



Post/Socialist Memory Cultures in Transition

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Day 1: Wed, 20 September, 16.00-18.00, Parallel Panels 1

P1.1 Museum Narratives: Creating and Transforming Canons

Valentyna Kharkhun, Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University

90th Anniversary of the Holodomor: How Is the Great Famine Exhibited in Ukrainian Museums?

2023 marks 90th anniversary of the Holodomor or Great Famine, a death by starvation which resulted in the loss of about 4 million people. This presentation analyses how Ukrainian memory politics of the Holodomor have affected its museumification. It examines exhibitions in national, state and local history museums, and discusses the main memory actors, narratives, and perception of each museum's memory policy regarding the Holodomor. Special attention is paid to the evolution of the state-controlled narrative which ranges from trauma, loss and tragedy to an emphasis on resisting, opposing and overcoming the communist regime.

The presentation demonstrates that the discourse of a museum's exhibitions is synchronized with the main requirements of the canonical narrative about the Holodomor, namely it being a genocide of the Ukrainian nation organized by the Stalin regime ("We were killed because we are Ukrainians"). Hence, the victimhood narrative predominates and reveals itself through the images of loss. At the same time, the "bravery" narrative begins to play a more crucial role in 2014, at the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war, and two important topics appear in the exhibitions: "resistance" explaining anti-Soviet opposition and "humanity in an unhuman time" detailing people who helped others to survive the Holodomor.

Ultimately, the presentation considers the question of why one Ukrainian museum's narrated exhibition with discussions of "painful" questions about numbers of the losses, ethnical measurements of victimhood, and conceived images of the perpetrators, is still only in the process of being completed for over 32 years since Ukraine's independence.

Valentyna Kharkhun is a Professor with the Ukrainian Literature and Journalism Department of Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University (Ukraine). She is the author of two books, six textbooks and more than one hundred articles. Throughout her career, she has worked almost exclusively on the relationship between ideology and culture, focusing on the following topics: ideology in Ukrainian modernist writings; the arts under Soviet rule; the socialist realist canon in Ukrainian and Russian Literatures; and the ideologies which drive



representations of the memory of communism in museums of Central and Eastern European countries. Currently, she is working on a book entitled *Multi-Faceted Memory: Exhibiting the Soviet Era in Ukrainian Museums*.

Ekaterina A. Olson Shipyatsky, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

A Ghost in the Museum: The Memorial at Miła 18 and the Oyneg Shabbos Milk Cans

In 1943, on the night before the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising began, members of the clandestine *Oyneg Shabbos* archival group buried their final cache under the streets of the ghetto. Understanding they were unlikely to survive the uprising or its aftermath, the *Oyneg Shabbos* archivists buried their materials in hopes of ensuring the survival of their collection. Three weeks later, over a hundred of the remaining fighters in the ŻOB (Jewish Fighting Organization) died by mass suicide in a bunker at 18 Miła Street in a refusal to surrender to the Nazis that surrounded them.

In this paper, I explore how these two acts of resistance – the collection and burial of the *Oyneg Shabbos* archive and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising – are represented in museums and memorials. To do so, I examine two memorial icons: the *Oyneg Shabbos* milk cans and the memorial at Miła 18. By thinking about these two memorial objects together, I explore themes of burial and excavation, resistance, memory, and temporality.

Through a close reading of the ways the *Oyneg Shabbos* milk cans are exhibited (in Washington, D.C., and in Warsaw), I explore how museums fold stories of resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto into linear narratives of post-socialist redemption. I turn to the memorial at Miła 18 and the third *Oyneg Shabbos* milk can, which remains buried under the streets of Warsaw. I argue that the bodies and documents, which remain unexcavated, “haunt” the linear narratives of museums. Finally, I conclude by asking what it might mean for museums to attend to these sites of disruption, and further, how resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto is remembered, narrativized, and even forgotten in the post-socialist context.

Ekaterina A. Olson Shipyatsky is a Ph.D. Student in political theory and museum studies at the University of Michigan Department of Political Science. Her research explores the global fashioning of Holocaust memory in museums and archives. She has completed fieldwork in Warsaw, Berlin, Moscow, and Washington, D.C. on how museum archives and exhibits navigate and represent transnational flows of violence. Her research has been funded by a University of Michigan Weiser Center for Research in Europe and Eurasia Grant, a Global Individual Grant Research Award, and a University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School Dean’s Grant. She is also the previous recipient of a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) award and a Fulbright English Teaching Fellowship to Russia.

Maria Kobielska and Kinga Siewior, Jagiellonian University, Cracow

Peripheral (Non)Polishnesses: Museums, Creeping Conflicts, and Transformative Frictions

Poland seems today a paradigmatic example of a homogeneous national and cultural identity, reinforced by the hegemonic historical policy of a conservative state. The master narrative



rests on exclusive templates of “Polishness”: Catholic, ethno-homogenous, male-centric and martyrological. However, other narratives evoking plural “Polishnesses” – e.g. multi-ethnic, non-Catholic, women – are emerging recently.

To examine the frictions of these narratives, we use exhibitions of historical museums as our field of observation. To identify situations in which tensions between the “central” Polishness and its unorthodox variants are evident, we look at museums in Wrocław, Szczecin and the Upper Silesia – i.e. located peripherally, in the “post-German” areas, characterized by a complex heterogeneous past in which Germanness and Polishness, Silesianness or Borderlandness mutually clash and dialogue.

After the territorial and political shifts of 1945 resulting in mass migrations, these territories were the scene of a fierce exchange of symbolic systems. Homogenizing discursive operations were sanctioning their Polishness, while eliminating manifestations of any cultural and ethnic differences. Moreover, many local and equivocal experiences (e.g. postwar forced resettlements) that did not conform to “central”, zero-sum axiologies, were erased.

These erased contents, however, are gradually being restored by new historical museums that explore local histories, and place them in the context of national memory. Analyzing selected exhibitions, we observe the national narrative being embedded in a non-Polish, resettled space, combined with ethnic and religious otherness. As we argue, these case studies offer dynamic, relational models of memory, and most importantly, allow us to introduce the concept of memory frictions.

Maria Kobielska, PhD, is a memory scholar, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, co-founder of the Research Center for Memory Cultures. She is currently a member of the Executive Committee of Memory Studies Association. She has written in Polish and English on contemporary Polish literature and culture in the context of memory and politics. Her most recent book discusses Polish memory culture in the 21st century (*Polska kultura pamięci: dominanty. Zbrodnia katyńska, powstanie warszawskie i stan wojenny*, 2016) and she is currently leading a research project that focuses specifically on new Polish historical museums.

Kinga Siewior – PhD, cultural studies scholar, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Polish Studies of Jagiellonian University in Cracow, member of the Research Center for Memory Cultures. Her research interests include Polish post-war culture and literature in the perspective of memory studies and migration studies. She has published, among others, a book on the cultural memory of postwar resettlements and the discourse of so-called “Regained Territories” (*Wielkie Poruszenie. Pojałtańskie narracje migracyjne w kulturze polskiej/The Great Movement: Post-Yalta Migratory Narrative in Polish Culture*, 2018).

Riikka Taavetti, University of Turku

Freedom and Liberty in Museums: Temporality and Empathy in Vabamu, Estonia, and Werstas, Finland

When both Finland and Estonia celebrated their centennials of national independence in 2017 and 2018 respectively, new museum exhibitions focusing on freedom were opened in these





countries. In Tampere, Finland, Labour Museum Werstas addressed the hundred years of Finnish independence from the perspective of ordinary people's struggle for freedom and the position of different minorities in their new exhibition titled Museum of Liberty. In Estonia, Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom in Tallinn acquired its current name with the word freedom in it, and opened its remodelled permanent exhibition on the occupations of Estonia and the restoration of national independence.

In this presentation, I analyse these exhibitions and contextualize them with the almost simultaneous national centennials of Estonia and Finland and by placing the museums within the national fields of cultural remembering. In particular, I focus on the temporality of freedom in the exhibitions analysing the historical timelines they cover and the periods they emphasize. By utilizing Alison Landsberg's concept of prosthetic memory, I address how the exhibitions aim to create historical empathy and analyse the choices made in preparing the exhibitions regarding the experientiality of a museum visit. With this perspective, I address who is placed as that subject of freedom and how is the viewer positioned in the exhibitions.

Riikka Taavetti works as a university lecturer in gender studies at the University of Turku. Her current studies address the transnational history of Estonian and Finnish lesbian networks and queer memory in the Nordic countries. Her research interests include politics of memory in Estonia and Finland, oral history, queer history and the history of sexuality. Taavetti's doctoral dissertation was titled *Queer Politics of Memory: Undisciplined Sexualities as Glimpses and Fragments in Finnish and Estonian Pasts* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2018).

P1.2 Translating Memories: Multidirectional Memory of Different Regimes

Timea Jablonczay, Milton Friedman University

Multidirectional Memorial Processes in Hungarian Literary Publicity during the 1960s and 1970s

In my presentation I wish to draw on the theoretical framework of transcultural memory studies for the history of Hungarian Holocaust memory, focusing on the 1960s and 1970s. Through a deeper analysis of the public representations of Holocaust memory in the socialist era - books, films, publicist articles - I further seek to refine the question of memory in the so-called anti-fascist discourse, broadening the focus and addressing the issues of multidirectionality, travelling memory, translations and mediatization. Continuing the research that started from the assumption that, contrary to earlier assumptions, several representations engaged with the memory of genocide in the 1960s and 1970s, this lecture examines how the memory of genocide was embedded in the Cold War context, to what extent, when, and how close connections emerged with representations of the colonial past, decolonisation, Vietnam, Hiroshima, nuclear weaponization, in other words, how can the



complex set of memory processes and their entangled character be grasped in the Hungarian context? What books and translations have been published on these topics, where can the impact of global memory processes (memories of wars, other violences, modes of representation of genocide) on the local aspects of genocide be detected, and to what extent and in what periods can we speak of the entangled presence of these topics in the Hungarian literary field? I will pay particular attention to the context of genocidal memory and the complex memorial processes of its discourse in the Hungarian literary journals of the 1960s, as well as to the works of *Ágnes Gergely* from the 1960s and 1970s, especially her novel *The Interpreter (A tolmács, 1973)*, and her translations of African and Japanese memory works published in the same years.

Timea Jablonczay, PhD. I have been working as an Associate Professor at the Department of Media and Cultural Studies of Milton Friedman University (former King Sigismund University), Budapest since 2010. I teach gender studies, identity discourses, visual and intercultural communication, critical cultural studies in different levels (BA and MA). I am also very interested in Holocaust remembrance through education because teaching about the history of Holocaust is fundamental to establishing respect for human rights, freedoms, and the values of tolerance. I give lectures on my topics within Erasmus Exchange Program in Milton Friedman University, and I went to give lectures to Vienna (Austria, 2016), Portalegre (Portugal, 2015) and Istanbul (Turkey, 2011). I had scholarship at University of Pécs, Faculty of Humanities, on Literary Studies PhD program (2004-2007), then in two terms at the Institute of Hungarian Studies of University of Jyväskylä (01.05.2008 – 01.06.2008; 01.01.2009 – 30.10.2009). In 2022 (01.02-30.11) I was awarded a 10-month fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Kőszeg, Hungary (iASK) in Central-Europe and the V4, „Historical and Cultural Heritage in Central Europe” Project with my research, titled Multiple Identity, Female Holocaust Testimony, Diasporic Memory. Research on the career and works of Erzsi Szenes. (<https://iask.hu/en/people/timea-jablonczay/>) Within the fellowship of iASK, I visited to Jerusalem for a two-weeks study trip, research on Erzsi Szenes. My interest lies within the field of literary and critical cultural studies, transcultural memory studies; my works focus on questions of representational practices of different identities, diasporic experiences, and multidirectional memorial practices in literary and non-literary texts from transcultural and transnational perspectives. My specific areas of research are Hungarian female Holocaust testimonies, the “Hungarian minority” literary field related to the issue of remembering and forgetting history of the traumatic past, and the work of transcultural memory. I have been undertaking research on the cultural heterogeneity, the plurality of identities and literary works of *Erzsi Szenes* (1902-1981) for many years, investigating her literary career in Central-Europe, and her holocaust and diasporic memories in Israel after the Holocaust. (<https://iask.hu/hu/people/jablonczay-timea/>)

My articles were published in academic literary journals (edited volume *Helikon* 2015/2. *Transnational Perspectives in Literary Studies*, or *Filológiai Közlöny, New Narratology*, 2006/1-2., *Transcultural Memory Studies*, *Helikon* 2022/3) I give conference lectures and presentations at many conferences in Hungary and at international conferences (Ghent, Nitra, Bologna, CEU, Halle-Wittenberg, HDKE Budapest, iASK-Kőszeg). I provided lectures in relation to Hungarian Holocaust Memory, and Female Holocaust Testimonies within the course of *The Holocaust and Genocide in the Visegrad Group Countries* dedicated to



studying Holocaust Remembrance at the University of Georgia (Tbilisi), Department of History (May, 2019), and also at iASK-Kőszeg in 2022. I am working on three major works: a monograph on Erzsi Senesh, the memory of the Holocaust in Hungary in the 1960s, and a work on Hungarian female Holocaust memory (1945-1989).

