



University of California, Berkeley

ISSN 1536-4003

# Newsletter of the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies

Spring/Summer 2017  
Volume 34, Number 1

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## **Newsletter of the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies**

University of California, Berkeley  
Institute of Slavic, East European, and  
Eurasian Studies

260 Stephens Hall # 2304

Berkeley, CA 94720-2304

iseees@berkeley.edu

<http://iseees.berkeley.edu/>

Editor: Zachary Kelly

Subscriptions are free of charge.

Submit mailing changes, suggestions,  
corrections, or inquiries to the above  
address or call (510) 642-3230.

## Notes from the Director

As the 2016-17 academic year draws to a close, I think it's safe to look back on spring 2017 to see how ISEEES, in good *Stakhanovite* fashion, attempted to overfulfill the plan with interesting programming in a valiant attempt to keep up with demand for insight about our troubled and fascinating region.

The semester started with our Colin and Elsa Miller memorial lecture, this year by Leszek Balcerowicz, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the National Bank of Poland. Balcerowicz spoke on "bad transitions" after free elections—an economic and political retrospective on the last 25 years in East Central Europe.

In March, we hosted the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Berkeley-Stanford Conference on Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. This year's conference, titled "1917-2017: 100 Years Since the Russian Revolution," showcased talks by George Breslauer (Political Science, Berkeley); Elena Danielson (Hoover Library, Stanford); Gregory Freidin (Slavic Languages and Literatures, Stanford); Edward Kasinec (Hoover Institution, Stanford); Eric Naiman (Slavic Languages and Literatures, Berkeley); Bertrand M. Patenaude (Hoover Institution, Stanford); Harsha Ram (Slavic Languages and Literatures, Berkeley); Edward Walker (Berkeley Program in Eurasian and East European Studies); and Alexei Yurchak (Anthropology, Berkeley). As usual, the event featured a host of disciplinary perspectives, and lively discussion from a packed space in the Heyns Room at the Faculty Club. Our two institutions probably collaborate more closely and productively on questions of "our region" than any other two in North America.

This year's 17<sup>th</sup> annual Peter N. Kujachich Lecture in Serbian and Montenegrin Studies was given by our own Ronelle Alexander of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. Professor Alexander read a series of poems in the original Serbian (with translation) and invited us to think about the historical resonances that make them so powerful, "equipping" listeners to live "in a world in which people actually die." But she also convinced us that their beauty has to do with genius, both of identifiable authors, but also with the unknown bards who have sung the country's great legends over the centuries.

This year's talk was held on a sad note, however, as Peter Kujachich, one of our Institute's long-time benefactors, passed away in January.

During this spring semester we also held a speakers' series on current events in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia, including talks such as: "Everyone Loses: The Ukraine Crisis and the Ruinous Contest for Post-Soviet Eurasia," by Samuel Charap, International Institute for Strategic Studies; "What's Next for Romania?" by Paul Sum, University of North Dakota; "Russian Strategic Calculus in Using Military Power," by Michael Kofman, CNA Corporation and Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center; "Authoritarian Soft Power? Russia, International Cyber Conflict, and the Rise of 'Information Warfare'," by Jaclyn Kerr, Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; and "Why We Get Russia Wrong," by Robert English, University of Southern California.

Speaking of current events, ISEEEES is deeply concerned by recent events involving the Central European University in Budapest, with which ISEEEES has a five-year faculty and graduate student exchange.

A first regular conference between Berkeley and the CEU as part of the exchange was held in Budapest in late March and considered the history and current contradictions of the liberal political project and

its principal alternatives. Speakers from Berkeley included Jason Wittenberg (Political Science), Steve Fish (Political Science), Laura Jakli (Political Science), Edward Walker (Berkeley Program in Eurasian and East European Studies), Victoria Frede (History), and myself.

During our visit the Hungarian government announced plans to revise a higher education law in order to make the continued operation of the CEU in Budapest impossible. At a dinner at his residence Rector Michael Ignatieff and other CEU leaders impressed us with their absolute determination to protect academic freedom at their institution, one of the leading centers of post-graduate education in the social sciences on the planet. In this issue of the Newsletter we are printing first-hand accounts from Victoria Frede and Laura Jakli.

For information about upcoming events, please continue to visit our website and events calendar at <http://iseees.berkeley.edu/>; and please include Tuesday, September 12, 2017 on your calendar as the date of our annual ISEEEES fall reception. I look forward to seeing you at many of our future events.

John Connelly  
ISEEEES Director  
Professor of History

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## Campus Visitors

**Oscar Jonsson** is a Visiting Student Researcher with ISEEEES during the 2016-2017 academic year. Mr. Jonsson is currently a PhD candidate at King's College London. His current research interests are Russian strategy and warfare and the changing character of law. While at Berkeley, he will continue research on his doctoral thesis entitled "Warfare and Peace: The Russian Understanding of War."

**Nora Scholz** is a Visiting Scholar with ISEEEES during the Spring 2017 semester. Dr. Scholz is an affiliate of the Institute for Slavic Philology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. Her research interests focus on the 'fantastic' in literature, e.g. monsters, vampires, aliens. While at Berkeley, she will continue research on her project entitled "Monsters, Mages, Cripples, Saints in Russian Contemporary Literature: Nonmimetic Nonsense and/or Extended Ranges of Awareness."

**Adela Toplean** is a Visiting Scholar with ISEEEES during the Spring 2017 semester. Dr. Toplean is currently a lecturer in the Faculty of Letters at the University of Bucharest. She is also enrolled in the postdoctoral research program at the New Europe College, which has brought her to Berkeley for research. Her research interests include attitudes on death in contemporary Romania with a focus on the clash of spiritual and secular post-Communist practices. While at Berkeley, Dr. Toplean will pursue research on death studies, the sociology of death and dying, and thanatology.

# CEU - the view from the Raoul Wallenberg Guesthouse, Buda

**Victoria Frede**

Associate Professor, History, UC Berkeley

*Victoria Frede is on sabbatical for the academic year 2016-2017 at the Institute of Advanced Study, Budapest, which is affiliated with the Central European University. Her sabbatical was funded by fellowships from the Thyssen Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies.*

On 4 April 2017, the Hungarian National Assembly passed an amendment to the Higher Education Act, which quickly drew worldwide attention. Though the amendment applies to all Hungarian institutions of higher education, its central target is the Central European University, Hungary's most famous university. On 10 April 2017, the President of Hungary, János Áder signed the law into effect. Faculty and administrators at CEU had long expected difficulties from the Hungarian government. Rumors about the government's intentions to close the university had circulated for months, if not years. As a result, administrators had already begun to consult with lawyers concerning possible lines of defense—a difficult proposition in Hungary, where the authority of the courts has been undermined by the governing Fidesz Party. They had also begun to consider how to mobilize support from concerned academics around the world. The amendment and its passage did not come as a bolt from the blue.

