility and Negativity

The focal point of the research project is the problem of the relationship between possibility and negativity. Negativity and possibility have been linked in Western metaphysics ever since Aristotle. Aristotle himself stated in his *Physics* that the problem of *steresis*, or privation, was just another way to describe the problem of *dynamis* or potentiality. There has been a long tradition in Western thought, leading up to Heidegger and beyond, that deals with this relationship as based on two dominant oppositions. The first one is the opposition between negativity and positivity, the second addresses the opposition between possibility and impossibility. Opposing negativity to positivity opens the way for an 'affirmativist' interpretation of negativity and in fact, predetermines and reduces the meaning of negativity through the concept of negation seen as an act. This means that negativity is seen as having an affirmative force of its own, which makes it an affirmation. If negativity is not to be reduced to a form of affirmation, then negativity is negative only to the extent that it is not an act. It is not to be opposed to the act (and, therefore to affirmativity), because it is not posed at all. If negativity is not an act, it should be thought of on the side of the possible. But in the possible it is what cannot be actualised, and therefore, what remains



impossible. The impossible is not opposed to the possible; it traverses it as its own impotentiality and thus marks its internal limits. It is for this reason that possibility is never reducible to what was already conditioned, or predetermined, or pre-given.

The project is based on the assumption that it is precisely the relationship of negativity and possibility that could help philosophy overcome the simple opposition between possibility and impossibility, on the one hand, and grasp the actualisation which does not presuppose anything pre-given, on the other hand.

The task of rethinking the correlations possibility–actuality–negativity–affirmativity was already partially fulfilled in the works of Heidegger, Deleuze, Derrida, and Agamben. These debates have been brought onto the Bulgarian philosophical scene and recently developed by Boyan Manchev, Dimitar Vatsov, and Deyan Deyanov. The present project attempts to reconsider and reevaluate some positions in these debates, and also seeks to advance a new thesis which would help rearticulate basic issues in the field of literary theory, critical theory, political philosophy, and sociology.

International Participants



Dmitry Birjukov

PhD in Philosophy (St Petersburg State University, Russia, 2007), MS in Physics (St. Petersburg State Polytechnical University, Russia), BA in Religious Studies (St. Petersburg School of Religion and Philosophy, Russia)

Field of study: Cultural Studies, Patristic, Byzantine philosophy, Ancient philosophy

Affiliation: Russian Christian Academy for the Humanities, Institute for the History of Christian Thought
Country: Russia

Project:

The Doctrine of Universals as a Factor of Self-identity of Intellectual Culture of Byzantium

So far, scientific research dedicated to the theory of universals in the history of Philosophy has paid strong tribute to the era of Antiquity and the Middle Ages (scholasticism), yet the theory of universals developed in Byzantine philosophy has been largely ignored. However, an in-depth deliberation of Byzantine thought is a strong premise for the understanding of the

general course of cultural and philosophical thought in history.

It is the project's main objective to develop the theme of the problem of universals as a factor of self-identity of the intellectual culture of Byzantium. The study is based on a general overview of the theory of universals in fourth- to fourteenth-century Byzantine intellectual culture, supplemented by a critical analysis of modern scholars' research. In particular, the project intends to discuss the works of those Byzantine authors in whose doctrines the theme of universals played an important role from the angle of history, philosophy, theology, and cultural studies. The sources under scrutiny are texts of Christian authors and Ancient philosophers in Ancient Greek.

The project encompasses a novel (in its essence) approach whereby a complete picture of the theory of universals in Byzantine philosophical thought will be offered for consideration and opportunities will be opened for a more profound understanding of the history of culture and philosophy, and of scholasticism, in particular.

In the framework of the project three factors, which influenced the development of the doctrine of universals in the Byzantine thought, are distinguished: 1) the theological factor, within of which three main stages in the history of theological debates in Byzantium, when the problem of universals played a significant role and when it was developed, are discerned; 2) the factor of the influence of popular Ancient philosophical views, and, 3) the factor of direct influence of the Ancient school philosophy (the *Athenian* and *Alexandrian Neo-Platonic* schools).



Benedikt Eckhardt

PhD in Ancient History (University of Bochum, Germany, 2011), MA in Ancient History and German Literature (University of Bochum, Germany)

Field of study: Ancient History

Affiliation: Research Fellow, The Cluster of Excellence 'Religion and Politics', University of Münster

Country: Germany

Project Title:

Graeco-Roman Voluntary Associations as Social Systems

The intended research concerns voluntary associations in the ancient Mediterranean world. Several studies have taken up this subject in the last decade. Yet, the current project will discuss the data (texts, artifacts, excavated architectural structures) from an entirely different angle based on an approach developed by the author in the last years in Münster. This new perspective enables the analysis of data within a broader context, and thus offers wide-ranging explanations of the

phenomena and explores new ways for the comparison of these data with other ancient as well as modern sources.

