



Presentations by Max Weber Fellows

11 and 25 October 2017
Sala degli Anelli, Villa Salviati

11 October 2017

9:15 **Introduction:** Ann Thomson

Session 1. **Chair:** Laura Downs

9:30 **Carolyn Schmitz:** *Collective and Individual Identities of Irregular Healers and their Patients: A Relational Approach to Medical Pluralism in Early Modern Spain.*

10:00 **Leonardo Ariel Carriò Cataldi:** *Early modern conceptions and measures of time: a historical approach*

10:30 **Blake Smith:** *The Upanishads and the Aryan Mind: Anquetil Duperron's Oupnek'hat*

11:00 Coffee-break

Session 2. **Chair:** Regina Grafe

11:30 **Angelo Caglioti:** *Fascist Internationalism. Italian Imperialism, Climatology, and the Origins of the F.A.O.(1905-1950)*

12:00 **Mishka Sinha:** *What the Thunder Said and Other (Dis)Orientations*

12:30 **Jared Holley:** *A Taste for Virtue: Refined Epicureanism and Rousseau's Political Thought*

25 October 2017

Session 3. **Chair:** Corinna Unger

14:30 **Madeleine Dungy:** *Cooperation and Rivalry in International Trade Politics during the Era of the World Wars*

15:00 **Christos Tsakas:** *The Quest for Enlargement: Greece, Norway, West Germany and the EEC, 1957–1981*

15:30 **Victor Petrov:** *Welcome to Cyberia: Bulgarian Modernisation, Computers, and the World 1967-1989*

16:00 Coffee-break

Session 4. **Chair:** Youssef Cassis

16:30 **Veneta Ivanova:** *Occult Communism: Culture, Spirituality and Science in Late Socialist Bulgaria*

17:00 **Pavel Khazanov:** *Recalling Russia: History and Memory of the Pre-Soviet Era, After Stalin Until Today*

17:30 **Katya Motyl:** *Rethinking Vienna's 'Sexual Crisis'*

Abstracts

Angelo Caglioti

Fascist Internationalism. Italian Imperialism, Climatology, and the Origins of the F.A.O. (1905-1950)

This presentation introduces some of the research questions that I will be pursuing during the time of as Max Weber Fellow. My research project here, tentatively titled “Fascist Internationalism. Italian Imperialism, Climatology, and the Origins of the F.A.O. (1905-1950),” investigates the continuities between Italian imperialism, scientific research in colonial climatology, and the origins of international development. From the beginning of Italian colonialism, engineering agricultural development was a crucial challenge for colonial experts. International cooperation in agricultural climatology allowed them to catch up with other European colonial empires. The International Institute of Agriculture (I.I.A.), the first global institution for international development that preceded the Food and Agriculture Organization (F.A.O.) of the United Nations, was created in Rome in 1905. Among many others tasks, the I.I.A.’s mission was to collect world-wide statistics about climatology and agricultural meteorology. Its research boosted the efforts of Italian colonial experts at the Agronomic Institute for Overseas in Florence. By the time of Mussolini’s “battle for grain,” the I.I.A. projected Fascism’s scientific influence beyond Italy’s colonial empire. In this presentation, I place this research in the broader context of my previous research about Italian imperialism, as well as the broader historiography about imperialism, internationalism, and international development.

Leonardo Ariel Carriò Cataldi

Early modern conceptions and measures of time: a historical approach

In my presentation I will sketch out the main lines of my research work. I will present my book project and the goals and challenges of my new project, entitled, *Translating time, constructing the world: from Mexico to the Eastern Mediterranean*. In this project, I propose to study 16th and 17th centuries circulation and production of measuring devices and practical knowledge in early modern European empires. The project focuses on the Iberian and the British empires, and argues that Early modern circulation of people and goods required the production, adjustment and commercialization of tools and practical knowledge that could be used anywhere in the world. The project relies on the analysis of a key and little-studied source, the *Bedwell’s Kalendarium* (London, 1614), which combines nine different calendars from Mexico to the Eastern Mediterranean. I claim that time synchronicity and translation practice were at the core of intellectual and commercial projects shaped by imperial circulations, competitions and religious oppositions.

