



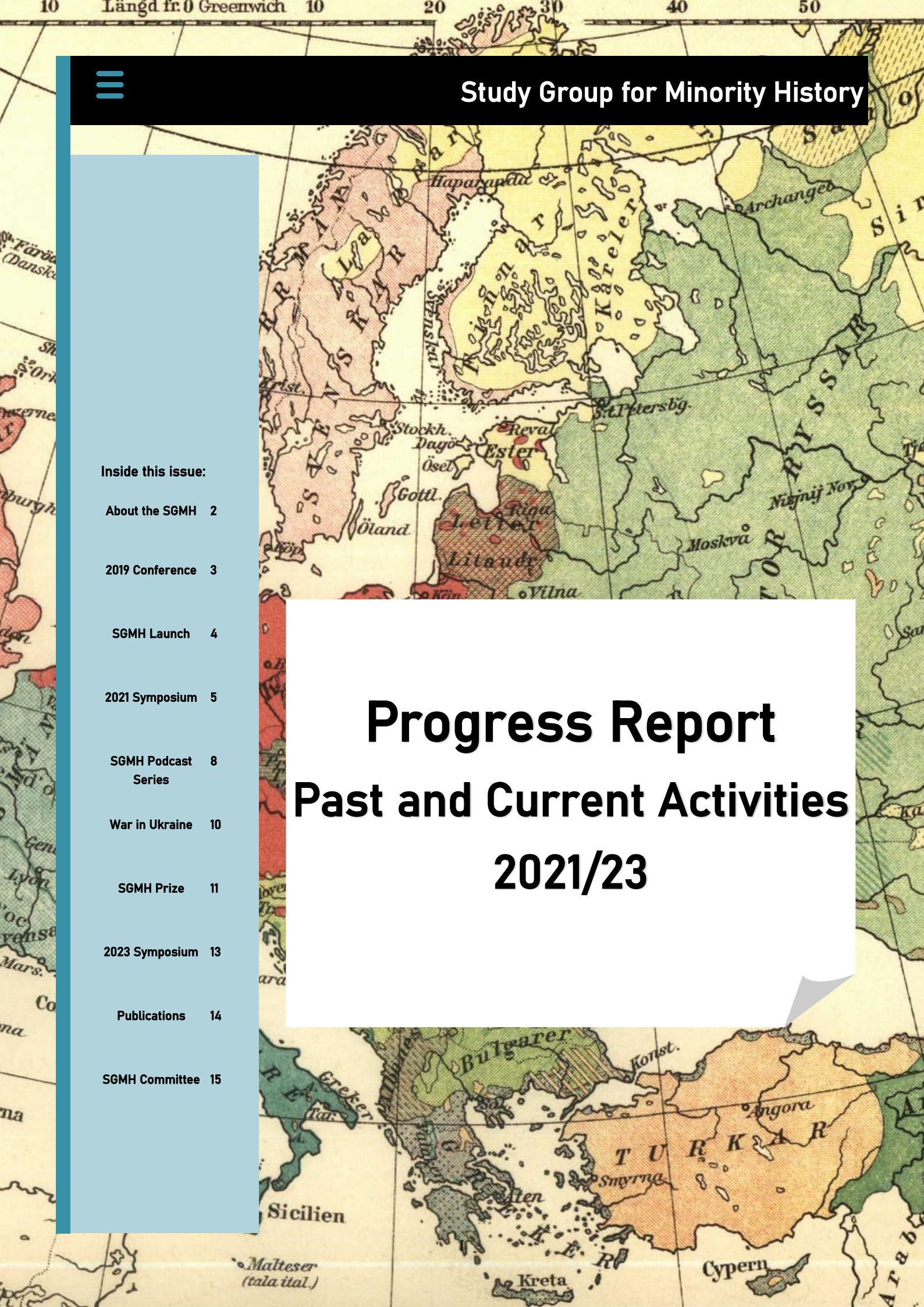
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Progress Report

Past and Current Activities

2021/23





The Study Group for Minority History (SGMH) is a forum devoted to the study of minority groups in the national and regional histories of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe from the Napoleonic Wars to the contemporary past. Its key aim is to assist scholars, currently working in this area of inquiry by fostering international networks to help promote and share their research. It also seeks to encourage collaborative forms of scholarship across different aspects of minority history such as the evolution of identity, diaspora-formation, inter-communal engagements, the development of cultural institutions, relations with states and state actors and the impact of regional conflicts. In addition, the SGMH aims to encourage the use of new methodologies, interdisciplinary scholarly approaches and theoretical frameworks in the study of minority groups.

