



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

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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,
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address or call (510) 642-3230.

Notes from the Director

To call this past year eventful would be an understatement. Like much of California, our Berkeley community got the foretaste of this spring's dramatic and still indefinite campus closure with the brief wildfire-related electricity shut-downs in the fall. Both the annual encroachment of the wildfires and the COVID-19 pandemic made the global reach of many of today's crises all too palpable, while also reminding us that the particular regions we inhabit and study tend to be affected in their own unique ways.

Even as the early maps of the pandemic's spread showed lower infection and death rates in the regions within the Institute's purview, for many of us the news prompted a more careful look at the dangerous underfunding of many post-socialist healthcare systems, the precarity and vulnerability to the virus of East European migrant workers, the complex networks of information and disinformation spread and public opinion formation in our region, and the susceptibility of many post-socialist regimes to populist and authoritarian takeovers, particularly in the times of crisis.

For many of us, the current crisis also revealed the fragility of our plans. As we look back on all of this year's successful events at the Institute, we also remember the multiple collaborative efforts that went into events that were only on the verge of taking place, such as the Annual Berkeley-Stanford conference, this year titled "Russia and Europe since 1989" and scheduled to take place at Stanford in April, but canceled for the first time since the conference's inception in 1977, or the Annual Peter N. Kujachich lecture, which this March was to be delivered by the political scientist Jelena Subotić, but likewise called off.

While campus life came to a halt halfway through the spring semester, people at the Institute continued to work from home, now planning Zoom events that could be useful for our community during the lockdown. In late May, Berkeley's Slavic and East European librarian Liladhar Pendse delivered a presentation on the great variety of online resources that have become available in the absence of physical access to libraries. A couple of weeks before that, Joshua Yaffa, the Moscow correspondent for *The New Yorker*, spoke to us from Moscow about what the pandemic response there looked like on the ground.

This was Yaffa's second, this time virtual, appearance at the Institute this year. In February, he presented his new and already much-acclaimed book *Between Two Fires: Truth, Ambition, and Compromise in Putin's Russia*, which deals with the decision-making and negotiating strategies of those in the Russian public sphere who manage to be successful and get things done. Coming before that, in November, this year's Colin Miller lecture was also delivered by a Moscow-based journalist, Maria Lipman, a prominent commentator and currently editor of *Point & Counterpoint*, who spoke on the topical subject of "Elections and Protests: Government Influence and Social Attitudes in Today's Russia," giving us a not-particularly optimistic overview of political public life in Russia over the past few years.

In fall and early spring, the Institute sponsored three very popular literary events, featuring contemporary writers and translators. In September, Maxim Osipov, a doctor and prize-winning short-story writer and essayist from Moscow and Tarusa, appeared in a bilingual reading from his newly translated *Rock, Paper, Scissors, and Other Stories*, together with Sabrina Jaszi, a UC Berkeley graduate student and herself a published

translator of late 20th-century Russian prose. In early February, the Institute hosted Mikhail Shishkin, one of Russia's most acclaimed prose-writers of the 2000s, who appeared in a bilingual reading and conversation with Berkeley's Slavic professors Edward Tyerman and Luba Golburt. In late Fall, we co-sponsored, together with the Slavic and English departments as well as the Townsend Center for the Humanities, a symposium on Moscow Conceptualism, which featured new translations of Vsevolod Nekrasov, Andrei Monastyrski, Dmitry Prigov, and Lev Rubinstein, which have come out in English in the past year. Organized and moderated by Berkeley's own Harsha Ram and by Matvei Yankelevich, editor of the East European Poets Series at the Ugly Duckling Presse in New York, the event brought together translators and scholars of this 1970s-80s movement, and concluded with remarks by the renowned poet and Berkeley English professor Lyn Hejinian.

This year we have also continued our long-standing faculty/graduate student lunchtime seminar series with former Institute-affiliated graduate students discussing their research. The 2019-20 lineup included Bathsheba Demuth, an environmental historian at Brown University; Dominique Reill, an Associate Professor of Modern European History at University of Miami, whose research interests include Adriatic multi-nationalism and the Hapsburg Empire; and Mieczysław (Mietek) Boduszyński, who teaches in the department of Politics at Pomona College and works on Balkan and US democracies.

This year, ISEEEES was pleased to host seven visiting scholars coming to us from all over Eurasia with projects that fully reflected the vast range and diversity of issues and geographical areas covered by our Institute. All of these scholars presented their work and contributed to the lively intellectual atmosphere at ISEEEES.

We are also very happy to announce that two new assistant professors joined the ranks of ISEEEES-affiliated UC Berkeley faculty in 2019-20. Aglaya Glebova (History of Art) specializes in Soviet art, history and theory of photography, and interwar European avant-gardes, and is completing a book manuscript on Aleksandr Rodchenko. Djordje Popović (Slavic Languages and Literatures) is a scholar of Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav literature and European intellectual history with a particular focus on criti-

cal and social theory and the literature of exile. A warm welcome to both!

While celebrating these new arrivals, we are sad to announce that Louanna Curley, who has been a dedicated and much-valued administrative assistant for ISEEEES and BPS since 1999 (and at Berkeley since 1993), announced her retirement as of July 2020. Louanna writes: "The best part of being at Berkeley is the lasting friendships that it creates. I enjoyed working with the graduate students and visitors over the years. Having people from so many different countries with different cultures never made my job boring, and I always looked forward to the interaction with our new scholars each semester." We thank you, Louanna, and will miss you, and wish you a fulfilling and joyful new phase of your life!