Bernadette Ščasná, Tallinn University

What Do Novels Teach Us About the Past and Present?: An Analysis of How The Devil's Workshop Unravels the Past to Its Local and Global Readers

In my paper, I discuss Jáchym Topol's novel called *The Devil's Workshop* which was originally published in Czech language in 2009. *The Devil's Workshop* combines fact and fiction with a lot of its attention directed at memorialization practices throughout Europe, especially within modern Czech Republic and Belarus, that is vividly elevated at the book's core during a comparison of two mass genocides: the Holocaust and the Khatyn massacre which took place in Belarus in 1943. The novel brings forth the superiority and inferiority complexes between Western and Eastern parts of Europe based on their past encounters with mass violence while challenging the fluidity of the regional borders of the Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it also suggests that people from different European countries are reluctant to be associated with the label "East" or "Eastern".

The main aim of my paper is to analyze the main socio-political and historical issues that the novel foregrounds. I focus on what kind of knowledge of the past related to the Holocaust and Khatyn massacre the novel offers to its local and global readers. By scrutinizing the novel's aesthetics as well as its accompanying paratexts and making observations about *The Devil's Workshop's* local and global reception through various reviews and readers' forums, I have discovered what effects it has on its readers, what knowledge they were able to acquire by reading it, and how it has shaped their understanding of the past and its implications in the present. My analysis has revealed many interesting interpretations of the novel by different readers which lie at the core of my presentation.

Bernadette Ščasná is a doctoral researcher studying at Tallinn University in Estonia. She is an active member of the ERC project *Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena*. Within the framework of the project, she studies the relationship between fact and fiction in different representations of the Socialist regime and the Holocaust in Czech and Slovak literature and film. Another focus of her research lies in studying the global and local reception of novels and films dealing with the dark past, as well as their outreach.

Hanna Aunin, Tallinn University

Transformation of the Memory of Soviet Mass Deportations in Estonia: From The Awakening (1989) to In the Crosswind (2014)

The discussion of Stalinist repressions, especially the deportations, were instrumental for the formation of collective memory and post-Soviet identity in the Baltic States (Davoliute and Balkelis 2018). Since the end of 1980s, the topic of mass deportations has been consistently explored in literature and life stories (which was a particularly influential medium for the



formation of Estonian national memory narratives, see Kõresaar 2005), but cinematic representations of the mass deportations have not been as numerous. However, two Estonian feature films that focus on the topic of mass deportations have been made 25 years apart: Jüri Sillart's *The Awakening* ("Äratust", 1989), made at the brink of re-independence, and more recent Martti Helde's *In the Crosswind* ("Risttuules", 2014).

On the examples of *The Awakening* and *In the Crosswind*, this paper explores how the memory of mass deportations and its representations have changed in Estonia over the course of 25 years. By comparing the aesthetic, formal and narrative choices, I examine how their time of production has affected the mode of representation. While the narrative and aesthetic choices of *In the Crosswind* render the film as part of the "search for recognition" memory paradigm and global memory culture, *The Awakening* approaches the topic from a different standpoint. By focusing on the machinery of deportations and highlighting local collaboration, the film deviates from the representational framework of national victimhood. I ask whether the representational mode of *The Awakening* is related to the film being produced at the very beginning of the period of post-Soviet nationalism, when the national memory narratives had not yet been fully formed and solidified.

Hanna Maria Aunin is a PhD student in Tallinn University. She completed her MA studies in Literature, Visual Culture and Film Studies in Tallinn University. Hanna's research is part of the project "Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena" and lies at the intersection of memory studies and film theory. She is studying the representations of World War II and Soviet past in post-1990 Baltic films. Her dissertation explores Baltic deportation dramas that were made in the previous decade and that are part of the "search for recognition" memory paradigm, and films that dramatize topics and events that have not received widespread attention in the memory culture of the Baltics.

P1.3 Representing Memory: Art, Film, Theatre

Edward Tyerman, University of California, Berkeley

Traces of Friendship, Ghosts of Empire: Remembering the Sino-Soviet Alliance in Contemporary Russian and Chinese Cinema

The Sino-Soviet "honeymoon" of the 1950s was brief, and the three decades of Sino-Soviet Split that followed have tended to obscure the scale and stakes of this earlier period of Sino-Soviet alliance. Yet for almost a decade, the Sino-Soviet alliance was the lynchpin of a post-war socialist world whose unprecedented expansion fundamentally redrew the political map of Eurasia. In recent years, with the revival of a geopolitically pivotal Chinese-Russian alliance, this shared socialist past has become the subject of a particular mode of post-socialist cultural memory. This paper focuses on recent Sino-Russian cinematic coproductions, a collaborative cultural practice that began in the 1950s and has been revived with active state backing in recent years. Films such as the 2015 war drama *Ballet in the Time of War* (dir. Dong Yachun 董亚春, executive producer Nikita Mikhalkov), the 2019 romantic comedy *How I Became Russian* (dir. Akaki Sakhelashvili and Xia Hao 夏昊), and the 2020



hit comedy *Lost in Russia* (dir. Xu Zheng 徐峥) develop a nostalgic perspective on the shared socialist past, from the participation of Soviet soldiers in the liberation of Manchuria to the affection for Soviet songs among China's older generation. At the same time, the different versions of these films prepared for Russian and Chinese audiences and their differing receptions in both countries point to divergent collective conceptions of this shared history, complicating any attempt at a common postsocialist memory politics.

Edward Tyerman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley. His research interests include early Soviet culture, Soviet internationalism, comparative postsocialisms, and cultural connections and exchanges between Russia and China. His first book, *Internationalist Aesthetics: China and Early Soviet Culture* (Columbia University Press, 2021), rediscovers the intensive engagement with China in 1920s Soviet culture as a key experiment in the imagining of socialist internationalism. His current research explores Sino-Soviet cultural collaboration in the 1950s and the role of the Russia-China relationship in the social imaginary of the postsocialist period.

Daria Gordeeva, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München,

The Soviet Union and the GDR in Film: How Historical Feature Films (Re-)Construct the Socialist Past

Over 30 years after German reunification and the collapse of the Soviet Union the struggle for the 'right' memory of the GDR and its 'big brother' is going on. State-funded museums, schoolbooks, leading politicians, and media remember the GDR almost exclusively as a dictatorship, as an *Unrechtsstaat*, which literally means "a state with no rule of law". This contrasts with an idealized image of the Soviet past in contemporary Russia. The „selective national amnesia” is reflected in highlighting the Soviet Union's rise to superpower status and Soviet achievements in sports, industry, science, and space exploration, while downplaying and marginalizing repressions and terror. Using the example of the GDR and the Soviet Union, my paper examines how successful feature films construct the past and affect the collective memory of life under socialism. How do movies represent the former socialist states? What is remembered – what remains forgotten? Who is involved in the production, which power structures lie behind? To answer these questions, the paper is grounded in the Assmann's and Erll's theories of collective and cultural memory as well as the (Critical) Discourse Analysis, as practiced by Foucault and Jäger. The empirical work includes the qualitative analysis of 20 core films dealing with the GDR and Soviet past and produced between 1990 and 2020 in Germany and Russia, respectively. The analysis focuses on film narratives, political, cultural, and social contexts, in which films are produced and received, as well as stakeholders participating in 'memory wars', such as film funders and distributors.

Daria Gordeeva, M.A., born in St. Petersburg (Russia), completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in Communication studies and Economics at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (Germany). Since January 2019 she is a research associate and doctoral candidate at the Department of Media and Communication. Her doctoral project



examines the reconstruction of the Soviet Union and the GDR in contemporary movies and critically explores power structures lying behind. In the interdisciplinary research network “[The media legacy of the GDR](#)”, she is working on the project “The GDR in Film” and is responsible for coordinating the network. Her research focuses on media discourses, cinematic constructions of reality, post-socialist cultures of remembrance as well as politics of memory in international comparison.

Mischa Twitchin, University of London

Translation, Memory, and an “Aesthetics of Care”

Reflecting on the cultural politics of memory and an “aesthetics of care” (Mihai, 2022), my presentation explores echoes recalled – and, indeed, generated – in two recent plays by Russian-Estonian theatre maker, Julia Aug: *Mum, is our cat Jewish too?* and *F*** the War* [X** войне]. *Ukraine. Letters from the Front*. Aug’s plays engage with “life stories” in multidirectional terms, translating questions of both “nationalities” and gender in post-Soviet memory space (Kirss, et al.: 2004), giving voice to histories long subject to “epistemic injustice” (Fricker, 2007). Relations between personal testimony and historical situatedness profoundly changed in the post-Soviet period (Hinrikus & Kõresaar, 2004), and the transnational and the “intranational” profoundly refract each other in Aug’s work. Drawing on Lotman (1990) – especially exploring dynamics of “theatricality” (2020 [1989]) for translating cultural memory – my discussion follows Pakier and Wawrzyniak’s caution that “individuals born and socialised in Eastern Europe” do not “remember in some ‘special’ ways in comparison to the rest of the world”, but rather “that there exists some specific set of discursive practices related to particular historical events that happened in this part of Europe” (2018: 15). Concerning such “discursive practices”, mediating past and present in post-Soviet cultural memory in the Baltics, the biographical in Aug’s plays can be read with Mihai’s suggestion that “it is via an analysis of these stories that we can both identify the bodies marked for exclusion from official mnemonic regimes and estimate the cost of those exclusions to present relationships and politics” (2022: 12).

Mischa Twitchin is a senior lecturer in the Theatre and Performance Dept., at Goldsmiths, University of London:

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/theatre-performance/staff/twitchin-dr-mischa/>. He was a British Academy Post-doctoral Fellow (2014-17) and has contributed chapters to several collected volumes, as well as articles in journals such as *Memory Studies*, *Contemporary Theatre Review*, and *Performance Research* (an issue of which, “On Animism”, 24.6, he also co-edited). His book, *The Theatre of Death – the Uncanny in Mimesis: Tadeusz Kantor, Aby Warburg and an Iconology of the Actor* is published by Palgrave Macmillan in their Performance Philosophy series; and examples of his own performance- and essay-films can be seen on Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/user13124826/videos>.

Agata Koprowicz, University of Warsaw

Painting Memories on Barn Doors: The Silent Memorial project (2017–) and Local Memory in the Polish Countryside



The Silent Memorial project was initiated by the painter Arkadiusz Andrejkow in 2017. Andrejkow creates “deskale” (“deskal” is a “mural” on wood, in Polish “deska” means “board”) on the walls and doors of barns and country huts, mostly wooden. These are paintings inspired by photographs of former inhabitants of the villages of Podkarpacie, Podlasie, Lubelszczyzna and Lesser Poland. As part of his project, he has already created over 100 works. The author himself describes his work as: “commemoration of ordinary villagers and those stories that have never been shown in books, albums or monuments. These are microhistories that have never been widely known”.

The theme of the painting is not imposed by the artist. It is individual people interested in commemorating a member of their family who order a “deskal” from Andrejkow on a building that belongs to them, thus creating new sites of memory. The artist’s services are also used by local memory guardians, e.g. associations protecting cultural heritage of the region, which want to commemorate the difficult history of the rural community, i.e. Jews who once lived there, ethnic minorities (e.g. Lemkos) or people forcibly displaced after World War II.

In the paper, I will analyze how private family photographs are translated into “deskale” and begin to function as a public medium of memory of a rural community. I will describe how Andrejkow’s project fits into the grassroots initiatives of recovering and reconstructing local (including micro-regional or ethnic) identity. In addition, I will demonstrate how “descale” reevaluate the social memory of the everyday life of the village and the work of its inhabitants, referring to the ongoing discussion in Poland on the history of peasants and ways of commemorating rural pasts.

Agata Koprowicz is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Polish Culture, the University of Warsaw. She is preparing a doctoral dissertation on the citizenship of Polish peasants and photography in the 19th century, using the perspective of potential history. Polish National Science Centre Preludium grant holder “Between subordination and emancipation. Cultural history of photography of peasants in the Kingdom of Poland and Galicia (1846–1905)”. In her research, she focuses on the social history of photography, the history of peasants, visual culture and memory studies.

