

## Cultures of South-Eastern Europe

Date	Lecturer	Lecture
5 October 2015	Dimitar Kostadinov Kambourov, PhD (Sofia), visiting academic	<p><u>Bulgarian Culture, a Historical Perspective, Part 1, 681-1908, From Founding to Independence</u></p> <p>The lecture is meant to introduce the mixed audience to the cultural history of a tiny European country that used to be powerful politically and influential culturally in its remote past. Established in 681, Bulgaria is among the first slavonic kingdoms in Europe. It snatched territory from Byzantium, predominantly lands populated by Slavs and by Thracians, but only Proto-Bulgarians managed to claim these territories as a state, turning thus Byzantine Empire into a historical neighbour and an arch-enemy. Being a state based on three pagan ethnic substrates it was crucial for Bulgaria to, first, adopt Christianity, and, second, create its own Slavonic Christian culture. Both projects succeeded in the second half of 9th C. Moreover, in the early 10th C Bulgaria became the main source and exporter of Christian culture and letters for the entire Slavic world, providing most of them with the new Cyrillic alphabet and with books translated or written in Old Church Slavonic, called by some Old Bulgarian language.</p> <p>This Golden Age of Bulgarian Culture was followed by periods of ascendancy and decline. Bulgaria suffered and survived through two long periods of foreign rule by the Byzantine and the Ottoman Empires. The period of Bulgarian Revival is insurmountable prerequisite for understanding contemporary Bulgaria as the mythopoetic narratives for constructing its national identity have been then invented and established. Its liberation in 1878 brought the development of a modern national culture. Based initially on a mixture of folklore and the Christian Slavonic tradition of the First and Second Kingdom, it integrated various foreign influences in achieving its own national cultural image and character.</p>
12 October	Dimitar Kostadinov Kambourov	<p><u>Bulgarian Culture, a Historical Perspective, Part 2, 1908-2007: From Independence to Unification</u></p>

		<p>We will actually start with 1905 when Modernism emerged. We will continue with the periods before, during and after the wars. The communist period will also be envisaged and evaluated. Finally, the period of Transition, i.e. the last 25 years, will be discussed.</p> <p>By patiently overcoming its regionalism and provincialism, uncertainty and stubbornness, unproductive sticking to models and confusing vacillations between formative influences, Modern Bulgarian culture passed through a number of cultural models, most of which were in fact competing contemporaries fighting for recognition and authority. Still the wide diversity might be heuristically reduced to two main tendencies, the Nationalist-Collectivist one and the Modernist-Individualist one. By applying such agonistic (rather than antagonistic) model, we'll be able to avoid the illusion of period identity. A particular focus will be put on the contradictions that construct the post-1989 cultural stage, when an opening towards a market dominated cultural production had to put up with an increasingly diminishing international visibility and recognition of Bulgarian culture.</p>
19 October	Dimitar Kostadinov Kambourov	<p><u>Bulgarian Literary Canon in the Context of European Great Books</u></p> <p>The lecture dedicated to Bulgarian culture will focus on the highest achievements of the modern literature and the arts before and after the national liberation. It will outline the most typical features of the masterpieces produced within Bulgarian culture.</p> <p>The greatest poet Botev is a proper starting point, provoking the question why Bulgarian poetry is so much better than our fiction, or is it? We will shed light on Vazov, Yavorov, Debelyanov, Dalchev, Vaptzarov and a number of contemporary poets.</p> <p>The overview on Bulgarian fiction will start with Vazov's novel <i>Under the Yoke</i>, Aleko Konstantinov's masterpiece Bay Ganyo and Elin-Pelin's and Yovkov's short stories. Dimitar Dimov, Radichkov, Vera Mutafchieva and Ivaylo Petrov will be also discussed.</p>
<p>26 October – there will be no lecture (Bank Holiday)</p>		

2 November	Dimitar Kostadinov Kambourov	<p><u>Bulgarian Masterpieces in Comparative Perspective</u></p> <p>Bulgarian music will be presented through an overview of Bulgarian folk music and its importance for the classical Bulgarian canon, Petko Stainov, Pancho Vladigerov, Ljubomir Pipkov, as well as for the internationally acclaimed musicians Milcho Leviev, Ibryam Papazov, and Teodosiy Spassov.</p> <p>Theater will be presented through its main characteristics and tendencies. Dimitar Gotschev and Yavor Gardev as international celebrities will be introduced.</p> <p>Visual arts will be addressed through a cluster of powerful figures like, Vladimir Dimitrov-the Master, Dechko Uzunov and others.</p> <p>Bulgarian cinema will be presented through the masterpieces of Georgy Dyulgerov, Rangel Vulchanov and Methody Andonov.</p> <p>Finally, we will pay tribute to Bulgarian performing arts through the names of Bulgarian opera singers and classical instrumentalists.</p> <p>Internationally acclaimed contemporary Bulgarian artists like Christo, Solakov, Tabakova and others, will allow us to wrap up the overview.</p>
9 November	Dimitar Kostadinov Kambourov	<p><u>Balkan Slavonic Culture Between East and West: a Postcolonial and Gender Perspective</u></p> <p>An approach of en-gendering the East-West partnership is crucial for understanding the hidden prejudices and apprehensions that hampered their ongoing attempts to get together and get along.</p> <p>The third lecture will provide such a comparative approach that is both more theoretical and more practical. First we will question the gaze of the West: why we, the people from the Balkans, have been perceived as the internal, hidden, suppressed and/or displaced other of the European West? What are the possible reasons behind the usual stereotypes and clichés about us? Why our in-betweenness turned out to be an instrument for our internal marginalization and deprivation of</p>

