

Humboldt Kolleg

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Global Challenges of the 21st Century

- 1) *Technological development and human health/ quality of life*
- 2) *Climate change and environmental sustainability*
- 3) *Democracy and cohesion in Europe*

Conceptualizing Modernity in Multi- and Intercultural Spaces: The Case of Central and Eastern Europe

This paper pursues an understanding of European modernity through interregional dialogue and, particularly, through highlighting the multi- and intercultural realities of Central and Eastern Europe. The author goes beyond the confusions born from the notions of center-periphery and the prejudices produced by this kind of historical-anthropological approaches and prefers the examples and analysis of European cultural similarities. He insists on the role played by the Enlightenment intellectual achievements in the genesis of the modern political thought, on the experiences and of the horizon of expectations which are to be found in the multiple cultural codes of the populations living in Central and Eastern Europe. Ignored by the 19th and 20th centuries nation-state historiographies, the quest for continuities and breaches in the period of modernization is useful to re-contextualize and rethink the local, regional and European intellectual creations.

Victor Neumann is a Romanian historian, political analyst, and professor at the West University in Timișoara. He is a specialist in the recent cultural and intellectual histories of the Eastern and Central Europe. Prof. Neumann focuses primarily on interculturalism and multiculturalism. Much of his work deals with Conceptual History, the Jewish-Romanian history, the history of antisemitism, as well as various topics connected with nationalism. As of October 2013, he is Director of the Timișoara Museum of Arts.