The SGMH main activities include:

- ⇒ a biannual 2-day workshop allowing scholars to present and receive feedback on their current research;
- ⇒ events organised through the BASEES Annual Conference including panels, roundtables and symposia;
- ⇒ publication of papers presented at the SGMH events in relevant peer-review journals, as well as non-specialist publications dedicated to the on-going research in the field.

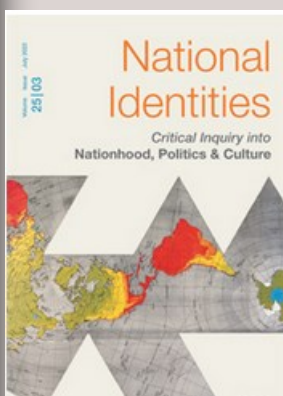
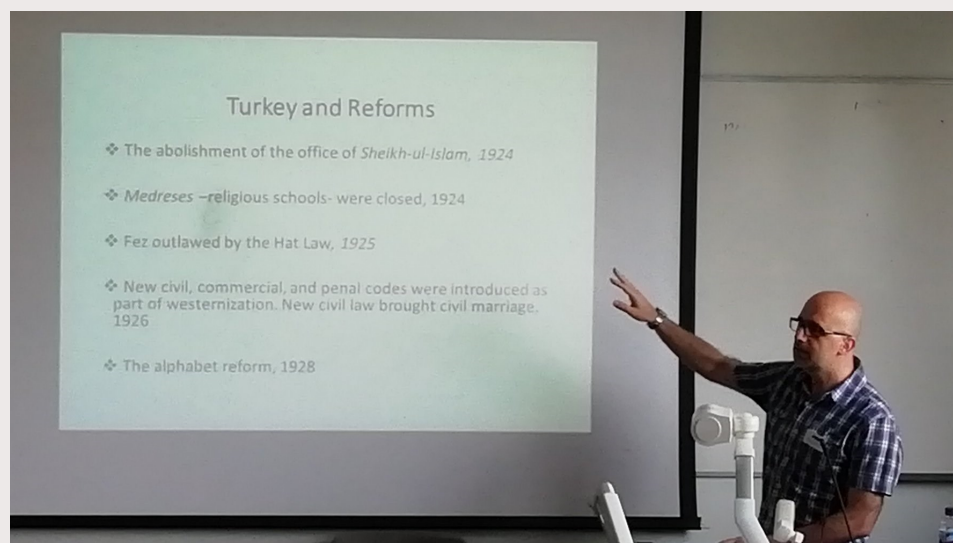
The SGMH is open to all scholars working in relevant research areas at academic institutions from across the UK and internationally. Registration and membership are free.

For further information, membership inquiry and/or to join our mailing list please e-mail:
sgmh.basees@gmail.com

2019 Conference: Contested Minorities in the New Europe

Prior to the Study Group for Minority History's (SGMH) founding in May 2020, the idea of establishing a research network focused on the modern history of minority groups in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe was initially proposed by our founding co-conveners **Olena Palko** (University of Basel, Switzerland) and **Samuel Foster** (University of East Anglia/University of Gloucestershire, UK). It would ultimately grow out of a two-day academic symposium, '[Contested Minorities in the New Europe: National Identity from the Baltics to the Balkans, 1918-1939](#)', organized by Olena Palko and Samuel Foster and hosted at Birkbeck, University of London, in June 2019. Bringing together a broad, international range of scholars, the symposium proved an immense success, having attracted financial and logistical support from BASEES, *Past and Present*, the Royal Historical Society and Birkbeck's Department of History, Classics and Archeology.

The event's overall success granted us the impetus to pursue the future establishment of a new research network that would eventually crystallize as the SGMH.