Even at this point it is difficult to assess the effects of the current crisis on our ability to return to Stephens Hall in the fall or successfully mount the Institute's many events and initiatives, most of which might take place on Zoom in the near future; however, we are committed – with your sustained support – to making this next year at ISEEEES as intellectually stimulating and vibrant as ever. New events and programs are planned; we have just finalized the fellowship awards for our graduate students for this summer and next year, and are keen on figuring out new ways of supporting young scholars in this ever more precarious employment environment. It is clear that ISEEEES will be forced to rely increasingly on our discretionary funds, which in large part draw on gifts and endowments made by friends and colleagues such as yourselves. The loyal support of private donors supplements the funding we receive from other sources and enables us to maintain the superior programming and research and academic support you have come to expect. Giving opportunities can be found on **pages 8-9** of this newsletter and on our website at <http://iseees.berkeley.edu/give>. Although I realize that these are trying times for all of us, even a modest gift could make a difference.

Sincerely yours,

Luba Golburt
ISEEEES Interim Director
Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Reinventing Democracy at Mauerfall30 and *Święto Wolności i Solidarności*

Pawel Koscielny

PhD Candidate, History, UC Berkeley

From 4-10 November 2019, the German state turned seven sites along what used to be the Berlin Wall into a commemorative festival for the Wende called ‘30 Jahre Friedliche Revolution: Mauerfall30.’ I walked through the festival in three days, and below I bring my observations into comparison with Poland’s ‘30-years-since 1989’ festival *Święto Wolności i Solidarności* and make some comments on how I understand the mainstream European memory-regime. 1989 is a major symbolic center; if Shoah remembrance reminds Europeans of what never to repeat, 1989 is supposed to remind them of the wonders to be achieved by nonviolent social action. In recent years it has become a rather contested legacy. *Mauerfall30* came two months after the AfD achieved historic numbers in the former DDR lands of Brandenburg and Saxony on the slogan ‘Complete the Wende!’ and ‘Wende 2.0.’¹ The Polish festival was held despite having its budget cut by the government whose ideology is about redeeming the putative betrayal of the nation by Round Table negotiators. In this context, the festivals should be read as an exercise in remembering – or reminding – the public what is worth defending about the post-socialist order. Put differently, they are defensive maneuvers by mainstream memory entrepreneurs in classification struggles over the legacy of transition from dictatorship to democracy.

The *Mauerfall*, though a later episode in the collapse of state-socialism than Gorbachev’s turn to *glasnost*, the opening of the iron curtain by Miklos Nemeth, or the saga of the Polish labor movement, stands as the uncontested master-signifier for the process in the Western imagination. This is probably because the image of Ossis literally dismantling the Wall is more readily romanticized than, for example, the very ambiguous and unheroic Round Table negotiations. By the same token, the *Mauerfall* as a symbol does much to obscure the nature of the Wende. As Richard Lachmann’s historical sociology shows, the collapse of major powers tends to be prefigured by the exhaustion of state resources by sharpening intra-elite conflict.² The Wende was no exception; reformist-technocrat wings of the Party-elites were decisive drivers of change in the bloc,³ but that is not what the contemporary memory-regime celebrates. Instead there is a mythology of bottom-up social action led by an emergent middle class.

1 Claudia van Laak im Gespräch mit Antje Allroggen. *Die DDR-Wende und die AfD: Wem gehört die Friedliche Revolution?* https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/die-ddr-wende-und-die-afd-wem-gehört-die-friedliche.691.de.html?dram:article_id=462754

2 Lachmann, Richard. *First Class Passengers on A Sinking Ship*. (London: Verso, 2020)

3 Bockman, Johanna. *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neo-Liberalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), Porter-Szűcs, Brian. “From Homo Sovieticus to Homo Economicus: The Transformation of the Human Subject in Polish Socialist Economic Thought.” *East European Politics and Societies*, (October 2019). doi:10.1177/0888325419875992.

I am broadly interested in how capitalist states maintain democratic legitimacy in the present historical conjuncture wherein capitalism and democracy were proven incompatible by the EuroCrisis. I am particularly interested in the role played by memory-images of state-socialism’s collapse in cementing that legitimacy. An event like *Mauerfall30* represents the mainstream of European remembrance sponsored by the continent’s leading state. Following Althusser, I see memory festivals as an extension of the educational sector in the Ideological State Apparatus, the role of which is precisely to secure the reproduction of capitalism.⁴ In what follows, I argue that the festival worked, through seven discrete technologies, to *interpellate* viewing subjects into an aestheticized ‘culture of victory’ for the entrepreneurial class. Althusser writes that “the individual is *interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e. in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection ‘all by himself.’*”⁵ How did the festival interpellate German subjects to freely accept subjection to a capitalist order that was experienced in the former DDR as a paradoxical purge of low-level state functionaries and negligible retroactive justice against top-ranking Stasi officers responsible for repressions,⁶ violent deindustrialization,⁷ various forms of social humiliation,⁸ cultural colonization, and the evisceration of a certain form of workplace democracy in the name of marketization?

At *Mauerfall30*, seven discrete ‘technologies of interpellation’ were employed:

1. An augmented reality application for tablets called *Mauar* that calls viewers to see where the wall used to be and simultaneously enjoy urban space in its absence.

