



NEWSLETTER

Bulgarian Studies Association



Photo by Dilyana Ivanova Zieske

Letter from the President

By Dilyana Ivanova Zieske

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the newest edition of the BSA Newsletter! It has been another exciting year for Daria, Traci and me in the leadership of BSA and we are delighted to share some the association's achievements and challenges in 2024. The big news from this summer is the successful realization of the 12th International Meeting of Bulgarian and North American Scholars, "Living Bridges Across Time". It was held from June 15 through June 17 in Sofia at the hall of the Institute for Bulgarian Literature and Institute for Bulgarian Language of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS). More than 40 academics from Bulgaria and North America delivered their papers at the meeting.

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Letter from the President (continued)

We are very grateful to all speakers for their diverse topics, and engaging content and discussions. Kudos to our hosts from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences for the smooth logistics, technical support, and for arranging free lodging for the North American attendees! The conference this year would not have been possible without the grant from the National Scientific Program “Development and Promotion of Bulgarian Studies Abroad”, financed by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science, the cooperation of BAS’s Council for the Bulgarian Studies Abroad, and and BAS’s Institute of Balkan Studies with the Center for Thracology, and the generous donation of the American Research Center in Bulgaria Inc.

Currently, the Bulgarian organizers are working on publishing the conference proceedings. It will be edited by the ongoing treasurer Traci Speed. If you are a conference participant, please make sure to submit your paper for the volume on time. A more detailed conference report by our vice-president Daria White appears on page 20 of this issue. Please note that it was decided previously by the BSA, despite the delay until 2022 of the last conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that this year’s conference should proceed. The next scheduled conference will be in 2028, to be held in the United States.

This year, we received six nominations for the John Bell Book Award and in November we are expecting our reviewers to announce the 2024 Book Prize winner. In August, the BSA leadership awarded the 2024 Martha Forsyth BSA Travel Grant to Ana Luleva to attend the 56th ASEES Annual Conference in Boston, coming up in November. You can find more information about this award on page 10.

We would like to express our gratitude to Liam Zieske, for acting as the general editor and a pro-bono attorney of the organization. Special thanks to the BSA Newsletter Editor, Sanja Ivanov for her amazing work on publishing the current issue of the newsletter, and to all of our contributors to this issue. Please consider sending us news and materials on topics related to Bulgarian studies for our website, Facebook page and newsletter. They will help us make your work and the field of Bulgarian studies more visible and successful.

If you are coming to ASEES Conference in Boston (November 21 – 24, 2024), please plan to attend the BSA Annual Meeting. You can find more information about our business meeting in Boston on page 27 of this issue.

(continued on page 3)

ABOUT THE BULGARIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The Bulgarian Studies Association (BSA) is a non-profit scholarly organization promoting the study of and exchange of knowledge about all aspects of Bulgaria, Bulgarian lands and Bulgarians: language, literature, folklore, culture, history, archaeology, politics, economics and international relations. BSA is an affiliate organization of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEES).

Letter from the President (continued)

In early 2024 we also received the very sad news of the passing of the prominent linguist and Bulgarian language specialist, Prof. Kjetil Rå Hauge (1945-2024). Prof. Hauge was a very active BSA member and served as the BSA vice president between 2002 and 2008. His passion for Bulgarian language and dedication to linguistic knowledge inspired linguists, and learners of Bulgarian language, around the world. Sincere condolences to his family and friends. You can access the memorial text by Prof. Yovka Tisheva by clicking on this [link](#). The text is published in the Journal of Bulgarian Language in 2024. Please see the citation below.

Tisheva, Yovka. (2024). In Memoriam Professor Kjetil Rå Hauge (1945–2024). *Journal of Bulgarian Language*. 71. 132-134. 10.47810/BL.71.24.01.14.

Finally, I would like to remind you to stay current with your membership fees. In 2024 our membership dues slightly changed. Our new membership fees are:

- \$10 for members living in Bulgaria.
- \$35 for members living outside Bulgaria.
- \$0 membership charge for retirees and enrolled graduate students (who only submit a membership form to join or renew).

Please click on this [link](#) to our PayPal for membership payments. The link and information are also available on our website. If you have any questions regarding the method of the payment, please contact Traci Speed at buglgarianstudiesassociation@gmail.com.

With warm regards,
Dilyana

Photo by Dilyana Ivanova Zieske



AWARDS GRANTS PRIZES

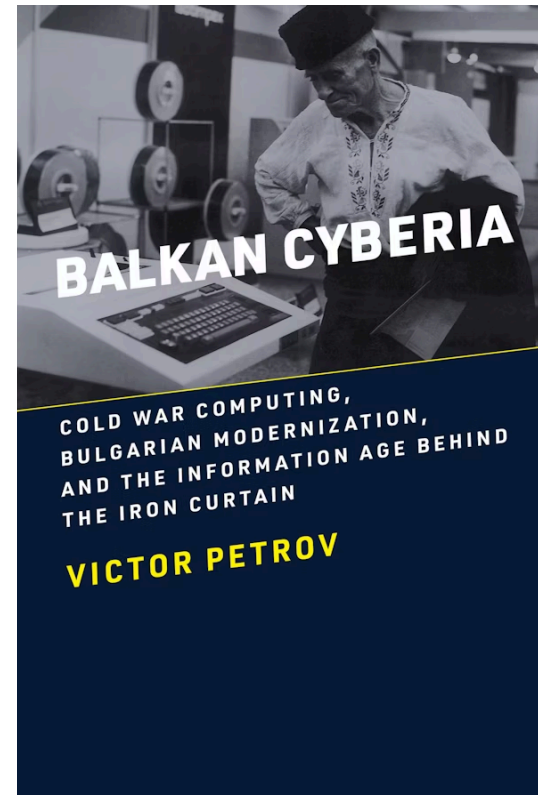


Two Prizes for Victor Petrov's Balkan Cyberia

Bulgarian Studies Association is pleased to announce that *Balkan Cyberia* by Victor Petrov has been named the winner of the **Barbara Jelavich Book Prize** (for a distinguished monograph published on any aspect of Southeast European or Habsburg studies since 1600, or nineteenth and twentieth-century Ottoman or Russian diplomatic history); and co-winner of the **Marshall Shulman Prize** (for an outstanding monograph dealing with the international relations, foreign policy, or foreign-policy decision-making of any of the states of the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe), both awarded by ASEES. Congratulations, Victor!

[Read more here.](#)

Photo courtesy of Victor Petrov



VICTOR
PETROV
IS
ASSOCIATE
PROFESSOR
OF HISTORY
AT THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE.

About the Book:

Balkan Cyberia: Cold War Computing, Bulgarian Modernization, and the Information Age behind the Iron Curtain

How Bulgaria transformed the computer industry behind the Iron Curtain—and the consequences of that transformation for a society that dreamt of a brighter future.

Bulgaria in 1963 was a communist country led by a centralized party trying to navigate a multinational Cold War. The state needed money, and it sought prestige. By cultivating a burgeoning computer industry, Bulgaria achieved both but at great cost to the established order. In *Balkan Cyberia*, Victor Petrov elevates a deeply researched, local story of ambition into an essential history of global innovation, ideological conflict, and exchange.

Granted tremendous freedom by the Politburo and backed by a concerted state secret intelligence effort, a new, privileged class of technical intellectuals and managers rose to prominence in Bulgaria in the 1960s. Plugged in to transnational business and professional networks, they strove to realize the party's radical dreams of utopian automation, and Bulgaria would come to manufacture up to half of the Eastern Bloc's electronics. Yet, as Petrov shows, the export-oriented nature of the industry also led to the disruption of party rule. Technicians, now thinking with and through computers, began to recast the dominant intellectual discourse within a framework of reform, while technocratic managers translated their newfound political clout into economic power that served them well before and after the revolutions of 1989.

