

Workshop: Ukraine before and after the full-scale Russia's war start: social impact and transformations

November 23, 2023, WIKO Colloquium room (Wallotstraße 19), 16:00-18:00 (Berlin time)

16:00-16:05

Introductory words by Dr Tetiana Kostiuhenko

Every presentation will take up to 15 min followed by ~5 min for 1-2 immediate follow-up questions, with broader discussion and Q&A after all presentations.

16:05-16:25

Testing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion: Ukrainian society after 2014

By Dr Viktoriya Sereda, VUIAS

This talk offers a multiscalar optics on the transformational effects of war and dislocation on Ukrainian society since 2014. It examines strategies of adaptation of the displaced and civil society response to dislocation through the different formal and non-formal networks. Extreme events such as war and displacement create ruptures in sense-making narratives at all levels of the society, displacement governance often shapes new lines of social inclusion or exclusion through production of multiple internal physical, symbolic or bureaucratic borders. The last section focuses on how war (re)shapes narratives and hierarchies of belonging of local communities in Ukraine and what is the role of the displaced people in these processes.

16:25-16:45

Business Interest and Ukraine's Resilience in War Times

By Dr Inna Melnykovska, CEU

Business is not expected to provide public goods and care about the state and wider society's needs, but in Ukraine, that has been resisting to Russia's aggression, it does. In the territories that have been less affected by hostilities and occupation, large number of Ukrainian companies demonstrate remarkable resilience by continuously adapting their production processes and logistics to meet the dynamic challenges of the war. The adaptation strategies of some companies go far beyond their narrow commercial interests. But why do some Ukrainian businesses respond to the war with providing assistance to the broader society and the state while others act much more ruthlessly and with a narrow profit-oriented logic? The presentation will provide conceptual framework to understand the broadening of corporate interest and highlight several explanations for this empirical phenomenon

16:45-17:05

Forging a Culture of Resilience in Ukraine during the War: Civil Society's Participation in the Resistance and Reconstruction

By Dr Yuliya Bidenko, ZOIS & Karazin State University (Kharkiv, Ukraine)

The response of civil society to the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine became a phenomenon that has been underestimated both by academia and policymakers. The presentation covers the core values, attitudes, and practices of the Ukrainian civil society during the war as well as underlines key challenges and expectations regarding the future of democracy, public participation, and reconstruction. These values, attitudes, and practices are analyzed through the lenses of the political culture and civic cohesion which was formed before 2022 and still under transformation during the war. Some preconditions for forging this type of civic culture such as decentralization, steady growth of awareness, and participation in public life emerged after the Euromaidan, others (the sense of unity, cohesion, and increasing the level of trust) appeared later, and could be challenged by the political centralization and post-war reconstruction.

17:05-17:25

War as a Clash of Civilizations? A Civilizational Approach to Explaining Russia's War against Ukraine

By Prof Olga Kutsenko, TU Berlin & Taras Shevchenko National University (Kyiv, Ukraine) – via ZOOM

For centuries, Ukraine has navigated between two civilizations: European and Eurasian (or Moscow-Byzantine). The struggle for national identity and independence has been the recurring theme throughout Ukraine's millennium-long history. Through post-Soviet transformations, three revolutions in 2000s, and Russia's war since 2014, Ukraine made a decisive civilizational choice in favor of the European prospect. What signifies a society's civilizational choice? What role does the Russian war against Ukraine, initiated in 2014, play in this decision? Is Ukraine's civilizational choice only a response to the pressures of war, or is it deeply rooted in the societal fabric? What characteristics empower a society to defend its civilizational choice and withstand Russia's military aggression?

A two-fold theoretical framework will be employed to analyze these questions, providing a deeper understanding of the nature of this war:

1. **Civilizational Paradigm:** Drawing on cultural and complexity-oriented perspectives (O. Spengler, N. Elias, F. Braudel, SN Eisenstadt, S. Huntington, Said Amir Arjomand, E.A. Tiryakian), civilization is defined as a complex cultural-historical formation with a unique system of interpretive, behavioral, and institutional models for social, cultural, and spiritual life. It represents a specific trajectory of societal evolution throughout history.
2. **Imperialism and Postcolonialism Conceptual Lens:** Utilizing the viewpoints of scholars like A.G. Frank, Samir Amin, Homi K. Bhabha, Edward W. Said, and Gayatri Ch. Spivak, this lens explores the dynamics of imperialism and postcolonialism.