In order to offer a new perspective on the phenomenon, the project approaches ancient voluntary associations as social systems, applying insights from systems theory, and especially its formulation in the magisterial works of the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann. The combination of insights from sociological theory, and especially from the sociology of organisation, with the ancient evidence on voluntary associations brings into dialogue two very different areas of research. Both ancient history and sociology can profit from this dialogue, because voluntary associations might very well be a 'missing link' between these – so far entirely unrelated – worlds.

The projected study rests on three pillars: Number one focuses on the internal affairs of associations, number two examines the relationship between associations and society, and number three relates to the impact this has on our understanding of the ancient Mediterranean society. The research carried out at the CAS concerns stage one, with some prospects towards stages two and three.

Robert Matthias Erdbeer

PhD in German Literature (University of Tübingen, Germany, 2006), MA and BA in Literature and History (University of Tübingen, 1997)

Field of Study: German and Comparative Literature, History of Science, Game Studies, Modern Esotericism
 Affiliation: University of Münster, Germany
 Country: Germany

Project Title:

The State of the Game: Aesthetic Modelling and the Ontology of Fiction

The key part of the research project is a case-study on multiplayering that addresses gaming as a collective technique of the Self. In literary and scientific theory it has been



claimed that fiction would provide, or even 'be', a form of latent knowledge where imaginary forces gather in free play (Schiller); that it may function as a pre-scientific incubator of scientific reasoning (Alexander von Humboldt), as a myth with its own logic (Blumenberg), as a 'meaningful' yet short-lived catalyst to generate the truth (Vaihinger) or as a human(ist) capacity to balance the Real and the Imaginary (Iser). Recently, the mode of fiction came to be the fashion mode of virtual reality as well as of Historical Epistemology, a mode of being that provides effective simulations and experiments of thought. The question of this study, though, is simple: how does fiction work? How does it work as an historically mutable, dynamic force, while constituting modern knowledge cultures between popular, sophisticated and inscrutable professional genres? How do fictional devices, formats and performances depend on their 'communities of fiction'? And to what extent is fiction a technology of the non-fictional (or even the fictitious) Self?

This project will investigate the rising 'New Essentialism' of contemporary culture in a post-postmodern fictional genre that became a major challenge, if not threat, to postmodern philology: the Role-Playing Game. Its main objectives are the multiplayering games and game communities of *URU live* and *Drakensang*, as well as game-related forms of literary, cinematic and performative popular fiction. Gaming, though, has come to be a striking issue with the agents of 'high culture', too: a war game table top appears as central topic in Roberto Bolaños novel *El Tercer Reich* (2010),

the ludic job of 'farming' is discussed in Cory Doctorow's youth novel *For the Win* (2010), and German dramatist Tim Staffel launched a stage play with the title joke *Next Level Parzival* (RuhrTriennale 2007).

Thus, this study will combine three central aspects of the Gaming Culture with regard to modern literature and media: the new ontology and modelling of ludic Selves (Fictional Competence), the joint proliferation of new objects, high and low (New Fictionality), and the cross-cultural encounters of the Virtual, the Real and the Fictitious in post-ludic art forms and communities ('Virtual Essentialism').



Jaro Stacul

PhD in Social Anthropology (University of Cambridge, UK, 1999), MA in History (University of Trieste, Italy)

Field of Study: Social and Cultural Anthropology
 Affiliation: Grant MacEwan University, Edmonton, Canada
 Country: Italy

Project Title:

The Making and Unmaking of Political Subjectivities in Post-Socialist Poland

The planned research seeks to address the highly topical issue of the ways neo-liberal discourses and practices shape political subjectivities in present-day Poland. It involves the analysis of ethnographic information collected in the course of anthropological fieldwork

carried out in the city of Gdańsk, on the Baltic Sea, between 2008 and 2011.

