

KOVACHEV, OGNYAN BORISOV

Email: ognyan@slav.uni-sofia.bg, or o_kovachev@yahoo.co.uk

Institution Address: DEPARTMENT OF LITERARY THEORY
FACULTY OF SLAVIC PHILOLOGY
ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI UNIVERSITY OF SOFIA
15 TZAR OSVOBODITEL BLVD.
1504 SOFIA
BULGARIA

Telephone number: 3592 9308 439

Fax number: 3592 9460 255

EDUCATION

- 2004: Defense of a PhD dissertation in Comparative literary history entitled *Готическият роман (1764-1820): генеалогия, жанрови и естетически трансформации (The Gothic Novel (1764-1820): A Genealogy, Generic and Aesthetic Transformations)*
- 1987: St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, MA in Bulgarian Philology and English Philology
- 1980: The English Language High School in Varna, Bulgaria

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2006: Associate professor in Comparative literary history with a habilitation thesis *Литература и идентичност: преобразявания на другостта (Literature and Identity: Transformations of Alterity)*
- 2005: Lecturer in Comparative literary history at the Neophyte Rilski University of Blagoevgrad
- 2004 – : Masters course “The western Canon” in the “Literary Studies” Masters Program, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia
- 2003 – : Masters course “Image – Text – Metatext” in the “Literary Studies” Masters Program, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia
- 1999 – : Specialized course “Gothic Writing: Historical and Theoretical Mysteries”, at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia

1996 – : Lecturer at the Cinema, Advertisement and Show Business department of the New Bulgarian University – Sofia

1993 – 2006: Assistant professor in Comparative literary history at the St. Kliment Okhridski University of Sofia

1992 – 1993: Assistant professor in Comparative literary history at the Shoumen University “Konstantin Preslavski”

1990 – 1992: Assistant professor in Bulgarian literature at the Higher Institute of Teachers Qualification “Dr Peter Beron” – Varna

1987 – 1989: High school teacher in Bulgarian language and literature in Varna

FIELDS OF STUDY

Comparative Literary History
Gothic Studies
Literature and Film
Literary Canon
Translation Studies

LANGUAGES

Bulgarian
English
French
Russian
German

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

1. Kovachev, Ognyan. *Literatura i identichnost: preobrazhenia na drugostta* [*Literature and Identity: Transfigurations of Alterity*]. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2005.
2. Kovachev, Ognyan. *Goticheskijat roman. Genealogia, zhanr, estetika* [*The Gothic Novel: Genealogy, Genre, Aesthetics*]. Sofia: Ednorog Publishing House, 2004.

The Gothic Novel: Genealogy, Genre, Aesthetics **A Book Summary**

My study describes various literary, aesthetic, philosophical and sociological contexts in which the British Gothic novel sprang up in the years 1764 – 1820, and its transformations until present day. It analyses the traces of gothic writing, reading, and generic self-consciousness within synchronic or typologically common discourses and is the first of its kind in Bulgarian literary studies. I apply an interdisciplinary approach based on the epistemological grids of Michel Foucault and the British Cultural studies, as well as on the interplay of textual and visual, and on contemporary psychoanalytical and literary theories.

Such approach allows for representing established standards of the tradition of Gothic studies, as well as for their critical rereading and interpreting. I call the adopted epistemological attitude a “principle of the constitutive blank”. This principle does not eliminate the inconsistencies or ambiguities of the studied object but applies them to outline and discuss its multifarious aspects.

