



ANNUAL REPORT ACADEMIC YEAR 2019–2020

New Europe College –
Institute for Advanced Study

www.nec.ro



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A Word to Our Readers


Dear Reader,

The round gravel plaza in the NEC garden, which you can see on the title page, is usually the meeting place for NEC Fellows, guests and staff. This spring, the square had to remain empty: 'Corona' has hit us hard. The necessary contact restrictions affect an institute like ours at heart: direct encounter, conversation, joint reflection and exchange are the essence of life at the Institute. As one might expect, the pandemic caused inconveniences and anxieties: international colloquia had to be cancelled or postponed (but until when?), Fellows needed advice and support, etc. But even under the changed conditions we tried to keep up morals and preserve essential elements. While the Fellows stayed in their apartments and the staff worked mostly from home, the internal seminars were resumed as quickly as possible (on 29 April 2020) and carried out using digital technology (zoom.us). The results were surprisingly positive – but of course we still hope to be able to establish contact with and between the Fellows in the coming academic year without such technical aids.

The interruption by COVID19 was felt all the more strongly because the semester had begun very lively and with several large events, as you will find documented in the following pages.



NEC seminar on zoom.us, 29 April 2020



CHRISTINE DE PIZAN, *Epistre of Otbea*
1400-1401

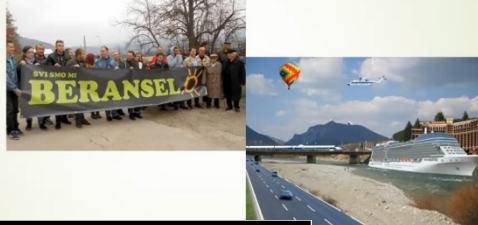
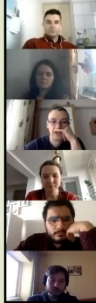
formula: four verses + explicative
glosse + interpretative allegory

Text number 16

Do not try to resemble
Narcissus, by expressing
immoderate pride.
A daring knight lacks many
graces.



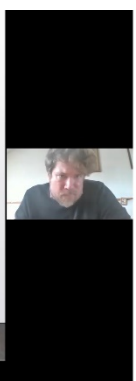
Political Embodiment


1.4 Bipartite structure of Cistercian estates

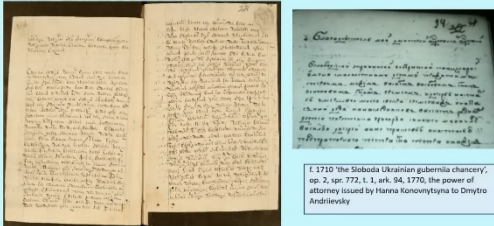
grange farms VS tenanted lands

- manor > grange > monastery
- centrally located or dispersed farms
- with - large croplands (100-300ha)
- precincts and building complexes
- topographic separation from villages
- their number per estate varies (5-10)




Sources

The Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Kyiv



1725 'the Kharkiv regimental chancery', op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 21.2v-22, 1744, the debates of the advocates Semen Antonov and Ivan Zakornytsky

1710 'the Stoboda Ukrainian gubernia chancery', sp. 2, spr. 772, l. 1, ark. 94, 1770, the power of attorney issued by Hanna Konovnytsyna to Dmytro Andrievsky



NEC 25 Anniversary Series

Speech given by NEC Rector Valentina Sandu-Dediu

15 November 2019

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

When my colleagues at NEC and I were thinking about celebrating a quarter century of existence in several episodes, one of the reasons was precisely the diversity, the plurality of opinions and types of projects and programs that have been – and still are – characteristic of the history of the institution. So let us remember this year's festive moments together.

The first episode of 2019's NEC events, on 26 January, celebrated the signing of the official birth act of the New Europe Foundation (when the institution was granted legal personality by the Sector 1 Law Court in Bucharest). On that day, when Bucharest had turned into an icy winter land under the impact of an unusual kind of ice storm, we sneaked onto Plantelor Street with difficulty. Access was blocked by fallen posts and wires, but this did not stand in the way of the enthusiastic opening of our series of festive events. Staff members, current fellows and alumni, friends and guests all met for an afternoon of warm words addressed to the institution, accompanied by a musical interlude.

Historian Edhem Eldem's speech, on April 12 – the second episode –, reminded us of the role of symbolical bridges between East and West, of the kind, we like to believe, our own Bucharest institute is. The European model thus initially represented the horizon we intensely looked over in putting NEC projects together. Then the institution won a privileged place in the Black Sea and Balkan regions, through regional programs targeting researchers from these geographical areas (scholarship programs entitled Black Sea Link, Pontica Magna, Europe next to Europe).



Valentina Sandu-Dediu giving her inaugural address at the fourth public event within the NEC 25 Anniversary Series, 15 November 2019

Thus, on 26 January, music by Robert Schumann, but also by Dan Dediu was being performed here, and on 12 April we were talking about an old text, the *Alexander Romance*, and the possible

linkages of this Ottoman text to earlier versions of the story, be they ‘western’ or ‘eastern.’ On both occasions we spoke about NEC, about its defining principles and its community of alumni, about the institution’s staff, my colleagues.

The third episode looked even more closely at the founding idea of our institution, defined by Andrei Pleșu in the early 1990s: to bring Romania into Europe, and Europe into Romania. The guests of the third event (on 31 May) represented two institutions to which NEC’s past, present and, we hope, future is linked: Dieter Grimm from Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and Dirk Lehmkuhl from the University of Sankt Gallen. They talked about *Liberal Democracy under Pressure; European and Domestic Issues*, in a panel moderated by Andrei Pleșu.

We now reach the final episode, for which I contacted another NEC friend. Edhem Eldem, Dieter Grimm and Dirk Lehmkuhl know the institution from within its academic or administrative boards. His Excellency Emil Hurezeanu, Ambassador of Romania in Germany, is also part of the Administrative Board of the New Europe Foundation. Beyond any information I might be able to offer you regarding his personality, all totally useless in the case of such a celebrity, I resort to my ‘madeleine’: I always associate his name with some poignant memories from my teenage years. I used to listen to my father and grandfather commenting – in a passionate, if clandestine, manner – on Emil Hurezeanu’s Radio Free Europe broadcasts in the 1980s. This is why I automatically associate his name with the theme of Enescu’s *Rhapsody No. 1*, the station’s musical logo, but also the *Rhapsody No. 2* theme which the signal of the program *Realitatea românească (Romanian Reality)* comes from. I have recently found the same symbolic connection in a totally different context. The Gera Philharmonic has initiated a courageous project of promoting Romanian music in Germany, one of the concerts being framed by both Rhapsodies by Enescu. The October program contained a text by Ambassador Emil Hurezeanu, from which I will take the liberty to cite a fragment: ‘Romania is not the first economic power in Europe, but it is a country with a convincing and lively cultural life, with an inspiring cultural landscape. Culture is not our secret weapon, but our great and public strength.’

I would like to thank Mr. Hurezeanu very warmly for accepting to close our series of NEC 25 events and I will let Andrei Pleșu, who is infinitely more entitled than I am, to take over these introductory remarks.



HE Ambassador Emil Hurezeanu speaking on *The Invisible Heroes*, 15 November 2019

CURRENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

NEC Fellowships (since 1994)

At its foundation in 1994 NEC was offering up to ten fellowships to young Romanian scholars. This program represented its core and still does, while developing in time two branches, which have distinct sources of funding: the *International Fellowships*, enjoying the financial support of NEC's institutional sponsors, complemented through funds resulting from an award given by UEFISCDI, the Romanian Executive Agency for Funding Higher Education, Development and Innovation; and *Stefan Odobleja Fellowships* (since 2008), targeting young Romanian researchers, supported by UEFISCDI. The fellows are chosen by the NEC international Academic Advisory Board for the duration of one academic year or one term. They gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research and participate in all the scientific events organised by NEC. The fellows receive a monthly stipend and are given the opportunity of a research trip abroad, at a university or research institute of their choice. At the end of their stay, the Fellows submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the New Europe College Yearbooks.

The Pontica Magna Fellowships (since 2015)

This program, supported by the VolkswagenStiftung (Germany), invites young researchers, media professionals, writers and artists from the countries around the Black Sea, but also beyond it (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine), for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College. Besides hosting fellows, NEC organizes within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of this region. In the framework of this program, NEC offers alumni of the *Black Sea Link* and *Pontica Magna* Fellowship programs the opportunity to apply for a research stay of one or two months in Bucharest. The stay should enable successful applicants to refresh their research experience at NEC, to reconnect with former contacts, and to establish new connections with current fellows.

The Gerda Henkel Fellowships (since 2017)

This program, developed with the support of Gerda Henkel Stiftung (Germany), invites young researchers and academics working in the fields of humanities and social sciences (in particular archaeology, art history, historical islamic studies, history, history of law, history of science, prehistory and early history) from Afghanistan, Belarus, China (only Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

'How to Teach Europe' Fellowships (since 2017)

This pilot program, supported by the Robert Bosch and Porticus Foundations, introduced a new and innovative fellowship module at the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia and at NEC, focused on the intersection of scholarly research and higher education. Its aim was to identify and bring together bright and motivated young and established academics from South-Eastern Europe, ready to dedicate themselves for a certain amount of time to research work oriented toward a specific goal: to lend the state-of-the-art theories and methodologies in the humanities and social sciences a pan-European and/or global dimension, and to apply these findings in higher education and in the transmission of knowledge to wider audiences. For this program, six excellent researchers were selected and, over the course of three years, edited their current research for dissemination to students. Results can be found on the website <https://research-to-teach.eu>.

The Spiru Haret Fellowships (since 2017)

The *Spiru Haret* Fellowship Program targets young Romanian researchers/academics in the humanities and social sciences whose projects address questions relating to migration, displacement, diaspora. Candidates are expected to focus on Romanian cases seen in a larger historical, geographical and political context, in thus broadening our understanding of contemporary developments. Such aspects as transnational mobility, the development of communication technologies and of digitization, public policies on migration, ways of employing transnational communities, migrant routes, the migrants' remittances and entrepreneurial capital can be taken into account. NEC also welcomes projects which look at cultural phenomena (in literature, visual arts, music etc.) related to migration and diaspora. The program is financed through a grant from UEFISCDI.

The Lapedatu Fellowships (since 2018)

This program is supported by the *Lapedatu* Foundation, which supports research activities on 'the life and work of Lapedatu family members and the socio-cultural and political context' in which they lived. Thanks to its generous financial contribution, NEC invites to Bucharest scholars who present scientific papers and initiate debates on Romanian and Southeastern European history in modern and contemporary times.

Landis & Gyr Fellowships (since 2000)

Studio residences for visual artists, writers and cultural critics in London, Berlin, Zug, Budapest and Bucharest [Förderung von Kulturschaffenden durch Atelierstipendien in den Bereichen Visuelle Kunst, Literatur, Kulturkritik] are offered by Landis & Gyr Stiftung (Zug, Switzerland). Landis & Gyr Foundation, one of the main supporters of NEC since its inception, has the use of one of the apartments on the NEC premises, where recipients of a grant offered by the Foundation are hosted. They work on their books or projects, give at the NEC public presentations of their current work, and are welcome to take part in all our activities.

Luxury, Fashion and Social Status in Early Modern South-Eastern Europe - ERC Consolidator Grant (2015-2020)

This ERC Consolidator Project, coordinated by Dr Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu as Principal Investigator and conducted by an international team of historians, aims to investigate the Christian elites of Ottoman-dominated Europe in the Early Modern period (17th to 19th centuries) from several perspectives, and to look at how they defined their social status and identity at the intersection of East and West.

Art Historiographies in Central and Eastern Europe. An Inquiry from the Perspective of Entangled Histories - ERC Starting Grant (2018-2023)

This ERC Starting Grant (PI Dr Ada Hajdu) proposes a selective account of the art histories produced in present-day Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia between 1850 and 1950, from an entangled histories perspective. The team members look at the relationships between the art histories produced in these countries and the art histories produced in Western Europe. But more importantly, they propose to investigate how the art histories written in the countries mentioned above resonate with each other, either proposing conflicting interpretations of the past, or ignoring uncomfortable competing discourses.

In the following pages we will present an abstract of the seminar presentations given, during the Wednesday seminars, by our fellows, researchers and academic guests.



