



MAPPING MEMORIES

of Post-1989 Europe

Workshop Abstracts

Workshop 1:

23 August 1939: The condemnation of totalitarianism as smallest common denominator in European politics of history?

Chair: **Maria Mälksoo**, Tartu University, Estonia

Olesya Khromeychuk, University of East Anglia, UK

This workshop looks at the ways in which the Ukrainian nationalist groups of the Second World War are remembered in contemporary Ukraine, especially in the light of the recently adopted laws 'On the Legal Status and Honoring the Memory of Fighters for Ukraine's Independence in the Twentieth Century', 'On Perpetuation of the Victory over Nazism in World War II of 1939-1945', and 'On the condemnation of the communist and national socialist (Nazi) regimes, and prohibition of propaganda of their symbols'. The legacy of the nationalist groups of the Second World War, such as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Waffen SS 'Galicia' Division, is highly contested and has been playing an important part in memory politics since Ukraine became independent. The workshop focuses on the challenges of remembering military formations which collaborated with the Third Reich, but which have been included into the mnemonic landscape of Ukraine as fighters for independence. The workshop will analyze recent developments in Ukrainian memory politics and the different treatment these organizations received.

Tatiana Timofeeva, Lomonossow University, Moscow, Russia

Recently, the topic of the Hitler-Stalin Pact has been contested again among the general public and historical scholars in Russia. Despite the official neutral/positive assessment of Stalinist foreign policy and his efforts to obtain peace for the USSR by any means, historians have attempted to pose serious questions about the notion of national interests and the substance of totalitarian regimes. This trend is barely visible today. The rejection of totalitarianism really seems to be the lowest common denominator in the political history of Russian citizens, because – then, as now – Russia has remained within the circle of hostile countries and needs to fight against "double standards". Those who fail to accept this risk to contribute to a distortion of history. Further elaboration of the historical and political assessment of the Pact and its impact on the start of the war has faded from current discussions at academic conferences and in the press. The uncomfortable question is to be left alone or left clearly in the past. But is it really the case that the 23rd of August 1939 has no real significance today?

Tatiana Zhurzhenko, Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna, Austria

How has the current Russian-Ukrainian/European conflict changed the meaning of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact as a European lieu de mémoire? Why has the Russian political leadership decided to rehabilitate the pact and by what vision of Europe was it guided? Why has the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact become a political metaphor of betrayal in today's Ukraine? What new meanings did this event acquire among Russia's Western neighbors since spring 2014? In "Black Earth" Timothy Snyder explains that Stalin's and Hitler's strategy in 1939 was the destruction of the East European states – a frightening historical analogy for the Ukrainians, and not only for them. In 2009 the European Parliament declared August 23 (the signing date of the pact in 1939) the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes. However, the lesson to be learnt from 1939 is not only that all forms of totalitarianism, regardless of their ideology, lead to human rights violations and crimes against humanity. Not least important is another lesson – that Russia's return to power politics and "zones of influence" not only cripples states at the European periphery, but is a threat to the European project itself.

Workshop 2:

Europe 1939-1945: Transnational memory discourses on occupation, resistance and collaboration

Chair: **Florian Kühner-Wielach**, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany

Christian Ganzer, Leipzig University, Germany

Khatyn', Ozariči, Domačevo, Trostinec, Brest. Every inhabitant of Soviet Belarus' and many other citizens of the Soviet Union knew the names of these places, after the collapse of the USSR this changed only gradually. The opposite was and is the case amongst Germans, whose ancestors brought death and trauma to those very places. Still other associations are prevalent in Jewish communities. But "knowing" and "ignoring" have more facets than it would seem on the first glance. The different perspectives often have multiple layers and functions. On the example of these five places the presentation discusses problems of the past and current separated memory and perspectives for a possible future common European culture of memory.

Andrii Portnov, Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin, Germany

In my presentation I will try to describe the usage of the "Great Patriotic War" rhetoric by both sides of the military conflict in the Donbas region, and to elaborate on the impact of the historical memories on the outbreak of physical violence. The question I would like to raise is: whether "identity" and "memory" issues caused the outbreak of war, or were they just used as a legitimization of the violent deeds.

