

Eric Hobsbawm †

President of Birkbeck College, University of London and Emeritus Professor in the Department of History

2003 Balzan Prize for European History since 1900

For his brilliant analysis of the troubled history of twentieth-century Europe and for his ability to combine in-depth historical research with great literary talent.

Institution Administering Research Funds:

The School of History at Birkbeck College, University of London

Adviser for the Balzan General Prize Committee: Keith Thomas

Reconstruction in the Immediate Aftermath of War: a Comparative Study of Europe, 1945-50

Eric Hobsbawm's Balzan research project, entitled "Reconstruction in the Immediate Aftermath of War: A Comparative Study of Europe, 1945-50", was established at Birkbeck College, University of London. It was directed by David Feldman (Birkbeck College), and Mark Mazower (Columbia University), and it comprised a programme of research projects undertaken by two postdoctoral fellows, Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White, as well as four workshops and a originally conference.

The project began in the academic year 2004-2005 and research activities ended in 2007. Both postdoctoral fellows on the project, Jessica Reinisch and Elizabeth White, have now permanent university positions, the former at Birkbeck College and the latter at the University of Ulster. Postdoctoral researcher Jessica Reinisch worked on "The reconstruction of the public health system in Germany up to 1949". Securing public health was a key component in reconstruction, and the issue of public health has generally received only superficial treatment in the literature on German reconstruction. Jessica Reinisch pursued a comparative analysis of reconstruction in the different German occupation zones, and her research contributed to our understanding of post-war reconstruction in a comparative perspective. Postdoctoral researcher Elizabeth White worked on "The return of Soviet citizens evacuated to the Urals, Central

Asia or Siberia". This work looks both at the experience of return and at the attempts of the soviet state to administer and control the re-evacuation and to use it as a form of social engineering. Whereas evacuation was a major theme in Soviet historiography, little work has been done on the return process. At the same time, the particular history of return in the Soviet Union presents one instance of a theme that the reconstruction project explores comparatively in a variety of national contexts. Over the course of the programme four workshops and a conference were held at Birkbeck College. These were attended by an international array of scholars from all over Europe and from the United States.

The first workshop, on *Comparing Europe's Post-war Reconstructions*, was held on 28th October 2005. Participants: Nicholas Atkin (Reading), Zhanna Bogdanovich (Birkbeck), Martin Conway (Oxford), Ralph Desmarais (Imperial College), David Feldman (Birkbeck), Sheldon Garon (Princeton), Peter Gatrell (Manchester), Yoram Gorlitzki (Manchester), Neil Gregor (Southampton), Jan Gross (Princeton), Eric Hobsbawm (Birkbeck), Simon Kitson (Birmingham), Carl Levy (Goldsmiths), Frances Lynch (Westminster), Mark Mazower (Columbia), Catherine Merridale (Queen Mary), Alan Milward (H.M. [UK] Government Cabinet Office), Shaun Morcom (Birkbeck), Philip Nord (Princeton), Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck), Jan Rueger (Birkbeck), Naoko Shimazu (Birkbeck), Ben Shephard (Oxford), Timothy Snyder (Yale), Nigel Swain (Liverpool), Johannes-Dieter Steinert (Wolverhampton), Penny Summerfield (Manchester), Frank Trentmann (Birkbeck), Adam Tooze (Cambridge), Jay Winter (Yale), Elizabeth White (Birkbeck), Waqar Zaidi (Imperial College).