Balkan Cyberia reveals the extension of economic and political networks of influence far past the reputed fall of communism, along with the pivotal role small countries played in geopolitical games at the time. Through the prism of the Bulgarian computer industry, the true nature of the socialist international economy, and indeed the links between capitalism and communism, emerge.

Adapted from the publisher's website

"BALKAN CYBERIA IS A BRILLIANTLY REVISIONIST ACCOUNT OF THE POROUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND [POST] COMMUNISM, THE STATE AND THE MARKET. AN ACCOUNT THAT WILL INTEREST ANYONE INTERESTED IN MODERN EUROPE AND THE AFTERLIVES OF SOCIALISM."

MARK MAZOWER,
PROFESSOR OF
HISTORY, COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY

“Amico” Medals for Three Bulgarian Academics

On October 14, 2024, during a special ceremony at the University of Lodz, Poland, Universitatis Lodziensis Amico (“Friend of the University of Lodz”) medals were awarded to Prof. Anna-Maria Totomanova from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski,” Prof. Mariana Tsibranova-Kostova from the Institute for Bulgarian Language – BAS, and Prof. Ivan Bilyarski from the Institute for Historical Studies – BAS. These three Amico medals were awarded to the Bulgarian scholars for their special and long-standing contribution to the development of bilateral relations with the University of Lodz, as well as for their achievements – publications, participation in conferences and projects, lectures, etc. This is a great honor and deserved recognition of the three Bulgarian academics and their institutions. The ceremony was attended by Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Poland Margarita Ganeva and the director of the Bulgarian Institute of Culture in Warsaw, Dr. Petyr Lyanguzov.

Suggested by Aleka Strezova (Institute for Historical Studies, BAS).

[Read more \(in Polish\).](#)

[Read more \(in Bulgarian\).](#)



Photo courtesy of Ivan Bilyarski



2022 John D. Bell Memorial Book Prize Winner

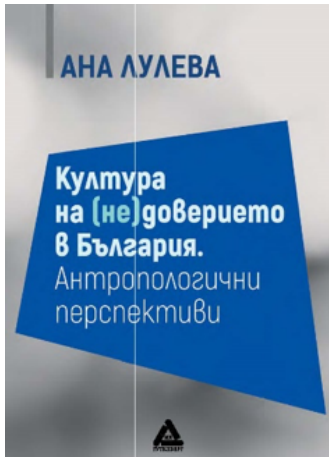
Mary Neuburger's Ingredients of Change: The History and Culture of Food in Modern Bulgaria

The Award Committee wrote in support of their choice for winner:

Mary Neuburger's book is an example of a fine scholarship. It focuses on the food culture in socialist Bulgaria. The author examines how Bulgarian menus changed over the decades of socialism, so that what is commonly understood as Bulgarian cuisine developed primarily at that time and under the strong and direct influence of the regime.

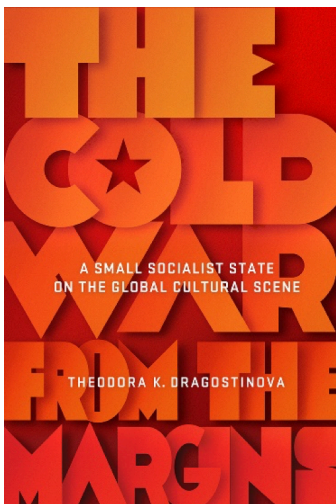
Foods considered traditionally Bulgarian, such as yogurt, tomatoes, peppers, bread, or wine, only became central elements of the Bulgarian diet after World War II, meaning that they are far less "traditional" than some observers would assume.

Neuburger clearly elaborates on this and thus shows that the traditional Bulgarian cuisine is in essential parts a construct. It is the result of socialist nutritional policy, which on the one hand served the national branding, but also, through specific selection of food by the regime, served the healthy nutrition of the "developed socialist personality."



2023 John D. Bell Memorial Book Prize Winners

Ana Luleva's *Култура на (не)доверието в България. Антропологични перспективи*



and

Teodora Dragostinova's *The Cold War from the Margins: A Small Socialist State on the Global Cultural Scene*

The Award Committee wrote in support of their choice of Ana Luleva's book:

Ana Luleva's book, *The Culture of (Dis)Trust in Bulgaria* is an important and valuable contribution to Bulgarian studies that deserves to be widely read. Luleva's monograph stands out for its historically situated anthropological approach ranging across supposed points of rupture—the consolidation of the Bulgarian state (and population transfers) after World War I; the revolutionary period after World War II; and the changes of 1989. This chronological depth and “thick description” in uncovering the social worlds found at the intersection of state and society, notions of public, and private and competing ideas of the “good society” is compelling. Luleva's research is thorough, involving a truly impressive range of sources. It is an outstanding book.

Taking impetus from pertinent debates in anthropology and sociology on the levels of trust and distrust in contemporary societies, the book makes an excellent use of existing theories in its in-depth analysis of Bulgarian culture in historical and contemporary perspectives. It combines a wide range of approaches and methods from a variety of disciplines (anthropology, sociology, history, political studies, ethnology, social psychology, etc.) and provides contributions to each of these fields...The book relies on impressive sets of sources and is an outstanding achievement in the field of Bulgarian studies – I strongly believe it will be translated and published in English language too and will attract the attention of reading audiences worldwide.

The Award Committee wrote in support of their choice of Teodora Dragostinova's book:

Teodora Dragostinova's *Cold War from the Margins* is an important contribution to the history of late socialism in Bulgaria and the global cold war that stands out for the originality of its research and the quality of its writing. *Cold War from the Margins* does situate Bulgarian studies within larger global conversations (and as such to raise the profile of the field) – tracing out relationships between Bulgarian state institutions and cultural figures with their counterparts in Japan, Mexico, the United States, India and Nigeria. In short, Dragostinova convincingly makes the case for why Bulgaria matters (not that we need to be told).

Focusing on the international exposure of Bulgaria during 1970s and on the country's involvement in world cultural policies, Theodora Dragostinova's book presents us with a thorough and fascinating study of international relationships during the Cold War period. The book is outstanding in many respects. Of primary importance among them is its extremely original analytic standpoint – one of analyzing the Cold War dynamics through the cultural policies embraced by a small state of the socialist bloc, of tracing interactions with "third world" countries, yet putting the factor of culture in the center of these politics. No less impressive is the solid set of arguments that the author develops and the wealth of sources from different social and cultural contexts. The analysis succeeds in placing Bulgaria and other countries "in the margins" into the center of the debates about global politics – a point that holds special pertinence until today.

2024 BSA Travel Grantee

IN 2024 THE BSA LEADERSHIP AWARDED THE MARTHA FORSYTH BSA TRAVEL GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$700 TO ETHNOLOGIST ANA LULEVA TO ATTEND THE 56TH ASEES ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN BOSTON. PROF. DR. ANA LULEVA IS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOLOGY OF SOCIALISM AND POST-SOCIALISM AT THE INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE STUDIES WITH ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM OF THE BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. AT THE CONFERENCE, SHE WILL DELIVER HER PAPER ENTITLED 'FREEDOM VS. UNCERTAINTY AFTER THE FALL OF COMMUNISM IN BULGARIA. APPROACHING THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF UNCERTAINTY.' THE PAPER WILL PRESENT RESULTS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH REGARDING UNCERTAINTY AND PRECARIETY IN THE PERIOD OF POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION IN BULGARIA.

