



# Envisioning Moving Frontiers. Ukraine & The Balkans



Dipartimento di Scienze  
Politiche e Sociali

Cultural and Political  
Perspectives on the  
'Other' Europe

By understanding the peculiar pattern of the 'Other' Europe, we can observe a cultural kaleidoscope of people who cannot be categorized within 'linear boundaries'.

The conference will focus on two main case studies, envisioning them following both a national and a regional perspective. The impact of the political and social turmoil on the minorities' pattern of the two regions will be at the core of the conference debates.

**Centro Residenziale  
Universitario di  
Bertinoro,  
Alma Mater  
Studiorum  
Università di  
Bologna,**

**10-11/09/2015**

**h. 09:30**

**Envisioning Moving Frontiers. Ukraine and The Balkans**  
**Cultural and Political Perspectives on the 'Other' Europe**

**Centro Residenziale Universitario di Bertinoro (CEUB). September 10-11, 2015.**

**University of Bologna - ERMA Master Program**

*Organising Committee: Prof. Stefano Bianchini, Dr. Sanja Kajnić, Dr. Marco Puleri*

‘Drawing boundaries’ is an exercise of power. Boundaries can be geographical, social, cultural, or economic. They define ‘what belongs to us’ and ‘what does not’. By using the term ‘frontier’, in order to define “an intermediate zone of contact between two or more distinctive cultures or polities”, A. J. Rieber looks at the peculiar historical creation of multiple frontiers between states, empires and civilizations, especially focusing on the shifting Eurasian boundaries. In the South-East European area, the prolonged existence of the multicultural empires postponed, according to Rieber, the passage from the historical frontiers to the language-ethnic (national) ones. By understanding the peculiar pattern of the 'Other' Europe, we can observe a cultural kaleidoscope of people who cannot be categorized within 'linear boundaries'. Nowadays, in the light of the dramatic events occurring in the Russo-Ukrainian frontier, the ‘Other’ Europe is experiencing a new wave of political and social turmoil. One of the questions we would like to explore is how the Balkans look at Ukraine. From newly independent Kosovo to Bosnia-Herzegovina, are people watching events in Ukraine through the lenses of their personal experience of the Yugoslav collapse? Some support Euromaidan for taking down a corrupt regime; others lament the potential economic fallout. Once more we can observe how these political, social and cultural boundaries are characterized by fluid and blurred dynamics. The second strand of enquiry to be explored concerns the impact of these dynamic changes on the status of minorities in these regions, as well as the negotiations of belonging between political, cultural and linguistic categories.

The conference which will take place in Bertinoro on September 10 and 11, 2015, will focus on two main case studies, envisioning them following both a national and a regional perspective. The impact of the political and social turmoil on the minorities’ pattern of the two regions will be at the core of the conference debates.

Main Sponsors:

### **CEI – Central European Initiative**

Founded in 1989, the CEI is a regional intergovernmental forum committed to supporting European integration through cooperation among its Member States. It combines multilateral diplomacy and project management, both as donor and recipient, while bridging European macro-regions.

During the days of the conference, we will be glad to host **Amb. Giovanni Caracciolo di Vietri** and **Sen. Lodovico Sonogo**.

### **IECOB – Istituto per l'Europa Centro-Orientale e Balcanica**

IECOB was founded in 1995 by scholars from different European and American Universities connected through the *“Europe and the Balkans International Network”*. Since then, IECOB has been active in promoting a yearly Summer School, MA Programmes and vocational courses. The Institute also cooperates with the Alma Mater-University of Bologna and the University of Sarajevo in organising interdisciplinary postgraduate courses.



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
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## Invited Speakers and Abstracts:

- **Nina Y. Belayeva** is a Professor and the head of the Public Policy Department, that she has created in 2000 in National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, and frequent visiting fellow at University of Bologna, Italy, where she recently started Double Degree Master Program between HSE and UniBo in the field of International Public Policy and Global Governance. Prof. Belayeva's major research interests are within the field of comparative citizen participation in different political regimes, competing actors in creating regulatory regimes, think tanks and knowledge governance and interaction between "knowledge communities" and self-organized publics and their influence on Global Governance.