P1.4 Decolonization, Decentralization

Jessica Ortner, University of Copenhagen

The Namibian Kids – Colonial History in the GDR

Recently, Germany’s short period of colonialism has come to the fore in the public sphere. Though these debates mostly revolve around the exhibition of stolen African treasures in Berlin, these discussions also shed light on the marginalized history of the 430 children from the former German South West Africa, presently known as Namibia, who were evacuated to the GDR during the countries’ fight for independence in the 1970’s. Placed in several institutions, these children spend much of their formative live in the GDR, being educated in socialist norms and ideology. For these children the fall of the socialist regime meant a “second uprooting.” (Krishnamurthy & Owens 2018). They experienced amounting exclusion



from Germany, which they had come to perceive as their homeland, and were eventually sent back to the for them unknown Namibia in the 1990s. This paper will provide the historical background of this broadly unknown colonial aspect of the GDR, outline the growing public and academic interest in this history, and explore the experience of the children by analyzing Lucia Engombe's book *Kind Nr. 95* by (2004), which is one of the few examples of literary productions by these Namibian GDR-children.

Jessica Ortner is Associate Professor at the department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies at the University of Copenhagen (2019–2023). Ortner's research focuses on German and European memory politics, Eastern European and Bosnian migrant literature and German-Jewish literature. Publications include the monograph *Transcultural Memory and European Identity in Contemporary German-Jewish Migrant Literature* (Camden House 2022), 'Flight, Expulsion and Resettlement in Contemporary German literature' (2018) and, together with Tea Sindbæk Andersen, *Memory Studies – 'Special Issue. Memory of Joy'*

Alena Pfoser, Loughborough University

Memories and Imperial Legacies in Russian Tourism to Post-Soviet Cities

Memory-making in tourism is usually seen through a pejorative lens: tourism industries commodify heritage, strip it of its intrinsic meanings and repackage it to sell it to global audiences. In this process, the past is trivialised and often made to serve conservative political agendas. Particularly post-colonial tourism has been criticised for circulating nostalgic interpretations of the past, based on an exoticising gaze on the 'other' and the reproduction of colonial power relations. Drawing on literature on post-colonial/imperial tourism and memory studies, this paper provides a detailed examination of memory production in Russian tourism to post-Soviet cities. Methodologically, it is based on a comparative ethnography of tourism in Tallinn, Kyiv and Almaty, conducted in summer 2019 and additional online interviews with tourists in 2019-2020. I identify three main modes of remembering in Russian tourism: nostalgia, memories of difference, and memory diplomacy. I subsequently reflect on the relations to neighbours embedded in these memories and highlight how they depend on the destination tourists are travelling to as well as their political positioning and generational belonging. In conclusion, the study complicates accounts of post-colonial/imperial tourism by highlighting the diversity of modes of remembering in tourism and relating to the 'other'. At the same time, I argue for the usefulness of a post-colonial perspective for sensitising us to imperial legacies and 'habits of thought' that persist in Russian tourists' memories, even in more critical and diplomatic approaches.

Alena Pfoser is a Senior Lecturer in Communication and Media Studies at Loughborough University, UK. Her main areas of expertise include memory in contested settings, heritage and tourism industries, borders and borderlands. Her work has been published widely on these areas in journals such as *Memory Studies*, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, *Geopolitics*, *International Journal of Cultural Studies* and *Ethnic and Migration Studies*. She is currently working on a monograph "Tourism as memory-making: heritage and memory wars in Russian post-imperial tourism" for Palgrave's *Memory Studies* series, based on her recently completed ESRC New Investigator project on Russian tourism to post-Soviet cities (2019-2022).



Nataliia Shuliakova, Central European University in Budapest and Vienna

"Mom of the South" and "A Country within the State": Revisiting the Odesa Myth in Contemporary Ukraine

The dismantling of the monument to Catherine II on the main square of Odesa on December 29, 2022, was a symbolic “end of the epoch,” as observed by local citizens. To me, however, it was only a vivid expression of the long-lasting reassessment of the individual and collective values, self-perception in the historiographical canon, and of the city’s diverse and rich legacy, which had been in transition since the early post-Soviet period but became most prominent during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Through official, imperial, and local memory practices, Odesa came to be seen as closely tied to the Russian Empire, later—to the Soviet Union, Russia, and eventually—as completely disconnected from the national affiliation with Ukraine. The unique local “Odesan identity,” consisting of alleged cosmopolitanism and detachment from the rest of Ukraine, is part of the urban myth of Odesa, which became widely used and abused by Russian propaganda during the war as one of the “justifications” for the invasion.

On the example of Odesa, I study how the nation-building policies in interaction with the city’s imperial legacies create a specific urban Odesa Myth, and how this myth is embodied in the global academic and everyday representation of the city. I approach the Odesa Myth’s complexity by analyzing its transformation in the imperial, Soviet, and modern stages of development, and by exploring the constituents of this myth—language, prominent actors, identity, and attitude of citizens and officials towards Russia and Ukraine—in comparative historical perspective. Essentially, I examine the transformation of the urban myth over the last decade through an analysis of changes in urban and social practices (such as exhibitions, memorial practices, monuments, literature, as well as my own observations) and propose a new, decolonial, understanding of the city from the perspective of a representative of a modern generation of Odesa citizens.

Nataliia Shuliakova is a visiting student at *Culture, Politics and Society* program at Central European University in Budapest and Vienna. She is an incoming student at Yale University, Class 2027, majoring in European History with a minor in Sociology. Her research focuses on the Political History and Urban Memory studies in contemporary and 20th century Ukraine. Her main research interests include Memory Politics, Urban Memory, National and Local Identity Politics, and Urban Mythmaking. She is currently writing a research on Urban Odesa Myth, involving scholars from the field by interviewing them and analyzing the perception of Odesa Myth in three historical periods (Imperial, Soviet, Independent). She is also working on the production of a podcast about present-day social and cultural reality of Odesa. Nataliia is the Student Coordinator at the Invisible University for Ukraine, Central European University (further – IUFU). She is also editor and author at the student-run web journal Visible Ukraine, writing on cultural and academic events in Ukraine and reviewing specific conferences of the IUFU. Nataliia is Student Assistant at Harvard Sociological Project on Ukrainian IDPs, working with Prof. Danilo Mandic. She is also part of the sociological working group in Vienna, working on creating recommendations for the City of Vienna



public policies regarding the labor market of displaced women from Ukraine with higher education. Nataliia is member of the Memory Studies Association, holding the Graduate/Student/Post-Doc/Unemployed Membership level. She is scholar of the Ukraine Global Scholars organization, and currently is part of the marketing and admissions team. Nataliia is currently based in Vienna, Austria.

Hanna Sjöberg, independent scholar and artist

Baltic Sea Memory Exhibit At the Waters Edge 2017-2018

I would talk about the exhibit but also about how the idea arose and the project took shape. The “lecture” would be a kind of power point with screening of photos. Geography and my own memories were important. When I was a child, my family spent their holidays in a summer cottage near the seashore on the island of Gotland. On the beach I could find things that the water had washed ashore: bottles, packages and wrappings, where you still could see some letters or words in strange languages such as Polish, Latvian, Estonian, Russian. These were messages from an unknown world. The Eastern part of the Baltic Sea was terra incognita for Swedish children in the Sixties. It was the cold war, also a child in neutral Sweden could hear the rumble of the Swedish Air Force.

20 years ago, I found my grandfather's photos in the summer house; a binder with a thousand negatives from the fifties and sixties; an exhibition *morfarskalejdoskopet /Vectēva Kaleidoskops* (the grandfather's kaleidoscope) was shown in Visby and in Talsi, Latvia. I collected visitors' memories in an art action at Gotland Art Museum's courtyard, *Beach Memory Station*, summer of 2014. Due to Russia's annexation of Crimea the cold war was again actual. I had the opportunity to organise a Baltic Sea workshop together with Antanas Mončy's house museum in Palanga September 2015 (Funds from KKNord). I invited organisations but also friends to meet and talk about cold war memories connected with the Baltic Sea. In cooperation with Unitas Foundation, later the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory, in Tallinn, the project received support from the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS). In 2017- 2018 the exhibition *at the water's edge* was shown in almost all Baltic Sea countries, in Germany twice in former East and West. The texts were available in all nine languages of the Baltic Sea. The idea with the exhibit-project *at the water's edge* was to create a cross-border dialogue based on personal memories and experiences; an encounter between narratives and places from a time when people couldn't meet. Memories, images and amateur photographs from all the Baltic Sea Region countries were put into an exhibition.

Hanna Sjöberg was born in Stockholm in 1956, lives in Berlin.

Master of Fine Arts in Textile Design, Konstfackskolan, Stockholm, 1984
Commissions as stage designer 1984–199 University of the Arts, Berlin, Department of Fine Arts, 1993–96
Commissions as exhibition designer and mainly own initiated art projects. Documentary theatre projects





P1.5 Memory Activism and Changing Solidarities

Iona Ramsay, University of Exeter

Memory of the Communist Past in Transnational Activism: Romania's 2018 Referendum on Redefining Marriage

In recent years, memories of suffering under communism have been increasingly instrumentalized as part of transnational movements to promote 'traditional values', helping to frame this activism as a new global struggle against 'cultural marxism'. This use of the communist past by transnational conservative activists, however, has longer roots. This paper traces how Eastern European anti-communist memory activism fed into and was shaped by a global rise of social conservatism from the 1970s onwards. It does this through a case study focussing on anti-communist use of memory as part of the failed 2018 referendum on same-sex marriage in Romania, tracing how Romanian and transnational activist networks, particularly the 'Coalition for Family', engaged and instrumentalized memory of suffering under communism. The paper first shows how these actors' engagement with the past was shaped by older Cold War transnational anti-communist memory cultures, which incorporated Romanian memories while also extending to countries including Brazil and South Africa. Particular attention is paid to how 'traditional values' were made 'traditional' and 'spiritual' in distinctively new ways through the struggle against communism. The paper then shows how these transnational memory cultures fed back into Romania after 1989 and helped shape new anti-communist framings of post-communist social and political struggles. Finally, the paper considers how communist memory was used in the successful counter-protest contesting the idea of 'traditional values'. The paper therefore helps shed light on how transnational anti-communist memory cultures have shaped instrumentalization of the communist past by populist right-wing movements, at local, national and regional levels.

Iona Ramsay is a third-year PhD student in the history department at the University of Exeter. She holds a BA in theology and religious studies from the University of Cambridge, and an MA in religion in global politics from SOAS (University of London). Her doctoral research examines the transnational development of ideas of spiritual resistance to communism, focussing in particular on the circulation of anti-communist memory between Romania, France and the USA. More broadly, her research interests centre on the relationship between religion and the politics of memory.

Zoltan Dujisin, Université Catholique de Louvain

National Memory Institutes: Therapeutic Historiography in Illiberal Times

The proposed presentation is based on the introductory chapter of a book proposal. Supported by over 60 interviews with historians from national memory institutes (NMIs) in Hungary and the Czech Republic, as well as representatives of NMIs who operate in European arenas, the chapter argues that NMIs can be conceptualized as institutions connecting the political and historiographic fields for purposes of making specific collective memory narratives



societally and regionally resonant. It then goes on to argue that by operating in, and expanding these interstitial spaces, NMIs generate a new form of expertise I term, following Kopecek, as *therapeutic history*. *Therapeutic historians* can thus be conceptualized as a professional community that openly assumes a more public and national-oriented role for history, without fully shunning academic canons. Hence, rather than situating themselves within the academically-oriented historiographic community, therapeutic historians assume a pastoral role, one by which they help a traumatized national community connect their (mediated) experiences and memories with societally resonant nation-building narratives. The chapter concludes by noting that, given their ability to make historical narratives resonant among the population, NMIs should be understood as an important and transnationally influential model, one with the potential to legitimize illiberal and conservative identity politics across borders.

Zoltán Dujisin obtained his PhD in sociology from Columbia University in New York and was a Marie Curie Leading Fellow based in Erasmus University Rotterdam. His research interests are sociology of knowledge, sociology of journalism, memory politics and political sociology. His research explores how claims to truth are legitimated through expertise, and the consequences of these processes for identity construction. His dissertation *Disciplining Post-Communist Remembrance: from Politics of Memory to the Emergence of a Mnemonic Field* argues that the Europeanization of an anti-totalitarian memory regime in the European Union is primarily driven by a transnational alignment of conservative identity politics in Central and Eastern Europe. This argument is also at the core of a paper published in 2020 in the journal *Theory and Society*.