NEW BOOKS





Nyberg holds a PhD in ethnochoreology and serves as artistic director at the Bulgarian Heritage Center of Seattle and moderator of the Glagolitsata Society for Poetry and Literature.

NEW BOOK:

Under the Bowler Hats of the Trees

Daniela Ivanova Nyberg

Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg published a new book of poetry in 2024. The book “Под бомбетата на дърветата” (“Under the Bowler Hats of the Trees”) was launched through several events in Plovdiv and Sofia, where Nyberg was lauded for the authenticity of her audacious, evocative writing.

When boats rock the lake
and fine furrows unfold
far and wide
all that is reflected in the lake
dances
trees, houses and people
And before me are revealed
double essences
some firmly planted on the ground
others - ethereal, undulating

And how important is only
in what surface
you look

(Translation from Bulgarian by Daria White)

Submitted by Daria White (Liberty University, USA).

Lyubomir Pozharliev

The Road to SocialismTransport Infrastructure in Socialist Bulgaria
and Yugoslavia (1945–1989)

NEW BOOK: **The Road to Socialism.** **Transport Infrastructure in** **Socialist Bulgaria and** **Yugoslavia (1945–1989)**

Lyubomir Pozharliev

Pozharliev’s book is the first comprehensive empirical study of transport infrastructure in two socialist countries in the years 1945–1989. In the case study of Yugoslavia, the construction of roads was interrelated with building socialist and trans-ethnic identities, uniting all federal republics.

In practice, the “Brotherhood and Unity Highway” was an artery linking the capitals of the most industrialized republics, neglecting Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and parts of Macedonia.

In socialist Bulgaria there existed a clear ideological link between transport and nation-building. Bulgarian roads’ disintegrative function was best seen in the example of the “Highway Ring” which, constructed as an inner circle, isolated the border regions and areas inhabited by Bulgarian Muslims and Turks.

Adapted from the publisher’s website.

**Please also read the
review by Nelly Berkus in
Technology and Culture,
Vol. 65 no. 2, 2024, p.
727-729.**

Conferences and Events





Photos by Desislava Tiholova

Tales from the Trenches. Bulgarian Trench Art. An Exhibition 110 Years Later.

One hundred and ten years after the beginning of World War II, the Regional Museum of History in Ruse, Bulgaria opened the exhibition "Tales from the Trenches. Bulgarian Trench Art," curated by ethnologist Desislava Tiholova. The worldwide phenomenon known as Trench Art includes decorative objects and souvenirs made by people who participated in military conflict or suffered its consequences. This new museum exhibit places Bulgarian Trench Art in the context of local Bulgarian socio-historical models and within the broader context of Trench Art worldwide. It presents examples of Bulgarian Trench Art through over 200 objects marked with the symbols and messages of Bulgarian national identity and self-awareness. The bilingual exhibition catalog offers an opportunity to get acquainted with Bulgarian Trench Art artifacts on the one hand, and on the other hand, shows how these generally humble items created in turmoil and hardship can tell stories in a museum context, serving as a reminder of the complex relationship between private and public experiences of war.

Contributor: Desislava Tiholova



Photo by Desislava Tiholova

Cultural Symposium and Conference: 'THE UNKNOWN', 2024

The fifth Cultural Symposium and Academic Conference 'THE UNKNOWN' 2024 was held in Plovdiv on October 12 and 13. It presented the cultural diversity of Bulgaria and promoted its research, knowledge, and preservation. The first day of the event was dedicated to the Armenian, Jewish, Turkish, and Roma communities, which are traditional elements of Bulgarian society. The second day of the symposium delved into the topic of 'Heritage: Forms of Cultural Expression,' offering deeper comprehension of community heritage of the different ethno-religious, ethnographic, cultural, linguistic, and other cohorts in Bulgaria and worldwide. 'THE UNKNOWN' offers a platform to meet and discuss diverse cultural elements and practices, which is of great importance to fostering heritage and inter-cultural understanding. Official Symposium partners are the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IEFSEM-BAS); the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy and History - 'Paisii Hilendarski' University of Plovdiv, Academy of Music, Dance, and Fine Arts 'Prof. Asen Diamandiev' - Plovdiv; as well as the Plovdiv Regional Ethnographic Museum.

Suggested by Daniela Ivanova-Nyberg (Bulgarian Cultural and Heritage Center of Seattle).

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference for Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Bridges and New Horizons

The International Scientific Conference, Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Bridges and New Horizons, was held in two parallel sessions at the Central Building of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia on October 3 and 4. The conference was organized by the Institute for Historical Studies - BAS and the Centre for Eastern European Studies at the University of Warsaw with the support of the Scientific Research Fund. Partnering in the event was the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Sofia. The scientific event, which was attended by more than fifty scholars from twelve countries, was part of celebrations of the 155th anniversary of the BAS and the thirteenth meeting of graduates and teachers of the Eastern Summer School at the University of Warsaw.

Contributor: Aleksandar Zlatanov (Institute for Historical Studies, BAS)

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference: The Storyteller and the World of Folklore, dedicated to Prof. Albena Georgieva

On October 24 and 25, the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IEFEM-BAS), hosted the international conference, The Storyteller and the World of Folklore, dedicated to Prof. DSc. Albena Georgieva. Albena Georgieva - Angelova (1954 - 2024) was an academic who made significant contributions in the field of folklore studies, ethnology and anthropology, a long-time researcher at IEFEM - BAS, and a respected member of the academic community. Her work as a collector and connoisseur of the oral folklore tradition, as a researcher of stories and storytelling, of folklore Christianity and local religious culture, as well as the considerable volume of her teaching and expert activities, leaves a significant mark in Bulgarian Humanities Studies. The conference was organized on the initiative of her colleagues from the Anthropology of Verbal Traditions section of IEFEM - BAS. The event was attended by over fifty researchers with diverse disciplinary training - specialists in the fields of folklore, ethnology, anthropology, history, ethnomusicology, literary studies, and art studies. The attendees represented twenty academic institutions and organizations such as the institutes of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences system, Bulgarian universities, museums and associations, as well as the Institute of Slavic Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, the University of Lodz (Poland), and the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia).

Contributor: Angelina Ilieva (IEFEM-BAS)

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference: Foreign Humanities Studies for Bulgaria and the Bulgarians

The International Academic Conference, Foreign Humanities Studying Bulgaria and the Bulgarians, will be held in Sofia on November 11-13, 2024. A keynote lecture by Prof. Antal Molnár from Hungary will open the conference on November 11 at the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Sofia. The conference will continue with paper presentations at the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IHS-BAS). The conference is organized by the IHS-BAS and the Bulgarian-Hungarian Joint History Commission within the National Scientific Program, Development and Promotion of Bulgarian Studies Abroad, funded by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science.

Suggested by Penka Peykovska (Institute for Historical Studies, BAS).

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference: Anthropology of Uncertainty. Society and Culture in Precarious Times

The International Conference, Anthropology of Uncertainty. Society and Culture in Precarious Times, was held in Blagoevgrad on October 10-12, 2024. It presented research themes focused on different aspects of precarization in Bulgaria and abroad: public discourses on uncertainty prevalent these days; precarization factors and everyday experience; how the situation of uncertainty and precariousness is described, perceived and experienced by social actors; cultural, religious, and generational specifics; how the situation of precarity affects people's way of life; strategies to deal with precarization; changes in life trajectories, family forms, family relationships, marriage, age, and birth rate; sources of social security; precarization and migration experience; collective identities as means of support in uncertain and crisis times; political attitudes and uncertainty; environmental uncertainty and strategies for its reduction; precarization during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The conference was organized within the research project, Anthropology of uncertainty. Continuity and Change in the Post-Socialist Period, was led by Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, and funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund, contract agreement КП-06-Н55/12 from 16.11.2021. The organizers were participants in the project team - colleagues from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IEFSEM-BAS). The conference was hosted by "Bachinovo" University Center at the Southwest University "Neofit Rilski."

