



The Idea and Futures of Europe

A Workshop

May 23-25

In May 2023, The Center for European Studies, Rutgers University, Simon Fraser University's Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies, in collaboration with Università per Stranieri di Siena will host a conference in Siena with the title, "The Idea and Futures of Europe."

Siena is an ideal space for such a workshop for two reasons. Its status as a Medieval city puts it in an angled relation with a certain narrative of Europe as the endpoint of civilization, which requires a line from antiquity to Renaissance to Enlightenment. At the same time, because of its location as the site of the University for Foreign Students (founded 30 years ago), Siena has a tradition of hosting students from all over the world—in more recent times also thousands of migrants. This makes it a perfect location for a workshop reflecting on how Europe has transformed in the last few decades, what it is becoming, where it is likely to go... and adds to its appeal as a space to host the workshop's investment in immigration and refugee issues as central to Europe's future.

Comprising historians, literary and cultural critics, linguists and anthropologists, this workshop invites scholars from diverse disciplines and methodological orientations to reflect on the idea of Europe, the challenges facing Europe as ethnonationalism rises, the political-economic crises precipitated in the European South and East by the neoliberal capture of the European union, as well as those precipitated by the refugee and migrant presence in the absence of an adequate reckoning with Europe's colonial past and its continuing colonial practices in Africa.

Workshop Program

Day One 23 May

10:00 am: Opening Remarks
Università per Stranieri di Siena
Piazza Rosselli 27-28
Room 1

10:15 –11:45

Postcolonial Questions

Moderator Sadia Abbas, Rutgers University

1. Faisal Devji, Oxford University
Postcolonial Europe
2. Gary Wilder, CUNY
Caribbean Polis: Thinking with C.L.R. James about Socialism, Democracy, and the Good Life

11:45 -12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 - 14:15

Ideas of Europe

Moderator, Stefano Baldassarri, ISI Florence

3. Roberta Morosini, Università di Napoli L'Orientale
"Di là da Gade, e di qua presso il lito" Dante, Europa's Forced Travel and Maps. A Mediterraneanocentric Perspective.
4. Sadia Abbas, Rutgers University
Revenant Ruin, or A Question of Europe
5. Belinda Davis, Rutgers University
On Why We Should Not Call Europe 'the West'

14:30-15:30 Light Lunch

15:45 - 17:15

Futures

Moderator, Belinda Davis, Rutgers University

6. Stefan Jonsson, Linköping University
The Futures of Europe Arrives from the Peripheries: Notes on the Southern, Eastern and Northern Borders

7. Caterina Romeo, Sapienza Università di Roma
Memories of the Future: Intersectional Representations and Transnational Migrations

20:00 Dinner at at Compagnia dei Vinattieri (Via delle Terme 79)

Day Two 24 May

Università per Stranieri di Siena

Via Pispini 1

10:00 – 13:15

Europe East-West

Moderator: Alessandro Vettori, Rutgers University

1. Diana Mishkova, Center for Advanced Study, Sophia
The 'Grey Zone' Byzantium
2. Dimitris Krallis, Simon Fraser University
Reflections on European Pasts Ignored: Taxes, State Power, and the Measuring of Society in a Forgotten Europe

Break

3. Nancy Condee, University of Pittsburgh
Eastern Relokanty in Western Europe: Stranded between World Culture and Decolonization
4. Ileana Nachescu, Rutgers University
Rethinking Europe from an Eastern European Feminist perspective: Migration, Ecofeminism, Postsocialism

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:45 Visit/Guided tour of the Palazzo Pubblico

15:45 – 17:15

Borders

Moderator, Phevos Simeonidis

5. Shahram Khosravi, University of Stockholm
Borders as the Ruins of the Future
6. Maurizio Ambrosini, University of Milan
Fortress Europe? Borders, Selective Admissions, Civic Stratification

17.15 – 17.30 Coffee Break

17:30 - 18:45

A Poetry Recitation and Conversation

Khaled Mattawa, University of Michigan

Rescue Zones: Remapping the Mediterranean

Day Three 25 May

Università per Stranieri di Siena

Via Pispini 1

10:00 - 11:30

African Engagements

Moderator, Dimitris Krallis, Simon Fraser University

1. Rosalind Morris, Columbia University
What is Europe in and for Africa?
2. Zakiya Salime Rutgers University
The 'Sahara' as Energy Infrastructure. (Online)

Break

11:45 – 13:15

Migration

Moderator, Faisal Devji, Oxford University

3. Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi, Rutgers University

- a. *Erotic Apprehension: Mutual Incorporation of Syrians and Germans*
- 4. Carla Bagna, University for Foreigners of Siena.
 - b. *Migrations, Linguistic landscape and Educational Linguistics: a Perspective Pre- and Post-Pandemic Period for Italian Studies*