Nadezhda
ALEXANDROVA
(Bulgaria)



Bojan BAÇA
(Montenegro)



Selina Nadine
BEGHETO
(Switzerland)

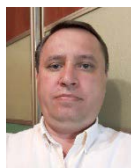


Alexandru
BEJINARIU
(Romania)

Nadiia BUREIKO
(Ukraine)



Igor CAȘU
(Moldova)



Măriuca Oana
CONSTANTIN
(Romania)



Călin
COTOI
(Romania)



Andrei CUȘCO
(Moldova)



László FERENCZI
(Hungary)



Nora
GEVORGYAN
(Armenia)

Adrian GRAMA
(Romania)



Idrir IDRIZI
(Albania)



Alexandra-Elena
ILINA
(Romania)



Răzvan IOAN
(Romania)



Anamaria IUGA
(Romania)



Aleh IVANOU
(Belarus)



Merk KOÇAK
(Turkey)



Volodymyr
KULIKOV
(Ukraine)



Jonathan
LARCHER
(France)



Nilay KILINÇ
(Turkey)



Patrick
LAVIOLETTE
(Canada)



Georgi
NIAGOLOV
(Bulgaria)



Svitlana
POTAPENKO
(Ukraine)



Andrei
SORESCU
(Romania)



Olga ȘTEFAN
(Switzerland)



Giuseppe
TATTEO
(Italy)



Leyla SAFTA-
ZECHERIA
(Romania)



Cătălina TESĂR
(Romania)



Evgeny TROITSKY
(Russia)



Salome
TSOPURASHVILI
(Georgia)

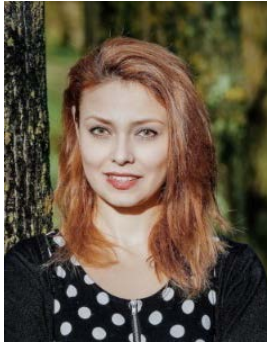


Maria Alexandra
VOIVOZEANU
(Romania)



Nikolai VUKOV
(Bulgaria)

Andrei Răzvan
VOINEA
(Romania)



**‘RAISED IN GERMANY, DEPORTED TO
TURKEY’: EURO-TURKS’ NARRATIVES OF
‘DOUBLE-TRAUMA’ AND SELF-HEALING**

Nilay KILINÇ
(Turkey)

October – November 2019

Pontica Magna Returning Fellow
Researcher, Istanbul

Presentation on 9 October 2019

The proposed research project grounds itself on a previously-conducted empirical research which explored the Turkish-German second generation’s post-deportation lives in Turkey – specifically in the tourism hub of Antalya – in relation to their social integration and psychosocial wellbeing as counter-diasporic subjects who experience stigmatization and exclusion by their co-nationals and, also as ex-criminals who have brought their traumas related to social discrimination, being neglected by their parents, ethnic communities or authorities, anxieties related to identity crisis and moral grounds, and imprisonment experiences in Germany.

The overarching research question is in what ways does a tourism place enable social and economic integration for the deported second-generation Turkish migrants from Germany? My broader goal is to raise the question of ‘who are the people’ in a modern democratic nation-state, and how acquiring or dispossessing citizenship of this nation-state affect an individual’s sense of belonging to the wider society, issues which call attention to the further issues of social inclusion/exclusion, integration and democratic participation.

**THE BECOMING ARCHIVE OF VERNACULAR
VIDEOS. PROVISIONAL LESSONS FROM
FIELDWORK IN ROMANIA**

Jonathan LARCHER
(France)

October 2009 – July 2020

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow
Lecturer, Nanterre University, Paris

Presentation on 16 October 2019

As part of this postdoctoral fellowship, I propose to carry out a survey that focuses particularly on a set of video images that, until now, have been held at the margins of the field of cinematographic and audio-visual studies, in particular those of Eastern Europe.

By combining the methods of ethnography, visual anthropology, and oral history, I will work on vernacular videos produced in rural and peri-urban areas of Romania, between 1990 and 2010.

By vernacular I mean domestic images, made amateurish and intended for family members only, and ‘family ordered films’ made by professionals for weddings, baptisms and funerals.

Through this research which focuses more specifically on the experience of women and rural and racialized populations (such as Roma/Gypsies), I wish to shed new light on the film and media practices that have emerged with the coming of democracy and capitalism in Romania.





**THUMB PIECE: REFLECTIONS ON BEGGING
AND SHARING WITHIN THE SUB-CULTURE OF
HITCHHIKING**

Patrick LAVIOLETTE

(Canada)

October 2019 – February 2020

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow
Visiting Scholar, University College London

Presentation on 23 October 2019

Inspired by and inspiring entire movements in literature and the arts, hitchhiking is more than a quirky and nearly extinct mobility genre. This fellowship shall allow me to complement my own ethnographic research material on this form of travel by uncovering its hermeneutic significance as found in travel writing and the 'mobilities turn' literature. The aim is to begin collating together material for a monograph based on data from over a decade's worth of field notes gathered from around Europe.

This fellowship would allow me to refine the ideas of several papers presented recently at various conferences/seminars and to follow up on an article dealing with the uses of autostop as an ethnographic methodology. The residency will thus permit me to explore some of hitchhiking's cultural narratives within the context of the English-speaking world and put this into a comparative, cross-cultural context which considers the phenomenon as it occurs in Benelux, Germany and the Baltics.

**NEGOTIATED DESERVINGNESS OF REFUGEE
STATUS AND RESETTLEMENT, RIGHTS:
UNHCR AS THE LEAD ACTOR IN CREATING
LEGAL GENDER CATEGORIES FOR QUEER
REFUGEES IN TURKEY**

Mert KOÇAK

(Turkey)

October 2019 – July 2020

Pontica Magna Fellow
PhD Candidate, Central European University,
Budapest

Presentation on 30 October 2020

This anthropological research aims to scrutinize how refugee governance of Turkey polices and controls not only sexuality and gender identity of queer refugees, but also sexualized and gendered belongings within a nation-state. Secondly, the research hopes to analyze UNHCR's role in constructing legal gender classifications by registering and resettling LGBTIQ refugees to a third country.

Queer migration literature gathered empirical evidence from countries with centralized asylum application in which UNHCR only plays the role of a mediator. Thus, the literature lacks the effect of UNHCR on establishing LGBTIQ as legal gender classifications. Since asylees can temporarily reside in Turkey (until they are registered and resettled to a third country by UNHCR, Turkey provides a unique opportunity to observe UNHCR's active role in establishing exclusionary practices of asylum application based on its own perception of gender identities of LGBTIQ.





FOOD RIOTS IN SOVIET MOLDAVIA (MARCH-JUNE 1946): TEXT, CONTEXT, AND AGENCY

Igor CAȘU
(Moldova)

October 2019 – July 2020

Pontica Magna Fellow
Lecturer, State University of Moldova, Chișinău

Presentation on 6 November 2019

The mainstream interpretation of postwar famine of 1946–1947 is that it was ‘organized’ by Stalin as genocide. In this project, I argue however for an interpretation that goes beyond the genocide/anti-genocide dispute that is excessively value ridden and biased. More exactly, I maintain that the Soviet postwar mass famine should be circumscribed into the Soviet model of modernization.

The pattern of food distribution in 1946–1947 followed the ideological commandments for attaining presumably higher aims as in the early 1930s famine. This is especially true in the Moldavian case, as the region was the only one not yet collectivized to experience mass starvation.

This project is based on new archival data disclosed recently in the Chișinău and Moscow archives and on contributions both empirical and conceptual made by Western historians in the years following the collapse of the USSR.

COMPETING INTERNATIONALISMS: INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN’S CAMPS IN ROMANIA’S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY DURING THE LATE COLD WAR (1960s-1980s)

Diana GEORGESCU
(Romania/Great Britain)

NEC Alumna
Fulbright Scholar 2019, Assistant Professor, School
of Slavonic and East European Studies, University
College London

Presentation, as guest, on 13 November 2019

This project is focused on a special form of soft power during the Cold War: international youth exchanges in and beyond the socialist camp during the 1960s to the 1980s.

Based on various archival and oral sources, the project aims to answer several research questions: ‘How was the project of socialist internationalism translated into practice in the Cold War, how was it experienced by children and adults in the everyday camp life?’ ‘What alternative pedagogies of internationalism did diverse leftist organizations bring to the camps and how were the resulting tensions negotiated in camp practice?’ ‘What were the constraints and possibilities of socialist internationalism in crossing national, cultural and geo-political borders?’ ‘What can youth exchanges tell us about the role and character of cultural diplomacy in Cold War international relations?’





**THE ART OF EXILE: GERMAN-SPEAKING
JEWISH REFUGEES IN NYC AND SHANGHAI**

Brian HAMAN
(Ireland/USA)

NEC Alumnus
Independent researcher

Presentation, as guest, on 20 November 2019

Brian Haman reflected on the condition of Jewish artists and their art in exile during the Second World War, in two completely different contexts, at two different corners of the world. His case studies were 'Portraits of Artists in Exile: Arthur Kaufmann' and 'Performing Marginality: WWII Austrian-Jewish Exile Theatre in Shanghai: Hans Schubert and Mark Siegelberg'.

Arthur Kaufmann was an avant-garde painter forced to leave Nazi Germany after being discharged from the Düsseldorf School of Applied Arts due to his 'non-Aryan' origin. Kaufmann left to the United States and became a celebrated portrait painter. 'The Intellectual Emigration' is one of his masterpieces, portraying the artists and scientists (Fred Dolbin, Albert Einstein, Otto Klemperer, Fritz Lang, Thomas Mann, etc.) who found refuge in America.

Half the globe away, Shanghai witnessed the influx of nearly 20,000 German-speaking Jews. Among these exiles were the Jewish-Austrian writers Hans Schubert and Mark Siegelberg. They authored and staged two dramas that discussed the topics of migration, exile, racial discrimination and salvation through art.

**THE MORAL ECONOMY OF TRADE AND THE
WORK OF HOPE IN A NEIGHBORHOOD OF
BUCHAREST**

Gergő PULAY
(Hungary)

NEC Alumnus
Postdoctoral Fellow, Max Planck Institute for Social
Anthropology, Halle/Saale

Presentation, as guest, on 27 November 2019

Gergő Pulay presented his ethnographic research in a stigmatized neighborhood in Bucharest. In this territory of marginality, poverty and stigma, the street is the setting where the anthropologist studies street life. The presenter explored several forms of solidarity established in the neighborhood, which is not a 'hidden community', but an intersection of actors involved in different global, regional or local networks. Yearning and hope for normal life are recurrent topics, as is making money and being economically successful.

Gergő Pulay focused on the links between marginality and the livelihood strategies with which inhabitants of the neighborhood – especially men who regularly hang out and make deals in the street – strive to create material and non-material value in their uncertain environments as a form of place-making. in the aftermath of the financial crisis.





**THE FUTURE OF MEMORY:
ART DURING HOLOCAUST**

Olga ȘTEFAN

(Switzerland/USA)

September – December 2019

Landis & Gyr Fellow

Independent curator and researcher

Presentation on 4 December 2019

‘The Future of Memory’ is a transnational platform for Holocaust remembrance in Romania and Moldova through art and media. For this platform I have produced films and exhibitions, a book, educational art workshops with high school students, panel discussions with survivors and historians, and other events.

In 2018, I continued developing the project by applying with a Romanian association, Uma Ed, for European funding to produce a documentary and develop additional educational workshops with high school students in Sighet and Mediaș. With the support of the Landis und Gyr Foundation, I will continue my research into long-forgotten artists that dealt with the topic of the Holocaust, and record some of the last survivors that have not yet been recorded.

For more details about this platform and other projects I have been involved in, please visit www.olgaistefan.wordpress.com.

**THE POLITICS OF THE CHURCH-BUILDING
INDUSTRY IN ROMANIA, 1990-2019**

Giuseppe TATEO

(Italy)

March – July 2019

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow

Independent researcher

Presentation on 11 December 2019

On 25 November 2018, Romanian Patriarch Daniel blessed the altar of the newly built national cathedral, namely the most impressive work ever realized in the country after the 1989 revolution. A controversial project for different reasons (location, name, public funding, architectural choices), the ‘Cathedral for the Salvation of the People’ was built in only eight years, although its history dates back to 1881. Surprisingly enough, the only historical account of it was published by the Romanian Patriarchate itself. Such an account is not satisfactory, for it fails to fully explain why the cathedral couldn’t be built until very recent times.