Madeleine Dungy

Cooperation and Rivalry in International Trade Politics during the Era of the World Wars

My research focuses on the history of international trade institutions during the era of the World Wars. My presentation will provide an overview of my doctoral dissertation and my next research project.

My dissertation, “Peace, Power, and Economic Order: International Rivalry and Cooperation in European Trade Politics, 1900-1930,” examines the impact of the First World War on European trade politics. I argue that international commercial cooperation in the 1920s is best understood as a continuation of wartime dynamics of power politics, rather than as an idealistic disavowal of international rivalry. The League of Nations offered a means to realize expansive visions of economic geography and international political hierarchy, and diverse politicians and intellectuals competed to exploit this new institutional scaffolding. Many of the key features of our current systems of international economic governance were first tested in this highly charged context of competitive innovation.

My second research project, “Foreigners and Foreign Trade: Freedom of Movement and Economic Internationalism, 1918-1945,” analyses the divergence between international trade and migration regimes during the interwar years. League economic institutions proposed a novel model of international free trade that specifically excluded migration; they promoted the free movement of goods and capital, but not people. The League delegated exclusive authority to manage migration to a semi-autonomous affiliate, the International Labour Organization (ILO). My research will examine how this institutional separation between free trade and freedom of movement was implemented.

Jared Holley

A Taste for Virtue: Refined Epicureanism and Rousseau’s Political Thought

... every Epicurean who runs after pleasures is a madman how does not know what he wants, and does not understand anything in his master’s system. (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, c. 1761).

This presentation introduces the guiding questions of the work I will be doing as a Max Weber Fellow. It will focus on my book manuscript. Entitled *A Taste for Virtue: Refined Epicureanism and Rousseau’s political thought*, the book argues that in order to understand the form of modern political freedom envisioned by Rousseau, we have to understand his theory of taste as ‘refined Epicureanism’. Rousseau saw the division of labour and corrupt taste as the greatest threats to freedom in modernity. He identified their cause in the spread of ‘vulgar’ Epicureanism, the intemperate pursuit of money, vanity, and sensuality; in its place, he advocated what he called ‘refined Epicureanism’. Materially grounded on an equitable proportion of needs and faculties, this was a hedonist theory of self-command designed to cultivate the temperate enjoyment of sensual pleasure. A shift from vulgar to

refined Epicureanism would secure political freedom in modernity by grounding the politics of the general will in an economics of balanced growth and a reinvigorated appreciation of natural beauty. This perspective provides a new way of both understanding Rousseau's legacy in nineteenth-century liberalism, and of systematically clarifying the role of political economy and aesthetic judgment in his theory of popular sovereignty.

Veneta Ivanova

Occult Communism: Culture, Spirituality and Science in Late Socialist Bulgaria

My book project explores the unlikely infusion of state-sponsored spiritualism into the materialist ideology of Bulgarian late communism. In the 1970s, Minister of Culture and daughter of long-term party leader Lyudmila Zhivkova initiated grandiose state programs to inject the "occult" into Bulgaria's national culture, art, science and even political philosophy. Inspired by her Eastern religious beliefs, she sought to 'breed' a nation of "all-round and harmoniously developed individuals," devoted to spiritual self-perfection, who would ultimately "work, live and create according to the laws of beauty." My manuscript focuses on how Zhivkova translated her religio-philosophical worldview into state policies. I examine three realms of what I have termed "occult communism:" Zhivkova's domestic and international cultural initiatives; occult religiosity and the mystical movement known as the White Brotherhood; and occult science as embodied by the Scientific Institute of Suggestology. I contend that as utopian as Zhivkova's vision was, her policies contributed to the liberalization of art and culture in a period that has long been associated exclusively with stagnation and decay.