Post-conference Special Issue in *National Identities*

Five of the symposium's contributing papers were revised and published in a [special issue of the journal *National Identities*](#) in March 2021 as our first listed publication. The special issue includes contributions from Olena Palko, Samuel Foster, Anca Filipovici, Stephan Stach, Petru Negura, Giuseppe Motta, and Mart Kuldkepp

2020

Following a period of consultation with BASEES' organising committee, the Study Group for Minority History was officially founded at the beginning of May 2020. The [official website](#) was launched later that month alongside a corresponding social media presence. It was also decided that a biennial symposium, in the model of 'Contested Minorities', would serve as its flagship event, with smaller projects being pursued in the intervening years. At its heart, the SGMH has remained primarily concerned with helping postgraduate and early-career scholars from Eastern and Southeastern Europe to share and promote their research through wider international engagement.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Study Group's activities were initially restricted to building an online presence, identifying potential partners for collaboration and preparing the forthcoming special issue of *National Identities*. Towards the end of 2020, we began planning for our first biennial symposium, approaching potential sponsors while monitoring the evolving international health situation. A call for papers was released in October, taking into account the uncertainties surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December we were delighted to welcome **Pierre Van Cutsem**, a Literary Studies PhD candidate at the University of Silesia in Katowice, in Poland, to serve as the SGMH's Communications Assistant.

2021 Symposium: Being a Minority in Times of Catastrophe'

Unsurprisingly, much of 2021 was shaped by ongoing developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. February saw the release of our first biennial symposium programme, with Mark Levene (University of Southampton) confirmed as our keynote speaker. The symposium's theme, '[Being a Minority in Times of Catastrophe](#)', broadly explored how periods of historical crisis impacted and often shaped minority identities and relations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



However, despite successfully securing funding grants from BASEES, *Past and Present* and the Royal Historical Society, having initially considered a hybrid format, by the beginning of April it was decided that the event would be fully online owing to continued restrictions on international travel. The symposium itself took place on 25-26 June over Zoom, and, as in 2019, brought together a broad range of scholars, of whom the majority were based at institutions outside of the United Kingdom.

Post-conference Special Issue in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*

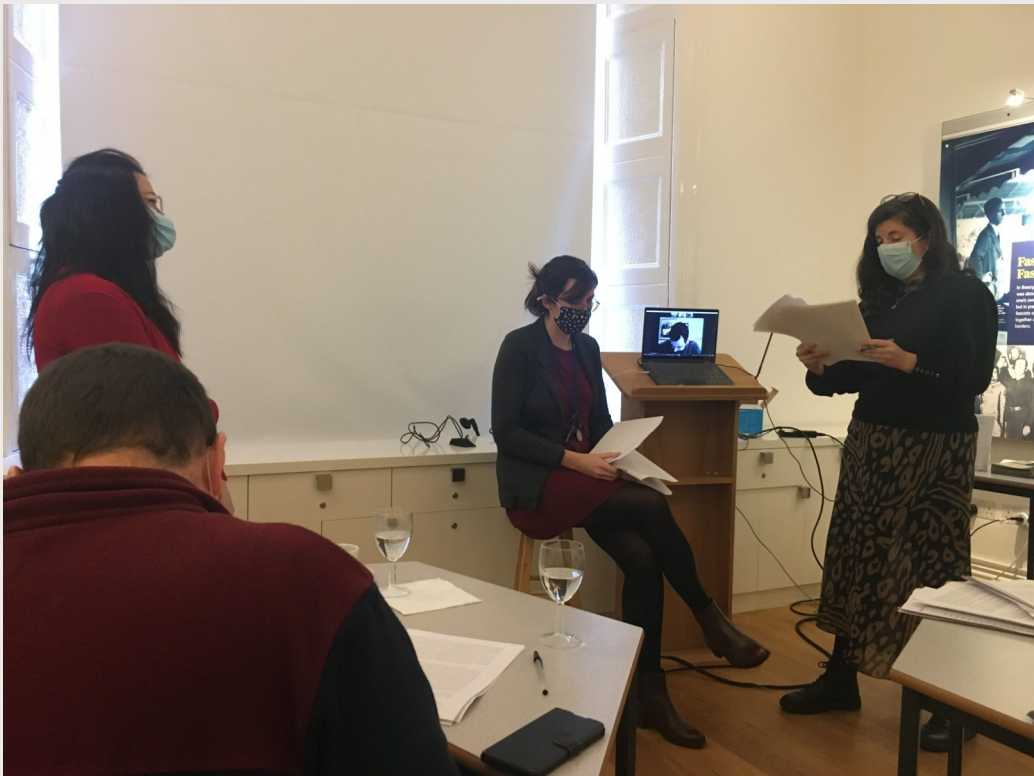


Four of the presentations were selected for publication in a special issue of the journal *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, featuring articles by Samuel Foster, Anca Filipovici, Igor Vucadinovic, Barbara Warnock and Elise Bath.