My research looks specifically at the first 50 years of the project, between 1881 and 1932 (when the less expensive renovation of the patriarchal cathedral shelved the idea of building a new one), and focuses on the secularizing forces that, de facto, postponed its realization in favor of other major works of public utility such as the construction of new schools. I argue that, on the one hand, the history of the national cathedral well illustrates an unexpected secular vitality in the Kingdom of Romania at the turn of the 20th century, while, on the other hand, it calls into question the role played by the state in funding the impressive church-building industry flourished after 1990.





**NARRATIVES OF SPACE. 'TRADITIONS'
BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN MEMORY**

Anamaria IUGA

(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow

Researcher, National Museum of the Romanian
Peasant, Bucharest

Presentation on 18 December 2019

The aim of this project is to approach the processes and phenomena which shape the written and oral dimensions of a local culture, in order to grasp a present meaning of traditions. The research is based on a fieldwork (2014–2017) dedicated to collecting local legends about space in communities from the northern area of Buzău County.

In Romanian ethnology there is still a fracture between classical folklore studies, that usually see local communities as exclusively oral ones, and the new ethnology influenced by anthropology, causing a difficult methodological integration of the former; the project aims to draw up an analysis model meant to integrate both approaches.

The theoretical frame will cover two topics: 1) the way the local memory is culturally transmitted through written and oral narratives, through the interaction between different generations; 2) the way the living memory becomes a distinctive field of the local memory, as it is filtered through the written culture.

**ARTICULATION, DISTRIBUTION AND
TRANSFERENCE OF EROTIC POWER IN THE
SOVIET ARTISTIC DOCUMENTARIES**

Salome TSOPURASHVILI

(Georgia)

October 2019 – February 2020

Pontica Magna Fellow

Lecturer, Institute for Gender Studies, Tbilisi State
University

Presentation on 8 January 2020

In the proposed project I am going to study and analyze the anatomy and the mechanisms of how erotic power is constructed and distributed in so called 'artistic documentaries' produced in the 1930s and 1940s.

In my research I will focus on the cinematic representations of the party leaders (and the party power in general) and their erotic dimension. I will argue that from 1930s to 1940s Stalin not only steps out from Lenin's shadow as a genuine leader of working class and subsequently of the Soviet Union, as it has been noted by Slavic scholars, but he also steps out and overshadows the eroticism which initially was embodied in Lenin's character in these films and from the end of 1930s was transferred to Stalin.

My argument is that if Stalin appears as a locus of heterosexual desire, Lenin first of all generates and evokes a homosexual one. I will try to contextualize this transference and rechanneling of desire in the light of 1930s homophobic stands and policies of the party.





**INVESTIGATIVE STATE MOURNING: STATE
RESPONSES TO THE BIOPOLITICAL
ENFORCEMENT OF NORMATIVE IDEALS OF
THE NUCLEAR FAMILY THROUGH ASYLUMS IN
ROMANIA AND IRELAND**

Leyla SAFTA-ZECHERIA
(Romania)
October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow
Researcher, West University Timișoara

Presentation on 15 January 2020

Starting from a recent series of criminal complaints launched by the Institute for the Research of the Crimes of Communism and the Memory of the Romanian Exile focusing on inhuman treatments committed during state socialism in care homes for disabled children, the proposed research project aims to look at how the judicialization of biopolitical practices has become ‘democratized’, thus transforming practices of transitional justice.

The alleged perpetrators of ‘crimes of Communism’ are no longer primarily party officials or secret service collaborators, but professionals ranging from cleaning staff to heads of children institutions, who are considered responsible for having let ‘unrecoverable’ disabled children die during state socialism.

Located at the intersection of transitional justice, biopolitics and humanitarianism, the project seeks to understand this recent transformation through an ethnographic, genealogical and epistemological approach.

**ALBANIA'S RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST
PARTIES AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS
IN THE THIRD WORLD AND WITH WESTERN
MARXIST-LENINIST SPLINTER GROUPS
DURING THE COLD WAR**

Idrit IDRIZI
(Albania)

October 2019 – February 2020

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow
University Assistant, Institute for Eastern European
History, University of Vienna

Presentation on 22 January 2020

The subject of this project is the almost completely unexplored relationship between Albania and the communist parties and revolutionary movements in the Third World, as well as with Western Marxist-Leninist factions during the Cold War.

The aim of my project is to analyze the conditions under which these relations developed, to reveal their goals, expectations and inspiration models and finally to assess how and why such global contacts were used in domestic and foreign propaganda by the Albanian regime.

The study explains the complex interactions between politics, ideology, propaganda, mentality, identity and culture as well as between national, regional and global contexts in the Cold War in the case of Albania. It is part of a postdoctoral thesis on interactions of internationalist tendencies of south-eastern European countries during the Cold War.





**THE TIME OF THE CHALICE: OF MARRIAGES,
ANCESTORS, AND SONS AMONG GYPSIES IN
TRANSYLVANIA**

Cătălina TESĂR

(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow

Researcher, National Museum of the Romanian
Peasant, Bucharest

Presentation on 29 January 2020

Ethnographic research among a Gypsy population from Transylvania, the Cortorari, provides me with insights for advancing the theorization of Gypsies' attitudes towards temporality, and the understanding of their survival as a group.

Contrary to other Romany people who are uninterested in the material world around them, and whose attitudes towards time are informed by a presentist orientation, the Cortorari convey a strong commitment to the ownership of some objects of wealth and status, namely the chalices. Practices related to the possession of chalices reveal a stance on time which accommodates pulls towards the past, the present, and the future.

Coming from the ancestors, chalices circulate as male heirlooms, and are central to practices of marriage. What is critical about chalices is that, on a temporal dimension, they secure permanence and immutability. I look at how different kinds of time, memory and historicity relate to each other and are weaved into the social reproduction of the group.

**CIVILIZING NATURE – HYDRAULIC EXPERTS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES IN THE
DANUBE DELTA IN THE 19TH AND 20TH
CENTURIES**

Constantin ARDELEANU

(Romania)

Long-Term Fellow at NEC &
Professor, The 'Lower Danube' University of Galați

Presentation on 5 February 2020

The presentation recounts the hydraulic works coordinated by Charles Hartley, the British engineer-in-chief appointed by the European Commission of the Danube to regulate navigation along the Maritime Danube. The paper covers three aspects that are usually relevant for the interactions between humans and rivers. The first is about the spatial dimension and the different spatial scales of river histories. It considers rivers as waterways, i.e. as transport infrastructures for people, goods and ideas. This makes rivers vital economic connectors, but they are also separators or dividers and oftentimes they delimitate geographical, political or economic spaces. The second frame is the temporal dimension of river biographies. Rivers are conceived as biological entities that have a life and a life story to be told. The third frame is about power and power relations in human–river interactions. Rivers have been interpreted as arenas where several kinds of power relations are being experienced. But human–river interactions also emerge as a power struggle in itself, with engineers trying to tame wild rivers and keep them under human control.





**CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONAL SECURITY
COMPLEX: EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION
(1992–2019)**

Evgeny TROITSKIY
(Russia)
February 2020

Pontica Magna Returning Fellow
Professor, Tomsk State University

Presentation on 12 February 2020

The post-Soviet Central Asia is widely recognized by academics and policy-makers as a distinct regional arena of international politics. The demand for knowledge on Central Asia stimulated the development of communities of experts with the competence in the international relations in this part of the world and in the transformations of Central Asian states and societies.

The main objective of this project is to discern the practices through which the national representations and constructions of post-Soviet Central Asia as an international region came into being and to trace out the implications of these practices for political decision-making and policy implementation.

The research seeks to look at the emergence and evolution of national communities of experts on Central Asia; to outline and analyze their shared beliefs and expectations about the object of their studies; to reveal the roles of epistemic communities in the national policies towards Central Asia and in the international interactions in and around the region.

**FROM WORDS TO DEEDS, FROM
METHODOLOGICAL INDIVIDUALISM TO THE
PRACTICE OF COLLECTIVIZATION**

Aleh IVANOU
(Belarus)

October 2019 – July 2020

Pontica Magna Fellow
Independent researcher

Presentation on 19 February 2020

I address the sphere of post-socialist agrarian transition and food policies, and focus on Belarus, aiming to elicit the role of potato (cultivated crop) behind the underdeveloped civil society and local community dominated by the state, and show prospects for public resistance.

I use for my guidance results of previous research on the societal role of potato and such-like staple food in Russia and elsewhere, but I also intend to bring the research edge forward by considering the role of governmental policies (in Belarus but possibly elsewhere) in establishing a close control over the distribution of certain food while retaining laxity regarding other products.

My research questions thus concern manifestations of 'food-induced' weakness of civil society and community, workings of specific governmental policies in food distribution, and prospects for public resistance. I expect to contribute to studies on authoritarianism, and post-Soviet transitology.





**ROMANIANS IN LOW SKILLED JOBS ABROAD:
RECRUITMENT INFRASTRUCTURES AND
EXPERIENCES OF PRECARITY**

Maria Alexandra VOIVOZEANU
(Romania)

October 2019 – September 2020

Spiru Haret Fellow
Independent researcher

Presentation on 26 February 2020

Through a comparative approach, I aim to explore the interplay between formal and informal actors within transnational recruitment of Romanian circular migrants. The hypothesis is that in more and more cases migration trajectories include a combination between departures mediated by informal actors (e.g. migration networks) and departures mediated by formal actors (e.g. specialized companies posting workers and recruitment agencies).

The project will compare (Romanian) migration in the construction sector in Germany with (Romanian) migration in the agricultural sector in Italy.

However, if the hypothesis will be disproved, and Romanian migrants depart for work abroad either turning to their social networks or to companies, I will explore the following questions: Are there differences in terms of social and human capital between migrants who turn to one of the two types of departures? Is the recruitment type influenced by the structure of the economic sector?

**SEEING LIKE A BANK: DEBT AND THE
CREDITWORTHINESS OF LATE SOCIALIST
EASTERN EUROPE**

Adrian GRAMA

(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ştefan Odobleja Fellow

Postdoctoral Fellow, Graduate School for East and
Southeast European Studies, Regensburg

Presentation on 4 March 2020

How did international banks assess the creditworthiness of the socialist states of Eastern Europe? Were macroeconomic data sufficient to value the financial reputation of communist governments? How did private lenders factor in politics in their country risk reports on the emergent East European market in sovereign borrowing? This project explores the changing metrics used by international banks to assess the creditworthiness of Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia from the 1970s to the 1990s.

I argue that the debt crisis of the early 1980s was a pivotal moment that pushed international banks (often in conjunction with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) to factor ongoing economic and political reform into their evaluations of creditworthiness. This language of social change, I show, expressed at one and the same time the increased supervisory role assumed by the IMF and the banks' loss of confidence in 'totalitarianism' as a guarantee of Eastern Europe's financial reputation, with consequences for the ways in which the post-socialist transition was understood by financial markets.





**HOUSING THE WORKERS IN EARLY STATE
SOCIALISM: BUCHAREST AND THE
CONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRST HOUSING
PROJECTS (1945-1958)**

Răzvan VOINEA
(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow
Independent researcher

Presentation on 11 March 2020

My project investigates the 22 housing estate projects built between 1945 and 1958 by the communist regime in Bucharest in order to house the workers and represents the chronological continuation of my Ph.D. research which analyzed the social housing policies between 1908 and 1948. These 22 projects housed more than 30,000 inhabitants. As the topic is currently investigated by other scholars (especially architects), I will focus on the research of the social features of housing, less appealing for architects, but at the core of the housing question in all the former communist countries.

My PhD research concluded the failure of the social housing policies before 1945 in terms of the distribution of housing to the working class. I will use this as a hypothesis and investigate to what extent the new regime continued or corrected the previous housing policies. Consequently, the methodology investigates the intentions of the reformers, the means of construction and the distribution, together with the features of daily life in these new housing estates.

**THE JURISPRUDENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE.
BETWEEN CULTURAL DEFENSE AND GENDER
VIOLENCE**

Măriuca-Oana CONSTANTIN
(Romania)

October 2019 – September 2020

Spiru Haret Fellow

Lecturer, National University of Political Science
and Public Administration, Bucharest

Presentation on 29 April 2020

Is Europe equipped with the proper legal instruments and legal concepts to address its increasing cultural diversity? I look for answers in the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and in the jurisprudence of EU member states. When relevant, I include cases from the European Court of Human Rights. The research focuses on cultural identity defenses and national identity claims across Europe, and how their interplay reconfigures the protection of both minority and majority rights (when the latter allege to be vulnerable). The study aims to look into: the cultural defenses raised in litigation by minority members and the cases where states use constitutional identity arguments mirroring majority culture in front of supranational courts.

