



**23.2.2017
18.00H
KOL-G-217**



Key-note & roundtable discussion

***VIACHESLAV MOROZOV (TARTU):*
RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE ISSUE OF LEGITIMACY**

With: Jeronim Perovic (University of Zurich) & Ivo Mijnsen (NZZ)

Russian foreign policy has experienced dramatic shifts in the past decade as the Kremlin refrained less and less from military intervention abroad. While the conflict in Georgia (2008) triggered harsh verbal reactions in the West, it had few consequences for the bilateral ties. Instead, Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 deeply shook East-West relations. Russian military intervention in Syria brought Russia back to the world stage and underscored its ambition to be more than a "regional power". While all these cases can be treated from a "raison-d'état" perspective as an attempt to secure spheres of influence and maintain a balance of power, the proposed international conference aims at explaining this international involvement of Russia taking a historical perspective. To this end, it assumes a widely constructivist stance and puts questions of political and national identity at its centre. Identity politics are, once more, a determining factor not only in Russian but generally in European and international politics. For example, Russian politics seems to have rediscovered a "russkii mir", a Russian world beyond its borders, composed of "compatriots", who must be defended. In Syria, Russian has seized its opportunity to reaffirm ties which go back well into the 1970s. Syria, however, is also a plane on which "great-power identities", and issues of statehood, sovereignty, and of the rules in the international system can be reiterated. The interdisciplinary workshop tackles the problem of identity and foreign policy through four different panels, which explicitly address historical and contemporary questions, unravelling the roots of key concepts that shape Russian foreign policy in the past and present.

Philipp Casula
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Guests are kindly requested to register in advance with Felix Rehschuh: Felix.Rehschuh@hist.uzh.ch

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