2021: Authors' workshop, London

Besides the ongoing release of our podcast series, the SGMH concluded its second year with our first live event: a special author's workshop held at the Wiener Holocaust Library in London on 22 October. Serving as a follow-up to the online June symposium, the workshop brought together our JGO special issue's contributing authors in order to discuss and provide feedback on their research. The issue itself is currently scheduled for publication either in late 2023 or early 2024.

**The
Wiener
Library**
for the Study of
the Holocaust
& Genocide



2022

Despite being an intermittent year for our biennial symposium, 2022 proved to be the busiest for the SGMH activity-wise. As well as the ongoing release of the podcast series, on 4 February we organised an online roundtable in collaboration with the Leibniz-Institut für Ost- & Südosteuropaforschung, that reunited several of our contributing presenters and authors from 2019 to discuss the various themes and wider questions raised at our next symposium 'Contested Minorities in the New Europe'. The main discussion was recorded and subsequently released as a [podcast episode](#).



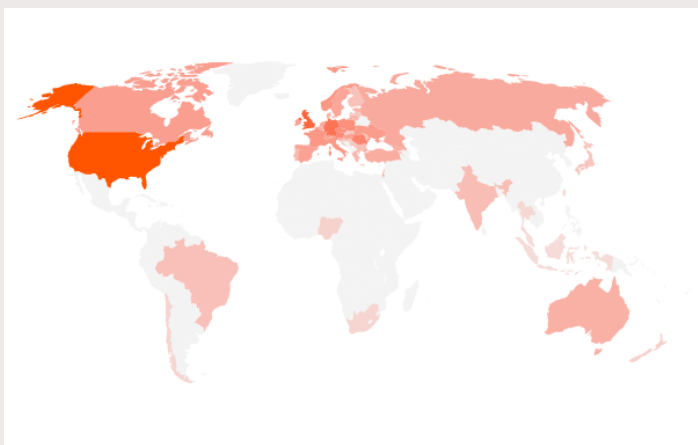
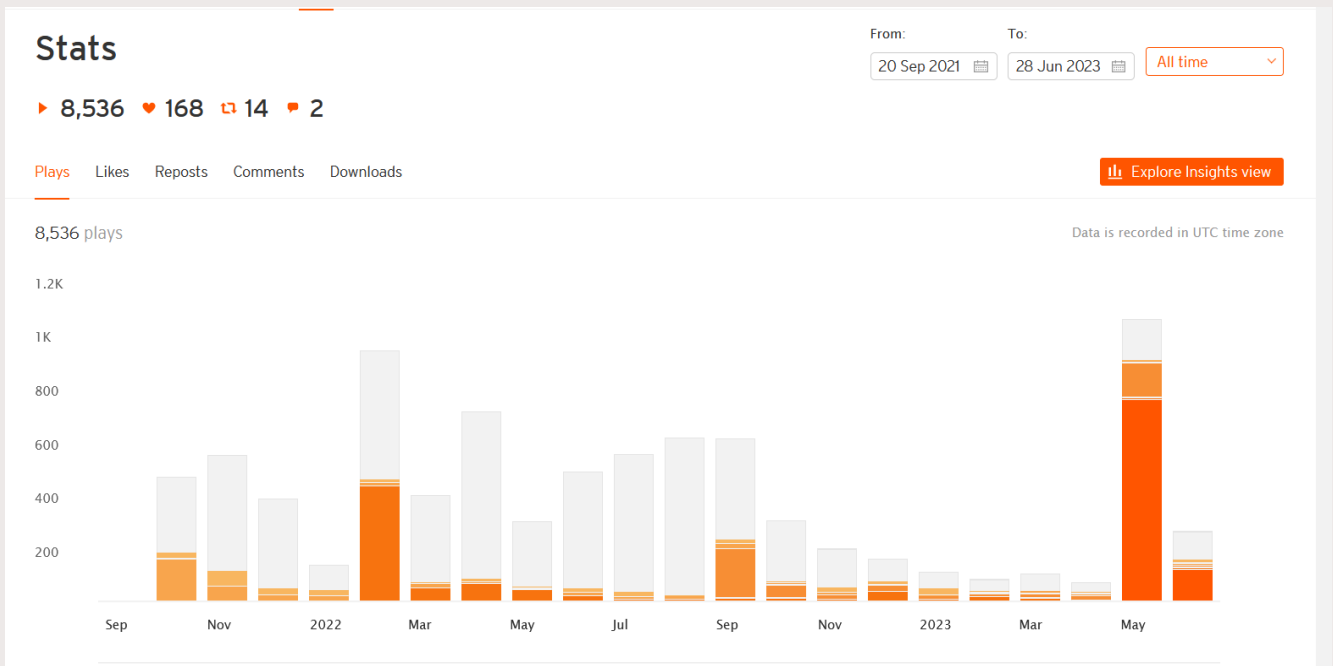
April 2022 also saw the return of the BASEES Annual Conference, following a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. Owing to other commitments, it was decided that we would keep the SGMH's presence fairly limited. However, a couple of panels, 'Revisiting the Polish vector in Soviet history and politics' and 'Digital mapping as a tool of historical research and teaching' were organised with SGMH sponsorship.