"Occult Communism" reveals first, that late communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union was less stagnant, monolithic and dull than usually imagined. Second, by pointing to continuities between the pre-socialist, socialist and post-socialist periods, my project challenges the dominant interpretation that communism produced a spiritual vacuum, demonstrating instead that religiosity not only survived but actually flourished in the late communist period. Finally, my study reveals how Zhivkova's occult communism is emblematic of the ways in which the New Age movement and scientific research into telepathy, parapsychology and suggestology were influential in both the East and the West during the global 1970s. It ultimately suggests that occult communism exemplified a global crisis of the modernist rationalist paradigm.

Pavel Khazanov

Recalling Russia: History and Memory of the Pre-Soviet Era, After Stalin Until Today

In the 1990s, the Tsarist double-headed eagle replaced the Communist hammer and sickle atop the Kremlin, and an enormously expensive replica of the nineteenth-century Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow replaced the world's largest swimming pool. Such spectacles of kitschy restoration of Tsarist symbols have been common in post-Soviet Russia. My work aims to explain this phenomenon and its meaning by tracking contemporary Russia's cultural memory of the Imperial era. By close-reading both popular and influential cultural texts, as well as analyzing their conditions of production and reception, I show how three generations of Russian cultural elites from the 1950s until today have used Russia's past to fight present-day political battles, and outline how the cultural memory of the Imperial epoch continues to inform the worldview of post-Soviet Russian leaders, as well as their supporters and detractors.

The book version of my project, which I will draft while at EUI, will accomplish three tasks: firstly, it will tell the untold story of how inventive recollections of the pre-Revolutionary past allowed core elements of late Soviet society—the liberal and conservative intelligentsia, their educated mass audiences, and the state apparatchiks—to define themselves and create post-Soviet Russia's mainstream political rhetoric. Secondly, my book will refract Russia's cultural developments against current theorizations of the social role of history and memory in post-War Europe, as well as theorizations of nostalgia and 'retro' in consumer capitalist societies. And thirdly, my book will contextualize Russia's social dynamics as part of today's global trend, evident in countries from Eastern Europe to the US, in which political agendas are increasingly being shaped by recollections of the past.

Kathya Motyl

Rethinking Vienna's 'Sexual Crisis'

Fin de siècle Vienna is often remembered as a place saturated with sex, calling to mind the eroticism of Gustav Klimt's paintings, Sigmund Freud's discovery of the sexual unconscious, and Richard von Krafft-Ebing's sexology. According to contemporaries, Vienna was in the throes of a 'sexual crisis'. Yet, as social historians have observed, the majority of Viennese residents were not familiar with Klimt's paintings, nor were they patients of Freud. Turning away from the perspective of the male cultural and intellectual elite, we might wonder if there was any relationship between the constant talk about 'sexual crisis' and everyday life. In this talk, I will discuss how ordinary women, the objects of sexual knowledge, might have experienced this sexually vibrant milieu.

Victor Petrov

Welcome to Cyberia: Bulgarian Modernisation, Computers, and the World 1967-1989

Tiny and backward Bulgaria, predominantly agricultural at the time of the communist takeover, had transformed itself into the socialist Silicon Valley by the 1980s. To do so, it looked outwards towards the world in order to learn, borrow, and sometimes steal, technological and business expertise. In doing so, it transformed its own political, economic horizons, spawning widespread debate at both the government and intellectual level about what computers were to be used for, and what it was to be a Man in a

Machine Age. The cash-strapped regime used computers to seek prestige and profit; engineers built them to be part of the new wave of the information age; traders and managers sold it, negotiated, and marketed it; philosophers, educators, and writers thought about it, taught with it, and worried about it. The commodity history of the Bulgarian computer, combined with an ethnography of the myriad people who were involved in this industry, are a prism through which to study not just for the late socialist period in Bulgaria, but the emerging Information Age globally.

