World War I changed the dynamics of representation and practical policies in the Russian-Romanian borderlands. Russian rhetoric of a “civilizing mission” in Romania shifted to a more critical pan-Slavism. Romanian nation building was often criticized or disparaged by Russian observers as imitative and explicitly anti-Russian. Using a regional comparative perspective, we will seek to uncover the link between symbolic geography (“mental mapping”) and the policies of imperial (and national) players in the complex early-20th-century setting.

Dr. Andrei Cusco (Ph.D., Central European University, Budapest) focuses his research on modern East European history, comparative history of the Eurasian empires, intellectual history, and historiography. Dr. Cusco has been Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in the Department of History and Philosophy of Moldova State University since 2011. Dr. Cusco co-authored, with Victor Taki, *Bessarabia as a Part of the Russian Empire, 1812-1917* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie Press, 2012). His book, *Between Nation and Empire: Russian and Romanian Competing Visions of Bessarabia in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century* is forthcoming (CEU Press, 2016). Dr. Cusco is currently a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at the University of Maryland (College Park).

Dr. Mikhail Dobilov will introduce the speaker.

Lunch will be served. To reserve lunch, RSVP at millercenter@umd.edu or call at 301-405-4299.