The modern era, outward mobility and migration was the defining characteristic of our region’s post-colonial and nation building story. People of different nationalities, ethnic backgrounds and localities chose or were forced to migrate within the region, in Europe and beyond, to look for a better life and new opportunities. At present, internal economic and political problems have triggered new emigration outflows which often affect the highly skilled and thus raise concerns about brain drain effects in the region. The new migrants have joined the established communities, creating strong diasporas around the world, with an impact on their homeland as well as on their host countries. At SEESOX we have developed a keen interest in the study of these diasporas, starting with the Greek Diaspora Project, one of our flagship research projects. Our project explores the relationship between Greece and its diaspora in the context of the recent economic crisis and related developments, in the fields of the economy, philanthropy and politics. Our aim is to expand the research scope by looking at other countries with similar experiences in South East Europe, in order to have a better understanding of the global impact of the region’s diasporas. This newsletter gives, among other, an overview of last year’s output of the Greek Diaspora Project, culminating in a major conference on June 22-23 with eminent diaspora scholars and experts from around the world (see page 4).
The academic year 2017-18 was very rich in seminars, workshops, conferences and publications, it enriched our research agenda, and got us engaged with new networks and partnerships. The present annual review shows clearly this abundance of activities including the regional focus. Last year SEESOX organised 17 lectures and/or panels on a variety of regional topics, 2 high levels seminars in Oxford with invited experts (one on the Macedonian name dispute and one on the Berlin Process), one workshop on the Western Balkans in Thessaloniki (in cooperation with the British Embassy in Greece), 2 major conferences with paper givers at St Antony’s College (one on the legacies of Yugoslavia and one on Greek diaspora relations with the homeland), and our annual conference in Tirana on the political economy of South East Europe, in cooperation with the Bank of Albania. It goes without saying that this tremendous effort paid off in terms of the widening of our research interests, our involvement in new areas of academic and policy relevant investigation, the introduction of new networks and partnerships and in publications which were produced and are currently under way. We are presently preparing two edited volumes based on the above mentioned two SEESOX conferences. During last academic year, we engaged more intensely with two particular areas of research: first, the European integration of the Western Balkans, given that 2018 was the year of the West Balkans in terms of international initiatives, reports and commitments by the EU, the six-month EU Presidency of Bulgaria and the London summit of the Berlin Process; second, our work on the Greek diaspora intensified with the addition of new themes, new researchers, new donors and new networks of cooperation. On both counts we got impressive reporting in the media and our conferences and workshops attracted participants from around the world. We are very pleased with the outreach and visibility of our work, and we look forward to deepening these and other subjects in the coming academic year. Once again congratulations to Team SEESOX for an excellent performance in Oxford and beyond.

Othon Anastasakis, Director of SEESOX

SEESOX news bites

- Adis Merdzhanovic departed SEESOX following a very successful and productive three-year period in Oxford. Adis is currently working on a project, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, investigating the challenges of liberalism in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, and what they mean in terms of European Union accession.

- Stathis Kalyvas (University Academic Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford and Gladstone Professor of Government) is the newest member of the SEESOX Steering Committee.

- Four new members joined the Greek Diaspora Project research team during last academic year: Maria Eleni Anastasopoulou, DPhil candidate in the Faculty of History, University of Oxford with a Masters degree in Migration Studies; Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni, PhD candidate at LSE researching the political economy of local development in Greece and Southern Italy; Anastasia Kafe, Adjunct Lecturer at Panteion University; and Iryna Lapshyna, lecturer at the Ukrainian Catholic University and former staff at Oxford’s Migration Centre (COMPAS).

- In Trinity Term 2018, SEESOX launched the first SEESOX E-Review: a termly electronic newsletter recording the events of the previous term, available for those who have signed up to our mailing list.

- SEESOX is pleased that David Madden has taken on the role as Chair of the SEESOX Steering Committee. David has been a member since 2012.

New books

Aligning Monetary Policy with Financial Stability

Othon Anastasakis, Adam Bennett, Charles Enoch and Gent Sejko

SEESOX, November 2017

The Greco-German Affair in the Euro Crisis: Mutual Recognition Lost?

Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni, Kalypso Nicolaidis and Claudia Sternberg

Palgrave, 2018
In their own words...

Foteini Kalantzi—A.G. Leventis Research Officer

Although a newcomer to the Seesox team, from the very first days I realised the significance and the ground-breaking nature of the flagship Greek diaspora project. I am therefore grateful to the Leventis Foundation for giving me the opportunity to participate in this ambitious programme.

During the few months of my engagement with the Greek diaspora project, I have felt privileged to participate in its planning and execution, but mostly to be part of an extremely cohesive and productive team. I have had the opportunity to carry out original qualitative research, investigating the position of political elites towards Greek diaspora through scrutiny of parliamentary debates, exploration of the stance of political parties and analysis of media discourse. Our first research results were presented at the SEESOX diaspora conference “Homeland-Diaspora Relations in Flux: Greece and Greeks abroad at times of crisis”. My responsibility for organising the conference and my participation has enabled me to engage with a diverse and interesting network of academics and practitioners in this field. Furthermore, I will be co-authoring a paper with Othon Anastasakis to develop this research even further.