13:15 - 14:00 Closing Remarks

Participant bios:

Sadia Abbas, Rutgers University
Revenant Ruin, or A Questions of Europe

Sadia Abbas is director of the Center for European Studies at Rutgers-New Brunswick and associate professor of postcolonial studies at Rutgers University-Newark. She is the author of [*At Freedom's Limit: Islam and the Postcolonial Predicament*](#), winner of the MLA first book award, and the novel [*The Empty Room*](#), shortlisted for the DSC prize for South Asian Literature, and co-editor (with Jan Howard of the RISD museum) of *Shahzia Sikander: [Extraordinary Realities](#)*, a volume on Shahzia Sikander's art, which was listed as one the best art books of 2021 by the New York Times. She has written numerous essays on subjects including Jesuit poetics and Catholic martyrdom in Early Modern English poetry, neoliberalism and the Greek debt crisis, Pakistani art, the uses of Reformation in contemporary Muslim thought, and Jewish converts to Islam and treatments of subjectivity in contemporary theorizations of Muslim female agency. She has also written essays and opinion pieces for Dawn and Daily Times (the Pakistani dailies), Naya Daur, OpenDemocracy, CommonDreams and TANK magazine. She is currently completing, *Space in Another Time: An Essay on Ruins, Monuments and the Management of Life* about the connected afterlives of ruins and monuments in India, Greece and the Americas and their role in the production and control of racial, religious and ethnic identities. She is co-founder and co-editor of [*Ideas and Futures*](#), a multi-media, interdisciplinary e-journal of culture and politics and Executive Director of Ideas and Futures: A Collaborative for Just and Vibrant Societies.

Maurizio Ambrosini, University of Milan
Fortress Europe? Borders, selective admissions, civic stratification

Maurizio Ambrosini is professor of Sociology of Migration at the university of Milan, Department of Social and Political Sciences, *chargé d'enseignement* at the university of Cote d'Azur (France). He is also the editor of the journal "Mondi Migranti", and the Director of the Italian Summer School of Sociology of Migrations, in Genoa. His handbooks, *Sociologia delle migrazioni*, and *Sociologia* (with L.Sciolla) are adopted as the textbooks in many Italian universities. In English he has published *Irregular Immigration and Invisible Welfare* (Palgrave, 2013) and *Irregular migration in Southern Europe* (Palgrave 2018). His articles have been published on leading international journals. He is also Member of the Scientific Board of the Journal of

Immigrant and Refugee Studies (since 2010 onwards). He is now committed as the head of the Italian unit in the European Project (H2020) MAGYC. [*Migration Governance and Asylum Crises*](#).

In 2017 he was appointed as an Expert at the National Council of Economy and Labour (CNEL), where he leads the commission on Integration Policies for Foreign Citizens.

Carla Bagna, University for Foreigners of Siena
Migrations, Linguistic landscape and Educational Linguistics: a perspective pre and post-pandemic period for the Italian Studies

Carla Bagna is Full professor in Didattica delle Lingue moderne at the University for Foreigners of Siena. She graduated in Foreign Languages and Literatures in 1998 at the University of Pavia and obtained her PhD in Linguistics and Didactics of Italian to Foreigners at the University for Foreigners of Siena with a research on “The prepositions in L2 Italian advanced and proficient learners. Uses and functions of a system in evolution: theoretical reflections and teaching implications”. From 2002 to 2006 she was research fellow on the topic of immigrant languages, being part of the research group at the Centre of Excellence - Permanent Linguistic Observatory for Italian abroad and Immigrant Languages in Italy. From 2006 to 2014 was a researcher in Educational Linguistics and 2014-2021 Associate Professor.

She carries out research on language teaching, in particular L2 Italian, on immigrant languages in Italian society and schools, and on new methodologies for collecting and analysing data on their presence, diffusion, vitality and visibility, in order to study the contexts and conditions of plurilingualism and linguistic contact in Italy, and thus to suggest suitable measures to be taken in language education, linguistic and cultural mediation, Language Testing.

Currently she directs the Language Centre of the University for Foreigners in Siena and she is the Pro-Rector for International Relations at University for Foreigners of Siena.