Ilya Malafei, Maastricht University

The Work of Mourning in the Belarusian 2020 Protests

Since renegotiation of collective memory is often considered to be central to decolonial struggles, I utilize the concept as a point of departure to elucidate how the Belarusian protests of 2020 challenge Russia's neo-imperialist ambitions. I interrogate the politics of remembrance articulated by the protesters, defying the state-generated narratives about those whose lives are to be mourned and whose are not. In the analysis of the practices of mourning over the protestors who are claimed to have been murdered by the state, I ask how the protest elaborates a link between public grief and remembrance. Mourning and its spatio-temporal dimensions serve as a hinge for the rearrangement of social life. In what ways does such framing pose a challenge to the hegemony of the imagined Soviet (Russian) history? Drawing on Athena Athanasiou's writing on the political work of mourning and Judith Butler's work on frames, I show how the protest re-inscribes certain bodies as grievable and how grassroots acts of commemoration of the 'heroes' of the Belarusian revolution-in-progress challenge nationalist memory politics and become events that are politically meaningful and generative for the imagined community, one that breaks away from colonial frames of belonging. In my analysis, I demonstrate how public mourning moves beyond a postcolonial reflex to center the past around an ethnic community by overcoming the reigning paradigm of the dispensability of lives.



Ilya Malafei, I am a Lecturer at University College Maastricht. I received my research MA in Cultural Analysis from the University of Amsterdam in 2022, where I wrote a thesis on the visual politics of the 2020 protests in Belarus. My main research interests include the politics of cultural memory, new materialisms, protest art and critical curatorial practices in the museum. I also work as a research assistant for the ERC-funded *Conspiratorial Memory* project at the University of Amsterdam.

Ivan Nikolovski, Naum Trajanovski, University of Warsaw/ Central European University
Making the Nation's Red Lines: The Role of Macedonian Intellectuals in Bulgaria-North Macedonia Dispute over History, Memory and Identity

The literature on mnemonic and, by extension, ontological security in international relations (IR) has been rather state-centric, looking at security-seeking practices as prerogatives of the state. However, little has been said about the agency of non-state actors in matters of ontological (in)security between states. The historical and identity-related dispute between Bulgaria and North Macedonia, after the signing of the Treaty on good neighborly relations and cooperation in 2017, is illuminating in this sense. Namely, the two states are yet another pair of neighboring countries with a history of bitter and lengthy memory conflicts. Ever since the late 1960s, Bulgaria has claimed that the contemporary Macedonian ethnonational identity has Bulgarian roots as it was not recognized nor widespread prior to the establishment of North Macedonia as a state within the Yugoslav federation following the end of World War II. Conversely, North Macedonia argues that the Macedonian ethnonational identity and the Macedonian language had predated the formation and served as an inspiration for the foundation of the contemporary Macedonian state, at least since the 19th century. But the revived memory wars following the signing of the Treaty, engaged many non-state actors who brought additional complications to the already complex conflict.

Against this background, we argue that non-state mnemonic actors, such as historians, public intellectuals, and politicians can influence inter-state relations in ontological security terms. Even when states agree to desecuritize contentious historical narratives in pursuit of reconciliation, non-state actors can remain trapped in mnemonic security dilemmas. Acting as mnemonic warriors, these non-state actors (re)securitize the historical narratives that they believe need to be defended at any cost. Confronted with opposition, states not only revert their policies of desecuritization but securitize the disputed mnemonic accounts by legal and political means, only to return to the spiral of mutually reinforcing ontological insecurities.

Ivan Nikolovski is a Ph.D. candidate at Central European University's Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy, and International Relations in Vienna. Nikolovski closely analyzes the deals with the discursive Europeanization of North Macedonia's memory politics and the Macedonian national identity amid the country's EU accession process. In addition, his areas of interest include the EU enlargement and conditionality policy and global powers' rival influence in the Western Balkans. His last academic publication was "North Macedonia: A fertile ground for external influences" – a book chapter he co-authored with Zoran Nechev in "The Western Balkans in the World" (eds. Bieber and Tzifakis, Routledge, 2020).



Naum Trajanovski, a PhD graduate from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, is an assistant at the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw. In the past years, he cooperated with the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje and the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. His major academic interests include historical sociology and memory politics in East Central and South East Europe. He is the author of a book on the Museum of the Macedonian struggle and the Macedonian memory politics (Templum, 2020). He also serves as a co-chair of the MSA South-East Europe regional group.

P1.6 Roundtable (hybrid): Weaponizing History in Russia's War against Ukraine: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Platform Perspectives

From its early stages in 2014, the Russian war against Ukraine has been accompanied by an aggressive Russian politics of history, which leans on a pompous WWII victory cult as its major source of ammunition. History – or rather its mythologized version – is routinely leveraged by the Kremlin to justify an unprovoked war, to silence its critics, and exculpate its aggressors on the ground. Building on existing research, this panel aims to both broaden and deepen insight into the weaponization of ‘the past’ during the ongoing war in Ukraine.

First, we extend the scope of investigation beyond the habitual focus on the narratives of Russian officialdom and discuss, among other cases, Ukrainian counter-mobilizations of history. In addition to geographic diversity, we pay close-up attention to the role of various media ecologies, including new social media platforms such as TikTok. We scrutinize the interplay between a top-down and bottom-up dynamic in the – increasingly global – dissemination of mnemonic lenses on the current war, while also asking how historically informed narratives, memes and songs migrate across platforms.

Second, the panel aims to produce a deeper understanding of the rhetorical devices and affective mechanisms undergirding these recent weaponizations of the past. Which historical continuities, repetitions, metaphors, or analogies are invoked? And how do these reconfigure historical time? To what extent do the technical affordances of specific platforms facilitate understandings of history as, for instance, repetitive, cyclical, or continuous? And to which persuasive effects?

Elena Pilipets and Marloes Geboers, University of Siegen, University of Amsterdam, (online)

Propaganda Videos and Counter-Mobilizations of Sound on WarTok

Elena Pilipets' work focuses on the processes of social media circulation, with particular attention to the study of platforms through combinations of visual and digital methods. This includes online-grounded empirical investigations of Internet memes, platform subcultures, and social bots, the latter being studied in the context of a working group funded by the Center of Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) in Bochum.



Marloes Geboers' work revolves around the visibility of warfare as produced within and through platforms and their fast-evolving participatory modalities. She blends digital methods and automated image analyses in order to study performative expressions that replicate, imitate or subvert propaganda narratives in more or less tactical ways. Marloes has a background in political science (MA) and journalism (BA), and she has teaching experience in digital methods and ethics of AI.

Daria Khlevnyuk and Boris Noordenbos, University of Amsterdam

Temporality Reconsidered: Historical References in Russian State Media Coverage of the Russo-Ukrainian War

Daria Khlevnyuk's current research engages with the 'old left' memory culture in Russia, pro-Soviet memory communities, difficult pasts and contested collective memories. She published on museum exhibitions on the Soviet repressions in Russian regions and online memories.

Boris Noordenbos is Associate Professor of Literary & Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam, and affiliated to the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA).

His publications focus on culture's engagements with the past, with a special interest in the former Soviet Union. Boris is the author of *Post-Soviet Literature and the Search for a Russian Identity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and co-editor of the volume *Post-Soviet Nostalgia: Confronting the Empire's Legacies* (Routledge, 2019). He is the Principal Investigator in the ERC-funded research project *Conspiratorial Memory: Cultures of Suspicion in Post-Socialist Europe* (2021-2026).

Aleksey Kamenskikh, Bremen University

The Effect of the Substitutive Analogy in Russian Public Discourse of the War: 2014-2022

Aleksey Kamenskikh, a memory scholar, with membership of the MSA from 2019, a board member of the Perm branch of the Memorial society, was, before beginning of March 2022, an associate professor in Higher School of Economics (Russia). Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Russian troops in Ukraine, he was forced to leave Russia and participates in a series of research projects in universities of Bremen (Research Centre for East-European Studies), Mainz (Institute of East-European History), and Amsterdam (School for Cultural Analysis).

Day 2: Thu, 21 September, 9.30-11.30, Parallel Panels 2





P2.1 Museums and Monuments as Political Media

Margaret Tali and Redi Koobak, Estonian Academy of Arts, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

What's in a Title? 'Rendering Race' as a Battleground for Rewriting History

Museums play an important role in translating, situating and shaping the convergences between local, national and global memory discourses and debates. In the postsocialist region art museums have often been the leading public discussions around issues concerning deeply rooted values, identity and belonging. Grappling with the impact of the recent debates around racial justice, decolonization and Europe as postcolonial/postsocialist, this paper focuses on 'Rendering Race', an exhibition held in Estonia in Kumu Art Museum in 2021. The exhibition, curated by US American art historian Bart Pushaw, engaged with representations of race in the artworks from the museum's collection from the 1920s and 1930s, provoking an unusually heated debate among the public.

We are interested in further unpacking the main point of contention: the curatorial decision to change racially charged titles of artworks. Importantly, the curatorial act of renaming brought together two minority groups: people of colour and Roma people who were thus for the first time actively considered as part of the museum's publics. This gesture implicitly acknowledged that the museum has agency in creating publics via textual and visual narratives (Koobak and Tali 2023). In this paper, we will explore how this marked an important shift towards mnemonic pluralism in local museums within the broader transnational context of substituting racist titles of artworks which continues to be controversial.

Margaret Tali is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Art History and Visual Culture in the Estonian Academy of Arts. Her research interests include global histories of cultural heritage and museum collections, practices of curating difficult histories. Tali is the author of the monograph *Absence and Difficult Knowledge in Contemporary Art Museums* (Routledge, 2018) and co-editor, with Ieva Astahovska of the Special Issue 'The Return of Suppressed Memories in Eastern Europe' in *Memory Studies* (2022). As a curator she has co-initiated the collaborative research, exchange and exhibition project *Communicating Difficult Pasts* (2019-2022) that focuses on Baltic region.

Redi Koobak is Chancellor's Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK. Her research interests include feminist visual culture studies; intersections of postcolonialism and postsocialism; cultural representations of gender, war, and nationalism; transnational and local feminisms; and creative writing methodologies. Koobak is the author of the monograph *Whirling Stories: Postsocialist Feminist Imaginaries and the Visual Arts* (2013) and the editor, with Madina Tlostanova and Suruchi Thapar-Björkert, of *Postcolonial and Postsocialist Dialogues: Intersections, Opacities, Challenges in Feminist Theorizing and Practice* (Routledge, 2021).

Malgorzata Głowacka Grajper and Malgorzata Łukianow, University of Warsaw



Soviet deportations as Agonistic Memory? Commemorations of Communist and Non-Communist Polish Armed Forces in Contemporary Poland

In 1941, after the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union, the latter joined allied forces which entailed the re-establishment of Polish-Soviet relations. The Soviets granted "amnesty" to many Polish citizens held in forced labor camps. Formed under the command of General Władysław Anders Polish Armed Forces in the East were released from Siberian exile and fought their way through Palestine and Italy. Later, under the command of General Zygmunt Berling the First Polish Army was formed and fought along with the Red Army.

Memory of the war effort of both armies was changing along with the political systems in Poland. Under the communist regime, the actions of Berling's Army were commemorated more (and Anders' army for a period was banned from public memory). After 1989, the situation changed diametrically: the discourse regarding Anders' Army (and Gulag deportations) entered the public sphere, whereas the memory of the Berling's army was ditched for being communist and remained in the personal memory of former soldiers and their families.

However, contemporary monument and museums dedicated to the victims of Siberian deportations in Białystok commemorates both armies on an equal level. In our presentation, we will address the issue of how Gulag deportations and victims of the Siberian exile become an umbrella memory for various groups. In analyzing the narratives concerning the two Polish armies as they appear in the commemoration of the victims of Soviet deportations, we want to combine the agonistic model of memory (a memory that departs from the division between "us" – the good – and "them" – the bad) with the concept of building moral capital through the politics of memory.

Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper, Ph. D hab. is a sociologist and social anthropologist. She works as an associate professor at the Faculty of Sociology at the University of Warsaw. Head of the Department of Social Anthropology and Ethnic and Migration Studies. Her main research interests include the issues of contemporary national and ethnic identity, social memory, especially memory activism, and research on the relationship between the local and national dimensions of memory. She has published over a dozen articles and books on ethnic and national minorities in Poland and Russia, social memory in post-communist countries, and the memory of post-war resettlement. Her last books are *Milieux de mémoire in Late Modernity. Local Communities, Religion, and Historical Politics*, 2019 (with Zuzanna Bogumił), *The Burden of the Past. History, Memory, and Identity in Contemporary Ukraine*, 2020, (edited with Anna Wylegała). Currently, she works on a project on the postcolonial perspective on imperial Russian heritage in Poland.

