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EUROPA-
UNIVERSITÄT
VIADRINA
FRANKFURT
(ODER)

Call for Papers

The **Institute for Transformations Studies (FIT)** at European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) and the **German Association for East European Studies (DGO)** invite to a conference dedicated to the transnational character of Ukraine during the 20th and 21st centuries:

Ukraine's historical and contemporary interlockings: A transnational perspective on transformations

Frankfurt (Oder), November 5-6, 2015

The Euromaidan protests shed a light on Ukraine not only as a state being on the fence between Eastern and Western European development paths. It became also obvious that Ukraine's search for identity and future is deeply rooted in a historical fragmentation of the country. This fragmentation stems from different belongings of Ukrainian regions, society and culture to different areas and powers at different points in time. In this respect, Ukraine can be considered paradigmatic for many Central European regions and states. These fragmentations and belongings underline Ukraine's long-standing and multiple ties beyond its borders.

The paths of Ukraine's transnational ties and networks are multifold. They add up to the question if Ukraine can today be interpreted as a transnational entity. Does a transnational perspective contribute to better understand Ukraine's contemporary development, potentials and problems? We are looking for contributions in the following areas:

- **Civil society:** A tracking of transnational civic networks includes civic activists traveling across Europe before and during the Orange Revolution in 2004/2005 to meet activists from anti-election fraud campaigns in Slovakia, Serbia and Georgia, and to learn about successful campaigning of political movements. The protests have been called an "imported revolution". The same happened to the Euromaidan protests with respect to the external democratization assistance provided to Ukraine by numerous Western states and organizations. But that superficial judgement veils the aspect of a growing transnational civil society that consists of networks of globally educated democratization activists in Central and Eastern Europe and beyond.
- **Political system and institutions:** The conflicting Ukrainian ties towards the EU and the USA on the one hand and to Russia on the other hand have become brutally ob-

vious during the war in Eastern Ukraine. They deserve further enquiry, since political ties to the West are not free from contradictions or even dilemmas. Also, Russian-Ukrainian relations have not always been and are until now not restricted to hostile interactions. Additionally, beyond those ostensible paths of influence, there are multifold connections to countries such as Georgia or Canada – inter alia – whose history and recent consequences deserve closer attention and systematic research.

- **Economy:** With respect to economic aspects of Ukrainian transnationalism, consequences of and forecasts with regard to regional integration towards the EU and/or Russia are of outstanding interest. Also, there is obvious cooperation of oligarchs not only with Russia, but also with off shore venture capital systems and international stakeholders.
- **Languages and culture:** There is a growing scene of artists, musicians, writers and intellectuals who are reflecting Ukraine's path since independence and its respective roots in Jewish, Russian, Ruthenian and Tatarian as well as Soviet history and culture. As a multi-ethnic country, Ukraine is entangled with its neighbors, but it contributes also to multi-ethnicity with the Ukrainian diaspora worldwide.

The conference will focus on – but not be limited to – the following overarching questions: Which transnational activist networks supported the Euromaidan, and are there societal and economic transnational interdependencies with both the West and the East? Will the war in Eastern Ukraine and the new patriotic fashion diminish Ukraine's transnational character and lead to a truly nationalized Ukraine? Although the conference's main perspective is on contemporary developments in Ukraine, we also invite scholars with a historic perspective to submit proposals.

A substantial part of the conference will be dedicated to a debate on the future needs and tasks of a social science approach to Ukraine studies. With respect to transnationalism being conceived a feature which marks Ukrainian politics, society and culture even more than those of other countries, any adequate research strategy implies the necessity of overcoming methodological nationalism. Hence, speakers are invited to present not only the issues and results of their research, but also to discuss whether their methodological approach is capable of analyzing transnational social phenomena.

If you are interested in presenting a paper at this conference, we kindly ask you to submit a proposal of about 250 words. The proposal should focus on empiric aspects of transnationalism in Ukraine, but should at the same time contain theoretic and/or methodological considerations on how to conceptualize transnationalism in a post-Soviet environment. Proposals with a comparative perspective are also welcome. We strive for an international composition of conference participants.

Participants will be kindly asked to send their papers two weeks prior to the conference. A publication of the presented papers is planned.

The German Association for East European Studies will cover expenses for (modestly priced) flights and hotel accommodation in Frankfurt Oder Słubice during the conference.

Please send your proposal to Timm Beichelt (beichelt@europa-uni.de) until June 15, 2015.