Contributor: Zlatina Bogdanova (IEFSEM-BAS)

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference: Bulgarian Studies in the Field of Contemporary Humanities

The Bulgarian Studies and Contemporary Humanities Conference took place at the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Berlin on October 27-28, 2024. It was organized by the National Scientific Program, Development and Promotion of Bulgarian Studies Abroad - a team of the Plovdiv University "St. Paisii Hilendarski", Humboldt University; Institute of Slavic Studies and Hungarian Studies, Bulgarian Cultural Institute - Berlin; and the Embassy of Bulgaria in Germany. The conference included working sessions in Literary Studies; Linguistics; History, Ethnology, and Sociology; and Translation and Cultural Transfer; and also a round table, Small Philologies and Artificial Intelligence. Tanya Ivanova-Sullivan, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and Roumyana Pancheva, University of California, Santa Cruz represented Bulgarian Studies in the United States. The event was concluded with a conversation with the special guest of the conference, Georgi Gospodinov.

Suggested by Angelina Ilieva (University of Chicago) and Tanya Ivanova-Sullivan (UCLA).

[Read more here.](#)

International Conference "Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Bridges and New Horizons"

The International Scientific Conference "Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Bridges and New Horizons" was held in two parallel sessions at the Central Building of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia on 3 and 4 October. The conference was organised by the Institute for Historical Studies - BAS and the Centre for Eastern European Studies at the University of Warsaw with the support of the Scientific Research Fund. The partner of the event was the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Sofia. The scientific event, which was attended by more than 50 scholars from 12 countries, was part of the celebrations of the 155th anniversary of the BAS and the XIII meeting of graduates and teachers of the Eastern Summer School at the University of Warsaw.

The International Scientific Conference "Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans: Historical Perspectives, Cultural Bridges, and New Horizons" provided a broad platform in the heart of the Balkans for the scientific and ideological interaction of an impressive diversity of foreign and Bulgarian scholars and experts (humanists, political scientists, diplomats, former politicians, etc.) who discussed the construction of new horizons for understanding the historical, geopolitical and cultural dynamics of these key spaces for Europe and the world.

Photo by Dilyana Ivanova Zieske

**PHOTO FROM
THE 12TH
JOINT
CONFERENCE
OF
BULGARIAN
AND NORTH
AMERICAN
SCHOLARS**

**READ MORE
ON THE NEXT
PAGE**



12TH JOINT CONFERENCE OF BULGARIAN AND NORTH AMERICAN SCHOLARS “LIVING BRIDGES ACROSS TIME”

SOFIA, JUNE 15-17, 2024

Dedicated to the 120th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the USA and Bulgaria, which took place in 2023.

In June of 2024, the Bulgarian Academy of Science (BAS) and the Bulgarian Studies Association (BSA) hosted the 12th Joint Conference of Bulgarian and American Scholars "Living Bridges Through Time." A total of 43 established researchers and young scholars from universities, museums and other academic institutions of three continents presented their papers at the conference.

The program included ten panels, in which the subjects of analysis and discussion were diverse problems related to the Bulgarian and North American relations in various academic fields, including history, diplomacy, cultural studies, cultural anthropology, folklore studies, archaeology, sociology, psychology, literature, theater, cinema and linguistics.

The conference's opening remarks were delivered by the Chairman of the Council for Foreign Bulgarian Studies at the Board of the BAS, art.-cor. Prof. D.Sc. Alexander Kostov, and by the President of Bulgarian Studies Association, Dr. Dilyana Ivanova Zieske. Prof. Alexander Kostov emphasized the importance of the event and the opportunity it provides to Bulgarian Studies specialists from all over the world to share and discuss their research findings. He wished success to the conference participants, noting that it is the communication and collaboration between specialists that stimulates academic progress. In her official address, Dr. Dilyana Ivanova Zieske highlighted the role of such forums for the development of Bulgarian-American academic relations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elka Traykova, the National Coordinator and Scientific Secretary of the BAS's Program, Cultural-Historical Heritage and National Identity, also greeted the audience and expressed gratitude for the support of the Cultural-Historical Heritage and National Identity Program for the collaborative work of Bulgarian and North American scholars in the field of the Bulgarian studies.

Acknowledgments:

The conference was made possible with support from

- The Bulgarian National Scientific Program, Development and Promotion of Bulgarian Studies Abroad, financed by the Ministry of Education and Science
- The Council for Bulgarian Studies Abroad - BAS
- Institute for Bulgarian Literature and Institute for Bulgarian Language - BAS
- The Institute of Balkan Studies with the Center for Thracology - BAS
- The American Research Center in Bulgaria Inc.

Interview



Interview with Izidora Angel

writer and literary translator

Izidora Angel is a Bulgarian-born writer and literary translator in Chicago. She is the author of several full-length translations, including works by Hristo Karastoyanov and Nataliya Deleva. Izidora received a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship for her work on Yordanka Beleva's collection of stories, *Keder*, and the Gulf Coast Prize in Translation for her work on Rene Karabash's novel, *She Who Remains*, forthcoming from Sandorf Passage in 2026. Izidora's writing has appeared in *Best Literary Translations 2024*, *Astra Magazine*, *Electric Literature*, *Gulf Coast*, *Chicago Reader*, and elsewhere. Her projects have been supported by English PEN, Art Omi, Bread Loaf, and by the Elizabeth Kostova Foundation, which in 2023 awarded her a writing fellowship for her in-progress memoir.



Photo courtesy of Izidora Angel

INTERVIEWER: VESSELA WARNER

(University of Alabama at Birmingham)

Which was your most rewarding translation (of a whole work or a word/phrase)? Why?

I think each of the books I've worked on have provided unique challenges and rewards. Hristo Karastoyanov's historical fiction novel, *The Same Night Awaits Us All* was extremely complex, with sentences that went on forever, a non-linear narrative, an older language, a ton of war terminology, and historical facts and names. Karastoyanov used a lot of single syllable relays to twist and turn the text: a, abe, uj, and he wrote the entire thing in the inferential mood, which, naturally, does not exist in English. Nataliya Deleva's *Four Minutes* was, by comparison, spare, super feminine and modern, a social novel, so that came more naturally to me, but required a lot of effort in getting to a good place in the text in a very short time. Ultimately, being a native speaker gives me an advantage because my mother tongue courses through my veins. Yordanka Beleva's book was a collection of short stories with a very poetic style that was very challenging. I worked on a single three-page story, *Amen*, for three months, to give you an example. Just a single sentence like this: "On the morning he set off from the village mounted on the old donkey, none of the villagers gathered lamented his leaving and yet their sendoff was strangely ceremonious" can take hours if not days. And when it fits, you know it, your body knows it, your long-suffering family knows it.

Interview with Izidora Angel, continued

What is untranslatable in translation?

There's plenty that can't travel from Bulgarian. Provincial dialect, political shorthand, certain exclamations, the richness of grammar, diminutives. But my job is to create something new and do my best to serve the source text. As I've done more books, I've felt more at liberty to make decisions, because ultimately, the chances of an editor here in the US being able to access the source language are slim to none. So a lot more responsibility rests on my shoulders.