2. 3D projections on 7 selected buildings (at Schlossplatz, Zionskirche, the EastSide Gallery, Alexanderplatz, Kurfürstendamm, Stasi Headquarters, Brandenburger Tor) where the crowd in the street blends in with the crowds on the screen as they shout anti-regime slogans, break the wall, and are welcomed enthusiastically into the West. We also relive Honecker’s resignation and Schabowski’s fateful announcement as if we had shouted them into doing it. Finally ethereal voices extolled platitudes about participatory democracy, the role of art in political change, the

4 Althusser, Louis. “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” in *la Pensée* (1970)

5 Ibid.

6 Beattie, Andrew. *Playing Politics with History* (New York: Berghahn, 2008), Espindola, Juan. *Transitional Justice After German Reunification* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Bornemann, John. *Settling Accounts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

7 Maier, Charles. *Dissolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999)

8 Boyer, *Spirit and System*. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005) 219-221

meaning of freedom etc. as CGI simulated the deconstruction of buildings. At the Schlossplatz exhibit, the ultimate historical irony is achieved by the interplay of the projections and the urban landscape- the Marx and Engels statues sit and watch a film about the dismantling of the GDR.

3. Open air-exhibitions composed of stellae in the seven locations where crowds read about aspects of the history of the Wende and look at photographs. Crucially, the exhibit at Kurfürstendamm, where the first Trabi drove through the Wall and now the public is shielded by concrete barriers from potential attacks by suicide drivers on the Christmas market – discussed the role of Western media and the Kurfürstendamm showcase in bringing about the Wende. The narrative was essentially that West German TV and Radio transformed the consciousness of East Germans (except for Dresden, the ‘valley of the clueless’) into that of informed political subjects. Meanwhile the showcase – a ‘model of the Golden West’ – inspired an insatiable craving for Western consumerism in the East. Behold – the making of the East German middle class! The idea that Western media and commodities inspired resistance to state-socialism is not historical memory but Cold War strategy reified as myth. Patrick Major’s studies of the impact of Western Radio on East German listeners was politically meaningless.⁹ Yurchak’s analysis of equivalent phenomena in the USSR reveals even more nuanced phenomena i.e. deterritorializing Soviet reality, “making it neither Soviet nor Western.”¹⁰

4. Phones were embedded into exhibits through which the public listened to interviews with witnesses of the Wende. According to the festival: “The exhibitions gave voice to a broad spectrum of perspectives. From civil rights activists to church leaders and from foreign workers to journalists covering events in the GDR for West German television – the exhibitions explored both familiar and previously neglected stories. Like a jigsaw puzzle, history is the sum of its parts” I rather noticed a pattern in the stories. Two variants were present: ‘victims of the SED regime’ and ‘victors of the Wende.’ The latter are overwhelmingly young creatives / entrepreneurs / civil society organizers / activists. Glaring is the absence of the kind of perspective drawn out by Berdahl and Boyer. Also glaring is the absence of interviews with industrial workers – is the perspective of workers on the collapse of a workers’ State not relevant here? Overwhelmingly, the DDR period is narrated as a theft of enjoyment/theft of time in both variants; i.e. “once I was pegged as a dissident, I lost opportunities to advance as an artist/journalist/scholar etc. and I couldn’t have a career, I wasted my life. When the Wall came down I could finally pursue my creative passions.” My German discussant told me that for two months leading up to the festival, *deutschlandFunk Kultur* was broadcasting stories like this every day. This bespeaks the dominance of capitalist temporality over the memory of socialism; time is understood as a race to the finish for accumulation and social prestige, and so it is only ever running out. The socialist temporality centered on collective futurity is recast as stolen time – a theft of enjoyment. The images attached to the interview project did their own work:

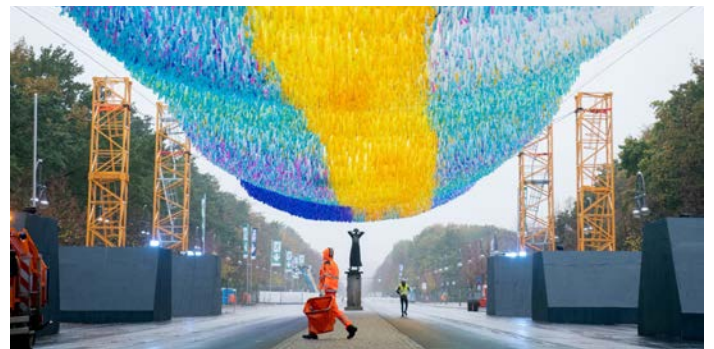
⁹ Patrick Major, “Listening behind the curtain: BBC broadcasting to East Germany and its Cold War echo” in *Cold War History*, 2013 Vol. 13, No. 2, 255–275, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2012.746840>, 1.

¹⁰ Yurchak, Alexei. *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*. P. 205.



Viewers are introduced to a gallery of heroes – an alliance of freelance journalists, artists, civil society organizers, and Protestant activists. WTJ Mitchell encourages us to think about what pictures want from their viewers.¹¹ I would say these pictures want us to share the euphoria emanating from their faces. Their victory over the party-state is also ours! Thanks to their sacrifice, we are free to live in liberal market democracy. This proto-middle class appears as the agent of a completed revolution, and we are invited to celebrate with them, to emulate them and continue to build democracy with them.