My research project, based on numerous archives and interviews, asks a number of questions. Firstly, what benefits did political loyalty in the socialist bloc bring countries? Connected to this is the need to take seriously the constitution of the Second World as an alternative modernity, with its own space of exchange and interaction. Secondly, how did the Second World meet the First on the grounds of the Third? Through a case study of India, my project shows how new business ideas and practices can enter closed societies. Thirdly, how porous was the Iron Curtain? Through the lens of the history of technology, old Cold War narratives break down. Lastly, is 1989 a real ending point for many of the processes of this time? The emerging of a transnational, trans-border technocratic and business class connected to this industry shows how even supposedly closed-off countries became part of the Information Age, and benefited from it. The research project tentatively asks just what does global history reveal when it often elevates motion over place, by delving into who benefited from this modern sector, and why. My research, building on my doctoral dissertation, will develop into a monograph during my time as a Max Weber Fellow.

Mishka Sinha

What the Thunder Said and Other (Dis)Orientations

In the broadest terms, my research interests are in the history of knowledge in the modern period, primarily in the context of colonialism and orientalism. My research analyses the cultural translation (that is, the adaptation and interpretation of ideas from one culture in another), and the intellectual and literary uses of texts and ideas from Asian cultures in Europe and the United States.

During my Max Weber Fellowship, I will first complete my monograph, *What the Thunder Said: A History of Sanskrit in Britain and the United States, 1832-1939*, which is under contract for publication by Princeton University Press. The book challenges fundamental perceptions of the language that historically dominated the development of the languages and cultures of South Asia, by arguing that its recent past was formative to modern, European and American traditions of poetry, philosophy and scholarship. *What the Thunder Said* is a history of the transformation of Sanskrit's modern identity.

The book analyses the development of Sanskrit as an academic discipline at universities in Britain and the United States, during a period of colonial expansion, socio-economic transformation, rising nationalisms, and cultural and intellectual innovation and reaction. Conjunctly and in parallel, the book also interrogates the diffusion of Sanskrit into broader literary and cultural contexts, philosophical and literary movements, beyond the academy, in both Britain and America. My book offers a comparative and transcultural history of Sanskrit, across British and American academic and broader cultural contexts using primary materials and neglected archival sources, developing an interdisciplinary methodology that combines historical narrative with the close reading of poetry and philosophy, letters, and lecture notes.

My current research project, "Ordering the Orient: A cultural and economic history of the publication of Eastern texts in the West, 1850-1939", argues for a new interpretation of the transmission and transformation of 'Eastern' ideas in the 'West' from 1850 to 1939, through an economic and cultural analysis of the European and American publishing and marketing of texts sourced from the East, and translated from Oriental languages. It investigates the cultural economy of Orientalism through studying the publishing of Oriental texts in the West as an economic and cultural enterprise, an intellectual activity and a historical process. This process led to the formation of an 'Oriental canon' that continues to shape perceptions of the East. The research will focus on the production and marketing of Oriental texts by selected publishers in London, Oxford, Cambridge, New York, Boston and Heidelberg, - all centres of Oriental scholarship and the book-trade. The project will make an original contribution to the histories of knowledge, of the book, of orientalism, and global cultural and intellectual histories of the modern period.