The research explores: (1) how Europe copes at judicial level (beyond policies) with both illiberal member states and illiberal minorities; (2) if liberal principles have the same interpretative role in relation to minority and majority culture, and (3) what values of shared European identity emerge from multicultural jurisprudence. This attempt requires a multidisciplinary approach (focusing primarily on law and moral philosophy).





**KNOWING THROUGH EMOTIONS.
BRENTANO'S GROUNDING OF ETHICS AND ITS
RELEVANCE FOR PHILOSOPHY**

Alexandru BEJINARIU
(Romania)
October 2018 – July 2019

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow
Research Assistant, Romanian Society for
Phenomenology, 'Alexandru Dragomir' Institute of
Philosophy

Presentation on 6 May 2020

My project investigates Brentano's method of one-step induction in his descriptive psychology with respect to its role for Husserl's establishing of phenomenology in *Logical Investigations*. In order to do this, I also approach the intricate transformations that took place in Brentano's thinking in his Viennese period between 1874 and 1895.

My main research hypothesis is that Brentano shifts from his early explicative method of empirical psychology (1874) similar to the inductive method of natural sciences, reaching only empirical generalizations to a method able to provide apodictic knowledge necessary for the founding of normative sciences such as ethics, aesthetics, or logic, without sacrificing the only source of knowledge Brentano accepts, namely intuitive experience.

Brentano's descriptive methodology is however problematic, and much needed clarifications can be gained by analyzing how Husserl appropriated and further developed it into his method of pure phenomenological description.

**NARCISSUS IN MEDIEVAL FRENCH
LITERATURE**

Alexandra–Elena ILINA
(Romania)
October 2018 – July 2019

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow
Lecturer, Faculty of Foreign Languages, University
of Bucharest

Presentation on 13 May 2020

This project aims to understand the role and influence of Narcissus in medieval French literature and iconography.

Understanding the attitudes that emerge from texts which often prove to be contradictory represents the first objective of the project. An analysis of the three types of narcissistic 'presence' in literature – direct, allusive, palimpsest – will enable us to establish the extent and features of the narcissistic corpus.

The research will also focus on the role played by Narcissus in the passage from lyrics to novel and in the story of the character. It will continue by questioning the role played by self-love and death in the construction of identity.

The last two objectives aim at the visual dimension of the myth: I will establish the features of the iconography of the character and the relationships it has with other iconographic series. The project will lead to an analysis of the dangerous beauty that manifests itself through Narcissus.





**PEDDLERS, PEASANTS, ICONS, ENGRAVINGS:
THE PORTRAIT OF THE RUSSIAN TSAR AND
ROMANIAN NATION-BUILDING, 1888 – 1916**

Andrei SORESCU

(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow

Independent researcher

Presentation on 20 May 2019

The project examines how, in late-nineteenth-century Romania, a subversive political object transformed the dynamics of nation-building. Brought in by Russian peddlers selling religious icons on transregional routes, engravings of the Russian Tsar in peasants' homes attracted the attention of political elites and catalyzed top-down attempts at nationalizing the peasant majority.

What happens when the masses are exposed to the 'wrong' symbols? How does the paraphernalia of a competing political project travel across borders? Is this necessarily the effect of deliberate subversion?

The project contends that approaches framing both national and imperial identity-building as self-contained processes must be put into dialogue with the bottom-up sensibilities of the trans-national, by recovering processes ignored or erased by national historiographies. Moreover, it represents the first step towards an examination of such processes beyond Romania, both in the Balkans and in the broader (global) Russian periphery.

**TOWARDS CRITICAL POSTSOCIALIST STUDIES:
FROM RESEARCH ON POST-SOCIALIST CIVIL
SOCIETY TO POSTSOCIALIST CIVIL SOCIETY
RESEARCH**

Bojan BAĆA

(Montenegro)

October 2019 – July 2020

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow

Ernst Mach Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for
Southeast European Studies, University of Graz

Presentation on 27 May 2020

The proposed project aims at postulating postsocialism as a critical standpoint and analytical lens akin to postcolonialism through which we can better understand structural changes in the nexus of polity–economy–society. It aims to theorize from the Global East by: firstly, understanding what post-socialist civil society actually is (instead of simply what it should be) through a comparative and multidimensional approach to post-socialist civil society (building) that goes beyond limitations of studying only individual attitudes and/or activities of non-governmental organizations; and secondly, providing new perspectives on civil society and social activism in the post-socialist space to explore new ways of conceptualizing civil society (building) and contentious politics that are relevant beyond post-socialist context(s). I argue that diachronic study of development of civil societies in the Global East – examined against the backdrop of tectonic, externally-sponsored institutional shifts in the polity and the economy – offers an unprecedented opportunity for theorizing not only about, but also from the 'postsocialist condition'





RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION AND IMMIGRATION IN SPINOZA'S POLITICAL TREATISE

Răzvan IOAN

(Romania)

October 2019 – July 2020

Ștefan Odobleja Fellow
Independent researcher

Presentation on 3 June 2020

We read and hear, on an almost daily basis, debates on the question of immigration, and on its influence on our lives. While contemporary philosophers are starting to address this topic, a historical frame of reference is, unfortunately, very often lacking.

This research project will address this gap in the literature by focusing on the philosophy of immigration in Early Modern Europe. It will do so through recourse to two major figures of the period, namely Machiavelli and Spinoza. While some scholarly literature addresses the connection between the two, a systematic study of their views on immigration is yet to be conducted.

The thesis is that the two are united by their inclusive attitude towards migrants, because both believe that the body politic can be greatly strengthened by the integration of foreigners. Nevertheless, this study will be sensitive to the fact that they are separated by more than a century of historical and philosophical developments.

LANDSCAPE IMPACT OF THE CISTERCIAN MONASTERIES IN MARGINAL EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

László FERENCZI

(Hungary)

October 2019 – July 2020

NEC UEFISCDI Award Fellow
Researcher, Association of Cultural Heritage
Managers, Budapest

Presentation on 10 June 2020

The proposed project will comparatively analyze a selection of well documented Cistercian estates in different marginal regions of Europe, in order to provide a better assessment of the long-term environmental impact of Cistercian land management in the medieval period.

An integrated analysis of historical data (estates records) and environmental/biophysical data (soil, geology, relief, woodland cover) will be carried out using GIS tools, to see how current landscape conditions link to patterns of medieval management.

Historical topographical data on the selected estates will be mapped and three aspects of Cistercian management, i.e. 1) manorial farms, 2) woodland, and 3) fishponds will be studied comparatively, reflecting on previous historical narratives, which emphasize the role of Cistercian agency in extensive woodland management (assarting, pasturing), in water management, as well as their expert knowledge in selecting more fertile lands.





**ON IDEOLOGICAL VIGILANCE, CHAPTERS
FROM THE CENSORSHIP OF (MINORITY
HUNGARIAN) CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN
ORADEA DURING THE 1970 AND 1980s.
PRESS, PHILHARMONIC, THEATER**

Zsuzsa PLAINER
(Romania)

NEC Alumna
Researcher, Romanian Institute for Researching
National Minorities, Cluj-Napoca

Presentation, as guest, on 17 June 2020

Interested in forms of censorship in communist Romania, the author studies the forms in which state authorities controlled the Hungarian and the Romanian theatrical sections in Oradea, during the 1980s. The institution, known as the Oradea State Theatre, was divided into two quasi-autonomous units: the Romanian theatre and the Hungarian theatre, the latter subordinated to the former, but with some institutional and financial autonomy.

Plays were controlled through similar mechanisms for both the Romanian and Hungarian sections. Rules were common, and so were the party bureaucrats ('censors'), who were appointed at national or local level. Some of them were Hungarians, many had a good command of Hungarian. The process started with compiling the repertoire according to prescribed criteria. Compiling the repertoire was itself a matter of negotiation/and or compromise between the party bureaucrats and the elite. After the repertoire got the approval, the rehearsals started. The last of them was called 'vizionare', was held in the presence of the censors, who could approve or ban the play.

**"INSTEAD OF MYSELF, I ENTRUST TO BE IN
THE COURT AND TO ATTEND...":
ATTORNEYS IN SLOBODA UKRAINE (1730s–
1830s)**

Svitlana POTAPENKO
(Ukraine)

October 209 – July 2020

Gerda Henkel Fellow

Researcher, 'M.S. Hrushevsky' Institute for the
Study of Ukrainian Archaeography and Sources,
Kyiv

Presentation on 24 June 2020

The project focuses on a professional group of attorneys in a border region of Sloboda Ukraine during the period when the local Ukrainian Cossack traditions were broken, and the imperial Russian bureaucratic mechanisms were introduced instead (1730s–1830s).

The goal is to examine the personal composition, social origins and career trajectories of the attorneys, as well as to analyze their strategies in court and in civil affairs. The profile of the clients is to be reconstructed, too. Special attention will be paid to juridical procedures (investigations, interrogations, court hearings and appeals).

The methodology includes methods from the social history, microhistory, history of everyday life, textual analysis and deconstruction. The project will be conducted on the broad basis of the archival sources explored in the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Kyiv.





**SURVIVING AS SMALL STATES BETWEEN
GLOBAL POWERS: ARMENIA ON THE
CROSSROADS OF THE EU AND THE EEU**

Nora GEVORGYAN

(Armenia)

March– July 2020

Pontica Magna Fellow

Associate Professor, Russian – Armenian (Slavonic)
University and Yerevan, Brusov State University of
Languages and Social Sciences

Presentation on 1 July 2020

Despite the fact that all states share the conception of sovereignty and autonomy, there are certain features that influence how small states operate in the international system and build their foreign policy priorities.

Having a limited set of human and material resources to proceed in the interaction with larger powers, small states needed to adopt particular strategies to ensure their survival, such as balancing or complementing. Focusing on Armenia as a case study, the issue of shaping its foreign policy in the rival environment of great powers is of particular interest and relevance especially in the context of the recent revolutionary events in this small landlocked country.

Thus, my primary goal during the fellowship will be to pursue research on the interplay between Armenia's Eurointegration and its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union, providing a thorough analysis of the implications of the Republic of Armenia's membership in the EEU on Armenia's European integration processes.



**Fellows in the 2019–2020
academic year
(citizenship)**

Albania	1
Armenia	1
Belarus	2
Bulgaria	3
Canada	1
France	1
Georgia	1
Hungary	1
Italy	1
Moldova	2
Montenegro	1
Romania	12
Russia	3
Switzerland	2
Turkey	2
Ukraine	3
Total	37



Periodization in the History of Art and Its Conundrums. How to Tackle Them in East-Central Europe

Report on the Second Seminar by Anca Oroveanu
25 November–3 December 2019

This was the [second seminar](#) in a series of three, organized with support from the Getty Foundation in the framework of their *Connecting Art Histories* initiative. The first one was held in May 2019, and featured in a previous report we presented. The seminar series addresses young scholars from Central and Eastern Europe, and our selection resulted in 16 participants from Austria, Bulgaria, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Ukraine. [The seminars](#), including 7 active days, are organized around three components:

- Discussions around key concepts related to the question of periodization
- Presentations of their projects by the young scholars selected in the program
- Talks given by guest speakers and by some of the consultants in the program

In deciding on the topics for the discussions around key concepts we were building on what appeared to us as being an already assured foundation provided by such discussions during the first seminar. The introduction and moderation of these discussions has been on both occasions the responsibility of the coordinator of the program and the Consultants, and they focused during this second seminar on *Master Narratives* (Anca Oroveanu), *Canons* (Edit András), *Style* (Ruxandra Demetrescu), *The Two Art Histories: The Museum and the University* (Cristian Nae and Mara Rațiu), and *Doing Feminist Art History and Curating Feminism(s). Feminist 'Inscriptions' in Art's Histories and the Politics of Display* (Edit András and Bojana Pejić). These introductions were intended to open and incite a larger discussion, with interventions from the young scholars and from the guest speakers present.



