

## East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### Roundtable on the State of the Art of Historical Studies

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2012

Location: Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

Co-organized by *Pasts Inc.*, *Center for Historical Studies* located at the Central European University in Budapest (<http://pasts.ceu.hu/>) and *Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena* (<http://www.imre-kertesz-kolleg.uni-jena.de/>), *East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Roundtable on the State of the Art of Historical Studies* is meant to serve two interrelated purposes. First, it is called to foster reflection and dialogue on the state of the art and potential future direction of historical research dealing with East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, a number of scholars with substantial contributions to the most dynamic thematic subfields are invited to share their scholarly insights and personal experiences while some of the leading scholars dealing with the history of East Central Europe are kindly asked to serve as commentators. Second, the roundtable is organized to better acquaint internationally oriented scholars dealing with this multifaceted region with each other and provide a forum where new agendas can be formulated.

Specific subjects shall be discussed in individual panels ranging from alternative approaches to the study of the region, such as the comparative, the transnational and the entangled, different spatial conceptualizations and uses of regional studies in various localities through diverging and conflicting national interpretations to the study of dictatorships and their remembrance to the challenge of integrating non-mainstream themes and actors into mainstream national and regional historiographies (please see below). Individual presentations shall last no longer than fifteen to twenty minutes and will be commented upon by distinguished scholars. All panels will include extended discussions. The discussions shall draw on in-depth studies of recent historiography published in volumes such as *(Re)Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism* edited by Ulf Brunnbauer, *Narratives Unbound: Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe* edited by Sorin Antohi, Balázs Trencsényi, and Péter Apor, well as on the recent all-European projects on modern historiography such as the volumes in the *Writing the Nation* series edited by Stefan Berger, Christoph Conrad and Guy P. Marchal.

## Structure of the event

**11<sup>th</sup> of May 2012**

**13:00 Welcome** on behalf of the two organizing institutions as well as the Department of History of the Central European University: Nadia al-Bagdadi, Włodzimierz Borodziej, Constantin Iordachi and Balázs Trencsényi. **Introduction** by the main organizers of the event: Balázs Trencsényi and Ferenc Laczó.

### **13:15 Panel One. Comparative, Transnational and Entangled Approaches to East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

The panel compares and contrasts mainstream approaches to the regional history of East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, hoping to foster joint reflection and debate on fundamental methodological and theoretical issues. Speakers shall analyze the current achievements in and relations between comparative, transnational and entangled historiography, discuss their intellectual promises more generally as well as explore their applicability and usefulness for the writing of the history of political thought, historiography and the study of religions.

Commentator: László Kontler (Central European University)

Joachim von Puttkamer (Imre Kertész Kolleg) / East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Comparative Perspective

Holly Case (Cornell University, Ithaca, NY and Fellow at Imre Kertész Kolleg) / Transnational Approaches to East Central Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Balázs Trencsényi (Central European University and Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies) / The Challenge of Studying the Political Thought of East Central Europe: Between European Embeddedness and National Autarchy

Maciej Górny (Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw and Fellow at Imre Kertész Kolleg) / Writing Comparative Histories of Historiography

Maria Falina (Postdoctoral Fellow at the Central European University) / The Historical Study of Religion

Discussion

**15:30 Break**

### **15:45 Panel Two. The Regional *Problématique* in Various National Contexts**

With its second panel, the roundtable turns to the discussion of various local sensitivities and criteria of relevance. Based on the recognition that all historical understanding relies on specific perspectives and employs spatial categories, this panel aims to map the variety of regional

historiographical agendas and inquire into their national and international embeddedness. Individual panelists shall discuss the geographical and thematic focuses, major results and main uses of regional studies in various national contexts while also reflecting on how their international contexts, including cooperation as well as competition, have impacted them. The panel thereby hopes to foster more nuanced awareness of alternative (and occasionally contrasting) regional notions and discuss potential ways to make scholarly agendas more compatible.