Blake Smith

The Upanishads and the Aryan Mind: Anquetil Duperron's Oupnek'hat

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, the French Indologist Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil Duperron published a pioneering Latin translation of the Upanishads, based on a Persian translation of the Sanskrit text, prepared by the atelier of seventeenth-century Mughal prince Dara Shikoh. This text, loaded with appendices, asides and commentary, influenced a number of readers in Germany, including Arthur Schopenhauer, who took from Anquetil the theory that the 'doctrine of the Indians' contained in the Upanishads was an iteration of a teaching that could also be found in the works of Plato and Kant. Taken up in different ways by Orientalist scholars such as Max Müller and Paul Deussen, this trinity Upanishads/Plato/Kant made it possible to see the Sanskrit text as an instance of what Müller called the 'Aryan mind' at work, installing the text in an intellectual genealogy that passed between ancient India and modern Europe, with no intermediary. However, as I have argued elsewhere (in an article published in *Purushartha*, vol. 33), Anquetil's comparisons of the Upanishads to Plato and Kant relied on hermeneutic strategies articulated by Dara Shikoh himself in his preface to the Persian translation, which Anquetil appropriated even as he condemned Dara's own efforts to treat the Upanishads as expressions of mystic monism compatible with Islam. Schopenhauer, Müller, Deussen and others inherited from Anquetil a comparative framework that brought the Upanishads into dialogue with Western philosophy even as it obscured European Orientalism's engagement with Persianate intellectual traditions.

Carolyn Schmitz

Collective and Individual Identities of Irregular Healers and their Patients: A Relational Approach to Medical Pluralism in Early Modern Spain.

Based on a substantially number of inquisitorial and criminal law trial records from 17th and 18th century Spain, my project will focus on the relationships between extra-academic healers and patients as well as on the process of constructing their individual and collective identities. Following recent accounts of Relational Sociology, individuals “cannot be understood, even theoretically, apart from their relational context” (Powell / Dépelteau 2013).

In my new project I aim to apply the relational approach to scrutinize the dynamics between two often neglected actors of medical practice: the patient and the irregular healer (wise women and men, herbalists, empirics, etc.). In a reflexive way, both figures played part in constructing their identities: While the healer often adapted to the patient’s expectations, the patient, in return, shaped the healer’s reputation.

In an attempt to reassess the nature of patient-practitioner relationships, - framed by scholars usually in terms of power with an almost exclusive focus on the university trained physician -, this project will test other elements, such as authority, trust, and fidelity, as part of a more appropriate and more refined characterization of the social interactions between irregular healers and their patients.

Furthermore, many of the practitioners documented in the trials were itinerants and migrated to foreign communities, producing at times sensational fame and/or rivalry. Another focus of my research is therefore to explore their processes of integration, in which patients and institutions can function both as protectors and destroyers of the new member’s recognition.

Christos Tsakas

The Quest for Enlargement: Greece, Norway, West Germany and the EEC, 1957–1981

The recent euro crisis has repeatedly brought the peculiarities of the Greek economy to the forefront of debates over European integration, whereas Britain’s decision to “renegotiate” its EU-membership paved the way for eurosceptics to advocate the “Norway option”. Scholars in various fields have addressed the factors that lead to the decision to join or abstain from the EEC/EU. However, scholars have not addressed to date the longer trends of enlargement cutting across or binding together different rounds. Instead, available scholarship tends to study enlargement either round by round or through the prism of bilateral relations, largely overlooking a most complex interplay between core and periphery as well as insiders and outsiders; a central issue that is crucial not only to our understanding of enlargement, but also in order to conceptualize the dynamics and limits of the Europeanization process. Yet, without such an understanding, we are left with an inadequate analysis that creates ill-informed policy decisions that in times of crisis lead to a vicious circle of blame.

This project will remedy the gap in the literature, employing a comparative analysis of the first and the second EEC-enlargement and examining West German attitudes towards the Greek and abortive Norwegian applications in the 1960s and 1970s. This research will bring transnational history methods and discourse analysis to bear on debates over the North–South divide in the context of European integration. My main argument is that the Europeanization of Greek and Norwegian business proved a key factor to the decision to pursue EEC-membership despite other domestic constraints, while Greece’s and Norway’s growing dependence on capital goods imports defined favorable West German attitudes. Yet, this was hardly a linear process. Adopting a business-centered, rather than a state-centric approach, my research inquires into societal actors and international business networks as analytical tools that not only challenge the conventional public–private and politics–economics dichotomies, but also question progressive interpretations of enlargement.