5. Central Installation by art-group Poetic Kinetics *Visions in Motion*. (See below)



Taken in context of the statue *The Screamer* by Francesco Petrarca on 17th July Street, the installation appears to represent a

¹¹ WTJ Mitchell *What Do Pictures Want?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005) XV

‘wave of freedom’ made up of a multitude of voices (the wave is constructed from ribbons with messages from the public saying what freedom/democracy mean to them) emanating from West Berlin toward a famous gap in the wall at Brandenburger Tor.

6. Six days of concerts occurring in tandem with the 3D projections and then a city-wide techno party involving 17 clubs bring the festival to a euphoric climax on November 9.

7. A series of special events including lectures, film screenings, interviews, etc.

Enjoy Capital as Yourself!

Mieczyslaw Boduszyński and Vjieran Pavlaković defined ‘cultures of victory’ based on their study of Kosovar and Croat nationalisms following the wars of Yugoslav succession:

In new states, there exists an acute need to locate tangible and meaningful content (a ‘usable past’) for the national narrative so as to build state and national identity. But the manner in which a new state is conceived is also a delicate subject, not only for the losing side in an independence struggle, but even within the winning coalition. There are major incentives for groups who played a leading role in the conflict to lay claim to foundational legitimacy as ‘memory entrepreneurs’ (...) groups claiming foundational legitimacy have an incentive to fiercely oppose any effort to defy the content of the liberation narrative. Foundational legitimacy rests on the ‘purity’ of this narrative, which must be cleansed of any crimes committed by those who fought for independence. In sum, challenges to the foundational legitimacy espoused by groups claiming a leading role in the independence struggle are seen as a threat to the prestige, privilege, and political and economic power these groups enjoy.¹²

This concept came to mind when I read Roland Jahn’s interview with Deutschlandfunk, parts of which were distributed at the festival sites. Jahn, the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Archives, claimed that the old Stasi files should be thought of as a ‘trophy of the Revolution’ comparable to the taking of the Bastille.¹³ Of course, this is no *national* culture of victory. For obvious reasons, to speak of a victory won by the German Nation is out of the question. Instead, the ‘groups who played a leading role in the conflict and today lay claim to foundational legitimacy as memory entrepreneurs’ are an alliance of anticommunist civil society groups, Christian associations, dissident artists etc. We don’t celebrate victory in a national war, but the ostensibly fulfilled peaceful revolution whose results were German reunification, democratization, and the arrival of capitalism. Crucially, following from this, the festival celebrates the construction of the new German middle class and its ascension to a leading role in remaking Berlin into a global cultural hub. This ‘class-culture’ of victory is further distinguished from the national culture of victory described by Pavlaković and Boduszyński in the way it relates to counternarratives. In this case, there is no need ‘to fiercely oppose any effort to defy the content of the narrative’ because of the specifically

capitalist-class content of the narrative. A passage from Gramsci’s classic essay *State and Civil Society* may help clarify this:

The previous ruling classes were essentially conservative in the sense that they did not tend to construct an organic passage from the other classes into their own, i.e. to enlarge their class sphere “technically” and ideologically: their conception was that of a closed caste. The bourgeois class poses itself as an organism in continuous movement, capable of absorbing the entire society, assimilating it to its own cultural and economic level.¹⁴

Thanks to this essential feature of the capitalist class and its historically unique form of rule (cultural hegemony), there is no need to fiercely oppose challenges to the narrative, challenges can be *absorbed*. For example, it is not negated by the festival that there was a movement by ‘vanishing mediators’ for reforming the DDR along the lines of democratic socialism. Instead this challenge is absorbed into the larger picture. Take for example the exhibit called *Lessons in Realpolitik*: “The dream of some Round Table participants of reforming the GDR, which they had so often discussed, was lost underfoot. Democracy needs majorities and there wasn’t one for developing socialism in East Germany.” On the stella *Reunification: Hopes and Fears* is written: “Fears were voiced among the opposition in the GDR that the East would be swallowed up by the West. The author Stefan Heym called the FRG a pirate state while East Germans viewed the welcome money and gifts of bananas and cola with skepticism. People in the West were particularly worried about footing the bill for transfer costs and social security payments. They also had concerns about large numbers of “Ossis” who they believed could not have internalized the fundamental values of a stable democracy after 40 years of dictatorship (...) For Germany, some of the fears came true – but above all, so did the hopes: Surveys show that reunification is considered one of the happiest moments in German history, second only to the fall of the Wall itself.” In another moment of the festival, I attended a roundtable called “Ostdeutsch Plus: The DDR migration-society since the fall of the Wall.” The discussion about comparing the experience of labor migrants and racism in DDR and post-socialist Germany began with the filmmaker Atif Mohammed Nor Hussein’s comment that “we speak of East and West but the DDR was also a society of immigration. The fact that there are East Germans who are not white is often forgotten, and we would like to remind – in order to cultivate a peaceful life in a harmonious Germany” and the novelist Lahya Aukongo read from her memoir about shedding tears with her sister during the Wende that ‘Our Erich Honecker’ had resigned. More interestingly she asked “Why doesn’t anyone remember solidarity anymore?” Another speaker named Laura recalled that the Wende was not imprinted with euphoria or hope in her memory, but rather recalled stories of black men being beaten by skinheads in Magdeburg and fearing for her brother: The moderator’s response was to ask how Laura understands her experiences in light of the whole festival, with the knowledge that the Wende gave her representative democracy and freedom of speech. Her answer “Yes, I suppose all this euphoria is quite contaminating, but the slogan ‘Wir sind Das Volk’ was frightening to me, because, who is that ‘We’? (...) we

12 Boduszyński, Mieczysław P., and Vjieran Pavlaković. “Cultures of Victory and the Political Consequences of Foundational Legitimacy in Croatia and Kosovo.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 54, no. 4 (October 2019): 799–824.