Commentator: Diana Mishkova (Center for Advanced Study, Sofia)

Michal Kopeček (Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague) / On Czech regional conceptualizations

Błażej Brzostek (Institute of History, University of Warsaw) / On Polish regional conceptualizations

Péter Apor (Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies, Fellow at Imre Kertész Kolleg) / On Hungarian regional conceptualizations

16:45 - 17:00 Break

Paul Gradvohl (University of Nancy 2) / On French regional conceptualizations of East Central Europe

Andrea Feldman (University of Zagreb) / On regional conceptualization in the post-Yugoslav space

18:15 - 18:30 Break

### **18:30 Book Launches**

László Péter, *Hungary's Long Nineteenth Century* (Brill Publishers, 2012). Presenters: Martyn Rady and Miklós Lojkó.

*New Approaches to the Study of Communism. The Publications of IICCMER*. Presenter: Bogdan Iacob.

Andrea Feldman (ed.), *Women's History in Croatia*. Presenter: Andrea Pető with the editor of the volume, Andrea Feldman, and one of its contributors, Ana Munk.

Dinner at 20:00

**12<sup>th</sup> of May 2012**

**10:00 Panel Three. Dealing with Conflicting National Interpretations**

A plethora of competitive and mutually exclusive national programs have been formulated in East Central Europe of the modern era. They have fuelled and been fuelled by interethnic violence. As a consequence, the ethnic diversity previously so characteristic of the region has greatly diminished. In the meantime, the ways national overlaps have been discussed (or ignored) and eliminated have emerged as crucial historiographical issues. Panel Three shall discuss three different cases of overlapping national histories in East Central Europe that, at least in part, continue to be characterized by conflicting interpretations. Panelists shall compare various types of overlaps and contests, historicize national conflicts and discuss their current relevance, including the prospects of various reconciliation efforts.

Commentator: Włodzimierz Borodziej (Imre Kertész Kolleg and Institute of History, University of Warsaw)

Philipp Ther (University of Vienna, TBC) / On Ethnic Cleansing in 20<sup>th</sup> Century East Central Europe

Hannes Grandits (Free University Berlin) / Serbian-Croatian-Bosnian

René Küpper (Collegium Carolinum, München) / Czech-German

Ovidiu Pecican (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj) / Hungarian-Romanian

Tibor Frank (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) / Disputed Territories and Shared Pasts in Modern East Central Europe

Discussion

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch Break

**13:30 - 16:00 Panel Four. The Dual Dictatorial Legacy of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Current Uses and the Challenge of Historicization**

Based on the recognition that East Central Europe has to deal with the dual legacy of fascism and communism in an age when the memory boom has greatly impacted historiographical priorities as well, Panel Four brings together case studies of history and memory. It deals with how the histories of communism and fascism are currently written, what approaches have proved most fruitful and what new directions of inquiry appear most promising. Some panelists shall analyze scholarly options to deal with the memory of these recent periods and ways to study the current cultural and political uses of such memories. The panel thus aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the historiography of the dictatorial regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in their regional variety as well as the local landscapes of their intertwined memory.

Commentator: Ulf Brunnbauer (University of Regensburg)

Dietmar Müller (Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas, Leipzig) / Current Discussions on the Dual Legacy of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Bogdan Iacob (The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Bucharest) / New Trends in the Study of Communism

James Mark (University of Exeter) / Studying the Memory of Communism

Constantin Iordachi (Central European University and Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies) / New Trends in the Study of Fascism

Margit Feischmidt (The Institute for Ethnic and National Minority Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest) / Studying Contemporary Right-Wing Extremism

Discussion

16:00 - 16:15 Break

**16:15 - 17:45 Panel Five. Integrating Non-National Phenomena and Non-Mainstream Historical Actors**

Panel Five enquires into the changing priorities of national and regional histories. On the most general level, it asks what principles of selection are currently at work in various places. More particularly, the panelists shall analyze how non-national or non-mainstream actors appear and how current researches of their histories, including discourses on exclusion, victimhood and responsibility, are renegotiated in mainstream national and regional canons. Does internationally oriented history writing function as the critique of national histories and is it among its tasks to compensate for the typically mono-ethnic focus and biases of the latter?

Commentator: John Neubauer (University of Amsterdam)

Armina Omerika (Ruhr University of Bochum, TBC) on the history of Muslims

Ines Koeltzsch (CET Prague) and Ferenc Laczó (Imre Kertész Kolleg) on Jewish history

Celia Donert (Postdoctoral Fellow at the Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam) on the history of the Romani people

17:45 - 18:00 Break

18:00 - 18:30 Final Discussion and Closing Remarks