By contrast, the strong national and international response in defense of CEU was unanticipated. As reflected in the concerns of the tens of thousands of Hungarians who attended demonstration in favor of the CEU, attempts to close the university have resonated, partly because local universities have already suffered numerous blows, including large cuts to funding, but also substantial administrative interference in their curricula and teaching. In the city of Budapest, civilians have been concerned by the government's reappropriation of state lands, including university buildings in Budapest. The manner in which legislation was drafted and rushed through the National Assembly in a matter of days, too, was viewed as a further sign of the erosion of Parliamentary independence. Last, but not least, the potential closure of the CEU is of symbolic significance in the midst of the crisis of the European Union itself. Though the University was founded with a private endowment by George Soros, and is accredited by the State of New York in the United States—as well as in Hungary—it receives extensive funding from grants by the European Union. Lecturers, students and staff include many Hungarians, but the University is largely admired for bringing academics from around the world to Budapest, for its high international standing and the energetic intellectual exchanges it encourages. The Fidesz-led attack on the CEU is viewed as part of a larger turn away from the European Union and toward Russia.

Nationally and internationally, academics have joined journalists in condemning and attempting to explain the Fidesz government's latest moves. Journalists in particular have represented it as a personal vendetta between Prime Minister

Viktor Orbán, once the recipient of a fellowship from the Soros Foundation, and George Soros himself. The many Nobel-prize winners, titled professors, institutes, and universities, by contrast, have largely represented the Hungarian government's measures against the University as an attack on academic freedom and academic integrity itself. Their addressees, Orbán and his allies, appear to dismiss these as empty phrases. Yet, the calls of academics around the world, like the agonized protests of Hungarians in Budapest, too, should be understood in a wider context. Appealing to government institutions, such as the Department of State in the US, or the European Commission in Brussels, academics are all too aware that their own governments have been cutting the budgets of universities, colleges, and research institutes. As higher education has become accepted as a commodity, these institutions are under pressure to train larger numbers of students, faster, and at less expense. Here, high-prestige institutions such as the CEU, are awkwardly positioned.

As academics abroad and in Budapest strain their eyes to read the writing on the wall, fears of budget cuts flow together with more serious concerns. The perilous future of academics in Turkey and the attempts to shutter European University in St. Petersburg come to mind. Both places grew nearer to Budapest in early April. Even Delhi, where faculty members at the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University have been pilloried as “anti-nationals”, appears closer.

In responding to the demonstrations and letters of protest that have poured in from around the world, representatives of the Hungarian government, including Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Human Resources Minister Zoltán Balog, have issued conflicting, often self-contradictory justificatory declarations. When they are on point, they assert that that policy on higher education is a sovereign matter, to be resolved by Hungarian voters and law-makers. Expert opinion is clearly unwelcome. Reassurances of the kind offered by Zoltán Balog, the Minister of Human Resources who proposed the original amendment to the Higher Education Act, do little to allay concern. “The Hungarian government is prepared to reach a constructive agreement. This aim is not served, however, by scaremongering and the spread of false statements regarding the imperilment of educational freedom. Such distortions may mobilize international academic opinion, but they do so while simultaneously misleading it.” Constructive dialogue is not the order of the day.

# Beyond Dichotomies: Rethinking the Liberal Agenda

## *The Future of the Central European University*

**Laura Jakli**

Graduate Student, Political Science, UC Berkeley

This past March, Central European University (CEU) welcomed me and a number of UC Berkeley colleagues for a workshop titled “Beyond Dichotomies: Rethinking the Liberal Agenda.” The roundtable discussions addressed various tensions within the liberal agenda—both in the context of its modern political and institutional alternatives as well as in consideration of post-communist and post-fascist legacies. Given the breadth of scholarly expertise represented at the workshop—ranging from historians to scholars of constitutional law to political scientists—the conversations spanned from nineteenth-century national liberalism to neoliberalism and the political actors that emerged following the global financial crisis of 2007-2008.

One substantive debate that emerged concerns the degree to which we *can* and *should* conceptually separate the ongoing retreat of liberalism from a retreat of democracy; is the European political momentum signaling the rise of illiberal democracy or, rather, an erosion of democracy in its entirety?

Another interrelated discussion concerns the concept of “open society”—how we do understand open society, and what are its limits? Edward Walker of UC Berkeley noted that liberalism was originally intended to ward off abuse of power by setting institutional constraints on it. As such, the “core” ideal of liberalism is agnostic to diversity. If so, where does liberalism stand with regard to open society?

Michael Ignatieff, Rector of the CEU, initiated an adjacent discussion about the (in)efficacy of the language of rights. More specifically, he questioned the degree to which scholars and EU policymakers are using the wrong frameworks by which to engage with citizens on the topic of open society. Perhaps, he suggested,

the concept would resonate if the abstract notion of rights was brought more in line with lived experiences—under the language of generosity, reciprocity, and compassion.

As scholars weighed in on the limits of the liberal agenda in the abstract, the tensions of liberalism and open society were realized on the Hungarian parliament’s floor. At the end of the first day of the workshop, a law was introduced in Parliament aimed at shutting down the CEU on the premise of the institution offering foreign-accredited degrees.

On a symbolic level, the CEU represents the antithesis of the current Hungarian political agenda. The swift approval of this legislation thereby represents the rising power of illiberalism over open society – nativism over globalism.

The ongoing CEU crisis brings the thematic importance of the workshop in sharp relief. If scholars are to move beyond the dichotomies of the liberal agenda, it is all the more urgent to establish common intellectual ground on the contents of meaningful liberalism as well as its downfalls in practice. Moreover, as Ignatieff and multiple other scholars at the workshop implored, scholars must move beyond abstraction and configure how liberalism best resonates with populations increasingly weary of its core principles.

If the CEU crisis offers a first test in moving beyond abstractions and dichotomies, then the CEU and the academic community writ large must convince Hungarian civil society—and a group of powerful political elites—that the ideals of the university are in harmony with their own democratic needs and societal values.



### **Save the Date**

*Upcoming event during the Fall 2017 semester\*\**

### **ISEEES Annual Fall Reception**

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

5:00 p.m.

Toll Room, Alumni House

UC Berkeley Campus



*\*\*Please note that event details may change. Updates will be sent out by email and can be found online at <http://iseees.berkeley.edu/>.*



# Films without a Hero:

## Sergei Loznitsa at the Pacific Film Archive

Matthew Kendall

Graduate Student, Slavic Languages and Literatures, UC Berkeley

Documentary has recently become a privileged mode in post-Soviet space, perhaps because fact and fiction often blur there. Of course, the story of documentary's popularity in Russia does not begin now: following the early factography movement of the '20s, non-fiction prose first went mainstream in the west with Solzhenitsyn and has now experienced a revival through figures like Svetlana Alexievich. Sergei Loznitsa has come to dominate the world of Russian documentary film, although just over a decade ago, he marked the middle of his career with an article titled "The End of Documentary Cinema."