13 https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/stasi-unterlagenbeauftragter-roland-jahn-die-stasi-akten.990.de.html?dram:article_id=467579

14 Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections From the Prison Notebooks*, eds. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International, 1971), 260

still don't *really* talk about racism, there is still racism, there was in DDR and there is in Germany now. My experiences were not understood properly as defined by my race. I suppose that there is a generation now that can more freely talk about racism." Here was something like a limit case when it seemed like the whole ideological operation of the festival would collapse, and yet in the final utterance, the counternarrative (that the Wende did not fix racism) was subsumed in the master-narrative – the Wende permitted a 'new generation' to emerge and 'open' East Germany, and the emergent bourgeois public sphere may work out the problem of racism even if the Wende itself did not.

We may call this a 'discourse of the cultural hegemon' that eschews negating alternatives in favor of absorbing them into their own logic. This discourse, I claim, is more central to the ideology of post-communist capitalism than the discourse of the Master and the discourse of the Hysteric¹⁵ drawn out by Žižek in the influential 1993 essay *Love Your Nation Like Yourself* where he claimed the definitive fissure in post-communist political life was the organically linked *Gemeinschaft* struggling against the alienated *Gesellschaft* shorn of organic links.¹⁶ Of course, what the Gramsci passage makes explicit is that advanced capitalist *gesellschaft* rules *precisely* through organic links (ie. A peasant or a worker *can* become a capitalist under the law) that can absorb the *gemeinschaft* (more on this below.) This underdeveloped dichotomy led Žižek to a weak theory of the link between nationalism and capitalism – precisely that the former would bring in the discourse of the Master to discipline the discourse of the hysteric and 'absorb the shock' and we would see an endless cycle of competition between liberals (hysteric discourse) and national populists (Master.) But Ivan Szelenyi has revealed the standard historical sequence of post-communist national populisms to be that they will begin with an appeal to organic community as movements, and then as regimes, they turn to a project of reconstructing the bourgeoisie.¹⁷ So it is not surprising that the populists antisystem parties employ the same standard model for memory politics as the mainstream – they are naturally gravitating into the hegemonic mainstream.

What I saw at *Mauerfall30* was that there is no need for a discourse of the Master to absorb the shock of capitalism that was felt by East Germans since the Wende. Instead, the discourse of the Hegemon invites subjects to enjoy the shock, to celebrate the victory of the entrepreneurial class that broke down the wall and to learn their values: enterprise, civil society, Christian work ethic, free speech, etc., so that we may participate meaningfully in the representative democracy they have built since 1989. Alternative memories that appeal to different social values like solidarity, stability, and security itself are given a nod, but it is clear that they are symptoms of attachment to the bygone and meaningless era of totalitarian communism.

15 Žižek, Slavoj. *Tarrying With the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and The Critique of Ideology* (Duke: 1993) 209-210.

16 Ibid., 211.

17 Szelenyi, Ivan. *Weber's Theory of Domination and Post-Communist Capitalisms* (Theory and Society) Spring 2017

Reinventing Democracy as Orientalist-Anticommunism

What concretely was celebrated at *Mauerfall30*? What is at stake for the State in narrating 1989? The answer seems as obvious to me as it did to Žižek when he asked what Western polities saw when they looked at the collapse of state socialisms in the early 90s – its about the reinvention of democracy of course!¹⁸ But it is obvious from this festival that a lot has changed since the Slovene penned *Love Your Nation Like Yourself*. The East is no longer gazed upon by the West as an Ego-Ideal, it has ceased to be 'a spectacle of democratic invention.' Likewise it no longer looks at the West with a naïve gaze for its own *agalma*. Instead, the East has invented democracy's illiberal variant and stares at the West with a bemused and defiant smirk. The gaze of the Western mainstream is well captured by a stella entitled *30 after 1989* at the Brandenburger Tor exhibit:

The legacy of the peaceful revolutions is no longer undisputed. Russia appears to have given up on being part of the common European home. (...) In Russia and to a lesser extent in some Central and Eastern European states, many now question the principal legacy of 1989: the restriction of political power through checks and balances and free and pluralistic societies.

So Žižek's formula should be reconstructed thus: the West still defines itself as democratic with its gaze to the East, but what it sees in 2019 is a determinant negation. I understand European democracy, following Luciano Canfora, as a mixed system (of financial oligarchy with representative democracy) in a serious representation crisis.¹⁹ Since 2009 it became clear that the European Council is mechanically unable to represent any people to the Central Bank. Moreover, elected representatives of ordinary people can be disciplined by financial elites when the austerity-regime is challenged.²⁰ The definition of democracy appearing in the European Constitution is a reading of Thucydides' citation of Pericles, it holds that 'power is held not by a minority but by the people.' In ancient Athens, where the security of the state depended on the navy, *demokratos* meant that marines drawn from the *demos* could participate in a voting public that restricted aristocratic domination of the city's politics. It seems like this gaping contradiction in how European democracy functions and how it imagines its identity is held from view by the mainstream memory-regime, which was substantially reconstructed in the decade since the EuroCrisis. With its' 2010 Resolution on European Conscience and Totalitarianism, and the 2019 Resolution on the Importance of European Remembrance For The Future of Europe, the European Parliament inserted a new content to fill up the hollowed out definition of democracy – basically a recapitulation of the medieval German 'myth of the reich.'²¹ The Holy Roman Emperor Otto legitimated his domain as a bulwark against the pagan East. Likewise, the European Parliament:

18 Žižek, 200.