*Contextualizing Ukraine in Russian and international media.*

*The issue of defining country's self-identity, the painful struggle for nation-building and the creation of a new Ukrainian State after Dignity Revolution feels to be incomplete without "contextualizing" those events through current discussion about them beyond its borders.*

*Those discussions are led by media - both traditional mass media and networked social media - and create a context, that is dramatically polarized, operating by incompatible discourses, that are openly and deliberately conflicting with each other. Summarizing a very diverse picture of narratives, attitudes and images of current status of Ukraine and its near future, my contribution to this event will present three clusters of such discourses, generated, predominantly, by the U.S., European and Russian media.*

- **Giovanna Brogi** was Professor of Slavic Studies (Medieval Eastern Slavic and Ukrainian literature) at the University of Milan until November 2014. From 1993 to 1998 she was co-Vice-President of the International Association of Slavic Studies. Since 2001 Giovanna Brogi has been President of the Italian Association of Ukrainian Studies. She received a *laurea honoris causa* at the Ivan Franko University of L'viv and the Kyivan Mohyla University. Her main research interests concern Historiography of Renaissance and Baroque in the Slavic countries and in the European tradition, Baroque literature of Ukraine with comparative approach to Western European and Russian literature, Plurilinguism and multiculturalism in Ukraine (16th-18th century), History of Slavic studies.

*Ukrainian Narratives. The Burden of Historical Frontiers.*

*As Serhii Plokhyi puts it in a recent paper, in historical, cultural and socio-political studies Ukraine is mainly considered "between" two entities, or "torn apart", "at a crossroads", or plainly "part of a 'neighborhood'". Ukraine's "significant others, both real and symbolic" may be called Russia and Europe, East and West,*



*Byzantine and Roman traditions, Russian Federation and European Union. Up to a certain point history explains why Ukraine is often considered rather as a liminal or transitional zone than an entity in itself. Some considerations on Ukraine's history and culture may help to put the issue in another way: will Ukraine ever be considered a system of values – cultural, civic, juridical, ethic values –, as an autonomous structure which may claim centrality and see her right of existing as fully recognized? Recognition should certainly be footed on self-consciousness coming "from inside", from the political and social ethos of the nation. However, external conditions are tantamount for allowing a country to grow in security and bring the recognition which is still lacking from outside, from an international community which too often looks aside when the "Ukrainian question" arises.*

- **Rozita Dimova** is Associate Professor in South East European Studies (2013-) at Ghent University, Belgium. Her main research interests concern borders, materiality, gender, ethno-nationalism, aesthetics, performance, art, refugees. Her latest publications include: (2014) *Between borderlines, betwixt citizenship: Gender, agency and the crisis in the Macedonia/Greece border region* (Women's Studies International Forum, 2014, In Press, available online 19 August 2014, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277539514001174>).
- **Mychailo Glubokyi** works at Izolyatsia Foundation (Donec'k, Ukraine). Izolyatsia is a multidisciplinary cultural centre founded in 2010 on the territory of a former insulation factory in Donetsk, Ukraine. Izolyatsia inherits its name from this factory. The name reflects the foundation's mission: to preserve the industrial heritage whilst simultaneously engaging with alternative programmes of social and cultural development. During the past five years, Izolyatsia has delivered more than thirty large-scale projects and numerous educational and social initiatives.

*Izolyatsia. Social Activism in Exile*

*On 9 June 2014 the forces of the self-proclaimed "Donetsk People's Republic" (DPR) seized the territory on which IZOLYATSIA foundation was situated in Donetsk allegedly to store humanitarian aid coming in from Russia.*

*IZOLYATSIA's offices, galleries, libraries, and book store were looted: the foundation lost its art works, supplies and equipment. Since then, the foundation's territory is used by DPR mercenaries as an armoury, military training camp, prison, place of execution, and a warehouse for stolen cars. Art installations, which are an integral part of the architecture and landscape of the foundation's territory in Donetsk, are sold for scrap metal or destroyed. Since June 2014, and following the evacuation of its team from Donetsk, IZOLYATSIA continues its mission in Kyiv.*