The latter half of the year saw a gradual expansion of the SGMH's wider activities. In September, we were delighted to welcome **Raul Cârstocea** (National University of Ireland, Maynooth) as our third co-convenor.

2021/22: Podcast Series: Eastern Europe's Minorities in a Century of Change

In honour of the Institute for Historical Research's centenary, September 2021 saw the launch of our first podcast series, '[Eastern Europe's Minorities in a Century of Change](#)'. Through a series of interviews and panels, the podcasts investigate the roles minority groups, broadly defined, played in this vast and complex region spanning the Baltic Sea to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Rhine to the Ural Mountains. So far, we recorded 33 podcasts, released in three seasons.



Geography of the Podcast listeners

2022: “Minorities on Screen”



Throughout the rest of the year, the SGMH continued its work in promoting the culture and history of Ukraine. This included a screening of the 1926 Soviet Ukrainian film *Alim* in collaboration with the Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image in London on 29 April. This screening represented our first event directly open to the public.

The screening itself attracted considerable interest, being prefaced by an introduction from our co-organiser Olena Palko and a short lecture, outlining the film’s historical background, from Stefan Lacny, a PhD candidate currently studying early Soviet film at the University of Cambridge’s Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics. The screening was then followed by a brief Q&A in which both presenters responded to questions from the audience regarding the history of *Alim*’s production and its folkloric source material.



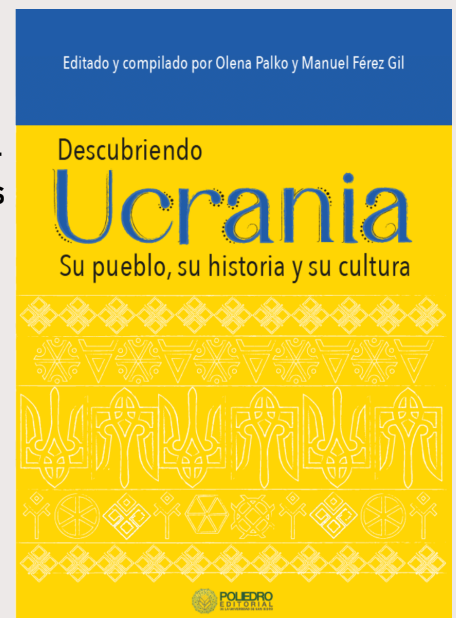
2022: Russia's War against Ukraine

In light of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, the SGMH organized a series of talks by several emerging and recognised academic experts, entitled 'Discover Ukraine: History, Culture and its People'. This was run as a collaboration with *Oriente Medio News*, Universidad Internacional de Cuernavaca and URIS Ukrainian Research in Switzerland with the aim of promoting awareness of Ukrainian history internationally, notably in South America, while also working to raise funds for Razom Emergency Response.

This series of talks has been designed to offer a scholarly overview of Ukraine's history, culture and identity. It is intended for all those wishing to learn more about Ukraine, its past and its present. The lecture series consisted of eight lectures by leading scholars: Fabian Baumann (Chicago), Stephan Rindlisbacher (Frankfurt/Oder), Olena Palko (Basel), (Jan Rybak (London), Bohdan Tokarsky (Potsdam), Boris Belge (Basel), Liubov Lankina (Mexico/City), Anna Chebotarova (Oslo).