"I don't mean that it's over," Loznitsa responded after I asked him to explain his title. During his recent visit to Berkeley in February, Loznitsa was extraordinarily kind to agree to speak with me for an hour about filmmaking, his work, and contemporary politics. "I'm asking: what is the end of documentary cinema? We have to redefine what we mean when we say documentary."

A kind of excitement and somber wariness over documentary as an art form permeates Loznitsa's projects and what he says about them: he is keen to repeat that film is never unadulterated proof of any kind of event. Loznitsa frequently couples this point with the example of Alain Resnais, to whose *Night and Fog* he has routinely (and politely) endured comparison since the premiere of his newest film, *Austerlitz*. The work follows tourists who visit concentration camps, a far cry from Resnais' brutal compilation of archival Holocaust footage. Many tourists are caught on camera asking for directions to the restroom, complaining of fatigue or hunger, and, in the worst examples, mimicking the poses of former inmates. For Loznitsa, Resnais' shortcoming is that *Night and Fog*'s famous voiceover becomes much more powerful in guiding the viewer's thoughts than the images in the film itself (Loznitsa does not use voiceover in his films): "I don't want to smooth over the gaze," he says.

Unsurprisingly, Loznitsa is adamant to distance himself from filmmakers who he feels "have an agenda," and discerning how he personally feels about his subjects' interactions with the afterimages of Nazism isn't easy. *Austerlitz* caused a stir amongst critics, just as it did with the audience at BAMPFA. In a Q&A moderated by film critic Neil Young, the film drew a mix of equally impassioned adulatory and skeptical remarks. Some audience members who had visited the camps felt that Loznitsa's depiction was unfair, while others praised his work and questioned how tourists could shamelessly behave the way they did. In our conversation, Loznitsa offered an explanation for why what he saw at the camps was worthy of filming: "in a normal society, this doesn't happen." He mixed in a few more convictions: industrialized tourism has transformed death camps into education complexes (not a good thing); the borders of post-war nations have splintered approaches to Holocaust remembrance into a country by country basis (Loznitsa claims to have seen very few Germans

visiting the camps, a statement that some members of his audience disagreed with); de-Nazification was a product of occupation, and thus not a personal reckoning, but instead a spectacle of shame for German citizens in front of the world.

In contrast to the wide scope of Loznitsa's political associations for the film, his camera remains fixed in every scene of *Austerlitz*, which cuts between no more than two dozen shots over roughly 80 minutes. He called the process of hiding his camera in his "crowd" features "hypnosis," although it notably backfires in *Maidan*, when a musical performer spots the camera and can't resist giving a brief performance. *Maidan* follows its crowd through distinct places and moments in time, culminating in the ultimate attack by the authorities on protestors at Maidan square. The attack breaks the trance again halfway through, when the camera itself is packed up and moved as the film continues to roll, shielding itself from a smoke bomb's fallout. It is this very rupture that marks Loznitsa's documentary style, however, and one that he teases in an early documentary short, *Life, Autumn*, in which his camera collapses to the ground mid-shot. Loznitsa's is a kino-eye that must blink, an end to any hallucination that passes film off as a document.

Accordingly, Loznitsa's dramatic films also tend to shock. In an interview with *Iskusstvo Kino* in 2010, Loznitsa recalls how his initial screening of *My Joy* (not included in the BAMPFA program) led to a Q&A that began with a journalist's blunt reproach: "your film offended me." Many viewers may find *In the Fog*, which closed Loznitsa's program in Berkeley, slightly less excessive than *My Joy*'s take on the '90s' proliferation of *chernukha* (a kind of gritty trash genre), but the violent underbelly of rural, derelict landscapes is a central topic for both films, as is the haunting of WWII over Eastern Europe's countryside. These are two themes that Loznitsa clearly links. *In the Fog*, set in occupied Belarus, follows a small group of friends who suspect their friend of working for the Germans. By re-hashing a classic Socialist Realist treason plot, Loznitsa blurs the historical mythology of the clear perpetrators behind Eastern Europe's violent 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The rural landscapes of these films pose a simpler, albeit more grizzly setting to the contemporary spaces that Loznitsa has captured in his crowd films. Loznitsa's fascination with the symbiotic relationship between crowds and spaces is evident in his musings on contemporary politics: "everything is mixed up — one doesn't understand where they are today. You can do whatever you want with people who don't understand where they are." Yet spaces in *My Joy* and *In the Fog*, from a Russia and Belarus disconnected from cities and crowds, are not that different from the camp-museums of *Austerlitz*: all of these films take place in spaces that teeter on the brink of becoming unrecognizable. As a result, Loznitsa's dramatic films rest in an uneasy stasis, agitated by a looming event that is too difficult to grasp, such as a German victory.

Despite their current magnetism, Loznitsa mentioned that he is perfectly comfortable with his own films someday becoming obsolete. In reference to Resnais, he openly wondered, “maybe in the future we’ll also think that my films are primitive or rude.” It is hard to guess when this could happen. Loznitsa’s use of sound, for example, is perhaps his most innovative contribution to contemporary documentary cinema, and one that deserves attention for some time to come. Loznitsa re-hashes the playfulness of Vertov’s early experiments with recording by ripping sounds from their place of origin and forcing them into new, unrelated contexts.

The two roles of chronicler and archivist, the poles that all of Loznitsa’s cinema appears to mediate, are most clearly on display in *Blokada*, which also happens to be Loznitsa’s most ambitious sound experiment. Working with his sound designer, Vladimir Golovnitiskii, Loznitsa overlays a soundtrack onto archival footage of the Leningrad blockade. He is forthcoming about using an artificial soundtrack, sometimes made with field recordings that were not captured on site, or even during the same shooting session: “I can change the meaning of the shot only with sound.” In “The End of Documentary Cinema,” Loznitsa admits that he knew many of the “found” images in *Blokada* were originally staged for propaganda films, but that the import of these images is one of the central conceits of his film – to unmask documentary cinema as a creation, not a testament. Polina Barskova has thus

noted that *Blokada* overcomes the impulse to mythologize the Siege of Leningrad, and that the film also resists the creation of a new typology of images to accompany it. This maneuver is evident in Loznitsa’s work with sound, which constructs a world that also reveals its artifice.

Yet it seems that the ambiguity of these films’ messages drives their viewers to ask a question that has long hovered over Russian art – who is to blame? Particularly *for whom* should feel shame – for ourselves, or for the tourists? Were the Germans or the Belarusians behind *In the Fog*’s bloody finale? Are those who staged films in the Blockade dishonest, or are viewers looking for totality dishonest with themselves? Loznitsa is currently finishing post-production work for a film based on Dostoevsky’s *A Meek One*, a work that he hopes will approach head-on what he sees as an old Russian tradition – the tendency to find a scapegoat.