*Presentation brings into focus the military events in Eastern Ukraine from various perspectives, and explores the role of culture during conflict by referring to the foundation's own story.*

*The purpose of the presentation is to communicate the story of this cultural foundation amidst the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. In many ways, the exiled IZOLYATSIA foundation represents the unheard voices of Donetsk, including those*

*thousands of young professionals, who protested for unity of Ukraine, and who have now fled the city.*

- **Yarina Grusha** is cultural projects coordinator in Ukrainian Crisis Media Center, Kyiv. Graduated from Kyiv Taras Shevchenko University in 2008, faculty of Italian language and literature, dedicating her diploma paper to Memory Discourse in Umberto Eco's novels. Since 2009 Ms Grusha has been working in cultural sphere. She was the coordinator of different film sections at Molodist IFF and Odessa IFF. Ms. Grusha was among founders of Babylon'13 cinema of a civil protest. During the last year she dedicated herself to cultural journalism and cultural events in the frame of the projects Cultural Diplomacy between Ukrainian regions.

#### *Cultural diplomacy between Ukrainian Regions*

*Recently, the modus vivendi of Ukrainians experienced the completely new concept of feeling guilty about ignoring for a long period Donbass region. The writer Oksana Zabuzhko explains it by speaking about two artificially built Ukraines. Marianna Savka, director of the publishing house "Vydavnytstvo Starogo Leva", explains it by the delay in bringing enough Ukrainian books in East Ukraine. Also the artist Lev Skopp, who did not have any exhibition of his works in Donbass before, can confirm it. We are completely conscious of our big mistake and now we are paying for it a very high prize. The project Cultural diplomacy between Ukrainian regions, supported by Ukrainian Crisis Media Centre, is organising exhibition performances and other meetings in Donbass region, trying to reduce the distance: not only the geographical one but also those involving mentality. We are going to speak about what was done and about the reaction to this cultural venture.*

- **Dušan Svetolik Janjić** is Principal Research Fellow at the Centre for Sociological Research, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Belgrade, Serbia, President of the Board of the Forum for Ethnic Relations, Belgrade, Serbia and President of the political party "Active Serbia", Belgrade, Serbia. Specialised in Sociology of (Ethno) Nationalism; Ethnicity; Ethnic Conflicts and their Resolution; Human and Minorities Rights; Political Movements and Ideologies; Peace Making and Building.

#### *Ethnicity and Borders: The case of the Western Balkans*

*The end of the previous century saw a veritable geopolitical storm rock the world, especially Europe. This storm swept away most of the world's communist regimes, and all such regimes in Europe. The leading force in the dynamic of these changes was the awakening power of ethnicity and ethno-nationalistic movements, which mobilized people and ended up demolishing communist regimes. The ancient and clearly defined borders of closed states were loosening up. Old, established borders were replaced by newly defined borders that achieved international recognition, but with the new borders also came the demand that they be penetrable and transparent. This point is illustrated through the significant*

*changes Europe has gone through; the most obvious examples being the reunification of Germany and the disintegration of multiethnic federations like the USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Through all these processes 28 new states emerged, all with newly defined external borders. At the same time the internal borders between these new states were strengthened and internationally recognized, and through this process the new states demarcated boundaries of ethnic societies and their territorial political entities. While many of these borders were a result of ethnic conflict they also today represent ethnically divided societies. This kind of borders can be found on the West Balkans, from Bosnia-Herzegovina through Kosovo to Macedonia, on the South Caucasus and in Moldova. The Turkish-Greek border on Cyprus and the still-open question of Israeli-Palestinian demarcation also belong to this category of countries.*