Siarhei Novikau, Minsk State Linguistic University, Belarus

The presentation seeks to uncover the historical essence of the new museum exhibition, which, in fact, serves the politics of history rather than historical understanding. The presentation intends to contribute towards the identification of public platforms for scholarly discussions as well as to the creation of a space for the conservation of collective and individual memory within

a European culture of remembrance. Current issues that are identified in the presentation are the renunciation of cross-border Soviet propaganda, overcoming old stereotypes and irrational traditions, as well as the use of new resources for the transformation of the museum into a future-oriented place of remembrance. In terms of the latter, the aspiration is to focus on international experiences and effective combinations of traditional and modern commemorative practices, as well as transforming the museum into an educational institute which offers collective and personalized forms of pedagogical work.

Possibilities of establishing discussion platforms based on scientific discourse will be proposed.

Workshop 3:

The century of the refugee: Remembering forced migration in, out of and to Europe

Chair: **Stefan Troebst**, Leipzig University, Germany

Harutyun Marutyan, National Academy of Sciences, Armenia

The presentation aims to stress on three issues, which were important for Armenian people throughout the whole 20th century that is – during three Armenian Republics. All three problems are connected to each other, because in a way are consequences of the Armenian Genocide, which still has a special, outstanding place in the Armenian memory. Anyway, during the final years of the Soviet power in Armenia, that is – the Armenian Revolution/Karabagh Movement (1988-1990), process of gaining independence and first 25 years of the Third Republic (since September 1991) changes and shifts took place in the policy of remembrance, in the memory politics. The process of the overcoming of the stereotype of the victim of the Genocide in Armenia, which led to the motto of the Genocide Centenary – “We Remember and Demand” will be discussed. The changes of the situation with the descendants of the Genocide refugees, who repatriated to Soviet Armenia during 1920-40s, and re-emigrated to West in 1990s will be shown in this presentation. The opposite process is also taking place: I will discuss why and in what ways the Diaspora Armenians are emigrating to Armenia, their relations with the Armenians of Armenia. The current state of the memory of Stalin era repressions, as well as its connection with Genocide outcomes will also be analyzed in the presentation.

Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, University Lund, Sweden

The object of the presentation is to show how the notion of a cosmopolitan memory and the corresponding EU policy influence the formation of collective memories in various local communities in modern Central and Eastern Europe which have lost their cultural diversity. The following questions are raised: To what extent does transnational remembrance policy influence the transformation of local communities, their identities and representations of "the other"? Does such policy undermine patterns of national remembrance, and does it stimulate actors in the field of local memory to implement a new kind of remembrance policy? The discussion is based on the most recent results obtained at Lund University under the leadership of the author. The project analyzed how the current populations of various Eastern European cities relate to the memory of ethnic cleansing carried out in these cities during the 20th century and to the lost cultural heritage of the peoples who vanished as a result.

László Levente Balogh, University Debrecen, Hungary

There is no doubt that the 20th century was also the century of refugees. Rather than marginal phenomena on the edge of historical events such as wars, civil wars and revolutions, flight and expulsion were in fact at the centre of these events. Due to its geopolitical position and historical situation, Hungary has been confronted with refugee related issues in several ways. During the 20th century it was both a country of origin for refugees and a transit zone and destination. Following the bloody suppression of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, some 350,000 refugees fled the country heading west and subsequently spread out across the entire globe. Following the First and Second World Wars and shortly before the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989, Hungary became a destination for ethnic Hungarians from neighbouring countries, particularly from Romania where poverty and oppression were worst. Yet it was as a transit state that Hungary experienced its worst refugee crises. These were in 1989, when citizens of the GDR mostly fled to the FRG via Hungary, and in 2015 when a wave of refugees from the Near and Middle East entered the EU via Hungary. Notwithstanding the different political and historical situations, there are also astonishing parallels in the conceptualization of refugees and in the communication about them, which the presentation seeks to highlight.

Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, University of Wrocław, Poland

Workshop 4:

Holocaust and Gulag as European-wide realms of memory

Chair: **Heidemarie Uhl**, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria

Diana Dumitru, Pedagogical University “Ion Creangă”, Kishinev, Moldova

This presentation will analyze the complex and often explosive context of the Holocaust Studies in contemporary Moldova. In doing so it will look into the main political, social, and historiographical considerations hindering both historical research and public debate on the topic of the Holocaust in Romania (including Moldova and WWII Transnistria). This study will aim to explain why the contemporary gentiles' testimonies on the Holocaust form a unique category of sources that can change in a decisive manner the outcome of the Holocaust studies in Moldova and open new perspectives for the acceptance of the Holocaust as part of the national history.

Ljiljana Radonić, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria

After the end of the Cold War the “memory-boom” in “western” countries has spotlighted the Holocaust as the negative icon of our era. In Europe, this process includes another dimension: Even though the self-critical dealing with the past has not been an official criteria for joining the EU, the founding of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research and the Holocaust-conference in Stockholm at the beginning of 2000 seem to have generated informal standards of confronting and exhibiting the Holocaust during the process called ‘Europeanization of the Holocaust’. This is indicated by the fact that the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest opened almost empty only weeks before Hungary joined the EU although the permanent exhibition had not been ready until 2006. So how do post-communist museums dealing with the World War II period perform given those informal standards? Some museums stress being part of Europe, refer to ‘international standards’ of

musealization and claim to focus on 'the individual victim'. Is this a mere 'invocation' of Europe or a proof that new, transnational forms of 'negative memory' are spreading? In other memorial museums narratives of Nazi occupation are predominantly used to frame an anti-communist interpretation of history. 'Threatening' aspects of the memory of Nazism are 'contained' so that it could not compete with stories of Soviet crimes. Yet both kinds of museums refer to the archetypical aesthetics of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Aline Sierp, University Maastricht, Netherlands

Discussions about Europe's memory of the past among scholars and politicians tend to concentrate on the divisions created by the debates on the equivalence of Nazism versus Stalinism, stressing the inherent competition that exists between different memory narratives. This presentation poses the question of whether European memory has to be necessarily conceived within this Holocaust-versus-Gulag dichotomy. By analyzing memory debates within the European institutions on the one hand and different EU politics of memory initiatives on the other, it scrutinizes the complex dynamics underlying discussions on the European level. The key hypothesis is that a European perspective attempts to break the mould of single national perspectives by integrating them into a common identity and value framework. Through the promotion of social interactions at the subnational level and the creation of a communicative arena, the EU acts as a facilitator for the transnationalisation of debates on memory that go beyond the competition between different memory frameworks.

Anna Schor-Tschudnowskaja, Sigmund Freud University Vienna, Austria

It appears that the experience of the Gulag system has not been processed rationally in the historical consciousness of either Russians or Europeans. This presentation seeks to explore the reasons for this.

In addition to historical political reasons, there are questions surrounding the character of post-enthusiastic, post-utopian societies.

The Russian philosopher Michail Gefter referred to Stalinism as "one of the greatest and, because of its mysteriousness, most horrific phenomena of the 20th century". The "horrific mysteriousness" of this era was the result not just of Stalin's regime and the unusual cruelty that it entailed, and the widespread informer culture among the general population, but also of the strange sense of humanistic rapture or creative surge emphasized by contemporary witnesses. And that, precisely, is the crux of the matter: that it proved possible to combine the euphoria that accompanied the establishment of a new, free, just and happy society with unbelievable brutality and the murder of millions. How proud people were of their own future in terms of humanitarianism, how committed they were to the idea of their system, how great the enthusiasm and joyful camaraderie in joint endeavours – and yet, precisely the intellectual, the human situation within the totalitarian soviet society was one of the worst humanitarian disasters of the 20th century.

The experience of having lost an ideology and a vision of the future, i.e., 'the experience of disenchantment', has clearly had a major impact on the collective actions of the subjects, their self-confidence, and the mechanisms of social integration within the community.