Małgorzata Łukianow, PhD., works at the Department of Sociology, University of Warsaw. Earlier, she was an assistant professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences and a research assistant at Chemnitz University of Technology. Co-chair of the Polish regional group of the Memory Studies Association. She is co-editor of the volume (with Anna Wylegała and Sabine Rutar) *No Neighbors' Lands in Postwar Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022) and the monograph on personal documents in the pandemic *Pamiętniki Pandemii* (Krytyka Polityczna 2022). She is interested in memory studies, sociology of knowledge and sociology of culture. She is currently conducting research on the



Russian imperial heritage in Poland and discourses related to it. She is also collecting oral history accounts of war refugees from Ukraine to Poland.

Douglas Ong, University of Greifswald

Bringing Wrocław into Poland: Analysis on the Kresy Expulsions' Depiction in the Depot History Centre in Contemporary Poland

In defending the “good name of Poland” Jorg Hackmann describes, the contemporary Polish expression of martyrdom and victimisation draws inspiration from the commemoration of traumatising Polish experiences during the Second World War such as the Holocaust and the Warsaw Uprising. This provided grounds for the cultivation of collective trauma universally relatable to Poles today, forming a new brand of patriotism. The study explores this development using a less conventional event, namely the post-war *Kresy Expulsions*, which saw thousands of Poles deported from the former Eastern Borderlands to the post-war communist Poland.

The case study for this presentation is Wrocław's Depot History Centre, which depicts the city's post-1945 history, which includes the *Expulsions* themselves. Wrocław is central in the *Expulsions'* experiences since many expelled Poles eventually resettled there. While integrative attempts by the periphery into the greater nation is not an uncommon feature, the *Kresy Expulsions'* museal representations there also highlight the greater nation narrating the periphery into it, as regional and national identities engaged with each other as distinct yet compatible entities. To summarize, Wrocławian and Polish identities will be shown to accommodate each other under a historical story of the *Kresy Expulsions*.

This analysis of trauma and nostalgia's utilisation seeks to combine collective identities with Maurice Halbwachs' *collective memories*. Scholarly concepts include James Young's *counter memorials* and Svetlana Boym's *restorative and reflective nostalgias* as they provide insights on how the two's museal utilisation provide both an origin story and objective to define the idea that is both Polishness and Wrocławian.

Douglas Ong is a Doctoral Researcher from the University of Greifswald as part of the “Baltic Peripeties” International Research Training Group since April 2021. Having done his dissertation with the National University of Singapore over identity politics and its presentation in Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Douglas' academic interests include Polish memory culture, museology, and nationalism. To supplement his ever expanding interest in Poland, Douglas also enjoys making pierogi with potatoes and cheese.

Alexandra Yatsyk, University of Lille, University of Tartu

Baltic Russophones and Emptiness: The Case of the Soviet-era Monuments' War in Estonia

The paper seeks to explore the media discourse of the Soviet-era monuments' “war” in Estonia, rearticulated in the country's public debate due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Based on the analysis of Estonian media (n articles=200) published by state-supported, independent, pro-Kremlin and far-right outlets in February-December of



2022, the research reveals two general narratives. The first one represents the Estonian mainstream discourse, insisting on demolishing those monuments, which visualise militarism and imperialism of the Soviet culture. The second narrative is shared by the Russian language Estonian media, which emphasize feelings of identity loss and deprivation, growing in the local Russian-speaking community. The paper raises a question on the community's identity pillars: could they be “re-invented”, as suggested by a number of Estonian intellectuals? Tackling this puzzle, I address the concepts of post-Soviet *aphasia* (Oushakine 2000) and *erasure* (Makarychev and Yatsyk 2019), as referring to the post-Soviet emptiness of meanings and the Soviet Union dissolution trauma (?).

Alexandra Yatsyk is a Visiting researcher at Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies at the University of Tartu (Estonia), a researcher at IRHIS at the University of Lille, and a lecturer at Sciences Po, France. Her expertise covers post-Soviet nation-building, sports and cultural mega-events, biopolitics and art. She is the author of numerous articles and books, including - co-authored with Andrey Makarychev - the *Critical biopolitics of the Post-Soviet: from Population to Nation* (Lexington, 2019), *Lotman's Cultural Semiotics and the Political* (Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017), and co-edited *Mega-Events in Post-Soviet Eurasia: Shifting Borderlines of Inclusion and Exclusion* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), *New and Old Vocabularies of International Relations After the Ukraine Crisis* (Routledge, 2016), and *Boris Nemtsov and Russian Politics: Power and Resistance* (Ibidem Verlag & Columbia University, 2018).

P2.2 Translating Memories: Difficult Heritage, Comparisons and Entanglements

The papers in this panel bring to comparison different approaches to studying the transnational dimension and entanglements of difficult heritage. Looking at discourses and practices that surround political prisons, memorials and sites that remind of dictatorships and colonial dominance, the papers in this panel discuss an extent, to which the categories of “post-socialist” and “post-colonial” are viable concepts when discussing memory dialogue, overlaps and interconnections. The papers approach comparisons and entanglements in memory practices from various theoretical methodological perspectives: local, cross-regional, transnational, and global.

Gruia Badescu, University of Konstanz

“Negative Heritage” in Southeastern Europe: Local and Transnational Entanglements in Memorializing Political Prisons after the End of Socialism

Gruia Bădescu is a Research Fellow at the Zukunftscolleg, University of Konstanz. He holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge, and, before Konstanz, he was a lecturer and research associate at the University of Oxford. His research examines urban and architectural interventions in the aftermath of political ruptures, focusing on post-war reconstruction of cities and memorialisation after political violence. His publications address reconfigurations of urban space and memory processes in Southeastern Europe, also in dialogue with other regions, specifically the Levant and the Southern Cone of Latin America.



Caterina Preda, University of Bucharest

Transnational Memory of Dictatorships from a Cross-Regional Perspective between South America and Eastern Europe

Caterina Preda is an Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Bucharest. She teaches undergraduate courses on Latin American politics, Art and Politics, and a graduate course on Cultural Memory in South America and Eastern Europe. Her research is interdisciplinary and deals with art in dictatorships, artistic memory in post-dictatorships in South America and Eastern Europe (Chile and Romania), as well as cultural memory in the two regions. Her book, published by Palgrave in 2017, compares the relationship between art and politics during the dictatorships in Chile and Romania. Her most recent research projects dealt with the case of the Romanian Artists Union (UAP), with the project “Transregional Remembrance of Dictatorships: Restoring Human Dignity through Artistic Practices in South America and Eastern Europe” (2018-2020).

Anna Topolska, independent scholar

Memory and Non-Memory in the Poznań Urban Space: Art and the Difficult Past

In October 2022, in cooperation with a number of cultural institutions, I conducted an educational-artistic project at the University of the Arts in Poznań, Poland entitled *Memory and Non-Memory in the Poznań Urban Space*. The students participating in the workshops were asked to address in their creative processes the issues of dealing with presence and absence of difficult memory in the urban space of Poznań. It was assumed that memory is produced and reproduced in social relations, operating on the border between private/public, personal/collective. It creates layers, both mental and material and visual, that interact with each other. The city has both memory and non-memory written in its tissue. The students were asked to conduct a historical research, select a topic and tackle such questions as: what is the role of the visual arts in the work of memory? What is the artistic reinterpretation of memory and non-memory? How can art revive, bring out and discuss the memory recorded in urban space? How does art communicate memory threads, inviting members of the community and its guests to confront them, to reflect, to launch their own memory processes? Can art be transformative for a community by introducing a memory ferment? The outcome were 10 team or individual projects, exhibited in a gallery, which I intend to discuss in this presentation.

Anna Topolska is a cultural historian specializing in visual studies and memory studies and a Polish-English translator of texts in the Humanities. She was educated both in Poland (PhD, 2019; MA, 2004 in History at Adam Mickiewicz University) and the United States (MA in History, 2015; Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies, 2014 at the University of Michigan). Her research interests and publications focus on war photography, memorials and museums, trauma, and visual rhetoric.



P2.3 Public History in Practice: State Initiative and Public Participation in the Co-creation of Narratives of Collective Trauma in Central and Eastern Europe I (online panel)

The proposed panel will assess practices of public history relating to narratives of collective trauma: foreign occupation, collaboration, political repression, partisan warfare, mass population displacement, and genocide, etc., in Lithuania and Central and Eastern Europe. The institutionalization of such narratives through public history was a key element of nation-building in the post-communist era. Since the accession to the EU of the 10 nations of Central and Eastern Europe, public history has evolved in response to the requirements of European integration at the national level, and at the EU level through the invention of European remembrance. At all times, state and non-state actors have played a role in shaping these narratives, sometimes cooperating, sometimes at odds with each other. Participants in this panel will assess the motivations, objectives, and impact of public history campaigns in Central and Eastern Europe relating to narratives of collective trauma.

The first part of the panel will focus on the case of Lithuania, exploring the intersection of two several traumas—World War II, the Holocaust and the anti-Soviet partisan resistance. The second part of the panel will expand the focus to include other cases in Central Eastern Europe, including Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Belarus.

Odetta Rudling, Lund University

Juozas Ambrazevicius-Brazaitis' memory in the Light of the 80th Anniversary of 1941 Uprising in Lithuanian SSR: The Debates of the Public Space

Odetta Rudling is Researcher (History) at Lund University. She has published on mass folklore in Soviet Lithuania and other aspects of culture in Soviet Lithuania. She is currently engaged in a project on the growing phenomenon of long distance nationalism.

Sebastian Graf, Lund University

Art and Affect — Assembling Ukrainian Virtual Museums of War

Sebastian Graf is a PhD Candidate in History at Lund University since August 2021. His project explores digital memory politics and uses of history in contemporary Ukraine. In particular, he is focusing on the ways the ongoing Russian invasion in Ukraine since 2014 is mediated and remembered in digital spaces.

Per Anders Rudling, Lund University

Memories of the Belorussian Peoples' Republic at its 100th Anniversary

Per Anders Rudling is Associate Professor of History at Lund University. His research interests include nationalism, historical culture, and the instrumental use of history in the former *Kresy Wschodnie*, the eastern border regions which today make up Western Belarus, Western Ukraine, and parts of Lithuania. A primary focal point are memories of 20th century



political violence and ideological history writing in the post-Soviet successor states and their overseas diasporas. His book *The Rise and Fall of Belarusian Nationalism, 1906-1931* appeared 2015 with the University of Pittsburgh Press. From 2015 he was Visiting Senior Fellow and coordinator of the European Studies Program at the National University of Singapore. In 2019 he was appointed Wallenberg Academy Fellow at Lund University, with a five-year research fellowship from the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation which generously underwrites his current research project on Ukrainian long-distance nationalism during the Cold War.

Tomas Sniegon, Lund University

Soviet Marshal Konev's Posthumous Battle of Municipal District Prague 6

Tomas Sniegon is a graduate of journalism at Charles University in Prague and history at Lund University. I have a PhD in history. I am an associate professor in European studies. My research focuses on modern European history, particularly the history of Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th Century, the history of the Cold War and the development of communism in the region, its crisis, collapse and aftermath. I am the author of *Vanished History. The Holocaust in Czech and Slovak Historical Culture*. I am currently completing a manuscript of a book based on a critical analysis of my own extensive interviews with Vladimir Semichastnyi (1924-2001), head of the KGB from 1961 to 1967, which I conducted in Moscow in the 1990s. The book confronts Semichastnyi's oral testimony with documents declassified in the archives of several countries. The book is under contract with Yale University Press.

P2.4 Folk and Nouveau-Folk: Indigenous and Authentic Voices in Post-Socialist Russia

This panel explores the nexus of folklore, history and identity in indigenous, minority, and contemporary texts ranging from fiction to autobiographical poetry and music video. Linking the papers are the questions of trauma and memory in Soviet and post-Soviet culture. Symbols from local and international folklore and fiction used in identity construction are juxtaposed with disharmonic, chaotic, and traumatic events and spaces to make claims about belonging and displacement, about remembering and mourning.

Karina Lukin, University of Helsinki

Remembering Folklore: The Appeal of the Epic in Nenets Irina Hanzerova's Poetry

Karina Lukin is the Academy of Finland research fellow at the University of Helsinki. She has published on Nenets written and oral texts and their entanglement with for example memory, environment, shamanism and imperialism.



Tintti Klapuri, University of Helsinki

Displacement and Nostalgia in the Kola Sámi Writer Askold Bazhanov's Autobiographical poetry

Tintti Klapuri is University Lecturer in Russian Literature at University of Helsinki. Her publications include *Chronotopes of Modernity in Chekhov* (2019), the edited collection *Bakhtin and his Others: (Inter)subjectivity, Chronotope, Dialogism* (2013), and articles on time and space in Russian literature from nineteenth to twenty-first century.