Introductory meeting to the Second Seminar, 25 November 2019

In each of the seminars 5–6 young scholars present their ongoing research. The topics ranged, during this seminar, from *Putting the Peripheral Centre Stage: Performing Modernism in Interbellum Bucharest* (Alexandra Chiriac), to *Shared Images of the Cold War: American Art in the Soviet Union* (Kirill Chunikhin), *The Structure of the Art Historical Time: A Kublerian Approach* (Ancuța Mortu),

Periodization and Stylistic Definition in the Art History of Early Modern Transylvania: The Case Study of Funeral Monuments (Dora Mérai), and *Semi-abstract Socialist Realism in Hungary – the Case of Gyula Hincz* (Barbara Dudás).

As in the first seminar, we had in this one as well several invited guest speakers. During their stays of various lengths, they were expected not only to give one or several talks, but to participate in the other events in the seminar, and to interact with the young researchers. Their talks addressed from various angles questions bearing directly or indirectly on the main topic of our seminar series.

The [guest speakers](#) and their topics were:

- Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, Frederick Marquand Professor of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University: *Dealing with Discomfort: Reflections on the Practice of Periodization*

- Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, Associate Lecturer in Art History at Birkbeck College, University of London: *The Lure of the Ethnic Dress: Eastern Europe in Travellers' Gaze*

- Carmen Popescu, Professor of Architectural History at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Bretagne (Rennes): *Space Versus Time: Flattening History. An Architectural History Perspective*

- Matthew Rampley, Professor at the Art History Department of the Masaryk University in Brno, Principal Investigator in the ERC Advanced Grant project *Continuity/Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe 1918–1939*, hosted by the Masaryk University in Brno: *Aby Warburg and the Transhistorical Migration of Images*

It should be noted that Matthew Rampley was here on a double assignment: besides participating in our seminar and giving a talk within it, he was also invited to give the opening keynote speech at the conference organized by our colleagues involved in an ERC project coordinated by Ada Hajdu, *Art Historiographies in Central and Eastern Europe. An Inquiry from the Perspective of Entangled Histories*. Since the project in which this team is engaged intersects thematically and problematically with ours, we felt from the outset that synergies between the two projects hosted by the same institution would be profitable for both, and hosted over the weekend within our seminar, as an independent event, this conference, entitled *Questions of Periodization in the Art Historiographies of Central and Eastern Europe*.

In contradistinction to the other components of the seminar, the talks given by the invited guests were open to the public and gathered a large audience. As in the previous seminar, some of the Consultants offered to also give public talks. On this occasion such a talk was given by Ruxandra Demetrescu, who spoke about *Feminity/Feminism in Romanian Modern and Contemporary Art*.

Background literature for all the events mentioned above was posted in advance on a platform we set up for this seminar series, and made thus available to all the participants.

It has to be said that the presence of the guest speakers (as well as that of the consultants) was not conceived by us in terms of conventional teaching. While young, most of the participants in the seminars already defended their PhD, recently or less so, and some of them teach at a university. We conceived of the seminars as a common undertaking, as occasions for scholars of different generations and geographic provenance to reflect together on questions of interest around the central topic of the seminar series, with the more mature scholars acting as catalysts. Obviously, their prestige and experience made it almost unavoidable for them to be perceived as mentors, and this was especially evident during discussions around the presentations by the young scholars of their projects. Whatever the role the young scholars chose to attribute to the more mature ones, they all expressed enthusiasm in being able to have exchanges with them, and saw this possibility as a privilege.

As can be seen, the titles of the young scholars' projects, as well as those of the talks given by the guest speakers make for a wide array of topics addressed during the seminar, which functioned both centripetally and centrifugally with respect to the main topic our seminar series attempts to address. We tried to consolidate the centripetal effect through the discussions around key concepts, as well as through the way we structured the seminar as a whole.

Luxury, Fashion and Social Status in Early Modern South Eastern Europe (LuxFaSS)

Report on activities during the 2019–2020 academic year by PI Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu
ERC Consolidator Grant, 2015–2020

During the 2019–2020 academic year, the LuxFaSS project was implemented as scheduled. In December 2019 we co-organized, in cooperation with the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the ‘Nicolae Iorga’ Institute of the Romanian Academy, an [international conference](#) entitled *Between Empires: Circulation, Communication and Interaction (15th–21st centuries)*. The three conveners were Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Mária Pakucs, and Ovidiu Olar, all of them NEC alumni and the first two members in the LuxFaSS project. The aim of the conference was to break new grounds in the research on the circulation of people, objects and knowledge between empires, by fostering a discussion on how interaction and communication enable societal change.

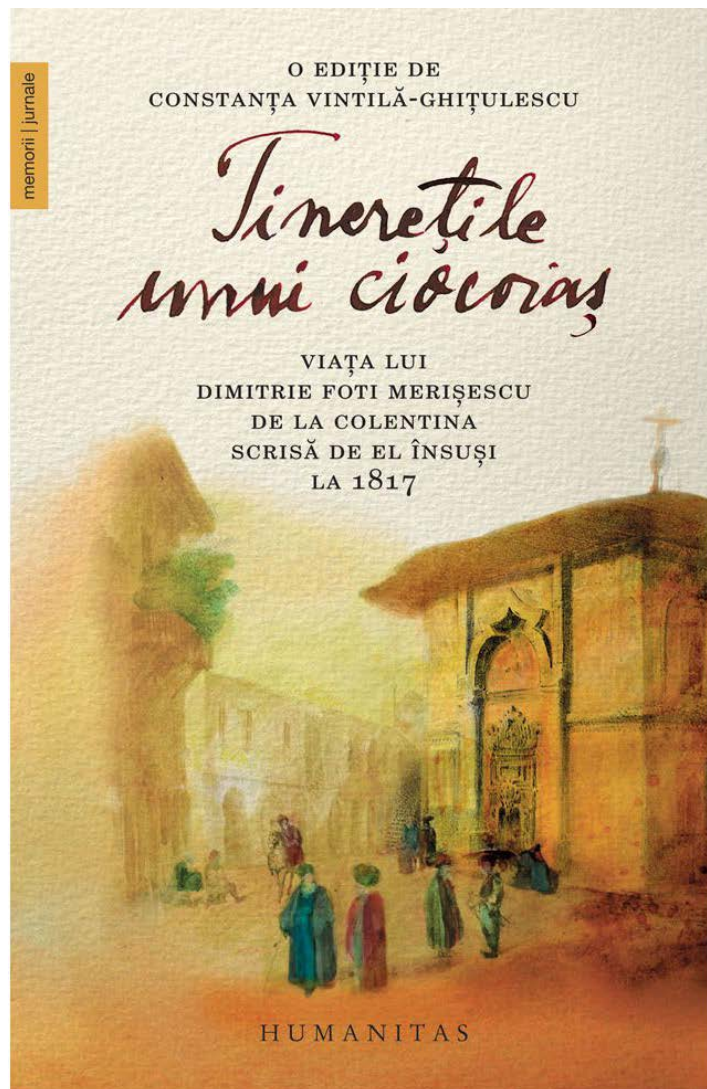
A similar initiative of the LuxFaSS team members was the organization of the [international workshop](#) *Trans-Imperial Matter(s): Human Mobilities, Local Communities and Material Objects in Early Modern Southeastern Europe*, scheduled at NEC for 14–15 May 2020 and postponed for the autumn months of 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. The workshop’s argument starts from the increasing historiographical interest in ‘go-betweenes and trans-imperial subjects’ and in the different ‘connected histories’ (global, imperial, transnational) that bound local communities to imperial centers and global flows of trade. However, a number of blind spots remain, both geographically and conceptually. On the one hand, the role of human mobility and inter-personal interactions in such analyses overshadows the role of inanimate objects, including raw materials, luxury objects and art pieces as establishing and defining the relationship between the local and the global. At the same time, it frequently ignores the fluid and changing nature of said objects and meaning ascribed to them by different interpretative communities, focusing on the perspective of the centers of power, thus reproducing the center-periphery dichotomies. These reciprocal interactions between human and material worlds on the move fueled the ongoing processes of negotiation, creation of meanings and reciprocal definition, influenced but not determined by imperial centers.

The workshop aims to bring together these different strands of scholarship by revisiting the circulation and transformation of objects – particularly luxury commodities and material symbols of status – from the vantage point of trans-imperial borderlands in early modern Southeastern Europe. Do flows of commodities, gifts and raw materials reinforce or subvert established notions of center-periphery distinctions? How did local communities adopt, adapt or reject material objects? Did the agency of local communities affect the objects themselves, transforming them both physically as well as discursively? In what ways these objects, in turn, served to construct, display and negotiate identities in a geographical space sandwiched between Habsburg, Ottoman, Russian, Venetian and Polish-Lithuanian imperial centers? In asking these questions, we intend to bring attention to multiple and frequently complex interactions between local, regional and imperial cultures through individuals, networks and objects that made them visible, recognizable and publicly accepted or contested.

Like the first one, this academic event will hopefully contribute to the dissemination of the team members’ research results to interested scholarly circles and will give a large visibility to the LuxFaSS project. During the past year all team members have succeeded to publish a large number of articles and presented their findings at international conferences and workshops. The publication of two special journal issues (*Chromos* and *Revista Istorică*) around material culture and social status is an important result of team collaboration.

Another relevant result of the project, with a large public visibility, was the publication of a critical edition of an early nineteenth century travel memoir: Dimitrie Foti Merișescu, *Viața lui Dimitrie Foti Merișescu de la Colentina*, edited by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2019. The

historical source was analyzed in an article by the PI (Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, 'I Believe in Stories'. The Journey of a Young Boyar from Bucharest to Istanbul in the Early Nineteenth Century, *Turcica*, vol. 50, 2019, pp. 285–317).



Merișescu, a young merchant/boyar born in Colentina (a suburb of Bucharest) of 'Greek' parents, travelled from Bucharest to Constantinople in various guises. The article explores this young man's initiation into both amorous and commercial liaisons, and also the manner in which he reinvents himself in the course of his journey, adopting new clothes and learning new languages. Two important hypotheses emerge from the analysis of these memoirs. The first hypothesis concerns the memoirs themselves, which are constructed in a different way from others in style, language, and behavior. The memoirs are the first testimony to the language and languages spoken in different social strata, and point to an active presence of 'Greeks' in the modelling of an education and a culture. With the help of language, Merișescu constructs a 'mobile' identity, maintained by a certain type of behavior and costume. The second hypothesis takes shape around the clientelary relations that connect this group, dominated by the figure of the merchant Ioan Hagi Moscu. Mobile due to the activities they pursue – as merchants, artisans, nannies – the 'Greeks' are bound together by a distinctive sort of solidarity. Travelling through the Ottoman Empire and its periphery (Wallachia and Moldavia), Merișescu always encounters Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs who are ready to help him. Their identity combines three elements: a common confession, a common language, and mobility.

Art Historiographies in Central and Eastern Europe. An Inquiry from the Perspective of Entangled Histories (ARTHCHEE)

Report on activities during the 2019–2020 academic year by PI Ada Hajdu
ERC Starting Grant, 2018–2023

Project description

Our [project](#) (ArtHistCEE StG-802700, 2018–2023) was funded by the European Research Council under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program, through its Starting Grants Scheme. The core members of the project are Ada Hajdu (Principal Investigator), Shona Kallestrup (Senior Researcher, also affiliated with University of St Andrews), Magda Kunińska (Senior Researcher, also affiliated with Jagiellonian University), and Mihnea Mihail (Research Assistant).

Our project proposes a fragmentary account of the art histories produced in Central and Eastern Europe in the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, from an entangled histories perspective. We are looking at the relationships between the art histories produced in the region and those produced in Western Europe. But more importantly, we are investigating how the art histories written in present-day Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia resonate with each other, either proposing conflicting interpretations of the past, or ignoring uncomfortable competing discourses. Central and Eastern European art historians did not simply replicate various theories, nor did they work independently of larger developments in the discipline. Therefore, our goal is constantly to relate their writings to the writings of other historians, from a non-hierarchical perspective. We focus on the period 1850–1950 because we are interested in how art history contributed to nation-building processes. Researching the conceptualization of a theoretical framework that can accommodate the artistic production of the past shows the difficulties of dealing with a complex reality without essentializing it along the lines of various political ideologies. We are focusing on two main issues: 1. How do Central and Eastern European art historians adopt, adapt and respond to theories and methodologies developed elsewhere? 2. What are the periodizations of art produced in Central and Eastern Europe; what are the strategies for conceptualizing local styles; and how was the concept of influence used in establishing hierarchical relationships? Analyzing the complex relationships between these art histories will question received knowledge about the region. But more importantly, it will contribute to a better understanding of the foundations and developments of art history as a discipline, and its transformations in a globalized world.