19 Canfora, Luciano. *Democracy in Europe: A History* Simon Jones Trans. (Wiley, 2004)

20 Varoufakis, Yannis. *Adults in The Room* (Bodley Head, 2017)

21 Riley, Dylan. (2018). *Metaphysicking the West*. In *Left Review*, N. (ed) *New Left Review 113*. New Left Review Ltd, pp. 125-140

15. Maintains that Russia remains the greatest victim of communist totalitarianism and that its development into a democratic state will be impeded as long as the government, the political elite and political propaganda continue to whitewash communist crimes and glorify the Soviet totalitarian regime; calls, therefore, on Russian society to come to terms with its tragic past;

16. Is deeply concerned about the efforts of the current Russian leadership to distort historical facts and whitewash crimes committed by the Soviet totalitarian regime and considers them a dangerous component of the information war waged against democratic Europe that aims to divide Europe, and therefore calls on the Commission to decisively counteract these efforts;

17. Expresses concern at the continued use of symbols of totalitarian regimes in the public sphere and for commercial purposes, and recalls that a number of European countries have banned the use of both Nazi and communist symbols;

18. Notes that the continued existence in public spaces in some Member States of monuments and memorials (parks, squares, streets etc.) glorifying totalitarian regimes, which paves the way for the distortion of historical facts about the consequences of the Second World War and for the propagation of the totalitarian political system.²²

Here, European democracy's social content equals less than nothing: the incomplete absence of communist totalitarian symbols in the public sphere. In a way it's a response to the memory-politics of Putinism that hails Stalin as the kind of master-figure that Russia needs. Simultaneously, the representation crisis of western democracy is abnegated and recast as a bulwark against Eastern tyranny. *Mauerfall30* made the same gestures, it avoided questioning how the legacy of 1989 may have something to do with the erosion of German democracy's social base – in evidence from the lightning growth of the antisystem movement AfD in the eastern *länder*. Instead, the festival interpellated audiences to relive the euphoria of overcoming communism 30 years ago and dread its return from the ever-uncivilized East.

M*auerfall30*'s orientalist-anticommunism was consistent with the message of Poland's '30-years since 1989' festival in Gdansk. *Święto Wolności i Solidarności* was held at the European Solidarity Centre (ECS) from 1-11 July. Months before the event, Gliški's culture ministry cut ECS funding by 40 %, forcing them to put out a call for private donations, and in the final calculus they generated ten times more than the planned budget. It was not a huge surprise, as the center enjoys enormous support among the still sizeable opposition to PiS' memory-regime. When the coffin of murdered Gdansk mayor Paweł Adamowicz was laid there for viewing in January 2019, director Berski commented 'this was always a temple of democracy.' The crowd-funded festivities were authentically jubilant compared to the forced joy of *Mauerfall30*, probably due to the summer weather and anti-state energy. Their climax was a roundtable discussion entitled '30 Years of Polish Democracy' with Lech Wałęsa, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and Bronisław

Komorowski giving remarks. Wałęsa's main point was that his generation should not be blamed for the illiberal turn – 'how later generations configure democracy is up to them, we created a chance for them.' For his part Komorowski spoke the phrase 'there was no alternative' with no hint of irony to sum up his reflection. And when he spoke the name Balcerowicz, the room broke out in spontaneous applause. Kwaśniewski remarked that the Poles had become an entrepreneurial people since 1989, and this should be celebrated, but the democracy they had built – it had to be admitted – is in crisis. Democracy's crisis has roots in social inequality and the fact that the post-'89 generation never had to fight for it. Because they take it for granted, the youth are in danger of being seduced by alternative models represented by Russia and China. These comments seemed to me a crucial elision of what should be asked about 1989: 'Why did the project to reconstruct the wreckage of socialist states into capitalist states fail to restrict the power of money over politics, to limit corruption, and to prevent runaway social inequality? In what ways did those failures weaken our democratic institutions to the point they are falling to antisystem movements like dominoes across the region?' Instead, the mainstream memory-entrepreneurs repeated the orientalist-anticommunist model beloved by the antisystem parties. When Kwaśniewski or *Mauerfall30* say that the legacy of 1989 is threatened by Russia, they enact the same sleight of hand as AfD, who says there is a need for *Wende 2.0* to meet the putative migrant threat. If they wish to neutralize the antisystem movements, the mainstream need to adopt a different stance, perhaps by saying 'we made mistakes in the 90s with privatization, this is the root of the current democracy's problems, not an incipient communist plot. 1989 shows that ordinary people can organize for effective social change – we need this kind of organization to confront the financial oligarchy, rather than the enemies invented by the populists.' This might not be the exact winning formula but as it stands, the memory-politics of the mainstream only mirrors that of the antisystem movements.

²² http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2019-0021_EN.html

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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 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.

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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.