Jenniliisa Salminen, University of Helsinki

Representing Minorities through Folklore and Fantasy: Tatars in Guzel Yakhina's Zuleikha and Finnish Russians in Susanna Hynynen and Dess Terentjeva's Neonkaupunki Series

Jenniliisa Salminen PhD is University Teacher at the Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki. She has published articles of Russian children's literature, fantasy fiction and contemporary Russian women authors.

Angela Brintlinger, Ohio State University

Nouveau-Folk in Post-Soviet Song and Video: ShortParis Revisits War, Wolves and Workers' Rights to Process Soviet History(ies) in Today's Russia

Angela Brintlinger is Professor of Slavic at Ohio State University, Columbus, OH (USA). Her book publications include *Chapaev and his Comrades: War and The Russian Literary Hero across the Twentieth Century* (2012) and *Writing a Usable Past: Russian Literary Culture 1917–1937* (2000; Russian translation 2020), as well as edited collections such as *Seasoned Socialism: Gender and Food in Late Soviet Everyday Life* (2019) and *Madness and the Mad in Russian Culture* (2007). She has also written numerous articles related to Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet culture.

P2.5 Politics of Memory in Communist Czechoslovakia and Post-Communist Czechia and Slovakia

The panel will focus on memory in public space, in particular insofar as memorial representations, commemorative practices and places of memory are concerned. Panelists want highlight specifics of the (per)formation of official memory through political rituals and intervention into public space prior to 1989: the construction of a single historical narrative and the related political calendar containing principal historical milestones, including their continuous political updating; displacement, manipulation of memory and orientation to the Soviet Union (e.g. the transfer and fostering of the cult of the Great Patriotic War); relevance of memory practices, objects and rituals for the (self-)presentation of the Communist regime, mobilization of masses and maintenance of the bipolar concept of the world. The political and social transformation after 1989 meant, among others, the end of the existing historical narratives inseparably connected with interventions into public space and commemorative practices. As a matter of fact, the process of dealing with the Communist past was manifested



in the earliest and most visible manner in this area. Furthermore, the contributions will concentrate on the materialized distance from the past (iconoclasm and cleaning of public space from “communist” symbols, or, in a broader sense, the problem of monument legacy, including more and more disturbing Russian interference), as well as on the legitimization of the post-1989 regime through instrumentalization of the past. A significant part of the latter was the construction of new memorials and places of memory reminding of the illegitimate and criminal nature of the Communist regime.

Marie Černá, Czech Academy of Sciences

Victory Day celebrations in communist Czechoslovakia and their Legacy in Today's Czechia

Marie Černá is a researcher in the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague where she specializes in the social and political history and memory of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia. She is an author of a book about Soviet army in Czechoslovakia 1968-1991 published in Czech (*Sovětská armáda a česká společnost 1968-1991*) which is now being translated into English; co-author of a book about political purges and screenings in Czechoslovakia (*Prověrky a jejich místo v komunistickém vládnutí 1948-1989*); co-author of a book about political education and ideological indoctrination in Czechoslovakia (*Pojetí a prosazování komunistické výchovy v Československu 1948-1989*); and co-author of history-based computer games *Attentat 1942* and *Liberation 1945*.

Markéta Devátá, Czech Academy of Sciences

Politics of memory in communist Czechoslovakia

Markéta Devátá is a researcher in the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, specializes in communist ideology and its promotion as well as memory of communism. She is a co-author of a book dealing with the process of the constitution of Czech collective memory of the communist era 1989-2019 (*Pamětní místa na komunistický režim v České republice*) or an author of a study *Terror, Failure, Resistance: Conflicting Memory of Armed Acts of Anti-Communist Resistance in Czechoslovakia (Czech Journal of Contemporary History 2017)*. She published several studies on ideologizing social sciences and education in post-war Czechoslovakia (*Marxismus jako projekt nové společnosti: dvě studie ke společenským vědám 1945-69* or in *Pojetí a prosazování komunistické výchovy v Československu 1948-89*).

Petra Hudek (Švardová), Slovak Academy of Sciences

Lenin and Gottwald in transition – statues and memorials after Velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia

Petra Hudek (Švardová) is researcher at the Institute of History, Slovak Academy of Sciences. In 2022-2023 she carries out her project “Iconoclasm in the Czechoslovak public space after 1989. The heritage of socialism in historical perspective” as postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences. She previously finished her thesis under the joint (cotutelle) Ph.D. program of the Institute of History, Slovak



Academy of Sciences (Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University Bratislava), and INALCO Paris (University of Languages and Civilizations). The topic of her doctoral thesis was “Material heritage from the Communist past in former Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria: the questions of preservation of monuments and their new roles. Soviet war memorials after 1989”. She completed her master’s degree in museum studies in 2012 at Paris Sorbonne University.

Oldřich Tůma, Czech Academy of Sciences

Politics of memory in post-communist Czechia and Slovakia

Oldřich Tůma is a researcher in the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, specializes in history of the Cold War, history of Czechoslovakia after 1945 as well as memory of communism. He is among others co-author of *History of Czech Lands* (2018), *Pamětní místa na komunistický režim v České republice* (2021) and an author of studies on above mentioned topics, e.g. *Dealing with the Past – The History Textbook (in Civic and Uncivic Values in the Czech Republic, London 2021)* or *1968: Die Tschechoslowakei, die Politik der Vereinigten Staaten und die Entspannungspolitik (in Entspannung im Kalten Krieg: Der Weg zum Moskauer Vertrag und zur KSZE, Graz-Wien 2020)*.

P2.6 Ukrainian Heritage at War: Vulnerability and Resilience of the National Identity (hybrid)

Attacks on heritage and identity during the current war on Ukraine have been wide-reaching and have included targeted attacks within historic cities, the destruction of cultural sites and the looting of museums and archival collections. Just like decades ago the national identity of Ukrainians meant to be erased by imperial power, but yet shows significant resilience and fast recovery.

The phenomenon of historic swings and palimpsest of memories, embodied in the Ukrainian cultural sites, monuments, museum and archival collections, reveals the variety of narratives. From multinational historic urban fabric and “inconvenient” heritage to heroic salvation of historical collections and developing a new story of Ukraine in museums – the panel will provide a comprehensive overview and explore the issues from the ground.

Kateryna Goncharova, Ukrainian Heritage Crisis Specialist at World Monuments Fund

Historic Preservation in Post-Soviet Ukraine and How it Reflects the Value of Authenticity, National Identity and the War

Kateryna Goncharova, Ph.D., is a Ukrainian Heritage Crisis Specialist at World Monuments Fund. Previously served as a Head of the Research Department at the Ukrainian State Research and Project Institute for Historic Preservation; she has been involved with the preservation of architectural heritage and historical sites of Ukraine, including research, management, and scientific support of projects. As a Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Goncharova also conducted research concerning the U.S. experience in historic preservation based on



public-private partnership, community engagement, and neighborhood revitalization. She also managed and co-organized numerous projects on integrated urban development, civic participation, and evaluation of cultural heritage as a resource for strategic development.

Valentyna Kharkhun, Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University

Decolonization in Action: Dealing with (Un)wanted Heritage during the Russo-Ukrainian War

Valentyna Kharkhun is a Professor with the Ukrainian Literature and Journalism Department of Nizhyn Mykola Gogol State University (Ukraine). She is the author of two books, six textbooks and more than one hundred articles. Throughout her career, she has worked almost exclusively on the relationship between ideology and culture, focusing on the following topics: ideology in Ukrainian modernist writings; the arts under Soviet rule; the socialist realist canon in Ukrainian and Russian Literatures; and the ideologies which drive representations of the memory of communism in museums of Central and Eastern European countries. Currently, she is working on a book entitled *Multi-Faceted Memory: Exhibiting the Soviet Era in Ukrainian Museums*.

Svitlana Shlipchenko, Center for Urban Studies NGO; Institute for Philosophy, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture
The (Post)Colonial (Post)Soviet: Rethinking the Uneasy Pasts in Ukrainian Cities

Svitlana Shlipchenko Director, Center for Urban Studies NGO; senior research fellow, Institute for Philosophy, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; Visiting professor at Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture.

Milena Chorna, Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War

Choices we make: Resilience of Ukrainian Museum Workers under Fire

Milena Chorna, art historian, expert of the cultural heritage sector at the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, deputy director for development and communications at the National museum of the history of Ukraine in the Second World War. The Memorial complex (Kyiv, Ukraine). Previously worked as an analyst for the Ukrainian government at the State Agency of Arts and Artistic Education and as a research fellow at the National museum of the history of Ukraine. Starting February 24, 2022 volunteered mostly for the Museum Crisis Center and occasionally - for the Heritage Emergency Rescue Initiative, monitoring the urgent needs of Ukrainian museum workers, specifically, in the de-occupied regions and those at the forefront, respectively providing assistance with packing materials, evacuating people and collections, and securing individual financial help for over 400 museum workers.

Oksana Dovgoplova, Odesa National University

Working Through the imperial Heritage in Ukraine: The Case of Odesa





Oksana Dovgoplova is a Professor at the Department of Philosophy, Odesa National University named after I.I. Mechnikov, curator of the Past / Future / Art memory culture platform. Works with the topics of the Ukrainian collective memory, especially with Odesa city mythology and historical imagination, researches the possible frames of Odesa local memory development under the influence of Russian aggression against Ukraine. Organized artistic exhibitions focused on the traumatic past, such as “Trees of Memory: Roots and Runners” (in partnership with the Ukrainian Institute and the Laznia Center for Contemporary Art, Gdansk, Poland, 2021), “From 1914 till Ukraine” (Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, 2023) etc. She also organizes the public memory discussions (public program for the artistic project about unity “#bruderschaft” in 2020, online forum “The (Non)Exclusion Zone” in 2021, “Empire: to forget impossible to demolish” in 2022 etc.). Worked as cocurator of the Laboratory of Artistic Research of the experiences of War “Land to Return, Land to Care” (2022-2023).

Day 2: Thu, 21 September, 14.00-16.00, Parallel Panels 3

P3.1 Museum Communities and Mnemonic Dialogues

Magdalena Buchczyk, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Tracing Collections & Evoking Textural Memories in Post-socialist Europe

This paper focuses on the potential of textural knowledge for memory studies (Astacio 2021, de la Fuente 2019). Drawing on case studies in Eastern & South-Eastern Europe, it explores the understudied collections of rural objects as tools for a reflexive investigation of layered memories and perceptions of the past. It brings together two cases of textile-makers in Poland and Romania to explore in what ways museum objects enable us to tell a transnational, vernacular memory in the post-socialist world and how they can help elucidate context-specific differences.

The first case study in north-east Poland explores memories of forced displacement, mobility & community-making in a socialist textile cooperative. The second case considers a fractured community and the role of textiles in evoking ambiguous memories of those who migrated and those who stayed behind in socialist and post-socialist Romania.

In both rural areas of Poland & Romania, the life histories told through textiles point to the entangled histories of the region & their reverberations today. The paper explores the potential of developing textural approaches to memory work & enhancing the interpretation of these collections. The paper proposes that textural knowledge allows for exploring dissonance and difference in ethnic, national, and gender terms in changing political and socio-economic contexts. By animating the forgotten collections & their textural memories, we can reposition these objects in local, national & transnational memoryscapes for new museum futures.

Magdalena Buchczyk is a Junior Professor in Social Anthropology of Cultural Expressions at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany. She conducts ethnographic research on





collections, memory, material culture, and heritage. Publications include articles in *Museum Anthropology*, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, *Journal of Museum Ethnography* and *Textile: Journal of Cloth and Culture*.

Linara Dovydaitytė, Tartu University, Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas
Collecting and Mediating Memories in the Museum: The Baltic case

The paper discusses museum exhibitions as a specific media of memory, focusing on how individual remembering is collected, translated, and mediated as a form of cultural memory. Baltic museums dealing with not-too-distant socialist past increasingly use different modes of knowledge production, combining historical facts with personal stories, scientific knowledge with individual memories, traditional display with creative approaches, or even privileging the latter in their exhibitions. Use of oral history and testimonials is often supposed to contribute to the multidirectionality and diversity of memory, or even to help shape the experience of agonistic memory for the visitors. Analysing recently produced museum exhibitions in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the paper explores curatorial strategies and exhibitionary techniques mediating collected memories as a part of bigger picture of the contested pasts. The research shows that sometimes the mediation of memory in museums relies on familiar visual, material, and narrative templates, sometimes new ways are being invented to produce meanings in changing social environments. The main question of the paper asks not only what and whose memories are collected and mediated but also how the very way of memory mediation shape the articulation of relationship with the past in post socialist exhibitionary complex.