Analyzing the differences between European and Eurasian (Russian) civilizations across (1) socio-geographical scope, (2) *Longue durée* structures in policy, economy, and culture, (3) basic human and social values, and (4) civilizational and national self-awareness will provide a comprehensive understanding.

Empirical analysis of sociological data within this theoretical framework suggests that the Russia's war in Ukraine involves a clash of civilizations, driven by Russia's imperial aggressive ambitions. The threat to Ukraine's national freedom, under the influence of Russian aggression, has acted as a catalyst for pro-European civilizational dynamics of Ukraine, transitioning Ukraine from a divided society to national cohesion with a European developmental vector. The resilience of this choice is anchored in a constellation of key cultural, socio-structural, and agency factors exhibited by Ukrainian society during wartime.

17:25-18:00

Q&A broad discussion (moderated by Tetiana Kostiuhenko)

Biographical notes

Dr Viktoriya Sereda is a sociologist, she was Senior Fellow of the Forum Transregionale Studien and the director of the project "*Prisma Ukraina: War, Migration and Memory*" in 2022-2023. Prior to this, she was a fellow at the Imre Kertesz Kolleg at the University of Jena. Since 2020, she has also been a senior research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and a professor in the department of Sociology at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv. Dr Sereda has either led or participated in over 30 sociological research projects on Ukrainian society and its regional dimensions. From 2011 to 2017, she was the head of the sociological team for the project "*Region, Nation and Beyond: An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine*", organized by the University of St. Gallen. In 2016/17 and 2019/20 she was the MAPA Research Fellow at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (HURI). Currently she is the Head Coordinator of VUIAS.

Dr Inna Melnykovska is Assistant Professor in Comparative Political Economy at the Political Science Department at Central European University in Vienna. She received her Ph.D. in Political Science from the Free University of Berlin. Before joining CEU Inna was a postdoctoral fellow at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University. Also, she worked as a research and teaching fellow at the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, at the Universities of Kiel and Giessen and at the Free University of Berlin. Dr Melnykovska is an expert on the dynamics of state-business relations and crony capitalism in Eurasia. Her current book project *“Global Money, Local Politics: Big Business, Capital Mobility and the Transformation of Crony Capitalism in Eurasia”* is supported by the Smith Richardson Foundation and is forthcoming in 2024.

Dr. Yuliya Bidenko is Associate Professor of Political Science Department at Karazin Kharkiv National University in Ukraine. She was a Research Fellow at Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (in Vienna), a Research Fellow for the Center for Advanced Studies and Education at the European Humanities University in Vilnius. Since 2016 Dr. Bidenko has been serving as an expert for the “Team Europe” Initiative by the European Union’s Delegation to Ukraine. In 2021-2022 she was the author of the *“Ukraine: Nations in Transit”* Report by the Freedom House. Since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, Dr. Bidenko was displaced and experienced six relocations but is providing lectures, presentations, and interviews remotely and in person in the University of Toronto, at Columbia University (the Harriman Institute), at the Atlantic Council, Cornell University, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and other institutions. As of 2023, she is affiliated with ZOIS (The Centre for East European and International Studies) in Berlin as a Senior Visiting Scholar funded by the UNet Program.

Olga Kutsenko is a Professor of Sociology at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. She chaired a Political sociology Department at Kharkiv National university in 2004-2007, and later chaired the Social Structures Department at Sociology Faculty of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. Prof Kutsenko was a visiting research fellow at The State University of New York (SUNY), Cambridge University, Central European University, and WZB in Berlin. She was invited as a visiting lecturer by Freie Universität Berlin (2009, 2011) and Cambridge University (2012). Since 2022 she has been an Einstein Fellow at Technische Universität Berlin. Among her publications are 8 books published in Ukraine, Germany, France, Russia and UK. The most significant publications are on social inequalities, class and elite, migrants and their integration, democratization and regional diversity studies.