This series of talks has since led to the publication of *Descubriendo Ucrania. Su pueblo, su historia y su cultura* in October 2022, a compilation of articles, sources and interviews edited by Olena Palko and Manuel F rez Gil (University Alberto Hurtado in Santiago de Chile).

The printed version was supported by the Representaci n Central Ucrania in la Rep blica Argentina, and was presented at the Buenos Aires Book Fair in 2023.



Discover Ukraine: history, culture and its people
Lecturers are recognised experts on Ukraine

In recent weeks, Ukraine has become the focus of world media covering the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Behind those headlines, remain the complex developments in Ukraine's history, national identity, culture and society. This course has been designed to offer a scholarly overview of Ukraine's history, culture and identity. It is intended for all those wishing to learn more about Ukraine, its past and present.

Course organized by Olena Palko and Manuel F rez

Lecture Series organised by the BASEES Study Group for Minority History, Oriente Medio News, Universidad Internacional de Cuernavaca, URIS Ukrainian Research in Switzerland, C rculo Israelita de Santiago and Bnei Brith Chile.

Course sessions 14:00 - Mexico | 15:00 - Chile | 20:00 - U.K. | 22:00 - Ukraine

<p>Session 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between Empires: Ukraine in the Nineteenth Century. Lecturer: Fabian Baumann, University of Chicago. April 13. 	<p>Session 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Territory of Ukraine and Its History. Lecturer: Stephan Rindlisbacher, European University Viadrina. April 20. 	<p>Session 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The many Faces of Ukraine: Ukraine's Ethnic Diversity Lecturer: Olena Palko, Birkbeck, University of London. April 27. 	<p>Session 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destruction, Revolution, and Autonomy: Jews in Early 20th Century Ukraine. Lecturer: Jan Rybak, Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism. May 4.
<p>Session 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ABC of Ukrainian literature: Resilience, Diversity, Tradition Lecturer: Bohdan Tokarsky, University of Potsdam. May 11. 	<p>Session 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Grain of Wheat to Gas Pipeline: Ukraine's Economy from the 18th to the 21st century. Lecturer: Boris Belge, University of Basel. May 18. 	<p>Session 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origins of Slavic mythology: Historical tradition and contemporary reality. Lecturer: Liubov Lankina, Universidad Internacional de Cuernavaca. May 25. 	<p>Session 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Society in turbulent times: Ukraine after 2014 Lecturer: Anna Chebotarova, University of Oslo. June 1.

Registration: <https://forms.gle/ppdGMTH4z7mxR0d>
Donations for Ukraine: <https://razomforukraine.org/razom-emergency-response/>



2022: SGMH First Book Proposal Prize

In 2022, the SGMH launched the SGMH [First Book Proposal Prize](#), a biennial award designed to assist early-career scholars in publishing a first academic monograph in English. This involves the awarding of a small monetary prize alongside the recipient also receiving advice and assistance with the publication process

Following an unexpectedly high number of applications, in February the SGMH's First Book Proposal Prize, was awarded to Vita Zalar (Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana) for her project *The Political Economy of Antigypsyism: Habsburg and Post-Habsburg Perspectives*. Submissions from Thomas Loyd (University of Cardiff) and Elżbieta Kwiecińska (University of Warsaw) received honourable mentions. The prize was officially awarded at the 2023 BASEES Annual Conference at Glasgow,



Photo by Jen Vander Heide

The expert committee for the 2023 cycle consisted of:

Raul Cârstocea, Maynooth University

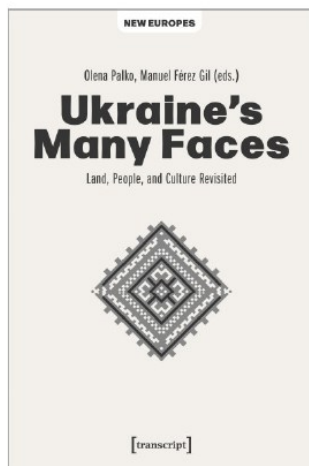
Doina Anca Cretu, Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences

Samuel Foster, University of East Anglia

Siobhán Hearne, University of Durham

Olena Palko, University of Basel

Jan Rybak, Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism



Olena Palko / Manuel Férez Gil (eds.)

