

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

"Russo-Ukrainian relations seen through the prism of history of literature " with Natalia Pylypiuk, Oleh Ilnytskyj and Mykola Riabchuk.

Time: Friday, 23 October, 13:00-15:00

Venue: UCRS Library, Gamla Torget 3, 3rd floor

Language: English

Moderator: Elena Namli.

In his presentation Professor Oleh Ilnytskyj will explore Ukrainian-Russian relations through the prism Nikolai Gogol literary works. His starting point will be that the binary "national" approach to the debate (is he Ukrainian or Russian?) misses an important point, namely, that Gogol lived in "Imperial Culture." Prof. Ilnytskyj will discuss the implication of this third category for interpreting the identity and nationality of Gogol.

Oleh Ilnytskyj is professor of Ukrainian Literature, Language & Culture at the University of Alberta. He is also the editor-in-chief of *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* (ewjus.com). His research interests lie in the area of Ukrainian-Russian cultural relations during the first half of the nineteenth century (Gogol, specifically) and the modernist period.

The title of Professor Natalia Pylypiuk's talk is "Politics and Theology in early-Modern Ukrainian Literature." During the presentation the following points will be addressed. First, the impact of Magdeburg Law and Ciceronian rhetoric on the formation of civil society in the 17th & 18th century, as reflected in two literary creations, one from 1622, the other from 1704. Second, Neo-Latin education and doctrinal differences between Ukrainian and Russian Orthodoxy, especially the doctrine of transubstantiation in Peter Mohyla's *Catechism*, and the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception in Dmytro Tuhtalo's *Lives of Saints* (vol. i), which led to the censoring (and even burning) of Ukrainian books in Muscovy.

Natalia Pylypiuk is professor of Ukrainian Culture, Language & Literature at the Department of Languages & Cultural Studies, University of Alberta. Professor Pylypiuk's research is dedicated mostly to the Early-Modern period and has covered such topics as the moral theology and mysticism of Skovoroda, the poetics of *carmina curiosa* in Ioan Velychkovsky, and the religious plays written in the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Mykola Riabchuk will discuss the current state of the Russian-Ukrainian literary relations that undergo their lowest point since 1991, when the two nations and cultures broke apart and paved their own ways in a suddenly opened, globalized world, beyond the Soviet imperial ideology and institutions that bound them together. The Russo-Ukrainian war has only exacerbated the process of mutual alienation that began as far as in the mid-19th century, got a full stream by the late 19th - early 20th century, and was only partially frozen by the Soviet repressive policies. However important are efforts of minor groups and individuals to maintain a positive Russian-Ukrainian dialogue, a radical change is impossible as long as Russian intellectuals expose a superior, patronizing view of what they believe are their "younger brothers" (or "village cousins") and share en masse an odd Putinist claim that Ukrainians are "almost the same people". See a related article:

<http://www.staff.amu.edu.pl/~comparis/attachments/article/333/Mykola%20Riabchuk.pdf>

Mykola Riabchuk is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Political and Nationalities' Studies in

Kyiv and a lecturer at the Center of East European Studies, University of Warsaw. Since 2014, he is also the president of Ukrainian PEN-center. He penned many books and articles on various problems of postcommunist transformation, national identity and nationalism, including “De la petit Russie a l’Ukraine” (Paris 2003), “Die reale un die imaginierte Ukraine” (Berlin 2006), “Gleichschaltung. Authoritarian Consolidation in Ukraine, 2010-2012” (Kyiv 2012), and “Ukraina. Syndrom postkolonialny” (Wroclaw 2015).

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