



Cultural Forum "Transcending Borders: GaliciaCult" in Kharkiv  
Lectures and Discussions Program  
October 4-18, 2016, Kharkiv, Ukraine

*'Galicia was invented by Austrians, appropriated by Poles,  
and ultimately reinvented and re-appropriated by Ukrainians'*

*Mykola Riabchuk*

Over the last decades, Galicia has gone in big fashion. It is studied, described in novels. It is the object of nostalgia and interest in the past, a brand and a label. Its name has been given to yogurts, juices, law companies, the mass media and political parties. It is so widely present in different cultural, commercial and political projects that one might have the impression that it had existed forever. In fact, Galicia as an administrative unit, a crowned land of the Habsburg Empire, existed only from 1772 to 1918. This short period of time was enough to generate at least four myths of Galicia. An Austrian myth about the creation of a community of Galicians from the multiethnic land populated by Poles, Ukrainians, Jews and other ethnicities that sank into oblivion along with the Austro-Hungarian empire. A Jewish myth about a welcoming and supportive land for all nations of the crown king, including Jews, that collapsed with the First World War and was commemorated in literature. A Polish myth of Galicia as a Polish Piedmont that lost its relevance after the creation of the Polish state and was revived for a short time in socialist Poland. The longest standing myth of Galicia, however, turned out to be the Ukrainian one. It nourished the belief in the eternity of the Ukrainian nation for over a century. Moreover, it reinforced the stereotype about the former Galicia as the 'most Ukrainian Ukraine' that contributed to the antagonism between 'westerners' and 'easterners' both in Soviet Ukraine and afterwards. The myth acquired new dimensions and vigour in the independent Ukraine that faced difficulty managing the Soviet legacy and the development of a new Ukrainian identity. In this context, an imaginary Galicia remained a stronghold of Ukrainianness. What's more, it acquired new senses of Europeaness. Wrenched out of the complicated and tragic history of the region the image of Galicia as a 'little paradise' and an 'outpost of western culture', the preserved facades of 'western' architecture of former Galician towns did significantly reinforce the myth. This constructed Galicia was a source of pride for many locals and part of their regional identity. It continues to attract and enchant people from different regions of Ukraine. Though one may expect its magnetism to gradually fade as Ukraine evolves to build an inclusive society and political nation.

Why was this imaginary Galicia so important for Ukrainians in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries? Why is it so enthusiastically evoked today in cultural, political, and commercial circles? What are challenges and threats posed by such mythmaking activities and the efforts to obscure behind an idealized past the complicated and tragic aspects of the region's history? What dangers are presented by such historical myths? What positive aspects do they carry for modern Ukrainian society? Over the course of ten meetings, invited historians, political scientists, ethnologists, philologists and literary scholars will discuss Galicia, both imaginary and real. They will talk about the invention, construction and branding of Galicia, as well as the tragic history of this territory, the place that was home to different ethnic communities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; the land that was part of four states and survived two world wars, three occupations, ethnic purges, deportations, the Holocaust, to finally emerge mono-ethnic and mono-cultural.

October, 5. 18:00

Vasyl Rasevych

### What is Galicia? From Myth to Brand



The Galicia forgotten in the Soviet times faced a real renaissance after Ukraine's independence. By no means, did the 'fashion' to Galicia come from within Ukraine, but from literary works of German speaking Galician writers. Their plots received a new special voice after the disaster of the Second World War. In the basis of constructing the myth of Galicia, there was a literary topos that started with nostalgic reminiscences and later transformed into an open political instrumentalization. Glorification and idealization of the Galician past appeared to be a necessary precondition to generate a new national unification narrative, and also to develop an exclusive Galician project. The instrumentalization ranged from 'Galicia, the most Ukrainian Ukraine' to even 'Galicians are not Ukrainians.' Public expressions of the 'Galicianism' and their instrumentalization will be the topic for the announced lecture.

**Vasyl Rasevych** is a historian, essayist, blogger, editor-in-chief the Zaxid.net online publication, senior research fellow at the Ivan Kryp'yakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies, expert in the history of Galicia of Austrian period and the policy of memory in the present-day Ukraine.

