

## Democracy as a façade? Bulgaria and Germany 20 years after the turnaround

Between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of October, 2009, the International Elias Canetti Society hosted a series of events supposed to encourage reflection on the turnaround in Bulgaria and Germany twenty years ago.

Beforehand, the citizens of Ruse were called upon to search through their households for objects which have been in use during the time of the turnaround. These memorabilia – from coffee machines and record players over clothing and badges of the Communist party to books and furnitures – were presented in an exhibition at the Elias Canetti House.



At the opening of the exhibition, Bulgarian artist Atanas Totlyakov showed an installation of his. There also was a reading from the Bulgarian translation of the new book by Iliya Troyanov and Juli Zeh.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, the German-Bulgarian movie series was launched which included movies about such subjects as the inner-German border or the assimilation campaign against the Turks of Bulgaria in the Eighties.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, the group *shortfilmlivemusic* which specializes in creating new soundtracks for shortfilms with improvised music was guesting in Ruse for a workshop with students of the local music school. An Friday night, a concert was held in which the students also participated.

On 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, a conference was held with participant from Bulgaria (Prof. Momchil Metodiev, Aleksandar Andreev), Germany (Prof. Ulf Brunnbauer, Prof. Stefan Appelius) and Austria (Dr. Harald Gröller). On Saturday evening, Bulgarian author Georgi Tenev read from his new novel at the Canetti house. The series of events ended on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October with a last movie presentation.