Nevertheless, he sticks to a kind of relativism regarding how viewers should watch his films: “you have to think only about yourself,” he says, being quick to erase some kind of a judgment from his work. Like his camera, he is adamant about staying hidden in these films, a position that does not anticipate his gregarious and open exterior. “Resnais found everything. There are a lot of mysteries for me.”



Sergei Loznitsa (left) and film critic Neil Young (right) have an open discussion following a screening of one of Loznitsa’s films at the Pacific Film Archive. (photo: Susan Oxtoby)

# Faculty and Student News

**George Breslauer** (Political Science) has published an article in *Post-Soviet Affairs* entitled “Reforming Sacred Institutions: The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Roman Catholic Church Compared.” He has also co-edited, with Tim Colton, the Spring 2017 issue of *Daedalus* (journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences), entitled “Russia Beyond Putin,” which brings together twelve leading specialists on contemporary Russia. His concluding article within the issue is entitled “Images of the Future.” Finally, this Spring saw the return of Prof. Breslauer to the classroom to teach an undergraduate course on “The Rise and Fall of World Communism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.”

**Myrna Douzjian** (Armenian and Slavic) received a grant from the USC Institute of Armenian Studies to pursue research on transgeneric cultural production in Armenia and Russia. She was also invited to give a talk, “A Photograph Resists Archivization: Reading Hrayr Anmahouni and Anahid Kassabian’s Solemnity,” at a conference on Spaces of Remembering the Armenian Genocide at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on April 28.

**Jennifer Flaherty** (PhD candidate, Slavic) will attend the American Comparative Literature Association’s Annual Meeting in Utrecht, the Netherlands, July 6-9, 2017. She will present as part of a seminar titled “Geographies of Realism: Literature and the Spatial Turn.”

**Joseph Kellner** (PhD candidate, History) was awarded the Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship for the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Matthew Kendall** (PhD candidate, Slavic) presented at two conferences during Spring 2017. His first paper, “Let Them Sing Songs without You: Sound and Gender in Two Screenplays from Andrei Platonov,” was given at the University of Cambridge as part of the interdisciplinary *Ear Pieces: Listening, Diagnosing, Writing*. His second paper was given at the Society for Cinema And Media Studies Conference in Chicago, entitled “Locked in Sync: Incarceration in Early Soviet Sound Film.”

**Emily Laskin** (PhD candidate, Comparative Literature) won the Dean’s Fund award for dissertation research in Russia over Summer 2017.

**Eric Naiman** (Slavic) delivered the keynote address, “Gospel Rape: On Close Reading in *Crime and Punishment*,” at the “Dostoevsky Games” at Duke University in April. He also spoke at the University of Oregon, UNC, and the University of Colorado, Boulder. He was appointed to the Executive Committee of ASEES.

**Anne Nesbet** (Slavic) received the Northern California Independent Booksellers Association’s Book Award for *Cloud and Wallfish* (Candlewick Press) in the Middle Grade category. Anna received another award, winning this year’s California Book Award in the category of juvenile fiction. She also had the rights for the novel sold for translation into Slovak.

**Johanna Nichols** (Slavic) was appointed research supervisor for the Linguistics Convergence Laboratory at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, 2017-2020. She has also been appointed Helsinki University Humanities Visiting Professor, 2017-2020. She has also secured a grant from the Kone Foundation with Prof. Riho Grünthal of Helsinki University for the project: “Grammatical characters in computational phylogeny: The causative alternation in Uralic.”

**Harsha Ram** (Slavic) published the article “The Scales of Global Modernisms: Imperial, National, Regional, Local,” in *PMLA* 131/5 (2016), pp. 1372-1385. He has received the Humanities Research Fellowship from UC Berkeley; a Mellon Project Grant for completion of his book manuscript, which will take him to Tbilisi, Georgia; and a summer fellowship at Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung in Berlin.

**Christina Schwartz** (PhD candidate, Slavic) received a Fulbright Fellowship for dissertation research in Moscow for the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Éva Soós Szőke** (Slavic) received the Berkeley Language Center Fellowship for Spring 2018 to explore differentiated instruction from the diverse “Readings in Hungarian” course. She will create new models and materials for particular language levels.

# Make a Gift to ISEEEES!

The loyal support of private donors like you supplements the funding we receive from other sources and enables us to meet the standards of excellence required of us by the University of California, Berkeley as an organized research unit and by the U.S. Department of Education as a Title VI National Resource Center. Your support helps to expand and sustain a robust area-specific international education for our students, furthers research opportunities for faculty focusing on our region, and allows us to respond to new programming opportunities and to expand public outreach.

Our Federal and state funding have faced continued reductions, compelling us to draw more and more on our modest endowments to maintain the superior programming and research and academic support our student, faculty, and public constituents have come to expect. As a result, we have expanded opportunities for more targeted giving in order to encompass a variety of ISEEEES programs. Contributions of any size are appreciated and contribute directly to ISEEEES's continued accomplishments. We would be very happy to discuss details of these funds or other giving opportunities. Jeff Pennington, executive director of ISEEEES, can be reached at [jpennington@berkeley.edu](mailto:jpennington@berkeley.edu) or (510) 643-6736.

## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

### **ISEEEES General Support Fund**

The ISEEEES General Support Fund is an unrestricted fund that is used to: provide travel grants to affiliated graduate and undergraduate students for the purpose of presenting papers at academic conferences; provide research assistance to affiliated faculty members; convene conferences, open to the public, that examine current topics in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies; host an annual reception to foster community building among faculty, students, and the public; and augment the state and grant funds that provide minimal support for ISEEEES operations.

### **ISEEEES Graduate Student Support Fund**

The ISEEEES Graduate Student Support Fund is a new UCB Foundation endowment that was established by a generous gift from an anonymous donor. When fully funded, the ISEEEES Graduate Student Support Fund will be used to support graduate students in the field of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. The endowment was launched by the initial gift and matching funds from the Graduate Division. Additional gifts to the Fund are encouraged and gratefully accepted.

### **Colin and Elsa Miller Endowment Fund**

The Annual Colin Miller Memorial Lecture honors the memory of a journalist and radio and TV producer who was devoted to the Center for Slavic and East European Studies (as ISEEEES was called before the year 2000). The endowment funds an annual lecture given by a respected scholar in the field of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

### **Hungarian Studies Fund**

This fund promotes the teaching of the Hungarian language at UC Berkeley, provides research assistance to faculty and students studying Hungarian topics, and supports lectures, workshops, and conferences devoted to Hungarian studies.