What is difficult to translate in Bulgarian language?

So much of the richness of the Bulgarian language comes from the complex grammar – and English is grammatically unremarkable. So when you have a speculative tense, or words that have come from the Turkish, or 45 years of communism, all these things inform the source text and I find my job to be not only of translating what is there but also of carrying over what is not explained or not even mentioned and explain it in a way that fits into the text without jarring the reader. There's a play on words in the novel I'm working on now, *She Who Remains*, a novel about the gender evolution of one of the last remaining sworn virgins in Albania, in which the narrator uses, interchangeably, the Bulgarian word for "blue" and "son" – which is the same word in Bulgarian, син/sin. There's no easy way to carry this over, so it's a decision that's going to take me the entire novel to come up with.

Have you refused a translation project or given up on a translation? If yes, why?

I've translated poems without doing the whole collection, I've given certain works a shot by trying to do a few pages. I've done some pages from Fani Popova-Mutafova's very early stories "Mirror, Halo, Flowers," which came out almost a hundred years ago. I'm not completely sure it will go anywhere but I have it. Ultimately, I have to decide if something is worth doing before I do the whole thing. And there are two things that help me do that: 1. Is the text promising? 2. Is someone going to pay me?

If you can compare a literary translator to another job, what would that be?

An actor, a pianist, an artist. Think about the way no two pianists will play the same notes identically. Think about how two or three different actors will bring a script to life in a way that is unrecognizable from the other. Translators work under very specific constraints but what they choose to do and how they choose to push those constraints is what differentiates them from one another. And my style is very specific to me and very different from other Bulgarian translators.

If you could give your 17-year-old self a piece of advice to prepare you for this profession, what would it be?

I had no idea I wanted to do translation when I was 17, but I did feel a lure towards writing. So, I would surprise my 17-year-old self by telling her she'd translate novels one day, and then I would tell her, keep on it, translation is a damn fine writing exercise, and it will take you exactly where you need to go with your writing.

Interview with Izidora Angel, continued

What prepares you or gives you the most confidence to translate Bulgarian literature?

Being a Bulgarian native and having my mother tongue in my bones gives me a unique perspective, I think. Of course popular discourse posits that you should translate into your native tongue not out of it, but I challenge this notion through my own painstakingly curated body of work that can, I think, only exist precisely because my blood courses with the Bulgarian language, culture, and history. I think it grants me a powerful creativity and gives my audience a unique and powerful perspective that they might not have otherwise.

How does knowledge of the readers' culture affect your work? Any particular examples?

I'm the only working translator from Bulgarian who lives in the U.S. and that probably makes me a bit too plugged into the language of the day here, but it also allows for me to use my knowledge of current events and politically loaded words and plant some great Easter eggs in my work that other translators would not. But to tell you where they are would be giving it all away, you must find them.

Do you believe AI could one day complete great translations of literature? What makes you think so?

I think AI is a glorified dictionary. It's a useful tool for simple text, but it lacks long-form context and the ability to create the taxonomy within a work, something that is essential to what I do; it can't read complex sentences or understand tenses very well. The current book I'm working on, *She Who Remains*, is written entirely as a stream of consciousness—no periods, hardly any capitalization, the perspective of the narrator shifts numerous times within a single paragraph, the prose shoots back and forth in time. AI wouldn't know where to even begin with this text. In a larger context, think of the ecosystem translators' function in: workshops, grants, residencies, academia, events, awards, conferences, creative meetings in general—how could a machine fill the place of a person in this way? It simply can't. Can you imagine the National Book Award going to ChatGPT? Or inviting AI to come meet your students, give a guest lecture, and discuss their career trajectory as I just did when I visited Oberlin? It can't, the idea of it is preposterous. And I guess what I'm ultimately saying is, sure, it's not impossible to run a whole text through a machine, I'm sure plenty of publishers looking to scam readers do this already, but we certainly can't call what comes out on the other end great literature, and what we're risking by thinking that we can is the erosion and ultimately eradication of linguists and language artists and by extension we risk the preservation of linguistic bio-diversity.

What do you wish your readers knew about literary translation before they open your books?

The biggest thing is: know that the book was a translation, that it was not written in English, that it is of another world, that someone carried it on her back, word by word, to bring it to you. So, in short, awareness of the provenance, a taste for and an appreciation of something new and different.

Interview with Izidora Angel, continued

How do you prepare for a translation project? What is your process?

I take a deep breath and prepare myself to almost get broken by both the process of translation and the rejection that I know is coming. I'm joking. Only half joking. There's nothing more thrilling than sinking my teeth into a new project and nothing more frightening, so I break it down into steps: do a sample, pitch to magazines, enter contests, pitch publishers, work on the positioning. Bulgarian literature is vastly under-represented, so, as you can imagine, I'm not getting inundated with requests, I have to create the demand for the work.

Has an author ever asked you to change a particular English word(s)? What was/were the word(s)?

Sometimes my authors don't speak English, so they have to trust me completely and I aim for clarity by asking them very specific questions. Other authors are more hands-on and there's a collaborative aspect. For example, Nataliya Deleva's novel *Four Minutes*, was called *Невидими/Invisibles* in the original. It's about people who we as a society choose not to see. But *Invisibles* to us did not sound right in English. It didn't have a good ring to it, it sounded almost Sci-Fi... no offence to Sci-Fi. So we made a list of titles, and from that list chose something that had urgency and a little mysteriousness and—because it alluded to the social experiment in the novel about only having to look a stranger in the eyes for four minutes to accept them—a hopefulness that the original did not have.

Are there textbooks or manuals for how to become a translator?

I might not be the best person to answer this, as my path has been decidedly unacademic—I did not study translation or read a ton of books on how to do it, I just did it—but I think that whatever path you choose to take, there's no better time than now. Translators are paid better and have more visibility than ever, many have their own agents now, many are crossing over into their own writing. So it's really an exciting time. I'm not saying that things are always peachy, but our numbers are strong, and we know and support one another. I co-founded a translation collective and that, to me, has been invaluable in terms of gaining knowledge, having important discussions, understanding what others are doing, what they are getting paid, how they're negotiating their contracts, what issues are pressing, where we should be looking, collectively.

Can you think of a good question for a literary translator?

The best question to ask a literary translator is: "Where and how soon can I send you payment for this work?" My colleagues will understand what I mean.

BSA Annual Meeting



2024 BSA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING INFORMATION

**56TH ASEES ANNUAL CONVENTION
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 6:30 TO 8:30PM, EST
BOSTON MARRIOTT COPLEY PLACE, 5TH FLOOR, MASSACHUSETTS
ROOM**

The Annual Business Meeting of the Bulgarian Studies Association will be held in connection with the 56th Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEES) at the Boston Marriott Copley Place on Thursday, November 21, 6:30 to 8:30pm, 5th floor, Massachusetts room.

The meeting will be chaired by BSA President, Dilyana Ivanova Zieske.

Photos by Dilyana Ivanova Zieske



Current Members and BSA Mailing List Subscribers:
In 2024 we increased our membership to 58 members. Our BSA
mailing list goes out to 224 subscribers.