- **Dejan Jović** is Lecturer at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Zagreb, Croatia. After taking degrees from the universities of Zagreb, Ljubljana and Manchester he received his Ph.D from the London School of Economics. As a Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence, he researched his book on the disintegration of Yugoslavia.
- **Maria Grazia Bartolini** is Assistant Professor of Ukrainian Literature and Medieval Slavic Studies at Milan University, from which she holds a PhD in Slavic Literatures. She was 2013 Shklar Fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. Together with Alessandro Achilli and Marco Puleri, she is co-editor of *Minima Ucrainica* (<http://www.pecob.eu/minima-ucrainica>).
- **Stanislav Menzelevskiy** – film critic and curator, Head of Research and Programming Department at Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Center (Kyiv). Postgraduate student at the Cultural Studies Department (National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy”). Carnegie Fellow at The Harriman Institute (Columbia University, NYC, Fall 2013). Member of Editorial Board of Medusa publishing house. Contributor to Commons, Prostory, Political Critique magazines.

*“Away from Moscow”: Soviet Ukrainian film industry before Stalin*

*Histories of Soviet cinema usually ignore the Soviet Republics and create monolithic and global view, neglecting cultural and political diversity of the era – different notions of socialistic culture. We are dealing with this monotheistic Soviet legacy of poetics and politics even today. VUFKU (All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration) was established in 1922 and became one of the most productive Soviet film studios of the silent era. VUFKU became a modern state monopoly which controlled film production, distribution and exhibition in Ukraine. VUFKU also successfully and independently operated on international markets, selling its films to France, Germany, UK, USA and Canada, signing contracts with Kodak, Pathè, Agfa and Artkino.*

- **Mikhail Minakov** is a scholar, political analyst and consultant. He has taught at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy since 2001. He has held fellowships at Harvard University, the Woodrow Wilson Centre for International Scholars (Fulbright Kennan Scholar in 2012-2013), and at Krupp Wissenschaftskolleg, Greifswald. In 2011, Dr. Minakov became the founding Editor-in-Chief of the scholarly peer-reviewed journal “Ideology and Politics.” He combines his academic career with work in political consulting. In 2010, he co-founded the Foundation for Good Politics and has been working with politicians and officials from the USA, Germany, Ukraine and Russia. He has also worked at the Eurasia Foundation, the Open Society Institute in Budapest, Soros Foundation in Ukraine, Victor Pinchuk Foundation, and UNDP in Ukraine.

*Framing Ukraine*

*My report will be dedicated to major developments of Ukraine's political system after EuroMaidan. I will focus on (a) contradictions of Maidan and War political agendas; (b) disbalance between state, civil society and oligarchy; (c) re-constitution of political regime with the new authoritarian and democratic tendencies.*

- **Elvira Mujčić**, born in Serbia in 1980, is an Italian-Bosnian writer. She has lived in Bosnia until the outbreak of the war in 1992. Graduated in foreign languages and literatures, lives and works in Rome. She has published: *Al di là del Caos* (2007), *E se Fuad avesse avuto la dinamite* (2009), *Sarajevo: la storia di un piccolo tradimento* (2011), *La lingua di Ana* (2012).

*Lost and found in translation: living in-between two countries and two languages*

*There is a saying that a man who speaks two languages is worth two men. Does this mean that a person who speaks a bit of one language and a bit of another is worth one person? Or half of one?*

*One of the deepest consequences of exile is the so called double absence: you are no more there, but you never totally get here. The experience of migration is full of feelings of loss, but also of a sense of possibility. This condition is evident in the linguistic identity of a migrant, as also the etymology of the verb translates: being removed from one place to another.*

*On the one hand, there is the mother tongue with its absolute correspondence between the word and the reality. On the other, there is the second language, which seems to be only a sign without significance, unsuited to express the nuances of personality. The inability to speak becomes the difficulty of existing in the new country, but it could also be transformed in an instrument to reinvent one's world.*



- **Asim Mujkić** graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo (Department of Philosophy and Sociology). He acts currently as professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo, and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. He has published five books and more than 80 scientific papers in various journals and proceedings at home and abroad.