### **Fund for Romanian Studies**

This fund promotes the teaching of the Romanian language at UC Berkeley; supports lectures, workshops, and conferences devoted to Romanian topics; and provides research assistance to faculty and students pursuing Romanian studies.



# Support Our Institute!

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ISEEES acknowledges with sincere appreciation the following individuals who made their annual contribution to ISEEES between December 2016 and May 2017.

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Your gift will qualify you for membership on our annual giving program: Associates of the Slavic Center. Descriptions of membership benefits by level are included below. Thank you for your continued support.

**Members (Gifts under \$100).** Members are notified in writing about major upcoming ISEEES events.

**Sponsors (Gifts of \$100—\$499).** ASC Sponsors receive a specially designed gift that bears the ISEEES logo, promoting Slavic and East European Studies at Berkeley.

**Benefactors (Gifts of \$500—\$999).** ASC Benefactors receive a complimentary copy of a book authored by ISEEES faculty.

**Center Circle (Gifts of \$1,000 and above).** Members of the Center Circle will qualify for the Charter Hill Society at UC Berkeley. The Charter Hill Society is Berkeley's new program designed to recognize donors' annual giving to the campus. Benefits of this program include a subscription to *Berkeley Promise Magazine* and an invitation to *Discover Cal* lecture.

*It is a policy of the University of California and the Berkeley Foundation that a portion of the gifts and/or income therefrom is used to defray the costs of raising and administering the funds. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

You can contribute online by visiting the ISEEES website -

**<http://iseees.berkeley.edu/give>**

- and selecting the fund to which you would like to make a gift.

Or send a check, payable to UC Regents, to:

Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies  
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☐ I have made a contribution but wish to remain anonymous.

# Illiberalism is for the Children:

## *Poland's 2016 Education Reform, Kids' Combat Associations, and the Philosophy of History*

Paweł Koscielny

Graduate Student, History, UC Berkeley

My last piece analyzed a public spectacle in Freedom Park on August 30. I arrived in Warsaw 24 hours later to witness a very different kind of spectacle. The day after Duda was humiliated by the Veterans' associations, Freedom Park was now full of children playing 'soldier'. The Museum of the Warsaw Uprising had organized a family educational event called *Z Chochlą za Barykadą* (Behind the Barricades with a Ladle) where children learned about the day-to-day reality of being an ancillary participant in the Uprising through simulation. Each youngster started by receiving a 'training certificate' (see Figures 1 & 2) that read:

Did you know that the fighting in the Warsaw Uprising took place behind the barricades as well? Poles fought in various ways. They struggled with a lack of supplies in the field-kitchen, the hospital, with fire, with fear in the sewers. Singing and performing concerts for the insurgents was also part of the fight. Today you have the opportunity to learn the skills that allowed insurgents to meet these challenges and survive hard times in the Uprising. Visit the stations and participate in the interesting tasks. Once you complete the task you will receive a stamp on this certificate. It is enough to gather 6 out of 8 stamps to win a prize. Good luck!

The tasks ranged from crawling through replica sewers to learning soldiers' songs, operating a 1940s firetruck, repairing uniforms, etc. I walked around the park absorbing quizzical stares from parents and the Museum's volunteers. In particular, I remember overhearing a volunteer explaining to a girl who looked about five: "Do you help your mom out at home? During the Uprising children helped their parents eagerly, they never acted up but did their part for their family and their country." One of the organizers told a TVP interviewer: "What we're trying to do here is teach kids about the idea of service that the insurgents believed in, to instill that dedication to service from a young age." There was an obstacle course at the station called 'Training for assistance at a field-hospital'. Kids were directed through the course and taught first-aid skills by very fit men in their 40s wearing camouflage pants rather than the regular museum volunteers. Next to the course was a stall handing out pamphlets advertising the company 'GROM Combat Kids'<sup>1</sup> (see Figures 3 & 4), which offers self-defense lessons in Warsaw for children aged 5-16.

Having seen what I saw at *Z Chochlą za Barykadą*, I was hardly surprised by the details of the 2016 Education Reform, which was

**ZAŚWIADCZENIE  
W SPRAWIE SZKOLEŃ**

**„Z CHOCHŁĄ ZA BARYKADĄ”**

Czy wiesz, że walka w czasie Powstania Warszawskiego trwała nie tylko na barykadach? Polacy walczyli na różne sposoby. Zmagali się z brakiem zaopatrzenia w kuchni, w szpitalu, z ogniem podczas pożarów, ze strachem w kanałach. Walką było także śpiewanie piosenek i koncerty dla Powstańców. Dziś masz okazję zdobyć umiejętności, które pozwalały zmierzyć się z tymi przeciwnościami i przetrwać trudne momenty w Powstaniu. Wystarczy odwiedzić stoiska i wykonać ciekawe zadania. Kolejność jest obojętna. Na każdym stoisku za wykonane zadanie otrzymasz pieczątkę. Wystarczy zebrać 6 z 8 pieczątek, aby otrzymać unikatową nagrodę. Powodzenia!

J	<b>SZKOLENIE Z POMOCY W KUCHNI</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ UPIECZENIA PIĄCÓWK KARTOFLANYCH NA GORĄCEJ BŁASZE
C	<b>SZKOLENIE NA PRZEWODNIKA KANALOWEGO</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ SPRAWNEGO PORUSZANIA SIĘ Z WAPĄ W KANAŁACH - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ POSŁUGIWANIA SIĘ ALFABETEM MORSE'JA
M	<b>SZKOLENIE NA PRASOWEGO SPRAWOZDAWCĘ WOJENNEGO</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ WYKONYWANIA FOTOGRAFII - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ SPRAWNEGO PISANIA NA MASZYNIE

Figure 1: Training Certificate

announced in late 2016. Brian Porter Szucs' blog post explains the problematics of the Reform program as it regards the teaching of history in very lucid detail.<sup>2</sup> The very short story is that the new government has redesigned the public-school history curriculum to teach very young students (grade 1-5) what Nietzsche called 'a pure monumental history'—a gallery of heroes to admire and emulate.<sup>3</sup> Poland's 'heroic wars' of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, its eternal role as bulwark against the Eastern hordes, Piłsudski, Holocaust rescuers, and, of course, the Grey Ranks and the Unbroken Soldiers, are the focal points. The University of Warsaw's official statement about the new curriculum explicitly complained that 'history is neither a collection of patriotic episodes nor a gallery of heroes.'

<sup>2</sup> Porter-Szucs, Brian.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On the uses and disadvantages of History for living" in *Untimely Meditations*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. P. 68.

<sup>1</sup> GROM is an elite Polish commando unit that performs counter-terrorist and non-conventional combat operations worldwide.