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October, 6. 18:00

Jagoda Wierzejska

### "Half-Asia" or a "Bulwark of the Western Culture:" Ideological Geography of Galicia between East and West

Since the beginning of its existence Galicia has been presentenced either as "half-Asia" or as an "outpost of the West." According to the former vision, the province was seen as a land of steppes, crags, and mad masters' castles; according to the latter, it was identified as a "bulwark" of the Western culture while with the qualities of the "East" was attributed Russia. The lecture discusses locating Galicia within the tension between "East" and "West," the categories meaning "backwardness" and "development," and presents ideological shifts of the region from Habsburg civilizing mission to concepts of Galician legacy as an entry-card to Europe.

**Jagoda Wierzejska** is a literary historian, an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw. Her interests focus on conceptualizations of the idea of Galicia in the Polish cotemporary discourse.

Studio 42 Konstytutsii sq., 1 entrance 7, floor 2

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**October, 9. 16:00**

**Discussion: New Contexts for Old Ideas: On Nationalisms in Ukraine and Europe**

Europe is now living through the period of revival of nationalisms. Many countries in the European Union are willing to regain the sovereignty they yielded for the sake of a collective idea of united Europe. The countries of the former socialist block and the USSR are increasingly often resorting to radical right ideas in search of their identities and political place in present-day Europe. Over the past 25 years, nationalism for Ukrainian society has become both a means to get rid of Russian influence, and also a strong desire to become part of the European Union.

What are the sources of nationalism in Ukraine? What is the role of nationalism in Ukrainian history? What are the reasons for the revival of nationalisms? What is nationalism like today in Ukraine and in Europe? Is there any threat that the classic national state of the early 20th century could come back? The questions will be attended by discussants, historians and philosophers from Lviv, Kharkiv and Kyiv, Oleksandr Zaytsev, Mykhaylo Minakov, Vasyl Rasevych, and Serhiy Naumov. Moderated by Volodymyr Sklokin.

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**October, 10. 18:30**

**Iryna Starovoyt**

**Memory, Blindness, and the Insight: Galicia and Its Facets in the 20th Century**

Galicia of the first half of the 20th century is one of the most dangerous, versatile and turbulent parts of the world. In the period between 1914 and 1944, the rule had changed over 7 times here, while violence and terror of different degree threatened, destroyed and displaced people. The Holocaust, ethnic purges, and deportations desolated Galicia, and new people started their new life stories in old houses. The memory thereon either had partially vanished, along with its owners, or fell victim to harsh censorship. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, with the change of generations and experience, previous 'installation memory matrices' went out of order. In terms of private, generational or family memories, they can still be recovered through the effort of recollections and autobiographies in different native tongues. What would our contemporaries in Ukraine unveil then? What do we do then with the sudden clarification, the pain and the burdening knowledge?

**Iryna Starovoyt** is a literary scholar, poet, and a professor at Lviv University and Ukrainian Catholic University. She studies the culture and dynamics of memory about the 20th century in East Europe.



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October, 11. 18:30

Natalia Khobzey

Words From Galician Worlds: on Our Own and the Borrowed, on the Old and the Modern...



Typical characteristics of Galician linguistic environment are deeply rooted in old times. Even though Galicia used to belong to the Habsburg Empire, local Ruthenians-Ukrainians were trying to contribute to the shaping of the literary language under different circumstances. They tried to use it in many areas of their activities, such as in everyday life, in literary works, in research pursuits, while developing their own attitudes to shaping a system of a language as a whole. The lecture will talk about lexical peculiarities of Galician way of speaking, about dialect vocabulary and its derivation, as well as about urban speak, such as the speak of Lviv citizens of 'old days' and the present day.

Natalia Khobzey is a linguist, chair of the Ukrainian Language Department at the Ivan Krypnyakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Some of her numerous research works include 'Hutsul Mythology'; she is co-author of 'Lviv Dictionary: In Earnest and In Joke' (Grand Prix of the Publishers Forum 2009), and 'Hutsul Worlds. Dictionary'.

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October, 12. 18:30

Yulia Bohdanova and Yevhenia Hubkina

Modernism of Lviv and Kharkiv: Between the 'Bourgeois' Functionalism and Socialist Constructivism



After the First World War and the collapse of great empires, Lviv found itself as part of the Polish state, while Kharkiv was part of the Soviet Union. The two cities were on the steady course towards the 20th century and acquired the features offered and dictated by the new times and circumstances. The Polish state and Soviet Ukraine created different political models. What was the impact on the new forms and means of expression in architecture? What were the main tasks that authorities posed to architects and what was the role of a person thereby? What is the Avant-garde architecture in Lviv/Lwow and in Kharkiv like? What is the difference between functionalism and constructivism? What was the impact of the interwar architecture on the aesthetics and practices in the USSR? The questions, among others, will be considered by the researchers from Lviv and Kharkiv in the discussion format.