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ISEEES Fellowship Recipients

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, ISEEEES is able to provide the following fellowships to our graduate students:

ISEEES AY2020-21 Dissertation Grants

Wendi Bootes, *Comparative Literature*
Brian Egdorf, *Slavic Languages and Literatures*
Lee Hekking, *History*
Clare Ibarra, *History*
Otto Kienitz, *Political Science*
Pawel Koscielny, *History*
Karina McCorkle, *Slavic Languages and Literatures*
Eve McGlynn, *Geography*
Dominick Lawton, *Slavic Languages and Literatures*
David Parker, *Slavic Languages and Literatures*
Melissa Samarin, *Political Science*
Aleksandra Simonova, *Anthropology*
Thomas Sliwowski, *Comparative Literature*
Agnieszka Smelkowska, *History*

ISEEES 2020 Summer Fellowships

Lee Hekking, *History*
Blaze Joel, *History*
Harrison King, *History*
Pawel Koscielny, *History*
Karina McCorkle, *Slavic Languages and Literatures*
Agnieszka Smelkowska, *History*
Richard Smith, *History*

Campus Visitors

Kristian Átland was a Visiting Scholar with ISEEEES during the 2019-2020 academic year. He will be working on a project entitled “Destined for Deadlock? Russia, Ukraine, and the Demise of the Minsk II Agreement.”

Kacper Dziekan was a Visiting Fulbright Student Researcher with ISEEEES during the 2019-2020 academic year. He will be working on a project entitled “‘Russian America’ and its Meaning for the Collective Memory of the Indigenous Peoples of Former Russian Colonies in North America.”

Zhanat Kundakbayeva was a Visiting Fulbright Scholar with ISEEEES during the 2019-2020 academic year. While at Berkeley, she will be working on her project “Writing a Multifocal Narrative of the Colonial Periphery and Decentering its Pictorial Construction: by Kazakhstani Locals and Dudin’s 1899 Photographs Perspective.”

Gašper Mithans is a Visiting Fulbright Scholar with ISEEEES for Spring and Summer 2020. While at Berkeley, he will pursue research on the religious behavior of Slovenian and other former Yugoslav immigrants in California, particularly in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Riikkamari Muhonen was a Visiting Fulbright Student Researcher with ISEEEES during the 2019-2020 academic year. She will be working on her dissertation: “The Connections of Moscow-based Peoples’ Friendship University with the Developing World in 1960-1979: A Case Study of Soviet Transnational Relations.”

Velislava Petrova was a Visiting Fulbright Scholar with ISEEEES during the Spring 2020 semester. She is currently investigating the way materialities of waste influence economies of waste with special interest on the different imaginations constructed around the category of waste. Her project is entitled Materialities of Dirt and Economies of Waste.

Lucas van der Velde was a Visiting Scholar with ISEEEES during the 2019-2020 academic year. He will be working on a research project “Automation and Employment Polarization in Transition Countries: A Political-Economic View,” focusing on Central and Eastern Europe.

Faculty and Student News

George Breslau (Political Science) published an article, “Re-forming sacred institutions, Part II: The Soviet Party-State and the Roman Catholic Church compared,” in *Post-Soviet Affairs*, July 2019; “Politics, Passion, Productivity, and Possibilism,” the preface in *Galia Golan: An Academic Pioneer on the Soviet Union, Peace and Conflict Studies, and a Peace and Feminist Activist* (Spring Nature, 2019); and *The Rise and Demise of World Communism*, a book manuscript under review for publication. He also presented at the 2019 ASEEEES convention in San Francisco: “Stephen F. Cohen, *War with Russia?*,” and “The Berkeley-Stanford Project in Retrospect” at Stanford University in November 2019.

Leonid Elyon (BA 2020, Slavic - Polish and Russian) received the Slavic Departmental citation for 2020.

Lyubov Golburt (Slavic) is co-editing, together with Catherine Ciepiela (Amherst) and Stephanie Sandler (Harvard), a large-scale volume on the history of Russian poetry from the early modern period to the present, commissioned by Oxford University Press for the *Oxford Handbooks* series. Her article, “The Ethics of Grammar in Anna Glazova's Nature Lyric” is coming out in Germany this summer. In Spring 2020, Golburt served as the Interim Director of ISEEEES and, starting in Fall 2020, will take over from Eric Naiman in chairing the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

Ryan Gourley (PhD candidate, Music) presented "Echoes of the Tsar: Musical Narratives of the White Russian Diaspora in San Francisco" at "Symposium: Music and Politics in the 1930s" at the University of Melbourne (Australia) in December 2019. He has received an ISEEEES summer research fellowship to conduct archival research at the Museum of Russian Culture in San Francisco and a Title VIII fellowship for virtual Russian language study at the Summer Language Workshop at Indiana University. In the Fall he will begin an internship for phonograph record research at the Museum of Russian Culture in San Francisco, funded by the ASEEEES internship grant program.

Sabrina Jaszi (PhD candidate, Slavic) was awarded the university's Roselyn Schneider Eisner Prize in Prose and its Julia Keith Shroud Short Story Prize. She also contributed to a new volume of translations of Teffi's work, *Other Worlds: Peasants, Pilgrims, Spirits, Saints*, forthcoming with NYRB Classics.

Harrison King (PhD candidate, History) will study first-year Georgian through the American Councils Eurasian Regional Language Program (now online) with the support of a Title VIII Fellowship. In the 2020/21 academic year, he will conduct archival research in Georgia and Russia through the ASEEEES-sponsored Cohen-Tucker Dissertation Research Fellowship.