Linara Dovydaitytė (Ph.D. in art history) is an associate professor in the Department of Art History and Criticism at the Faculty of Arts, Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, and a research fellow in Museum Studies at the Institute of Cultural Research, Tartu University, Estonia. Her current research interests include memory culture and museum studies, nuclear aesthetics in art, and representations of industrial heritage in contemporary culture. Her recent publications include the co-authored monograph [‘Learning the Nuclear: Educational Tourism in \(Post\)Industrial Sites’](#) (Peter Lang, 2021), the chapter ‘Assembling the Nuclear, Decolonizing the Heritage’ in the book [‘Discovering the New Place of Learning’](#) (Peter Lang, 2022), and the contribution to the special issue of the Journal of Baltic Studies [‘\(Re\)Imagining the nuclear in Lithuania following the shutdown of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant’](#) (2022). Since 2021 she is involved in two international research projects: [‘Nuclear Spaces: Communities, Materialities and Locations of Nuclear Cultural Heritage’](#) and [‘Practices and Challenges of Mnemonic Pluralism in Baltic History Museums’](#).

Beata Nessel-Lukasik, Maria Grzegorzewska University

A Relational Museum and the Democratization of Memory in a Historical Museum

Presenting the concept of relational museum as example of including memory community members in curatorial practices and building the narrative of a modern museum. How, based





on theory of ecomuseum and participation, can today effectively involve not only the local community, but also other groups in co-creating the program of historical museum and preserving previously overlooked testimonies of past? I will answer this question based on effects of participatory project that was carried out at the Piłsudski Museum in order to create memory coalition around one of Polish historical monuments, Piłsudski's home, the main object of museum. How did 95 parallel stories come about as part of developing relational museum concept? What did their preservation and dissemination contribute to narrative of Piłsudski Museum and perception of the "Milusin" manor house? What is the status of this type of storage media in memorial site? Can making them available to public translate into polyphonic perception of past? By presenting the accounts of people representing four generations of children, whose biography is inextricably intertwined with the main museum object, I will show how testimonies of past, previously neglected, create space for developing dialogue between voices of museum's curators and people representing a different perspective: children perspective. Thanks to the implementation of relational museum concept, adults have created their own memory frame. Today testimonies have become another example of how historical museum can produce not only alternative stories, but fully polyphonic images of past thus creating space for building community around memorial sites.

Beata Nessel-Lukasik PhD is a sociologist, art historian, graduate of SNS IFIS PAN, scholarship holder of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Researcher of the impact of social changes on contemporary museums and various groups of audiences. Museologist associated with, the Warsaw National Museum and Józef Piłsudski Museum in Sulejówek, where she created the first Local Programs Department in Poland. Co-author of the relational museum, Sulejówek Social Archives, participatory projects and texts about museums and their audiences. Author of interdisciplinary monograph "Memory Coalitions", established at the Maria Grzegorzewska University. ICOM member, member of "Museology" editorial team and of the Telos Group.

Anežka Brožová, Charles University; **Czech Academy of Sciences**
Institutionalizing Memory in the Hlučín Region

The paper will critically review the institutionalization of communicative memory in the Hlučín Region whose experience of WWII and its aftermath was distinctive from the rest of Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic. The Hlučín narrative was silenced during state socialism when only one official interpretation of recent history was allowed. After 1989 the state politics of memory was loosened, and different narratives started to form in the public space. Therefore, the Hlučín (i.e., the people of the Hlučín Region) could finally publicly remember their history, transfer it to younger generations, and with this, define and strengthen their collective identity.

Currently, the Museum of the Hlučín Region, with its permanent exhibition called *Who are the people in the Hlučín Region* (since 2014), is a key actor in regional memory politics. The institution records testimonies of the Hlučín from the oldest living generation, archives them, and sets a memory canon of the region. The paper will analyze interviews with the director and other employees of the Museum recorded in the summer of 2022 and will answer questions such as: What does the process of memory institutionalization look like? How is



the archive created? What memories are canonized? What are the motives of the Museum staff for this activity? In particular, the paper will stress the importance of personal agency in institutionalizing the Hlučín memory.

Anežka Brožová is a PhD candidate at the Institute of International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, and the Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences. She has studied in Prague, Regensburg, and Cracow and holds a master's degree in Area Studies focused on Germany and Central Europe. Her research interest covers nationalism and national minorities and cultures of memory in the 20th century and today's Central Europe. In her dissertation, she studies the institutionalization of memory in the Hlučín Region after the fall of communism. Currently, she is a team member of the project “Transformation of Silesia 1945–1948,” funded by the Czech Grant Agency.

Latest publication: Anežka Brožová, “World War II Monuments and Graves in the Hlučín Region: Fallen Hlučín Soldiers as a Contested Realm of Memory in the Czech Culture of Remembrance,” in *East Central European Cemeteries. Ethnic, Linguistic and Narrative Aspects of Sepulchral Culture and the Commemoration of the Dead in Borderlands*, ed. Ferdinand Kühnel, Soňa Mikulová and Snežana Stanković (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2023), 47–76.

P3.2 Translating Memories: Postsocialism, Nostalgia, Archive

Claudiu Turcus, Babeş-Bolyai University

Westalgia and the Orphanage of Communism in Post-1989 Romanian Fictional Narratives

This presentation builds on the conceptual framework of Boris Buden (the “repressive infantilization” of former communist societies) and Nataša Kovačević’s (the concept of “self-colonizing tendency”). It aims at addressing one of the most comprehensive and complex phenomena of contemporary Romania: the post-communist fictional portrayal of communist childhood. It also addresses the ideological implications that have led to the emergence and expansion of a memory-oriented subgenre in the region. I read the binary opposition typical to nearly all post-communist recollections of the communist period against the grain. On the one hand, I analyse the “black” books and films of post-communist remembrance, a territory, that is a deeply vindictive and incriminatory realm with respect to the abuses and crimes of totalitarian regimes. On the other hand, I state that the “pink” books and films foster feelings of nostalgia and portray a longing for the state system and communist community. I argue that, built on the traumatic experiences accumulated during communist childhood, the critical portrayal mostly implies carefully designed scenarios through which the shortcomings of the post-communist transition are depicted. In this context, *Ostalgia* proves to be *Westalgia*, that is, the protagonists or children-narrators from post-1989 literary texts and films do not present a longing for communism per se, but rather a desire for a Western world which, however, remains distant and acts as a set against the backdrop of Soviet-inspired totalitarianism. In both these cases, communism attains the role of the abusive parent that forbids or corrupts any contact with the Western adoptive family.



Claudiu Turcuș is Associate Professor of Literary and Film studies and Vice Dean of the Faculty Arts at Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania. He published widely on topics such as the cultural memory of socialism, the representation of post-communist transition, intellectual history, or the ideology of New Romanian Cinema. His most recent publication are co-authored with Dr. Constantin Parvulescu: “Specters of Europe and Anti-communist Visual Rhetoric in the Romanian Film of the Early 1990s”, in Aga Skrodzka, Xiaoning Lu, and Katarzyna Marciniak (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Communist Visual Cultures*, (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 693-712; “Afterlives of Romanian socialist-era historical film: reruns, story universes, reception”, in *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Volume 63, 2021 - Issue 1-2, pp. 50-71.

Kapitolina Fedorova and Natalia Tšuikina, Tallinn University
Photos of the Past and Discursive Mechanisms of Shared Memories: Facebook Group “Советская Эстония – Eesti NSV”

Sharing memories and narratives focused on the imagined past is a process important for creating and maintaining new – even if seen as ‘old’ – group identities (Eyerman 2004). Modern technologies, including digitalization of archive documents and photos and online communication with strangers via social media, provide many new opportunities for such practices. In Estonia, as in many other Post-Socialist countries, the phenomenon known as ‘nostalgia for communism’ (Willinger 2007; Velikonja 2009) is quite common. The Soviet past and its legacy, condemned by the state officials, is, though, quite often represented favorably in many public discussions and in interpersonal everyday communication. The proposed paper deals with one particular case of using online platforms for sharing memories contributing to the creation of a nostalgic memorial discourse of Estonia’s Soviet past – the Facebook public group with a bilingual Russian-Estonian title ‘Советская Эстония – Eesti NSV’ (‘Soviet Estonia’). In this group, its members post photos depicting various places and scenes of Tallinn and Estonia during the Soviet period, sometimes accompanying them with texts referring to personal memories of those places. Some of the posts provoke reactions of other group members resulting in long discussions. In the paper, posts and comment threads in this group are studied using sociolinguistic methods (Farina 2018) to reveal the discursive mechanisms of sharing and creating memories for strengthening the group identity and for opposing the official narrative not only in relation to the past but also in current political issues.

Kapitolina Fedorova graduated from St. Petersburg State University (Department of Russian and Department of General Linguistics), 1999, and European University at St. Petersburg (Department of Ethnology), 2001. PhD in philology (2002). In 2003-2018 worked at European University at St. Petersburg and then at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, South Korea. Since 2020, works at Tallinn University, Estonia. Research interests: sociolinguistics, language contacts, migration studies, border studies, linguistic landscape.

Natalia Tšuikina graduated from St. Petersburg University (Department of Russian Philology), 1996. PhD in philology (2000). Since 2002, works at Tallinn University. Research interests: linguistic creativity, linguistic landscape, language and culture, bilingualism,



Russian as a foreign and a heritage language.

Emilia Diana Popa, Tallinn University

Romanian Slow Films and the Specificity of the Romanian Cultural Memory of the Communist Past

Nostalgia, alongside trauma, are two of the most influential (to this date) paradigms of the study of the memory of state socialism, with concepts such as *Yugonostalgia* and *Ostalgie* contributing to its wide international circulation. In this presentation, I will focus on what I will refer to as Romanian slow films – a group of films that is smaller than, yet necessarily part of, what is usually grouped under the labels Romanian New Wave or New Romanian Cinema – in order to explore how they question nostalgia as an “exportable” interpretative framework of the state socialist past (Pehe 2020).

Romanian slow films depart from the experiential narrative modes and mainstream cultural productions that most of the scholarship on film and memory focused so far (Landsberg 2004, Erlil 2011). I argue that Romanian slow films use a structural and visceral presentation mode that I call “slowness full of tension” for the production and transmission of locally specific memories of the communist past. Consequently, tension in Romanian slow films is not the result of narrative tension. Instead, tension emerges, paradoxically, as a feature of slowness (de Luca 2011, Jaffe 2014) and as rooted in the “Golden Age” of Romanian communism, the last nine years of Ceaușescu’s regime. Importantly, contemporary Romanian films use slowness full of tension to complicate anticommunism, the public discourse on the period when these films were made, and, in the process, to replace nostalgia with tension as an appropriate cultural reaction to the Romanian specificity of the communist past.

Diana Popa is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow on the European Research Council Starting Grant project entitled: [“Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena”](#) at Tallinn University, Estonia. Previously, she was an ERC postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Edinburgh as part of the “Illuminating the ‘Grey Zone’: Addressing Complex Complicity in Human Rights Violations” project. She received her PhD in Film Studies from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. Her research interests lie in the relationship between film and socio-historical and political contexts, film style and aesthetics, film and cultural memory studies. Her articles have been published in *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, *Journal of European Studies* and *Short Film Studies*.

Natalija Arlauskaitė, Vilnius University

Politics of Voice in Post-Soviet Archival Film

In this paper, I will analyse archival films reflecting on the Soviet era and rethinking its visual archive, primarily photography. These are not necessarily photofilms in their pure form, but the remediation of photography is a significant part of them. They focus on the politics of the voice-over as a way of disrupting, deterritorialising a once hegemonic visual and ideological order. In archival cinema - whether it uses newsreels, photographs, or it is of mixed visuality – the additional voice is usually a voiceover. Whatever the editing figures that are created, it operates creating a tension with the image, in various ways establishing a critical distance. In



other words, the rewriting of the archive involves its *vocal deterritorialisation*, repositioning the subject and shifting the archive's visual regime. Where the voice (and other sounds) reinforces and sustains the archival sequence, it performs the opposite action - it strengthens the hegemonic meaning rather than displaces it. Vocal deterritorialisation strategies are analysed in the following films: *Desappearance of a Tribe*, 2005, Deimantas Narkevičius; *One Day in Peoples's Poland*, 2009, Maciej Drygas; *Nora's Sisters*, 2009, Marge Monko; *Siberian Testament*, 2009, Gintaras Makarevičius.

