



Podium discussion

Future of Ukrainian Studies

ON 27.3.
AT 16.00
IN B 52-5120

From insight to impact

Future of Ukrainian Studies

Panelists: Olena Palko (Basel), Ulrich Schmid (St. Gallen) and Benjamin Schenk (Basel), Alexander Chertenko (Giessen)

Moderator: Maria Mayerchyk (Greifswald)

Since the full-scale Russian attack on Ukraine in February 2022, we have witnessed a significant growth of interest in Ukraine on scholarly and public levels. European societies' need for expertise in Ukraine coincides with the relocation/displacement of many Ukrainian scholars who fled the war and are hosted now by European universities. In these circumstances, collaboration and knowledge exchange between Slavists and Ukrainian scholars can be very promising, and Ukrainian Studies as an academic area can gain momentum for further intensive development. At the same time, there are questions regarding the (self-) positioning of "Ukrainian voices" in Western academia and public discourse. What kind of knowledge about Ukraine is most supported and welcomed? Which theoretical paradigms are privileged, which are not, and for what reasons? Another set of concerns focuses on the institutional aspects. What implications has the temporarily supported presence of Ukrainian scholars on the global academic market? What are structural changes needed to accommodate the new demands? And how do they relate to the much-discussed slogans of "decolonization" and "decentering" of Western academic institutions?

Today, a profound discussion about the future of Ukrainian Studies in both methodological and institutional terms is much needed. As numerous events on the topic have shown, the study of the ongoing war and its effects on Ukrainian as well as European society is often hindered by the politically motivated concerns of not being weaponized by Russian propaganda and not "playing into the hands of the aggressor." Given this complexity, we may ask: How to research Ukraine today? How could a re-orientation of East European and Slavic Studies toward Ukraine and other "minor" cultures be carried out on methodological, institutional, and structural levels? In what ways can the results of such re-orientation be transferred to the decision- and policymakers?

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