



SVENSKA FORSKNINGSPENNINGSTIET I ISTANBUL
SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL

THE SRII EASTERN TURKEY SEMINAR 2013

30 September, 2013, 10–16 p.m.

Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul
İstiklal Caddesi 247, Tünel, Beyoğlu (next to the Consulate General of Sweden)
The Auditorium

PROGRAM

10.00

Introductory remarks on seminar and journey
Birgit Schlyter

10.15 – 13.15

Presentations of current/planned research projects

Kristina J. Hesse

Intercultural Contacts in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age

Daniel Henningsson

'Out of the north an evil shall break forth': Some Minor Remarks on the Importance of Asia Minor during the Migrations in the Eastern Mediterranean World during the Late Bronze Age

Fedir Androshchuk

Varangians, Borderland and Border People in Byzantine Cilicia

Anne Karahan

Byzantine Aesthetics and Christian Ideology: A Research Project on Meta-Images

Adam J. Goldwyn

Roads to Nowhere: Symbolic and Geographic Travel in the Byzantine Romance

Birgit Schlyter and Patrick Hällzon

Accounts of Silk Road Traveling in the Gunnar Jarring Eurasia Collection at SRII

Elisabeth Özdalga

The Role of Fictional Literature in the Formation of National Identities

Önver Cetrez and Valerie DeMarinis

Mental Health, Meaning-Seeking, and Integration among Syrian Immigrants

13.15 – 14.00
Lunch on the SRII terrace

14.00 – 16.00
Information and orientation about places to be visited by the ETS participants

19.00 – 21.00
Public lecture by Professor Valerie DeMarinis, Uppsala
*The Impact of Cultural Analysis on Mental Health and Psychosocial Services Programmes in
Complex Emergency Settings*
With the focus on Iraqi and other refugee groups in Syria.

A Greeting from the SRII Director

For the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII), the idea of a "traveling seminar" gathering scholars and students conducting research at or in association with the Institute, is a new initiative in order to offer the participants an opportunity to get together within the framework of an SRII Research Environment, with a possibility of both introducing one's own research agenda and gaining new knowledge of relevance for future work.

The notions of *mobility* and *identity* are two common denominators for the research interests of those invited to the Eastern Turkey Seminar 2013. These two notions are significant features characterizing research activities at SRII in general.

From ancient times till the present day, the long stretch of land from innermost Asia to the Mediterranean region, which is the geographically relevant field of academic training and research at SRII, has been characterized by mobility in one direction or another, where the moving entities have been either physical bodies – people and goods – or, more abstract, ideas and cultures.

Mobility means encounters with new environments in relation to which the social identities of individuals are to be shaped or reshaped. Studies on the history of art and architecture, religion, language, literature as well as contemporary socio-cultural and socio-political fieldwork are important devices for exploring and communicating these processes of travel and identity formation across Eurasia and the Middle East.

Abstracts >>>>

[Abstract for the SRII Eastern Turkey Seminar on 30 September, 2013]



Kristina J. Hesse

Intercultural Contacts in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Bronze Age

Intercultural relations such as trade and exchange, migrations and diplomatic contacts are the leading principles of my research on the Bronze Age societies of the Eastern Mediterranean. My presentation at SFII will mainly touch upon a project based on my participation in Syria-Finnish and Syria-Norwegian surface survey investigations in Syria. These investigations were conducted in the semi arid desert of the Jebel Bishri region and in the mountainous area just outside the oasis town of Palmyra.

Thousands of Akkadian clay tablets found in the archaeological excavations of the Middle Bronze Age city-state of Mari, located along the Euphrates, tell us about the ancient life of the kings and the people within the city as well as in its neighbouring regions. These tablets also describe the interactions between pastoral nomads in the Syro-Mesopotamian semi-arid desert and the urban elite along the Euphrates River.

Crossing difficult terrains such as deserts required some form of professional assistance. While the desert's harsh environment posed a threat to passing caravans, pastoral nomads overall acclimatization to its environment, and their knowledge of routes and water sources, easily supported the business of escorting caravans through the desert's hazardous landscape. Besides pastoralism these nomads were thus engaged as messengers, escorting, guarding, and with the provisioning of caravans. Additionally, their vast kinship network offered protection against raiders, whom paradoxically often also belonged to nomadic tribes.

I will discuss some examples on these activities and present a current project idea.



Daniel Henningsson

‘Out of the north an evil shall break forth’: Some Minor Remarks on the Importance of Asia Minor during the Migrations in the Eastern Mediterranean World during the Late Bronze Age

For half a millennium, five great powers ruled all that we today call the Near East, from the Zagros Mountain in Persia to the oasis of the Libyan Desert, from the rich mines of *Paphlagonia* to the fertile fields of Nubia. Those five powers were: *Ahhiyawa* in mainland Greece, the Islands, and Crete; *Hatti* in *Asia Minor*, western *Armenia*, northern *Syria*, and Cyprus; *Kemet* in Egypt, *Libya*, *Nubia*, Canaan, and southern *Syria*; *Aššur* in Assyria; *Kar-Duniaš* in Akkad and Sumer.

