



UKRAINIAN RESEARCH IN
SWITZERLAND

URIS Newsletter September 2020

We are pleased to welcome our seventh URIS fellow Dr [Bohdan Tokarskyi](#) to Basel!

A Slavonic and cultural studies scholar from the University of Cambridge, Tokarskyi is exploring the life and work of the Ukrainian poet **Vasyl' Stus (1938-1985)** in a study titled "**A Fragment of Wholeness**". Stus spent the last 13 years of his life in the Soviet camp Perm-36 and is revered in Ukraine as a dissident and national martyr. Bohdan Tokarskyi looks at poetic subjectivity in Vasyl' Stus's oeuvre and seeks to position it within the canon of European Modernism. With his innovative literary scholarship, Bohdan Tokarskyi pays tribute to the work of a Ukrainian poet who is still largely unknown outside of his home country.

Translations by Bohdan Tokarskyi of Vasyl' Stus's powerful poems can be found in the article "[Thriving in Isolation and Beyond: The Empowering Poetry of Vasyl Stus](#)", which our URIS fellow recently published in the Los Angeles Review of Books.

The subject of poetry and resistance is also the focus of the course Bohdan Tokarskyi will teach at the University of Basel in the 2020 autumn semester. The tutorial "[Towards a History of Poetic Resistance in Ukraine](#)" will centre on poetic oppositions such as "nation/empire", "individual/state" and "poet/ regime" in a historical context. The aesthetic, forms and images that shaped the tradition of resistance poetry from Taras Shevchenko to the Euromaidan will be analysed before being placed in a comparative and *histoire croisée* context with poetry from Russia and Poland.

URIS & CEES Workshop on "Conflict and Migration" 20 November 2020, University of Zurich

"How to React to Crisis, Secessionism and War – Protest, Peace Activism, or Emigration? South Caucasus & Ukraine in a Comparative Perspective"

While the leaders of the "Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics" have been waging an armed conflict with Russian support for more than five years, the "Republic of Abkhazia" declared itself an independent state in the wake of the Russo-Georgian War in 2008. These conflicts at Europe's geographical peripheries are still confronting the people in Eastern Ukraine and the South Caucasus with difficult decisions: should one join the secessionist movements, engage in peace solutions, cultural and social activities, or escape the zone of conflict by emigration?

To address these questions, the academic programmes “Ukrainian Research in Switzerland” (URIS) and “Centre of East European Studies” (CEES) jointly invite experts from Ukraine and the South Caucasus to an interdisciplinary workshop. Our guests will assess the situation in Eastern Ukraine and the South Caucasus in a comparative way and from a sociological, ethnological, historical and geographical perspective. In this context we want to shed light on topics such as the societal consequences of (internal) migration, interferences between tourism, culture and political (in)stability, and the question of how art and culture shape processes of social memory.

The programme, consisting of several roundtables with the fellows from both initiatives, will be published soon on our website.

Save the date for our Ukrainian Language Course II in February 2021

Advanced Ukrainian language course from 15 to 26 February 2021 at the University of Basel

In continuation of our last Ukrainian course, our experienced instructor **Yuliya Mayilo** will again offer a two-week course of Ukrainian language training during the semester break in February 2020. The course is run by URIS and is open to all students and staff of Swiss universities. Participation is free of charge. The course will be held in Basel from 15 to 26 February 2021. More information about registration will be published soon on our website: www.uris.ch.

Looking back...

Conference “Ukrainian Studies Today. State of the Art in Switzerland”

In January 2020 URIS marked its third anniversary with the conference “Ukrainian Studies Today. State of the Art in Switzerland” in Basel. The [report](#) sums up the highlights of the panel discussions led by our six URIS fellows and the URIS academic advisory board.

A video of the keynote lecture “*Non-Euclidian Nation: What and how do we write about Ukraine?*” by Prof Dr Yaroslav Hrytsak (Lviv) can be found on our [website](#).



At the conference in Basel. Photos by Nadine Freiermuth Samardžić

The URIS advisory board farewelled its esteemed founding member **Professor Andreas Kappeler** at the conference. We would like to formally thank Dr Kappeler for his tremendous support in the creation and development of URIS.

We are delighted to welcome **Professor Gwendolyn Sasse** as a new member of our academic advisory board. Dr Sasse is Academic Director of the Centre for East European and International Studies ([ZOiS](#)) in Berlin. A political scientist and Slavist, Dr Sasse is currently coordinating a number of research projects on the history and contemporary situation of Ukraine. Of particular interest here are her studies on the influence of local Ukrainian politics on societal change and the impact of war, flight and displacement on political identities in Ukraine. We are very much looking forward to working with Dr Sasse over the coming years.

NEWS

Viktoriya Sereda, who will be our eighth URIS fellow in spring 2021, will teach an online course on historical memory for international students at the UCU (Ukrainian Catholic University) in the 2020 autumn semester. If you are interested you may register [here](#) for the class *“Historical Memory in the Post-Communist Space: Ukraine and its Neighbours since the 1990s”*.

Olha Martynyuk has been awarded an EKSAS fellowship and will spend the 2020/2021 academic year at the University of Basel/ Department of History. URIS is looking forward to working with Olha Martynyuk and learning more about her current research project *“Bicycle Transport and Micromobility in Ukraine (1890-1990)”*. More information about Olha Martynyuk’s interesting research can be found [here](#).

The Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at the University of St Gallen is hosting the conference **“Transculturality in the Black Sea Region: New Theoretical Approaches and Research Methodologies”**, 9-12 September 2020. This multidisciplinary conference aims to explore the present and historical dynamics shaping the Black Sea Region through the lens of transculturality. We propose regarding the Black Sea region as a fluid realm where various discourses and ideas interact, compete and merge. We seek to explore novel theoretical concepts and methodologies for the study of the transcultural space of the Black Sea region and the contemporary challenges that it faces. The conference programme can be found on our [website](#).

Бажаю Тобі гарних вихідних і хорошого настрою!
Anne Hasselmann