During 2019 and the first months of 2020 we opened two postdoctoral positions and hired the fifth and the sixth members of the team: Anna Adashinskaya, who graduated her PhD studies at the Central University in Budapest, and Cosmin Minea, who defended his PhD at the University of Birmingham. The competition for these positions brought to our attention the work of several very interesting young researchers, with whom we intend to collaborate, inviting them to the conferences that we plan to organize and/or possibly including them in our future collective volumes.

Project scientific activities

The project started in October 2018 with the core members. The first months were spent laying the basis of our future research, including significant amounts of reading of essential texts. **We** met via Skype on a regular basis, at least once a month, in order to discuss the advancement of our research and various administrative issues. These meetings via Skype alternated with team workshops in Bucharest, at NEC. Our first team workshop took place in November 2018, when Shona Kallestrup gave a public talk at the National Museum of Art as part of the series *Conferințele Ruxanda Beldiman*, on 8 November 2018. Her talk, ‘Word and Royal Image in the Children’s Tales of Queen Marie’, will be published in a Romanian cultural review (<http://secolul21.ro/arhive/2607>). In addition, Shona Kallestrup and Magda Kuninska were

invited at the Department of History and Theory of Art of the National University of Arts in Bucharest, where they gave two lectures for students.

We were extremely fortunate that NEC runs the research seminar *Periodization in the History of Art and its Conundrums. How to Tackle them in East-Central Europe*, coordinated by Prof. Anca Oroveanu and funded by The Getty Foundation through its *Connecting Art Histories* initiative, because its theme intersects with one of the central research topics of our project. All core members participated in both seminars that took place by now, the first one in May and the second one in November–December 2019. During the first session, Ada Hajdu and Mihnea Mihail presented the project to the participants to the seminar and to the NEC fellows, and, together with Shona Kallestrup, were actively involved in moderating some of the seminar’s thematic discussions.



Ada Hajdu introducing Matthew Rampley for his keynote address, 29 November 2019

As the theme of the *Periodization* seminar perfectly complements part of our project, we decided to organize our first international conference in Bucharest in direct connection to it. The conference took place on 29 November – 1 December 2019 at NEC and was entitled *Questions of Periodization in the Art Historiographies of Central and Eastern Europe*. As we suggested in the call for papers, the early stages of research by local historians into the art of Central and Eastern Europe went hand-in-hand with their gradual familiarization with Western art and art history. These two processes shaped each other, even if the relationship between them was asymmetric, with the search for what was local framed by the knowledge of what was Western. However, the periodizations developed by Western art historians encountered difficulties when applied to artistic production from Central and Eastern Europe. Art historians from these regions needed to refine, ignore or hybridize such periodizations, while still bearing in mind the West as a point of reference, and the desirability of maintaining the idea of a synchronous development with it. In the center-periphery paradigm, distance from the center equated temporal belatedness, and/or allowed for alternative periodizations. While the usefulness of periodizations in general has been questioned before, the established periodizations of Central and Eastern European art histories have not been systematically compared or criticized. Our conference aimed to address this issue, inviting proposals that critically investigate how the art historians writing in or about Central and Eastern Europe in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries used periodizations. We were interested in instances when established periodizations (Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque etc.) were

adapted, adopted or contested, as well as in cases when different, local or regional periodizations were proposed.

We selected 22 speakers and invited 3 keynotes, and the conference was attended by more than 80 people in the public: https://arthist.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ArtHistCEE_1_brosura_web.pdf. The keynote speakers were Matthew Rampley (Masaryk University, Brno, PI of the ERC project *Continuity and Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe, 1918–1939*), who questioned the relevance of the year 1918 as borderline between two phases in twentieth-century art, and Wojciech Bałus (Jagiellonian University, Kraków), who addressed the concepts of turning points, crises and evolutions in writing art history. Unfortunately, the third keynote speaker, Juliet Simpson (Coventry University), was not able to attend due to personal reasons. The 22 speakers came from 15 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, and the UK. Some of them addressed the national historiographies of their country of origin, others are Western scholars who work on the art and architecture of Eastern Europe; some of them are in the early stages of their career, other are established researchers. We believe that bringing all these researchers together was beneficial for all participants and attendants, including the members of the *Periodization* seminar, as the fruitful debates and the planned collaborations suggest.

The conference was reviewed by Julia Secklehner, who is researcher in the ERC project *Continuity and Rupture: Art and Architecture in Central Europe, 1918–1939*, and who also participates in the *Periodization* seminar, in [latest issue](#) of the open access *Journal of Art Historiography*, the most prestigious journal dedicated to art historiography. As a result of this conference we have prepared a book proposal for a collective volume for which we selected 15 papers, to be published with a leading academic publishing house.

Publications and conference participations

In addition to their contributions to the collective volume that will be published as a result of our conference, the team members also prepared several publications that are currently forthcoming or under review. Shona Kallestrup signed a contract with Peter Lang Publishing for a volume of collected essays in their series *Internationalism and the Arts* (series editor Grace Brockington), entitled *Nordic Design in Translation: the Circulation of Objects, Ideas and Practices*, that she is co-editing with Charlotte Ashby (Birkbeck). She will also contribute the introduction and a chapter entitled ‘Scandinavian-Romanian Connections c.1900: A Case Study of the International Dimensions of ‘National’ Art’. Shona will publish ‘*La femme du monde est difficilement la femme de son mari: The Artistic Collaboration of Carmen Sylva and Dora Hitz*’, a book chapter co-authored with Natalie Gutgesell, forthcoming in Ramona Mihăilă (ed.), *Carmen Sylva. A Cosmopolitan Touch of Royal Penning*, Addleton Academic Publishers, New York, 2020. She also published a book review of József Sisa, *Motherland and Progress. Hungarian Architecture and Design 1800–1900*, Birkhäuser, 2016 in Oxford University Press’s *Journal of Design History*.

Magda Kunińska is co-editing with Wojciech Bałus a collective volume that is currently under review at Routledge, provisionally entitled *Iconologies Between West and East: Local Diversities of the Method*, to which she contributed the introduction and the chapter ‘Zofia Ameisenowa, W. Heckscher and the “Genesis of Iconology” (Bonn 1964)’, while Ada Hajdu and Mihnea Mihail contributed the chapter ‘The Absence of Iconology in Romania. A Possible Answer’. Magda is also preparing the article ‘Identity Built on Myth. The Cracow School of Art History and its Relations to Vienna: Facts and Legends in the Discourse of the History of Art History’, which is currently under review at *Journal of Art Historiography*.

In addition to the conference that we organized with NEC and to our participation in the *Periodization* seminars, the team members took part in a total of 7 conferences and the project was also presented at 4 international events. For more details, please visit <https://arthist.ro/>.

How to Teach Europe

Fourth (final) international workshop within the 'How to Teach Europe' Fellowship Program
11–12 October 2019

In 2017, in partnership with the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS) in Sofia, NEC launched (with financial support for Porticus and the Robert Bosch Foundation) a Fellowship Program aiming to improve the quality of higher education in the social sciences and humanities and to enhance its public relevance. The Program started from the premise that gifted university professors from South-Eastern and Eastern Europe should be supported to turn their first-rate research into teaching. Six fellows were selected in this Program named 'How to Teach Europe', and in 2017–2019 they spent time at CAS and NEC to prepare new courses for students in their home institutions.

At the end of the program, after alternative workshops hosted in Sofia and Bucharest, the Fellows presented their work at NEC, on 11–12 October 2019. Romanian guests with experience in research and teaching and the Program's Steering Committee reviewed critically the syllabuses, which are available at the address <https://research-to-teach.eu/>. A short description of courses is provided below:

Nadezhda Alexandrova, Department of Bulgarian Literature, Faculty of Slavic Studies, Sofia University: 'Adventures with Emotions in Bulgarian Literature from the 18th and 19th Centuries'. The course aims to introduce BA students in Literature to a comparatively new field of study: history of emotions. Its scope includes research of the transfer of earlier ideas about emotions from Europe and the Mediterranean and investigation of the local adaptations of this transfer in premodern and modern Bulgarian culture.

Călin Cotoi, Department of Sociology, University of Bucharest: 'The History of the Social: Social Laboratories and Networks of Reform in Central and Eastern Europe'. Intended for MA students in Sociology, the course seeks to offer a meaningful 'history of the present', a history of the social, focused on Central and Eastern Europe, but as part of a larger European comparative and transnational approach.



Discussing fellows' syllabuses, 11 October 2019

Volodymyr Kulikov, Department of Humanities, Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv: 'Industrial Enterprise and Society in Modern Eastern Europe'. Intended for BA and MA students in Economic History, this course aims to discuss the main economic, social, technological, cultural, and political

changes in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Eastern Europe through the prism of business organization and entrepreneurship.

Georgi Niagolov, Department of English and American Studies, Sofia University: ‘Literary Elements / Learning Game’. The course proposes to use ‘Literary Elements’, a learning game, as an instrument designed to provide a safe and enjoyable platform for developing high reading competence through structured discussions of literary texts. When used in a formal learning environment, the game dismantles the inherent hierarchy between instructor and BA students in Literature, gives back the ownership of the reading process to the students, and challenges everyone to compete by the same rules.



Fellows' presentations, 11–12 October 2019



Nikolai Vukov, Department of Ethnology, Plovdiv University ‘Paisii Hilendarski’: ‘Communism as “Heritage”, Heritage as “Nostalgia”’. This course for BA students in Anthropology aims to introduce students to the various aspects of remembering and interpreting the communist period in Eastern Europe through the juxtaposition of the notions of ‘heritage’ and ‘nostalgia’.

EnviroCitizen. Citizen Science for Environmental Citizenship

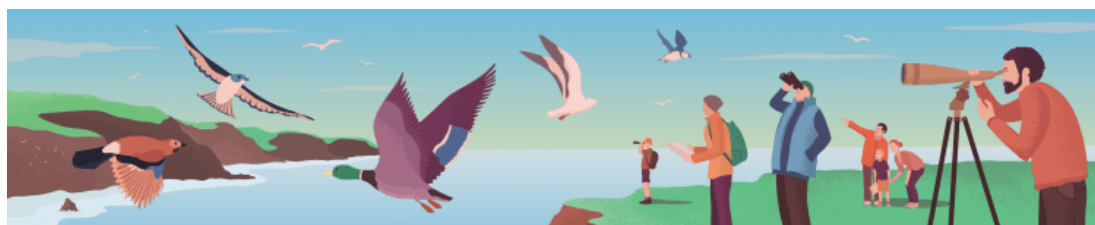
Official launch of the Horizon 2020 Project
2020–2023

On 2 April 2020, participants from seven research institutions in Norway, Sweden, Estonia, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, and Cyprus officially launched [EnviroCitizen](#). This is a Horizon 2020 project that aims to uncover the processes by which citizen scientists working in environmental-based activities can strengthen their environmental citizenship. NEC is one of the seven partners in the consortium, led by the main applicant, the University of Stavanger in Norway. Finn Arne Jørgensen, Professor of Environmental History, is Project Coordinator, while the NEC team is conducted by NEC alumnus Ștefan Dorondel.

The team will study birding activities, which hold great potential for developing environmental citizenship. The project aims to:

- assess the evolution of citizen involvement in citizen science birding activities;
- evaluate how citizens learn about and enact environmental citizenship through their citizen science birding activities;
- develop innovative community interventions designed to complement existing citizen science birding programs in order to cultivate environmental citizenship in the future.

As Professor Jørgensen stressed during [the inaugural meeting](#), ‘over the next 42 months, we will study how engagement in birding-related citizen science projects can make the participants into better environmental citizens. Supported by the European Horizon 2020 funding scheme, we bring together scholars from history, literature, anthropology, STS, education, biology, and ecology in order to gain a deeper understanding of the formation of environmental values and action. These are certainly interesting times to be launching a citizen science project of this type, where both we and the people we study and work with face new challenges. We all have to seek new forms of togetherness and find new ways to strengthen connections and communities at a distance, often through digital media. We don’t know how soon the situation will return to “normal”, assuming it ever does. These are times that cry out for engagement and citizenship.’



While many projects have stressed the scientific quality of citizen science activities, there has been less inquiry into the ‘citizen’ part of the phrase ‘citizen science’. EnviroCitizen proposes that the social capacity potential of citizen science extends to the very roots of what it means to be a citizen of the planet. Team members want to understand the ways in which citizen science involvement has been and could be in the future used to cultivate environmental citizenship, which encompasses new ways of thinking and acting in all aspects of life to promote environmental sustainability.