In less than fifty years, roughly between the years 1220 and 1180 BC, all was destroyed. *Ahhiyawa* and *Hatti* fell and did never re-appear; Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia were severely weakened and three hundred years passed before they re-appeared on the international scene. During this, the Dark Age of the Eastern Mediterranean World, new kingdoms and peoples appeared and when the written records of Egypt and Assyria once again mention other territories, we can read about the Phrygians in *Asia Minor*, the Kingdom of Urartu in *Armenia*, the Arameans in *Mesopotamia* and *Syria*, the petty-kingdoms of the Neo-Hittites, the Hebrews, and the Philistines in the Levant.

The only written records, in our possession, that concerns the full span of this period comes from the inscriptions of two Egyptian Pharaohs, Merenptah, 1212-1202 BC, and Ramesses III, 1187-1156 BC. They mention almost only the last phase of this great catastrophe, the phase that resulted in two attempts by far away peoples, called by the Egyptians *na chasut en pa yam* and by the scholars today the Sea Peoples, to invade and settle in the land of Egypt. My research consist of primarily two main questions: Where can we find their countries of origin? Where did they go after their unsuccessful invasion of the Egyptian Empire?

Since the first half of the twentieth century the study of the ancient kingdoms and empires that surrounded Egypt has greatly developed. Especially the new and rich texts from Hattusha, the capital of the Empire of the Hittites, and from the Hittite vassal kingdom of Ugarit in the Levant has given us new and very interesting sources to try to identify the origin and later whereabouts of these so called Sea Peoples. Thus, in my research I try to identify earlier and later peoples and/or places with these Sea Peoples on the basis, not only, on later Greek and Roman writers but also on texts from the Mycenaean Cities, from Hatti, from the Levant, and from Assyria.



Fedir Androshchuk

Varangians, Borderland and Border People in Byzantine Cilicia

The aim of my project is to explore the phenomenon of borderland and border people in Mediaeval Byzantium as well as the role of Varangians in marginal areas of the Empire. The area under consideration is Asia Minor with particular focus on Cilicia, which by then had already for a long time been under both Christian and Muslim influences. The Taurus and Anti-Taurus mountain chain has been considered as both a natural and symbolic border between these two cultural worlds. The Muslim geographers call Cilicia the region of the *thughur*, or frontier towns. The eastern part of this frontier area was studied recently by Asa Eger who published a catalogue of the most important frontier towns including those located in Cilicia (Eger 2012). A new contribution to this project is a Viking sword discovered in 2007 in a Byzantine walled settlement in Mersin, Turkey. The sword was found in one of the rooms adjacent to the fortification of a Byzantine settlement dated to ca. 960–1071 AD. This find in addition to some written sources rises a range of crucial questions concerning the military aspects of border life, the presence of Varangians and everyday life in the military settlements of Byzantine borderlands. The finding-place is Yumuktepe, a well-known archaeological site in the south coastal region and not far from the river Lamos, the demarcation line between Cilicia Trachea and Arab Cilicia. In the second half of the 10th century, a walled Byzantine settlement was established on the top of a terraced hill (Caneva, Köröğlu 2010). A part of the discovered structures belong to the 11th– 13th c. but some of them - fortification, weaponry, Byzantine lead seals, ceramics, coins as well as houses and a small church with a cemetery are dated to 10th– 11th century. The finds are published but still not interpreted. They reveal a range of important questions for both Scandinavian and Byzantine history.

What was the character of the settlement – rural, military or administrative and what was the role of international and interreligious contacts of its population? There are extensive accounts concerning Byzantine army but its economic resource still remains unclear. The material culture of Byzantine army is also obscure. Who were the Byzantine soldiers? Where were they recruited from? Some features of Yumuktepe's fortification give me reason to search for parallels among some hill-forts in the eastern Slavonic area. How should this circumstance be interpreted? Was this technology imported from the east to Byzantium by some Varangian mercenaries or was it a Byzantine innovation introduced to Eastern Europe? What happened to the residents of this settlement with the arrival of Seldjuks, passing Crusaders and the subsequent establishment of the Armenian kingdom in Cilicia?

[Abstract for the SRII Eastern Turkey Seminar on 30 September, 2013]



Adam J. Goldwyn

Roads to Nowhere: Symbolic and Geographic Travel in the Byzantine Romance

The medieval romances which flourished from the 12th to 14th century in Byzantium tell of the trials and tribulations of aristocratic lovers struggling against social, physical and financial obstacles in order to get married. One such obstacle is often geography, that is, the lovers are often separated and must wander long distances over unknown terrain in order to be reunited. Most broadly, my current research focuses on ecocriticism: the literary discourse which examines the symbolic and literary construction of the natural world and the human interaction with it. Since most of the romances take place between the Ionian Coast and eastern Anatolia, the construction of the natural in the romances will offer a literary look at the real environments we will see during our travels.

Specifically, my paper will analyze roads: how do the characters in the romance conceive of travel, how do they get from point A to point B, often with little or no directional guidance, and how do they navigate the vast stretches of dangerous and unknown territory they often face? An analysis of literary roads in Byzantine Anatolia will reveal that navigation in the romances is more symbolic than geographical, that heroes move from realistic to fantastical worlds with ease, and that concerns of realistic geography are secondary to the genre's literary, thematic and ideological aims.