I am also proud to see the Digital Diaspora Map take shape online. I have had thorough involvement in all aspects of the project from designing the dataset, producing the first quantitative reports investigating profiles of Greek organisations globally, and contributing to the creation of the project’s new website. I can increasingly see how this substantial and original database of Greek diasporic organisations can facilitate further research on diaspora and assist researchers in their investigation on this subject. Lastly, I am hugely appreciative of the constant intellectual stimulation offered by my role and the fertile environment within SEESOX and St Antony’s. I have been able to interact and converse with colleagues at the top of their fields, from numerous different disciplines especially via my participation in workshops, talks and the seminar series. I am looking forward to the exciting new term ahead and to further developing our strong diaspora programme that will shed light on unexplored aspects of the Greek diaspora and foster comparative research with other diasporas.

Manolis Pratsinakis—Onassis Foundation Research Fellow

My first year at SEESOX as the Onassis Foundation Postdoctoral Researcher was highly rewarding and intellectually stimulating. I was honoured to join the team of the Greek Diaspora Project as the deputy project manager. That allowed me to contribute to a research program which has critical policy implications for Greece, especially in the current context of prolonged crisis, while being academically pioneering as it sheds light on the determinants of diaspora engagement in an understudied time/space context. I was involved together with my colleagues in number of academic activities such as editing the Greek Diaspora Blog, designing our extensive nationwide UK survey, conducting qualitative research among the Greeks in the UK and assisting in the development of the Interactive Diaspora Map. Moreover, we organized and co-sponsored a number of outreaching events including the international conference entitled ‘Homeland Diaspora Relations in Flux: Greece in Crisis and Greeks abroad’. In parallel, I was able to further my previous research on everyday nationhood and the Greek crisis-driven migration and was given the opportunity to benefit from extremely fruitful intellectual exchanges with academics and practitioners that helped me critically develop my ideas. The SEESOX seminars as well as the diverse workshops and lectures at ECS bring together people from diverse disciplines and backgrounds and push you to think out-of-your intellectual comfort zone. More than anything I was delighted to become a member of community formed by bright people and characterised by an amicable, warm and inclusive atmosphere that makes day-to-day work an absolute pleasure.
On June 22-23, 2018, the Greek Diaspora Project at SEESOX organized the conference "Homeland-Diaspora relations in flux: Greece and Greeks abroad at times of crisis", at St Antony’s College. The conference explored the impact of Greek diaspora communities on their homeland through interactions in the domains of economy, politics and philanthropy.

During the first panel, the SEESOX team presented some of the output of in-house research. Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX) and Foteini Kalantzi (SEESOX) examined the substance of Greek parliamentary debates on diaspora during the period 2009-2017, by focusing on issues such as the diaspora vote, Greek state sponsored language education, and diaspora aid and investment. Irina Laphsyna (SEESOX) looked at the Greek diaspora from a conceptual and comparative perspective and compared the Greek with the Ukrainian Diaspora and the role of the state in mobilizing diasporas in times of conflict. Antonis Kamaras presented research on diaspora philanthropy and governance in the Greek state and non-profit sectors. Renee Hirschon presented some preliminary findings from an anthropological study on the Greeks in Oxford.

The second session dealt with diasporic identities. Here, Giorgos Anagnostou (Ohio State University) pointed out the existence of two Greek-American narratives, the bootstrap narrative whereby individual achievements bear no connection to collective endeavor and the narrative relating to the Greek-American’s community aligning with other actors to help achieve goals of collective significance. Anastasia Christou (Middlesex University) discussed on the more recent migration", the result of the socio-economic crisis, adding new dimensions to our understanding of Greek diaspora. Vassiliki Chrysanthopoulou (University of Athens) focused on the subnational level exploring relationships between Greek islanders residing in Australia with their communities of origin.

The third session dealt with diasporic institutions and the third sector. Marina Frangos (University of the Aegean) adopted a critical review of the Council of the World Hellenes’ (SAE) arguing that this consultative body was neither deeply rooted in the diaspora nor propelled by its own power of initiative. Antonis Kamaras (SEESOX) examined the role of diaspora in the private and public education in Greece, arguing that conflicting dynamics in both of these spheres make philanthropy and volunteerism and highly contested process. Ioanna Mousikoudis (University of Aix-Marseille) gave us an account of Greek language schooling in the city of Marseilles and focused on the quality and effectiveness of the Greek state’s provision of teachers and Greek instruction.

The fourth session focused on Diaspora and Church starting with Ioannis Grigoriadis (Bilkent University) who discussed the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, how the Greek economic crisis has affected its role as diaspora actor and evolving relations with the Moscow Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in North America. Athanasios Grammenos (University of Macedonia) analysed Archbishop Iakovos’ strategy to make Greek Orthodoxy into a central religious denomination, in the US, through his historical engagement in the fight for civil rights and his efforts to have Greek Orthodoxy and Greek-America mutually reinforce each other with a strong Greek-Americal community cohering around an invigorated Archdiocese. Alexander Kitroeff (Haverford College) mentioned
some key statistics - 87% of Greek Americans born in the US, 80% plus observant in the Greek Orthodox Church – to explain how the Patriarchate has become the leading priority for US politicians with Greek-American constituents. For the impoverished immigrants in the US the church was that organization which provided the educational and social nucleus of their communities. Georgios Trantas (University of Erfurt) wondered whether the new influx of highly educated immigrants from Greece to Europe might not create a fusion between a progressive laity and the Greek Orthodox churches of the continent that might yet act as an agent of modernisation in Greece.

The fifth session on media and diaspora included George Topalidis (University of Florida) historical study scrutinizing the distinctive treatment between of Ottoman from mainland diaspora Greeks in the US Greek diaspora print media and finished with Nikos Stamoulopoulos’ contemporary understanding of Greece’s new diaspora and the premiere of his documentary on the travails of a modern day young Greek emigre in the Netherlands and her engagement with the new society abroad.