Linda Kinstler (PhD candidate, Rhetoric) published an essay, “Auschwitz, before it existed: Keeping alive memories of the horror,” in *The Times Literary Supplement*, May 8, 2020. <https://www.the-tls.co.uk/issues/may-8-2020/>

Dominick Lawton (PhD candidate, Slavic) was awarded a Gililand Scholarship by Phi Beta Kappa of Northern California. He had a contribution (“Comintern Aesthetics: Between Politics and Culture,” a chronology) published in the volume *Comintern Aesthetics*, ed. Amelia M. Glaser and Steven S. Lee, which came out with the University of Toronto Press in February. He presented a paper, “The Modernist Revolt of Things,” on the panel “Modernism and Material Culture,” at the 2019 ASEEEES convention in San Francisco in November. He also won an Outstanding GSI award this Spring, and received a Berkeley Language Center fellowship to develop materials for teaching Russian (“From Poetry to Memes: Poetic Citation in Russian Language and Culture”) last Fall.

Melissa Samarin (PhD candidate, Political Science) was an Alfa Fellow from 2019-2020 living in Moscow and working at the Higher School of Economics for the year before being evacuated in March, just 3 days before the lockdown in Moscow went into effect. She was invited to the Valdai Conference in Sochi this October and asked to contribute to a research project for the conference.

Richard Smith (PhD candidate, History) received 2 fellowships during the 2019/20 academic year, one from the Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation, the other a Fulbright-Mach research grant (scheduled until the end of June but prematurely discontinued due to COVID). In October he attended the “XIII. Annual Convention of the Austrian and Central European Centers in Vienna” and gave a presentation entitled: “Promethean Empire: Habsburg Nation-Building in Bosnia and its Transformation of the Empire.”

Maria Sonevytsky (Music) had her first book, *Wild Music: Sound and Sovereignty in Ukraine*, published in the Music/Culture series of Wesleyan University Press in late 2019.

Matthew Stenberg and **Laura Jakli** (PhD candidates, Political Science) had their article published, “Everyday illiberalism: How Hungarian subnational politics propel single-party dominance,” in *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, available online: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/gove.12497>

Spring 2020 Courses

Selected course offerings and selected area-related courses

Armenian 124	Modern and Contemporary Armenian Literature Across Empires, Nations, and Peoples	Douzjian, M.
Comp Lit 100	Introduction to Comparative Literature:	Naiman, E.
Geography 170	Post-Socialist Spaces	Feakins, M.
History of Art 186A	The Shock of the Modern: European Art, 1900-1940	Glebova, A.
History 39H	Culture and Migration in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1800-2000	Philliou, C.
History 100M	The Ottoman Empire	Philliou, C.
History 100U	Holocaust Museums in Israel and the World	Rotem, S.
History 103B	Fall of the Soviet Union	Kellner, J.
History 162B	A Century of Struggle: International Relations, 1914-1989	Kellner, J.
History 167D	Berlin and the Twentieth Century	Hoffmann, S.
History 171C	The USSR: War and Revolution in Everyday Life	Peri, A.
History 172	Russian Intellectual History	Frede, V.
History 280B	European State-Building, 1800-1914	Frede, V.
History 280B	The Soviet Experience: A History of Everyday Life	Peri, A.
History 280U	Comparative Genocides	Astourian, S.
Music 80	Studies of Musics of the World	Sonevytsky, M.
Music 245	Music, Sexuality, and Gender	Sonevytsky, M.
Poli Sci W3	Introduction to Empirical Analysis and Quantitative Methods	Wittenberg, J.
Slavic R5A	Awkward: Social Indeterminacy in Russian Literature	Flaherty, J.
Slavic R5A	Rewriting Russia: <i>Twentieth-Century Women Writers and the Slavic Cultural Imagination</i>	McCorkle, K.
Slavic R5A	Post-Soviet Politics and Protest	Schwartz, C.
Slavic R5B	Beauty and Justice: Nabokov's <i>Lolita</i> and Coetzee's <i>Disgrace</i>	Whittle, M.
Slavic R5B	"For Paris is a Feast" <i>Russian & American Literary and Cultural Life in Interwar Paris</i>	DeWaele, K.
Slavic 39	Images of Eastern Europe	Frick, D.
Slavic 46	20th Century Russian Literature: <i>Utopias and Dystopias of the Russian Revolution</i>	Tyerman, E.
Slavic 49AC	Children's Literature	Nesbet, A.
Slavic 50	Introduction to Russian, East European, and Eurasian Cultures	Kavitskaya, D.
Slavic 133	The Many Faces of the 19th-Century European Novel	Golburt, L.
Slavic 134G	Tolstoy and Dostoevsky	Paperno, I.
Slavic 134N	Russia and Asia	Tyerman, E.
Slavic 147A	East Slavic Folklore	Flaherty, J.
Slavic 170	Written in Exile: An Emergent Post-Yugoslav Literature?	Popovic, D.
Slavic 188	Contemporary Russian Prose	Sokolov, I.
Slavic 210	Old Church Slavic	Frick, D.
Slavic 246A	Russian Modernism (1890s-1920s)	Matich, O.
Slavic 280	The Novel	Paperno, I.
Slavic 280	The Living Russian Word	Kavitskaya, D.;
		Muza, A.
Slavic 375A	Language Pedagogy – Russian 1-4	Muza, A.

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