Despite Poland's integration into the transnational and global markets through the EU and growing levels of consumption, widespread inequalities and unemployment remain endemic. A wide range of scholarly works have provided interpretive keys to the transformations that Poland underwent after the demise of Socialism. Arguments have been developed that the new management technologies adopted in factories in the country after the Socialist era were crucial in legitimating neo-liberal discourse and in displacing class-based politics (Dunn, 2004). On the other hand, a case has been made for a systematic analysis of wider shifts in political identifications, calling our attention to the salience of 'class' in order to understand nationalist discourse in Poland (Kalb, 2009). Yet other research has called for a reconsideration of the interrelation between nationalism and religion (i.e. Roman Catholicism) by showing how the latter provides an idiom to speak of the former at a time of significant social transformations (Zubrzycki, 2006). What unites most of these studies is the fact that they seem to highlight the 'conservative' character of the country by focusing on aspects such as nationalism, religion, and neo-liberalism.

However, a systematic analysis of the interrelation of these still requires an understanding of how political identifications relate to another important sphere, that of consumption. In this sense, the transformations that have occurred since the demise of Socialism raise three important issues: How do people of different social classes and occupational statuses constitute themselves as political subjects in the face of the aforementioned transformations? To what extent does neo-liberal ideology inform the official narratives of Polish history of the last thirty years? What role does consumption play in constituting consumer identity on the one hand and belonging on the other?

The city of Gdańsk with its shipyard – the cradle of the *Solidarność*/Solidarity movement in the early 1980s and the location where Socialist ideology was contested – lends very well to

the analysis of the above issues. The project for the revitalisation of the shipyard has attracted much political tension for it entails rewriting the history of the events of the 1980s and turning the area into a location for the consumption (and ultimately commercialisation) of Polish history. Hence the current study deals with the issue of how Poles understand and make sense of the contradictions with which the revitalisation project is rife by casting new light on the ways in which ordinary people cope with the challenges posed by neo-liberal globalisation.



Iryna Vushko

PhD in History (Yale University, 2008), BA and MA in History (Lviv National University, Ukraine; Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)

Field of Study: History

Affiliation: Imre Kertész Kolleg, Friedrich-Schiller University, Jena, Germany

Country: Ukraine

Project Title:

From Empire to Nation State: the Habsburg Factor in European Politics, 1900–1925

The project analyses the transition from the empire to nation states in post-1918 Europe. It is designed as a collective biography of politicians who started their careers in the Austrian Empire and who subsequently parted their

ways into respective nation states. Its main focus falls upon individuals who knew each other through their common participation in the former Austrian imperial institutions – the Parliament or the Ministries – and who maintained personal and professional contacts after 1918. The research covers the successor states that evolved out of the Austrian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Poland and Ukraine.

The study addresses three broad questions, namely: What role did imperial legacy play in interwar Europe? How did people experience their new states? How did men coming from different parliamentary traditions worked together within a national framework?

The project explores the dilemma of post-Habsburg politicians in their new successor states and examines how these men incorporated or rejected political models and practices from the Austrian Empire in different nation states. It analyses the engagement of former Austrians in guarding of the rise of fascism in Europe's south-west, their involvement in the Russian-Polish-Ukrainian civil war and later in Soviet Ukraine, in Europe's east, as well as their role in creating a stable political order in Europe's center, in Austria and Czechoslovakia.

The project hopes to offer a more nuanced picture of a new Europe, where political boundaries and East-West divisions were perhaps not as strict as we tend to think, and where chronological divides were not ultimate (and perhaps reversible). The study will show how imperial networks and connections survived the immediate post-war years; how and why these networks became disrupted with time, and how the gradual break-down of former intra-imperial contacts helped consolidate national political establishments around respective centres, Vienna, Rome, Prague, Warsaw, Kiev (before 1923).

Calendar of CAS Public Lectures

2011

-
- 15 March Prof. Tzoch Boyadjiev, Sofia University:**
The Philosophy of Photography
-
- 22 March Dr Vihra Barova, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences:**
Post-Socialist Youth Subculture Identity:
from Dissidents to Workers
-
- 29 March Assoc. Prof. Ivo Hristov, Plovdiv University:**
The Chances of Rule of Law in Contemporary Bulgaria
-
- 5 April Prof. Ivan Elenkov, Sofia University:**
Labour and Rest. Introduction into the History
of the Ideological Construction of Everyday Life
in Communist Bulgaria
-
- 12 April Assoc. Prof. Orlin Spassov, Sofia University:**
Internet Politics in Bulgaria.
Citizen Participation, Representation and Democracy
-
- 19 April Dr Hristian Atanasov, Archives State Agency:**
Urban Life in the Balkans:
Population, Social Structure, Poverty and Wealth
in Ottoman Sofia, Vidin and Ruschuk (1699–1839)
-
- 26 April Prof. Ivaylo Ditchev, Sofia University:**
The Passions of Belonging.
The Role of Emotions in the New Media Constellation
-
- 3 May Prof. Tanya Chavdarova, Sofia University:**
Small Entrepreneurship:
The Social Embeddedness of Economic Action