The sixth session focused on diaspora and economy. This included Dimitris Kataifitis (University Paris IV – Sorbonne) and Anastasios Grigoriadis (University of Macedonia) who traced the trajectory of entrepreneurship of the Pontic Greeks which repatriated to Greece from the Former Soviet Union, from liquidating family possessions in flea markets to engaging in sophisticated cross-border business operations, either in managing tourist flows from the FSU to Greece or acquiring important assets put on sale by the Greek government. Americ Faure (London School of Economics) and Socratis Konioros (University of Crete) analysed in their presentations the remittance patterns of the new Greek migration. They both noted that middle class, highly educated Greeks are not prone to remit. Americ argued that these declining remittances are partly due to the lack of trust towards the Greek state. Sokratis underlined that migration has as a motivation, by and large, the reproduction of middle class life standards abroad. Finally, Platon Tinios (Piraeus University) underlined that the two main assets of an individual are his home and his pension, both being affected by migration. An additional factor discussed was the ability of the Greek state to negotiate, on behalf of its diaspora, optimal arrangements for pensionable obligation pay outs with host states.

The seventh session dealt with brain drain and included Vasiliki Toumanidou (University of Leeds) who analysed student migration to the UK, Anthi Koskina (College IDEF / Universite Paris XIII) who reviewed the policy initiatives that the Greek state took to mitigate the brain drain effects of the crisis and Eleni Tseligka (Staffordshire University) who explored the responses of the Greek communities of Germany to the recent inflows of Greek migrants which are sometimes overwhelmed as particularly many low skilled migrants lead a precarious existence; she underlined that many of these migrants are employed in the black economy and thus their employment patterns and numbers are underreported.

The eighth session on diaspora engagement started with Elizabeth Mavroudi (Loughborough University) who noted that the crisis-generated engagement of Greek-Australians with the homeland can include and exclude due to differentiated ability, among the diaspora. Additionally, any type of engagement will need to overcome Greek-Australian mistrust towards the Greek state, the integrity of Greek institutions and perceived as prevailing attitudes of the Greek people. Antonis Pipergoglou (Australian Catholic University) explored the tendency of prominent Greek-Australian professionals and businessmen to share in the Asia-centric perspective of the mainstream Australian business community. He argued that Greek policy makers should alert Greek business actors to the exposure and expertise of their Greek-Australian counterparts in the Asian continent. Olimpia Dragoumi (Humboldt – Universitat zu Berlin) reviewed the status of the Greek community in Poland while Anastasia Kafe (SEESOX) discussed methodologies employed in surveying Greek diaspora communities in the UK, which is part of SEESOX’s research.

The final panel was composed by founders of bottom up diaspora initiatives who presented their experiences and lessons learned from engaging with diaspora matters from a practitioner’s perspective. These included Nikos Theodorakis’ BrainGain, Effie Kyrta’s Reload Greece, Nikos Stamoulopoulos’ New Diaspora and Dimitris Kraniotis’ Hellenic Institute of Cultural Diplomacy.

In conclusion, the conference provided numerous insights on the state of Greek diaspora-homeland relations, gave to the participants the opportunity to acquaint themselves with different perspectives and current research and critically advanced SEESOX’s aim of sharing its research agenda with Greek diaspora scholars originating from some of the most important Greek diaspora communities. It also created a strong network for cooperation and synergies in the future!

Antonis Kamaras
Alongside the SEESOX Core Seminar Series, other seminars looked at aspects of regional politics.

In October 2017, Susan Woodward, of City University of New York, presented her book *The Ideology of Failed States; why intervention fails*. Her book looks at why this flawed concept continues in frequent use by international actors, given its security-focused nature and, above all, its abuse to justify intrusive international intervention. It had now reached a point where it had become the main basis for external intervention, with little or no discretion for the beneficiaries to choose their own development paths. How could policy competition in development be restored and the lazy thinking offered by abuse of this concept avoided?

In November 2017, SEESOX hosted a panel discussion on *Technocratic Government – challenges and legacy: the case of Romania*, with Dacian Cioloș, former Prime Minister of Romania, Raluca Pruna, former Justice Minister, and Dragos Tudorache, former Interior Minister, and Heidi Maurer (LSE) as discussant. The technocratic government headed by Cioloș had been appointed in November 2015 and handed over power to a newly-elected government in January 2017. Tudorache explained the challenges they had faced – lack of time to put together a programme and people who in many cases barely knew each other; it had been motivating to see the positive response from the Romanian diaspora. Transparency had been a key tool. Pruna pointed out the limitations on a technocratic government, due to the need for cooperation with an unfriendly parliament. Cioloș highlighted the varying expectations of the different actors – parties, civil society and voters. The main legacy was voters seeing a government working for people rather than party. Maurer highlighted the exceptional character of the Romanian case, wondering how long people could keep hoping for better, in the face of constant disappointment. The discussion focused on the possible development of a new approach to politics, based on a civil movement.

In the Trinity Term 2018, SEESOX hosted two Western Balkans events: on 23 April, Iztok Mirosic, Slovenian State Secretary for European Affairs, on *The Balkans in the wider European context: A Slovene view*; and, on 23 May, Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, on *What’s Happening now – and what’s next?* Discussants for Inzko were Richard Caplan (Linacre College) and Jessie Hronesova (Aktis Strategy Ltd.).