	<b>SZKOLENIE Z ORGANIZOWANIA ZABAW DLA MŁODSZYCH DZIECI</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ WYKONANIA GIER PLANSZOWYCH DLA DZIECI UKRYWAJĄCYCH SIĘ W PIWNICACH
	<b>SZKOLENIE NA POMOC W PUNKCIE SANITARNYM</b> - UKOŃCZENIE PRZESZKOLENIA SANITARNEGO - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ SPRAWNEGO PRZEJŚCIA PRZEZ TOR PRZESZKÓD
	<b>SZKOLENIE KRAWIECKIE</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ WYKROJENIA I USZYCIA FARTUCHA KUCHENNEGO
	<b>SZKOLENIE NA POMOCNIKA STRAŻACKIEGO</b> - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ WCHODZENIA NA WYSOKIE DRABINY - UMIEJĘTNOŚĆ SPRAWNEGO POMPOWANIA WODY
	<b>SZKOLENIE MUZYCZNE</b> - ROZPOZNAJ JEDNĄ, Z WARSZAWSKICH MELODII I ZAKREŚL ODPOWIEDNI TYTUŁ: • "Siekiera, motyka" • "Tango andrusowskie" • "Meraz jest wojna" • "Chodź na Pragę" • "Serce w plecaku" • "Bał na Gnojnej" • "Piosenka w tramwaju" • "Pałacik Michła" • "Czerwone jabłuszko" • "Warszawskie dzieci"

ZATWIERDZONO DNIA.....

Figure 2: Training Certificate

For the UW professors, the new curriculum is guilty of glossing over Poland's multinational character, industrialization, social transformation, and controversial figures. They are completely correct, but their critique is ultimately quixotic. It misses the main point of the regime's philosophy of history – specifically that Poland's past contains lessons about the struggle against tyranny that are sorely in need of revival in the contemporary historical situation. Basically, to accuse PIS of having overemphasized heroism and patriotism in early history education is to play right into their hands, because their answer is precisely 'Yes! These aspects of history have been shrouded by the liberal order for too long, and we need them now more than ever!' It is the same futile gesture as accusing this government of dismantling liberal democracy and betraying the values of Europe, because they consider liberal democracy and the values of Europe to be the ideological tools of an economic order that exploits Poland. Below, I attempt a critique of the illiberal philosophy of history on its own terms. In other words, instead of reinscribing a liberal critique, I consider the strategic aspirations of their philosophy of history, and draw out its internal contradictions by recourse to Wendy Brown and Slavoj Žižek's reflections on contemporary capitalism.

Joseph Stiglitz rightly pointed out that the big illiberals like Trump and Putin justify themselves through pure pragmatist machismo and not 'some universal theory of history.'<sup>4</sup> Why then

<sup>4</sup> Stiglitz, Joseph. "Illiberal Stagnation" in *Social Europe*,

are the ideologues of the PIS regime so obsessed with historical revisionism? One might be tempted to say it is because they are true believers in their narcissistic self-image as the latest vanguard of the Polish revolutionary subject. Certainly, they speak with bravado, conviction, and faith on radio and television. But my intuition is that what appears to be narcissism is actually closer to a neurotic fixation on their impotence vis-à-vis real historical processes.

The only real historical process to speak of in Eastern Europe since 1989 was the unchallenged march of neoliberalism into the region. According to Phillip Ther, Poland was the most effective at absorbing the shock due to its large amount of 'human capital' – a highly skilled, flexible, and resilient workforce.<sup>5</sup> But if we take Zygmunt Bauman's reflections on precarity seriously, it becomes clear that what made the Polish workforce good at surviving labor market liberalization and floating currencies also made it particularly prone to the anxieties which illiberal ideology feeds on.<sup>6</sup> "Precarity," said Bauman, "is the feeling of walking on moving sands brought on by highly digitized and fluid economics." As time passes, the anxiety gets worse, and paradoxically, the workers who thrived under neoliberalism became more fearful for the social position they had painstakingly earned and began to long for a strong caring state that could guarantee that position in the face of more aggressive liberalization.

Poland bought an express ticket on the neoliberal train under the direction of the leaders of 1989, and PIS employs its campaign



Figure 3: GROM pamphlet

April 7, 2017. <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/illiberal-stagnation-russia-transition-by-joseph-e--stiglitz-2017-04>

<sup>5</sup> Ther, Phillip. *Europe Since 1989*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016)

<sup>6</sup> Baumann, Zygmunt. "Behind the World's Crisis of Humanity" (Interview with Al Jazeera) <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazera/2016/07/zygmunt-bauman-world-crisis-humanity-160722085342260.html>





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Figure 4: GROM pamphlet

against those leaders (together with Orbán's offensive on Hungarian civil society) as the region's second meta-revolution. The notion of meta-revolution was conceived by the Soviet mathematician-poet Sergei Volpin, who theorized that the ossified sediments of Lenin's revolution could only be broken up by a revolution in the very concept of revolution.<sup>7</sup> Following Volpin's lead, the Central European dissidents eschewed Leninist vanguardism and took to building the parallel polis. They fostered a growth of civil society that was so pervasive it forced the Party to negotiate. That was the character of the 1989 meta-revolution, but far-right ideologues hold that this version of the transformation is a mystification. In the summer of 2014 I attended a talk in the parish hall of a large Catholic Church in Mielec, Poland. The room was packed and the speaker was Stanisław Michalkiewicz, an anti-communist activist and now leading figure in Poland's New Right party. He spoke on the conspiracy of 1989, claiming that in fact the secret police had corralled the dissidents to the Round Table and made them compradors in the new order. PIS's theory of history starts from the same assumption, but where Michalkiewicz maintained that the compradors cannot be moved save by violence, Kaczyński imagines his party as the vanguard of the meta-revolution against them. His strategy was a variation on the electoral route; in 2015 PIS drew the countryside, young parents, precarious workers, and the usual legion of pensioners into politics with the promise of 500+. Their present aim is to dismantle the strong urban civil society structures prepared by the dissidents by establishing a direct organic link between the state and the family. In my last piece I wrote in more detail about how PIS links its own meta-revolutionary project to the cult of the Unbroken Soldiers

and previous generations of Polish resistance to both German Fascism and totalitarian communism. This theory of history is the phantasmatic surplus that gives the pure financial-transactional gesture of 500+ the appearance of a genuine organic link between state and family. By reviving traditional values embodied in the Unbroken through this current educational reform, PIS proposes it will save the Polish family from the decay wrought by Global Capital and EU technocrat rule.

