



Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin
INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

Scholars at War

The past, present, and future of intellectual communities in Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Workshop

February 6, 2023, 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm.

Russian invasion of Ukraine strikes its observers as both unseen and eerily familiar, evoking parallels with previous global conflicts. The horrendous bloodshed and the wave of destruction affected all spheres of human life across several countries. Along with power plants and military objects, Russia's terrorist regime purposefully destroys Ukraine's scientific, scholarly, and educational infrastructure. In Russia and Belarus, scholars and public intellectuals became the targets of political prosecution and censorship. As a result, hundreds of scholars, scientists, and students have been displaced and exiled. The exact geography and structure of these diasporas remain unknown. Several "universities in exile" projects popped up in different countries, offering students and scholars at risk temporary academic homes.

Historically speaking, the phenomenon of displaced academic communities is not new: the most recent examples include the expulsion of independent scholars and intellectuals from Turkey and the forced emigration of Afghan scholars. One can also see a lot of similarities between the forced emigration of scholars from Nazi-controlled territories on the eve of and during WWII and the exodus of independent scholars from Putin's Russia. How does the experience of war and exile affect the communities of intellectuals, scholars, and writers? How does the involuntary uprooting shape writing and contemplation and alter scholarly and intellectual activity? And above all: What can help these communities to preserve their integrity?

This seminar addresses the present state of the humanities and discusses the past experiences of academic exile and displacement. We will also talk about the role of scholars in helping their societies to cope with the trauma of war and reckoning with the difficult questions of the war's causes. Finally, we would like to discuss the future of the humanities and social sciences in Eastern Europe in the aftermath of war.

Program

14.00-14.15 Introduction:
Ekaterina Pravilova (Princeton University, Fellow 2022/2023)

14.15 – 16.00 *Academic diaspora and displaced scholars. Cross-national and interdisciplinary perspectives*

Speakers:

Arie Dubnov (George Washington University, Washington, Fellow 2022/2023)

Laura Robson (Penn State University)

Juliane Fürst (Leibniz Centre for Contemporary History, Potsdam)

Elcin Aktoprak (The School of Human Rights Association, Ankara, Fellow 2022/2023)

16.00-16.15 Coffee break

16.15-18.00 *War, dictatorship, and the academic refugee crisis*

Speakers:

Anna Medvedovska (“Tkuma” Ukrainian Institute for Holocaust Studies, Dnipro, Fellow 2022/2023)

Martin Saar (Goethe University Frankfurt/Main, Fellow 2022/2023)

Henadz Sahanovich (University of Warsaw, Fellow 2022/2023)

Other participants:

Kateryna Burkush (Fellow 2022/2023)

Kateryna Mishchenko (Fellow 2022/2023)

Maria Stepanova (Fellow 2022/2023)

Igor Khristoforov (Princeton University)

Paul W. Werth (University of Nevada, The American Academy in Berlin)

Tetiana Portnova (University of Potsdam)

All WIKO fellows are invited to attend!