

## About the Authors

### Michael Erdman

Michael Erdman is a first-year student in the MPhil/PhD in Near and Middle East Studies Program at SOAS. He has completed a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Toronto (2005), a Masters of Science in Economics at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (2006) and a Masters of Arts in Turkish Studies at SOAS (2014). Prior to enrolling in the MA in Turkish Studies program in 2013, Michael worked as an Economist at the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, Canada, and as a Management Consular Officer for the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. He served as the Consul of Canada to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Yemen and Oman and has also worked at Canadian embassies in Kuwait, El Salvador, Ecuador, Panama and Spain. Michael's doctoral project is a comparative analysis of Soviet and Turkish historiographies of pre-Islamic Central Asia between 1921 and 1947. He investigates the ideological and political motivations for the divergence in the two narratives, and contextualizes such differences within global diplomatic and political trends of the period. His research interests also include Turkish leftist thought, nationalist ideology and State inputs to the construction of national and ethnic identity. Michael's works "A Tale of Two Nationalists: Parallelisms in the writings of Ziya Gökalp and Michel Aflaq" and "Neo-Dhimmi in an Age of Neo-Ottomanism: Religious Difference and Gagauz Perceptions of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AKP" will be published as chapters of two separated edited editions over the course of 2015.

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### Anaïs Da Fonseca

Anaïs Da Fonseca is a PhD research student in History of Art at SOAS and her research focuses on *Contemporary Cherial Paintings from the Telangana Region in India: Continuity and Changes*. She just completed one-year of fieldwork in India with the support of fieldwork awards from SOAS, The Nehru Trust for the Indian Collection at the V&A, and the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient. She also holds the Saraswati Dalmia Scholarship for Modern and Contemporary Indian Art (2013-2014). Her academic interests include Indian folk arts and performances as well as modern and contemporary Indian art, on which she wrote her Master's thesis, submitted in 2012 at Paris X University, France.

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### Massimiliano Lacertosa

Massimiliano Lacertosa is completing the MA in Contemporary Art and Art Theory of Asia and Africa at SOAS, University of London. He has been recently accepted for a PhD in comparative philosophy at SOAS' Department of the History of Art and Archaeology. His PhD will focus on a comparison between Daoism and Western philosophy. His academic curriculum starts at Alma Mater Studiorum A.D.1088 Università di Bologna with a *Laurea specialistica* in Theatre. During his studies he collaborated with the poet and theatre director Arnaldo Picchi. As dramaturg and assistant director of many Picchi's productions, he had the opportunity to participate in various aspects of theatre. Although this collaboration came to an end, due to the untimely death of Picchi, the director remains a role model for Lacertosa. Abandoning theatre, Lacertosa attended a MA in Photography and Visual Design at NABA Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti in Milan. After his MA, he divided his work between writhing and photography projects. He published introductions to important literature classics such as: *In Praise of Folly* by Erasmus of Rotterdam for La Feltrinelli; *Galateo* by Giovanni

della Casa for Rusconi Libri; *The Mandrake* by Niccolò Machiavelli and *The Demons* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky for Barbera Editore etc. His photographic projects have been exhibited in many places in Italy and in European Magazines. Next summer he will conduct a project in Shanghai on its urban regeneration.

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### **Julia Lisiecka**

Julia Lisiecka is a postgraduate student in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Near and Middle East at School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Julia is specializing in political society and political economy of the Middle East, with particular focus on Turkey and Israel/Palestine. Additionally, she is interested in language policies and gendered aspects of national movements. Her recent works examine the role of women in national movements as transmitters of language and culture. She completed BA in Sociology in the University of Warsaw, focusing on the anthropology of multiculturalism. Her thesis entitled "The Theory of Symbolic Domains within Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" followed a yearlong research period based in Israel and Palestine supported by the scholarship of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

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### **Violeta Ruano-Posada**

Violeta is a third year PhD candidate in the Music Department at SOAS. After having engaged in an extended period of fieldwork last year in the Saharawi refugee camps (southwest Algeria), Mauritania, and Spain, she is now engaged in the final stages of writing her thesis. Her research interests focus on music as non-violent resistance in conflict situations, especially within the ongoing Saharawi struggle for self-determination. She has been involved with Saharawi music, politics, and culture for more than three years, having worked in numerous musical projects throughout that time, such as UK-based Sandblast's music empowerment project Studio-Live. She has also led the archiving project 'Portraits of Saharawi Music' in collaboration with the British Library and the Saharawi Ministry of Culture, creating the beginning of a Saharawi music archive in the British Library that also has copies in local Saharawi institutions. Violeta is often engaged in the dissemination of her research findings through a diversity of online platforms, conferences, and other mediums.

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### **Ivan R. V. Rumánek**

Ivan R. V. Rumánek took his MA in English and Japanese Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. His interest in classical literature and language brought him to Osaka University where he took lectures of Professor Ii Haruki. He elaborated a specific method to render classical Japanese poetics into his Slovak translations of the *waka* poetry and published a monograph on it including his translations and studies (*Kvety srdca* (Flowers of the Heart) 2004, Bratislava: Petrus). He took his first PhD in linguistics at Comenius with the topic "*Ki no Tsurayuki and the First Japanese Poetic.*" Working at the Slovak Academy of Sciences for fifteen years, he participated in the codification of

transcriptions from Eastern and Southeastern Asian languages into Slovak, taught Japanese and Sanskrit and lectured at various universities in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. His research focus was on the ethnogenesis of the Japanese people, Okinawan and aspects of classical Japanese language and literature. He spent two years at the Nōgaku Institute of Hōsei University in Tokyo, guided by Prof. Nishino Haruo, completing his monograph on *nō Japonská dráma nó – žánr vo vývoji* (Japanese Nō Drama – an Evolving Genre, 2010, Bratislava: Veda). Afterwards he decided to expand his research onto the influence of *nō* on the nascent *kabuki* drama. He asked Prof. Andrew Gerstle of SOAS to guide him and started his second doctoral course at SOAS in 2009. He is about to finish his dissertation, while lecturing for the Centre of Japanese Studies, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic.

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