Stefano Baldassarri, ISI Florence, Moderator

Stefano U. Baldassarri is Director of The International Studies Institute in Florence (ISI Florence), where he was professor of Italian Literature from 2003 to 2013, when he took on his current administrative position. After graduating from the Università di Firenze in 1993, he received his PhD from Yale University in 1999. His research interests include medieval and Renaissance literature, translation studies, and philology. Professor Baldassarri has published monographs and conference proceedings on those topics, as well as essays in scholarly journals such as *Archivio Storico Italiano*, *Rinascimento*, and *Modern Language Notes*. Also, he has edited critical editions of various humanistic works (sometimes with a facing translation in either Italian or English), including Latin texts by Bruni, Loschi, Manetti, and Salutati. In 2000/2001 he was a fellow at Villa I Tatti (The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies).

Nancy Condee, University of Pittsburgh

Eastern Relokanty in Western Europe: stranded between world culture and decolonization

Nancy Condee is on the faculty of Slavic and Film Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. She directs the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies (REEES), one of eleven federal resource centers in the US responsible for supporting experts and preparing the next generation of regionally relevant specialists in policy, law, security, culture, and social analysis.

Belinda Davis, Rutgers University

On Why We Should Not Call Europe 'the West'

Belinda Davis is professor of History at Rutgers University, and author or co-editor of five books, including most recently *Social Movements After '68: Selves and Solidarities in West Germany and Beyond*, ed., with Stephen Milder and Friederike Brühöfener (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2022); and *The Internal Life of Politics: Extraparliamentary Opposition in West Germany, 1962-1983* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). Her new project concerns the problems scholars create and reinforce when they uncritically deploy the terminology of political modernity.

Faisal Devji, Oxford University

Postcolonial Europe

Faisal Devji is professor of Indian History and Fellow of St. Antony's College in the University of Oxford. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and Institute of Public Knowledge Fellow at New York University. He is

Senior Fellow of the School of Criticism and Theory at Cornell University, Inaugural Chair in Gandhi Studies at Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam, Kerala, and has been the Yves Oltramare Chair at the Graduate Institute in Geneva. Devji is the author of four books, *Landscapes of the Jihad: Militancy, Morality, Modernity* (2005), *The Terrorist in Search of Humanity: Militant Islam and Global Politics* (2009), *The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and the Temptation of Violence* (2012) and *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (2013). He is co-editor of *Islam After Liberalism* (2017) and *Political Thought in Action: The Bhagavad Gita and Modern India* (2013) and serves on the editorial boards of journals such as *Public Culture*, *Modern Intellectual History and Humanity* as well as of the monograph series *The Global Middle East* (Cambridge University Press), *Oxford Historical Monographs* (Oxford University Press) and *South Asia in Motion* (Stanford University Press). Devji writes regularly for the press and online magazines including *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, as well as making appearances on the BBC News and World Service and other media outlets in the US, Europe, South Asia, and the Middle East.

Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi, Rutgers University

Erotic Apprehension: Mutual Incorporation of Syrians and Germans

Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi was born in the former “West-Berlin” in a divided Germany, and spent early childhood in Montréal, Paris, and Berlin. He is associate professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University. He is the author of *Pogrom in Gujarat: Hindu Nationalism and Anti-Muslim Violence in India* (Princeton University Press) and *Muslimische Heilige in Gujarat: Sufismus, Synkretismus, und Praxis im westlichen Indien, and editor of Violence: Ethnographic Encounters*. His research has been supported by the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst), SSRC (Social Science Research Council), and the Wenner Gren Foundation.

Stefan Jonsson, Linköping University

The Futures of Europe Arrives from the Peripheries: Notes on the Southern, Eastern and Northern Borders

Stefan Jonsson is professor at the Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society (REMESO), Linköping University, and cultural critic at Sweden’s major newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*. He writes on the political aesthetics and intellectual history of European modernity and coloniality, with particular focus on crowds and collective identities. In addition to numerous books in Swedish, he has published *Subject Without Nation: Robert*

Musil and the History of European Identity (2000); *A Brief History of the Masses* (2008); *Crowds and Democracy* (2013); *Eurafrica* (with Peo Hansen; 2013); and *Austere Histories in European Societies* (edited with Julia Willén; 2016).

Shahram Khosravi, Stockholm University
Borders as the Ruins of the Future

Shahram Khosravi is professor of Anthropology at Stockholm University. His research interests include anthropology of Iran, forced displacement, border studies, and temporality. Khosravi is the author of several books such as: *Young and Defiant in Tehran* (2008); *The Illegal Traveler: an auto-ethnography of borders*, (2010); *Precarious Lives: Waiting and Hope in Iran*, (2017); *After Deportation: Ethnographic Perspectives*, Palgrave (2017, edited volume); *Waiting. A project in Conversation* (2021, edited volume), and *Seeing Like a Smuggler* (2022, edited volume). He has been an active writer in the international press. He is a co-founder of Critical Border Studies, a network for scholars, artists and activists to interact.