[Abstract for the SRII Eastern Turkey Seminar on 30 September, 2013]



Birgit Schlyter & Patrick Hällzon

Accounts of Silk Road Traveling in the Gunnar Jarring Eurasia Collection at SRII

The Swedish Turkologist and diplomat Gunnar Jarring (1907–2002) was a great collector of prints and manuscripts relating to language, literature, ethnography, and other aspects of the cultural history of the Turkic world and Eurasia at large. In 2012, a body of approximately 8000 items from his private library was donated by the the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities to the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, where it was set up as a separate library section under the name of *The Gunnar Jarring Eurasia Collection*.

In an endeavor to increase the availability of rare publications and manuscripts found in the Gunnar Jarring Collection at SRII a digitization project has been initiated for the presentation of this material in a database to be installed on the SRII website. As a modest first step in this enterprise a catalogue of travel literature, mostly accounts of Silk Road traveling, has been launched online (www.srii.org), provided with hyperlinks which enable rapid online access to a minor part of these accounts elsewhere.

In a rapidly changing world, this type of literature is interesting for many reasons. It constitutes an important historical source of knowledge about conditions in the central and inner parts of Asia from a time period when little was known about these regions to the outside world. Furthermore, the observations registered in these accounts offer insights into the views of mostly Western explorers and agents traveling in Eurasia in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Within the framework of the current digitization project, funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, preparations are made for future research on travel accounts and old photographs from the Silk Routes viewed as sources providing clues to cultural transformations and identity formation processes.



Elisabeth Özdalga

The Role of Fictional Literature in the Formation of National Identities

Despite the profound impact of mass media like TV and internet, the role of fictional literature in the formation of identities, particularly national identities, must not be forgotten. Literary narratives offer insights into the complexities of social and political power relationships. It illustrates how relations between state, nation, religion and identity are forged and how various authentic and imagined communities are constructed and reconstructed.

In *Tales of Crossed Destinies: The Modern Turkish Novel in a Comparative Context* (2008) Professor Azade Seyhan argues that literary narratives establish relations between past and present by offering humans means of inscribing themselves into collectives (2008:1-2). Literary narratives thus speak of socio-historical and political realities, experiences, and/or imaginings. But literature also holds the capacity to form national identities and communities. It offers a pool of metaphors, symbolic resources and narratives which can be used to forge social bonds and create senses of belonging to a community. This contention is elaborated by Gregory Jusdanis in *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture. Inventing National Literature* (1991) and *The Necessary Nation* (2001).

Naguib Mafouz' Cairo trilogy (1956-57) offers a well-known example of an epic, which reflects the lives of individuals in Egypt of the 1920s and 30s, an important period in the formation of Egypt as a modern nation. However, as part of a larger body of Egyptian literature, the novel also contributes to the formation of the idea (or imaginings) of Egypt as a modern nation, as well as notions of self in the minds of its readers/citizens.

This research aims to explore the multitude of ways in which literary narratives and national identity formations are intertwined in order to better comprehend the complex role of fictional literature as representation as well as agent in the constructions of national identities. Special focus is given to Turkey and the Middle East.



Önver Cetrez & Valerie DeMarinis

Mental Health, Meaning-Seeking, and Integration among Syrian Immigrants

Background

Major world religions have belief systems, values and practices that allow human beings to adjust to and create existential meaning from severe loss and trauma. Consequently, mental health providers in developed countries that treat immigrants and refugees with different cultures, need to understand cultural belief systems, including religious thought and practice that relate to mental health and illness. Thus the aims of this study are: 1) Explore the role of religio-cultural practices for enculturation and acculturation processes among Syrians; 2) Determine the daily life use of religio-cultural resources; 3) Explore the mental health implications of religio-cultural processes in daily life for those involved in mental health services.

Theory and Method for projects

The theoretical framework for the project is located in the relation between religion, existential worldview and refugee mental health. A mental health model by Silove (and applied in the Swedish context by DeMarinis & Jacobsson) provides a conceptual framework for understanding the existential meaning-system in mental health initiatives among refugees in post-conflict societies. The second framework is related to a multi-level cultural context analysis. Such an approach to health and illness highlights: the role of culture and acculturation in shaping existing paradigms of health and illness; that access to the existential dimension is central for understanding health and illness paradigms; and these paradigms inform political and social structures and healthcare policies.

The study will use a mixed method, multi-stage design, incorporating qualitative and quantitative instruments, thus increasing the validity and generalizability of the results. Persons included in the study are those who have recently been granted asylum in Sweden and are living in Södertälje and Stockholm

Instruments used for the study are:

1. Semi-structured interviews including biographical network maps with Christian and Muslim groups, among these the *3-R (Relation, Religion, Ritual)*, including a network map.
2. Clinical interviews and measures to explore the health situation, including trauma, depression, PTSD, somatic symptoms, and resilience.
3. Our developed acculturation scale modified for Syrians in Sweden.