Ukraine's Many Faces

Land, People, and Culture Revisited

Russia's large-scale invasion on the 24th of February 2022 once again made Ukraine the focus of world media. Behind those headlines remain the complex developments in Ukraine's history, national identity, culture and society. Addressing readers from diverse backgrounds, this volume approaches the history of Ukraine and its people through primary sources, from the early modern period to the present. Each document is followed by an essay written by an expert on the period, and a conversational piece touching on the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine. In this ground-breaking collection, Ukraine's history is sensitively accounted for by scholars inviting the readers to revisit the country's history and culture.

With a foreword by Olesya Khromeychuk.

Print, 48,00 EUR

7/2023, 402 Seiten kart.,
Dispersionsbindung, 12
SW-Abbildungen, 11
Farbabbildungen
ISBN 978-3-8376-6664-9

E-Book (PDF), Open Access EUR

7/2023, 402 Seiten 12
SW-Abbildungen, 11
Farbabbildungen
ISBN 978-3-8394-6664-3

E-Book (EPUB), Open Access EUR

7/2023, 402 Seiten 12
SW-Abbildungen, 11
Farbabbildungen
ISBN 978-3-7328-6664-9

Endorsements "The thought-provoking contributions in this volume will clarify some of the unfamiliar pages of Ukrainian history and identity. They shed light on the origins of the complex identity of Ukraine, its imperial past, the contradictions of the interwar Soviet period, and the present, showing that modern war is not accidental or caused by the sick imagination of one person. The reader has the opportunity to see in the actions of the Russian aggressor a kind of attempt to reconstruct the Soviet period of nation-building in Ukraine during the interwar period, to understand the reaction of the Ukrainian people as another attempt to protect its independence and freedom." (Olga Ryabchenko, Professor, Head of the Department of World History at the H. Skovoroda Kharkiv National University and Visiting Scholar, University of Cambridge)

"There is no other comparable publication on Ukraine with this specific methodological approach. Ukraine, its history and present, has to be (re)introduced to anglophone Non-Ukrainians and this not only in the light of the ongoing Russian war of aggression against this largest country of Europe but with regard to Ukraine as a sui generis case of European-type statehood and national identity. Each of the three sections is divided into ›primary sources‹, ›conversation pieces‹ and ›analytical articles‹. A particular strength are the ›conversation pieces‹ in the three section is the didactic value of the book. This makes it also an excellent textbook for highschool and university teaching." (Stefan Troebst, Professor of East European Cultural History, Leipzig University, former Deputy Director of the Leipzig Centre for the History and Culture of East-Central Europe, GWZO)

Olena Palko

Universität Basel, Schweiz

Manuel Férez Gil

University Alberto Hurtado in Santiago de Chile, Chile

Schlagworte

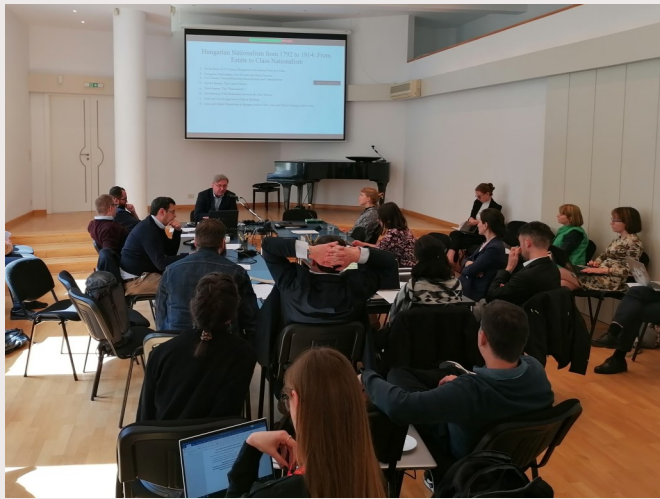
Ukraine, History, Culture, Identity, War, Memory Culture, Cultural History, Eastern European History, Social History, History of the 20th Century

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2023: Minorities at War from Napoleon to Putin

The current year has, to date, been largely focused on preparing for organising and following up on the SGMH's second biennial symposium. Preparations continued throughout the beginning of the year with the SGMH forming a collaborative partnership with Constantin Ardeleanu ("Lower Danube" University of Galați, Romania) and the New Europe College (NEC) in Bucharest, we agreed to host our event in early May. As a result of this partnership, we were also able to secure funding from one of NEC's key sponsors, the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland.