*Borders and the Final National Solution*

*The entire period of 'renaissance' of particular ethno-national statehoods in the Western Balkans (from 1875 onwards), which followed upon the process of capitalist appropriation of the region, can also be viewed as a period of 'transformation' of social diversities ('hopelessly mixed races'; see Todorova, 1997) through armed national revolutions and then through mechanisms of classic national-state models of representative democracy. Balkan ethnic nationalization processes should, therefore, be analyzed as a part of the overall ethno-nationalization process of the European continent, which started in the first half of the 19th century and continues to this day in the Western Balkans (but not only there). In that light Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) could be considered as a country in the midst of the notorious process that Brubaker calls 'ethnic unmixing', or what could be cynically called, the process of ethnonational management. It is not a national state as understood in the most of Europe, that is, it is not, as Brubaker points, "the state of and for a particular ethnocultural 'core nation' whose language, culture, demographic position, economic welfare and political hegemony must be protected and promoted by the state", because there is no clear "sense of 'ownership' of the state by a particular ethnocultural nation that is conceived as distinct from the citizenry or permanent resident population as a whole" (Brubaker, 1996: 431). Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina is often described as a failed state because it lacks all the presumed elements of a consolidated democratic state.*

- **Aleksej Nikitin** is a Ukrainian Russian-language writer. He was born in Kiev, Ukraine, USSR, in 1967. He studied physics at Kiev University and spent time in the army after which he worked in the gas and nuclear industries – including devising an emergency system for suppression dust contamination from the Chernobyl sarcophagus. He published many novels and novellas. In 2000 Nikitin won the Ukrainian Writers Union Korolenko Prize for the year's best work of fiction in Russian and in 2014 he was awarded the Russian Prize for his novel Victory Park.

*Ukrainian Literature after Maidan 2014: new works, new authors, new cultural situation.*

*Starting from springtime of 2014 Ukraine feels like to be at undeclared war with a big and more powerful neighbour. It was preceded by three months of vigorous social protests in Kiev and other cities of the country. The Ukrainian intellectuals are deeply involved in the current processes: they participate in the volunteer activities, in humanitarian aid to the refugees from the eastern regions of the*

country, they try to create a dialogue with the Ukrainian army troops and the residents of the anti-terrorist operation regions. At the same time their main task is the artistic description of the current events, understanding their causes and consequences.

War changed the Ukrainian society in general and life of many people in particular. These changes, among other things, resulted in the appearance of new writers. A bright and extremely spectacular example of this mechanism was the initiation to Kreschatik in the days of Maidan of "The Artistic Barbican" – a place for performance of poets, prose-writers, artists, religious and cultural figures. Copies of their speeches were collected and now they are published in the anthology "The Artistic Barbican. Triangle 92".

An additional tension in the Ukrainian cultural situation is being created by the fact that a part of confrontation is passing along the line of language distinction. A lot of Russians in Ukraine got used to associate themselves with Russian culture. Life in a climate of war persuades all of them to more clearly define their position.

- **Elena Stjzhkina** is professor of history at Donec'k National University (Ukraine). She is well known as a scholar and a writer in both Ukraine and Russia. Recently, she published her 'Diaries', entitled 'Country. War. Love', where she tells the dramatic events which took place in her hometown during the last year.

*Russian war against Ukraine: why we need correct words to describe it*

*Words are key elements in thinking, understanding and modeling past and future. Words can create artificial realities. And then artificial realities can have destructive effects for people and for their countries.*

*Firstly, there is no "civil conflict" or "civil war" in Ukraine. There was no and there is no civil confrontation between Kyiv and Donetsk or between West of Ukraine and East of Ukraine. There are words about civil conflict. Words used by Russian propaganda in order to create the image of a civil confrontation.*

*Secondly, We have not any "people republics". We have occupied territories of Ukraine. So, the occupied territories lose their economical, political and information subjectivities. That's why now we do not hear the voices of Donbass and the "people's leaders of republic" ones, but the voices of the occupied power and Kremlin.*

*Thirdly, Peace process after war will strongly depend on the use of correct words and on the use of correct pictures of what is happening now. Not "rebels" but traitors, not "people of republic" but victims and hostages of Russian aggression. This discourse will be helpful and fruitfulness for reconciliation and reunification.*