**Yulia Bohdanova** is an architectural historian, a lecturer at Lviv Polytechnics, co-author of the books 'Architecture of Lviv. Time and Styles of the 13th - 21st century', 'Secession in Lviv'.

**Yevhenia Hubkina** is an architect, curator, and researcher at the Center for Urban History in Lviv, author of an architectural guidebook along Slavutych.



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October, 13. 18:30

Iryna Sklokina

### Making the Soviet West: Post-war Sovietization of Western Ukraine and Cultural Staff From the East

The Sovietization process of the western regions annexed to the Ukrainian SSR upon the Second World War was contradictory and included Ukrainization and the fight against 'bourgeois nationalism', the reconstruction of some monuments and destruction of others, repression against local cultural elite and their career promotion and education. What was the role of 'Easterners', Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews, in this process, as residents of the prewar Ukrainian SSR and the representatives of the 'brotherly republics'? What view did they take on the western Ukraine and how were they affected by the things they saw? How did the project of Ukrainian Soviet nation change under the impact of Stalin 'reunification'? What the 'Soviet West' had become within the Ukrainian body – a virus of confrontation against the regime, a symbolic alternative to the 'Soviets', or another achievement of Soviet modernization and ethnic unification?

**Iryna Sklokina** is a historian at the Center for Urban History in Lviv. She studies the policy of memory and cultural heritage in the postwar Soviet Union.



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October, 14. 18:00

Bohdan Shumylovych

### Between a Soviet City and a Galician Village: Lviv Rock in the 1980s and Its Hybrid Vision of Galicia



Rock culture in Soviet Lviv was born in the late 1960s and had different manifestations, from almost official 'ensembles' to the alternative hippy bands. The milieu was mostly transnational but it was consolidated by the common things, such as Lviv, Galicia, and love for music. Another thing many authors and bands shared was that they were not able to create any interesting, genuine and alternative (i.e. non-Soviet) product in Ukrainian. After Perestroika was declared in the mid-1980s, music stopped being a prohibited art and a rock club was established in the city. There, a rock band was created that managed to de-colonize popular Ukrainian music from the tenets of ethnographism, rural aesthetics and clichés of the Russian rock. It was an urban culture that went ironical about its own 'village' alter ego, the culture that was capable of transforming not only Galicia, but the entire Ukraine.

**Bohdan Shumylovych** is a historian, director of the 'Urban Media-Archive' at the Center for Urban History in Lviv. He studies popular culture during late Socialism.

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October, 17. 18:30

Eleonora Narvselius

## Aroma of Memory with the Flavour of Nostalgia: Modern Theme-based Restaurants and Galicia Branding

Is it possible to create an image of Ukrainian cultural heritage and Ukrainian history that would be both attractive and acceptable for the broad public in Ukraine and far beyond? In Galicia, branding of Ukrainian cultural acquisitions was quite successful, even though not without problems. Cultural peculiarity of the 'most Ukrainian, and the least Soviet' region is mostly presented as the combination of Ukrainianism, Europeanism, and a typically local flavour tending to impose the myth of Galicia. The lecturer will talk about one of the local initiatives, such as theme-based restaurants. The listeners will be offered a story about commercial use of collective memory about some groups of population in Galicia, such as Poles, Jews, and Austrians, as opposed to mono-cultural perceptions about the past events of the region.

Eleonora Narvselius is an ethnologist at the Lund University (Sweden). She studies cultural heritage, commercialization of history, and collective memories in East Central Europe.



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### Program Curator

**Iryna Matsevko**

Historian, deputy director of the Center for Urban History in Lviv  
coordinator of public history projects

### Organizers:

Charity Foundation "The Depths of Art"  
Center for Urban History

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Благодійний фонд "Мистецькі надра"



### Supported by:

Polish Institute in Kyiv  
International Renaissance Foundation  
The Austrian Cultural Forum in Kyiv