Mirosic gave an overview of developments; even after Brexit, UK interests in the region remained broadly similar to the EU’s. There was a general impression of a loss of EU interest in a region slowly slipping back into instability, with a corresponding loss of local interest in accession – and associated reforms – and deep mistrust by local populations, creating space for other external actors. The Berlin Process, which drew on the experience of the Brdo-Brijuni process, had been set up to counter this; it needed to deliver results to preserve EU leverage. A change of narrative was needed – tough conditions for accession, alongside a genuinely credible prospect of membership.

Inzko reviewed the role of international actors in Bosnia since Dayton, underlining the lack of political will among local elites to implement reforms. After the first ten years of unprecedented progress, the subsequent fifteen had shown the extent of the frozen conflict, with “local ownership” mutating into state capture. Peace should not be taken as a given but used as a basis for development. The international community needed to be robust and prescriptive in its approach, focusing on effective rule of law.

Hronesova advocated wider involvement of those outside the elite and better coordination of international efforts, avoiding duplication. Caplan stressed that Bosnia was from the start a hard case for peacebuilding. How could a constituency be built in favour of reform? Was the accession perspective sufficient?

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In November 2017, SEESOX hosted a panel discussion on Technocratic Government – challenges and legacy: the case of Italy, with Adis Merdanovic, Kalypso Nicolaidis and Susan Woodward.
Chancellor Merkel, concerned by Russian action in the Crimea and socio-economic unrest in the Balkans, launched the Berlin Process to revitalise the waning process of European integration. The core agenda was economic connectivity, regional cooperation and civil society. It had got the largest countries of the EU involved, and ensured an annual focus on the priorities for the Western Balkans. But some questioned the inclusion of the UK and Poland next year.

Othon Anastasakis described three levels of engagement between the EU and the Western Balkans: the accession process, the Berlin Process, and security integration. He concentrated on the last. The threats included radicalisation/fundamentalism, organised crime and corruption, unsolved border disputes, and the securitisation of migration. External actors such as Russia, Turkey and China were adding a geopolitical and geo-economic challenge. But he pointed to the risks of exaggerating security challenges during the London summit, and in particular the threats from Russia within the security agenda itself.

Adis Merdzanovic addressed the rule of law. The UK had two problems in hosting the London Summit: Brexit, and lack of influence in the region. So the UK should concentrate on a strength: the rule of law; not understood as a legal principle alone, but also as a social norm. The rule of law meant freedom from the tyrannies of fear, the few and the majority. The UK had a centuries-old credibility, dating back to Magna Carta; and should focus on the individual, the flexible, and the honest. All this would support the region’s EU perspective.

Jessie Hronesova commented on the difficulties when civil society was either over-funded from outside, or under-funded. Also, there was a tendency to pile too much on the shoulders of civil society. The inclusion of civil society in the Process had been evolutionary. It offered society a voice, networking and platforming opportunities. The shortcomings were lack of communications strategy (as elsewhere in the Process), duplication of effort, and lack of a structured approach and prioritisation.

Discussion covered: UK involvement despite Brexit; Russian role in the region; youth unemployment; the slow pace of economic convergence; lack of accountability and monitoring in the Process; and how well it really hung together.

David Madden
The first seminar, on 18 January, on “The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey”, was given by Soner Çağaptay, of the Washington Institute, with Ceren Lord (Oxford) as discussant. He gave an overview of Erdoğan’s rule since 2002, highlighting Turkey’s evolution into a bipolar country, with one bloc of adoring pro-Erdoğan conservative voters and the other of left-leaning opponents. This societal divide had been consolidated in the aftermath of the July 2016 coup. In Çağaptay’s view, Erdoğan’s polarising rhetoric risked sharpening ethnoreligious divides, with the potential for civil strife.

Secondly, local elites seemed to survive unchanged, whatever the formal structures under which they worked; this “elastic authoritarianism” had to be overcome.

On 31 January, the seminar on “Energy and geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean” was given by Vassilis Kappis (University of Buckingham) and Constantinos Filis (Panteion University). Kappis looked at big power rivalry, focusing on the respective security roles of the US, Russia and the EU in the region. While the US remained the dominant force, it was playing a smaller role, while Russia was taking a renewed and increasingly influential place. With the EU’s security role relatively limited, there was an increasing tendency for local players to turn to a regionalisation of their security links among themselves. Filis looked at potential energy exports from the region, in the context of EU energy vulnerability. With the US becoming self-sufficient, the EU would face increasing competition for energy resources from China, India and others. The region presented a promising source for diversification of EU supplies, but success would depend on cost-effective extraction and transport.

The fourth seminar, on 7 February, was on “The Greco-German Affair in the Euro Crisis: Mutual Recognition Lost?”, a book authored by Claudia Sternberg (UCL), Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni (LSE) and Kalypso Nicolaidis (St Antony’s College) with a panel of discussants. The book looks at the relationship between Greeks and Germans during the Euro crisis, and the resulting war of images, stories and mutual representations in the
media. The crisis cast light on the tensions between aspirations for, and denials of, mutual recognition, but also suggested that behind all the problems, both sides emerged with enhanced mutual engagement.

The 21 February seminar looked at “(Ir)regular states of migration; contested sovereignties on Europe’s margins” with Katerina Rozakou (University of Amsterdam) presenting a paper and Franck Duvell (University of Oxford) acting as discussant. Rozakou had made an ethnographical study of the situation in Lesvos in the summer of 2015, where there was a backlog of 20,000 unrecorded border-crossers awaiting registration. Despite strong pressure from UNHCR to allow them to move on without registration, the Greek government had resisted; the production of documents was seen as an essential and valuable aspect of Greek state and EU sovereignty. Moreover, both street-level bureaucrats and fatalistic border-crossers seemed to have accepted this and waited for hours in the hot sun to perform their part.