Dimitris Krallis, Simon Fraser University
Reflections on European Pasts Ignored: Taxes, State Power, and the Measuring of Society in a Forgotten Europe

Dimitris Krallis was born in Athens where he lived from childhood through his college years. From the University of Athens, where he studied political theory, he moved to Oxford the University of Michigan for training in Byzantine Studies and History. He joined Simon Fraser University in 2006 and today He is a member of the Department of Global Humanities and Director of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies. At SFU he teaches Ancient Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman history broadly defined, and he writes on various aspects of Medieval Roman (a.k.a. Byzantine) intellectual, social, and political history.

Khaled Mattawa, University of Michigan
Rescue Zones: Remapping the Mediterranean—A Poetry Recitation and Discussion

Khaled Mattawa was born in Benghazi, Libya, in 1964 and immigrated to the United States in his teens. His collections of poetry include *Fugitive Atlas* (Graywolf Press, 2020), *Tocqueville* (New Issues, 2010), *Amorisco* (Ausable, 2008), *Zodiac of Echoes* (Ausable, 2003), and *Ismailia Eclipse* (Sheep Meadow Press, 1995). He is also the author of the chapbook collection *Mare Nostrum* (Sarabande Books, 2019) and *Mahmoud Darwish: The Poet's Art*

and *His Nation* (Syracuse University Press, 2014). Mattawa has also translated many volumes of contemporary Arabic poetry and co-edited two anthologies of Arab American literature.

Mattawa is the 2010 recipient of the Academy of American Poets Fellowship, a Guggenheim fellowship, and a MacArthur Fellowship. A Chancellor Emeritus (2014-2019), Mattawa teaches in the graduate creative writing program at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and edits *Michigan Quarterly Review*.

Diana Mishkova, Center for Advanced Study, Sophia
“The ‘grey zone’ Byzantium”

A historian by training, Diana Mishkova has specialized in modern and contemporary history of Southeastern Europe. Having taught at the History Department of Sofia University and a number of European and US universities, since 2000 she has been the director of the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia. Her recent publications include *Beyond Balkanism. The Scholarly Politics of Region Making* (Routledge, 2018) and *Rival Byzantiums: Empire and Identity in Southeastern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). She is the editor of seven international volumes, among them *European Regions and Boundaries. A Conceptual History* (Berghahn Books, 2017), *‘Regimes of Historicity’ in Southeastern and Northern Europe, 1890-1945* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2014); *Entangled Histories of the Balkans. Vols. 2 and 4* (Brill, 2014, 2017). Foreign Corresponding Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Doctor Honoris Causa of Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden, holder of the “Danubius Award” (2022) and the “Konstantin Jireček Medal” (2023).

Rosalind Morris, Columbia University
What is Europe in and for Africa?

Rosalind C. Morris is an anthropologist, cultural theorist and documentarian who is Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University. Her recent discipline-crossing work grows out of more than two decades of field research in southern Africa on the histories of mineral extraction (especially gold mining), and addresses itself to theoretical debates in political philosophy, economic anthropology, literary criticism and media aesthetics, as well as feminist and critical theory. Her most recent books include collaborations with the South African artist, William Kentridge, and a book-length essay on the Enlightenment concept of fetishism as it has influenced twentieth century theory (*The Returns of Fetishism: Charles de Brosses and the Afterlives of an Idea*, with Daniel Leonard). Her media works

include the documentary film, *We are Zama Zama* (currently playing on BBC Africa), and the flexible multi-channel installation, 'The Zama Zama Project' (Berlinale Forum Expanded, 2021). She is also co-librettist, with Yvette Christiansë of the operas, *Southern Crossings* and *Cities of Salt*.

Roberta Morosini, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

"Di là da Gade, e di qua presso il lito" Dante, Europa's forced travel and Maps. A Mediterraneanocentric perspective.

Roberta Morosini is full professor of Italian literature and the Mediterranean at University of L'Orientale in Naples. She joined L'Orientale in 2022 after spending 22 years at Wake Forest University in North Carolina and teaching as a Speroni chair at UCLA. She is the author of several articles and books on the literary Mediterranean as a geocritical and cultural space with a special attention to maps and cartography. Her publications range from reading of the sea as in *Il mare salato. Il Mediterraneo di Dante, Petrarca* (Viella 2020), to Christian-Muslim relationships. Her book on Dante and Islam (*Dante, il Profeta e il Libro*, L'Erma di Bretschneider 2018) and *Boccaccio and the Literary invention of Islam* are forthcoming with L'Erma and DeGruyter, as she prepares to share her studies on the role of the Island Books in the perception of the Atlantic and the Americas.