Venue: Sofia City Library

2012

-
- 13 March** **Assoc. Prof. Simeon Evstatiev, Sofia University:**
Struggles against Innovation in 17th and 18th Century Islam in the Arab Middle East (with a Reference to the Balkans)
-
- 20 March** **Assoc. Prof. Kristina Popova, South-West University of Blagoevgrad:**
"The Joy of Service". Biopolitics and Biographies between New York, Sofia and Gorna Dzhumaja in the First Half of the 20th Century
-
- 27 March** **Dr Boris Todorov, Independent Scholar:**
Royal Saints and the Integration of the Medieval Serbian Space (13th–14th Centuries)
-
- 3 April** **Dr Rosen Lutskanov, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences:**
The Significant Other: Interactions of Philosophy and Abstract Mathematics in the German Academic Milieu (1870–1930)
-
- 10 April** **Assoc. Prof. Boyan Znepolski, Sofia University:**
Sociology as a Social Critique: A Question of Legitimacy and of Efficiency
-
- 17 April** **Prof. Violeta Decheva, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences:**
Redirecting National Identification by the Communist Regime in Bulgaria 1944–1950
-
- 24 April** **Dr Velislava Petrova, Sofia University:**
Why Garbage Matters?
-
- 8 May** **Dr Petya Slavova, Sofia University:**
The Soviet Type of Profession and its Local Deviations: a Comparative Study on the Lawyers' Profession in Socialist Bulgaria and the USSR
-
- 15 May** **Dr Vesselina Vachkova, National Academy of Art:**
The Byzantine Memories of Sofia



January 2011

06 January

Fellow Seminars:
Dr Orlin Spassov, 'Internet Politics in Bulgaria. Citizen Participation, Representation and Democracy' (interim results).

13 January

Fellow Seminars:
Dr Vihra Barova, 'Post-Socialist Youth Subculture Identity: from Dissidents to Workers' (interim results).

20 January

Fellow Seminars:
Prof. Ivaylo Dichev 'The Passions of Belonging. The Role of Emotions in the New Media Constellation' (interim results).

27 January

Fellow Seminars:
Prof. Tzocho Boyadjiev: 'The Philosophy of Photography' (interim results).

February 2011

10 February

Modernity and Identity Fellows' Presentations:
Dr Ina Dimitrova: 'National Welfare and Poverty Management in Bulgaria (1930-1944)'.



March 2011

15 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Prof. Tsocho Boyadjiev, 'The Philosophy of Photography'
(Venue: the American Corner of Sofia City Library)

23 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Assoc. Prof. Ivo Hristov: 'The Chances of Rule of Law in Contemporary Bulgaria'

29 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Vihra Barova: 'Post-Socialist Youth Subculture Identity: Westernised Punk and Immigrant Punk'

April 2011

05 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Prof. Ivan Elenkov, 'The Cultural Calendar of Late Socialism'



07 April

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Giedre Mickunaite, 'Maniera Graeca' in Europe's Catholic East: Picturing Belief and Spreading Faith in Late Medieval Lithuania'.

12 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Assoc. Prof. Orlin Spassov, 'Internet Politics in Bulgaria: Citizen Participation, Representation and Democracy'

19 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Hristiyan Atanasov, 'Urban Life in the Balkans: Population, Social Structure, Poverty and Wealth in Ottoman Sofia, Vidin and Ruschuk (1699-1839)'

26 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Prof. Ivaylo Dichev, 'The Passions of Belonging. The New Geometry of Scandal'

May 2011**03 May**

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Prof. Tanya Chavdarova, 'Subversive Institutions and Legitimate Conventions: the Informal Practices of Small Entrepreneurs in Bulgaria'

**June 2011****02 June**

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Boris Todorov, 'Royal Saints and the Integration of the Medieval Serbian Space (13th – 14th Century)'

09 June

Fellow Seminar:
Assoc. Prof. Simeon Evstatiev, 'Struggles against Innovation in 17th – 18th Century Islam in the Arab Middle East (with a Reference to the Balkans)'

23 June

Fellow Seminar:
Prof. Violeta Datcheva, 'Redirecting National Identification by the Communist Regime in Bulgaria 1944–1950.'

28 June

CAS Guest Lecture Series:
Prof. Pietro Bortone, Oxford University, UK, 'Between National Identity and Ancestral Language: the Conundrum of Greek-Speaking Turks'

**30 June**

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Galina Valtchinova, 'Cultures of Pain, Cultures of Salvation: Crisis and Eschatological Beliefs and Discourses in the Balkans at the Turn of 21st Century.'