2024 BSA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

	<p>November 21, 2024, Agenda Items</p>
1	<p>Approval of BSA Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2023, (attachment), page Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, President</p>
2	<p>BSA President Report</p>
	<p>1. Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12th Joint Conference of Bulgarian and North American Scholars • Conference Volume • 2024 BSA Newsletter <p>2. For discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership: How to expand membership? • Newsletter and website: Volunteers to help with our Newsletter and our Website content? • John Bell Book Award: Volunteers to serve on the Book Award Committee? • Fundraising ideas for our activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Conference, publications, travel awards and scholarships. Any other purposes? ◦ Fundraising venues/sources? ◦ Volunteers to fundraise? • Update on the permanent residence for BSA at U.S. university – None at the moment <p>3. Announcements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 John Bell Award. • 2024 BSA Travel Grant. <p>Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, BSA President</p>
3	<p>Treasurer Report, by Traci Speed, Treasurer, Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, BSA President</p>
4	<p>Other Business, if any.</p>

BSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES, DECEMBER 1, 2023

Philadelphia, PA

The annual business meeting of the Bulgarian Studies Association was held on Friday, December 1, 2023, in conjunction with the 55th Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), at the Marriott Downtown Hotel, Philadelphia, PA.

BSA AWARDS & GRANTS

2023 John Bell Award

Announcement: Dilyana opened the meeting with the announcement that this year, two authors have shared the John D. Bell Memorial Book Prize for their outstanding publications in the field of Bulgarian Studies: Ana Luleva and Teodora Dragostinova. Ana Luleva received the award for her book *Култура на (не)доверието в България. Антропологични перспективи*, Sofia (Gutenberg Publishing House), 2021; and Teodora Dragostinova for her book, *The Cold War from the Margins: A Small Socialist State on the Global Cultural Scene*, Ithaca and London (Cornell University Press), 2021.

Note: On behalf of the BSA Board and John Bell Award Committee, Dilyana congratulated the winners and presented them with the Award Certificates.

2023 BSA Travel Grant

Announcement: Dilyana announced the 2023 BSA Travel Grant winner: Desislava Tiholova, ethnologist at the Rousse Regional Museum of History. D. Tiholova received funding from BSA to attend the current ASEEES Conference in Philadelphia where she delivered her paper, titled "The Case of 'Eberhard Undzhiyan' – from Family Migration to Mobility." The paper analyzes memoirs and biographical interviews of a third-generation descendant of Armenian refugees to Bulgaria and places his life story within the complex political, social and cultural processes of the 20th and the early 21st centuries.

Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, President

BSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 2023, CONTINUED

BSA PRESIDENT REPORT

BSA website, logo and letterhead, and newsletter

Report: Dilyana elaborated on the newly modernized website and the new logo and letterhead. She added that the newsletter was resumed. She reminded the attendees to send their contributions for the newsletter and for the website, and mentioned that the organization now has a Facebook page, and all the news and announcements get posted on the Facebook page, as well.

The upcoming 12th Joint Meeting of Bulgarian and North American Scholars

Announcement: Following the model used in 2016, BSA is partnering with The Council for the Bulgarian Studies Abroad to present the 12th Joint Meeting of Bulgarian and North American Scholars will take place in Sofia, Bulgaria on Saturday, June 15 and Sunday, June 16 of 2024. The Council for the Bulgarian Studies Abroad has been working on the conference arrangements. The conference will take place in the rooms on the first floor of the Institute of Literature, Bulgarian Language and History at 52 Shipchenski Prohod Boulevard, Sofia. The hotel of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is right next to the conference venue at 50 Shipchenski Prohod Boulevard, Sofia (<https://www.domnaucheniya.com/en/sample-page/>), and it will accommodate the conference participants. Most likely the Program for the Bulgarian Studies Abroad will be funding the lodging of the attendees from the United States. The conference committee is planning a trip or some cultural event after the conference. Prof. Alexander Kostov, the chairman of the Council the Bulgarian Studies Abroad, sent Dilyana a questionnaire regarding the theme and the format of the conference (ideas for panels, paper titles, etc.) with a request that it be shared to the BSA mailing list. Dilyana will distribute this questionnaire to the BSA Community after the ASEES conference. Prof. Kostov has requested the completed questionnaire to be submitted by December 10, 2023.

For discussion

Establishing a Martha Forsyth BSA Travel Award

Decision: The meeting attendees approved the idea of establishing a Martha Forsyth BSA Travel Grant when funds are available. This year's 2023 BSA Travel Grant winner Desislava Tiholova was deemed to be the first recipient of the renamed grant award.

BSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 2023, CONTINUED

Membership

Discussion: Dilyana explained that starting in 2023, all BSA annual memberships will be based upon the calendar year (January 1 – December 31) to create a more streamlined and less confusing membership payment and renewal process. She noted that memberships paid/renewed during January through October will expire on December 31 of that year. If the membership is paid/renewed in November or December, it will extend through the following year. The attendees asked if there is a way to get personal reminders so they can cover their dues on time. Dilyana explained that she doesn't have access yet to a more automated and personalized way to send membership renewal reminders, but she has been trying to email reminders at least three times per year to the full BSA list. Anyone who has questions regarding their membership status is welcome to contact our Treasurer, Traci Speed at bulgarianstudiesassociation@gmail.com and ask her whether or not they are current with their dues to the organization.

Decision: The attendees approved a modification of the membership dues as follows:

- 10 for members living in Bulgaria.
- \$35 for members living outside Bulgaria.
- \$0 membership charge for retirees and enrolled graduate students.

Action: The new membership fees and categories will be posted on the BSA website and shared on Facebook. Dilyana will send the announcement regarding the membership changes to the BSA mailing list.

Fundraising ideas for our activities

Discussion: Dilyana pointed out how important it is to start fundraising more actively because the organization needs more money to support the Bulgarian Studies scholars with travel grants, publication grants and other activities. BSA also needs money for the BSA conferences and proceedings, as well as BSA operations, website maintenance, etc.

Dilyana invited the attendees to think more actively about fundraising venues and means.

She explained that along with Traci she has been exploring the fundraising features of Facebook through the PayPal Giving Fund. The PayPal Giving Fund has been created for BSA, but Dilyana hasn't figured out how to use PayPal for Facebook fundraiser. Dilyana will continue exploring the fundraising features of Facebook and report at the next meeting on progress.

Action: This topic will be discussed again at the next BSA meeting.

BSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 2023, CONTINUED

BSA: unincorporated association or corporation?

William F. Zieske (Liam) – BSA Member and *pro bono* Lawyer

Discussion: Liam explained that BSA currently is an unincorporated association and there are advantages to not incorporating. Our current format offers flexibility – we are not tied to a single state, which often becomes irrelevant once officers of a scholarly organization change. To be incorporated, most (perhaps all) states require the corporation to keep a registered agent, usually an accountant or lawyer such as himself, with an office in the state, for purposes of service of process (in case of any legal trouble). Liam explains that he does this *pro bono*, as a donation each year, to the scholarly NFP corporations he represents, and he intends to continue (if BSA wishes) to represent BSA for the foreseeable future. This would make incorporation in Illinois easy to maintain for now; but if Liam moves away, he would not be able to continue in that role, and it may be difficult to find someone else in the state to step into the role.

There are some advantages to incorporating – it can be more difficult to get a bank account for an unincorporated association. But most banks do provide options with submission of IRS paperwork and the organization's constitution. For example, many church groups are unincorporated associations and do maintain accounts. Another reason to consider incorporation is if BSA starts receiving grants and big donations. Any major sponsor will prefer to deal with a corporation rather than an unincorporated organization.

Members of the audience suggested that BSA look for a more permanent residence at some U.S. university with a Slavic Studies department and with Bulgarian Studies specialists who develop programs there. Ohio State University and University of Chicago were suggested as possible venues for the BSA residence.

Action 1: Yana Hashamova will explore the Ohio State as a venue for BSA, and Angelina Ilieva will explore the University in Chicago for the same purpose.