Ileana Nachescu, Rutgers University

Rethinking Europe from an Eastern European Feminist perspective: Migration, Ecofeminism, Postsocialism

Originally from Romania, Ileana V. Nachescu is Assistant Teaching Professor and Director of Honors with the Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality at Rutgers University. Her monograph titled *The National Alliance of Black Feminists (1974-1983): A History* is forthcoming from the University of Illinois Press. She is at work on a book-length project, *Memoirs of a Socialist Childhood*, which explores the articulations of gender, class, and race in a society of equals, and a research project on Eastern European immigrants and transnational whiteness. Her essay "Ukraine: Beyond the Postsoviet," published in the *Boston Review*, has been translated into Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, and Romanian. Together with Tereza Hendl, she co-founded the speaker series *FeminEast: Eastern European and Eurasian Feminisms*.

Caterina Romeo, (Sapienza Università di Roma)

Memories of the Future: Intersectional Representations and Transnational Migrations

Caterina Romeo is an Associate Professor at Sapienza Università di Roma, where she teaches Literary Theory, Migration Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Gender Studies. Recently she has published the volume *Interrupted Narratives and Intersectional Representations in Italian Postcolonial Literature* (2023) and co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* titled *Intersectional Italy* (2022). She has translated into Italian the work of numerous Italian American women writers, among them Louise DeSalvo and Kym Ragusa. Her essays on the memoir and autobiography, Italian postcolonial literature, intersectionality, representations of Italian Blackness, and Italian American literature and culture have been published in national and international journals and edited volumes.

Zakia Salime. (Rutgers University)
The 'Sahara' as Energy Infrastructure.

Zakia Salime is an Associate Professor of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, and Sociology at Rutgers University. She is a Fulbright Scholar and was The Presidential Visiting Associate Professor in the Department of Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies at Yale University (2016-17), and a Visiting Professor at the University Paris-8 Vincennes- Saint-Denis (2015). She is the author of *Between Feminism and Islam: Human Rights and Sharia Law in Morocco* (Minnesota 2011) and co-editor of *Freedom Without Permission: Bodies and Space in the Arab Revolutions* (Duke 2016). She has published extensively on gender, women's movements, Political Islamism, and youth cultural and political movements in the MENA region. She is working on a book manuscript on gender, resource grab, and land rights in Morocco. She is a co-editor of the book series *African Religions, Social Realities* with Ohio Press and the journal *Souffles-Anfas*. Salime's work was featured in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

Phevos Simeonidis

Phevos Simeonidis is an OSINT & audiovisual forensics researcher and an archivist. He is an MA graduate from the Centre for Research Architecture, a researcher and investigative partner of OmniaTv and The Manifold, and the former director and co-founder of Disinfo Collective in Athens, Greece. As of late 2023 he will be a PhD candidate at Durham University, SGIA. He is a frequent collaborator of -among others- Forensic Architecture, Lighthouse Reports, with his work focusing on far/alt-right narrative creation and performativity online, militarized border regimes and surveillance, and human rights violations in the external borders of the EU.

Alessandro Vettori, Rutgers University

Alessandro Vettori is Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at Rutgers University. His many authored and edited books include *Dante's Prayerful Pilgrimage: Typologies of Prayer in the Comedy*. Brill, 2019; *Giuseppe Berto. La passione della scrittura. Venezia, Italy: Marsilio Editore, 2013; Berto: Thirty Years Later. Atti del Convegno internazionale. Fordham University at Lincoln Center. New York City, 1 novembre 2008, Padova: Marsilio Editore, 2009; Poets of Divine Love. The Rhetoric of Franciscan Spiritual Poetry. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004; and Binding the Lands. Present Day Poets, Present Day Poetry. Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of IPSA, the Italian Poetry Society of America, Fiesole (Firenze): Edizioni Cadmo, 2004.*

Gary Wilder, CUNY

Caribbean Polis: Thinking with C.L.R. James about Socialism, Democracy, and the Good Life

Gary Wilder is a Professor in the Ph.D. Program of Anthropology, with cross-appointments in History and French, at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, where he is also Director of the Committee on Globalization and Social Change. He is the author of *Concrete Utopianism: The Politics of Temporality and Solidarity* (Fordham University Press in May 2022), *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Duke University Press, 2015), and *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism Between the World Wars* (University of Chicago Press, 2005). He is currently writing a book on the political thought of CLR James.