July 2011**07 July**

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Alike Angelidou, 'Pathways of Anthropology in South Eastern Europe: an Ethnographic Study of Discipline and its "Disciples" in Bulgaria and Greece.'

October 2011**27 October**

The Role and the Responsibility of History Today:
Annual Meeting of the International Congress for Historiography and Theory of History, hosted by the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia.

November 2011**03 November**

CAS Discussion Series:
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'):
Opening Session.

10 November

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Rosen Lutskanov, 'The Significant Other: Interactions of Philosophy and Abstract Mathematics in the German Academic Milieu (1870–1930)'

**17 November**

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Velislava Petrova, 'Why Garbage Matters?'

24 November

Fellow Seminar:
Assoc. Prof. Boyan Znepolski, 'Sociology as a Social Critique: a Question of Legitimacy and of Efficiency'

December 2011

01 December

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Petya Slavova, 'The Soviet Type of Profession and its Local Deviations: a Comparative Study on Lawyers' Profession in Socialist Bulgaria and the USSR'.

02 December

CAS Discussion Series
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'): Session 2.



05 December

Institutional Impetus
External Evaluation of the Centre for Advanced Study, performed by Prof. Oliver Schmitt and Dr Silvana Galassi

06 December

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Henrike Schmidt, 'The Creation of the Literary Canon as Art. Fictitious Anthologies in (Post)-Modern Bulgarian Literature'.

January 2012

12 January

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Vesselina Vatchkova, 'The Byzantine Memories of Sofia'.

19 January

Fellow Seminar:
Assoc. Prof. Kristina Popova, 'The Joy of Service. Biopolitics and Biographies between New York, Sofia and Gorna Dzhumaja in the First Half of the Twentieth Century'

20 January

CAS Discussion Series:
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'): Session 3.

February 2012

24 February

CAS Discussion Series
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'): Session 4.

March 2012

13 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev 'Struggles against Innovation in 17th and 18th Century Islam in the Arab Middle East (with a Reference to the Balkans)'.
(Venue: the American Corner at Sofia City Library)

20 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kristina Popova, 'The Joy of Service. Biopolitics and Biographies between New York, Sofia and Gorna Dzhumaja in the First Half of the 20th Century'.

23 March

Kick-off Workshop:
Conceptual History of European Regions and Boundaries: Opening Session.



27 March

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Boris Todorov, 'Royal Saints and the Integration of the Medieval Serbian Space (13th – 14th Centuries)'.

30 March

CAS Discussion Series:
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'): Session 5.

April 2012



10 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Assoc. Prof. Boyan Znepolski, 'Sociology as a Social Critique: a Question of Legitimacy and of Efficiency'

17 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Prof. Violeta Decheva, 'Redirecting National Identification by the Communist Regime in Bulgaria 1944–1950'

20 April

CAS Discussion Series
Existential Socialism ('Death under Socialism'):
Session 6.

24 April

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Velislava Petrova, 'Why Garbage Matters?'

26 April

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Metodi Rozhdestvenskiy, 'The Barbarian Rhetoric: 5th Century BC – 6th Century AD'.

May 2012

04 May

CAS Guest Lecture Series
Prof. Tilottamna Rajan, University of Western Ontario, Canada, 'The Future of Deconstruction'.

08 May

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Petya Slavova, 'The Soviet Type of Profession and its Local Deviations: a Comparative Study on Lawyers' Profession in Socialist Bulgaria and the USSR'

10 May

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Benedikt Eckhardt, 'Graeco-Roman Voluntary Associations as Social Systems'.

15 May

Advanced Academia Public Lecture:
Dr Vesselina Vachkova, 'The Byzantine Memories of Sofia'

17 May

Fellow Seminar:
Assoc. Prof. Miglena Nikolchina, 'The Humanism – Antihumanism Divide: the Concept of "Man" between the End of World War II and the Fall of the Berlin Wall'.



31 May

Fellow Seminar:
Assoc. Prof. Tsvetelin Stepanov, 'Invading in/from the "Holy Land": Apocalyptic Metatext(s) and Sacred and/or Imagined Geography, 950–1200'.

June 2012

07 June

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Roumen Avramov, 'The Economics of the Revival Process'.



14 June

Fellow Seminar:
Dr Dmitry Birjukov, 'The Doctrine of Universals as a Factor of Self-Identity of Intellectual Culture of Byzantium'.



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