The team will create new knowledge and community interventions in six different languages and cultures across Europe through an ambitious multi-language school-based educational program and public engagement events to both increase participation in existing bird counting activities and raise environmental citizenship as a deliberate outcome of involvement in these activities.

Research Group ‘Reflections on the Political and Social History of the 18th and 19th Centuries’

GRIPs during the 2019–2020 academic year

Since 2009, several scholars meet at NEC each month to discuss topics on the political, social and cultural history of the 18th and 19th centuries from various theoretical and disciplinary perspectives. The members of this group and their guests are historians, political scientists, sociologists etc. who conduct research on different themes related to transformations and modernizations in the Romanian area or the Balkans. GRIPs' ambition is to establish a wider European and regional scientific network as well. GriPs is coordinated by NEC alumnae Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu and Silvia Marton. In the past academic year, GriPs hosted six meetings on the topics below:

24 October 2019 – *A Year after the Centenary*, a [roundtable](#) on the recently published book *Războiul de fiecare zi. Viața cotidiană în tranșee și în spatele frontului în Primul Război Mondial (1914-1919)* [Everyday Life in the Trenches and Behind the Frontline during WWI, 1914-1919, edited by NEC alumni Bogdan Popa and Radu Tudorancea (Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2018). Starting from this book, participants reviewed the historiographical production related to Romania's involvement in the First World War and the unification of 1918.



‘A Year after the Centenary’, 24 October 2019

11 November 2019 – *Universal Visions and National Ambitions: Reconfiguring the Concept of Civilization in Early Nineteenth-Century Southeastern Europe*. This [talk](#) by Alexandra Tipei, Fulbright Fellow in the Political Science Department of the University of Bucharest tracked how Balkan leaders employed a particular type of ‘civilization-speak’ between roughly 1800–1850. It compared and contrasted how they deployed the notion in different linguistic milieus – French, Modern Greek, and Romanian – and how they exploited it to further shifting political goals during a period of upheaval in the region.

16 January 2020 – *Ethnicity and Citizenship in the Old Kingdom (1900–1918). Case Studies and Prosopography*. Daniel Cain from the Institute of Southeast European Studies of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest [analyzed](#) the legislation and mechanisms which regulated granting citizenship to ‘foreigners’ in modern Romania.

20 February 2020 – *On Humor and Mockery in the 19th Century*. Eugen Istodor, Lecturer at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest [looked](#) at how and why the town of Mizil was mocked in 19th and early 20th centuries Romanian press.

'The Group for Anthropological Research and Debates'

GARD's activity in 2019–2020

GARD is a new research group at NEC focusing on contemporary anthropological research and theories and their larger relevance within the humanities and social sciences. Building on the continuous support for anthropology during NEC's existence through fellowships, workshops and conferences, this research group aims at offering a space for exchanges, debates, projects of anthropological relevance for all scholars interested in anthropological research on/in Romania and beyond. Benefiting from the multidisciplinary and international profile of NEC, inter-disciplinary exchange between anthropologists and other social scientists is strongly encouraged and anticipated. The group meets monthly, under a variety of formats including public talks, discussion of pre-circulated papers, film screenings, debates, and roundtable exchanges on newly published relevant books. While the group's range of topics and themes of interest is programmatically left as open as possible, further thematic and topical threads of discussion and research are expected to emerge during the first year of the group's existence.

This group is coordinated by Viorel Anăstăsoaie, NEC Alumnus, Librarian and Researcher at NEC. In the 2019–2020 GARD organized several events with support by a grant of the Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P3-3.6-H2020-2016-0018, within PNCDI III. A brief description is provided below:

9 October 2019 – [Film screening](#) of *The Chalice. Of Sons and Daughters*, a documentary directed by NEC Fellow Cătălina Tesăr. The screening was followed by a Q&A session with the film director. Discussions were coordinated by NEC Fellow Jonathan Larcher, Lecturer at Nanterre University in Paris. The documentary (whose production was supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation) follows the story of a Roma couple in their mid-20s, parents to a 5-year daughter, who are striving to conceive a son, in order to comply with the customs concerning the male inheritance of ancient chalices (golden cups). While the couple lives the stress and hassle of fertility checks and ultrasound exams, their respective families are disputing their rights in the chalice pledged when they arranged the couple's match.



'The Chalice. Of Sons and Daughters', 9 October 2020

13 November 2019 - *Enhancing the Inner Self: An Anthropology of Entrepreneurial Middle-Class Subjectivities in Contemporary Romania*. The [presentation](#) was given by NEC Alumnus Sorin Gog, Lecturer at the Department of Sociology of the 'Babeş-Bolyai' University in Cluj-Napoca. The talk focused on the booming field of personal and spiritual development programs that are becoming very popular within the emerging middle class from Romania. The guest analyzed the various forms of alternative spiritualities and their embedding in different professional fields in relation to the structural

transformation of the labor market taking place in Romania after the financial crisis. Research explored how these personal and spiritual development programs socialize a new type of self that emphasize creativity, resilience and reliance on an interiority that finds in itself all the resources needed to live a happy and productive life.



'Enhancing the Inner Self', 23 November 2019

27 November 2019 – *The Moral Economy of Trade and the Work of Hope in a Neighborhood of Bucharest*, a seminar presentation by Gergő Puly, NEC Alumnus and Postdoctoral Fellow, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale. A short description was made above, on page 11.

11–12 December 2019 – *Trends of Anthropological Research in the 21st Century*, a talk given by Dr. Mihály Sárkány from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Ethnology and a workshop on *Themes, Theories and Temporalities in Mihály Sárkány's Anthropological Research*. Viorel Anăstăsoaie, László Fosztó, Călin Goina, Csilla Könczei, Mihály Sárkány discussed the prodigious activity of Mihály Sárkány. Sárkány's main research fields are economic anthropology, peasant studies, the history and theories of sociocultural anthropology and the transformation of rural economy and society in Hungary and Africa. He was an invited professor at universities in Hungary, Romania and Germany. After 2000 he has also contributed to research programs and publications of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale.



'Trends of Anthropological Research', 11 December 2019

16 December 2019 - *Desire for a Stranger Master: Foreign Privatisations and National Humiliation in the Balkans*, a lecture by Ivan Rajković, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna, focusing on a Serbian car plant that has been privatized by FIAT. When they recall how the factory was managed in the past, local inhabitants appropriate the privatization into an ethno-theory of a self-destructive nation: one that threatens its own existence.

13 January 2020 – *Viktor Shklovsky, Bronislaw Malinowski, and the Invention of a Narrative Device: Implications for a History of Ethnographic Theory*, a talk by NEC Fellow Giuseppe Tatteo.

27 January 2020 – *Making and Unmaking neamuri. The Fairness of Kinship in a Romanian Village*, a talk given by NEC Alumnus Radu Umbreş, Assistant Professor, National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest.

10 February 2020 – *'The Grass Is Ripe When Little Bells Sound in the Grass.' Interdisciplinarity Research of the Cultural Landscape*, a talk given by NEC Fellow Anamaria Iuga, ethnologist at the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant in Bucharest and Cosmin Marius Ivaşcu, biologist Aquatim Timișoara. The presentation focused on the opportunities and challenges of interdisciplinary approach of the cultural landscape research, based on several researches conducted by larger interdisciplinary teams, in the regions of Transylvania, Bucovina and Maramureş. The speakers argued that interdisciplinary research is the most appropriate way of studying complex socio-ecological systems that are embedded in the concept of cultural landscapes.

24 February 2020 – *That's Enough About the Other: Founding Figures in the History of Anthropology*, a [talk](#) by Anna Grimshaw, Department of Anthropology, Emory University, Atlanta and NEC Fellow Patrick Laviolette, moderated by NEC Fellow Jonathan Larcher. Building on the constant academic interest in biography, this event explored the potentialities of the biographical genre in advancing how anthropology understands and re-writes its disciplinary history, as well as expands its capacity for representing individual lives in creative ways -- especially by drawing inspiration from documentary films.



'Historical Anthropology of Industrial Socialism in Romania', 9 March 2020

9 March 2020 – *Historical Anthropology of Industrial Socialism in Romania*, a [discussion](#) starting from the recently published volumes of NEC Alumna Alina Cucu (Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, Goldsmiths University of London) and NEC Fellow Adrian Grama (Postdoctoral Fellow, Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies, Regensburg), moderated by Ştefan Guga, an anthropologist at Expert Syndex Romania.

The Manifold Faces of the East

International colloquium

31 October – 2 November 2019

Organized in the frame of the research project PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2016-0628 (25/2017), financed by a grant from UEFISCDI, the [international colloquium](#) *The Manifold Faces of the East. Western Images of Eastern Christianity and Islam in the Second Half of the 16th Century* was convened by NEC Alumni Ionuț-Alexandru Tudorie and Daniel Benga and co-organized by NEC and the Institute for Research in the Humanities of the University of Bucharest.

The peace concluded in 1547 between the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire entailed the constant presence of German imperial diplomats to the Sublime Porte, which boosted the political, economic and cultural contacts between Europe and the Levant. Humanists, pastors, physicians, preachers and theologians would accompany the imperial legates and even remained with the ambassadors in Constantinople for several years. There were also individual cultural or religious initiatives to visit the region. From Constantinople, Western travelers often went on journeys or pilgrimages to Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. During their travels, or after their return from the East, they would describe the experience of their encounter with the other in diaries or travel descriptions.



Religious otherness is of key importance for the understanding of the relationships between different cultures and mentalities. The colloquium addressed the way in which the images of Eastern Christianity and Islam are constructed in the diaries and travel descriptions of Western Christians to the Ottoman Empire. The analyzed travelogues belong to clerics or diplomats pertaining to various European Christian cultures and denominations (Roman-Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Anglicans) and document the history of mentalities, religious otherness and the construction of cultural patterns.

The Western mental images of the Eastern Christians and Islam seem to be marked by prejudice, clichés and stereotypes. Participants in the workshop attempted to go beyond the structural approach to otherness, which is focused on social-cultural elements, and instead dwelled on religion and the investigation of the other's beliefs, as identity markers.

Thus, this timely investigation offered a substantially new contribution to the ongoing dialogue on religious identity and social integration. The research methodology employed concepts put forth by F. Hartog ('rhétorique de l'altérité'), R. Koselleck ('asymetrische Gegenbegriffe') or P. Burschel ('duale Grundmuster'), which were critically examined. Based on Tzvetan Todorov's typology of the relationships with the other, participants carried out research along three lines: praxeologically (closeness or distancing from a foreigner, delimitation or adaptation), axiologically (value judgments such as good/bad, attractive/unattractive) and epistemologically (knowledge/lack of knowledge, acquaintance/lack of acquaintance).

Several NEC alumni were among the participants: Marian Coman (University of Bucharest), Bogdan Tătaru-Cazaban (Institute for the History of Religions, Romanian Academy), and Ovidiu Olar (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften).

Making the Borders of Contemporary Ukraine

International workshop

5–6 December 2019

Among the states of Eastern Europe, Ukraine has one of the longest land borders, which it shares with seven other countries. These include three former Soviet republics (Russia, Belarus, Moldova) and four EU member states (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania). While its borders with these EU countries are clearly delineated, those Ukraine shared with its ex-Soviet neighbors have yet to be formally ratified. The porousness of these border regions became a real threat to the country's national security and sovereignty in 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea and granted its support to pro-Russian insurgencies across Eastern Ukraine.

This [workshop](#) discussed the historical context and differing perspectives surrounding the formation of Ukraine's contemporary borders. The origins of these borders lay in the Ukrainian national revolution of 1917–1920, when the nationalist government proclaimed Ukraine's independence from the fragmenting Russian Empire on 11 January 1918, establishing an independent foreign ministry and dispatching its own diplomatic missions abroad. While the new Ukrainian People's Republic had little control over its eastern border, it engaged in separate peace negotiations with the Central Powers. The resultant peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk recognized the People's Republic as a subject of international law while providing formal ratification to its western borders. However, Ukraine's government was short-lived and lacked both legitimacy and the necessary means of protecting its borders against Bolshevik Russia. This task was instead taken up by the government of Soviet Ukraine, established in March 1919. A new Ukrainian–Russian border was agreed upon that same month but remained in a state of continual fluctuation as the two states continued to engage in various limited territorial exchanges up until 1926. Ukraine's borders with Soviet Belarus and the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Republic were regarded as internal partitions within the Soviet Union that were often defined by the Communist leadership in Moscow.

