



CEU DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HISTORY

The Doctoral Thesis in Comparative History

by

Francesco La Rocca

on

“Writers of Tales: A Study on National Literary Epic Poetry with a Comparative Analysis of the Albanian and South Slavic Cases”

will be held on

Wednesday, January 18, 2017, at 11:30 a.m

in

**Gellner room, Nádor 9.
Central European University (CEU)
Budapest—1051**

Examination Committee

Andrea Pető – Chair (Department of Gender Studies, CEU)
György Endre Szőnyi – supervisor (Department of History, CEU)
Balázs Trencsényi – CEU internal member (Department of History)
J.T. Leerssen – external member (University of Amsterdam)
István Fried – external reader (Szegeci Tudományegyetem)

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I intend to investigate the history and theory of national literary epic poetry in Europe, paying particular attention to its development among Albanians, Croats, Montenegrins, and Serbs.

The first chapters will be devoted to the elaboration of a proper theoretical background and historical framing to the concept of national epic poetry and its role in the cultivation of national thought in Europe. The second part will flesh out national epos among Albanians and South Slavs by the means of a comparative analysis of some epics belonging to these literary cultures. In order to carry a comparison methodologically as solid as possible, I will investigate how the authors of epos have dealt with three key elements which I regard as crucial in the context of cultural nationalism: The study of these three elements, i.e. kinship, religion, and patriotism, constitute what I would like to call the “Tripod model”.

Whereas the importance of folk traditions in European cultural nationalism has been the focus of many valuable studies, the elaboration and communication of national/nationalistic ideas by the means of literary epics has met with relatively little attention from the scholarly world, despite the relevance some of these epics had (and still have) in many East European countries. By investigating the theory and history of national epic poetry, this project aims at filling this gap by providing an original contribution to the study of cultural nationalism in Europe.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Francesco La Rocca

EDUCATION

2008–2010 MA in International Research and Studies on Eastern Europe (MIREES). University of Bologna in cooperation with Vytautas Magnus University at Kaunas, Corvinus University of Budapest, Saint-Petersburg State University.

2003–2007 Scienze Politiche e Relazioni Internazionali [Political Science and International Relations]. La Sapienza University of Rome, Rome (Italy).

WORK EXPERIENCE

13/01/2014–04/04/2014 Teaching assistant. Central European University (CEU), History Department, Budapest (Hungary).

04/2013 Assistant researcher. Central European University (CEU), Budapest (Hungary).

06/2011–08/2011 Archive intern. Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Prague Office, Prague (Czech Republic).

03/05/2010–03/08/2010 Intern. Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italian Institute of Culture in Tirana, Tirana (Albania).

09/2002–06/2008 Volunteer educator, archivist and secretary. Fondazione Internazionale [International Foundation] Don Luigi Di Liegro, Rome (Italy).

PUBLIC LECTURES

23 October 2014, Sofia, Bulgaria. American Research Center in Sofia (ARCS) public lecture series. Lecture "Epic Nation Building: Comparing Albanian and South Slavic National Narratives in Epic Literature".

CONFERENCES

06-08 November 2015, Tartu, Estonia. Conference on *Orthodoxy in the Baltic Rim: religion, politics, and education (1840s-1954)*. Paper: "Between Two Worlds: Uniatism and Orthodoxy in Interwar Lithuania (1823-1945)".

06-10 September 2015, Marburg, Germany. 11th Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe. Paper: "A Forgotten Minority: History and Identity of the Greek-Catholic Church in Lithuania".

22 - 23 November 2013, Cologne, Germany. Conference on *Metal and Politics: Zwischen Ideologie und Utopie* [Between Ideology and Utopia]. Paper: "Gegen die Weltordnung: Politik und Ideologie im Power Metal [Against the World Order: Politics and Ideology in Power Metal]".

25 - 27 April 2013, Budapest, Hungary. 7th annual graduate conference in European history (GRACEH) *Historians in Space: Concept of Space in Recent European Historiography*. Paper: "Mythological and Political Spaces in Conflict: The Danish-German Intellectual Polemics and the Schleswig Wars (1848-1864)".

4 - 7 October 2012, Thessaloniki, Greece. Conference on *Balkan Worlds: Ottoman Past and Balkan Nationalism*. Paper "Troublesome Self-Representations: the Albanian Ottoman Past in Gjergj Fishta's 'The Highland Lute'".

GRANTS AND AWARDS

September 2014 - November 2014: American Research Centre in Sofia (ARCS) Pre-doctoral Fellowship.

2011-Present: Central European University Doctoral Fellowship.