That is what gives the ideology as a whole its formidable affective gravitational field. Added to this are legitimate popular grievances against the neoliberal hegemony (whether it is called a comprador order or not.) But it is an unstable field, because the PIS project is, in fact, *not even close* to a meta-revolution. It is actually a very predictable, outdated, and reflexive answer to neoliberalism called neo-conservatism. The core argument of neo-conservatism is that global capital is here to stay, but the effects of its admittedly chaotic energies can be alleviated by traditional civic and family values. Historically, neoconservatism has neither ameliorated the plight of families and communities under neoliberalism nor halted its march. In fact, it is doomed to be neo-liberalism's unconscious servant. Wendy Brown has already described this relation better than I can hope to:

How does a rationality that is expressly amoral at the level of both ends and means (neoliberalism) intersect with one that is expressly moral and regulatory (neoconservatism)? How does a project that empties the world of meaning, that cheapens and deracinates life and openly exploits desire, intersect one centered on fixing and enforcing meanings, conserving certain ways of life, and repressing and regulating desire? How does support for governance modeled on the firm and a normative social fabric of self-interest marry or jostle against support for governance modeled on church authority and a normative social fabric of self-sacrifice and long-term filial loyalty, the very fabric shredded by unbridled capitalism? (...) the choosing subject and the governed subject are far from opposites ... Frankfurt school intellectuals and, before them, Plato theorized the open compatibility between individual choice and political domination, and depicted democratic subjects who are available to political tyranny or authoritarianism precisely because they are absorbed in a province of choice and need-satisfaction that they mistake for freedom.<sup>8</sup>

Well before neo-liberalism took its present form, the likes of Oakeshott and Foucault warned that across Europe, the configuration of Capital with the state was eroding the model of citizen-as-participant-in-politics and replacing it with the citizen-as-consumer-of-services.<sup>9</sup> And when the public is effectively pushed out of the public sphere and molded into purely consumptive subjects, the big winners will be the private corporate sector seeking to buy out state services and secure bailouts. The PIS reflexive neoconservative reforms and its attacks on civil

<sup>7</sup> Werner-Müller, Jan. *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth Century Europe*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011) pp. 227.

<sup>8</sup> Brown, Wendy. "American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and de-Democratization" quoted in Mark Fisher's *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Zero Books, 2009) p. 60.

<sup>9</sup> Muller, 224-228.



society can only accelerate this trend. They are fully aware that for all their bellicosity, they do not have the strategic acumen to halt the still-roaring (and close to derailment) neoliberal train. Perhaps better than anyone, they have witnessed the transformation of Capital into a formidable and impersonal historic force – its digital self-circulations and completely abstracted power have rendered it basically impervious to traditional ideology-critique. It now works as an objective subject that exists in a purely virtual space but affects material reality in ways that it is not aware of.<sup>10</sup> It turns all criticism of its impact into input on how to make itself more efficient without regard for the consequences. The PIS gallery of heroes has even less to say to contemporary global Capital than

10 Žižek, Slavoj. “Interlude 1: Marx as Reader of Hegel, Hegel as Reader of Marx” in *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism*. (London: Verso, 2012.)

traditional Marxist analysis. The idea of service and sacrifice that drove the Unbroken in their struggle are not the lessons needed for the struggle of today.

By urging Poles to rethink their family life, to not question the state, and to participate in the military instead of civil society, PIS tears down the remaining obstacles to the neoliberal hegemony, which can only be eroded by strong, creative, and thoughtful civic engagement. Their entire political memory project, then, is at once a futile attempt to resist history and a desperate effort to inscribe their imaginary legacy in a historical process before which they are as powerless as the children they are trying to re-educate. So, the response to the illiberal pseudo-revolutionary stance should echo how Jacques Lacan famously chastised the 68ers: ‘What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a new Master. You will get one.’



## Save the Date

*Upcoming events during the Fall 2017 semester\*\**



### **“How Capital Inflows Transformed Rural Russia”**

Thursday, August 31, 2017

**Susanne Wengle**, *Assistant Professor, Political Science, University of Notre Dame*

### **«Конференция без героя»**

Friday, October 13, 2017 - Sunday, October 15, 2017

*An alumni conference hosted by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures*

### **“Discussion of Current US-Russian Relations”**

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

**Matthew Rojansky**, *Director of the Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson Center*

### **Book Talk: *Gorbachev: His Life and Times***

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

**William Taubman**, *Bertrand Snell Professor of Political Science Emeritus, Amherst College*

\*\*Please note that event details may change. Updates will be sent out by email and can be found online at <http://iseees.berkeley.edu/>.

# AATSEEL 2017

San Francisco, CA

February 2-5, 2017

*The American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages exists to advance the study and promote the teaching of Slavic and East European languages, literatures, and cultures on all educational levels. This year's annual conference took place in San Francisco*

## **Faculty & Student Papers:**

**Isobel Palmer** (Slavic): "Mixing metaphors: literal and figurative motion in the teaching of Czech case and grammatical relations"

**Megan Barickman** (Slavic): "The Role of Feodosii's Mother in *Zhitie prepodobaago ot tsa nashego Feodosiia, igumena Pecherskago*"

**Milutin Janjic** (Slavic): "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's (Mat. 22:21): Testimonies from a Log-journal of Missionary Priest Tikhon Shalamov"

**Karina McCorkle** (Slavic): "Maiden-Tsar and Tsar-Maiden: Solov'yevian Eros in Tsvetaeva's Tsar-devitsa"

**Matthew Kendall** (Slavic): "A Photograph of Leont'ev's Hand: Vasilii Rozanov Against the Word"

**Isobel Palmer** (Slavic): "Orality, Technology, and the Poetry Evening"

**Thomas Dyne** (Slavic): "Знаю, что и вы обо мне там думаете": the ethics of realism in Dostoevsky's *Bednye liudi*"

**Anna Muza** (Slavic): "Reality and Corporeality in Chekhov's Drama"

**Caroline Tracey** (Geography): "Adapting *Phaedra* and the Ecofeminism of Marina Tsvetaeva"

**Jennifer Flaherty** (Slavic): "Он всегда попевал вполголоса: Capturing Peasant Voice in Turgenev's *Записки охотника*"

**Kathryn Pribble** (Slavic): "Beyond Heaven and Earth: Romantic Gnosticism and the Overcoming of Byron in Mikhail Lermontov's *Demon*"

**Christina Schwartz** (Slavic): "The Ascension of Unskilled Labor: Critical Aesthetic Strategies from Prigov to Voina"

**Josefina Lundblad-Janjic** (Slavic): "Testimony Trouble: To Die as a Poet and to Write as a Witness in Varlam Shalamov's 'Cherry Brandy'"

## **Panel Chairs:**

**Isobel Palmer** (Slavic): *Technology and Teaching: Czech and BCS*

**Christina Schwartz** (Slavic): *Musical Motifs in Russian Culture*

**Anna Muza** (Slavic): *Pushkin*

**Lyubov Golburt** (Slavic): *Physiologies of the Text in the 1840s*

**Olga Matich** (Slavic): *Digital Humanities and the Contemporary Performance Archive: Russian Writers at Berkeley*

**Jennifer Flaherty** (Slavic): *Nineteenth-Century Literary Heroes*

## **Panel Discussants:**

**Lyubov Golburt** (Slavic): *Over a hundred years' abyss: links between 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Russian literature*