The other three workshops involved the following participants:

Relief and Rehabilitation in the Immediate Aftermath of War, June 2006. Rod Bailey (Imperial War Museum), John Barber (Cambridge), Polly Basak (Wellcome Trust), Virginia Berridge (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, LSHTM), Sanjoy Bhattacharya (Wellcome Trust), Richard Bessel (University of York), G. Daniel Cohen (Rice University), Ralph Desmarais (Imperial College), David Feldman (Birkbeck), Matthew Frank (Sheffield Hallam), Katerina Gardikas (Athens), Peter Gatrell (Manchester), Christian Goeschel (Cambridge), Eric Hobsbawm (Birkbeck), Simon Kitson (Birmingham), Rowan MacAuslan (Birkbeck), Anthony McElligott (Limerick), Emily Mayhew (Imperial College), Mark Mazower (Columbia), Christopher Read (Warwick), Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck), Jan Rueger (Birkbeck), Silvia Salvatici (Teramo), Rainer Schulze (Essex), Ben Shephard (Oxford), Naoko Shimazu (Birkbeck),

Iain Smith (Warwick), Frank Snowden (Yale), Johannes-Dieter Steinert (Wolverhampton), Penny Summerfield (Manchester), Pat Thane (School of Advanced Study/ICBH, King's College London), Flora Tsilaga (King's College London), Paul Weindling (Oxford Brookes), Elizabeth White (Birkbeck), Waqar Zaidi (Imperial College).

Displacement and Replacement in the Aftermath of War, 1944-1948, September 2006. Pamela Ballinger (Bowdoin College), Antony Beevor (Birkbeck), Richard Bessel (York), G. Daniel Cohen (Rice University), Gustavo Corni (Trento), Matthew Frank (Sheffield Hallam), Orlando Figes (Birkbeck), Peter Gatrell (Manchester), Loukianos I. Hassiotis (Thessaloniki), Panikos Panayi (De Montfort), Daniel Pick (Birkbeck), Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck), Lucy Riall (Birkbeck), Eduard Mühle (Münster), Irena Salenice (Daugavpils), Silvia Salvatici (Teramo), Rainer Schulze (Essex), Nik Wachsmann (Birkbeck), Marie Sevela (CRJ-EHESS, Paris), Naoko Shimazu (Birkbeck), Johannes-Dieter Steinert (Wolverhampton), Elizabeth White (Birkbeck), Nick Stargardt (Oxford), Tara Zahra (Harvard).

Planning, Production and Reconstruction in Post-war Europe, June 2007. John Gillingham (Missouri, St. Louis), Jacek Kochanowicz (Universitas Varsoviensis - Warsaw), Katherine Lebow (Virginia), Mark Mazower (Columbia), Alan Milward (LSE), Kiran Patel (Humboldt, Berlin), Waqar Zaidi (Imperial College).

The scheduled conference, dedicated to *Post-War Reconstruction in Europe* was held in June 2008. Participants: Richard Bessell (York), Fred Cooper (New York University), Jan Gross (Princeton), Toby Haggith (Imperial War Museum), Mark Harrison (Warwick), Harold James (Princeton), Pieter Lagrou (Université Libre de Bruxelles), Suzanne Langlois (York University, Toronto), Mark Mazower (Columbia), Silvio Pons (Università di Roma, "Tor Vergata"), Peter Romijn (Amsterdam), Remco Raben (Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie), Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck), Emma Rothschild (Harvard), Ben Shepard (Bristol/Oxford), Anders Stephanson (Columbia), Jakob Tanner (Zürich), Adam Tooze (Cambridge), Nick White (John Moores University, Liverpool).

A further conference was also held 10th-11th Sept. 2010, *The Forty Years' Crisis: Refugees in Europe 1919-1959*, organized by Jessica Reinisch.

Researchers:

Jessica Reinisch
Elizabeth White

Publications:

