

Speakers' biographies

Ivo Banac is Bradford Durfee Emeritus Professor of History at Yale University and Professor of History at the University of Zagreb. His award-winning books are *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (1984, Wayne S. Vucinich Prize) and *With Stalin against Tito: Cominformist Splits in Yugoslav Communism* (1988, Strossmayer Prize). He was also minister of environmental protection and urban planning in the government of Croatia, president of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, and editor of *East European Politics and Societies*.

Richard Crampton's first degree was from Trinity College, Dublin, and he read for his doctorate at The School of Slavonic and East European Studies. His PhD was on Anglo-German relations in the Balkans from 1911 to 1914. In 1990 he moved to Oxford, and became Professor of East European History in 1996. He has published a number of books on the history of Bulgaria, as well as text books on Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century and on the Balkans since the Second World War.

Basil C. Gounaris (DPhil Oxon) is Professor of Modern History at the Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University and the Dean of Humanities at the Hellenic International University, both in Thessaloniki, Greece. He has also been for many years director of the Centre for Macedonian History & Documentation. In 2009-10 he was visiting Professor at King's College, London and in 2013 Senior Visiting Scholar (Onassis Foundation) at Yale, Princeton, Columbia, George Washington and York (Canada).

Margaret MacMillan is Warden of St Antony's College. Her book *Peacemakers: the Paris Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to Make Peace* won the Duff Cooper Prize, the Samuel Johnson Prize for non-fiction (the first woman to do so), the Hessel-Tiltman Prize for History, the Silver Medal for the Council on Foreign Relations Arthur Ross Book Award and the Governor-General's prize for non-fiction in 2003. Her most recent book is *The War that Ended Peace: How Europe abandoned peace for the First World War* (Profile Books, 2013). She comments frequently in the media on historical issues and current affairs

Eugene Rogan is University Lecturer in the Modern History of the Middle East and a Fellow of St Antony's College. He took his BA in economics from Columbia and his MA and PhD in Middle Eastern history from Harvard. He is author of *The Arabs: A history*, which has been published in ten foreign languages. His forthcoming book, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1920*, is scheduled for publication in 2015.

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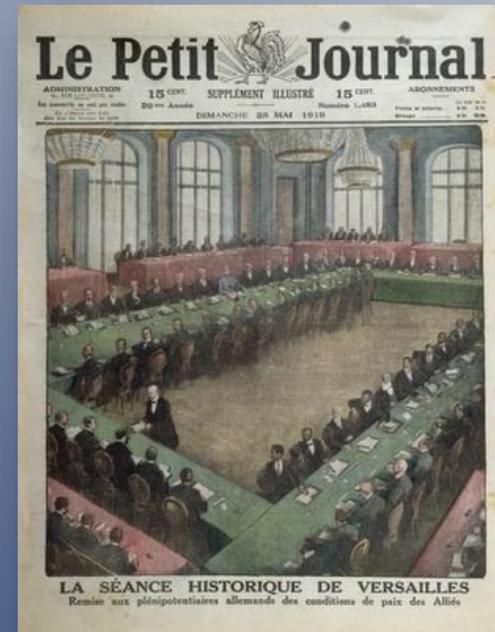
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South East European Studies at Oxford



With grateful support from the Tsakopoulos Foundation

South East European Studies at Oxford WWI Centenary Symposium

*The past is never dead:
Balkan legacies of the First World War*



Thursday 29 May
2—6:30 p.m.
Nissan Lecture Theatre
St Antony's College

Ivo Banac (Yale University)

Richard Crampton (St Edmund Hall, Oxford)

Basil Gounaris (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Margaret Macmillan (St Antony's College, Oxford)

Eugene Rogan (St Antony's College, Oxford)

Convenors: Othon Anastasakis; David Madden; Elizabeth Roberts
(St Antony's College, Oxford)

Programme

- 14:00 *Welcome and introduction*
Othon Anastasakis (St Antony's College, Oxford)
- 14:15 **Session One**
Europe and the Balkans before 1914: Too much history and too many neighbours
Margaret Macmillan (St Antony's College, Oxford)
The contrasting legacies of the South Slav Question
Ivo Banac (Yale University)
Was the First World War the turning point at which Bulgarian history failed to turn?
Richard Crampton (St Edmund Hall, Oxford)
Chair: **Elizabeth Roberts** (St Antony's College, Oxford)
- 16:15 Tea/Coffee Break in lobby of Hilda Besse Building
- 16:45 **Session Two**
WWI and the fall of the Ottomans: Consequences for South East Europe
Eugene Rogan (St Antony's College, Oxford)
Greece and the Great War: Unwanted legacies
Basil Gounaris (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)
Chair: **David Madden** (St Antony's College, Oxford)
- 18:30 End of symposium



Synopsis

In the years leading up to 28 June, 1914, the affairs of South East Europe were dominated by the conflicting fortunes of two Empires. The Austro-Hungarian Empire remained determined to hold its ground in South East Europe, as demonstrated by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. The Ottoman Empire was in terminal decline, high-lighted by defeats in the 1911 Italo-Turkish war, and in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Meanwhile, the Russian Empire was playing a prominent role in the region; and the British Empire had started to take a renewed interest, administering Cyprus, and benefiting from the Suez Canal to greatly shorten the route to India.

During the War, the countries of the region were divided in siding either with the Triple Alliance or Triple Entente. Some, like Greece, were bitterly divided internally on which side to take. After the War, South East Europe was transformed. The two regional Empires, and their Russian counterpart, had effectively imploded. The modern Turkish state was born. Yugoslavia was created, and would last for the next 70 or so years. Greece suffered its biggest national tragedy in Asia Minor.

The post war settlement contained significant bones of contention, which manifested themselves almost immediately. The main difficulty was Yugoslavia. It was created to reflect the wish of South Slavs for political unification, despite their diverse religious and cultural heritage. It lay across one of the great fault lines of history; and was bedevilled by the contrasting legacies and aspirations of its different parts, and by the wish of Serbia to be the Piedmont of Yugoslavia. Additionally, despite the creation of Albania in 1913, more Albanians lived outside than inside the country, half a million of them in Yugoslavia, mainly in Kosovo.

Some of these problems are still with us today. The violent break-up of Yugoslavia brought new and bitter wars, exposed unresolved predicaments from the past and generated new tensions. Bosnia-Herzegovina lies across the fault line, and is trapped in the deficient Dayton constitutional framework. Serbia and Kosovo are each pursuing their separate paths towards the EU; but status questions will have to be confronted one day. Cyprus remains divided, despite entry into the EU. Significant Albanian communities remain outside Albania. The very name of Macedonia is itself an unsolved problem. The EU is still a beacon for progress, though its attractive force has been undermined by the Euro crisis and economic stagnation. Today, a century after the start of the First World War, there is still contention over questions of responsibility and culpability, engendering passionate argument.

Many of the distinct problems of South East Europe can be traced to the War and pre-War period, the peace conference and the differing legacies left by the vanished Empires. Can a study of the War and its aftermath throw new light on these issues? Does returning to the roots of the problems make them any easier to solve? Is there any consensus on how they arose in the first place? Are there any common factors, or collective lessons to be learned? What can we glean from history?

Our centenary symposium will discuss the legacies of the First World War in the present day Balkans, by looking at how the War and its aftermath have shaped twentieth century developments which continue to be with us today. Our speakers will be asked to present their views on the meaning and significance of the Great War in today's local, national and regional collective memory.