**Eric Naiman** (Slavic): *Regifting: Nabokov and His International Audiences*

**Christina Schwartz** (Slavic): *Digital Humanities and the Contemporary Performance Archive: Russian Writers at Berkeley*

**Dominick Lawton** (Slavic): *Digital Humanities and the Contemporary Performance Archive: Russian Writers at Berkeley*

**Kathryn DeWaele** (Slavic): *Digital Humanities and the Contemporary Performance Archive: Russian Writers at Berkeley*

**Kathryn Pribble** (Slavic): *Digital Humanities and the Contemporary Performance Archive: Russian Writers at Berkeley*

**Harsha Ram** (Slavic): *Translation in Slavic Contexts: Roundtable on Cross-Disciplinary Teaching and Research in Translation Studies and Slavic Studies: State of the Field*

## **Meeting Moderators:**

**Ronelle Alexander** (Slavic): *Coffee with Leading Scholars*

**Caroline Brickman** (Slavic): *Roundtable Conversation with Poetry Translators*

# CEU-Berkeley Symposium

March 28-29, 2017

Budapest

## *Beyond Dichotomies: Re-thinking the Liberal Agenda*



From left to right: Jeffrey Pennington, Executive Director of ISEES; Laura Jalki, graduate student in Political Science; John Connelly, Professor of History and Director of ISEES; Edward Walker, Executive Director of the Berkeley Program in Eurasian and East European Studies and Associate Adjunct Professor of Political Science; Victoria Frede, Associate Professor of History; Jason Wittenberg, Associate Professor of Political Science; and M. Steven Fish, Professor of Political Science.

Following the signing of an exchange agreement between UC Berkeley and the Central European University, the faculty at both institutions organized a joint conference in March 2017 that brought together faculty and students from both institutions to discuss relevant topics. Neither group could have anticipated that the Hungarian Parliament would—in the afternoon of the first day of the conference—introduce legislation effectively meant to shut down the Central European University. The irony truly lies in the title of the conference: *Beyond Dichotomies: Re-thinking the Liberal Agenda*. Regardless of the circumstances, the conference was a success. ISEES sent six UC Berkeley representatives (pictured above), with Berkeley Professor Victoria Frede-Montemayor already present in Budapest as a fellow at the CEU's Institute for Advanced Study during her sabbatical year.

*Beyond Dichotomies* discusses the history and the current contradictions of the liberal political project and the profile of its principal alternatives. The often-used dichotomy of liberal and non-liberal (anti-liberal, illiberal, etc.) regime alternatives masks both the contradictions inherent to the liberal project and the variation among the non-liberal models. This variation has increased spectacularly since the end of the Cold War. Societies that move towards closed governmental structures often participate in—and sometimes even drive—globalization. The tendency towards closure in certain fields coexists with the opening up to the exchange of ideas, goods, capital, and technologies in other fields. Closed structures benefit from the existence of open structures.

# Spring 2017 Courses

## Selected course offerings and selected area-related courses

Anthropology 196	The Politics of Memory after Communism	Yurchak, A.
Armenian 102	Advanced Readings in Specialized Armenian	Douzjian, M.
Armenian 126	Armenian Culture and Film	Douzjian, M.
Comparative Lit 254	Studies in East-West Relations	Ram, H.
Geography 170	Post-Socialist Spaces	Feakins, M.
History 84	How Wars Begin	Wetzel, D.
History 100AP	Art and Monuments as Sources for Pre-Modern European History	Angelova, D.
History 100F	Mongol Empire	Baumann, B.
History 101	Topics in Modern European History, 1789-1989	Wenger, E.
History 103B	The Totalitarian Self: Autobiographies, Diaries, Memoirs, Fiction	Connelly, J.
History 103U	Comparative Genocides	Astourian, S.
History 162B	War and Peace: International Relations since 1914	Wenger, E.
History 167D	Berlin and the 20th Century	Hoffmann, S.
History 171C	The Soviet Union, 1917 to the Present	Slezkine, Yu.
History 178	The Holocaust	Efron, J.
History 275B/280B	Europe's Twentieth Century	Hoffmann, S.
History 280B	Problems of Nations and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe	Connelly, J.
History 280B/285B	Accusing the Self: Historical Credibility of Self-Accusatory Practices	Laqueur, T. & Rév, I.
History 285B	Research Topics in Soviet History	Slezkine, Yu.
Global Studies 110E	Europe/Russia in Global Context	Beecher, D.
Political Economy 101	Contemporary Theories of Political Economy	Beecher, D.
Political Science 2	Introduction to Comparative Politics	Fish, M. S.
Political Science 140L	The Rise and Fall of World Communism in the 20th Century	Breslauer, G.
Political Science 141C	Politics and Government in Eastern Europe	Wittenberg, J.
Political Science 291AS	Comparative Politics Colloquium	Wittenberg, J.
UGIS 156	Human Rights Interdisciplinary Minor Capstone Workshop	Beecher, D.
Slavic R5A	Man and Nature	Scott, L.
Slavic R5A	The Poetics of Translation	Brickman, C.
Slavic R5A	Writing in Emigration	DeWaele, K.
Slavic R5A	Belief and Rebellion in the Modern World	Flaherty, J.
Slavic R5B	Texts on the Move: Literature and (E)migration	Postema, A.
Slavic R5B	Documenting Atrocity: Literary Witness and the Memory of War	Postema, A.
Slavic R5B	Me, Pre-Selfie: Problems of Self-Representation	Kendall, M.
Slavic 39	Cemeteries and Histories of Death	Matich, O.
Slavic 46	Twentieth-Century Russian Literature	Naiman, E.
Slavic 50	Introduction to Russian/East European/Eurasian Cultures	Kavitskaya, D.
Slavic 133	The Novel in Russia and the West	Golburt, L.
Slavic 134C	Dostoevsky	Paperno, I.
Slavic 134E	Chekhov	Muza, A.
Slavic 138	National Cinema: <i>Soviet Film Style, From Silence to Sound</i>	Nesbet, A.
Slavic 190	Russian Culture Taught in Russian: <i>Country, Identity, and Language</i>	Paperno, I.
Slavic 200	Graduate Colloquium	Naiman, E.
Slavic 222	Introduction to Descriptive Grammar of Slavic Languages	Kavitskaya, D.
Slavic 239	Russia and World Literature	Ram, H.
Slavic 256	European Folklore Theory	Alexander, R. & Lindow, J.
Slavic 280	Shorter Fiction and <i>Crime and Punishment</i>	Naiman, E.

The Slavic Department offers courses in Armenian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, and Russian. The German Department offers Yiddish.