LANGUAGES

Mother tongue(s) Italian

Other language(s)	UNDERSTANDING		SPEAKING		WRITING
	Listening	Reading	Spoken interaction	Spoken production	
English	C2	C2	C2	C2	C2
German	C1	C1	C1	C1	C1
Albanian	B2	C1	B2	B2	B2
Romanian	B2	B2	B2	B2	B2
Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian	B1	B2	B1	B1	B1
Hungarian	B1	B1	B1	B1	A2
French	A2	C1	A1	A1	A1
Lithuanian	A2	B1	A2	A2	B1
Bulgarian	A2	B1	A2	A2	A2
Czech	A1	A2	A1	A1	A2
Latin		B2			
Ancient Greek		B2			

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user - B1 and B2: Independent user - C1 and C2: Proficient user
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Book chapters

"Eric Hobsbawm and Folk Metal: The Invention of Tradition in the Music and Lyrics of Eluveitie", in Jenny Butler (ed.), *Folk Metal: Critical Essays on Identity, Myth and Culture* (Palgrave, forthcoming).

"Gegen die Weltordnung: Politik und Ideologie im Power Metal [Against the World Order: Politics and Ideology in Power Metal]", in Roman Bartosch (ed.), *Heavy Metal Studies Band II* (Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Tier, 2015).

"Troublesome Self-Representations: The Albanian Ottoman Past in Gjergj Fishta's 'The Highland Lute'", in Dimitris Stamatopoulos (ed.), *Balkan Worlds: Ottoman Past and Balkan Nationalism* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2015).

Articles

"The Viking Raids of Britain in Metal Music: From Ideology to Parody", forthcoming in *Metal Music Studies*.

"Clashing cultural nationalisms: the 19th-century Danish-German intellectual debate, the Schleswig wars (1848-1864), and some reflections on the cultural roots of National Socialism", in *Revista Română de Studii Baltice și Nordice / The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies*, Vol. 7, Issue 1 (2015), 105-122.

"Nuove e antiche fedi: la Chiesa Cattolica e i nuovi movimenti religiosi [New and Ancient Faiths: The Catholic Church and the New Religious Movements]", in *Il Palindromo*, Year II, Number 5, March 2012, 99-109.

"At the Crossroads: The History of the Greek-Catholic Church in Lithuania", in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Volume XXXI, Number 1, February 2011, 1-16 & Volume XXXI, Number 2, May 2011, 1-9.

Book reviews

Traveler, Scholar, Political Adventurer: A Transylvanian Baron at the Birth of Albanian Independence. The Memoires of Franz Nopcsa by Robert Elsie (ed.), Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014, in *East Central Europe*, Volume 43, Issue 1-2, 2016, pp. 227-229.

Voisinages fragiles: Les relations interconfessionnelles dans le Sud-Est européen et la Méditerranée orientale 1854-1923: contraintes locales et enjeux internationaux by Anastassios

Anastassiadis (ed.), Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 2013, in *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 2015, pp. 519-521.

The Making and Breaking of Soviet Lithuania. Memory and Modernity in the Wake of War by Violeta Davoliūtė, Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 2013, in *Europe-Asia Studies*, Volume 66, Issue 10, 2014, pp. 1748-1749.

The Kosova Liberation Army: Underground War to Balkan Insurgency, 1948-2001 by James Pettifer, London: Hurst & Company, 2013, in *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, Volume 21, Issue 1, 2014, pp. 145-146.

Thor: Myth to Marvel by Martin Arnold, London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011, in *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, Volume 19, Issue 4, 2012, pp. 641-642.

Pro Russia: The Russicum and the Catholic Work for Russia by Constantin Simon SJ, Rome: Orientalia Christiana Analecta 283, Pontifical Oriental Institute, 2009, in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Volume XXX, May 2 (May 2010), pp. 27-28.

Orthodoxy and the Cold War: Religion and Political Power in Romania 1947-65 by Lucian N. Neustean, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, in *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 11: 1, Ruthledge, UK.

Lo Zar e il Patriarca: I rapporti tra trono e altare in Russia dalle origini ai giorni nostri [The Tsar and the Patriarch: The Relations between Throne and Altar in Russia from the Origins to the Present Day] by Giovanni Codevilla, Milan: R.C. Edizioni La Casa di Matriona, 2008, in *Religion and Eastern Europe*, Volume XXX, Number 3, February 2010, pp. 37-38.

Returning Home to Rome: The Basilian Monks of Grottaferrata in Albania by Ines Angeli Murzaku, Grottaferrata: Analekta Kryptoferris, 2009, in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Volume XXIX, Number 3, August 2009.

La Slovacchia e la Santa Sede nel XX secolo: Atti del Convegno promosso dall'Ambasciata della Repubblica Slovacca presso la Santa Sede in occasione del V anniversario della firma

dell'Accordo Base tra la Repubblica Slovacca e la Santa Sede [Slovakia and the Holy See in the XX Century] by Jozef Dravecký (ed.), Vatican City: Vatican Publishing House, 2008, in *Religion in Eastern Europe*, Volume XXIX, Number 1, February 2009, pp. 51-53.