Action 2: If one of these universities agrees to host the BSA organization, then we can continue the conversation regarding incorporation.

Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, BSA President

Treasurer Report

by Traci Speed, Treasurer

No discussion. Dilyana presented Traci's financial report.

Presenter: Dilyana Ivanova Zieske, BSA President

Other Business, if any.

BSA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 2023, CONTINUED

BSA Meeting Attendees:

1. Dilyana Ivanova Zieske
2. Daria White (by Zoom)
3. William F. Zieske
4. Ana Luleva
5. Emilia Zankina
6. Desislava Tiholova
7. Stanimira Dermendjieva
8. Ian MacMillen
9. Cris Scarboro
10. Ben DeDominicis
11. Cammeron Girvin
12. Gerald Creed
13. Ronelle Alexader
14. Milena Savola
15. Martin Marinos
16. Victor Petrov
17. Kristian Kafozov
18. Nikolay Karkov
19. Yana Hashamova
20. Teodora Dragostinova
21. Veselina Dzhumbeva
22. Sarah Craycraft
23. Irina Gigova
24. Francis Fung (by Zoom)
25. Angelina Ilieva (by Zoom)



Photos by Dilyana Ivanova Zieske

Papers and Panels, Roundtables and Book Discussions at the 2024 ASEEEES Convention



PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION IN BOSTON, MA, NOVEMBER 21-24, 2024

The following papers, panels, roundtables and book discussions, culled from the preliminary conference program, promise to examine Bulgaria or an element of its culture; other papers and panels may be relevant for Bulgarian Studies scholars as well. Please note that panel scheduling may change between press time and the convention itself.

Thursday, November 21st - 12:00-1:45 pm

1-15 Close Encounters: Seeing and Believing after Socialism in Bulgaria and Beyond - Grand Ballroom Salon B, 4th Floor

Chair: Martin Marinos, Pennsylvania State U

Papers:

- Lyubomir Raychev Pozharliev, Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (Germany)
- "'IT', 'Ricky', 'They' Are in Charge of Our Lives': Mystic and Conspiracy Explanations of the Bulgarian Post- Socialist Transition"
- Victor Petrov, U of Tennessee, "Paranormal Parastates: Bio-Healing, Energies, and Alternative Sciences in Post-1989 Bulgaria"
- Mary Catherine Neuburger, U of Texas at Austin, "A Bulgarian Medium in the Media: Transnational Transitions and Baba Vanga in the Russian Imagination"
- Cristofer Scarboro, King's College London (UK), "Innocents Abroad at the End of History: Last Men (and Women) at the American University in Bulgaria"

Disc.: Martin Marinos, Pennsylvania State U

1-17 The Social Fallout of Socialist Extractivism: Constructing and Disrupting Race, Class, and Gender Hierarchies in Landscapes of Devastation - Grand Ballroom Salon D, 4th Floor

Chair: Eagle Glassheim, U of British Columbia (Canada)

Papers:

- Raina Bhagat, Northwestern U, "Abandon Hope All Ye?: Hellish Infrastructures in Russian Dystopia"
- Brian LaPierre, U of Southern Mississippi, "Men Behaving Badly: Bulgarian Guestworkers in Komi and the Court of Soviet Public Opinion, 1968-1985"
- Julia Mead, U of Chicago, "Late Socialist Mining Masculinity and Its Management in Czech Silesia"

Disc.: Eagle Glassheim, U of British Columbia (Canada)

PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION, CONTINUED

Thursday, November 21st - 2:00-3:45 pm

2-23 Book Discussion: The Road to Socialism: Autotransport Infrastructure in Socialist Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, 1945- 1989, by Lyubomir Pozharliev - (Roundtable) - Grand Ballroom Salon J, 4th Floor

Chair: Mary Catherine Neuburger, U of Texas at Austin

Part.: Artan R. Hoxha, Academy of Sciences of Albania (Albania); Brigitte Le Normand, Maastricht U (Netherlands); Mary Catherine Neuburger, U of Texas at Austin

Thursday, November 21st - 4:00-5:45 pm

3-02 Contested Legacies of Post-Ottoman Liberation in the Balkans - Berkeley, 3rd Floor

Chair: Sohee Ryuk, Columbia U

Papers:

- Lukas Tsiptsios, U of Rouen Normandy (France)
- "Renegotiating the Ottoman Heritage: The Matter of the Ottoman Public Debt for the Balkan Successor States, 1912-1930s"
- Dimitrios Mitsopoulos, Columbia U, "Navigating Boundaries: Border Crossing and Imperial Legacies in the Greek-Yugoslav Case"
- Charis Marantzidou, Columbia U, "Frontiers of (Counter)Revolution: Bulgaria's Black Sea Borders and Their Management in the Interwar Period"

Disc.: Taylor Zajicek, Columbia U

Friday, November 22nd - 8:00-9:45 am

4-19 Collecting, Preserving, Restoring, and Displaying the Ottoman Architectural Heritage of the Balkans in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century - Grand Ballroom Salon F, 4th Floor

Sponsored by: Society of Historians of East European and Russian Art & Architecture

Chair: Doina Anca Cretu, Masaryk Institute and Archives CAS (Czech Republic)

Papers:

- Cosmin Tudor Minea, Masaryk U (Czech Republic) "Overcoming the Ottoman Heritage: Restoration and Preservation of Monuments in Early 20th Century Romania"
- Serena Acciai, ENSA Paris-Belleville (France) "Merging Architectural Styles in the Balkans at the End of 19th Century"
- Deodáth Zuh, Eszterházy Károly Catholic U (Hungary), "Early Vernacular Cosmopolitanism and the Hungarian Plea for Revisiting Ottoman-Turkish Architecture"
- Stefan Peychev, U of Sofia (Bulgaria), "From Banyabaşı to Bath Square: Thermal Water, Space, and Place in the Making of Post-Ottoman Sofia"

Disc.: Seraina Renz, Masaryk U (Czech Republic)

PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION, CONTINUED

Friday, November 22nd - 10:00-11:45 am

5-07 Left Perspectives on State Socialism IV: Land, Soil, Communes, and the Rural - Columbus 1, 1st Floor

Chair: Sarah Craycraft, Harvard U

Papers:

- Zhivka Valiavicharska, Pratt Institute, "Vegetarian Land Communes and the Tolstoyan Communities in Bulgaria in the Early Twentieth Century"
- Olena Lyubchenko, York U (Canada), "Primitive Soviet Accumulation and the Zhenotdel Collectivization Campaign: A Social Reproduction Analysis"
- Victoria Myznikova, Ludwig-Maximilians-U Munich (Germany) "Science Town in Times of Economic Transition: From Rational Nature Management to Sustainability"

Disc.: Mieka Erley, Colgate U

5-19 The Soviet Legacy and Kremlin Propaganda vis-à-vis Ukraine - (Roundtable) - Grand Ballroom Salon F, 4th Floor

Chair: Nadia G. Boyadjieva, Balkan Studies Institute BAS (Bulgaria)

Part.: Golfo Alexopoulos, U of South Florida, Nadia G. Boyadjieva, Balkan Studies Institute BAS (Bulgaria); Andrea Graziosi, U of Naples Federico II (Italy); Thomas W. Simons, Harvard U; Nina Tumarkin, Wellesley College

5-26 Music and Liberation III: Musical Responses to Political Changes - Hyannis, 4th Floor

Chair: Kevin Bartig, Michigan State U

Papers:

- Alexandra Birch, Columbia U, "To Be in Central Asia Was Already to Be Free?: Weinberg, Yudakov, and Postwar Antisemitism"
- Carol T. Silverman, U of Oregon, "Intersectionality in Bulgarian Pop/Folk Music: Romani Celebrities Respond to Populism"
- Kiril Tomoff, UC Riverside, "Soviet Cultural Empire in Crisis: The National and Imperial in the Soviet Cultural Community, 1956-1957"

Disc.: Emily Frey, Brandeis U

PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION, CONTINUED

5-28 Globalization and the Modern Bulgarian Nation-State - Massachusetts, 5th Floor

Sponsored by: Bulgarian Studies Association

Chair: Benedict Edward DeDominicis, Catholic U of Korea (South Korea)

Papers:

- Markus Wien, American U Bulgaria (Bulgaria), "Power, Nation-State, and Society: Constitution and the Monarchy in Bulgaria, 1879-1944"
- Tatiana Rizova, Christopher Newport U, "Stolen Elections: Examining the Impact of the January 6th, 2021 Events on Perceptions of Democracy in Bulgaria"
- Senem Konedareva, American U Bulgaria (Bulgaria) "Verbalizing Trauma: Their Truth of the 'Revival Process': The Case of Bulgarian Muslim Community"

Disc.: Benedict Edward DeDominicis, Catholic U of Korea (South Korea)

Friday, November 22nd - 1:30-3:15 pm

6-18 History Does Not Travel in One Direction: "Real Existing" Postsocialism in Eastern Europe - (Roundtable) - Grand Ballroom Salon E, 4th Floor

Chair: Jill Massino, UNC at Charlotte

Part.: Ondřej Klipa, Charles U in Prague (Czech Republic); Luciana Marioara Jinga, New Europe College / IICCMER / IRRD (Romania); Victor Petrov, U of Tennessee; Cristofer Scarboro, King's College London (UK); Markus Wien, American U Bulgaria (Bulgaria)

Friday, November 22nd -3:30-5:15 pm

7-10 Folklore and Tradition: Small Encounters, Broader Meanings - (EDC) Event Design Center, 5th Floor

Sponsored by: Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Folklore Association

Chair: Isabella Palange, U of Wisconsin-Madison

Papers:

- J. Eugene Clay, Arizona State U, "Liberation in the Epistles and Folk Hymns of Vasilii Stepanov",
- Elena E Boudovskaia, Georgetown U, "A Boy in Red in the Carpathian Mountains of Ukraine and Beyond"
- Sarah Craycraft, Harvard U, "'The Children of Postsocialism' and the Village Paradigm in Bulgaria"

Disc.: Erin M. Collopy, Texas Tech U

PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION, CONTINUED

Saturday, November 23rd – 12:00-1:45 pm

10-18 Accessing Socialist and Post-Socialist Memory through Oral History - Grand Ballroom Salon E, 4th Floor

Chair: Jeff Hayton, Wichita State U

Papers:

- Jovana Babovic, SUNY Geneseo, "The Youngest Yugoslavs: An Oral History of Post-Socialist Memory"
- Lilia Topouzova, U of Toronto (Canada), "Can Art Narrate Silenced Narratives: Staging Oral History Interviews at the 2024 Venice Biennale"
- Dilyana P. Ivanova Zieske, The Field Museum, "Memories of Socialism in the Immigrant's Suitcase"

Disc.: Jeff Sahadeo, Carleton U (Canada)

Saturday, November 23rd – 2:00-3:45 pm

11-41 Freedom, Hope, and Uncertainty in a Bulgarian Longue durée Perspective - Vineyard, 4th Floor

Chair: Dilyana P. Ivanova Zieske, The Field Museum

Papers:

- William F Zieske, Zieske Law and Fine Arts Legal, "(Self-)Identity among Early Migrants from Bulgarian Lands to the United States"
- Desislava Tiholova, Rousse Regional Museum of History (Bulgaria) "The Exhibition 'Tales from the Trenches': Bulgarian Model"
- Ana Luleva, Inst of Ethnology & Folklore Studies BAS (Bulgaria) "Freedom versus Uncertainty after the Fall of Communism in Bulgaria: Approaching the Anthropology of Uncertainty"

Disc.: Irina Gigova, College of Charleston

Saturday, November 23rd – 4:00-5:45 pm

12-23 The Downfall of the Soviet Bloc: A 35-Year Retrospective - (Roundtable) - Grand Ballroom Salon J, 4th Floor

Chair: Vít Smetana, Institute of Contemporary History CAS (Czech Republic)

Part.: Laszlo Borhi, Indiana U / Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Hungary); Nadia G. Boyadjieva, Balkan Studies Institute BAS (Bulgaria); Sławomir Lukasiewicz, John Paul II Catholic U of Lublin (Poland); Douglas E. Selvage, Humboldt U Berlin (Germany); Oldrich Tuma, Institute of Contemporary History, CAS (Czech Republic)

PAPERS AND PANELS, ROUNDTABLES AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS AT THE 56TH ASEES CONVENTION, CONTINUED

Sunday, November 24th – 8:00-9:45 am

13-05 Film and Freedoms of Expression: Production, Aesthetics, Mediology (Late Socialism and Beyond) - Brandeis, 3rd Floor

Chair: Valery Vyugin, Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House) RAS (Russia)

Papers:

- Petia Alexandrova Alexandrova, New Bulgarian U (Bulgaria), "Film Liberation in the 21st Century: Ambiguity of Independent Bulgarian Cinema"
- Mariia Zhukova, U of Konstanz (Germany), "Under the Sign of Television: New Poetics in Soviet Films of Perestroika",
- Innokentij Urupin, U of Konstanz (Germany), "Film as Dissident in Literary Television-Plots of Vladimir Sorokin"

Disc.: Volha Isakava, Central Washington U

Sunday, November 24th – 12:00-1:45 pm

15-04 Environmental Impacts of the 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine - Boylston, 1st Floor

Sponsored by: ASEES Committee on Environmental Sustainability

Chair: Laura A. Henry, Bowdoin College

Papers:

- Mika Perkiömäki, U of Helsinki (Finland), "All's Fair in Nuclear Power and War?: Ecological Narratives in International Media Coverage of Ukrainian Nuclear Power Plants during the Russian War"
- Elana Resnick, UC Santa Barbara, "Greening the Grid in the Midst of War: Nuclear Development and Doubt in Bulgaria"
- Olga Dovbysh, U of Helsinki (Finland), "Re-Imagining the ESG Agenda in Russia after February 2022"
- Elizabeth N Plantan, Stetson U, "Transnational Environmental Activism and International Philanthropy after the War in Ukraine"

Disc.: Laura A. Henry, Bowdoin College;
Philipp Kohl, Ludwig-Maximilians-U Munich (Germany)

15-13 International and State Power in Gender and Sexual Violence Prevention in the Postsocialist "East" - Falmouth, 4th

Chair: Miglena S Todorova, U of Toronto (Canada)

Papers:

- Miglena S Todorova, U of Toronto (Canada), "Where There is Power, There Is Resistance: Re-interpreting Bulgaria's Response to the Istanbul Convention on Preventing Gender-based Violence"
- Nana Gulic, U of Toronto (Canada), "Culture and Structure in Sexual Violence Prevention: Imagining New Pathways toward Gender Liberation"
- Qichun Zhang, U of Toronto (Canada), "Community-Based Sexual Violence Prevention Education in Digital Space: A Case Study of Sexual Violence Prevention Approaches at Sun Yat-Sen University"

Disc.: Janet Elise Johnson, CUNY Brooklyn College