**Workshop 5:
Signatures of an era: “1945”, “1956”, “1968” and “1989” in European cultures of remembrance**

Chair: **Jenny Friedrich-Freksa**, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Germany

Zaal Andronikashvili, Center for Literary and Cultural Research, Germany

On the 19th of December 2009 the Great Patriotic War Memorial Site in Kutaissi, Georgia's second largest city, was blown up to make way for a new parliament building. This event is related to a debate that erupted in the Georgian press in the same year, and which continues to this day, about whether the end of the war should be celebrated on the 8th or 9th of May. Against this background, my presentation looks at the question of remembrance and the significance of the Second World War in post-Soviet Georgia. The way in which the war is commemorated is symptomatic of the more fundamental issue of how the Soviet past is evaluated in Georgia. My thesis is that the former governing right-leaning liberal party viewed the Soviet past as an experience to be rejected, forgotten and entirely eradicated at the symbolic level, and in so doing followed the remembrance policy set out in the Constitutive Acts of the second Georgian Republic. This problematic remembrance policy was neither capable of eradicating popular memories of the Second World War nor of integrating them.

Nelly Bekus, University of Exeter, UK

The presentation will discuss the revived observation of the “International Day of Liberation of Nazi Concentration Camp Inmates” on the 11th of April in post-Soviet countries (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan) as a signifier in geopolitics of memory coming to replace political ideologies, which constituted inseparable feature of the memorial work in the Cold War realm. The day of liberation of Buchenwald camp on April 11, as symbolically opposed to January 27, the day of liberation of the Camp of Auschwitz chosen by UN, displays how geopolitical entities have been re-constituted and united anew, while the process of re-shaping memories attendant upon the end of Cold War remains embedded in the divisions of the past. Recalling the memory of the Soviet victims among prisoners of Nazi's concentration camps in public commemorations and rituals held on the April 11 help to maintain post-Soviet space as a “remembering community.” Long-established history of April 11 as an International Day of observance refers to the “internationalism” characteristic for post-war political anti-fascism and resistance fighters. And while communist ideology that once constituted the core of that movement became irrelevant, its internationalist appeal remains meaningful. Bridging these two aspects in the commemorative practices on April 11 makes possible the prevention of the post-Soviet space of commemoration of victims from segregation and isolation, at least symbolically.

Uilleam Blacker, University College London, UK

The losses of civilian populations in the Second World War and the redrawing of national boundaries and exchanges of populations that followed it in the immediate postwar period left a profound mark on cities across East-Central Europe. The new inhabitants of many post-war cities, such as Wrocław, Kaliningrad, or L'viv, found themselves surrounded by the material traces of cultural others, sometimes others for whom they felt a deep resentment. Combined with longing for their own, lost towns and cities, this led to a profound sense of mnemonic disconnect from space, which would become manifest both through bottom-up and top-down impulses towards forgetting, but also, especially in the late and post-communist periods, by

unexpected and creative approaches to recovering memory in fragmented, sometimes foreign spaces. The paper will trace some of the cultural strategies and commemorative practices employed in these cities in the post-1989 period that aimed to create a meaningful mnemonic connection to place in cities that had suffered from drastic upheavals in 1945.

Workshop 6:

Transmitters of mutual understanding: Bilateral committees of historians, intergovernmental institutions and pan-European organisations

Chair: **Miloš Řezník**, German Historical Institute Warsaw, Poland

Stefan Troebst, Leipzig University, Germany

The debate about a "Centre Against Expulsions" in Berlin that has been raging between Germany and Poland since 2000 stirred the state presidents to take moderating action in 2003, followed by the governments of the two countries in 2004. As a result, Polish culture minister Waldemar Dąbrowski and his German counterpart Christina Weiss reached an agreement to found a network that would span as many European states as possible and that would have as its focus the tragic history of Europe in the "recent" 20th century – including the process of forced migration. However, the plan to form an initial nucleus from the four Visegrád states of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, plus Germany and Austria, failed when Prague and Vienna both withdrew. The topic of expulsions was particularly hard to understand on the Czech side, and the Poles also had some issues with it. One consequence was the project for a "Museum of the Second World War" in Gdansk in 2006, which was designed to provide an alternative to the expulsion-centred German viewpoint, as accepted by the "Foundation Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation" founded in 2008. Notwithstanding this renewed bilateral controversy between Warsaw and Berlin, the network project that was formalised in 2005 "survived" and, after a long incubation period, finally gathered pace in 2010. In the meantime, the Central European Agency for Memorial Culture based in Warsaw, which was expanded to include Romania in 2013, is now active throughout Europe.

Michael Schwartz, Institute for Contemporary History, Berlin, Germany

Markus Prutsch, Research Administrator at the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium