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The academic year 2019/20 ended twice. It ended once, abruptly in mid-March 2020, with the first shutdown of public life, the closure of borders, the transposition of academic life to the virtual world. It ended again, on schedule but unspectacularly in late June, with all of us in a state of disbelief that that we were now parting with Fellows and bidding them farewell without the usual rituals and markers of the cohort year’s end, without the usual small and large gatherings to conclude discussions, saying goodbyes and plotting of future encounters, to enjoy conviviality. When the Institute formally closed the academic year in early July 2020, we did so with a keen sense of regret because of all the events and meetings that had to be postponed, but, nevertheless, with confidence that the worst would be behind us. These two rhythms, the new times of Covid-19 and the Institute’s calendar, were to stay with us until the summer. And, as I am writing these lines, far into the new academic year, with no tangible end in sight.

Despite of this, it is not the pandemic that dominates the Fellows’ reports and reflections. Intellectual life at the Institute did not come to a standstill, on the contrary. What remains of the year is much more than the short-hand Covid-19 would suggest. Yes, workshops were postponed or canceled; yes, our meeting rooms metamorphosed into virtual zoom spaces; and yes again, physical distancing (I prefer this term to ‘social distancing’).
consigned the Institute’s fundamental idea of conviviality, encounter and exchange to absurdity. The reflections of the 2019/20 fellow year testify to a continuous, and at times reinvigorated drive to keep on working. Intellectual exchange, writing, finishing projects and starting new initiatives continued to thrive under Covid-19 conditions. Moreover, a peculiar sense of now more than ever took over in the offices in October 6. street and in the guesthouse, individually and as a group. If the raison d'être of the Institute was put to a stress test, responses to counter the sudden isolation, to overcome physical distance, and to engage in inter- and intra-disciplinary discussions emerged instantly, too. These took place among the fellows, within the institute, but other, new venues were discovered, such as the virtual NetIAS Lecture Series, initiated by Prof. Dario Braga, Director of IAS Bologna, co-hosted and organized by our Institute. These virtual lectures were our first entry into the new routine of resisting the lockdown and the isolation of fellows, research teams, and communities, and of connecting across boundaries, imagined and real.

And then another chapter was closed. After the fellows had left Budapest in June, we moved the Institute to its new premises. This was a move with a special touch. Still on CEU campus, the Institute finds its new home in the stunning, still relatively new building in Nádor utca 13., but we moved into a building that was vacated, following the enforced relocation of CEU from Budapest to Vienna. Having spent most of her years in the splendid Marczibánya building in October 6. street, the entire staff at IAS packed over the summer office boxes and books and moved out from the building that exuded the peculiar, fading charm of the Marczibánya Palace. The new home of IAS in the award winning N13 building, impressing with its warm brick style and sleek interior architecture, which turned quickly into our new home – despite the Covid-19 lockdown and the silence it enforced, and emptiness of its corridors and offices. For the moment.

An unusual year it has been, in many ways, the relocation of the university, the lock-down with its physical distance, the move to our new place. To one of our Fellows' question, which I take to stand for a few, Professor Ibukun Filani’s “could I stay longer or at least, come back again?” - I offer an emphatic, “yes, please!”

Nadia Al-Bagdadi
Fellows
I liked to take a walk in the mornings—from my home in the thirteenth district to my office at the IAS. My daily route connected Újlipótváros, the neighborhood where I grew up and my new work neighborhood. Apart from shorter stays I had not lived in Budapest for five years and my tenure at IAS offered me the opportunity of temporary return. Reconnecting to the city became meaningful in so many ways.

My fellowship enabled me to establish new connections, especially to CEU’s scholarly community. Many of our conversations revolved around shared experiences of relocation, how traveling shapes us, what it means to be far from home and return, temporarily or permanently, having multiple origins or multiple routes, moving between different languages, professional trajectories, and shifting scholarly interests. These conversations helped me look at my city differently, too, and spot some of the beauty I had not seen previously—and understand some of its frailties as well.

My daily route from home to the office confronted me with expressions of recent change, as the new regime had redesigned the city as a space of memory and, most importantly, political rule. Especially the new governmental district in the Buda Castle and the reconstruction of areas in the fifth district around the Parliament presented a landscape that revised the country’s relation to its difficult past. Certainly, changes in
the political climate were palpable at the campus as well, as we witnessed CEU’s ongoing move from Budapest—enforced by the regime, this move is already altering Budapest as well, leaving behind a less cosmopolitan, more homogeneous city.

Coincidentally, some of my extracurricular readings reflected the same spaces that I crossed daily: József Lengyel’s memoir, Visegrádi Street, Tibor Déry’s seminal novel The Unfinished Sentence, and István Vas’s multi-volume autobiography, Difficult Love transferred me to the prewar history of the two neighborhoods, Lipót- and Újlipótváros.

This where my wife and I were taking our walks during the months of the Covid pandemic as well—walks that became our daily escape from quarantine. These walks presented a way to still connect to the city, despite isolation, and turned these spaces into the sites of many of our conversations. We reflected on our previous travels in Europe, as well as our experiences in her hometown in the US. We were processing her experiences here and pondering what it means to be connected to multiple places—as many of us are.

The research project that I had proposed to IAS is closely related to local history, its spaces, sources, and topics. Being reconnected to the city inspired me to narrow down the scope of my research and come up with a new title: The Undying City. Budapest on the Mind of the Fascist Exile.

My research is a contribution to the emerging field of perpetrator memory studies and examines the memory culture that Fascist Hungarian émigrés created after 1945. It centers on a generation of intellectuals that were born around nineteen hundred, started their carrier in counter-revolutionary Hungary, propagated racial policies in the nineteen thirties and forties and shaped the radical émigré culture in the fifties and sixties. I explore how public intellectuals in the Hungarian Fascist diaspora remembered the Second World War and the Holocaust. This research project argues that the memory of the perpetrators has an unexplored potential for the research of both the Holocaust and postwar history, as it can help us better understand the actions of the perpetrators, the re-creation of radical identities, and long-term continuities in memory regimes.

In my understanding, perpetrator memory studies fill the gap left by memory studies, perpetrator studies, and scholarship on Holocaust denial. Since the nineteen nineties, memory studies focused primarily on the historical evolution of Holocaust remembrance and its globalized norms.
Historical research related to Holocaust denial, on the other hand, lacks an interest in perpetrator memory. Rather than exploring and exposing denial per se, my research is about understanding perpetrator memory as a culture. Similarly, perpetrator studies, as it developed since the nineteen eighties, examines factors that led ordinary perpetrators to their crimes, but excludes their later life and the entire dimension of memory. By contrast, perpetrator memory studies examines how perpetrators re-narrated their past, produced regimes of historical “truth,” re-defined identities, and re-created communities across countries and continents. From memoirs to commemorations, their practices were powerful in binding together distant communities, teaching them how to see the past and pass down its memory to the generations to come.

*The Undying City* looks at how Fascist intellectuals perceived Budapest before 1945—intended to radically redesign it—and how they remembered the wartime city in their exile. This new focus helps me narrow down my research and, at the same time, open it up to new questions. It examines acts of past imaginations: visions of a future national capital and retrospective perceptions of the wartime city. *The Undying City* connects some of my previous research to my current interest and extends in new directions. Studying Fascist memories of the Battle of Budapest enables me to connect the dots between postwar Fascist exile and contemporary neo-Fascist currents as well. Annually, neo-Fascist groups, both local and international, gather at the Buda Castle to commemorate the Battle of Budapest. While they display a pro-Fascist view on the past, these gatherings express exclusionary visions on Europe’s and the country’s future as well.

Beside working on my research project, during my tenure I wrote a long review of Paul Hanebrink’s recent book, *A Specter Haunting Europe. The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism*, for the journal *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History*. I also worked on editing an article that I had written for the edited volume *Emotionen des Antisemitismus* under the title “Eine »entsetzliche Einsicht«. Zur Emotionsgeschichte des »besiegten Selbst« im ungarischen Antisemitismus”. I was invited to present my research at the Research Center for the Humanities at the Academy of Sciences, an opportunity that did not materialize because of the Covid pandemic.

Finally, our weekly seminars offered inspirational insights into various ways of doing research in the arts, humanities, and social
sciences. Despite CEU’s transitioning and then the Covid pandemic, these seminars created situations of learning that belong to the most memorable moments of my stay.

Suzy Kim  
Rutgers University, United States

Women Behind the Iron Curtain: A Cultural History of North Korea During the Cold War

My main goal at IAS was to read the thousands of pages of scanned materials I had collected over the last several years in Washington DC, Moscow, and Seoul, and write the book on a women’s history of North Korea, tentatively titled *Women Behind the Iron Curtain: A Cultural History of North Korea During the Cold War*. I couldn’t finish all the reading and writing but got much more out of my time at IAS CEU. One of my motivations to apply for the IAS fellowship was the potential to work with Professor Francisca de Haan of the Department of Gender Studies at CEU. She pioneered the study of the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF, a major left international women’s organization instrumental in organizing women especially in the Second and Third Worlds throughout the Cold War), and her scholarship has been pivotal in opening my eyes to North Korean women’s involvement in the international arena, an important component to the history of North Korean women. The Korean Women’s Democratic Union was (and is) a member organization of the WIDF, and one of the highest-ranking female leaders in North Korean history, Pak Chong-ae, led the organization as chair for 20 years from 1945 to 1965. During my residency, we were able to discuss including a chapter on this important woman’s biography in her edited volume in progress, *Communist Women’s Activists from Around the World: A Twentieth-Century Global History*.

Another aim while at IAS was to complete an article that had been in the works for too many years without time to finish amid the regular teaching and administrative duties. Tentatively titled “North Korea through Intimate Histories: Captured Archives and Future Anteriorities of the Cold War,” the essay was envisioned as a kind of follow-up to my first monograph, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Cornell 2013), to interrogate the archival basis for this study, the so-called North Korean Captured Documents that were the materials collected by the US Armed Forces in North Korea during the Korean War (1950-53). While thinking about this archive and the various ways in which the history of the Cold War and its resulting archives have framed
its very historiography, including the study of North Korea, I benefited from Professor Marsha Siefert’s seminar on Media, Communication and Communism in International Context. She graciously allowed me to sit in on her class, and although I was not able to finish the semester due to the length of my fellowship, I learned a great deal, not only about the topic, but also about teaching. Observing an experienced, charismatic pedagogue at work gave me the chance to reflect upon teaching methods, something we, as scholars, don’t often get the chance to do once while teaching full time and absorbed in our own work. The class was also an excellent way to get to know the caliber of the students at CEU, and the tremendous synergy and diversity that the university brings as a result of its international and transnational community in which no single nationality dominates. This seems to me a remarkable achievement as a model of how differences strengthen (rather than divide) communities, helping build a more collaborative and thereby more hopeful society than the narrow and insular nationalisms currently on the rise in various parts of the world. As a first-time resident of Hungary and Europe, I learned up close about the various schisms within Europe and Hungarian society, as well as what keeps Europe together despite the current resurgence of nationalisms. The need to preserve what CEU has accomplished became especially urgent this year, when it was “exiled” out of Budapest to set up another campus in Vienna after the Hungarian government stripped it of its accreditation, part and parcel of the general encroachment on academic freedoms in Hungary. As disturbing as these policies are, I felt fortunate to have been here during this time to observe the valiant efforts by which the university has handled this crisis, and to stand in solidarity with the dedicated and resolute CEU community.

Finally, the cohort of fellows that included artists-in-residence really propelled me to think about writing in a different way; not tell as many academics tend to do, but to show. The first couple of months of my fellowship coincided with a deadline for a piece I was commissioned to write for a new online magazine called Adi that aims to humanize foreign policy. The thematic issue to which I was invited dealt with the various countries affected by the travel ban from the Trump administration, with my contribution addressing North Korea. In the many rounds of edits back and forth with the editor, I struggled over the writing. But it was thrilling to have such hands-on feedback on the writing itself (rather
than the argument per se), and it was inspiring to have a writer among us – thank you Andrea Tompa for the writing tips! The Visual Studies Program at CEU, through which I met Jeremy Braverman and Oksana Sarkisova, also helped me think more visually and explore ways to incorporate visual analysis into my work.

From the Open Society Archives and the Verzio Film Festival to the Presidential Lecture Series on populisms and nationalisms, the Natalie Zemon Davis Lectures this year by famed historian Carlo Ginzburg, and the works of students in the Visual Studies Program screened at CEU Docs (an amazing program that gave me the best insights into the issues facing Hungarian society and the world as seen through student perspectives – highly recommended!), my five months in Budapest with IAS was made much richer thanks to the CEU community as a whole. In addition to these engagements at CEU, the fellowship gave me the opportunity to participate in the Geneva launch of a co-authored report on the gendered impact of sanctions on North Korea, sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the world’s oldest international women’s organization. I also participated in the annual meetings of professional organizations with a panel on “Women’s Transnational Organizing Against the Korean War” organized at the National Women’s Studies Association in San Francisco, and “Women against War: 1950s Anti-Imperialist Organizing from the Korean War to the Cuban Revolution” at the American Historical Association in New York. Lastly, I was able to squeeze in a research trip to the International Institute of Social History to gather materials on the women’s movement in my last month of residency.

All in all, it was an incredibly productive time spent here at IAS CEU, and I will miss my 324 office in Október 6. utca and my -1/1 apartment at the Wallenberg Guesthouse. My sincere thanks to Nadia Al-Bagdadi for her warm yet fearless leadership of the Institute, and the entire IAS team: Ágnes Bendik, Krisztina Domján, and Andrey Demidov, who turned out to be an expert director helping me hone my message for the IAS video. Last but certainly not least, my gratitude to Ágnes Forgó for her helpful advice throughout my stay, including the great conversations about the South Korean film *Parasite*, which made the historic Oscar win this year as the first ever foreign film to win best picture. It has sparked ideas for another possible writing project, so onwards!
My project investigates the postsocialist lives of Hungary’s communist state security files. It asks how knowledge has been produced both from and about these files over thirty years of political, legal, and cultural transformation and across several different dimensions: from historical scholarship to mass-mediated scandals, from legal battles to political debates, and from everyday practices of remembrance to the ways that artists, writers, and filmmakers have grappled with the legacies of the communist state security in their works. In thus examining a varied range of contemporary stakeholders, my research expands past the binary of perpetrators and victims—informers and those they betrayed—that often tends to dominate public discussion about this issue in Hungary and elsewhere.

My focus upon the present-day stakes of the archive builds upon recent scholarship that has primarily investigated historical issues such as the workings of communist bureaucracy and how the regime produced information about its subjects. I ask how and why the state security archive has increasingly become the source of “truth” about the socialist past—and what kinds of remembering and forgetting this focus upon the past regime’s informers facilitates.

In particular, I have been interested in the ethos of transparency, as both a project of historical knowledge and cultural therapeutics of the past. As previous scholars have observed, transparency’s dialectics of secrecy and revelation may obscure as much as it illuminates, and thus may impede knowledge as much as it provides access to it. Indeed, the call for transparency may create its own opacities, as each revelation produces the suspicion of further secrets yet to be unveiled, and the social conflict that often results from such revelations may ironically only increase the longing for ignorance. Moreover, such emphasis upon uncovering hidden truths risks making secrecy the very criterion for truth: a logic that may be inherited the state socialist era, when only that which was hidden could be trusted to be truthful in the eyes of both the regime and its citizens.

My original plan for my time at IAS was to complete two chapters for a book manuscript on this topic. I hoped to interview archivists, historians and other scholars, writers, artists, and curators, as well to benefit from the multidisciplinary perspective of my colleagues at IAS, CEU, and other Hungarian universities and academic institutions (including the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Debrecen,
where I was invited to give a talk on my research). I also planned to take advantage of CEU’s library resources to read more broadly about the fate of the state security files in other former Soviet-bloc states, and I looked forward to accessing several CEU working papers on the topic that previously had been unavailable to me.

While I was able to make good progress towards these goals in the first two months of my stay, the coronavirus pandemic forced me to alter my plans. Unable to conduct as many interviews as I hoped, I decided to instead focus upon the data I had already collected, and to combine that with further analysis of media debates and close readings of film and literary works. I also realized that with future trips to Hungary looking uncertain over the next couple of years, it would be better to reformulate this project as a series of articles rather than a book manuscript whose completion would likely be considerably delayed.

Inspired by the Q&A after my presentation, as well as other feedback from my colleagues at the IAS, I rewrote a manuscript on how failures of transparency can produce both the demand for knowledge and the longing for ignorance (“‘I wish I didn’t know’: Paradoxes of transparency and the politics of knowledge in Hungary’s communist state security files”), which I plan to resubmit to American Ethnologist. I also drafted a new article that looks at spectacles of exposure in Hungary’s mass media, and how the scandal of such revelations is compounded when past informers refuse to apologize (tentatively titled, “‘To see and live more clearly’: Spectacles of transitional justice in postsocialist Hungary”).

In addition, I wrote a blog post for the Cornell University Press website, titled “Pandemic and the ambivalent legacies of state socialism”, published and circulated in July 2020. This short essay uses my forthcoming book, Remains of Socialism, as a lens through which to discuss my ethnographic observations of Hungary’s experience of the coronavirus pandemic during my residence as an IAS fellow. I also have begun to draft a longer piece on this topic that examines how the dialectics of secrecy and revelation that has shaped contemporary discussions of the state security files also impacts the ways people have responded to the Hungarian government’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic. I will present a faculty lecture on this topic at Swarthmore College, and I will also participate in a roundtable on “Anthropology and Crisis” at the annual meeting for the Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies next fall.
Finally, thanks to the time I was able to spend this spring on Zoom deepening some existing relationships with Hungarian colleagues, I am planning to co-edit a volume with Anikó Szűcs of Yale University that will build upon the insights I have gained studying the afterlives of communist state surveillance in Hungary. Tentatively titled, *Opposing Surveillance: Artistic and Activist Responses*, this interdisciplinary and transregional volume will examine, theoretically and ethnographically, contemporary resistance to political surveillance. We are currently drafting a call for submissions that we hope to circulate this summer.

I feel honored to have spent such a strange and unexpected historical moment at the IAS this spring. Beyond the gift of time free from teaching and administrative duties, the weekly seminars and lunches (and, later, the Zoom fellows’ presentations and coffee meetings) were crucial to the success of my stay here and provided not just community but intellectual inspiration. Each conversation led to new books to read, new ideas to pursue, and new potential pitfalls to be aware of in my research. And I am very grateful to everyone at the Institute and the Guesthouse for rising to the challenge of supporting a community of global scholars amid profound uncertainty. Thank you for helping to make these trying past months into productive ones!

Péter Róbert
TÁRKI Social Research Institute, Hungary

*Children in School: Well-being and Beyond*

My project aimed to study primary school children’s subjective well-being. The research was based on survey data collected from about 3000 pupils aged 8, 10 and 12 years old in 75 schools, located in various cities and villages all over Hungary. This investigation is part of the International Survey of Children’s Well-Being (ISCWeB) project on children’s lives, daily activities and their own perceptions and evaluations of their circumstances. For the purpose of this worldwide research initiative, an international group of scholars from the field of pedagogy, psychology and sociology have developed the core questionnaire that pupils had to fill in in the classroom together. It varied in length given the different age of the children but contained the same topics. The questions focused on various aspects of satisfaction, among others: family relations, family life, the care giving provided by the parents; the housing situation, the house or flat where pupils live; financial circumstances, the material situation around the children; the school, they attend and the way how teachers educate,
instruct them; educational achievement and progression; the atmosphere in the classroom, their classmates, relationship to friends; the way how they spend their leisure time. Generally, the survey explored how happy the children were; how they felt about themselves and what they thought about their future perspectives. In this way, an important feature of the study is that children report about these questions themselves, expressing also that their opinions matter and the adults should pay attention to their voices. Results from this project are relevant and useful for the stakeholders with respect to family policy and educational policy.

In Hungary, an additional parental questionnaire was also developed in order to collect information on parents’ labor market participation (possible unemployment), level of education, on housing circumstances, and on some aspects of financial situation. Questions on well-being were also added with the aim to examine the intergenerational association between parental and children’s attitudes and feelings.

As part of the project, information on the schools was also collected. The school questionnaire was a self-administered one, filled in by the principal in the school and the head of the class also provided information on the school class as such. Data on educational attainment of pupils are also relevant for the study, some marks of the pupils like those in maths, literature, history and the mean of their school performance were also registered and linked to the individual children. Nevertheless, all questionnaires were anonymized, children in the study cannot be identified.

Finances related to the whole process of data collection described above were provided by a grant from NKFIH (National Research, Development and Innovation Office in Hungary) under the grant contract No. NN125715. This funding covered the costs of preparing and carrying out the fieldwork, plus it allowed to pay for research assistance on statistical data analysis. In line with the rule of NKFIH grants, as a principal investigator I could not be on the pay list of the project.

By the time I started my fellowship, in October 2019, the fieldwork had been done and I had all the Hungarian data on the computer ready for analysis. The first motion, in line with the international project requirements, was the preparation of a Hungarian country report in English containing the summary of the first results. This is a 30-page document with text and tables based on the first statistical analysis of the data. It has been published online on the ISCWeB website in March 2020.
together with the reports from other countries. An official launch of these publication was planned for May in Zurich, but it has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Just to mention a few key points from this report on Hungary:
• Their home and its surroundings count as a safe place for children and they are satisfied with the area where they live; there is enough place to play and to have a good time. Over half of the children have their own room and most children have their own bed and a quiet place to study.
• Children are satisfied with their own belongings. Most of them own enough clothes and shoes in good condition, access to Internet at home, and equipment for school, sports and hobbies. They are also satisfied with the way how they use their own time.
• Children in Hungary are mostly satisfied with things they learn at school, but they evaluated life as a student more critically. Although they feel safe at school, they did not have opportunities to make decisions in questions that concern them, and they evaluated satisfaction regarding teachers’ caring and support only moderately high.
• Children are satisfied with their friends. Most of them have enough friends and in case of a problem they can rely on friends for support.

In March 2020, the international ISCW eB dataset became available for analysis. This made possible to investigate the Hungarian data in comparative perspective with other post-socialist countries (Croatia, Estonia, Poland, Romania) and some Western and Northern countries (Belgium, Finland, Germany, Norway). TÁRKI’s bi-annual volume, Social Report 2020 will publish a chapter with the first comparative results in Hungarian.

Again, a few key points from this chapter:
• Hungary takes a middle position among the former socialist countries; children seem to be more satisfied in Romania and Croatia and less satisfied in Poland and Estonia. Children from the Western and Northern countries (Germany, Finland) expressed more critical views.
• Gender differences reveal that boys are more satisfied, girls are more critical.

There are also age differences, younger pupils tend to be more satisfied, older pupils made more critical observations.

I started a collaboration with Beáta Nagy (from Corvinus University); she has also collected data on subjective well-being from children with similar questions. The topic of our joint research is the comparison of
children’s satisfaction to their parents’ feelings. It seems that there is a strong association: children are more satisfied in families where their parents are also more satisfied. First results of our research project were presented in November 2019 in a workshop at Corvinus University. Though the paper was not written up yet, it had been accepted for oral presentation at the 18th annual conference of International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS) in August in Rotterdam. Unfortunately, the conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

While children were interviewed in my survey in their classrooms in school, children were interviewed at home in the survey by Beáta Nagy. This allows to investigate the reliability of the well-being data from children and to test whether the place of the interview has an influence on the answers children gave to similar questions. The editor of a Hungarian journal already expressed his interests in this article. Nevertheless, the topic may be important for an international journal as well.

Regarding further potential co-operations, one of the fellows, Eszter Neumann also works in the field of education. In January 2020, we both attended a workshop on social mobility and ethnicity, that was organized in Budapest by the Institute of Minority Studies. We may co-operate in the future; our similar research interests and our different – quantitative-qualitative – approach can provide a productive combination.

Two IAS fellows, Gabriel Cepaluni from Brazil and Sujoy Dutta from India turned out to use similar quantitative methodological approach in their research like the one I am applying. We may co-operate in the future; a more concrete plan was discussed with Sujoy Dutta because India is also included in the comparative data of the ISCW eB project.

Finally, I would like to mention that I worked on a H2020 application during my fellowship between November 2019 and March 2020. The proposal relates to the call H2020-SC6-TRANSFORMATIONS-2018-2019-2020 (Socioeconomic and Cultural Transformations in the Context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution) and has been submitted in March 2020 titled as ‘Pioneering policies and practices tackling educational inequalities in Europe’. So far, there is no information on the decision.
My project, titled “Antisemitism, Gender, and Exile: Hungarian Jewish Women and the Numerus Clausus Law in Hungary, 1920-1938” set out to provide a reassessment of Act XXV/1920, the so-called numerus clausus (NC) law, a hundred years after its enactment. The first antisemitic law of the post-WWI era in Europe was introduced with the ostensible aim of reducing the overcrowding of Hungarian universities after WWI and the punishing Trianon Treaty. It pegged admissions to the ratio of “races” and “nationalities” in the general population and, with the 6% quota set for Jewish students, managed to drastically reduce their representation at universities. Combined with the antisemitic agenda of the Horthy regime and the violence inflicted on Jewish students by right-wing student organizations, the NC law also led to the flight of thousands of Hungarian-Jewish students to study abroad, while its breach of equal citizenship paved the way for the openly racial anti-Jewish laws in the late 1930s and, ultimately, the Holocaust in Hungary.

I chose to focus on Hungarian Jewish women who were singled out by university policies both as Jews and emancipated women – and whose experiences remain unexplored to this day. The NC law drastically altered the life course and limited the educational and professional choices of young Hungarian Jewish men and women who reached university age between the two World Wars. I hypothesized that because young Jewish women were the pioneers of women’s emancipation and university education in the pre-WWI period, their marginalization also had a significant and lasting impact on women’s emancipation and social modernization in Hungary in general. Previously destined for careers in medicine and the liberal arts, after the introduction of the NC law young Jewish women were forced to find alternatives and would go on to train as, among others, seamstresses, photographers, or apprentices in other trades. Many of those who had survived the Shoah would enroll at the faculties after WWII and achieved professional success while many others chose emigration in 1956, illustrating cases of postponed education and emigration.

I had planned to spend my IAS fellowship with consulting the statistical, archival, library, and oral historical sources accessible in Budapest, as well as use my stay to identify, contact, and interview descendants of subjects -- as the latter are very unlikely to be still among us. I was particularly eager to probe the specific female experience of the NC law by addressing the following research questions: How does the
numerus clausus live on in the mythologies and narratives of Hungarian Jewish families? Can we establish connections between a family’s socio-economic, cultural, geographical, and religious position and the young women in these families to study and become professionals? How did the law shape the life course and professional choices (and often, marriage strategies) of young Jewish women? How did it influence the decisions and compromises of families when it came to their children’s university education, often having to decide to support one but not the other of the siblings? What professions or trades did young women resort to, when denied the opportunity to study at universities abroad? What cultural and political movements and/or groups did they join? Did they continue to pursue public/political roles after the Second World War? These questions and my however tentative answers would also help address the broader social and cultural implications of the NC law during the interwar and postwar periods: How had the law changed the educational strategies of Hungarian Jewish families? Had it slowed down Jewish assimilation, to reinforce Jewish identity? And ultimately, how did the NC law influence the pace of social modernization and the impact of modernity?

In the first two months of the fellowship, I have indeed read and listened to transcripts and videos of interviews of the Oral History Archive currently held at the Veritas Institute and the University of California Shoah Foundation, to assemble a sample and reconstruct the itineraries of research subjects. I have continued my previous co-operation on the NC project with scholars in Budapest and Vienna – including Éva Kovács and Kinga Frojimovics of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute, Anna Borgos and Ferenc Erős of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and Ágnes Kelemen of the Masaryk Institute, the Czech Academy of Sciences. Other colleagues in the field I have had the chance to consult in Budapest included Viktor Karády, Michael Miller, and András Kovács of CEU, Péter Tibor Nagy of Wesley Academy, and colleagues at the Historical Institute (TTI) of the Hungarian Academy of Science. In late February I gave the IAS fellow seminar and received valuable feedback. In early January 2020 I traveled to the University of Bonn for a seminar talk on my research at the university’s Department of Osteuropäische Geschichte and gave a short talk at a conference organized by the Wesley Academy on the gender perspective of the 1920 counter-revolution. (http://oktatas.uni.hu/keret.cgi/?20200301.htm)
In other activities, indirectly related to my research project, I contacted the curators of two Holocaust-related photo exhibitions (and secured a cover photo for the English edition of a Hungarian Holocaust memoir, forthcoming at The University of Toronto Press). To further strengthen my ties with the Hungarian historical profession, I attended a memorial dedicated to the scholarly legacy of Mária Ormos at the Academy of Sciences, a round table discussion on the legacy of the „Red” and „White Terror” at the Institute for Political History, and participated in the internal defense at the TTI of Hungarian Academy of Sciences of my doctoral student, with her defense scheduled for the 25th of March at the University of Pécs.

As we all know, that was the point when our lives and plans took an unexpected turn: the doctoral defense has been rescheduled for the Fall, CEU was closed on March 11th and with major airlines shutting down I have spent the last two weeks of my stay at IAS trying to get on a flight back to Canada and left on March 26th. The last three of the scholarly conferences I was to attend: the European Social Science History conference in Leiden, the Netherlands in late March where I was going to give a talk on the NC and comment on another panel on antisemitism in Central Europe; the CEU-organized conference scheduled for May on the centennial of the NC; and a commemorative conference on the NC at the Wesley Academy in April, were cancelled and/or postponed indefinitely.

I returned to Montreal weeks before the originally scheduled completion of my fellowship – but among the very few things that might have benefited from the „lockdown” of all scholarly institutions, my project on the NC may have been one. Since early March I have received significant aid in my research from the philosopher and literary scholar Éva Karádi of ELTE – I initially contacted her as a potential interview subject and she volunteered to join the project. It was also she who arranged for an interview published on a Jewish community website, calling for research subjects while I was still in Budapest and we have continued to collaborate ever since. We have contacted potential subjects through e-mail and social media, seeking short written responses to the questions listed above, as well as collect family stories, memories, documents, and photos, reconstructing the life course of Hungarian Jewish women born between 1902 and 1925. These times of “social distancing” and confinement to our respective homes may offer
unexpected advantages, allowing us to look through family photo albums and write down memories of parents and grandparents.

The result of our inquiries has been quite overwhelming, resulting in a rich collection of family stories, documents, and photos, and providing a database on which to draw conclusions that, through the impact of the NC law on Hungarian Jewish life, promise to modify our understanding of Hungary’s social and cultural history in the interwar period and beyond. The material collected and still growing is shaping up to be the basis of a volume, consisting of memoirs, photos, documents, as well as scholarly essays; and despite the unprecedented interruption of normalcy in our lives, offering a rich reward for this researcher that could not have been acquired without the opportunities granted by the IAS fellowship.

It was an immense pleasure to be awarded a Senior Core Fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study, Central European University. My project was entitled “Dehumanization and Literature: Representing the Figure of the Perpetrator.” Dehumanization is a hot topic in many disciplines today (sociology, psychology, social anthropology, philosophy, etc.), but literature and literary studies have often been dismissed as being not serious enough for the study of real-life atrocities. My project has been based on the conviction that the critical study of literary works can open new paths in our understanding of dehumanization. During the first part of my research period at IAS (from October 2019 until the Covid-19 outbreak in March 2020), I made ample use of the electronic resources of the CEU library and finished a chapter “Dehumanization in Literature and the Figure of the Perpetrator,” forthcoming in The Routledge Handbook of Dehumanization (ed. by Maria Kronfeldner). I also finalized an article “Gergely Péterfy’s Stuffed Barbarian [Kitömött Barbár], the Ethics of Narration, and the Politics of the Human. A British Context.” to be published in Hungarian Cultural Studies. Both texts engage with the problems involved in the representation of the “human” in the unstable difference between dehumanizing representations and representations of dehumanization, and both complicate the notion of narrative empathy.

The handbook chapter especially focuses on perpetrators of dehumanization who are not criminals, that is, they do not violate the laws of their society, and exemplify what Simona Forti, inspired by Hannah
Arendt, calls “the normality of evil.” It argues that these characters reveal an unbridgeable gap between ethics and law by putting on critical display the difference between criminals and perpetrators of dehumanization. Meanwhile, through the complex, difficult empathetic unsettlement they provoke, they also make readers engage with the potential perpetrator in themselves (i.e., it is highly improbable that one ever becomes a criminal, one may easily become a perpetrator of dehumanization.) As case studies, the chapter examines four novels. 1.) Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) serves as an example for dehumanizing literary representations that lure the reader in sympathizing with the perpetrator. 2.) J.M. Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986), this critical 20th century rewrite of *Robinson Crusoe*, critically represents dehumanization, and draws attention to the violent aspects of sympathy, too. 3.) Jonathan Littell’s *The Kindly Ones* [*Les Bienveillantes*, 2006], apart from critically representing dehumanization, also makes one question, through the polyphony of the voice of its protagonist, the notions of narrative voice and readerly empathy. Eventually, the chapter briefly touches upon the problem of the aesthetic and the comic via Nabokov’s *Lolita*.

The second essay presents Gergely Péterfy’s *Stuffed Barbarian* [*Kitömött Barbár, 2014*] in the context of eighteenth-century, pre-Revolutionary debates on slavery and the related question of the “human.” It especially focuses on the ethical and political stakes of Péterfy’s narrative technique, and argues that the improbably omniscient, third person character narration used throughout the novel performs the universalist and exclusive ideology of *Bildung* proper to the European Enlightenment, which Péterfy mourns.

While working on these papers, I also presented papers at 2 conferences, which were related to my previous research on the nineteenth-century poet and thinker, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The first one, in November 2019, was the joint conference of Eötvös Loránd University and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the Huxley Family; here I talked about Coleridge, Huxley and the Idea of Good and Bad Drugs. The second one on *Late Romanticisms*, was organized by the University of Leuven, Belgium. There I presented a paper on Coleridge and Lateness. Meanwhile, IAS offered the opportunity to travel to Vienna and represent IAS in front on the German Scientific Council with other fellows and professors of CEU.
In February 2020, I worked on the publication of my Habilitation Thesis *The Human Form*, which was published by Eötvös Loránd University Press in March 2020 just before the Covid-19 outbreak.

Between October 2019 until March 2019 IAS CEU gave me an immense intellectual stimulation, through the weekly seminars, the interdisciplinary exchanges, and the various events we could attend. (I was an enthusiastic member of the audience of the events organized by the Philosophy Department and the Department of Gender Studies) I very much enjoyed the friendly and supportive atmosphere among the fellows, and the Wednesday lunches. I am pretty sure that the connections and friendships formed with some of the fellows will survive in the future, too. I find it difficult to write about these now: they ended so abruptly, with the Covid-19 outbreak, that we did not even have the time to mourn. I think about the first part of my stay at IAS with nostalgia, and with a lingering sense of some missed opportunity.

And then hit Covid-19. On the 12th of March, Thursday, I still exchanged a text message with Christiane Tewinkel, another fellow, that we would go to the office, not knowing that this will be our very last day. On the 13th of March, Friday, I took all my books and belongings home. From the 16th of March, nurseries and kindergartens got closed, and my family, including our two small kids (aged 2.5 and 6), got stuck in a tiny flat for 3 months. This made it very difficult to accomplish any work, and this sense of not having accomplished enough still prevails. However, the weekly seminars on Zoom, and especially the two seminars organized by IAS on the pandemic gave ample fruit for thought, and we also had the chance to present short interventions on the way in which the pandemic changed our lives. I gave a short talk on the intertwining of the literary and the metaphorical senses of the “virus” and its relationship to dehumanization. (Subsequently, in May 2020, I was asked by a colleague to contribute with a paper on Covid-19 to the journal *Apertura*.)

Meanwhile, the workshop we had been planning with Maria Kronfeldner from the Philosophy Department of CEU on “Dehumanization and Empathy in Literature and Theory” was postponed for the next year. Instead of the workshop, I could give a substitute Zoom talk, which helped me focus on research during the pandemic. I presented an extended version of the brief introduction that I planned for the workshop itself.
In the book chapter I finished in January, I outlined the ways in which an engagement with novels presenting the point of view of perpetrators of dehumanization complicated received notions of narrative empathy, taking for granted the idea of the banality of evil inherited from Hannah Arendt. Having finished the chapter, I started to engage more deeply with the work of Arendt, only to realize how controversial and challenging her views were on compassion, empathy and solidarity, how deeply her work was indebted to “aesthetics,” and how her own narrative technique (her double voiced discourse) performs her political ideals. In the talk, I analyzed two works that she was composing almost in parallel, Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963) and On Revolution (1963) and placed them in the context of The Human Condition, and the Life of the Mind.

All in all, I’ve found the intellectual atmosphere of IAS very stimulating, especially because of its uniquely interdisciplinary character: for a literary scholar, it was extremely motivating to be challenged by philosophers, historians and sociologists.

This also holds for the future: with another fellow, Mor Segev, who is a philosopher, we are planning to organize an interdisciplinary conference on literature and philosophy at the CEU Philosophy Department during the Fall of 2020. David Weberman and István Bodnár, both from the Philosophy Department, will also participate. At the same time, I hopefully will be able to continue my cooperation with Maria Kronfeldner, too. Although it is great pity that Covid-19 cut through my plans to forge more personal contacts with the CEU Faculty, I do hope we will be able to keep in touch.

Meanwhile, I owe very special thanks first of all to Nadia Al-Bagdadi for the hospitable, friendly and stimulating atmosphere she has created, as well as the IAS staff, Ágnes Bendik, Andrey Demidov and Krisztina Domján for all their help during my stay.

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What Was Medieval Logic About?

I arrived at IAS CEU on October 1, 2019 with the plan of working mainly on a monograph on the history of medieval logic but aiming to keep other lesser projects in the advance. These lesser projects included some papers to be written, an initiating co-operation building with the Sun Yat-Sen University at Guangzhou, and some conference travel. To the extent possible, I planned to concentrate on writing. A particular difficulty that I expected was related to my family life: my 8-year-old son Akseli would
stay in school at Jyväskylä, and thus I would have to coordinate ways in which I would still have the possibility of spending time with him.

Arrival went fine. The apartment appeared well-equipped, and the welcoming practices were surprisingly helpful. Finding the necessities of daily life proved out to go about very smoothly. Looking at the office I was assigned at CEU I thought that I would mainly use that for work. However, as it turned out, I mostly preferred to write home and at the CEU library. The library had a good collection of core works related to my projects, and it was aesthetically very enjoyable place to concentrate. From home, I liked to take short walks up to the palace hill despite all the tourists, because I enjoyed the landscape, and climbing up the hill felt like a reasonable exercise.

The book manuscript made satisfactory process, although I did not quite reach the goal that I had: I did not leave IAS CEU with a complete unfinished manuscript as I had hoped. This is perhaps more due to the project becoming a bit more ambitious through its progress. I wish to finish the book as a wider history of the Aristotelian paradigm in logic, including considerably more materials from Antiquity and the early medieval Arabic tradition.

I finished to almost submission stage two papers on respective aspects of the planned book: on Anselm of Canterbury’s conception of truth, and on Plato’s conception of logical consequence. According to Anselm, truth is fundamentally normative: to be true, a sentence needs to signify what it normatively should signify, which often means that it should signify that things are as they actually are. In effect, Anselm’s theory of truth may prove to give an interesting novel insight into current discussion on the nature of truth. In my paper on Plato, I argue that instead of Aristotle, he should be recognized as the founder of Western logical tradition, since he identified the phenomenon of logical validity as inherently related to mathematical reasoning, rather than just conversational persuasion. I am submitting these papers in the coming weeks, perhaps to Vivarium, and to History and Philosophy of Logic, respectively.

Also, I am almost ready with a paper on Thomas Hobbes’ conception of personhood. This paper shows how Hobbes thought of personhood from the viewpoint of agency and explicates the “two faces” of what it is to be a person. In Hobbes’ terms, human personhood is aptly understood by comparison to an actor on stage, whose actions represent what possibly
fictional character is doing. That is, there must be an “agent” that does the actions, and the “character” to whom the actions are attributed. In normal human natural personhood, these “two faces” are attributed to the same human, but oftentimes the two faces need to be considered separate. In developing the theory, Hobbes had at the forefront in his mind the way in which Leviathan and other politically grounded agents act with normativity and responsibility, which in of course are completely absent for the basic level of matter in motion in his strictly materialist metaphysics. Indeed, understanding Hobbes’ little studied conception of personhood properly may help in understanding the grounding of normativity in a world that is understood in terms of reductionist physicalism.

During the time at IAS CEU, I made a long conference trip to China and Australia, participating a major conference on selfhood at Beijing University late November, and the Australasian Early modern philosophy conference ASEM2019 at University of Queensland at Brisbane at the beginning of December. Both at Brisbane and at Beijing, I presented on personhood, related to the above-mentioned paper on Hobbes. I travelled also back to Finland not only for family reasons but for some academic purposes as well, like seminar presentations and serving as the opponent at Janne Hiipakka’s doctoral dissertation on modal logic on 24th February.

On the latter half of my time at IAS CEU the Covid-19 epidemic emerged in Wuhan, in China, and in fact throughout the world. As I write, it is still unclear how the situation develops, but in any case, it is giving a major blow to academic travel and thereby to international co-operation. During my time at IAS CEU, we were spared of the actual virus, and there were only singular cases in Finland either. I, or my travel did not really suffer, but I had to cancel some planned trips, including one to Beijing Normal University early March 2020, where I would have discussed possibilities of building co-operative research projects in Beijing. As I write, the virus situation in China has improved considerably, while the situation in Europe is getting worse. My travel to Beijing is still postponed indefinitely. Also, I intended to travel to Parma, Italy, but plans for that workshop are still pending.

During the months in 2019 I made two visits to Guangzhou, where we started planning an ambitious conference series, “Global history of logic”, the first of which would be planned for October 2020. Sun yat-Sen
University is committing considerable resources for the project. I am also co-editing a collection of translations of internationally important papers on the medieval philosopher William Ockham, intended as a Chinese language companion on his philosophy for graduate student working in related fields.

Building a more lasting relationship with CEU, I am co-operating with István Bodnár and Hanoch Ben-Yami in organizing a workshop on how old logic is cast in new forms, or on how most recent developments in logic can be used to illuminate historical issues in logic. Given the Covid-19 situation we decided to have the workshop in October, when the epidemic is hopefully over.

I am looking back to my period at IAS CEU as fruitful and comfortable. Although I did not get the book manuscript quite to the stage where I hoped to get it, I did manage to get quite a lot of important work done. My son spent altogether less than a month in Budapest, but the whole five-month period did not build into any significant disruption for him. Instead, he met and got to know two other kids of his age, Noelia and Max, and he is generally happy about the period. As he sees it himself, he looks back to having lived happily in Budapest for a while. For my academic work, I think the most beneficial thing was that I did manage to get several publication projects move considerably forward.
In 2018, I was invited by the CEU Center for European Neighborhood Studies (CENS) to speak on gender and political culture in the event “The Western Balkan’s Diversity of Identities: Political Culture, Minorities and Gender.” I truly enjoyed the experience, but I could not imagine that just one year later that same room, N103 at Nádor 15, would become my agora of IAS CEU life. There I would listen to presentations of the fascinating work of my co-fellows and present mine in the famous weekly Wednesday seminars. This is my first fellowship experience, but I’m convinced that the Wednesday seminars are the highlight of IAS CEU as they distillate the best of IAS – the fellows’ excellence, the extremely rich interdisciplinarity, and the constructive and incentivizing academic and social environment. My seminar, like my research project at IAS, focused on issues of migration and social protection and was scheduled for January 2020. Though it came a bit early in the life course of my nine-month research project, when I still had more questions than answers while collecting and analyzing data, it challenged me out of the comfort zone of my discipline, and the Q&A session gave me the opportunity to exchange insights with the fellow colleagues and other participants form a wide range of areas of expertise that encouraged me to make my research more intelligible to wider audiences. Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic did take away
some of the magic of that room, when we had to switch to a virtual medium. Nonetheless, with the remarkable versatility and support of the IAS CEU staff, online seminars turned out to be nearly as good and new opportunities arouse including shared events in the Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study – NetIAS, and special discussions among IAS CEU fellows like the “Special discussion: Covid 19 – implications in and outside academia” where I spoke on its implication and (in)equalities.

Indeed, I’m grateful to IAS CEU for the formal and informal experiences in the pre- and post-Covid pandemic eras. Thanks to the fantastic conditions provided by IAS and the Wallenberg Guesthouse, the support and flexibility of the staff, I was able to make my time in Budapest both productive and pleasant, both for myself and my family. I was able to access relevant literature in my area through the fantastic CEU library and also meet and exchange with colleagues from the migration research group at the CEU and participated in many other events with brilliant guest speakers. During my 9 months at IAS, I got the chance to have exclusive time for research after long years of intensive teaching. Furthermore, I was able to collect (with some support from home) and analyze more than thirty in-depth interviews and submit my first paper to the Journal of Mediterranean Knowledge where I addressed issues of migration, transnational informal social protection and family in a transnational context. During the unusual days of the pandemic, I co-authored the essay “Rethinking the transformative role of the social work profession in Albania: Some lessons learned from the response to Covid-19” which will soon appear in International Social Work journal. Finally, I’ve been able to outline and partially draft two book chapters that use data and findings from my research at IAS. One of them is expected to be part of an edited volume, edited by Nadia Al-Bagdadi and William O’Reilly, entitled “Stuck in Migration: Dynamics of Waiting and Mobility.” The other is aimed for the forthcoming “The Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Problems.” Now that my time with IAS CEU has ended, I hope to be able to keep a similar pace of productivity and progress so that I finalize these two book chapters and advance with few other publication projects using data and findings from my work at IAS.

During my time as the IAS Fellow, I was also able to follow up with other previous engagements related to the area of my research at IAS. Being part of an international research group in the area of media and
migration, I attended the project partners’ workshop in December 2019, in Brno, Czech Republic where we planned the outline of an edited volume. Moreover, I did not give up on my tradition of participating in international conferences and submitted an abstract and was expected to participate in the Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development, in Rimini, Italy – initially scheduled for June and later postponed for November 2020. Finally, my time at IAS CEU helped me to build new professional partnerships and inspired new ideas that would feed new projects for the years to come.

With the transition of CEU to Vienna, IAS may one day move too; however, this report would be incomplete without spending few words on Budapest. This city made my family and me feel at home and enjoy a lovely journey. Another member of my family, my daughter enjoyed the education opportunities of Budapest. Although we had a challenging time the first month of our stay trying to find a fit school for her, we ended up making a great choice that gave her an outstanding and memorable experience. My little one was not as lucky, as time between having an available place for him at a state kindergarten and the coronavirus lockdown was very short. However, he and my husband – who was fully dedicated to support us during the time at IAS, ‘specialized’ in exploring and enjoying the beauties of the city and were our guides towards some amazing adventures. We all left IAS CEU and Budapest with the lovely memories and a great disposition to never miss a chance to visit in the future.

My research stay in Budapest marked several firsts for me: first time in Europe, first time outside Africa, first time in winter (I saw snow for the first time!), first time I had been away for so long from my home culture, etc. So, I arrived in Budapest with puzzles and with high hopes. My hopes centred around the unfamiliar experiences I would have and the changes I might have undergo by the end of the stay. The puzzle concerned how I would cope with the weather, culture, and how I would find answers to my research questions. Nine months later, the puzzles were resolved. I had survived the cold months of winter, eaten some Hungarian delicacies and tasted the finest of Hungarian wines. I had found answers to my research questions and in the process, I had generated more questions than I could have imagined. It is the end of
the nine-month period, and I can say that I have enjoyed my stay!

When I received the notification that I had been selected for the IAS fellowship in 2019, I was pleasantly surprised. It came at a time I so much needed one but was not sure I would get one. But the surprise did not end with the correspondence. Budapest, too, was pleasantly astounding. The historic architecture inspired one to imagine how life could have been in the past. The Buda Castle, cathedrals in the city and the Danube separating Buda from Pest together with the Chain Bridge linking them chronicled numerous narratives from the past and how Budapest became a cultural and intellectual capital.

To make headway with my project, I needed time with books – lots of books and articles! And a space for thinking and writing. IAS CEU provided all these. The IAS created conducive and comfortable conditions and I appreciate this. My office space was perfect for thinking and putting my thoughts together. My flat at the Fellow's Residence, the Raoul Wallenberg Guesthouse, was a very convenient abode with a space equipped for work. The location of the Guesthouse and its distance to the office was not too far for ambulating. Being a short distance made walking to the office pleasurable and many times that I did the distance, it was in company of other Fellows. We walked, talked and I learnt more about other academic cultures. Our talks went beyond academic interactions as we built friendship. Some of my fondest memories were just walking around Budapest, discovering the city and stumbling on monuments.

When people ask me what I do as an academic and I tell them I research jokes – African stand-up comedy – I usually get this response: are you kidding me? The CEU IAS community’s reaction to my project was different. They knew my research interest was not a joke! The casual conversations were encounters with different disciplines and cultures represented by other Fellows. The IAS programme provided an avenue, the lunch after the Wednesday’s seminars – a very fine avenue to eat European and Hungarian cuisines. (I always, deliberately, went there hungry!) As Fellows, we had our own potlucks and drinks too, and we became a family. Through the seminars, I encountered interdisciplinarity in two dimensions: first as the one who listened to others and second as someone who had to speak to others. I had interactions with scholars whose disciplines were different from my own. These intersections repositioned me in some ways. First, I assumed I knew something about other fellows’ topics or that the research was in a way
related to mine; second the talk showed me how strange the research was to me; third, I gained deeper understanding through the questions and answers sections and my follow-up conversations with the presenter. I also had the opportunity to discuss my research with humour researchers in Hungary like Prof. Dr. habil. Anna Litovkina (convener of the Hungarian Interdisciplinary Conferences on Humour) and a couple of others. So apart from gleaning ideas from books and articles, the cross-disciplinary interactions offered me many theoretical insights I would not have thought of or even encountered through my readings. I received valuable feedbacks from my talk and the interactions I had with other scholars.

I arrived in October 2019 and it was very cold for me. People said it was warm then and I would wonder why they still had warm clothing on. Then came the winter months and I understood why October was warm. Coming at the start of the academic year and staying for the whole of it allowed me to experience the four seasons of Europe. Through the window in my flat, I observed how vegetation changed as the seasons changed. The most beautiful was the sight of snow falling and covering everywhere in white. Its paradox was that it was also the most challenging as the weather became colder after the fall. It was beautiful to see different colours of leaves and different birds coming and going. Being free from the teaching routine and faculty administrative duties together with the conducive working space located where one encountered the beautiful scenery of nature and culture was an impetus that awakened the ingenuity needed for research. Then knowing that one is not constrained by demands to be efficient based on certain criteria, aside that which one sets to achieve for oneself, created a sense of liberty to explore and to enjoy different academic discourses from the IAS and other CEU units. Such a liberation framed me into drafting six articles. Like I noted, I enjoyed my stay at IAS. And like Oliver Twist, I was tempted to ask, could I stay longer or at least, come back again?

The research project on which I was working during my stay at the IAS at CEU was entitled “The Afterlife of the Ruins of the World Trade Center.” This project grew out of my PhD dissertation, which explored the relationship between trauma and taboo in the context of 9/11, photographic and filmic representations of those that jumped out of the towers after the planes hit. My new research project moves away from
the actual event of 9/11 and focuses on the ruins of the World Trade Center after their hasty removal from Ground Zero. Although previous scholarship has addressed the ruins' radically heterogeneous materiality in which the remains of victims are inextricably mixed with debris and the remains of terrorists, my intention was to trace the afterlife of this material. The project stands on three pillars which are as follows: 1) the post-Ground Zero biography of WTC steel, 2) the musealization of objects retrieved from Ground Zero 3) textual and visual representations of the afterlife of the World Trade Center ruins. In addition, the project focuses on the social, cultural, and political discourses and decisions that are at work behind these different uses and destinations of the ruins. My objective for my stay at the IAS from 1 October 2019 till 31 January was to get my bearings on the theoretical grounding and overall structure of my project, which will eventually (hopefully) result in a book in the foreseeable future. Within the scope of these four months, I wanted to complete an article for Atlantic Studies, which will soon be sent for review.

My first couple of days at the IAS were an emotional roller-coaster. I was born and raised in Budapest and completed my doctoral studies at ELTE but I left the country once I landed a job in 2012 at the Cultural Studies Department at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands. Although I would come back for shorter visits three or four times a year, the opportunity to stay in Budapest for four months was one that I had not experienced over the past eight years. Besides finally having time to fully dedicate myself to research, I was very much delighted to reconnect with old colleagues, friends, and family, knowing that goodbyes could wait until the end of January. Apart from rekindling old friendships and reconnecting with old networks, I found an extremely vibrant intellectual environment at IAS and at the CEU in general. I had the chance to meet like-minded scholars in memory studies among the fellows themselves as well as to pursue fruitful discussions with new acquaintances at the Sociology and Cultural Heritage departments. It also became clear to me early on, however, that what looked like a long stay ahead of me was in fact a very short one and that I needed to manage my time accordingly. The Institute and the Wallenberg Guesthouse have provided me with all possible support to get the best out of my stay.

Fortunately, the timing of my seminar presentation at the beginning of November provided me with the necessary incentive to delve into my
project early on and receive constructive feedback. On the one hand, the seminar confirmed my belief in the potential that my project has but it also highlighted some shortcomings regarding structure and scope. In addition to the numerous useful comments that I received, I was especially glad that Prof. József Laszlovszky and his colleagues and students from the Cultural Heritage Program and the Medieval Studies Department had the chance to attend my talk. He and his colleague Dóra Mérai provide me with ample feedback and encouragement to continue. I wish to stay in contact with them in the future as well. Shortly after my IAS seminar I gave an invited talk about my research at the University of Debrecen, on November 20, and another one at Károli Gáspár University in Budapest on December 3. These two additional talks gave me the opportunity to reorganize my presentation, incorporate the feedback I had received at the CEU, and ‘test out’ new ideas on different audiences. For all the enthusiasm with which I accepted these invitations, by mid-November I had the feeling that these talks would take up too much time of my stay in Hungary and disrupt the rhythm of my work. In retrospect, however, the opportunity to share my research with colleagues and receive even more feedback were worth the trouble. I was also honored to be one of the fellows to represent IAS at the meeting of the German Wissenschaftsrat at the new Vienna campus of the CEU on November 18, just before my talk in Debrecen.

Over the course of these four months my writing has been focused on the material history of the ruins after their removal from Ground Zero, which is the first pillar of my general research project. In the article I am about to finish, I approach this material history through the lens of three ships, each of which represents a particular aspect of the ruins’ afterlife. One of them highlights the rhetorical function of archeology in the musealization of pieces of the debris, another one is the battleship USS New York which incorporates WTC steel in its bow stem, and the third one is a Turkish cargo ship, which was responsible for carrying the bulk of the World Trade Center’s recyclable steel to the Far East where they were sold as scrap metal. I realized that my initial distinction between ‘ruin’ and ‘rubble’ was not nuanced enough to analyze the complex economic, reverential, and mnemonic aspects of the different forms of the ruins’ afterlife, which often stand in stark contrast with one another. In my article, I introduce the triad of ‘refuse’, ‘relic’, and ‘rubble’ as a tripartite
conceptual platform in order to highlight the abject materiality of the ruins (refuse), their re-inscription as indexical markers of the victims (relics), and their recycling and commoditization as raw material for new constructions (rubble). This terminological triad has proven more feasible than my earlier approach.

The CEU library, rather than my office, became my second home in the writing process. This is not to say that I didn’t like my office, quite the contrary. I simply found the library such an inspiring environment that it served me as an ideal base camp for daily research, writing, and meetings with fellows and people from the CEU. My stay at the IAS, however, meant much more to me than an opportunity to work on my project. It allowed me to gain perspective on my work as an academic, as well as to reflect on my life outside academia. The distance from my home university in the Netherlands, particularly from teaching and administrative duties, compelled me to pose such important questions as to what I find important as a researcher, a teacher, and ultimately as a man who has just embarked on married life. It compelled me to consider my position in the Netherlands as a Hungarian academic and to reconnect with my intellectual and familial roots in the city that I love dearly. Although the answers to these questions may have to wait for some time, the fact that I could ponder them is a big leap forward. Needless to say, the distance gained from daily duties was as much liberating as emotionally overwhelming, making my departure more difficult to cope with than ever before. Unsurprisingly, no sooner had I started to delve deep into my work, than I had to pack up and leave. In retrospect, it was a short stay, too short perhaps, but undoubtedly a stay from which I will benefit for years to come.

I came to the IAS just over a year after my PhD thesis defense. There were two main reasons why I had initially applied to IAS CEU. The first reason was my book project. As an early career researcher in the Humanities and Social Sciences, you are expected to publish your thesis as a monography before applying to tenure-track positions. However, it is particularly challenging to find the time to turn your thesis into a book manuscript while writing research project proposals, improving your publication record and your overall academic track record, and making a living while teaching at several institutions as adjunct faculty. In this situation, the
IAS is the ideal place that gives you the time, infrastructure, and financial security to do just that, working on your book manuscript. While North America and the UK have a close network of similar society fellowship programs, such opportunities are less developed.

Second, the IAS is an incredibly prestigious institute. The CEU resembles the international, research-intensive university that I was used to since embarking on a PhD project at the European University Institute. This international orientation attracted me initially to EUI and, again, to CEU; such an environment is genuinely enriching one’s academic research.

For these reasons, my focus during the nine months at IAS was to finalize my book manuscript, and I was indeed able to fulfill this goal. After my stay, I submitted the book proposal to two US-American university presses, and the manuscript is currently under review.

In addition to the main task of writing the book manuscript, I pursued other academic activities. The most important task of these was finding a place (and, as necessary, funding) to continue my career after the IAS. Hence, I successfully submitted several research project proposals. One of the proposals that I submitted during my time at the IAS reached the necessary funding approval threshold. I am started my position as an Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Sociology and Political Science, National University of Ireland, in Galway.

The international environment at the IAS helped to achieve these goals. The weekly seminars provided fruitful insight into colleagues’ work from other disciplines, thereby encouraging me to think outside one’s own academic field. The IAS facilitated the environment to stimulate further debate among the fellows and close intellectual and personal links could be forged that will hopefully be long-lasting. One of these conversations’ outcomes was the invitation of fellow Joe Malherek to my seminar on European history since 1945 at Webster University in Vienna. Unfortunately, this event had to be cancelled due to the pandemic outbreak. If the pandemic situation allows it, I plan to extend a similar invitation to former IAS fellow Max Rosochinsky in the spring 2021 semester. A similar invitation was extended to IAS committee member Almira Ousmanova who presented her research on the protests in Belarus in my social movements’ seminar at Webster University in October 2020. Almira is also a contributor of my forthcoming edited volume on *Performing Memory After 1968* (edited with Luisa Passerini, and under-
review with Palgrave Macmillan). So, there is already the potential for lasting academic links and collaboration.

Links with scholars from other CEU departments and outside the CEU in Budapest could be established too. For instance, I joined Erin Jenne’s Conflict and Security Research Group (ConSec) and presented in one ConSec seminar in May. I continued these collaborations after the fellowship, and I am still participating in the fortnightly research seminars. Through the Austrian Cultural Forum, a contact initially established by the IAS, I built connections to the Andrássy University. Unfortunately, a proposed public event at Andrássy University, sponsored by the ÖKF, had to be cancelled in late March due to Covid19.

Nonetheless, I am still in personal and academic contact with the two other invited speakers for this event, Thomas Fetzer of CEU, and Christian Griessler of Andrássy University. Through the IAS, the English Department of the University Debrecen had invited me to a guest lecture in April – again, this lecture had to be cancelled because of Covid19. Nonetheless, the contacts to CEU, University of Debrecen and Andrássy University are still intact, and I hope to build future research collaboration with these institutions.

The same holds true for CEU Press. The contact with Linda Kunos, acting director and editor of the Press, was established through an informal event organized by the IAS. After the publication of my monograph that I finalized at the CEU and the publication of an edited volume with Luisa Passerini, my next book-length project will be the publication of an updated, revised and extended English language translation of my first German book on Irish republican women, published in 2017. I discussed this book project with Linda. Due to the interest in gender studies by CEU Press, and the forthcoming publication of research monographs on Irish history in the CEU Press catalogue, she showed considerable interest in my project. I am currently working on a book proposal to be submitted to CEU Press in spring 2021.

Finally, I devoted a considerable amount of time to improve my publications track record. In December 2019, I had already published an article in the Q2 journal *International Journal of the History of Sport*. Although the article was prepared and submitted before I started my fellowship, I changed my affiliation to CEU for the publication. This allowed me to fall under the CEU’s open access agreement with Taylor &
Francis. An additional book chapter was published in January 2020.

Furthermore, I worked on several journal articles, book chapters, and my edited volume as an IAS fellow. Some of these publications are still under review or in print. These are in total: one monograph under review with Columbia University Press, one edited volume under review with Palgrave Macmillan, five peer-reviewed journal articles (two published, one accepted and in print, one accepted with minor revisions, one under review), and two book chapters (one published, one under review).

I also continued my work as a freelance journalist and media commentator using the IAS affiliation. The years 2019 and 2020 were a particularly intensive period due to my Irish history and politics expertise considering the then ongoing Brexit negotiations. In October 2019, I had a 5-part series on the Irish border history on the Austrian radio station ö1. All five days, IAS was named as my affiliation. The IAS as my affiliation appeared in my articles for several newspapers and magazine, as well as interviews with media outlets; among these are (in no particular order): Washington Post, Irish Examiner, RTÉ, Wiener Zeitung, Der Standard, NTV, Snopes, ö1, The Journal, DPA, Letzeburger Tageblatt, Tagebuch, Neues Deutschland/ND.der Tag, and Junge Welt.

My main objective during my stay at the IAS CEU was to develop my book project, provisionally titled *Debating Optimism, Pessimism and the Value of Oneself*. The book examines the debate between philosophical optimism and pessimism in the history of philosophy, focusing on Aristotle, Maimonides, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Camus. Philosophical optimism, as I use the term in the project, is the view that the world is optimally arranged and is accordingly valuable, and that the existence of human beings is preferable to their nonexistence. Philosophical pessimists, by contrast, maintain that the world is valueless, and that human nonexistence would have been preferable to our existence. Schopenhauer criticizes the optimism he locates in the Hebrew Bible and in Spinoza for being unable to square the presumed perfection of the world and its parts, including human life, with the suffering and misfortunes observable in them, and for leading to egoism and thereby to cruelty. Nietzsche, in turn, criticizes Schopenhauer’s view, which is overly pessimistic, for (inter alia) furtively positing a perfect state for
one to aspire to, thus being latently optimistic. And Camus, similarly, charges Nietzsche, who announces his rejection of both optimism and pessimism, with deifying the world and oneself, thereby reverting to optimism. Interestingly, Aristotle countenances an optimistic theory, later adopted and developed by Maimonides, that is arguably capable of facing Schopenhauer’s challenge, by accounting for the perfection of the world in terms of a hierarchy of value between its parts, with human beings ranked relatively low, and recommending an attitude congruent with that ranking.

I dedicated most of my time in Budapest to working on this project, writing an introduction and revising and expanding several chapters. In the introduction, I take a bird’s-eye view on the debate at the center of my project and ask fundamental questions about the concepts involved and the methodology employed. For example, I consider the surprisingly convoluted questions of how philosophical optimism and pessimism ought to be defined, which features of these theories are essential to the debate I am particularly concerned with, and whether comparisons between ancient and modern optimism and pessimism are warranted. Thinking about these issues during my time at the IAS CEU felt particularly appropriate. My interactions with scholars working in different disciplines encouraged me to consider ways of making my project more accessible, and often raised questions about its nature and assumptions that would not have occurred to me otherwise.

The additions to the main chapters of my book include the following. Chapter 1, dealing with Schopenhauer’s critique of optimism as he locates it in the Hebrew Bible and in Spinoza, now features in-depth discussions of representative examples of biblical exegesis from the Middle Ages to our day, main strands of which in fact turn out to agree with Schopenhauer’s assessment of key biblical texts as essentially optimistic, as well as with his denial of personal immortality and his identification of an anthropocentric focus in the Torah. Chapter 2, dealing with Nietzsche’s critique of Schopenhauer’s pessimism, now contains, apart from a close analysis of the Genealogy of Morals III, also an examination of Nietzsche’s direct criticism of Schopenhauer in his personal correspondence and of the textual evidence that his criticism employs. I also examine Nietzsche’s reference to his own theory as ‘Dionysian pessimism’, arguing, against a prominent reading, that it is consistent with a complete rejection of pessimism in the proper designation of the term. Chapter 3, which deals with Camus’s critique of
Nietzsche, now contains an extended discussion of Camus's alternative to Nietzsche's view. In *The Rebel*, Camus criticizes Nietzsche for failing, upon recognizing the problems inherent in postulating any normative values, to abide by the conclusion, resorting instead to the valuation (indeed, the deification) of the world and of oneself. Camus's alternative is precisely to resist any such valuation, by adopting the ideal that he calls 'moderation'. However, 'moderation' is arguably ineffectual (as Camus seems to signal himself, in his later writing). The last chapters of the project, dealing with Aristotelian optimism, now offer an analysis of Aristotle's account of the perfection of the world, especially based on a reading of *De caelo*, and develop a comparison between Aristotelian optimism and ancient and modern pessimism. I canvass possible ways in which Aristotle's optimistic theory (and its development by Maimonides) could respond to the challenges Schopenhauer brings forth against optimism (in particular, the charges that optimism cannot successfully address the problem of evil and that it inevitably leads to moral depravity).

In January, I gave a talk at the CEU Department of Philosophy Colloquium, on a fragment of a lost dialogue by Aristotle (*Eudemus Fr. 6, Ross*). Discussing this paper with members of the CEU Philosophy Department, and with fellows at the IAS CEU who attended my talk, was gratifying. The paper is currently forthcoming in the journal *Classical Philology*. Apart from my own presentation at the CEU Philosophy Department colloquium, I also attended several talks by other speakers during the months of my fellowship. My interactions with members of the Philosophy Department at CEU on those occasions were invaluable. I received useful feedback on my research, had fruitful exchanges with fellow philosophers about their work, and made new friends with whom I look forward to discussing philosophy in the future.

Participating regularly in the IAS CEU Fellows' Seminar was a rewarding experience, both academically and socially. I learned a lot from the other fellows — both those working in my field and those from other disciplines — and the meetings, followed by a lunch for all the participants, also strengthened my sense of belonging to the IAS CEU community. When CEU was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminar continued to meet regularly on Zoom. Indeed, a weekly social gathering on Zoom was introduced by the IAS CEU in addition. This routine was essential to me at the time, and it greatly contributed to my productivity.
In April, the IAS CEU Fellows’ Seminar hosted two special sessions dedicated to a discussion of “COVID-19: Implications in and Outside of Academia.” I was among the speakers in the second session and gave a brief presentation on Albert Camus’s *The Plague*. My presentation focused on the descriptions, primarily found at the beginning of each chapter, of the population of the town of Oran during the plague, rather than on any of the main characters in the novel. As the plague progresses, one can trace through those descriptions a shift in collective consciousness from the alienation of and scorn toward the sick, along with fear of being associated with the victims of the plague, toward viewing the plague as a collective concern, recognizing a shared feeling of yearning caused by deprivation, and cooperating toward finding a cure.

In May, I organized a reading group, meeting once a week to discuss ancient texts dealing with epidemics. Participants included fellows of the IAS CEU and other institutes participating in the Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study (NetIAS). In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, not only Camus’s *The Plague*, but also several ancient texts treating epidemics, have received renewed attention. In the reading group, we examined and compared such ancient Greek and Roman historiographical, philosophical and dramatic works, with a view to determining their relevance to current affairs. We focused on Sophocles’ description of a plague in Thebes in *Oedipus Rex* and the discussions of the Athenian plague in Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War* and Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*. It was illuminating and inspiring to discuss ancient texts with a group of people from various research backgrounds and disciplines. The discussion each week was entirely unpredictable and always engaging and thought provoking. I am privileged to have had the opportunity to meet and discuss texts that I deeply care about with fellow scholars in that setting.

In June, I presented my book project at the IAS CEU Fellows’ Seminar. My presentation, titled “Debating Optimism, Pessimism and the Value of Oneself: The Case of Aristotle and Schopenhauer”, focused on the comparison between Schopenhauer’s criticism of optimism and Aristotle’s optimistic theory, with a view to showing that Aristotle’s optimism can address Schopenhauer’s concerns. The talk was followed by an immensely enjoyable and useful discussion session.

My stay at the IAS CEU, between January and June 2020, was fruitful
and rewarding. It allowed me to work on my current book project and on academic articles, give several presentations, participate regularly in an intellectually stimulating seminar, attend various talks, organize a reading group, and meet new colleagues and friends. I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to spend a semester in such a hospitable and vibrant academic environment, and I look forward to keeping in touch with the IAS CEU community as an alumnus.
Much of my time as the Junior Botstiber Fellow at the IAS for 2019–20 was spent writing. I completed three articles, a book review, and—most importantly—my book manuscript.

The book manuscript, *The Frankfurt School’s Other: Socialist Émigrés Who Made Capitalist Culture in America, 1918–1956*, is the project for which I received my fellowship at the IAS. It is an intellectual history that weaves together the biographies of three prominent Central Europeans who emigrated to the United States in the 1930s. Specifically, it considers the Austrian sociologist and market researcher Paul Lazarsfeld; the Viennese architect and urban planner Victor Gruen; and the Hungarian artist and designer László Moholy-Nagy, who established his career as a teacher at the Bauhaus design school in Weimar and Dessau. The socialist politics and Jewish identity of these figures was antithetical to the Nazi regime, which made it impossible for them to pursue their careers in Europe. Though they worked in different professions, these three figures were all social theorists and entrepreneurial institution-builders. The book considers the ways in which the urban, social-democratic milieu they grew up in contributed to their respective worldviews, and how they expressed that socialistic sensibility in their work. Although the new republics that arose after the First World War had provided an
opportunity for social-democratic experimentation, the rising fascist and nationalist movements would ultimately force them to leave. As émigrés in the US, they encountered a New Deal-era culture that was open to their social-democratic ideas so long as they could be adapted to the capitalistic, consumer culture. Ultimately, the project seeks to challenge the bifurcation of economic models. I emphasize that the experiments in social democracy in the new republics of post-World War I Central Europe may serve as models for the productive integration of political and economic forms and institutions that are often seen as contradictory.

I wrote two chapters during my time at the IAS, both on Moholy-Nagy: “Bauhaus for the Masses: Moholy-Nagy, from Budapest to Berlin” and “Design for the Future: Moholy in London.” These chapters consider Moholy-Nagy’s life and career from his birth in Bácsborsód, Hungary in 1895 up to the point of his emigration to the United States in 1937, where he would reestablish the Bauhaus in Chicago. As with each figure I consider in my book, the European period is key to establishing the ways in which a socialistic ethos was infused in the products of work in the context of a capitalistic consumer culture.

Three of the articles I completed are related to a new project I’m working on about the international institutions involved in the placement of refugee scholars forced from their positions by the Nazi regime in 1933 and thereafter. I completed an article for the Bulletin of the German Historical Institute, “Displaced Knowledge and Its Sponsors: How American Foundations and Aid Organizations Shaped Émigré Social Research, 1933–45,” which specifically looks at the ways in which the specific interests of foundation officers, such as John Marshall of the Rockefeller Foundation, affected the course of social research in the middle of the twentieth century. What might appear to be contradictory modes of research—commercial market research studies by Paul Lazarsfeld’s Columbia bureau and the Marxian social research practiced by Max Horkheimer’s Institute of Social Research—actually overlapped in productive, stimulating, yet paradoxical ways. Another article, “Nativism and the Specter of Antisemitism in the Placement of German Refugee Scholars, 1933–45,” will be a chapter in a forthcoming volume, Dynamics of Emigration, edited by Stefan Berger and Philipp Müller for Berghahn’s “Making Sense of History” series. This article also considers the officers at the foundations and aid organizations, but it
specifically considers the ways in which their fears of provoking nativism and antisemitism motivated their placements decisions and strategies, which would determine the fate of thousands of refugee scholars from Central Europe. The final article that is part of this new project, “Walter Kotschnig and the German Refugee Scholar Crisis, 1933–36,” was written for the Botstiber Institute for Austrian-American Studies Blog. It is a short biography of Walter Kotschnig, an Austrian political scientist who served in many roles at international aid organizations and later became a professor and diplomat in the United States. This article focuses on Kotschnig’s time serving under High Commissioner James MacDonald as director of the League of Nations’ High Commission for Refugees (Jewish and Other) Coming from Germany, and in other capacities working to place refugee scholars during the Nazi period.

Finally, I wrote an essay-style review of a new book by Jan L. Logemann, *Engineered to Sell: European Emigrés and the Making of Consumer Capitalism*, for the journal *Europe Now*. The book overlaps in many ways with my own project on émigrés from Central Europe, though Logemann’s approach focuses less on biography and political-economic models and more on transatlantic exchanges and networks. The review is set to be published sometime in May 2020.

Although writing occupied the great majority of my working time in Budapest, I did a few other things beyond participating in the regular seminars, talks, and other activities of the IAS. Of course, I gave my own talk on my project at CEU on October 30, 2019. I had been scheduled to give two guest lectures at Webster University in Vienna on March 19th and 20th, and I was set to participate in a workshop sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, “Transferring Dissent: Eastern European Exile and Critical Thinking in the West in the 20th Century,” at the Research Center for the Humanities in Budapest on March 24th; unfortunately, these events were cancelled due to Covid-19 concerns. I met with and had a lengthy correspondence with Péter Apor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences about organizing this workshop (we were looking to invite a senior scholar for a keynote), but our efforts were ultimately for naught due to the pandemic. Although my exchanges with scholars outside of the IAS were somewhat sporadic, I feel that the deep and (hopefully) enduring relationships I’ve established with the other IAS fellows more than makes up for it.
Finally, I also took one research trip to Vienna on November 15, 2019 to visit an exhibit at the Wien Museum MUSA, “Das Rote Wien, 1919–1934,” for which I also purchased the catalogue with my Botstiber research funds. On the same day, I attended the ceremony inaugurating the new Vienna campus of CEU, which featured an address by the founder, George Soros. This was a great event!

When my family and I arrived in Budapest in the early January days, I was immediately struck by the beauty of this city that I had last visited thirty years ago, and by the brisk elegance of the CEU architectural arrangement. Getting settled at the Guesthouse was a matter of hours, and within just a few days, I had met the wonderful IAS staff and all of my fellow fellows.

My plan for the IAS Budapest had been to examine sources on the life and work of the Viennese piano teacher Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915), who was well-known in the Classical music world of his time yet has scarcely met with scholarly attention, to find out more about the experiences of his circa 400 US-American (henceforth American) students. My material consisted in hundreds of digital pages of hitherto undetected letters, calendars, concert programs, and student lists. They originate from a visit to the archive of the New York Leschetizky Association that I had paid just a few months earlier, generously supported by the Dietrich W. Botstiber Foundation. In a parallel vein, I intended to scrutinize articles on Theodor Leschetizky in historical newspapers and music journals.

This research marks the opening phase of a large research project on transatlantic relations in music and anti-American bias around 1900 that also takes the situation in Weimar around Franz Liszt (1811-1886) and the Berlin music scene into consideration. Looking at these settings will, I hope, further our understanding of what Anti-Americanism is and how its central tenets played out in music. It will broaden our knowledge about related issues in musical life around the turn of the century, like the question of virtuosity, of musical canon and musical historiography, and of music as a business. Furthermore, I hope to be able to cast a new light on power structures in the present Classical music scene, where Central Europe still counts as a Mecca for international music students, especially from Asian countries like China, Japan, or South-Korea.

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“You play exactly as if you came from America.” Transatlantic Relations in the Musical Life of Imperial Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire around 1900
In Budapest, I was first assigned an office in the Department of Gender Studies; only later did I move into a room at the IAS premises. Changing between my first office and CEU’s excellent library (with a view to the Danube if I was lucky enough to obtain a spot in the early morning), I set out to work with the documents, and parallel to that, I immersed myself into the literature on Anti-Americanism and the Classical music scene around 1900. Much of my time was devoted to time-consuming philological tasks. As I took on transcribing the hand-written documents, I realized that like Robert Schumann, Leschetizky was a meticulous accountant of his own life. He documented appointments for lunch, birthday parties, meetings with colleagues, opera performances, students’ progress, the compositions they played and the fees he received. As mundane as some of these notes appear, they offer abundant material for the historian interested in reconstructing an individual life, not to speak of the fact that an equally rich documentary of the usually very black box of instrumental teaching can hardly be found.

I also noticed that while American grand tours around 1900 involved all sorts of experiences they felt special for those who originated from a European background. Also, contrary to my expectation, experiences with anti-American sentiment were differing greatly, as were thoughts about German-speaking lands. Indeed, anti-German or -Austrian sentiment of non-nationals was often complemented by related criticism from within, and accordingly, anti-American bias from outside would occasionally match the dislike of Americans of their own compatriots, a situation frequently addressed in scholarly research on Anti-Americanism.

Naturally, learning about the work of other fellows diverted my attention and helped me articulate my own questions more clearly. I was intrigued to hear about Suzy Kim’s project on North Korean women as it also addresses the issue of national stereotypes, about Joseph Malherek’s research on European émigrés to the US in the 20th century since it deals with transatlantic relations, too, or about Zoltán Kékesi’s and Maya Nadkarni’s work on memory and archival institutions because their findings will impact anybody interested in historiography. I learnt more about the Hungarian school system from Eszter Neumann and Péter Róbert, while Audrey Anton and and Mor Segev addressed fundamental issues at work in human interaction as such. Two months into my stay, I moved offices, embarking upon long conversations on the current state of academia and Hungary alike with my new neighbor Andrea Timár. She
suggested reading Henry James’s Daisy Miller to me, a great initiation into the vast literary universe that deals with transatlantic relations.

Speaking of those early March days, I remember distinctly the discussion that Robert Lisek’s concert provoked one morning and the film evening that Dalia Neis and her Hungarian colleague András Szirtes staged at the Open Society Archives, followed by a heated debate among fellows as we walked back along the dark Danube, ready to cross the Chain Bridge on our way home to the Guesthouse. Naturally, I enjoyed these weekly lectures and lavish lunches with the IAS community immensely, and I also took great interest in the CEU’s broad range of other academic events.

I attended a conference on women in music, I heard a rather juicy lecture by Neil McKenna on Victorianism and a sterner one by Michael F. Stanislawski on Isaac Babel. Marsha Siefert from the CEU History Department and I started to co-operate on an international workshop on “Transatlantic Relations in Music Before World War I” that involved a range of international scholars, among them Leon Botstein who had kindly accepted our invitation as a keynote speaker. I met with musicologist Lóránt Péteri from the Liszt Academy and visited Zsuzsanna Domokos, director of the Franz Liszt Museum, who saw me through their fantastic exhibition. I arranged for concerts and opera performances that I wished to attend. To summarize, I had landed in an ideal spot, with enough time available to always go further and reach yet deeper, with ever new books to read, new questions and themes to unearth.

Then Corona hit, and everything changed within a matter of days.

With all IAS lunches and academic events terminated until further notice, our workshop out of sight, a conference in Graz that I had been invited to cancelled, CEU buildings closed and the Coronavirus slowly making its unforeseeable way through Europe, besides, with an 11-year-old who couldn’t go to school anymore and a husband who needed to touch base with his employer in Berlin, we had to change plans. On the eve of March 17, we left Budapest, hoping to return as soon as possible.

I took up my research in Berlin, thinking fondly back to Budapest and communicating with my fellow fellows through Zoom-sessions and frequent emails. In mid-May, I gave my IAS lecture, oddly directed at the computer screen that was now substituting for the live audience. I presented first findings on the question of how American students’ goals, anti-American bias and the specifics of Leschetizky’s teaching all tied into one: First, the
range of activities beyond piano playing and all that detailed tracking and accounting (proving that not only 'the Americans' but also Leschetizky knew very well what money can buy) came close to what official institutions offered at the time. Secondly, the hierarchical structure of student-teacher relations made it easy to grasp at what pace students progressed, an attractive feature for American students who were to invest into an otherwise arcane field. Indeed, improvement under Leschetizky’s tutelage came in stages that ranged from not being accepted to becoming one of his assistants. Thirdly, the private setting, including participation in family events, was attractive to those coming from abroad. Fourthly and related to that, students of Leschetizky, himself a pupil of Carl Czerny and a grand-pupil of Ludwig van Beethoven, were partaking in what was then – if not still is – deemed the most important of all musical legacies. This especially must have appealed to American students, who were representing a nation regularly criticized for both its lack of history and its sense of entitlement.

I was amazed to see how the weekly lectures and afternoon teas, now all set up via Zoom, were still capable of advancing me in my research and providing a feeling of community. Longing to be back with the cohort, I took up a routine of checking the Hungarian news early in the morning to find out when the country would open again. Only now do I realize that this routine is no longer needed as we have returned to Budapest long since. I feel privileged to be able to resume my IAS fellowship on site, and I cherish the many contacts and friendships that I have been able to forge here.

From a scholarly viewpoint, I have covered substantial first portions of my research project on transatlantic relations and Anti-Americanism around 1900. I was asked to participate in a Berlin conference on “Transatlantic Music Transfer Before 1918,” to a lecture on Leschetizky in Bremen, and to a contribution for a volume Stuck in Migration. Dynamics of Waiting and Mobility, edited by Nadia Al-Bagdadi and William O’Reilly. Most importantly, while an IAS fellow, I was invited to a one-year visiting professorship in Berlin and received positive news about a two-and-a-half-year grant by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft that allows me to follow up on my research. I am deeply grateful for all the IAS administration’s, especially Nadia Al-Bagdadi’s, constant support and for all the chances that this wonderful fellowship has offered me. Despite its somewhat meddled mode, this first half of the year has been extremely rewarding, and I am returning home with truly renewed spirits.
I shall be forever grateful for the opportunity afforded me by the Institute for Advanced Study at Central European University in Budapest to spend six months working on my book manuscript, *Aristotle’s Vice*. Despite the global pandemic of 2020, I have had a most productive experience. My stated objective was to draft three chapters of *Aristotle’s Vice*, which I have managed to do just that. However, the three chapters that I wrote were not the three I set out to complete. My interactions with many different scholars through the institute and the university had a positive impact on the plan for my book, inspiring an additional chapter.

Of the three chapters, I presented two as works in progress during my time here (one for the Philosophy Department and the other for the IAS fellows’ weekly seminar). One of those chapters is completely new; I had not envisioned including it prior to my experience at IAS. It was through interactions and collaborations with other fellows and members of the Philosophy Department (especially the graduate students) that helped me to realize the necessity of extending my book to address the issue.

Prior to my arrival in January 2020, Tim Crane, head of the CEU Philosophy Department, invited me to speak at the philosophy colloquium series. I was grateful for the opportunity and accepted at once, despite not having any idea what I would present. The presentation was set for March 10, 2020.
Immediately upon arriving at CEU, I tried my very best to be of use to the graduate students in the department. Besides conducting my own research, I saw my fellowship as an opportunity to make connections and volunteer some of my time and energy in efforts to express gratitude for the generous funding and experience. Between the start of the new semester and my talk, I had many occasions to meet the graduate students, invited speakers, and several professors from the Philosophy Department during the wine receptions and dinners following weekly colloquia. I routinely interrogated the graduate students about their research interests and projects. They were most cordial in obliging my curiosities. I learned about several of the courses they were taking, including one on Free Will. I offered to share my first book, *Moral Responsibility and Desert of Praise and Blame* (Lexington Books, 2015), with anyone who might be interested. I also tried to make myself useful particularly to any graduate students interested in Ancient Philosophy. For example, on multiple occasions I visited with Dong-Geun Kim, an M.A. student in the process of applying to Ph.D. programs. We discussed his tentative dissertation topic of the ontological status of mathematical objects in Plato. Another student, Andrej Tomic, has interests that mirror my own (the intersection of moral responsibility and Ancient philosophy). Andrej was selected to introduce me at my colloquium talk, and he and Dong-Geun attended the dinner after my colloquium. I had multiple exciting conversations with Forrest Schreick, Maarten van Doorn, Rosemaria Romanelli, and Rueben Noorloos.

I mention my extensive happy interactions with CEU graduate students for several reasons. First, I do not have graduate students at my university. It was very exciting to have the chance to interact with more advanced students who are specialized in their thinking. Second, I found the graduate students excellent sounding boards for my research. Many indulged my desires to talk out my project. As they were not yet at the level of their professors, they were eager listeners. As they are more advanced than the students with whom I normally work, their questions and comments were all the more helpful. In fact, it is through my interactions with them (and with István Bodnár) that I came to realize the need for the most necessary addition to my monograph.

When contemplating what to discuss during my philosophy colloquium, it came to my attention that many of the students at CEU were completely unaware of the very famous aspect of Aristotle’s Ethics,
the doctrine of the mean. As the department specializes mostly in the traditional analytic topics in philosophy (philosophy of language, logic, mind, epistemology, and metaphysics), even their courses on the history of philosophy pass over many subjects in Ethics. Therefore, I began to design a presentation that included a brief introduction of Aristotle’s doctrine and how it related to the main topic of my book.

In undertaking this summary, it became clear that an entire chapter on Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean as it relates to specific vice pairs is warranted. Through surveying Aristotle’s discussions of individual vices with close attention to which of a pair is deemed lesser or worse and why, we learn several things. The appetitive animalistic vices are worse because they threaten to stunt our moral growth. At the very least, appetitive animalistic vices distract from reason. While rational vices are bad, they do not threaten rationality *per se*. What’s more, some errors are bad but not truly vicious. These bad qualities are not a matter of approximating virtue, for they do not come close. They are less bad on account of the fact that they still involve a measure of truth. In contrast, certain vices (in particular, intemperance and injustice) are foundational to the vicious character. That is to say, while insensitivity is a vice and ought to be avoided, intemperance is characteristic of extreme vice insofar as it is a character state.

Working on this new chapter proved useful to developing further a major part of the monograph—the chapter on pernicious ignorance (which I presented in May at the IAS weekly seminar). I had also been working on a chapter arguing that Aristotle had a spectrum of character states. Upon writing the chapter on pernicious ignorance, and after having considered what made certain vices worse than others, I was in a better position to argue for a point that I previously felt was correct, but now I am able to defend more thoroughly. On my understanding of Aristotle’s vice, vicious people have a history of incontinence. The vicious once did know the good, and what makes their ignorance so blameworthy is that they supplanted that knowledge with false beliefs. That is what makes ignorance of the vicious sort offensive (as opposed to the innocent sort of ignorance we find in children). Therefore, while my plan to finish later chapters of the final monograph was altered with the introduction of an entirely new chapter, I believe it has resulted in increasing the quality of the overall project.
My time at IAS CEU has also been one for personal development. I came across an opportunity to take a Modern Greek language course. This time, the instructors were graduate students in the Medieval Studies department at CEU, Andra Juganaru and Aleksandar Andjelovic. The two had learned Modern Greek at the university of Thessaloniki in Greece—an institution famous for its immersive Modern language program. We met weekly for 2-3 hours for just over four months. I have learned a great deal and built a foundation to continue my study of the language (which is significantly different from the Attic Greek that I am able to read). As I frequently visit Greece to make use of archives, I am sure to continue to enjoy the benefits of this class for years to come.

Oddly enough, the pandemic gave me three opportunities for philosophical engagement. First, I was invited to be a panelist for a two-part online discussion concerning online teaching during the pandemic, Philosophy Teaching Online, March 26th and April 1st. I have taught online for years, and I could only imagine how difficult it must have been for professors to transition to online teaching without notice or experience. I felt fortunate to have been spared such a traumatic task, and I found it rewarding to be able to offer suggestions and support. Shortly following this experience, on April 15th, I was honored to join several of my IAS colleagues on the Second Panel of Covid 19—Implications In and Outside of Academia. As much of my recent work deals with the history of philosophy, it was particularly rewarding to apply my philosophical skills to a contemporary issue. Third, I joined Mor Segev’s pandemic reading group, where several scholars from around the world met to discuss depictions of plagues in Ancient literature. Of course, nothing could justify the destruction and loss caused by this pandemic, and so I will not be so trite as to suggest we found the proverbial silver lining. However, I must applaud the IAS for adjusting to the times so quickly and providing such scholarly outlets and support.

In addition to meeting the members of the CEU Philosophy Department, I was fortunate to have many fruitful conversations with other faculty members, such as Péter Molnár, former member of the Hungarian Parliament and Research Affiliate on Freedom of Speech at the Center for European Enlargement Studies, and Attila Németh, Classical Philosopher and Research Fellow at the Department of Philosophy, Eötvös Loránd University. I also met two alumni: Máté Veres on several
occasions, and another, Martin Pjecja, at my IAS presentation, with whom I continue to communicate about my project.

It is not possible to mention all of the informative and positive interactions I’ve had with the fellows these six months. From the weekly luncheons of the earlier months, to weekend excursions both before and after the lockdown, to impromptu “happy hours” in the courtyard, or the pre-planned “virtual coffee hours” coordinated over Zoom, each and every moment was precious. I learned a great deal from the scholars working on various aspects of Hungarian culture and history, and I learned for the first time about art forms such as visual poetry and A.I. musical composition. Through both historical, sociological, and musicological studies, I was introduced to a plethora of ways that prejudice and ambition can collide, shaping both the opportunities and outcomes for so many on the basis of irrelevant characteristics. These learning experiences reinvigorated my sense of justice, illuminated the humanities’ role in facilitating liberty, and reminded me to maintain cautious optimism and unflagging patience, as the harms of the past are aspects of the human condition, we must carry with us into the future.

My brief time here at IAS has been productive and enlightening. I am very grateful for this opportunity. I am certain that my project is better for having spent time here in Budapest and at the Institute. While it is never pleasant to suffer through a pandemic, I cannot imagine a better place to be or a better group of people to be with through it all. I shall miss this wonderful intellectual community!

With the COVID-19 outbreak, the 2019-2020 academic year brought twists and turns to our lives that had been previously unimaginable. It was an unusually intense and challenging year, both for my private life and my scientific progress. Thus, it was especially important that throughout my fellowship, I continuously felt the solid presence and generous support of the IAS team. It was a wonderful experience to get acquainted with the fellows, and indeed a great delight to converse with them over our copious lunches – what a regret that we had to stop those meetings! It was a refreshing mental exercise to attend the fellow seminars, and the lectures representing various social science and humanities disciplines week by week pushed me to my boundaries. Although many of the topics fell far from my research interests,
it was always edifying and a source of inspiration to watch others present
and to learn about their research methods.

During my fellowship at the IAS, I started to work on a new research
topic. My research project is titled “The New Alliance of the State and the
Church: The effects of the increasing role of the church in operating primary
schools in Hungary.” The project aims to explore the education policies
of school maintaining churches and the social justice consequences of the
increasing participation of historical churches in the education provision. In
the Autumn I was primarily occupied with reading the literature on right
wing populist governance, the relations between religion, populism, and
right-wing ideologies, and on the privatization of education and the role of
church schools within education systems internationally and in Hungary.
I retrieved data from national school statistics and compiled a longitudinal
database on church-run schools which allowed me to quantitatively describe
the rise of such schools in Hungary.

The next stage of my research was conducting exploratory interviews
with key educational decision-makers of school maintainer churches.
Given the political sensitivity of the project, I was relieved to find that
those whom I approached mostly gave me positive answers, and I was only
turned down by one potential interviewee. The interviews are very dense
and insightful, and they confirmed my hunch that the education policies of
the churches are an important topic for the sociology of education, and an
astute perspective on the governing strategies of the Orbán government.
Unfortunately, this research phase - including my planned pilot study
- was interrupted by the pandemic. After consideration, I decided to
suspend the interviews and opted for conducting online interviews. On the
one hand, I felt that it would be inappropriate for people (and myself) to
discuss one’s regular work in the pre-pandemic times during the lockdown.
I was also concerned that the quality and depth of the interviews would
be curtailed by the lack of face-to-face contact. Finally, I was hoping
that I would obtain funding and I could continue the interviews in the
Autumn via face-to-face meetings. In February, I submitted a proposal for
a 3-year long postdoc to the Hungarian Research Fund (NKFIH-OTKA)
- a positive outcome would enable me to continue this project and
eventually write up the findings in a book. In the meantime, during the
lockdown, I rewrote one of my thesis chapters and submitted to a journal.
Furthermore, I continued to review the literature, and spent most of my
work time developing a visualization of the proliferation of church schools in the Hungarian education sector over the last two decades.

During my fellowship, I became part of two promising new research collaborations; one had been planned for a longer time, while the other occurred in response to the pandemic. With the assistance of the IAS office and in collaboration with CEU CPS, I was planning to organize a project proposal-writing workshop in the end of May at the CEU Guesthouse for a team of colleagues from the Czech Republic, Greece, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK. The meeting would have aimed to prepare a bid for a collaborative project with the working title "Marketisation and privatization and the politics of inclusion across Europe." As a joint event, our team would have offered a round table discussion about the recent trends of the privatization of education for the CEU community. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, the face-to-face meeting and the roundtable had to be cancelled. Instead, we held a shorter online meeting where we discussed the first draft of the proposal, and divided the tasks related to developing the proposal further between ourselves. Currently, we are working towards submitting an ERC advanced grant proposal, but we are also keeping our eyes open for other research funding possibilities. In the shorter run, as a way to strengthen the comparative angle of the project, two colleagues from Central Europe and I decided to write a comparative paper on educational privatization in CEE countries. Furthermore, I joined a writing collaboration with the help of Professor Viola Zentai (CEU CPS) who connected me with her former student, a Romanian scholar who set up a team to write a comparative article exploring the ways in which CEE educational governments have responded to the pandemic and administered the school closures. The abstract for our article, involving case studies from Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova and Romania was submitted to the open call for a special issue of the European Education Research Journal on Education in Europe and the COVID-19 pandemic and was accepted by the editors. It was a fulfilling experience to present at the weekly fellows' seminar as I had a very responsive audience and received many thoughtful and occasionally challenging questions that helped to reconsider the focus of my research. Following my presentation at the fellows' seminar, I was invited to give a talk to the students and faculty of the Centre for Religious Studies of CEU. From events organized at CEU, the talk given by Professor Jan-
Werner Müller was especially inspiring for my own research project and it was wonderful to have an opportunity to talk to him in person at the lunch organized for the Academic Advisory Board and the fellows.

As for further professional activities, I have been honoured to become the link convener of the Sociologies of Education network of the European Education Research Association. As the annual conference where the convener elections are usually held was cancelled, the network members appointed me as an interim link convener until next year’s election.

Overall, my fellowship at IAS CEU was an enriching experience both professionally and socially, and I am very grateful for the IAS team for giving so much support for my work. I am very excited to continue my project and write it up in a book – in which I would be able to express my gratitude for this fellowship opportunity.

Max Rosochinsky
Independent scholar

Contemporary Ukrainian War Poetry

During my nine-month fellowship as a Junior Thyssen Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, I have accomplished important milestones in the preparation of my manuscript on contemporary Ukrainian poetry, provisionally titled Truth, Art, and Propaganda in the Digital Age: Ukrainian Poetry During the Hybrid War. More specifically, I have completed the majority of the translations required for the volume and placed two volumes of poetry in translation under contract with presses; presented my research at two major international conferences, and submitted successful proposal to three more international conferences focusing on a diverse range of topics and issues connected to poetry, propaganda, and their reception; and participated in a roundtable discussion about the ethical obligations of artists who choose to speak on a wide variety of social and political topics on which they cannot reasonably claim expertise. I also presented my research to the Institute and took active part in its intellectual life. Working side by side with other members of the IAS CEU community, I have developed close relationships with fellows from other fields, including anthropology, history, and philosophy, collegial friendships that may eventually lead to joint conferences, workshops, grant applications, and scholarly collaborations.

In the fall, I presented my current research on navigating the social media aspect of my project at the Aleksanteri Institute conference (“Technology, Culture, and Society in the Eurasian Space”) in Helsinki,
Finland. In the paper titled “Museification and Memefication in the Digital Literary Spaces and Media” I have laid out a framework for the project’s digital iteration, arguing for a balance between the tendency of memefication, which promotes circulation and reader engagement, and museification, which presents the materials in a rarified timeless form, encouraging a unilateral engagement expected of a respectful visitor to a space carefully curated by acknowledged authorities. My co-authored paper titled “Unintelligibility of Donbas: The Lines That We Won’t Share” was also presented by my collaborator Dr. Oksana Maksymchuk at Columbia University. Finally, I have presented my current research on the second chapter of the monograph, titled “Dislocated Poets and Poets-Refugees,” at the IAS CEU seminar, drawing on the work of those poets who are considered separatists. I have also taken part in a round-table discussion on the ethical obligations of writers in the context of war, moderated by Professor Al-Bagdadi.

Three more of my papers have been accepted to international conferences at the University of Leuven (Belgium), European University Institute, Florence (Italy), and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany). The first of these, titled “Imagining the Future in Liminal Times: Ukrainian Futurists in Search of a Post-National Identity,” was developing a historical literary context for some of my discussion of Ukrainian war poetry by focusing on the essays, manifestos, and poetry of Mykhail Semenko, whose poetics of crisis influenced such key contemporary Ukrainian poet as Lyuba Yakimchuk and Serhiy Zhadan. This paper was to be presented at the Biennial Conference of the European Network for Avant-garde and Modernism Studies at the University of Leuven (Belgium) in September 2020, but it has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second paper titled “Heroism, Emotions, and Ideology in Svetlana Alexievich’s War’s Unwomanly Face,” approaches the problem of war narratives from another direction, by examining the delicate balancing between the demands for authenticity and the quest for the creation of a text that has literary and artistic merits. This paper is to be presented at the European University Institute, Florence (Italy). Originally, the presentation was scheduled for April 2020, but has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organizers will also prepare an edited volume based on the selections from the conference. The third paper I have conceived and drafted up for a conference presentation during the
period of my tenure as an IAS CEU fellow is titled “Mra-Remeslo: The Darkness of Poesis in Marina Tsvetaeva’s Writings.” The paper examines Marina Tsvetaeva’s engagement with an influential premise in a popular understanding of art, namely, that it enjoys a sacred or otherwise morally exceptional status. Against this view, Tsvetaeva argues that art is essentially dark, resisting hermeneutical efforts to place it, categorize it, and evaluate it from any conventional perspective. Neither sacred nor morally elevating, art is disorienting and mortally dangerous. This paper will be presented at the Institut für Slawistik und Hungarologie, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (Germany), in the fall.

In addition to the work in progress that I have been preparing in the form of talks and scholarly presentations, I am bringing to completion two articles on the basis of my research at the Institute so far. In one article, I focus on contemporary Donbas poets who adopt a distinctive socialist realist style as a way of signaling their allegiance with the Soviet legacy, associated with the defeat of fascism and the formation of specific brand of unitarian post-national identity. Provisionally titled “The Afterlife of Socialist Realism in Contemporary Donbas Poetry,” it has been solicited for Socialist Side of World Literature, a volume edited by Prof. Yanli He (Harvard University) and Prof. Daniel Pratt (McGill University). In the other article, I focus on the war poetry of Serhiy Zhadan, Ukraine’s leading poet and public intellectual. In this article, I argue that the conception of the figure of the poet has undergone a significant shift, and explain what the meaning of this change is for Zhadan’s poetic mission. Titled “The Labor of Hope: Righting the War-Torn Self in Serhiy Zhadan’s A New Orthography,” it will be submitted to a leading journal in my field in August 2020.

During my fellowship, I and my collaborator Oksana Maksymchuk have prepared two self-standing books of translation. We have also prepared a draft of a scholarly introduction for one of the books and developed a scholarly apparatus for another. In the spring of 2020, we have placed both books under contract with presses. Lyuba Yakimchuk’s Apricots of Donbas and Other Poems is integral to my chapter on the dislocated poets and poets-refugees. It has been placed with Lost Horse Press, which has an impressive award-winning Ukrainian Poetry Series. The second book, Marianna Kiyanovska’s The Voices of Babyn Yar, is key to my chapter on poets who have been compelled to revisit and memorialize
the historical events in light of their experience of war in the Ukrainian east. This manuscript has been accepted by Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and is forthcoming with Harvard University Press.

In addition to the volumes of books in translation, my co-translator and I have also placed individual translations of nine poems in an anthology of Ukrainian-Jewish poets, and in Washington Square Review.
The six months I spent at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) and School of Public Policy (SPP) were a very productive period, thanks to the generous support from the Global Challenges Fellowship and the stimulating intellectual environment provided by the Central European University (CEU). During my stay, I worked on my Bolsa Família’s research proposal, organized a workshop, presented my work at Uppsala University (Sweden), and engaged in new collaborations and research projects.

Starting with my leading research project at the IAS/SPP, my co-author Amanda Driscoll (Department of Political Science, Florida State University) and I are analyzing the full records of Brazil’s Cadastro Único, a massive administrative dataset designed to identify possible beneficiaries for conditional cash transfer programs. We introduce a new data set containing all individuals registered into the Bolsa Família program from each municipality every day between January 1, 2002, and August 21, 2015. The data set accounts for 47.8 million Brazilians’ daily registrations into Bolsa Família or nearly a quarter of Brazil’s entire population.

In the project, we compare the educational attainment of applicants and beneficiaries of Brazil’s Bolsa Família program and find that the adult children of beneficiaries outperform their parents in terms of educational
outcomes, relative to their peers of non-beneficiary families. Next, we compare beneficiary children 15-17 years old who are Bolsa Família beneficiaries with their siblings who were above the age of 18 at the time of enrollment. We find that Bolsa Família has a more considerable impact on “treated” under-aged children than on their “untreated” siblings in terms of predicting parental education outperformance.

Due to the IAS audience feedback, we focus on the program's differential effects on boys and girls. Driscoll and I are working on another related project with Marco Antonio Faganello (Unicamp) and Taylor Kinsley Chewning (Department of Political Science, Florida State University).

In this new project, by utilizing the same data set of each person registered into the Bolsa Família program and implementing an instrumental technique, we offer an innovative approach to understanding the relationship between Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) and child labor. Moreover, we contribute to the literature on development by exploiting a natural experiment in the data: the presence of multiple births (twins). Using an instrumental variable approach, we argue that multiples act as an as-if random assignment of an unplanned and unexpected financial burden on impoverished families. Our finding is that Bolsa Família does not fully protect low-income families from an unexpected increase in family size, as families with multiple births still have more working children, despite receiving Bolsa Família.

The specialization of certain types of work by gender can help explain CCTs' heterogeneous effects. For example, De Hoop and Rosati (2014, pg. 219) review past studies on CCTs and find that boys tend to have more substantial reductions in economic activities, while girls tend to have more robust domestic work reductions. Examining the “Attention to the Crisis” CCT program in Nicaragua, Del Carpio, Loayza, and Wada (2016, pg. 42) find that “boys reduce their farm work more than girls do, and girls decrease their household chores more than boys do.” Regarding the same program, Del Carpio, Macours et al. (2010) examine the household’s labor allocation decisions after they randomly received the transfer. Boys that were older or lacked educational achievements tended to work less.

Regarding households that received an additional productive investment package, they find that “girls...are more likely to increase work in nonagricultural activities and domestic work, when compared to their siblings. The result suggests that increased potential for nonagricultural
activities in the household reinforced specialization by girls in these tasks” (pg. 286). In a study of Nicaragua’s Red de Proteccion Social (RPS) CCT program, Dammert (2009, pg. 63) discusses how education’s opportunity costs may differ by gender and age. Specifically, parents may expect boys and girls to have different returns to education or view older children to have higher earning potential than younger children (pg. 61). Finally, Dammert (2009) finds that although boys and girls received the same transfer amount, market work participation decreased for boys at higher margins than girls in 2002 (-14\% vs. -1\%). These studies illustrate that the effectiveness of CCTs on reducing child labor are not uniform and often are dependent on gender and the tendency for both genders to specialize in different types of work.

Several countries throughout Latin America, Africa, and South East Asia implemented CCT programs. Therefore, knowing the limitations and benefits of Bolsa Família, we can help perfect similar social programs around the world.

The workshop “Political Economy of Development: Democratic Institutions and Poverty Alleviation,” organized with Amanda Driscoll (Department of Political Science, Florida State University) and Cristina Corduneanu-Huci (School of Public Policy – SPP, CEU), attracted a diverse set of scholars. Besides the organizers, the presenters included Michele Castiglioni (Department of Social and Political Sciences, Bocconi University), Arieda Muço (Department of Economics and Business, CEU), and Michael Dorsch (SPP, CEU).

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic at the end of my stay, I was unable to give talks at Bocconi University (Milan, Italy), PolMeth meeting (Hamburg, Germany), and Aarhus University (Aarhus, Denmark).

On a more positive note, the Covid-19 pandemic also motivated a partnership with Michael Dorsch (SPP, CEU), Réka Branyiczki and Dániel Kovarek (Ph.D. students at the Political Science Department, CEU). The paper “Political regimes and deaths in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic” (with Dorsch and Branyiczki) is the first product of this collaboration. Our team is currently finishing another article, tentatively called “Mobility and policy responses during the COVID-19 pandemic” (with Dorsch and Kovarek). Finally, Dorsch and I also started to write a book chapter for the Cambridge University press on COVID-19, Democracies, and Populist regimes. This last collaboration
was possible thanks to the invitation from Levente Littvay (Department of Political Science, CEU), and Kirk Hawkins (Department of Political Science, Brigham Young University).

I expect to produce a series of research papers and book chapters due to both my project on Bolsa Família and COVID-19. Both teams want to submit articles at top journals published in social science, such as PNAS, APSR, AJPS, and JoP. In the long-term, we also expect to publish our work in a book format by a sizeable university press, for instance, Cambridge or Oxford University press.

Finally, I want to thank the staff of the Institute for all the support, without which my past and present collaboration with the CEU faculty and Ph.D. students would not be possible.

During my fellowship at IAS my objective was to complete my project paper titled “Does Better Information Lead to Lower Corruption? Evidence from the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, India.” The study examines the extent to what the Right to Information Act (RTIA, which was introduced in India in 2009) is an effective tool for poor households. Drawing on empirical evidence from the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) I choose two categories of poor households. The first category included the poor residing in urban slums, and the second category – the poor in the countryside. Both research sites were chosen in proximity to capital city of UP (Lucknow). Proximity to Lucknow served two objectives. First, to investigate to what extent the poor were aware of the RTIA. Second, how rural and urban communities engage with the state in their attempts to access welfare resources. The RTIA provides space for democratization as it enables citizens to challenge local power holders. It supplies citizens with better information regarding their rights. This well-designed act can substitute for bribery and can challenge local power holders. However, what I found is that the poor face constraints in accessing RTIA. First, they are unaware and unorganized. Households claimed their elected representatives (who also acted as middleman) never came to their rescue as they did not understand the problems faced by the poor. These middlemen have a clear interest in maximising that corruption is pervasive. For them, political mediation was about “looting the state” by targeting poor households. Their clear interest was to keep things
mysterious as possible; most of them insist what is going on publically is a façade, with the real decisions being made behind the scenes. The second reason that the poor lack support from external agencies (NGOs, self-help groups and caste-based networks).

At present, there is a debate among academia regarding the impacts of the Right to Information Act (or freedom of information, as known globally). In this context, IAS was helpful as it provided the correct podium to discuss the details of the research with other fellows who showed interest in my research. These fellows were drawn from various disciplines in arts and social sciences which helped in building an interdisciplinary framework for my research, this enabled me to answer some pertinent questions: why RTIA has failed to reach the poor? Can civil society groups help the poor leverage the RTIA to access government services? How can government bureaucrats be made more accountable in implementing the RTIA?

The fellowship at IAS also opened an opportunity for me to work with other scholars on joint publications. Presently, together with another Global Challenges Fellow of 2019/20, Gabriel Cepaluni I am working on a paper titled “Land Invasions and Contemporary Slavery.” I am also working on a joint paper with Dr. Anand Murugesan, Assistant Professor at the CEU School of Public Policy. This paper is titled “Greasing the Wheels of Accountability System: How the State Close the Gap between Accountability and Corruption.”
During my stay as a Visual Studies Platform - IAS affiliated teaching fellow, I conducted my research into the essay form through a combination of teaching about the history and theory of the film essay to students at the CEU’s VSP programme in conjunction with my own essay project ‘How to Watch Once Upon a Time in the West’. This emerged out of my interest in the film essay and expanded my methods of ‘cinepoetics’, as coined by the media theorist Christoph-Wall-Romano (2015) and alludes to an intermedial form which sits in between filmmaking and literary practices. In ‘How to Watch Once Upon a Time in the West’, my aim was to reflect, in the form of an intermedial essay, on the cinema history of the Spaghetti Western, with its production roots in the Andalucian landscape, and the cultural history of the Islamic Spain, in its initial renaissance in Al Andalusia from the period 711 to 1492. Beginning with a historical account, and investigation of the Spaghetti Western’s relationship to the colonial history of America, and the concealed historical colonialism in Spain, the essay shifts to an oneiric meditation on the dreams and myths of these film artefacts, and the cultural histories and landscapes that produced them. This research attempted to imaginatively evoke the cultural memory of the history of Judeo-Islamic encounters in Spain, via the popular genre of the Spaghetti Western. My objectives were to explore the extent the
essay form can playfully subvert the conventional codes and respective structures of the documentary and lecture mode, and the extent to which the linearity and logic of the essay, and the presumed authenticity of the documentary can dissipate into a non-linear, fragmentary mode of address, merging fiction and documentary approaches. During my period at the IAS CEU, I developed my script and recorded a narration which was then underscored by the Berlin-based composer/collaborator, Andreas Reihse. We developed the project as a 5.1 cinema-sound installation. This audio essay emerged out of a previous collaborative sound piece for the cinema auditorium entitled ‘Celluloid Corridors’ with Cairo-based artist/writer Mohamed A. Gawad, wherein we critically explored the relationship between cinema history and the archive from the vantage points of diverse cultural contexts and site-specific places. I have since had news that strands of my new piece in collaboration with composer Andreas Reihse ‘How to Watch Once Upon a Time in the West’ will feature in the upcoming online version of the International Oberhausen Film Festival at the end of May, 2020.

While in Budapest, I also initiated a screening and discussion of my own essay films in conjunction with the Hungarian filmmaker, András Szirtes at the OSA Archives, generously coordinated and supported by the IAS and the VSP program. This was a well-attended event with fruitful discussion and responses to our works. The screening played a significant role in extending my engagement with the essay form as a method for questioning conventional historical narratives through remixing and recontextualising found footage and archival moving image. I was also interested in exploring an intergenerational dialogue between my own contemporary practice and a filmmaker who emerged out of an experimental film context in Budapest from the late 1960s to the present moment. This ‘meeting’ and double screening forged a dynamic dialogue and further questioned my own ongoing fascination into the essay form within the particular, localized prism of Hungarian experimental film history. I must also mention that my teaching experience for the VSP was incredibly valuable as it opened a deeply engaging and expansive discussion around the essay form, which hopefully benefited the student’s own practice and thinking, as much as did it my own.

My creative practice is deeply intertwined with place and while residing in Budapest, I began to explore specific locations which formed
a new point of departure in my engagement questions surrounding the unfilmable and ‘ghostly’ presences. Through returning to these sites, I began to develop a series of ongoing research questions that I have been exploring for a while: How do artists/filmmakers respond to immaterial forces and atmospheric phenomena? Specifically, what maps, methods and strategies are available for exploring what can be described as ‘haunted terrains’—from urban cityscapes to remote environments, relics, ruins, and those ‘invisible’ frequencies beyond the physical dimensions of a place? How can an ‘unfilmable’ subject form the basis of a rich inquiry into representational strategies and creative processes without pre-conceived outcomes or actualized forms? My visits to singular sites in Budapest (which initially began as exploratory walks with my students during teaching), provided me with rich fodder for these ongoing questions within the unique, local prism of this city’s history and its relationship to sound and acoustics, spoken word and poetry. In this regard, the former IAS fellow, László Munteán’s own local research into Budapest and his engagement with memory and architecture was particularly relevant in this light, as was Zoltán Kékesi’s work on overlooked strands of Hungarian memory culture. I also greatly benefited from ongoing dialogues with Max Rosochinsky and his collaborator, Oksana Maksymchuk – their historical knowledge, and scholarly expertise on radical poetic practices have been incredibly informative and inspiring for my own research into poetics. All these fellows were extremely generous, and I benefited greatly from their encounters and dialogue. I look forward to continuing to foster these contacts over the course of my research and beyond. I am right now developing this project into a sound installation /unfilmable script and will keep the IAS updated. Overall, I felt at home at and deeply enjoyed the diversity and varied input of the scholars, artists and writers at the IAS. There was a genuinely stimulating dialogue between artists and scholars and those like myself, who engage with both theory and creative practice, found it particularly beneficial.
Despite the months of “lockdown” due to the COVID pandemic, the six months spent as an Associated Fellow in Budapest have been personally re-energizing and professionally productive. I arrived in Budapest on January 1 worn out from many years of teaching too much and researching too little. My goal was to start a new long-term project and “see what I could get done” while getting needed energy and rest. My project, a new English translation of the foundational Renaissance and Humanist poem Africa by Francesco Petrarca, had not even its cellophane wrapper off of it when I landed in Europe, but since then I have made great strides on completing the translation and becoming knowledgeable about Petrarca, his poetry, and the intellectual atmosphere in which he composed.

Since all I had done before arriving was collect bibliography and do a little reading, my goals were modest: read as much as I could of the scholarly literature surrounding Africa, get a handle on the 14th century zeitgeist and the ancient intertexts that Petrarca used, and complete a draft of a translation of the Africa, somewhere around four books worth. Four books would be just under half of the nine total books of the epic, and about 1/3 of the total number of verses.

As a Classicist, I understood that Petrarca was deeply interconnected with ancient epic sources, such as Vergil and Statius, as well as Roman

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Petrarch’s Africa: A 21st Century English Translation With Notes
historians like Livy, Roman philosophers like Cicero and Seneca, and early Christian authors like Augustine and Boethius. I deemed an understanding these sources to be as important as reading 20th-21st century secondary literature on Petrarca because they allowed a view of Petrarca’s mindset, affected by his bookshelf. The Africa is a highly intertextual work, with clear allusions to each of these authors nestled carefully in the verses. Without reading these sources, I would miss a lot of the “context.” I read extensively from these authors (besides Vergil and Statius, on whom I am an expert) and this reading was very effective in helping me through moments in the translation, previously considered idiosyncratic. Interspersed with these primary sources, I read extensively from mid-20th century scholars, as well as recent authors, on the life, poetry, and thought of Petrarca. In all, my reading of primary and secondary sources this semester totaled several thousand pages.

When I approached the translation, I spent a fair amount of time trying to understand Petrarca’s personal poetic idiom and it took trial and error transmitting that poetic sense into English that a 21st century speaker would recognize. I insisted that my translation be poetic in its own right, that is in a poetic form for the English language. Thus, I used a blank verse in 11 or 12 syllables. I insisted that I choose cinematic words, words that produced a strong visual sense for reading. Over the course of about 4 months (approximately February through May), I completed my goal for the translation portion of my project. I produced a rough draft of the first four books of Petrarca’s epic in English blank verse. Over the course of the next year or so, I will complete the remaining five books or 2/3 of the verses. In essence, I have taken a project that stood at the garden gate, as it were, and pushed well on into its projected journey. To complete the translation to publication should only take about two further years, once I return to my teaching, advising, and service obligations at APSU.

While I have not finished a publication this semester, I used the month of June to formulate a new article project, stemming from my overall translation project. Most of my published and conference presentation work has investigated the intersections of ancient poetry and Hellenistic philosophy, particularly the philosophical systems of Stoicism and Epicureanism. As I translated the Africa, keeping in mind Petrarca’s deep affinity for philosophical authors like Cicero and Seneca, I began to notice and formulate theories on the use of Stoic concepts of virtue and moral
behavior in the construction of the main character Scipio Africanus. Thus, I have read bibliography for, taken notes on, and formulated ideas toward an article (first to be given as a conference paper in the year 2021) tentatively named “Autarkeia and Stoic Arete in Petrarch’s depiction of Scipio Africanus.” I aim to complete this paper and send it out for publication sometime in late 2021.

While here in Budapest, I also made a few small connections with scholars working on similar things. In January, had a productive coffee meeting with Dániel Kiss, formerly of ELTE and now on faculty at the University of Barcelona. Dr. Kiss is a textual critic of medieval manuscripts of Catullus and very familiar with the manuscript world of Petrarch. Dr. Kiss gave me excellent advice on how to plug into the scholarly world of Petrarch and even put me in contact with two Italian professors and experts in Petrarch’s manuscripts, Vincenzo Fera and Silvia Rizzo. I intend to ask both professors for review of my translation.

On a personal skills level, my wife Audrey Anton and I also took advantage of a Beginning Modern Greek language class, which took place once a week over the course of the Spring 2020 semester, and earned a certificate for the A1 language proficiency level (beginning communication skills). Learning Modern Greek is crucial for us, since we intend to soon lead undergraduate study abroad trips to Greece. This beginning in learning the language will allow us to ramp up our understanding of and skills with this language at home with more effectiveness.
Let me start with the unexpected benefits this fellowship semester brought to me. No-one can know in advance who the fellows will be in the fellowship year they apply for (and whether they will be awarded the fellowship, in the first place). I had the privilege of being in an exceptionally stimulating cohort alongside two fellows – Audrey Anton and Mor Segev – working on ancient philosophy. I have been familiar with their work to some extent, but the opportunity of talking to them on a regular basis allowed for really sustained discussions. I am glad that my colleagues at the CEU Philosophy Department also welcomed Audrey and Mor at our Departmental Colloquium series, where both gave well received talks. Moreover, even before the Covid lockdown Audrey and Mor started to organize meetings among us, inviting also other people. The lockdown did not stop this: indeed, by moving to meetings in Zoom we could greet people also from elsewhere at the weekly sessions about ancient literary texts on the plagues, organized by Mor Segev. As these meetings are not location-bound, they still went on, even though the fellowship year was over, and the fellows from abroad mostly left Budapest.

The major objective of my faculty fellowship application was to start working on different sections of the long-term collaborative project, in which Orna Harari of Tel Aviv University and I collect and translate...
the testimonies of the *Physics* commentary of Alexander of Aphrodisias, and write a commentary on these fragments and testimonies. Most of what I planned was preparatory: to assess the material for Books I – III and VII (meanwhile this was changed to Books I, II, IV and VII, for reasons connected to the ‘Alexander meets Galen’ workshop we organize, see below), and to start the actual translation. I also planned two topical investigations, one about Alexander’s suggestions about the way magnitudes and motions can be represented, and another one on the status of celestial movers, a sequel to an earlier paper I published in 2014.

I planned to present preliminary results of the first of these topical investigations at the Institute’s Fellows’ Seminar on March 18, 2020. Luckily, that had to be moved to early February: by early March CEU went into lockdown, and the seminars were continued in Zoom sometime later. The gist of this presentation will feature in the commentary section of the Alexander project. There are some further issues to be cleared up, around the edges – I hope to return to them some time in the Fall – and then I can turn to writing up my drafts, which I used for the presentation, into a proper paper.

I also spent the fellowship semester finalizing contributions I had started or had been working on before the actual fellowship period. These papers fall into two groups. The first group contains the papers on Plato’s and Aristotle’s take on astronomy. One of them compares Plato’s pronouncements on astronomy in the *Republic* to how the *Timaeus* presents these issues. Another one is about Aristotle’s use of exhortatory rhetoric in discussions of his celestial theory. In another group there are papers on issues of division and mixture in Aristotle and Alexander. One discusses the first half of chapter 6 of Aristotle’s *De sensu*, where Aristotle has to align two of his commitments, one to the infinite divisibility of magnitudes and the potential for having an infinite variety of proportions for mixtures of qualities, and the other, to perceptual realism. Another paper is a discussion of Chapter 15 of Alexander’s *De mixtione*, where Alexander contrasts the juxtaposition of minute parts to proper through-and-through mixture.

Like a few fellows of Spring 2020, although my fellowship semester has ended by now, there remain outstanding activities and opportunities connected to the fellowship project that will take place during the Fall of 2020. Most importantly I have been involved in organizing two IAS
workshops. (Luckily, both events have been planned from the start for the Fall – had they been planned for Spring 2020, they would have had to be postponed to the Fall anyway.)

One of them we organize together with Mikko Yrjönsuuri (IAS CEU Core Senior Fellow 2019/20) and my colleague at the CEU Philosophy Department, Hanoch Ben-Yami, with the title ‘Putting Old Logic in New Forms.’ The point of this occasion is that through a few case studies we take stock of the development of the approach and assessment of ancient and medieval logic starting from the second half of the 20th century. Most importantly, we intend to have a look at this both as an account of the development of historical understanding, and also as one where changes in logical theory created new sensibilities in the appropriation of the historical material.

Even more closely connected to the fellowship project is the other workshop, which – together with Orna Harari and Matyáš Havrda (the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences) – we will organize under the title ‘Galen Meets Alexander.’ The occasion for such a workshop is that like our endeavors of collecting, translating and interpreting the testimonies and fragments of Alexander’s commentary on Aristotle’s Physics, Matyáš Havrda and Pauline Koetschet are in the process of collecting and reassessing the testimonies of Galen’s *On Demonstration*. Galen pursued medicine on scientific and philosophical principles, formulating a philosophical outlook of his own. In this he interpreted Aristotle, singling out some Aristotelian doctrines specifically for criticism. The two important cases we plan to cover are Galen’s criticism in Book IV of *On Demonstration*, where he takes issue with Aristotle’s argument for the eternity of the world, and the other one, in Book VIII, where he criticizes Aristotle’s definition of time in Physics IV. Although in the first case Galen targets Aristotle’s argumentation in the *De caelo*, this also has direct relevance to our project, in relation to Aristotle’s argument for the eternity of motion at the beginning of *Physics* Book VIII. Not only do we plan to discuss these specific cases in depth – the results of which, similar to the issues tackled in my talk at the Fellows’ Seminar, will feature in the commentary section of the Alexander project – but we also hope to establish an ongoing dialogue between the researchers and other interested scholars for the full length of the two projects.
This has been a very fruitful and eventful time for me at IAS. My initial goals were to complete the manuscript *Jewish Revival(s): Remaking Jewishness in a Post-Secular Age* (submitted to Wayne UP) and to make significant progress on *Food and Borders: Terroir and Territory in Europe and the Middle East* (to be submitted in 2020 to U. of California Press Food Studies Series). I have met these goals and completed two new chapters. IAS will be duly acknowledged in both publications.

During my stay at IAS, I was awarded a major research grant of 375,000 euro by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung on “Lost Cities” in Israel and Palestine. Fall 2019 was an intensive period which saw the fruition of numerous research projects on alternative urban cultures, gastronationalism, indigenous wines and French schools. Most importantly, however, at IAS I encountered a fascinating group of researchers and intellectuals. The friends I made at IAS will stay with me for years to come. The seminar was a particularly rich arena of exchange and learning. The trips organized by IAS were both fun and a serious learning experience which have contributed to my teaching. I have asked László Munteán to lead an urban tour for my Cityscapes class students, which helped them see Budapest in a new light.

I have worked on two major publications: *The Jewish Revival* book now under review and my ongoing manuscript *Food and Borders*. Other publications were accepted or published this Fall. Articles that were accepted during Fall will duly acknowledge IAS support. Most importantly is the Hebrew publication of my 400-page monograph on Jaffa, which was finalized after years of continuous work.
During my residency at the Institute for Advanced Study at CEU, I focused on creating an interactive storytelling framework based on artificial intelligent systems. The research used advanced AI methods (meta-learning) and cutting-edge technologies including immersive, virtual environments to offer an innovative contribution to the domain of storytelling. Specifically, the project aimed to propose a solution for problems linked to the creation of dynamic interactive narratives, specifically the problem of continuous adaptation of artificial agents in complex dynamic environments. This refers to the design of artificial agents that can respond intelligently to evolving complex narrative situations. Environments are considered dynamic when there are changes in the structure of the environment in presence of multiple artificial agents or human users.

My approach is based on meta-learning. Meta-learning describes research that aims to create machines capable of general intelligent actions. “General” in this context means that an AI program realizes several different tasks and continuously learns to learn. Meta-learning goes by many different names: learning to learn, multi-task learning, transfer learning, etc. People easily transfer knowledge acquired in solving one task to another more general task. This means that we naturally
recognize and apply previously acquired knowledge to new tasks. In contrast, popular machine learning algorithms deal with individual task. Transfer learning attempts to change this by developing methods to transfer knowledge acquired in one or more source tasks and using them to improve learning in a target task. In my initial research and experiments concerning adaptation, I focused on testing agents with the reinforcement learning. The reinforcement learning agent (RL) discovers the state of the environment and performs actions that change its state, as well as triggers rewards. Its purpose is to learn the policy of actions that maximizes the total reward. The meta learning creates a process that informs the agent how it should adapt to new environments. In other words, the agent’s goal is to acquire knowledge that can be generalized in new situations. Although working with natural language can help an agent learn more abstract representations, it’s better to start with experiments without language input, e.g., learning of intuitive physics. I experimented with several algorithms and programmed games with virtual characters and a dynamic environment that test the problem of adaptation. The goal was to optimize the agent’s policy to ensure good performance after some adaptation. I started with simple toy experiments, in which a group of agents adapts to changes of the environment, e.g., added obstacles and opponents. During the residence, I also did experiments with natural language. I tested various types of recurrent neural networks and GPT-2 with their amazing capabilities of building language model and generating new texts.

The second topic of my research was creating dynamic virtual environments (VE) for storytelling. I was focused on the roles of Presence, Flow, Immersion, and Interactivity. I was particularly interested in the problem of presence and flow. Presence is defined as the subjective experience of being in one place or environment, even when one is physically situated in another. Presence is an awareness phenomenon that requires directed attention and is based on the interaction between sensory stimulation, environmental factors that encourage involvement and enable immersion. Flow is a state of experience where someone is completely absorbed and immersed in an activity. I researched relations between presence, flow, immersion and interactivity, e.g., how interactivity and sound spatialization improves the experience of presence. I have developed machine learning methods that extend granular and pulsar
synthesis in composing and new methods of building and transforming virtual environments. In this approach formations of complex sonic or visual structures are based on a transformation of distribution of very large sets of particles. I used among other recurrent neural networks (RNN), generative adversarial network (GAN) and RL. The long-term goal was creating of ‘vibrational topology’ in which creation of forms includes composing of oscillations, pulses and flow of sound and visual events. I presented the results of research and new composition at the IRCAM Center Pompidou in Paris. Subsequently, I performed the show called “Golem” at the Propelling Reality Festival in Vienna, that was also broadcasted on local TV. I gave a lecture and presentation in the Institute for Advanced Study CEU. Later I prepared a performance for the Theatre Festival Altofest in Naples. I recorded 3 new compositions and I played a concert organised by Appo-33 in Nantes. I composed a new gesamtkunstwerk called “Ellipsis” where virtual characters interact with human performers. The research concerning evolving architectures was prepared in cooperation with Karolína Kotnour. Since part of my residence concerned sound spatialization, I participated in classes on composition and performance in IRCAM. I also participated in the seminar in Network Science Department CEU. I have taken part in online meetings organized by Computer Art Society London, Leonardo S+T+ARTS, ZKM Karlsruhe and Computer Vision and Deep Learning Summit.

During the second part of the fellowship, I developed the concept of a Meta-Story-Composer. Meta-composer is a neural network equipped with the ability to combine concepts and narratives in a flexible way to synthesize a new consistent story. Meta-composer can generalize the concepts we know, so they can be combined in new ways that are unlike anything else we’ve seen. Meta-composer is therefore an intelligent agent that monitors virtual worlds and changes the narrative structure according to the previously trained model. In my approach, the user interacts with the environment and virtual characters. The goal of meta-composer is to understand user’s behavior and create scenarios that improves drama. The meta-composer creates possible narrative trajectories by generalizing previously created sub-stories. The software is autonomous, but the elements, goals and rules of the initial story are created by the human author. Therefore, meta-composer can be treated as
a creative partner and a tool supporting the work of a writer, storyteller or director. The framework is based on Meta-Learning. Meta-learning is the next generation of artificial intelligence. The agent is not learning how to master a particular task but how to quickly adapt to new tasks. The goal of meta-learning is to train the agent to learn knowledge that can be generalized to new situations. The next step in the development of the meta-story-composer is adding the ability to manipulate natural language, high-level abstractions and processes related to attention and awareness. Due to the lack of a generally accepted definition of consciousness, my research was inspired by theories of consciousness in modern cognitive science and philosophy. Conscious thought is a set of those elements with which we have focused on and then made available to other processes taking place in our mind at an unconscious level. Therefore, consciousness is a kind of ‘sieve’ for information and is closely related to decision-making processes. Consciousness chooses information that has a strong impact on decision making and organizes it in more general concepts that allow better predictions and effective operation in a dynamic environment. Therefore, the goal of future research related to meta-story-composing and regarding machine learning should be an extension in which the learning task will include the creation of significant abstractions with high predictive power.

During the pandemic time I started a philosophical research and book concerning metaphysics in which I propose fundamental ideas that can be impulses for European culture. In this philosophical treatise, I research ideas and open problems concerning consciousness, free will, life, randomness, recursion, symmetry, time and space synthesis, evolution and infinity.

I proposed a research and seminar concerning philosophical, social, political and economic implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was time to re-think human conditions but also re-invent our scientific fundamentals and methods. Restrictions introduced during the pandemic motivated me to research the potential of AI and virtual reality for the evolution of society. I thought about implications of telepresence and machine learning for the organization of society. I prepared a plan for a new Laboratory that deals with the study of new social forms based on the virtual presence and AI technologies. The goal of the laboratory is to test and develop tools that will be useful to create decentralized network society, with horizontal relationships between people, in which decisions
can be developed during dialogue, based on personal participation and in which cases of “representation” as authorities can be minimized by using intelligent systems. I organized and conducted meetings of the Fundamental Research Group, that deals with critical analysis of contemporary networks. The goal of the laboratory is to re-think critically ideas such as freedom, openness, pluralism, transparency and democracy, in the perspective of dynamically developing technologies such as AI. The lab is interested also in the potential of machine learning and virtual reality within the field of art and its possible contribution to current political and social discourses.

My stay in Budapest, as the Writer in Residence at the IAS, was productive and interesting, both in terms of the specific creative tasks I had set for myself and in a broader sense. It coincided, unfortunately, with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which closed Europe and the world, and in fact affected my creative process and related research. But on the other hand, it was also a chance to rethink certain aspects of my work in the context of the new realities and to look for the intersections between them.

The search for the roots, the connection with the ancestors, the ancient cradle of the nation are all basic conceptual elements, embedded in almost every national mythology. Hungarian history offers several well-documented examples of this phenomenon, which dates to the 13th century, but took its most distinct forms during the Romanticism. In Bulgaria, as in Hungary, the interest in this distant past, haunted more by fantasies and emotions than by real historical documents, serves primarily political goals and national ambitions. The resurgence of this interest at the beginning of the 21st century is a sign of the rising nationalist and populist sentiments in these countries, which rely heavily on mythologies forged in the 19th century. One of my main tasks was to study Hungarian sources related to this aspect of national mythmaking and to draw parallels with the popular interpretation of the same subject in my country. The comparative analysis helped me to better understand the essence of the issue and to situate it in a broader European context. The information I have gathered from various sources will serve me not only for the purposes of this particular project, but will also influence my future
creative plans, will help me to clarify my point of view on a number of issues related to the cultural and political history of Europe and the world.

