



2nd Doctoral School in Urban Geopolitics:

LIFE IN GEOPOLITICAL FAULT-LINE CITIES

Four Doctoral School events

September-October 2020

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and the University of Oslo, in collaboration with partners of the Norwegian Research Council-funded UKRGEOPOL research project, are delighted to announce that the **2nd Doctoral School in Urban Geopolitics** will be held in virtual space (because of COVID-19, of course). It's a new experience for us, but it opens up for potentially many more participants from across the world.

Please note that *all previously accepted applications remain accepted*, and we very much hope that all applicants will be able to join us. In addition, given the new format of the event, **we also invite new doctoral candidates and young researchers to join the event**, which will be devoted to discussions on “Life in Geopolitical Fault-Line Cities”.

The Doctoral School will take place over four days in September-October 2020. Please write down in your calendar "Days of Urban Geopolitics": 28 September, 02, 05 and 09 October 2020. In addition, you will be able to join a **virtual field trip** to Dnipro, the city which

was originally supposed to host this Doctoral School event.

The Doctoral School discussions will draw inspiration from the ongoing international research project **Ukrainian geopolitical fault-line cities: urban identities, geopolitics and urban policy**, funded by the Research Council of Norway. Within the scope of the project, we want to gain insights into socio-spatial polarization, identity, and IDP-related issues in cities.

We are looking for participants from various disciplinary backgrounds (e.g. geography, political science, sociology, anthropology and planning)

To register for the event, please fill in the online application form:

<https://forms.gle/zhYo7BWBj3V22JMYA>

Registration deadline: **23 September 2020**.

You will receive confirmation of your participation immediately.

Confirmed speakers:

Prof. Joseph Salukvadze (urban and human geographer, Tbilisi State University)

Dr. Vlad Mykhnenko (economic and urban geographer, University of Oxford)

Dr. Eugenia Kuznetsova (media expert, Kyiv School of Economics)

plus a **surprise** speaker (!)

The Programme

Day 1 (28 September 2020, 14:00 CET). Lectures and discussion on “Floating populations on multiple fault-lines?”

Lecture, followed by discussion, on “IDPs in post-Soviet cities – the case of Georgia”

Joseph Salukvadze (Tbilisi State University)

Internally Displaced Persons emerged in Georgia after the independence and comprise a new, vulnerable and deprived social stratum of (urban) society. How do the existence of IDPs and their daily struggle for survival affect the formation of urban environment? How do IDPs cope with marginality and exclusion, and how do they influence the urban landscapes of the communities to which they have had to move? The issues of the residential resilience of IDPs is considered in the context of official policies implemented by the Georgian government.

“Cities and towns are the spaces where even IDPs have chances to be re-included into society”, they “are tied quite strongly to the places of their current residence. These are the areas where they do spend most of their free time socializing mainly with family members and the other IDPs” (Salukvadze et al. 2013)

(17:00 CET)

Lecture, followed by discussion, on “IDPs and the media in geopolitical fault-line cities”

Eugenia Kuznetsova (Kyiv School of Economics)

Apart from informing the public, media influence perceptions on pressing issues and shape the attitudes to different social groups, including vulnerable groups like internally displaced people. The problem of IDPs is largely considered as a national-level phenomenon with local implications that must be taken care of by the national government (Albuja and Ceballos 2010, Su 2010). But it is equally important to consider urban policy concerning IDPs. How adequately and fully do local media cover the problems experienced by IDPs? Does the ‘CNN effect’ work when emotional reports necessitate political responses from local authorities, provoking some measures of urban policy, in particular ‘cultural integration’ as it’s called by local media? Are local media able to reflect the trauma, fears and uncertainty of displaced people?

“In Russian-controlled de facto statelets, the media also assume a de facto status of sorts: they exist, but they do not fulfill the key functions that the media perform in

healthy societies. Put more bluntly, they have been transformed into an instrument of political influence within the broader Russian information space” (Kuznetsova 2020)

Day 2 (2 October 2020, 14:00 CET). Surprise lecture by equally surprising speaker

Day 3 (5 October 2020, 14:00 CET). Virtual fieldtrip: “Encounters in fault-line cities – getting a sense of Dnipro”

A view on the city through different eyes: virtual excursion accompanied by locals. Alongside with famous sightseeing sites we will visit three contested locations, accompanied by the locals’ personal comments and opinions. Different stories will be told.

Discussant: Sven Daniel Wolfe (University of Lausanne)

“Co-presence might be an important precursor to interaction in public space... When society is particularly divided ... its importance is greater still” (Rokem 2017), public space has the potential to “reassemble what society divides” (Hanson and Hillier, 1987).

Day 4 (9 October 2020, 14:00 CET). Lecture, followed by discussion, on “The causes and consequences of the war in eastern Ukraine: An economic geography perspective”

Vlad Mykhnenko (University of Oxford)

The lecture provides an economic geography perspective on the causes and consequences of the war in eastern Ukraine. It focuses on the controversial proposition that the armed conflict in 2014 was triggered by domestic, economically determined factors. Economic and material circumstances in the region had generated neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for a locally rooted, internally driven armed conflict. The role of the Kremlin’s military intervention was paramount for the commencement of hostilities. As the human and economic costs of the war continue to mount, Ukraine’s war-ravaged eastern regions face further depopulation, economic decline and erosion of development.

“The ongoing armed conflict in the Ukrainian Donbas was not economically determined and cannot be explained in terms of economic rationality. Despite the existence of some long-term baseline separatism, Donbas was neither outstandingly prosperous nor excessively economically depressed—relative to the rest of Ukraine—to warrant an armed uprising of its own volition. Even if one assents to the historical materialist perspective that the social structures of production condition social relations in the final reading, the evidence ... points to the paramount role of exogenous political agency and of endogenous military geography in explaining the outbreak of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine” (Mykhnenko2020: 555)