Conversely, the country's western border came to be shaped by external military conflicts. While the borders of Eastern Europe's newly established nation-states and those of Soviet Ukraine were formally agreed upon by the international community in the aftermath of the First World War, they were very quickly challenged by competing political interests. The Soviet border with Poland, for example, was reconsidered by the Riga Peace Treaty of 1921 that put an end to the Polish–Soviet War, only to be redrawn again with the Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939. Following the Second World War, Ukraine's territory was further enlarged with parts of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transcarpathia. The latest alteration to Ukraine's borderline was the transfer of the Crimean oblast to Soviet Ukraine in 1954 that symbolically marked the 300th anniversary of the Pereiaslav Council of the Ukrainian Cossacks' decision to join the Russian Empire in 1654.

The workshop was convened by Olena Palko (Birkbeck College, University of London) and Constantin Ardeleanu (NEC / The 'Lower Danube' University of Galați) and was supported by a grant from the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe of the University of St. Gallen. The workshop is part of NEC's interest in the larger Black Sea region, which is visible in its *Pontica Magna* and *Gerda Henkel* Fellowship Programs and is linked to the *Ukrainian Regionalism. A Research Platform*, an initiative coordinated by Ulrich Schmid, Professor at the University of St. Gallen and a member of NEC's Academic Board.

NEC Alumnus Alexander Voronovici (Higher School of Economics, Moscow) and NEC Fellow Svitlana Potapenko (M.S. Hrushevsky Institute of Archaeology and Source Studies, Kyiv) also participated in the workshop. Keynote guest was Professor Georgiy Kasianov (Institute of History of Ukraine / National University 'Kyiv Mohyla Academy', Kyiv), who gave a talk on “‘The Good, The Bad and The Ugly’: Ukraine Between the ‘East’ and the ‘West’”.

re:constitution

11–14 February 2020

re:constitution is a [joint program](#) of the Berlin-based **Forum Transregionale Studien** (FTS) and **Democracy Reporting International** (DRI), funded by **Stiftung Mercator**. The Berlin-based FTS promotes the internationalization of research in the humanities and social sciences. The Forum provides researchers with resources and instruments to develop research ideas and projects, to build international research groups and networks, as well as to translate their questions and insights to different publics. DRI is a non-partisan, independent, not-for-profit organization registered in Berlin. DRI supports and engages people who are working to build, preserve and defend democratic and accountable institutions. DRI believes that institutions play a critical role. People make change, but institutions preserve it. In a polarized world, DRI helps local actors to protect and expand the democratic space that all share, independent of political opinions, religious beliefs or personal preferences. **Stiftung Mercator** is a private and independent foundation. Through its work it strives for a society characterized by openness to the world, solidarity and equal opportunities. In this context it concentrates on strengthening Europe; increasing the educational success of disadvantaged children and young people, especially those of migrant origin; improving the quality and impact of cultural education; measures addressing climate change and promoting science and the humanities.

The *re:constitution* program promotes exchange and debate between scholars and practitioners of law, as well as experts approaching the law from a social, empirical or historical dimension. It aims to create a European network for the discussion of views about the current state of European constitutionalism in order to contribute to an informed and fact-based public debate. In three modules – Fellowships, Seminars and Analysis – the program intends to inspire comprehensive discussion about and around questions of democracy and the rule of law and about the shifting political dynamics in Europe.

NEC hosted a meeting of the *re:constitution* group in February 2020, when three events were organized in Bucharest by the project’s coordinator, Prof. Christoph Möllers (Professor of Public Law and Legal Philosophy, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Permanent Fellow Wiko Berlin) and his assistants: Lisa Mertin, Dorit Modersitzki, and Lisa Moeller: the second meeting of the *re:constitution* Fellows, the first *re:constitution* Seminar (dedicated to the topic ‘Institutions of Judicial Independence’) and a [roundtable](#) entitled “‘Judicial Independence’ and the ‘Judicial Council Model’: Conformities, Convergence, Tensions. The round table was organized by NEC alumnus Bogdan Iancu (Associate Professor, University of Bucharest) and Christoph Möllers. The event brought together judges, magistrates, academics and members of the civil society, all stakeholders in the juridical system in Romania.



Roundtable within the *re:constitution* program, 13 February 2020

Other academic events

Eclecticism and Eclectic Philosophy in the 17th and 18th Centuries 4–5 November 2019

Organized by NEC Alumna Tinca Prunea-Bretonnet (University of Bucharest) and Sophie Roux (ENS, PSL University), this [workshop](#) aimed to examine the meaning and role of eclectic philosophy and eclecticism in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, up to V. Cousin's treatment of the eclectic method. Although eclectic philosophy was initially associated with autonomous judgment and freedom of thinking, the term 'eclecticism' came to be used in a pejorative way at least from Kant onward. However, central eclectic elements remained highly relevant up to the end of the eighteenth century. In order to shed new light on this approach, the conference adopted three complementary perspectives. First, participants analyzed the way in which both modern historians of philosophy, including J. Brucker, J.G. Walch, D. Diderot, and V. Cousin, and present-day scholars conceived of 'eclecticism' and 'eclectic philosophy' as historiographical categories. Second, they investigated how authors such as J.Ch. Sturm, Ch. Thomasius and the philosophers of the Berlin Academy, to name but a few, explicitly endorsed 'eclecticism' and 'eclectic philosophy' to characterize their own methodology, and to inquire about the origins of this methodology and its relationship to other related approaches. Third, they considered Kant's and Hegel's critiques of eclecticism and their impact on the Enlightenment, as well as post-Kantian assessments of the eclectic method. While focusing primarily on the German and French contexts, other regions were also analyzed in relation to eclecticism and eclectic approaches in natural philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, and methodology. Several relevant case studies were examined. Three NEC Alumni and Fellows participated at the workshop: Sorana Corneanu, Oana Matei and Alessandro Nannini, all from the University of Bucharest



'Eclecticism and Eclectic Philosophy', 5 November 2019

Elites and Their Music. Music and Music-Making in the 19th-Century South-Eastern Europe Salons 21–23 November 2019

A continuation of a previous event co-organized by NEC alumnus Nicolae Gheorghita, Professor of National University of Music in Bucharest, this [workshop](#) brought together numerous guests who presented a variety of papers on 19th century music and music making in Romania and the neighboring region. Keynote speaker was Phillip V. Bohlman, Ludwig Rosenberger Distinguished Service Professor in Jewish History in the Department of Music at the University of Chicago, where he is also Artistic Director of the New Budapest Orpheum Society, and he is Honorarprofessor at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. He took his MM and PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Illinois (1984). His research addresses issues at the intersections of music with race, nationalism, and colonial

encounter; the ontological and ethical dimensions of music; and the social agency of aesthetics and performance. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy.

At NEC Professor Bohlman spoke about “Balkan Borderlands” and “Transylvanian Transit”: Cabaret Topographies of East European Modernity’: The concept of the ‘cabaret’ grows from my work as both an ethnomusicologist and the Artistic Director of the cabaret ensemble, The New Budapest Orpheum Society. I employ the cabaret theoretically in this paper to examine the ways in which diverse musical repertoires from the Eastern Europe cohere in ways that allow us to rethink the ways in which music and geography interact to narrate modern history. Critical to the perspectives opened by theories of the cabaret are the musical juxtapositions of lived-in worlds on the stage, turning them inside-out. The boundaries between audience and performer – symbolically between actors and agents in history – blur and disappear. Musical performance becomes a mirror for historical action. Cabaret musical repertoires are particularly abundant across Eastern Europe. Metaphor emerges from musical border, for example, in the caesurae that form the hemistiches in Balkan epic. The borders of empire – Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Russian – have divided musical genres during the *longue durée* of encounter. Borders run through sacred music practices, for example, separating eastern and western Christianity no less than eastern and western Ashkenazi Jewish cultures. As my title indicates, Balkan borderlands are also sites of transit, in other words, the mobility that yields the extensive multiculturalism that defines regions, nations, and musics. Borders and transit converge in the cabaret practices I have pursued for over two decades. For my Bucharest talk, I draw upon the recordings of my own cabaret ensemble, especially as these echo the work of other colleagues gathering in Bucharest, allowing diverse musics to remap East European modernity. In so doing, I hope to expand my theory of the cabaret in critical new directions.



Professor Philipp V. Bohlman, 21 November 2019

**Alexandre Kojève. From Philosophical Anthropology to the Philosophy of History
21 February 2020**

Alexandre Kojève is best known as an expert in Hegel and the philosopher who, through the seminar he held at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris in the 1930s, introduced Hegelian thought into the French cultural space. However, his prodigious and multilayered work cannot be reduced to an exegetical commentary or to an ‘update’ of the Hegelian system. Equally interested in contemporary phenomenology and theoretical physics, in Eastern wisdom and political theory, Kojève proposed an original and radical reflection on the configurations of meaning that deeply articulate the contemporary world, a reflection that has deeply influenced, through different channels, the European intellectual landscape of the 20th century. Starting from the recent translations of some of his seminal works, the [workshop](#) aimed to explore the different horizons that his philosophical thinking opens and to subject the

major theses of his philosophy to a critical evaluation. The workshop was organized by NEC Fellow Adrian Grama and included several NEC alumni among the participants.



'Alexandre Kojève. From Philosophical Anthropology to the Philosophy of History', 21 February 2020

Revival of Islam in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan: Secularism versus Sharia

5 March 2020

The [talk](#) given by Altay Goyushov, Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin and Professor at Baku State University, tackled a very relevant topic: the revival of Islam in Azerbaijan.

A strong revival of Islam followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. Due to the lack of internal sources of knowledge, which had been wiped out during the Soviet rule, foreign actors played a powerful role in the process of revival. Thus, three major groups of practicing Muslims now dominate Islamic life in Azerbaijan. These are Twelver Shi'is who maintain strong spiritual ties with Iran, and to some extent with Iraq, via the powerful network of grand ayatollahs residing there, different Sunni groups connected to organizations and institutions in Turkey, and Salafis connected to various Arab Gulf States. However, the unexpected economic downturn since the late 2014, due to falling oil prices, corruption and mismanagement exposed the deep economic and political vulnerabilities of the existing system. In this situation the government has been challenged by rising political Islam. Diminishing space for the activities of civil society, independent media and secular opposition boosted opportunities especially for Shi'a Muslim groups to replace weakened democratic forces as the strongest voice of dissent. Yet, the secular nature of Azerbaijani society still remains relatively strong.



Altay Goyushov speaking at NEC, 5 March 2020

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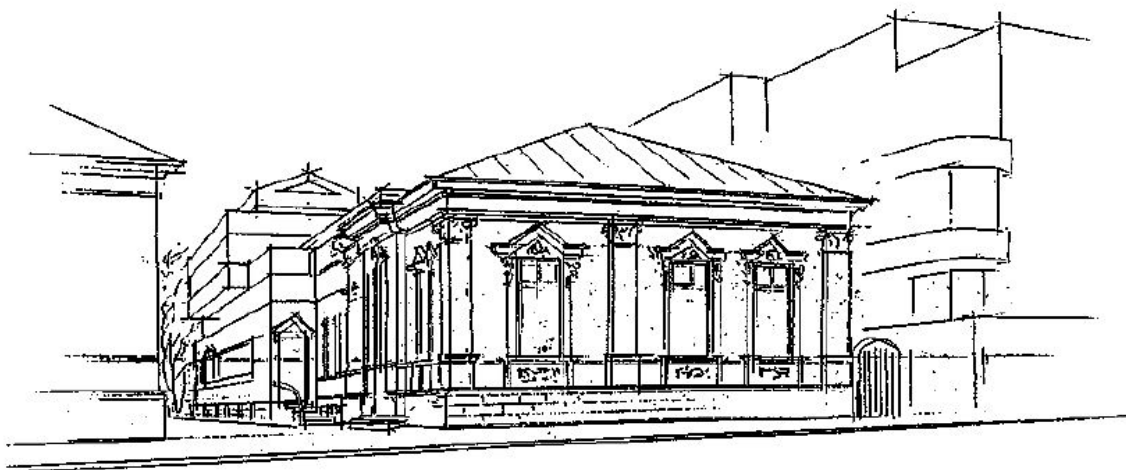
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