On 28 February, a panel of speakers addressed “The erosion of free speech in Turkey: Why were key institutions defeated?”: Riza Türmen (former ECHR judge), Funda Üstek-Spilda (Goldsmiths, London), and Kemal Göktas (Çumhuriyet newspaper. Türmen reviewed the gradual undermining of parliament and competitive political parties leading to the concentration of power in the hands of one man – Erdoğan – who had a flawed, majoritarian understanding of democracy. No previous government had had such a tight grip on the judiciary which had always seen itself as defending the state rather than individual rights. Üstek-Spilda focused on erosion of free speech in academia. Purges of academics in Turkey were a long-standing phenomenon: in every case recovery was slow and damage was done to students and to intellectual life. In addition, governance of universities was authoritarian and top-down. Göktas recalled Turkey’s poor standing in the index of freedom of information and the recent convictions of journalists. Independent journalism in Turkey had died. This situation had its roots in the 1980 coup, but the subsequent progressive monopolisation of the media by private interests, and the rise of the AKP, had changed the media environment.

The final seminar, on 7 March, looked at “Rival power: Russia and South East Europe”, with Dimitar Bechev (University of South Carolina, Chapel Hill), with Roy Allison and Othon Anastasakis (both from St Antony’s College) as discussants. Bechev’s latest book reviews the different dimensions of Russian influence in the region, including energy, military security and soft power, through media, religion and culture. While Russia was not able to offer countries in the region a coherent alternative to EU accession, it played a disruptive game of influence. His presentation looked at Russia’s impact in the energy sector, which though extensive, had weakened since its high point in the 2000’s, and the growing closeness of Russia with Turkey – a “marriage of convenience?”

For detailed accounts of each seminar, please visit the SEESOX blog: https://seesoxblog.blogspot.co.uk
Panel discussion: 30 April, 2018

“Greek-Turkish Tensions: Impending Conflict?”. Ezgi Başaran spoke about the Greek-Turkish tensions that began on 15 July 2016, with the eight Turkish soldiers who landed at the Alexandroupilos airport the day after the attempted coup in Turkey, seeking asylum. In 2018 relations between the two countries worsened, with numerous incidents in the Aegean, and further escalated with the imprisonment of two Greek soldiers after they got lost and crossed into Turkish territory.

Othon Anastasakis presented a Greek perspective, pointing to the fact that the issue monopolised public discourse in Greece. He emphasised that there was a re-securitisation of the relationship between the two countries following the previous multifaceted rapprochement since 2002. He added that Greece had been consistent in trying to multilateralise the disputes, as opposed to Turkey, which had consistently viewed them as bilateral.

Mehmet Karlı offered a Turkish perspective. He spoke about the new identity of Turkish foreign policy, describing its main features as a “zero friends” policy, reliance on hard power, weakening of Western orientation and strengthening of relations with authoritarian regimes like Russia. He also spoke of the high cost factors for Turkey that could reduce the risk of an escalation of the conflict – military, diplomatic and economic.

Katerina Dalacoura put the crisis in the Middle-Eastern context. She argued that the centre point of the issue was Syria. The turning point was in the 2015 elections and the AKP’s shift to nationalism (political opening towards the MHP party). Also, the loss of Davutoglu was a further turning point - both a cause and an effect of what was happening.

Yaprak Gürsoy spoke about the lack of involvement of NATO and the US in the current crisis. In the past they had intervened to mediate, so that conflicts had not been prolonged. Gürsoy concluded that it was highly unlikely Turkey would leave NATO but, because of regional and domestic circumstances, NATO has lost its leverage over Turkey and the crisis in the Aegean.

Kalypso Nicolaidis summarised the discussion from an EU viewpoint. She feared the apparent tendency to learn from past failures rather than successes. On a more optimistic note, the Greece of today remained moderate. The Middle East situation could have positive (turning Turkey’s focus away) or negative (spill-over) effect. Greater resilience over refugees would allow the EU to play a more influential role.

David Madden

Greek To Me

Special lecture, 20 February 2018

Professor Richard Clogg gave a talk on his latest book, Greek To Me, which focusses on the secretive world of academia and university politics, as well as providing unique eyewitness accounts of modern Greek history.

Peter Mackridge commented that the book was written with trademark gusto and humour. It was highly topical in providing insights into Universities and academic freedoms, and the difficulties for those investigating controversial subjects: and appeared at a time when the marketization of higher education represented a threat to academic standards.

Stathis Kallivas described the book as a page-turner. It was fascinating on Clogg’s discovery of Greece and experience of academic politics. Central themes were academic funding, and criticism of constraints on freedom emanating from donors; and the lively turf battles between academics. He paid tribute to Clogg’s eye-opening books about Greece, in particular the Concise History, and the Short History, and the imaginative use of images and illustrations to convey themes and ideas.