The book consists of three main parts. The first one, “A Gothic poetics” introduces the Nietzschean and Foucauldian notion of *genealogy* as opposed to the traditional concepts of history. Then I argue that the concept of *writing* is most compatible with genealogy and appropriate to the diversity of Gothic texts in analysing their complex interplay. In the analysis of the vital to my study concept of *genre* I juxtapose a variety of models of literary genre, predominantly poststructuralist, structuralist, reader response and romantic ones, in order to outline the plurality and fluctuations of its transformative model. Genealogy, writing and genre are indispensable in my discussion of the central to the Gothic poetics undecidability between *romance* and *novel*. In my theoretical conclusion I define the Gothic novel as a dynamic institution in which the individual works are interrelated by means of family resemblances – transformations, translations or transgressions of generic boundaries. Therefore Gothic becomes a double bind: simultaneously an object of study and an instrument for the study of its heterogeneous contexts. Finally, a canon of Gothic revival novels is presented, including works by H. Walpole, C. Reeve, W. Beckford, W. Godwin, A. Radcliffe, M. G. Lewis, M. Shelley, J. Polidory, and C. Maturin.

The second part, “A Gothic Aesthetics”, outlines and explores some of the most topical ideological contexts of the Gothic. First, a variety of notions invested in the very name “Gothic” is described, ranging from medieval ages to the late Enlightenment. This explication also supports the genealogical approach to the studied phenomenon – not as a unitary event but as a container of multifarious meaning. Second, particular attention is paid to the interaction of the Gothic and the sublime from the time of Edmund Burke and the early Gothic writers to their present day technological, media and Internet transformations. Next come the interplay of partially overlapping phenomena such as the fantastic, outlined in the works of Todorov and Iser, the supernatural, and the Freudian uncanny, all of them related to the senses of terror/ horror which are central to the sublime and the Gothic. Finally the Gothic aesthetics finds its counterpart – both pedagogical and subversive – in the nationalist and religious controversies that leave trace in some of the most representative Gothic Revival novels, such as Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *The Italian*, Lewis’s *The Monk*, Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer*.

The third part, “Reading as Building In”, is focused on the possibilities of reading Gothic traces in other generic, temporal, socio-cultural, technological, even political contexts. Thus, the numerous Gothic elements in V. Hugo’s well-known historical novel *Notre Dame De Paris* provide not only for “building Walter Scott in Homer” as Hugo himself framed his ideal for a generic synthesis but for his re-construction of a complicated model of European cultural history. The chapter on “reading Gothic novels now” presents a rich paradigm of ways for reading and interpreting the studied novels and the effects they have on their changing frameworks. Its conceptual grid combines N. Holland and L. Sherman’s psychoanalytical reader response criticism and F. Lyotard’s interpretation of the avant-garde aesthetics of the sublime. The final chapter deals with the homologies between the XVIII and XIX century Gothic tradition and the new technological and Internet culture. I describe the “Gothicising of the Net” as a cultural code for engendering, representing, interpreting and cleansing the anxieties of the self. It, like the heart of Gothic, is driven by the irresistible fear-and-desire for transformation.

EDITING AND INTRODUCTION

3. Protohristova, Kleo and Licheva, Amelia and Kovachev, Ognyan (editor and introduction). *Identichnosti. Otrazhenia. Igri* [Identities. Reflections. Plays]. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2004.
4. Kovachev, Ognyan and Kiossey, Alexander (editors and introductions). *Cheteneto v epohata na medii, compjutri I Internet* [Reading in the Age of Media, Computers and Internet]. A Collection Volume from the International Conference in Honour to Professor Wolfgang Iser (Sofia, 2000). Sofia: Figura, 2003.
5. (Ed. and introduction) Burke, Edmund. *Filosofsko izsledvane na proizhoda na nashite idei za vazvishenoto i krasivoto* [A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful]. Translated by Vasilena Dotkova and Enyo Stoyanov. Sofia: Kralica Mab, 2001.

STUDIES, ARTICLES AND REVIEWS (SELLECTED)

LITERARY STUDIES

1. Literary Contexts of Reading of Aleko Konstantinov's Short Story 'God Keep Us from the Upstart'. In: *Interpretations of Classical Bulgarian Literary Texts - I*. Shoumen, 1992, pp. 10-23;
2. An Image of Pencho Slaveykov's Poetry. In: *Bulgarski ezik i Literatura* Magazine, 2, 1992, pp. 35-41;
3. Bay Ganyu – A Book of the Slave-Master or In Search of Identity Lost. In: *Interpretations of Classical Bulgarian Literary Texts - II*. Shoumen, 1993, pp. 46-57;
4. The Essays of George Orwell – the Otherness of a Novelist. In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 1, 10-16. 01. 1994;
5. Metamorphoses of Meaning in *A Dream for Happiness* by Pentcho Slaveikov. In: *Interpretations of Classical Bulgarian Literary Texts - III*. Shoumen, 1994, pp. 24-44;
6. Elegies of No Return: Modes of Transcendence in Dimtcho Debelyanov's Poetry. In: *Literature and Literary Studies Today*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 1996, pp. 182-95;
7. Bay Ganyu Prosecuted by the Collective Authority. In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 28. 5 - 3. 6. 1997, p. 10;
8. Less Lonely in Loneliness. History without Names: the Stories within a Name. In: *The Anarchic Legislator: A Festschrift in Honour to Professor Nikola Georgiev*. Sofia, 1997, pp. 121-36;
9. A Tale of Desire: Gothic Symbols in Bulgarian Literary Symbolism. In: *Ezik i Literatura*, 5-6, 1997, p. 81-87;
10. Chose the Bulgarian, Or the Anxiety of Identity. In: *Democratic Review Quaterly*, 1998;
11. E. A. Poe: Gothic and Marginally Fated. In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 2, 20-26. 1. 1999;
12. Metadiscourse: More Than a Language. In: *Language. Literature. Identity*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 1999, pp. 389-96;
13. *Veda Slovena*. Literary Mystification and Nation-Imagining. In: *Ezik i Literatura*, 1, 1999, pp. 73-83;
14. The Gothic Novel (1760-1820): Genre, Name, and Canon. In: *Literaturna Misal*, 1/1999, pp. 143-70;
15. Wolfgang Iser – The Altering Dimensions of Reading. In: *Democratic Review Quaterly*, 41-42, 1999;

16. Subversion of Catholicism in the European Gothic Novel (1764 - 1830). In: *Inspiracije crkveskijanske w kulturze Europy*, Lodz, 1999, pp. 115-22;
17. Reading of/ Reading in Nikola Vaptzarov's Poetry. In: *Bulgarian Literature – Figures of Reading*. Sofia: Figura Publishing House, 2000, pp. 299-312.
18. Reading Gothic Novels: Does It Happen Now? In: *Commentary, Interpretation, Possibilities of Reading* (A Conference Collection Volume). Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2000, pp. 266-75;
19. The Asimetry of the Fantastic and the Gothic Novel. In: *Tzvetan Todorov: the Versatile Mind: Festschrift in Honour to Tzvetan Todorov*. Sofia: LIK, 2001, pp. 69-88;
20. Edmund Burke: The Sublime Versus Beautiful. Introduction to Edmund Burke. *A Philosophical Inquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas Of the Sublime and Beautiful* (translation in Bulgarian). Sofia: Kralica Mab, 2001, pp. 5-59;
21. *Oedipus Rex* – Three Didactic Versions of A Crime. In: Sophocles. *Oedipus Rex*. Sofia: Ariadna, 2002, p. 98-115;
22. *Veda Slovena* – a Bulgarian Invention of Literary Institution and Nationalist Discourse. – In: *Literární mystifikace, etnické mýty a jejich úloha při formování národního vědomí*. Studie Slovákckého muzea: Uherské Hradiště 6/2001, pp. 43-52;
23. Witold Gombrowitch's *Ferdidurke*: The Theatre of Immaturity and Its Doubles. – In: *Figures of the Author. Festschrift in Honour to Professor Boyan Biolchev*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2002, pp. 186-94;
24. The Dog of Memory, The Blind Knight and the Letter (*Theta* by Daniela Hodrova). – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 19-25. 03. 2003, pp. 4-5;
25. National Literature. World Literature. Global Literature? – In: *Kritika Journal*, 1-2 / 2002, pp. 70-77; also in: *Language and Literature in the Age of Globalization*. Conference Volume. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2003;
26. Metafiction – The Agon Between the Reading Writer and the Writing Reader. – In: *Memory and Duty. Festschrift in Honour to Professor Ivan Radev*. Veliko Tarnovo: St. Cyril and Methodius University Press, 2003, 352-57;
27. Literature in the New Global Situation – Between Universality and Differance. – In: *Vox litterarum Journal*, Year I, Vol. 1, 2003, pp. 128-37;
28. Gothicizing the Web/ Reframing the Sublime. In: *Literaturna Misal*, 1/2000; also in: (ed.) O. Kovachev and Al. Kiossev. *Reading In the Age of Media, Computers and Internet: Collection Volume From the International Conference In Honour to Prof. Wolfgang Iser (Sofia, 2000)*. Sofia: Figura, 2003, pp. 324-336;
29. The Locked Room Violeted: Disruption of Privacy in the 18th Century Gothic Novel. – In: *The Many-Sided Readings of the Text. Festschrift in Honour to Professor Kiril Topalov*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2003, 435-443;
30. The Spirit of Literature and the Contemporary State. – In: (ed.) Jordanka Holevich and Kamen Rikev. *Bulgarian Studies. A Collection Volume*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2004, pp. 219-22;
31. The Death of Vaptzarov: The Art of Poetry and the Reader's Imagination. – In: (ed.) Raya Kuncheva, Kleo Protokhrystova and Blagovest Zlatanov. *Cultivating the Sense. Festschrift in Honour to Radosvet Kolarov*. Sofia: Boyan Penev Publishing Center, 2004, pp. 364-85;
32. History in *Notre Dame du Paris* – Techniques of Building in. – In: (ed.) K. Protokhrystova, A. Licheva, O. Kovachev. *Identities: Reflections: Plays. Festschrift in Honour to Professor Simeon Hadzhikosev*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2004, pp. 37-55;

33. 'Teach Me Laughter, Save My Soul': Roles of Gothic Laughter. – In: *Literaturna Misal*, 1/2004, pp. 77-87;
34. The Ghost of Bulgarian Gothic: Explorations and Incarnations. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 38, 17-23. 11. 2004;
35. Metadiscourses: practices of re-writing and/or re-ordering. – In: *Trials of Theory: Critical Dialogues* (Collection Volume), Sofia: Alexander Panov Publishing House, 2004, pp. 254-80;
36. *Ruritania* Or the Balkans: A (No) Man's Land in the Topography of the Imagination (A Review of the Bulgarian Translation of Vesna Goldsworthy's *Book Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*, Sofia: Kralica Mab Publishing House, 2003). – In: *Kultura Weekly*, 31, 23. 07. 2004.
37. The Generic 'Wisdom of Insecurity' and the Gothic Novel. – In: *Festschrift in Honour to Professor Ivan Pavlov*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2005, pp. 145-59.
38. Worlds Beyond Words. – In: *How with Words to Make Worlds*. Conference Volume. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2005, 9-17.
39. Between *Frankenstein* and *Frankenstein*: "He never gave me a name" and/or "my form is a filthy type of yours" – In: *Littera et Lingua*. Electronic Journal of Humanities, Issue 3, Autumn 2006:
<http://www.slav.uni-sofia.bg/liliJournal/archive/LiLi3/index20063.html>.
40. Gothic Motives in George Orwell's dystopia *1984* (co-author with Adrian Lazarovski). – In: *Altera*. Journal for Gender, Language and Culture, vol. 10, X. 2007, pp. 19-34.
41. My Oxford Experience in Gothic Miniatures. – In: *Altera*. Journal for Gender, Language and Culture, vol. 10, X. 2007, pp. 75-83.
42. How I Stopped Worrying (About Theory) and Loved the Terror of History. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 40, 5-12. 12. 2007, p. 12-13.

FILM STUDIES

43. *The Final Combat*: Besson's Passions. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 9, 10-16. 3. 1999;
44. Programing the Look (Odeon Cinema Club). – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 38, 24-30. 11. 1999;
45. The Language of Myths (Film Theory). – In: *Kinohit*, vol. 14, December 1999;
46. Sounds and Pictures From the Noah's Ark: The Films In Odeon Cinema (10. 12. 1999 – 13. 1. 2000). – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 41, 15-21. 12. 1999;
47. Felini's Films in the Dimension of Love. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 3, 26. 1 – 2. 2. 2000;
48. Ashes and Diamonds. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 12, 29. 3 – 4. 4. 2000;
49. The Divine Garbo Or the Legend's Two Faces. – In: *Kinohit*, vol. 18, April 2000;
50. Groucho Marx and the Others: Foundations Of Cinemarxism. – In: *Kinohit*, vol. 19, May 2000;
51. Telling Stories With Images (A Review of Wim Wenders. *Logikata na obrazite (Logik Der Bildung)*). Sofia: Kolibri Publishing House, 2002). – In: *Ekran*, February 2003;
52. "Balkan Cinema" – An Image Impossible or Haeterovision of a Beautiful Friendship? (A Review of Dina Jordanova. *Cinema of Flames: Balkan Film, Culture and the Media*. London: British Film Institute, 2001) – In: *Kultura Weekly*, 17/18, 25 April 2003;
53. Homeopathy of Violence in the Cinema on the Balkans. – In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 38, 26. 11 – 2. 12. 2003.

54. *The Hours* from Page to Screen and In-between. – In: *Gender and Order in Bulgarian Culture*. Collection Volume. Sofia: Center for Women Studies and Politics, 2005, pp. 233-46.
55. Hitchcock and Circuses. – B: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 28, 19-25. 7. 2006, p. 12-13.

* All titles are published in Bulgarian except № 16 and 22, which are published in English.

TRANSLATIONS

1. George Orwell. *Eseta. (Selected Essays)* Varna: Galaktika Publishing House, 1994.
2. Peter Steiner. *Ruskijat Formalism. Metapoetika. (Russian Formalism. A Metapoetics)* Shoumen: Glaukus Publishing House, 1995.
3. E. A. Poe. *Buchvata s Amontiljado (The Cask of Amontillado)*. In: *Literaturen Vestnik*, 2, 20-26. 1. 1999.
4. Simon During, 'Literaturata – Drugostta na nacionalizma. Prerazglezhdane na sluchaja' (Literature – Nationalism's Other. The Case for Revision). In: *Ezik i Literatura*, 1, 1999;
5. (Ed.) Edmund Burke. *Filosofsko izsledvane na proizhoda na nashite idei za vazvishenoto i krasivototo (A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful)*. Sofia: Kralica Mab, 2001;
6. Sanford Budick, 'Nachertaniata na filosofskata fikcija u Iser I praktikuvaneto na 'talanta' za obrazcovost u Kant' (Iser's Charting of Philosophical Fiction and Kant's Exercise of His 'Talent' for Exemplarity). – In: (ed.) O. Kovachev and Al. Kiossev. *Reading In the Age of Media, Computers and Internet: A Collection Volume from the International Conference in Honour to Prof. Wolfgang Iser (Sofia, 2000)*. Sofia: Figura, 2003;
7. Winfried Fluck, 'Tarseneto na distanca. Negacia I negativnost v literaturnata teoria na Wolfgang Iser' (The Search for Distance. Negation and Negativity in Wolfgang Iser's Literary Theory). – In: (ed.) O. Kovachev and Al. Kiossev. *Reading In the Age Of Media, Computers and Internet: A Collection Volume From the International Conference in Honour to Prof. Wolfgang Iser (Sofia, 2000)*. Sofia: Figura, 2003;
8. Gabriele Schwab, 'Urokat po pisane: vaobrazhaemi vprisvanija v sreshti na kulturite' (*The Writing Lesson: Imaginary Inscriptions in Cultural Encounters*) – In: *Identichnosti. Otrazhenia. Igri. A Festschrift in Honour to Professor Simeon Hadzhikosev*. Sofia: Sofia University Press, 2004.