The third biennial symposium of the BASEES Study Group for Minority History (SGMH) took place on 11.-12. May 2023 in the New Europe College, Bucharest. It was supported by the Centre of Culture and Governance in Europe at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland). The organizers facilitated a broad temporal and geographical approach, making a significant contribution to challenging the perpetual and potential victimhood of minorities and emphasizing their diverse roles within the context of war across the local, national, and regional levels.

in April we were delighted to welcome **Julia Elena Grieder**, a History PhD candidate at the University of Basel, to the executive team as the SGMH's new Subscriptions Officer.

Full conference report and the programme can be found [here](#).

Our Publications

1. Olena Palko, and Samuel Foster (eds). Contested Minorities in the 'New Europe': National Identities from the Baltics to the Balkans, 1918–1939', *National Identities*, 2021, Vol.23, No.4
2. Olena Palko y Manuel Férez Gil (eds.) *Descubriendo Ucrania. Su pueblo, su historia y su cultura*. (Poliedro Editorial de la Universidad de San Isidro, 2022) ISBN 978-987-48799-4-3
3. Palko, O. and Whitewood, P. (eds.) "Revisiting the Polish Vector in Soviet History and Politics", *Revolutionary Russia*, Volume 35, Issue 2 (2022)
4. Olena Palko y Manuel Férez Gil (eds.), *Descubriendo Ucrania. Su pueblo, su historia y su cultura* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Antigua, 2023)
5. Olena Palko and Manuel Férez Gil (eds.) *Ukraine's Many Faces. Land, People, and Culture Revisited*. With a foreword by Olesya Khromeychuk (Bielfield: Transcript Verlag, 2023) (Book series New Europes)
6. Olena Palko and Samuel Foster (eds.) Being a Minority in Times of Crisis, forthcoming in the *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*

SGMH Committee



Dr [Olena Palko](#) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of History, University of Basel (Switzerland). She is the author of several publications on early Soviet cultural history in Ukraine. Her current project "[Red Tower of Babel: Soviet minorities experiment in interwar Ukraine](#)" investigates the Soviet nationalities policies during the interwar period. She is the author of '[Making Ukraine Soviet. Literature and Cultural Politics under Lenin and Stalin](#)' (Bloomsbury Academic, 2020) and a co-editor of '[Making Ukraine. Negotiating, Contesting, and Drawing the Borders in the Twentieth Century](#)' (MQUP, 2022)

Dr [Samuel Foster](#) is a Lecturer at the University of East Anglia's School of History, and the University of Gloucestershire. He received his PhD at the University of East Anglia, where he also served as project manager for the John Corsellis Archive. His research focuses on the First World War in the (pre-)Yugoslavian Balkans on which he has written and presented extensively including contributions to the BBC and *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. He is the author of '[Yugoslavia in the British Imagination. Peace, War and Peasants before Tito](#)' (Bloomsbury Academic, 2021)



Dr [Raul Cârstocea](#) is an Assistant Professor in Twentieth-Century European History at Maynooth University (Ireland). He is the co-editor, with Éva Kovács, of [Modern Antisemitisms in the Peripheries: Europe and its Colonies, 1880-1945](#) (Vienna, 2019), and the author of numerous publications on antisemitism, fascism, nationalism and nation-building projects in Eastern Europe and their impact on minority groups. He is co-editor of the series [Modern Histories of Politics and Violence](#) at Bloomsbury Academic and Vice-Chair of the Scientific Advisory Council of the [Observatory on History Teaching in Europe at the Council of Europe](#).



SGMH Communication assistant: Pierre Van Cutsem (he/his) a scholar and translator of Polish weird fiction writer Stefan Grabiński. Pierre is currently a PhD student at the doctoral school of the *Uniwersytet Śląski w Katowicach* (Poland).



Subscription officer: Julia Elena Grieder is currently a PhD candidate in Eastern European History at the University of Basel. Her research is dedicated to non-titular minorities in newly implemented territories of post-war Soviet Ukraine.

studygroupforminorityhistory.com

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Facebook: BASEES Study Group
for Minority History

Twitter: @BaseesSGMH

Credits:

Text by Samuel Foster

Design by Olena Palko

Photos are by the SGMH committee members, unless stated otherwise



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study group
for minority history