Richard Clogg, Peter Mackridge and Stathis Kallivas
On 25 October 2017, Nora Fisher Onar (Coastal Carolina University) gave a seminar entitled Islamo-liberalism: Turkey and The Life Cycle of a Political Alliance. Fisher Onar took the events of 5 July 2016 coup attempt and, after giving a brief picture of the purge that followed, highlighted how the West perceives Turkey in the aftermath of the failed putsch, and how supporters of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) in turn construct their own image of the West. Western pundits, she suggested, tend to read developments in Turkey through a simplistic equation of authoritarianism as Islamism. Pro-AKP pundits, similarly, tend to dismiss all Western criticism as Islamophobic negation of the Turkish people’s will and agency. Both approaches, she argued, permit a reading of pro-religious and liberal political programmes in Turkey as irreconcilable. This collision of Orientalist and Occidentalist frameworks, she contended, serves to empower groups committed to organicist, ethnoreligious readings of Turkey’s national identity and international role. However, in her view, political change in Turkey is driven by multiple shifting factions and alliances, including an Islamo-liberal coalition which, roughly once every generation, drives significant political change before itself collapsing.

On 1 November 2017, Ezgi Başaran, Turkish journalist and coordinator of the SEESOX Programme on Contemporary Turkey, launched her book Frontline Turkey: the conflict at the heart of the Middle East. In presenting her book, Başaran narrated the history of the Kurdish problem in the context of a decade and a half of AKP rule in Turkey. She described how Turkey’s most troublesome and persistent conflict had brought its democratic institutions to a state of collapse, just when a solution seemed in sight. As a journalist who had been following the Kurdish issue in Turkey for more than ten years, she had interviewed almost all the prominent figures who had shaped the course of the Kurdish movement in the country. Based on this material, she outlined the chronology of events leading up to the launch of a peace process between Turkey’s President Erdoğan and the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party), focusing particularly on the dramatic and very intense period that followed, up to the collapse of the process in 2015 and the coup attempt in 2016. In her view, Turkey’s peace process with the Kurds had principally collapsed as a result of both the expansion of the Syrian Kurdish cantons adjacent to the Turkish border and the ambitions of the then Prime Minister Erdoğan to create an executive presidency for himself.

Ezgi Başaran

Two Turkish Academic Visitors to join Team SEESOX

SEESOX is delighted to welcome two new Turkish Academic Visitors in Michaelmas 2018 Term: Alev Özkazanç, Professor of Political Science and Gender Studies, recently retired from the University of Ankara; and Murat Belge, literary critic and columnist, and Professor of Comparative Literature at Istanbul Bilgi University.
The purpose of this Symposium, on 23 November, was to examine the relationship between Yugoslavia and the successor states: to look at the consequences of Yugoslavia’s existence; and to ask what vestiges and legacies it left behind.

Adis Merdzanovic argued that the Yugoslav system exhibited proto-liberal elements which could have been used as anchor points for the consolidation of liberalism. The EU in particular failed to build on the proto-liberal reality of the Yugoslav space.

Catherine Baker considered “Yugonostalgia”, which tended to embrace almost any cultural phenomenon connected with Yugoslavia as a common state; and added the point that everyday cultural exchange between post-Yugoslav states were now more frequent than fifteen years ago.

Denisa Kostovicova, Adam Fagan and Ivor Sokolic highlighted the disordered and ambiguous nature of civil society, which had acted both for and against processes of democratisation. It was marked by pluralism, and represented a discontinuity from Yugoslavia; but had challenged democracy and aided nationalist efforts.

Jasmin Ramovic looked at lessons learned from socialist self-management for economies in post-conflict societies in the Balkans. He analysed the ways in which self-management contributed to workers’ contentment with their workplace, and also to reconciliation between ethnic groups.

Ljubica Spaskovska examined the legacies of Yugoslav non-aligned multilateralism. The approach was essentially selective: an attempt to acknowledged the positive side and thus use it for pragmatic political gains in international forums; but also, and especially at individual level, a sense of loss.

James Ker-Lindsay considered the issues of status and border delimitation which arose when Yugoslavia disintegrated. They were both legacies of a time when boundaries meant less, and equally harbingers of a time when boundaries became less important within the EU.

Othon Anastasakis contended that Russia and Turkey had been guided all along by their own strategic interests, and the compatibility or incompatibility with Western ones, despite their current claims of historical and cultural affinity and continuity.

Dejan Jovic focussed on the disintegration of Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as of Yugoslavia. The collapse of Yugoslavia was a sudden and unexpected event, and primarily a consequence of the ending of the Cold War in East and Central Europe.

Adam Bennett stated that microeconomic self-management fatally undermined optimal macroeconomic management. He covered attempts by the IMF to support Yugoslavia’s stability programs and explained the failure of these programmes.

Milica Uvalic noted that the speed and direction of systemic change had been very different across the successor states. While pursuing the common objective of multiparty democracy and market economy, some countries had dismantled key elements of the old system much faster than others.

Peter Sanfey suggested that former Yugoslavia had appeared well placed to make a rapid transition to a sustainable market economy. But the violent break-up of the country and subsequent conflicts prevented a smooth transition. The road to a sustainable market economy remained a long one.

The Symposium was followed by an evening seminar, in which Professor Norman Davies addressed the question “Do countries ever really disappear?”: a subject on which, as Vanished Kingdoms demonstrated, he is uniquely qualified to speak.

