

invite you on **November 10, 2022** at **4pm** to **194th GELLNER SEMINAR**

Venue:

EÚ AV ČR, Na Florenci 3, Prague 1 (5th floor) and on-line (link bellow)

Exo-experiences and gymnastic of the self

Prof. David Berliner
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While most of us feel that it is integrated and stable, the self relentlessly engages in a complex gymnastic. Not only does it oscillate between a plurality of facets, roles, ideas, values, emotions, sometimes contradictory, but it is also endowed with a relative elasticity. Certain immersive experiences constitute fascinating laboratories to explore such dynamics. Like actors, historical reenactors impersonate men and women of the past. Cosplayers embody comic book heroes whilst furry fans and puppy players pretend to be animals. Fiction writers invent literary alter egos for themselves, a fabrication of identity that resembles the creation of avatars in the cyberspace. Some anthropologists, too, are familiar with such experiences. In participant observation, the ethnographer self appears to be increasingly fragmented and malleable. I call these “exo-experiences.” Rooted in perspective-taking, empathy and imitation, they share a desire, that of having, as captured by Proust in *La Prisonnière*, “other eyes, of seeing the universe with the eyes of another, of a hundred others, of seeing the hundred universes that they see.”

David Berliner, professor of anthropology and a book lover, occasionally resurfaces as Derek Moses. His work touches on a number of objects and problematics, ranging from religion, memory and nostalgia to heritage, sexuality and alterity. His most recent book *Devenir autre* (2022) will be the subject of his GS lecture.

MS Teams *link*