		<p>phenomenological solidity and clear physiognomy? What are the mythological automatisms still at work in the perceptive models of <i>the bridge</i>, <i>the crossroad</i> and <i>the road</i> between two presumably self-identical entities – Orient and Occident?</p> <p>In order to address this issue the lecture will put together a postcolonial reading of the way the Balkans have been perceived and articulated. A particular emphasize will fall on its gender perception. The paradox is that the Balkans in fact drop from the automatic gender pattern of feminizing the other. The latter is valid for Eastern Europe as Larry Wolff's <i>Inventing Eastern Europe</i> has shown. Yet the Balkans endure an alternative process of extreme masculinization. Why the internal other of the Balkans was perceived through the symbolic imaginary of masculinity, what was their own contribution and what was imposed on them through a masculinization on the verge of monstrosity? What were the responses of the Balkan cultures to such aggressive perceptive model? Was it a predominantly positive embracing or rather a negative adjustment with attempts to reconsider and counter-project such imposed gender perception?</p>
16 November	Sanja Frankovic, Visiting Research Fellow	<p><u>The Interference of Styles in Croatian Painting at the End of the 19th and Beginning of the 20th Century (on the example of Slava Raškaj)</u></p> <p>Painter Slava Raškaj (1877-1906), Croatian watercolorist, was born in Ozalj, which landscape inspired her painting. She was deaf and mute from birth, but her talent was recognized by Ozalj teacher Ivan Muha-Otoić, who took her to Zagreb in 1896. Famous painter Vlaho Bukovac sent her to his ex-disciple Bela Čikoš Sesija. Slava was not inclined to the dark palette of Čikoš, but when he showed her his old watercolorized drawings of Croatian castles and towns, she found her technique. In the short time of her creativity and life more painting styles can be recognized: the <i>realistic</i> depictions of plants and flowers and the copying of plaster statues during her schooling in Vienna, <i>plain air painting</i>, which is rather an expression of her sensibility than the influence of „Zagreb multicolored school“, and <i>faivism</i> in the final phase (the paintings of</p>

		<p>human characters in the contrast of bright colours).</p> <p>Slava Raškaj had a sense for the small details of landscape and the game of light and colours. That was congruent with the <i>modern style</i> (Croatian term: <i>secesija</i>), which tended to include the aesthetic expression of all arts and art crafts, literature, and theater. The ornamental features of the modern style are visible on Slava's paintings of plants and flowers (water lilies, daisies, and tulips). She also had a talent in applied art forms and made vignettes, stylized ornaments in books, hand-held fans, and ceramic objects applicable in everyday life.</p> <p>Slava's paintings are her own experience of the material world. In <i>symbolist</i> moments, the motifs of flowers and people reflected her intimate being. Slava was not an isolated artist: she had been visiting international exhibitions (Hrvatski salon / Croatian salon 1898; Saint Petersburg 1899; Paris World Exhibition 1900), was a part of Croatian art circle, and published her works in the newspaper <i>Vijenac / The Wreath</i>. However, her deaf was a great obstacle to her, and her techniques of watercolour and pastel were not accepted as a serious at the beginning of the 20th century. She died in a mental hospital in Stenjevac, but her work of original inspiration remained. Slava's life and work became the theme of more authors. Art critic Matko Peić wrote a monograph 1957, writer Nada Iveljić dedicated to her a fictionalized biography <i>Bijela kopriva / White nettle</i> in 1988, and producer Dalibor Matanić made a film <i>Sto minuta Slava / Hundred minutes of Slava</i> (2004). An exhibition of her works was prepared in the local museum of Ozalj in the centenary of her death (2006).</p>
23 November	Sanja Frankovic	<p><u>National Figures of Heroes in the Statuary of Ivan Meštrović and the Epic Cycle <i>Croatian kings</i> of Vladimir Nazor</u></p> <p>This lecture compares the literary and art forming of national characters in the context of modern style (Croatian: <i>secesija</i>; Italian: <i>stile floreale</i>; German: <i>Jugendstil</i>; French: <i>art nouveau</i>) at the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century (until the First World War). Modern style is recognizable by its ornamentality and tendency towards aesthetic</p>