David Madden
On 9 November 2017, SEESOX and the Bank of Albania collaborated on a high-level conference in Tirana on Banking Developments and Financial Market Infrastructure. Its purpose was to discuss domestic and foreign risks to banking system stability in Emerging Europe, with a particular focus on Albanian and South East European economies, and the challenges that these risks pose for central banks. The conference was opened by Ilir Meta (President of Albania), and by Arben Ahmetaj (Minister of Finance of Albania), with a welcoming address by Gent Sejko (Governor of the Bank of Albania). Panel speakers included academics and officials from Albania, and other countries in South East Europe, as well as from Oxford University, the LSE, Bocconi University, Banca d’Italia, the IMF and the World Bank. Discussions featured a cautious optimism regarding the region’s prospects, while recognizing that challenges remained. In particular, the region as a whole still had a relatively bank-dominated financial system and needed to diversify into other types of financial market. Non-performing loans were falling, but their resolution remained problematic. While stock market activity was beginning to recover, there needed to be greater synergies between the financial centres, as well strengthened efforts to contain the informal financial markets. There was room to improve education in primary and secondary schools, and especially in financial education for adults towards advancing financial inclusion. There was scope for enhanced cooperation between countries in the region in financial matters, and between SEE and multilateral organizations like the IMF and the World Bank.

On 13 June, 2018, SEESOX led a workshop, with the support of the Bank of Albania, on the Western Balkans and the Berlin Process—ahead of the London conference hosted by the British Government. Participants included academics from the Western Balkans, Oxford University, and LSE, as well as officials from EBRD, and representatives from Oxford Analytica. Key findings included the following: (i) while security issues were important, they should not be allowed to dominate the discussions; (ii) there was a need to re-energize engagement between the EU and the Western Balkans; (iii) better coordination was required between the EU accession reform process and the Regional Economic Area (REA) agenda, with a strengthening of the capacity of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) to implement the REA; (iv) a balance must be struck between treating the Western Balkans as a single region, and as a collection of individual countries; (v) Western Balkan countries should be elevated from “third country” status in banking and other fora; (vi) more could be done to stress the positive benefits resulting from implementing the EU’s reforms in the region; (vii) the goals of some political elites in the region are not always well aligned either with those of the EU or with their own people; (viii) the REA agenda could be enhanced to further promote the region’s trade in services, as well as address other considerations, such as governance, entrepreneurship, inequality, and youth development; (ix) finance for SMEs could be developed using the expertise of the City of London; and (x) the UK—a world leader in academia—could help strengthen academic institutions in the region.

Adam Bennett
**SEESOX seminars and events**

**Michaelmas 2017 (October-December)**

- The contested meaning of Failed States for international order
  - **Susan Woodward** (City University of New York)
  - Discussant: **Adis Merdzanovic** (St Antony’s College, Oxford) in association with Centre for International Studies (CIS) and Anastasakis

- **Rival Power: Russia and South East Europe**
  - **Dimitar Bechev**

- In association with Timothy Garton Ash and the Free Speech Debate (Former ECHR judge and former MP)
  - **Kemal Göktaş**

  - Discussant: **Katerina Rozakou**

- **margins** (Ir)regular states of migration: Contested sovereignties on Europe
  - **Richard Clogg**

- **Greek to Me: A Memoir of Academic Life**
  - **Constantinos Filis** (Panteion University); **Bill Kappis** (University of Buckingham)

- The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey
  - **Soner Cagaptay** (Washington Institute for Near East Policy)

- Hunger and Fury: The Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans
  - **Jasmin Mujanović**

  - Discussant: **Richard Clogg** (All Souls College, Oxford)

- Technocratic government – challenges and legacy: The case of Romania
  - **Dacian Cioloş** (Former Prime Minister of Romania); **Raluca Pruna** (Former Justice Minister of Romania); **Dragos Tudorache** (Former Interior Minister of Romania)

  - Discussant: **Heidi Maurer** (LSE/DPIR)

- Do countries ever really disappear?
  - **Norman Davies** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

- **Hilary 2018 (January-March)**

- The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey
  - **Soner Cagaptay** (LSE/DPIR)

- Energy and geo-politics of the Balkans
  - **Jasmin Mujanović** (East West Institute)

  - Discussant: **Danijela Dolenec** (University of Zagreb)

- The Greco-German Affair in the Euro Crisis: Mutual Recognition Lost?
  - **Kira Gartzou-Katsouyanni** (LSE); **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (St Antony’s College, Oxford); **Claudia Sternberg** (University College London)

  - Discussants: **Mehtet Karlì; Adis Merdzanovic; Manolis Pratsinas** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

- Berlin Process: A bridge between the Western Balkans and the EU?
  - **Marika Djolai** (Balkins in Europe Policy Advisory Group); **Spyros Economides** (LSE); **Adam Fagan** (Queen Mary University of London); **Tobias Flessenkemper** (Centre international de formation européenne – CIFE); **James Ker Lindsay** (St Marys University, Twickenham); **Andrew Page** (FCO); **Goran Svilanović** (Regional Cooperation Council)

  - Discussants: **Mehmet Karli; Adis Merdzanovic; Manolis Pratsinas** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

- Greek to Me: A Memoir of Academic Life
  - **Richard Clogg** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

  - Discussant: **Stathis Kalyvas** (All Souls College, Oxford)

**(Ir)regular states of migration: Contested sovereignty on Europe’s margins**

- **Katerina Rozakou** (University of Amsterdam)

  - Discussant: **Franck Duvell** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

- The erosion of free speech in Turkey: Why were key institutions defeated?
  - **Kemal Göktaş** (Cumhuriyet; Reuters Institute); **Riza Türmen** (Former ECHR judge and former MP); **Funda Ustek-Spilda** (Goldsmiths University of London)

  - In association with Timothy Garton Ash and the Free Speech Debate

- Rival Power: Russia and South East Europe
  - **Dimitar Bechev** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

