

KARL-FRANZENS-UNIVERSITÄT GRAZ
UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ

Institut für Amerikanistik | Department of American Studies



SVET DI-NAHUM

War and Chauvinism: Authoritarian Masculine Militarism from the View of Social Philosophy, Existentialism, and Aesthetics

Organized by Univ. Prof. Dr. Stefan L. Brandt
Moderator: Liliia Makala, M.A.
Commentator: Priv.-Doz. Dr. Martin Holtz

Keywords: Authoritarian systems, Aggression, Existentialism, Humanism, Macho Behavior, Masculinity, Militarism, Monumental Art, Putinism, Social Philosophy, Sociology, Trumpism, Ukraine, War.



Svetoslav Naoumov, who writes under the pen name Svet Di-Nahum, studied at the Department of Philosophy at Southern

Illinois University and holds a PhD in Philosophy of Law/Theory of Justice from Sofia University. His academic interests involve philosophy, theories of justice, sociology, aesthetics, American modern fiction, American modern cinema, creative writing, and theories of Drama.

He has published short stories in numerous literary magazines in Bulgaria and throughout Europe; his work has been translated into English, German, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Romanian, Chinese, Serbian, Turkish, Spanish, and French. His fiction has appeared in US literary magazines such as *Drunken Boat*, *Gloom Cupboard*, *Danse Macabre*, and *Audience*, and in HCE Magazine in UK. Di-Nahum is the author of *The Wolf's Howl* (1994), *The Unicorn in Captivity* (2007), *RAPTUS* (2009), *The Second Life of Michael Jackson* (2011), *The Hangman and the Clown* (stage play, 2017), and *Escape from Crimea* (2019).

RAPTUS was a nominee for the Elias Canetti National Literary Award and was subsequently published in the United States by Hammer & Anvil Books (Las Vegas, 2013). *Escape from Crimea* won the Ukrainian International Literary Prize "Panteleimon Kulish." Svet Di-Nahum is the winner of the essay competition for World Noble Peace Prize Laureates 2013 in Warsaw (and the Lech Walesa Foundation) with his essay "Solidarity Restarted."

Abstract

The lecture focuses on authoritarian systems and their militaristic nature. Putin's regime and his war in Ukraine are viewed in terms of masculinity, chauvinism, and aggression. Totalitarian ideology is analyzed through the perspective of social philosophy, existentialism, and aesthetics - monumental art as a way to illustrate dictatorship ideology. Parallels are drawn between macho behavior typical for Trumpism and slogans by the Chinese Communist Party. Examples are provided from the fields of American fiction and cinema. Existentialism is employed as a vital philosophy defending individual values against populism. Special emphasis is placed on authoritarianism as a form of social anomie that aspires to turn its own pathology into a world norm.

Lecture by

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