As soon as I arrived at the IAS, I received valuable methodological support in connection with the research that was ahead of me. I appreciate very much the warm introductory talk with Nadia Al-Bagdadi, the Director of IAS, which helped me to orient myself in the vast field of my interests and to identify the institutions and sources to which I should turn. The list of sources that Krisztina Domján prepared and presented to my attention also contained very specific and useful information. Among these texts gradually emerged the main characters on which I focused my interest, namely: Arminius Vamberi and Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. Two remarkable personalities who embark on risky journeys in the heart of Central Asia, inspired by the romantic idea of discovering the ancient roots of the Hungarian nation. It was exciting to discover how these historical figures correspond to the leading characters of my novel set in the very present. My conversations with my friend and translator, the anthropologist Petar Krastev, also contributed to the critical comprehension of their role, significance and paradoxical way of life. As a great admirer and connoisseur of Vamberi’s work, he first drew my attention to the parallels between his adventures and the plot I am developing. But I was even more impressed by the dramatic fate of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. An eccentric scientist, obsessed with the mythical ancestral fiction, wandering around Asia on foot, carrying a Hungarian national costume in his bag - this fantastic image captivated me to such an extent that it distracted me for a moment from my inconsistent tasks. I was struck by the deep symbolism in this story. The inscription on Csoma’s tombstone in Darjeeling seems to best express the sense of absurdity and tragic irony that I myself was trying to achieve in my work: “A poor lonely Hungarian, without applause or money but inspired with enthusiasm sought the Hungarian native country but, in the end, broke down under the burden.” During my research, an important role was played by the article “Touched a nation’s heart” by Imre Galambos, which explores a series of weird and to some extent even ridiculous events related to the 70th anniversary of Csoma’s death. In between the lines, I found the prototype of a character who might find a place in my novel.

I was lucky to establish contact with the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences before the lockdown and got acquainted with the
impressive Oriental collection. I was assisted by Ms. Rita Hafner, head of reference & readers’ service and the head of the Oriental Department, Kelecsényi Ágnes, who introduced to me the collection. As one of the possible locations in my novel, it was important for me to get a closer look at this institution. Valuable sources of information were also the CEU Library and the Museum of Asian Art. Among the interesting people I met was the historian Balázs Sudár, Turkologist and the head of the Prehistory Theme Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. We discussed the subject of historical speculations and falsifications related to the origin of nations. My colleague and IAS fellow, Zoltán Kékesi, directed me to information about the so-called Kurultai, which has been held in Hungary for several years and is a clear example of “invented traditions”, according to Hobsbawm’s apt definition.

Finally, I would like to note the positive effect of the open and free-thinking environment of the IAS and CEU in which I find myself. The opportunity to communicate with researchers from different countries, coming from so many different fields of humanities, the interdisciplinary approach to the presented material, enriched and broadened my point of view on several issues. Unfortunately, this process of intellectual communication and exchange of ideas was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and doomed our community to forced isolation. I appreciate the efforts of the IAS team to maintain and continue the communication between us. The feeling of belonging to an enlightened community of like-minded people was a source of great support in these dark days. For me personally, it was a time to re-evaluate and rethink the material collected. My research focused on the narrative structure and the internal logic of actions, on the interaction between elements of my study and the balance between them within the text. During this process, adjustments and changes in the original plan were implemented, which, in my opinion, brought my work to a higher structural and conceptual level, albeit at the cost of some delay in the deadlines I had set. I am happy to report that despite the complicated situation, I managed to write about three quarters of the novel and if everything goes according to plan, the book will be published in the fall 2020.

Amid the crisis, watching how easily countries close, barriers between nations raise, old and new prejudices thrive again, and national enmities and rivalries revive, I realized how important it was to continue working
on my topic. The critical distance from the past, the deconstruction of public myths by means of humor, satire, and irony, builds an invisible defense against the viruses of chauvinism, populism, and national selfishness that have never left us. I hope that my work has contributed at least a little to strengthen this line of defense.

I take this opportunity to thank the IAS team and the board members for their support at this critical time, for assessing the importance of this project, and I would like to believe that our intellectual partnership will continue in the future.

During my stay at the IAS I could focus on writing and on completing the first draft of my manuscript, my novel titled HAZA / HOME, which – I proudly announce – has been published by Jelenkor Publishers Ltd.

The novel finally became a story – almost a road novel – of going back to the country left by the hero as a middle-aged person to a class reunion, but also a story of leaving this country and making a plunge into the big world as a young person. My hero – who turns out to be a woman, but gender in this book plays no real role – becomes a writer, after experiencing a lot from the world and from arts. As a writer she tries to understand her own story as well as the stories of the others, her classmates. It is a fragmented, often speculative kind of storytelling with lots of characters – classmates who also left their home countries.

I wanted to look at people who happen to leave their homes and to see what kinds of stories they have, what kinds of live tracks, emotions, attitudes, states of minds. There are the successful ones who have great careers (but maybe unable to have a family), the radical ones who become closed in themselves and can only praise their original homes, the countries and cultures they left behind, (and become racists or alcoholics), the ones with multiple identities, and the ones who are not attached to any places and are drifting. And, through the main character, the writer and another character, a Painter there are those who will have arts at hand to express their emotions, feelings, findings. What I tried to shape in different stories – basically, the whole novel is a collection of stories – is what these people share, if they do share something.

Different ages played important roles: those who left when young could/might adapt. But old people – the Mother of the main character And...
who left when she was already 65, could not adapt anymore. Only the Body left, but the Soul did not arrive.

The main character also tried to understand something about the past – she reads the state security files about his father. She realizes that Truth is not something she would find there – in those files she can only read fiction. That is why she is not going to write a novel about those files. I was trying to write in a language of poetry, something floating as these people, those who left their home in a way are drifting, floating, fling. For a while – because the lucky one “arrives”, the less lucky one still floats.

The main character reads a lot of Russian literature – she studies literature – and the emigration experience of the Russians has a great impact on her. She has also an inner conflict of what return to home would mean: would that mean failure? A migrant must always be successful?

It is a novel not put in any concrete space, but a move from East to West is a main topic – as the hero experiences that there will always be an East/West division. The only one time I use the word ‘Hungarian’ is when a woman with dementia is asking if there are Hungarians in the town where she lives. What I wanted to build here is an understanding of these regions, these human experiences beyond Hungarianness, if I may. I was looking at those changes of times – the strange moments of capitalism, the changing, emerging worlds which is rewriting of the experience of a home. I was trying to look at the meaning of some very complicated words like nostalgia, patriotism, mother tongue, at some very basic feelings like attachment to places or different landscapes. The “task” is to transform all this into stories, humans, human relations…

A great impact on me had the situation of CEU itself. It changed my mind to some extent. I had to realize that even professors here do not have a safe place/space and might be forced to leave the country. As CEU must leave its home, Budapest. This made me understand that safety is not something you can build on and into your life today. So home, viewed a bit from inside CEU became a very tricky question.

In this book I used lots of different languages – English, Russian, sometimes others – as the main hero enters the world, and the world speaks foreign languages. A major metaphor of the story is Homer’s Odyssey as an archetypical character of leaving and returning. The novel has some sort of intellectual dimension in this regard.

The novel is approximately 650,000 characters long in Hungarian.
I made extensive use of the CEU library, had lots of informal interviews with fellows and people affiliated with the University. I preferred informal talks and chats with others to formal interviews, because more formal interviews would force my partners to talk about things they are not necessarily interested in. I attended several lectures, talks and seminars. I also took part in a panel discussion on war and ethics moderated by Nadia Al-Bagdadi and organized on occasion the Nobel Prize in Literature Laureat announcement. We failed to organize a workshop about nostalgia, which I initiated, and it is basically my fault, I was too busy with writing and not enough organized. But to talk with co-fellows about nostalgia was very inspiring. Lots of lectures had great impact on my thinking, and I think for a writer closed in his/her world, language and thoughts this environment is very enriching.

During my stay in the IAS CEU I felt praised, loved, needed, highly supported. I felt an environment of trust and hope, of international richness. Not the fellowship itself (i.e. the stipend), not the silent office, not only those wonderful people I met, but this moral support is something helped me work. In Hungary in 2020 this support is invaluable.
Events
23 January 2020  Annual IAS Academic Advisory Board Lecture 2019/20
Is Christian Democracy Illiberal Democracy?

Jan-Werner Müller, Professor of Politics at the Department of Politics, Princeton University

The lecture examined a tradition of political thought – Christian Democracy - that has often been misunderstood and also been underestimated in its importance for European political development. It asked as well, in a more normative vein, what we should make of recent attempts in various places in Europe and beyond to associate Christian Democracy with new forms of illiberalism.

16 June 2020  (online)
Dehumanisation and Empathy in Literature and Theory:
Hannah Arendt’s Poetics

Andrea Timár, Senior Core Fellow at IAS CEU, Senior Lecturer at ELTE, Budapest
The point of departure of this talk was Hannah Arendt’s controversial take on compassion, as presented in Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (1963) and On Revolution (1963). This talk addressed, on the one hand, the relationship between what Arendt calls “enlarged thinking” and her rhetorics of irony manifest in her use of reported speech, in order to show how all these reflect and create an ethical and political agenda rooted in Kant’s aesthetic judgement. On the other hand, the talk engaged with the significance Arendt attaches to speech and especially to the proper way of telling a story, and points to “the inability to speak” as a potential blind spot in her thinking. Eventually, it asked whether it was possible to model a way or reading on Arendt’s conception of taste as political judgement.

László Munteán, Junior Core Fellow at IAS CEU, Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies and American Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands

The destruction of the World Trade Center towers resulted in a radically heterogeneous matter in which the borders between architectural debris and human bodies, as well as the remains of the victims and those of the terrorists, were destabilized. These material entanglements rendered the ruins’ treatment as relics, poisonous material, and scrap metal to be sold equally problematic. Taking its cue from the disintegration of material borders in the ruins, this presentation examined the conflicting political, economic, mnemonic, and reverential factors that have played key roles in the biography of the towers after Ground Zero.

The lecture was organized in cooperation with NetIAS, Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study as part of the European NetIAS Lecture Series.
13 February 2020  

Political Economy of Development:  
Democratic Institutions and Poverty Alleviation

A workshop organized by Gabriel Cepaluni, IAS CEU GCF Fellow, (associate professor, São Paulo State University – Unesp-Franca, Brazil) Dr. Amanda Driscoll (associate professor, Florida State University, USA), Dr. Cristina Corduneanu-Huci, (assistant professor, School of Public Policy, Director - Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy and International Relations, CEU, Budapest)

The workshop discussed different approaches to the ongoing problem of widespread poverty in developing countries. In the centre of the discussion was the problematic of the synergy effects of democratic institutions and targeted social programs, such as conditional cash transfer programs – CCTs – for alleviation of poverty. Bringing in the case of Brazil’s Bolsa Família program, the largest cash transfer program in the world, the workshop participants sought to debate and examine the challenges that democracies face when formulating and implementing well-designed social programs. They discussed the role of many problems of developing societies, such as nepotism, corruption, and political polarization, that obstruct the efficient distribution of welfare and improvement of public policies. The
workshop paid particular attention to the use of experimental and quasi-experimental methods and to intricacies of obtaining, maintaining, and analyzing data from large administrative data sets.

Speakers: Cristina Corduneanu-Huci, Amanda Driscoll, Arieda Muço, Michele Castiglioni, Michael Dorsch

25 May 2020 (online)  
New Forms of Privatisation and the Politics of School Inclusion/Exclusion – Project Preparation Workshop

A workshop organized by Eszter Neumann, IAS CEU Junior Thyssen Fellow

The aim of the proposed event was to prepare a funding application for the ERC Advanced Grant Scheme (submission deadline: August 2020). Our project team took form during the writing and editing of the book Austerity and the Remaking of European Education (Traianou & Jones, 2019). The production of the edited volume drove our attention to the new forms of privatization emerging in the education sector in our countries. Our collaborative comparative project paid special attention to European countries where educational privatization has significantly exacerbated during the last decade. We were particularly interested in understanding the divisions created by new forms of privatizations in the public education system (e.g. alternative provision in England, moves to decentralization and teaching support for refugee and other vulnerable groups in Greece, church-run schools in Hungary, free schools in Sweden) and the various processes of marginalization and exclusion of out-groups (e.g. Roma, refugees, working class and disadvantaged students).
4 November 2019  Psychology and Politics. Intersections of Science and Ideology in the History of Psy-Sciences

(CEU Press, 2019) by Anna Borgos, Júlia Gyimesi & Ferenc Erős (eds.)

Psy-sciences (psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, pedagogy, criminology, special education, etc.) have been connected to politics in different ways since the early twentieth century. Here in twenty-two essays scholars address a variety of these intersections from a historical perspective. The chapters include such diverse topics as the cultural history of psychoanalysis, the complicated relationship between psychoanalysis and the occult, and the struggles for dominance between the various schools of psychology. They show the ambivalent positions of the “psy” sciences in authoritarian regimes, revealing the role of psychology in legitimating and normalizing them on the one hand, and being exposed to the repression of dictatorships on the other. The authors also discuss the ideological and political aspects of mental health and illness in Hungary, Germany, Transylvania, and Russia. Other chapters describe the attempt by critical psychology to understand the production of academic, therapeutic, and everyday psychological knowledge in the context of the power relations of modern capitalist societies.

The event included the launch of the book and a debate with the editors of the volume Anna Borgos (researcher, Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience and Psychology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences), Júlia Gyimesi (professor, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Department of Personality and Clinical Psychology), Ferenc Erős (professor emeritus, former Fellow at IAS CEU), volume contributors: Emese Lafferton (professor of history, CEU, Budapest), Mártta Csabai (professor, SZTE, Szeged) and Melinda Kovai (professor, ELTE Budapest), and invited discussant Csaba Pléh (professor, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Budapest). War,
The award of this year’s Nobel Prize for literature triggered heated debates in European feuilletons, raising several fundamental questions that go beyond the case of Peter Handke. Do writers have any special moral obligations in virtue of practicing their craft? Is the realm of the aesthetic separated from the public persona of the writer? Writers, poetry translators and literary critics discussed these and related questions and explored the writers’ responsibility in the time of war and other humanitarian disasters, as well as the possible approaches to the question of recognition of the artistic merits of the work produced by writers who hold ethically problematic views.

Panelists: Oksana Maksymchuk (poet and translator), Max Rosochinsky (IAS fellow, literary scholar), Andrea Tompa (IAS fellow, writer), Jasmina Lukic (Professor, CEU)

Moderator: Nadia Al-Bagdadi (Director, IAS CEU; Professor, CEU)
10 March 2020  

*Bifocal Freedom*

Parallel film screenings of Dalia Neis (Affiliated Teaching Fellow in Visual Theory and Practice at IAS CEU in cooperation with the Visual Studies Platform of CEU) and film director András Szirtes.

This film program forged a rare intergenerational dialogue between two artist-filmmakers who work with the essay form as a means to subvert and reimagine the archive, its relationship to history and memory. The event was organized by the Institute for Advanced Study, CEU, the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, and the Visual Studies Platform, CEU.
FELLOWS’ SEMINARS

16 October 2019  Suzy Kim, Senior Core Fellow
Rutgers University, USA
*Behind the Iron Curtain: Cold War Women in North Korea*

30 October 2019  Joseph Malherek, Botstiber Fellow
George Washington University, USA
*The Frankfurt School’s Other: Socialist Émigrés Who Made Capitalist Culture in America, 1918–1956*

6 November 2019  László Munteán, Junior Core Fellow
Radboud University, the Netherlands
*The Afterlife of the Ruins of the World Trade Center*

13 November 2019  Andrea Timár, Senior Core Fellow
Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
*Dehumanisation in Literature: Perpetrators without Crimes*

20 November 2019  Mikko Yrjönsuuri, Senior Core Fellow
University of Jyväskylä, Finland
*What was Medieval Logic About?*
27 November 2019  Max Rosochinsky, Thyssen Fellow
Independent scholar, USA
War and Poetry: The Voices of Donbas

4 December 2019  Andrea Tompa, Writer-in-Residence
On Writing. Presence, Alienation and the Emancipated Reader

11 December 2019  Daniel Monterescu, Faculty Fellow
Central European University, Hungary
Jewish Revival(s) Inside Out: Remaking Jewishness in a Post-Secular Age

15 January 2020  Zoltán Kékesi, Senior Core Fellow
Center for Research on Antisemitism,
Technical University of Berlin, Germany
Spectral Present. Perpetrator Memory and the
Hungarian Fascist Exile in Postwar Munich

22 January 2020  Péter Róbert, Senior Core Fellow
TÁRKI Social Research Institute, Hungary
Children in School: Well-being and Beyond

29 January 2020  Elona Dhëmbo, Junior Core Fellow
University of Tirana, Albania
The Role of Access on Formal and Informal Social Protection
in the Nexus of Migration, Return and Re-migration

5 February 2020  István Bodnár, Faculty Fellow
Central European University, Hungary
Representation of Motions, Representation of Parts

12 February 2020  Eszter Neumann, Thyssen Fellow
Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary
The New Alliance of Church and State in Hungarian Education Policy
19 February 2020  Gabriel Cepaluni, Senior Global Challenges Fellow
São Paulo State University (UNESP-Franca), Brasil
*Can Conditional Cash Transfers Interrupt the Cycle of Intergenerational Poverty? Lessons from a Large Administrative Data Set*

26 February 2020  Judit Szapor, Senior Core Fellow
McGill University, Canada
*The Numerus Clausus in Hungary: Antisemitism, Gender, and Exile a Hundred Years On*

4 March 2020  Robert B. Lisek, Artist in Residence
*Continuous Adaptation of Artificial Agents in Complex, Dynamic Environments*

25 March 2020  Maya Nadkarni, Senior Core Fellow
Swarthmore College, USA
*The Postsocialist Lives of State Socialism’s Secrets*

8 April 2020  Sujoy Dutta, Senior Global Challenges Fellow
Tata Institute of Social Studies, India
*Does Better Information Lead to Lower Corruption? Evidence from the North Indian State of Uttar Pradesh, India*

22 April 2020  Alexander Popov, Writer-in-Residence
Independent writer, Bulgaria
*Ancient Bulgarians Census*

29 April 2020  Dalia Neis, Affiliated Teaching Fellow in Visual Theory and Practice
Independent scholar and artist, Germany
*Windvision: Cinepoetics and the Essay Form*

6 May 2020  Stephen Kershner, Affiliated Fellow
Austin Peay State University, USA
*Towards a New 21st Century English Translation of Francesco Petrarca’s Africa*
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<td>3 June 2020</td>
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