- J. Reinisch, *Comparing Europe's Post-war Reconstructions: First Balzan Workshop, Birkbeck College, London, 28th October 2005*, "History Workshop Journal", 61, 299-304, 2006.
- F. Tsilaga, *Relief and Rehabilitation in the Immediate Aftermath of War, Second Balzan Workshop, Birkbeck College, London, 16th June 2006*, "History Workshop Journal", 63, 371-374, 2007.
- E. White, *After the War was Over: The Civilian Return to Leningrad*, "Europe-Asia Studies", Vol. 59, No. 7, 2007, pp. 1145-61.
- W. Zaidi, *Planning, Production and Reconstruction in Post-war Europe, Fourth Balzan Workshop, Birkbeck College, London, 26th June 2007*, "History Workshop Journal", 65, 279-284, 2008.
- J. Reinisch (ed.), "Journal of Contemporary History", Vol. 43. No. 3, July 2008 (special issue) - Jessica Reinisch, Introduction: *Relief in the Aftermath of War*.
 - Ben Shephard, *Becoming Planning Minded: The Theory and Practice of Relief 1940-1945*.
 - Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *British Humanitarian Assistance: Wartime Planning and Postwar Realities*.
 - G. Daniel Cohen, *Between Relief and Politics: Refugee Humanitarianism in Occupied Germany 1945-1946*.
 - Jessica Reinisch, *We Shall Rebuild Anew a Powerful Nation: UNRRA, Internationalism and National Reconstruction in Poland*.
 - Paul Weindling, *For the Love of Christ: Strategies of International Catholic Relief and the Allied Occupation of Germany, 1945-1948*.
 - Katerina Gardikas, *Relief Work and Malaria in Greece, 1943-1947*.
 - Frank Snowden, *Latina Province, 1944-1950*.
 - Flora Tsilaga, *The Mountain Laboured and Brought Forth a Mouse: UNRRA's Operations in the Cyclades Islands, c. 1945-46*.
- E. White and J. Reinisch (eds.), *The Disentanglement of Populations: Migration, Expulsion and Displacement in Post-war Europe*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- M. Mazower, J. Reinisch and D. Feldman (eds.), *Post-war Reconstruction in Europe: international perspectives, 1945-49*, OUP, 2011.
- J. Reinisch, 'Survivors and Survival in Europe after the Second World War' in S. Bardgett, D. Cesarani, J. Reinisch and J. Steinert (eds.), *Justice, Politics and Memory in Europe after the Second World War, Landscapes after Battle*, Volume 2, Vallentine Mitchell, 2011, pp. 1-18.

- David Feldman (ed.) "Past and Present" Volume 210 suppl. 6, 2011 *Post-War Reconstruction in Europe*
- Mark Mazower, *Reconstruction: The Historiographical Issues*
- David Edgerton, *War, Reconstruction, and the Nationalization of Britain, 1939-1951*
- Adam Tooze, *Reassessing the Moral Economy of Post-war Reconstruction: The Terms of the West German settlement in 1952*
- Holly Case, *Reconstruction in East-Central Europe: Clearing the Rubble of Cold War Politics*
- Mark Harrison, *The Soviet Union after 1945: Economic Recovery and Political Repression*
- Silvio Pons, *Stalin and the European Communists after World War Two (1943–1948)*
- Richard Bessel, *Establishing Order in Post-war Eastern Germany*
- Pamela Ballinger, *At the Borders of Force: Violence, Refugees, and the Reconfiguration of the Yugoslav and Italian States*
- Pieter Lagrou, *Regaining the Monopoly of Force: Agents of the State Shooting Fugitives in and around Belgium, 1940-1950*
- Frederick Cooper, *Reconstructing Empire in British and French Africa*
- Nicholas J. White, *Reconstructing Europe through Rejuvenating Empire: the British, French, and Dutch Experiences Compared*
- Sunil Amrith, *Reconstructing the 'Plural Society': Asian Migration Between Empire and Nation, 1940–1948*
- Jessica Reinisch, *Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA*
- Harold James, *The Multiple Contexts of Bretton Woods*
- Waqar Zaidi, 'A Blessing in Disguise': *Reconstructing International Relations Through Atomic Energy, 1945–1948*
- Tara Zahra, 'A Human Treasure': *Europe's Displaced Children between Nationalism and Internationalism*
- J. Reinisch, *Public Health in Occupied Germany* (forthcoming 2012).

Links:

www.balzan.bbk.ac.uk

http://past.oxfordjournals.org/content/210/suppl_6/9.full