  - Discussants: **Roy Allison** (St Antony’s College, Oxford); **Othon Anastasakis** (St Antony’s College, Oxford)

  - In association with Centre for International Studies (CIS) and Russian and East European Studies Centre (RESC)

**Trinity 2018 (April-June)**

- The Balkans in the wider European context: The Slovene view
  - **Iztok Mirošič** (Slovenian Deputy Foreign Minister)

- Greek-Turkish tensions: Impending conflict?
  - **Ezgi Basaran** (St Antony’s College, Oxford); **Yorgos Dedes** (SOAS, University of London); **Katerina Delacoura** (LSE); **Mehmet Karli** (St Antony’s College, Oxford); **Yapra re Gürsoy** (Aston University)

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: What’s happening now... and what’s next?
  - **Valentin Inzko** (High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina)

  - Discussant: **Jessie Hronesova** (Aktis Strategy Ltd)

**Conferences and workshops**

- 4th RELOAD GREECE CONFERENCE (London) September 2017
  - The unstoppable generation: Hacking entrepreneurship into a culture in association with London Business School and LSE

- CONFERENCE (Tirana) November 2017
  - Banking developments and financial markets infrastructure in association with the Bank of Albania

- SYMPOSIUM (Oxford) November 2017
  - Revisiting Yugoslavia in the shadow of the present: Continuities and discontinuities

- WORKSHOP (Oxford) December 2017
  - The Macedonian name dispute: A window of opportunity?

- CONFERENCE (Thessaloniki) March 2018
  - Prosperity and security in the Western Balkans

- CONFERENCE (Oxford) June 2018
  - Homeland diaspora relations in flux: Greece in crisis and Greeks abroad

**Outreach**

- AMBASSADORS’ FORUM (Oxford) May 2018
  - Key issues and developments in South East Europe

- SEMINAR (London) June 2018
  - The Berlin Process on its way to the London Summit: A bridge between the Western Balkans and the EU?

  - In association with Global Strategy Forum
SEESOX aspires...

“My theme is outreach...

The most obvious examples of SEESOX reaching out to a wider world is the Diaspora Project. This studies the relationship between parent nations and their communities abroad (USA, Canada, Australia, Africa) and how they interact and affect each other. The project starts with Greece, and will go wider.

In other ways, SEESOX has attempted to reach out further, and spread its message more widely:

- Ambassadors’ Forum. An annual lunch held in St Antony’s since 2013 to bring together all the Ambassadors from South East Europe posted in London, for detailed round table discussion on a range of issues;
- Cooperation with Global Strategy Forum in London, involving presentations by SEESOX on our events, including seminars, workshops and other symposia. Again, this has happened annually since 2013. This year’s event focussed on the Berlin Process, based on the seminar on 14 February;
- Presentations in Athens, in the Megaron Hall, on regional themes. These took place in 2015 and 2016. As recorded in this newsletter, both the Forum and a joint event with GSF took place this year; and we have high hopes that they will be continued next year as well. SEESOX participated in a seminar in Thessaloniki earlier this year, and there is a further event planned in the Megaron for October 2018. So we are broadcasting the message that South East Europe and SEESOX matters.

David Madden

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Can the international community cope with current security challenges?

PANEL DISCUSSION

Contemporary Global Security Challenges
Richard Caplan (University of Oxford)

Europe and Security
Maria Eleni Koppa (Panteion University, Athens)

New Cyber Security Threats
Lucas Kello (University of Oxford)

The view from NATO
Despina Afentouli (NATO Public Diplomacy Division)

Chair: David Madden (University of Oxford)

Tuesday 23 October, 19:00
Megaron Plus, Athens

FORTHCOMING EVENT

Panel Discussions

Greek diaspora and political participation
Monday 29 October, 18:00
Onassis Cultural Centre, Athens
On 3 May, SEESOX hosted its annual Ambassadors’ Forum at St Antony’s College, Oxford. This was the sixth in the series: in the well-established tradition of inviting to Oxford all the diplomatic missions from the region of South East Europe in London, and presenting to them the fruits of SEESOX’s work. This year the working lunch was attended by nine Heads of Mission, two Deputy Heads of Mission and one First Secretary, as well as the SEESOX group.

SEESOX briefed on the main themes which it addressed during the academic year 2017-2018, concentrating in particular on EU integration and the European Commission’s new strategy for the Western Balkans, the region’s geo-political challenges, the Berlin Process and the political economy of the region, including the impact of Brexit and other macro-economic challenges. The Bulgarian Ambassador briefed on the priorities for the Presidency and the Sofia Summit on 16/17 May, with the focus on the Western Balkans, and the themes of connectivity, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations. There was general round table discussion of these issues, and on the forthcoming summit meetings in July (Berlin Process in London, and NATO in Brussels). Our Forum discussed the future of the Berlin Process, the meaning of the London Summit and what messages this gives now that the UK is leaving the EU, especially regarding a range of security concerns.

The second part of the Forum focused its discussion on SEESOX’s flagship project, the Greek Diaspora project, presented by two SEESOX researchers who briefed on the main goals of the project including a survey aimed at Greeks in the UK, the creation of an interactive map and research into philanthropy, brain drain and the diasporic impact on domestic politics. This presentation led to a wide-ranging exchange about the diasporas of other South East European countries with references to issues such as size, role, brain drain, make-up, voting issues, remittances, cultural ties, and education of the region’s diasporic communities around the world. It was agreed that there is genuine scope for comparative studies which SEESOX is determined to undertake.

David Madden

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