		<p>expression (herbal and geometric motifs, the characters of gigantic dimensions, historical themes mixed with mythological). The epic cycle <i>Hrvatski kraljevi / Croatian kings</i> of Vladimir Nazor (1912) is a literary equivalent to the athletic sculptures of national characters of Ivan Meštrović. Both artists followed an archaic style congruent with neo-Romantic currents at the beginning of the 20th century. Neo-Romantic tendency was to return to the distant past and national tradition. Croatian national idea of Nazor and Meštrović was not contradictory with their Yugoslav orientation, which is understandable in the context of their time. In intention of separating from Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Croatia was not politically and economically strong enough. So Yugoslav orientation was an option of exit from Monarchy, where the defense of Croatian national distinctiveness always encountered many obstacles. The lecture will compare the pictures of Meštrović's sculptures with Nazor's literary stylization (plastic poetical images, pathetic tone, dramatic approach to tragic national past after glorious beginnings).</p>
30 November	Sanja Frankovic	<p><u><i>Diocletian Palace as the Roman Heritage in Split and Today's Literary Theme (Veljko Barbieri, / Diocles Jupiter's Son)</i></u></p> <p>Diocletian's Palace was the last project of the Roman emperor Diocletian, who lived there after his voluntary abdication at the beginning of the 4th century. It was built by the architectural principle of a Roman military camp. Two main streets, <i>cardo</i> and <i>decumanus</i>, make a cross-shaped layout, four doors indicate to the four sides of the world, every quarter of the space has four fortifications, and the centre is a <i>navel of the world</i> (world axis), what means that the Palace was a copy of the world. After the destruction of Salona, the capital of the province of Dalmatia, Diocletian's Palace served as an asylum for refugees in the 7th century. The core of Split (Aspalathos) was developed from Diocletian's Palace. Today the Palace is a Roman heritage of Split and a frequent literary theme.</p> <p>After the historical and art representation of the Palace, the lecture will give its representation in the novel of Veljko Barbieri <i>I Diocles Jupiter's</i></p>

		<p><i>Son</i> (2008), where the emperor's return to homeland and new-built Palace means a return to the roots of an ordinary man and the consideration of his emperor's acts from the human, not divinized perspective. The lecture will compare the architectural features of Diocletian's Palace, its Roman historical context and symbolic role in Barbieri's novel, where it is a kind of isolated place that is a world in miniature and emperor's compensation after abdication. Today, Diocletian's Palace is a symbol of Split's pre-Slavic history and culture.</p>
7 December	Sanja Frankovic	<p><u>Old-Croatian Religious Architecture</u></p> <p>The lecture on Old-Croatian architecture will include the area of Istria, Croatian Littoral, middle Dalmatia and Dubrovnik with islands. Pre-Romanesque small churches were being built from 9th to 11th century. It was the time of the first Croatian principalities before the Croatian lands became the part of Hungarian crown.</p> <p>Old-Croatian architecture was conditioned by geographical, economical, social and political circumstances. Croats did not find a waste land on their immigration. They could not neglect the tradition of the old settlers – romanized Illyrians. Pre-Romanesque builders found still vivid antique forms or their remains. Interventions on the existing works implicated taking over the past features and economically introduction of new forms. The new church was not the sum of its elements, but unique building, which harmony was being realized in the unity of the building and its environment. The building's form follows the sun's motion. The appearance of the sun's rays on a particular place was being used in the building of pre-Romanesque churches. Their asymmetrical form is a consequence of its subordination to time's conditions. The orientation of churches was being adapted to the direction of the sun's rays, that would fall to the altar septum on the day of a particular saint. The geometric structure of the pre-Romanesque churches reveals that their builders knew the geographical and astronomical laws. Such approach connects the human with the cosmic world.</p>

14 December	Sanja Frankovic	<p><u>Arsen Dedić as a Croatian Singer, Songwriter and Contemporary Poet.</u></p> <p>Arsen Dedić (1938 – 2015) was the one of Croatian chanson's founder, the translator of foreign chansons of Gino Paoli, Sergio Endrigo and Jacques Brel, and a composer of his own chansons. He composed music for the poems of Croatian poets (Dobriša Cesarić, Miroslav Krleža, Zvonimir Golob, etc.), songs for other musicians (Gabi Novak, Ibrica Jusić and Dalmatian vocal groups called <i>klape</i>) and music for television, radio and theater. With his poetry he was a founder of the popular culture in the 1960's, but at same time he ironized it because of inclination to kitsch and consumerism. His poems are far from conceptual poetic introduced in 1960's by poets gathered around the journal <i>Razlog/Reason</i>. Arsen wrote about real feelings when social realism repressed love as an art theme. He was a founder of <i>new orality</i> and offered songs that public could experience emotionally. Arsen himself detected the roots of his „author's song“ in Italian chanson of the 1960's, but he also included the influence of Croatian folks singers called <i>guslari</i> after their instrument <i>gusle</i>. They were poets and singers at the same time. By his origins Arsen was close to that community.</p> <p>The lecture will compare Arsen's musical and poetic work, that connected Mediterranean tradition with postmodern intertextuality, irony and autoreferential questioning of music as his own choice. His poems written in the time of War of Independence also insist on irony and social criticism. Arsen connected Croatian poetry with diverse media, but never gave up from the quality of his work, even in 1990's, when the postmodern popular culture set consumerism on the first place. In the new millenium he continued his fight against kitsch and cultural dilettantism and turned from romance to irony and cynism. Despite that, he never ceased to believe in the sense of poetic word.</p>
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