Natalija Arlauskaitė – film and visual studies scholar, professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University. Her current academic interests include visual theory, forms of historical imagination, Soviet medical imagery, feminist film theory. She is an author of “Key-Concepts of Feminist Film Theory” (2010), “Native and Foreign Canons: Film Adaptations between Narrative Theory and Cultural Studies” (2014); “Severe Piece: Photographs of the Collapsed Regimes in Documentary Film” (2020, all Vilnius University Press); ed. w/Lina Kaminskaitė, “In Focus: Women in Lithuanian Cinema” (2021, Lapas), co-author w/Miglė Anušauskaitė, “To Look and To-be-looked-at: Concepts and Comics of Feminist Film Theory” (2023, Lapas).

P3.3 Public History in Practice: State Initiative and Public Participation in the Co- creation of Narratives of Collective Trauma in Central and Eastern Europe II

The proposed double panel will assess practices of public history relating to narratives of collective trauma: foreign occupation, collaboration, political repression, partisan warfare, mass population displacement, and genocide, etc., in Lithuania and Central and Eastern Europe. The institutionalization of such narratives through public history was a key element of nation-building in the post-communist era. Since the accession to the EU of the 10 nations of Central and Eastern Europe, public history has evolved in response to the requirements of European integration at the national level, and at the EU level through the invention of European remembrance. At all times, state and non-state actors have played a role in shaping these narratives, sometimes cooperating, sometimes at odds with each other. Participants in this panel will assess the motivations, objectives, and impact of public history campaigns in Central and Eastern Europe relating to narratives of collective trauma.

The first part of the panel will focus on the case of Lithuania, exploring the intersection of two several traumas—World War II, the Holocaust and the anti-Soviet partisan resistance. The second part of the panel will expand the focus to include other cases in Central Eastern Europe, including Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Belarus.

Dovilė Budrytė, Georgia Gwinnett College

Memory Wars and Mnemonic Cooperation: The Relationship of the Roma Holocaust Narratives to the Leading Trauma Stories in Lithuania

Dovilė Budrytė is Professor of Political Science at Georgia Gwinnett College, USA. Her



articles on minorities, women and historical trauma in Lithuania have appeared in *The Journal of Baltic Studies*, *Gender and History*, and *Journal of International Relations and Development*. Her other publications include books and articles on minority rights and historical memory in Eastern Europe. She is President of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS).

Violeta Davoliūtė, Vilnius University, Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies

The Baltic Model of Civic-Patriotic History: Engaging National and European Audience

Violeta Davoliūtė is currently Senior Fellow at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (2022/23). She is also Professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University, Senior Researcher at the Lithuanian Institute of History and the Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, and Project Leader of Facing the Past: Public History for a Stronger Europe (Horizon Europe, 2022-2025). A specialist in cultural memory and social trauma, she has published extensively on these topics with a focus on the Baltic States and East-Central Europe. In recent years she has been a visiting scholar at Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena, Yale University, EHESS, and Uppsala University.

Viktorija Rimaitė-Beržiūnienė, Vilnius University, Military Academy of Lithuania

Memories in Conflict: Exploring Representations of the Traumas of the Nazi and Soviet Occupations in the Public Sphere in Lithuania

Viktorija Rimaitė-Beržiūnienė is a Lecturer at Military Academy of Lithuania in Vilnius and Assistant Professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University. In 2022, she defended her doctoral dissertation on the ways in which monuments affect Lithuania's national identity (Vilnius University).

Liucija Vervečkienė, Vilnius University

Commemorating Heroic Armed Resistance: Intersections between State-level and Family memory

Liucija Vervečkienė is associated with the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University. She researches collective memory from individual and family perspectives. In 2022, she defended her doctoral dissertation on the ways in which different generations talk about the Soviet past.

P3.4 Post 1989: Revolutions, Ruptures, and Longing for the Past

Till Hilmar, University of Vienna

The Social Memory of Economic Ruptures: Small and Large Narratives about the Post-1989 Period in East Germany and the Czech Republic

My presentation has two aims: First, I want to explore the relationship between social memory and economic ruptures in peoples' lives, focusing on the way people interpret rising social inequalities in biographical accounts of living through the 1990s. I propose a



theoretical framework – derived from case studies of East Germany and the Czech Republic after 1989 – that proposes to foreground peoples’ temporal reasoning, their popular ideas about justice, and their sense of changes to social relationships. I draw on interviews with 67 respondents from these two societies who experienced the year 1989 as young adults. A key finding is that there is a cultural texture to economic experiences (personal, collective, as well as imagined experiences), often expressed in justice ideas, that plays an important role in how people remember this period today. Second, I want to assess such “small”, biographical narratives about the 1990s in the context of “large”, politicized memory debates about the meaning of the transformation. The narrative of a failure of the transition to democracy and market society, and the betrayal of citizens by Western elites, is often weaponized by actors on the far-right, including the Russian government. At the same time, the political left advances a critique of the 1990s as the triumph of neoliberal hegemony in this very context. Hence, increasingly, there is a politically consequential contestation around who “owns” the memory and the meaning of the transformation period. In my presentation, I argue that exploring the links between memory and economics will also improve our understanding of the ways in which these memory debates resonate with large swaths of society. The presentation is based on my forthcoming book *Deserved: Economic Memories after the Fall of the Iron Curtain* (New York: Columbia University Press 2023).

Till Hilmar received his PhD in sociology from Yale University in 2019 and is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Sociology, Vienna University. Before coming to Vienna, was as a postdoctoral researcher at Bremen University’s SOCIUM – Research Center on Inequality and Social Policy. He is a faculty fellow at Yale University’s Center for Cultural Sociology and an assistant editor of the American Journal of Cultural Sociology.

His research interests include qualitative approaches to inequality, cultural and political sociology, social memory, post-1989 transformations, and text-as-data. He is interested in popular ideas about economic inequality and is developing methodological approaches to understand cultural narratives about economic change – such as, in a recent project funded by the Volkswagen Stiftung, narratives about the economic ramifications of the Covid-19 crisis.

Jogilė Ulinskaitė, Vilnius University

Stories of Negotiated Success during the Post-communist Transformation in Lithuania

The post-communist transformation and its legacy are often conceptualised as win vs loss, often emphasising traumatic experiences in the societies. To challenge this simplistic dichotomy, I propose analysing the expression of pride in the memory of Lithuania's post-communist transformation. How does pride of achievement fit in with societal values? How does it change or continue in different periods? How do narratives of change and continuity guide the emotion of pride in different contexts? To answer these questions, I compare two groups of oral history interviews collected in the summer of 2021 on the memory of the post-communist transformation in two industrial cities of Lithuania, Panevėžys and Jonava. The first group consists of people who worked in the Lithuanian industrial sector and continued to work during the post-communist transformation. The second group established their businesses during the transformation. Through an in-depth analysis of the narratives, I investigate whether pride expresses agency in dealing with



change and its associated emotions. In addition, I explore how people negotiate and position their personal experiences and values within a collective narrative. Finally, I argue that people express pride in narratives of continuity and/or endurance in changing social environments.

Jogilė Ulinskaitė is an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Research Fellow at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University. Her research focuses on populism and its links to emotional narratives about the past. She has also been part of a research team that carried out several projects on the collective memory of the communist and post-communist past in Lithuania.

Marta Chmielewska, European University Institute in Florence

Making Sense of the 1990s: Global Economy in the Memories the Polish Corsetry Industry Workers

Despite the growing inequality and insecurity, the 1990s are remembered mostly as times of endless demand by people working both in the public and private sector of bra production in Głowno, a small town in Central Poland specializing in corsetry production since the 1950s. Already in the 1980s, Polish bra factories were subcontracting for Western European brands, which only accelerated after 1989 when postsocialist states became the sub-production site of clothing for the EU. At the same time, small workshops that began to appear in the 1990s were benefiting from filling the demand of the post-soviet clients. Such times are long gone, and the industry in Głowno is in decline, as Polish production costs became too high in comparison, firstly with other Eastern European countries like Ukraine, then the Middle East, and finally Southern Asia.

In this paper, I examine how people working in the corsetry industry in Głowno narrativize the 1990s deindustrialization in the context of globalization. Based on oral history interviews with people working in public and private companies, I aim to shed light on how people understand, analyze and judge the changes in global supply chains and labor regimes. I am particularly interested in how workers and business owners mobilize categories of international order, race and gender hierarchies, as well as sexuality, in making sense of the social change they experienced. I place my findings in the global context by comparing the Polish bra industry with research done in the same industry in France, from where the labor was contracted, and Sri Lanka, where it ultimately moved to.

Marta Chmielewska is a doctoral researcher at the History Department of European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Supervised by Prof. Glenda Sluga, she is working on a thesis on underwear production in socialist and postsocialist small-town Poland that explores how Central and Eastern Europe's transition from Eastern Bloc socialist states to a neoliberal democratic member of the EU was experienced at the local level. Before joining EUI, she studied sociology and social anthropology at University of Warsaw and Central European University.

Merilyn Meristo, Joosep Heinsalu, Tallinn University

Foreign Language Teachers' Professional Memory: The Recollections of the Soviet





Period

During the 1960s under the Soviet regime Khrushchev's educational reforms created a paradoxical situation - specialized foreign language classes were opened for gifted students, yet the Party's slogan was the principle of egalitarian education. Those schools became prestigious not only among the students and their parents but also among teachers. In general, in the Soviet Union, there was a huge divide between the teachers of foreign languages, the so-called 'elite' teachers were highly educated and capable of executing any curricula, whilst the majority of teachers, due to their low level of education, experienced difficulties in their work. However, we lack systematic knowledge about the lived experiences of teachers of foreign languages in the Estonian context in order to understand the ways Soviet-era opportunities generated opportunities for a post-Soviet era. How are the teaching experiences at specialised foreign language schools during the Soviet period manifested in foreign languages teachers' recalls? What privileges and empowerment, if any, did the teachers perceive when working at specialised schools during and/or after the Soviet Union? This research relies on twelve interviews with former teachers of English, German or French and head teachers of foreign languages who were in position during the Soviet period and afterwards (from 1968 until 2015) from eight different foreign language specialised schools across Estonia. In addition, archival materials have been studied to contextualise the findings. The interviewees' recollections shed light on differences between the motivation and attitudes of the students of specialised foreign language schools and ordinary schools among other findings.

Merilyn Meristo is an Associate Professor of French at Tallinn University School of Humanities and her research interests range from linguistics and foreign language didactics to school culture, and teachers' job satisfaction. This study was supported by the Estonian Research Council under Grant [PUTJD1129] "Education for the Elites vs. for the Masses: The Development and Deployment of Social Capital and Networks of Elite Public School Alumni in Estonia", awarded to dr. Meristo.

Joosep Heinsalu, Tartu University – his MA thesis focuses on the foreign language teachers' memories of the Soviet period.

P3.5 Roundtable: Rhetorics of Colonialism and Russia's War in Ukraine

"The war in Ukraine is a colonial war," headlined the historian Timothy Snyder in [*The New Yorker*](#) in April 2022. After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in both countries as well as in the Baltic States and societies outside the former socialist bloc, debates around colonialism were revived. We currently observe opposing views and narratives – and a seemingly insurmountable gulf between them. While some condemn the 'modern Russian imperialism' and criticize colonial practices of today's Russia (the annexation of Crimea, denial of the existence of the Ukrainian state and its right to sovereignty, violence, restrictions, and political repressions), others blame the Western – particularly American – domination in global politics, economy, and culture, described by the term 'neocolonialism',



and accuse the West of fueling the war. Between these two extremes, there are many other perspectives, depending on personal and cultural background as well as the analytical lenses one puts on.

In the planned roundtable discussion, we are going to place the war in Ukraine into a wider context of post-socialist (memory) landscapes and critically assess narratives and rhetorics during the war. By whom, how, and to what ends are narratives of the colonial and imperial past used (policy makers, activists, journalists, etc.)? How are the ‘colonizer’ and ‘colonized’ portrayed? What role do victim narratives play, and what emancipatory narratives of self-empowerment can we observe? By discussing these questions, we build a bridge between the past and the present and contribute to a deeper understanding of the war that will occupy scientists from various disciplines in the coming decades.

Tatiana Zhurzhenko completed degrees in Political Economy and Philosophy at the V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (Ukraine), where she subsequently taught as Associate Professor. *Research interests:* Borders and border regions in the post-Soviet space, Memory politics, Conflict and post-conflict societies, etc.

Maria Mälksoo is a Professor at the Centre for Military Studies, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen. She is the Principal Investigator of the European Research Council’s Consolidator Grant RITUAL DETERRENCE (2022-2027) and leads the Baltic chapter of the collaborative MEMOCRACY project, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation (2021-2024). Besides her articles and chapters on memory politics, critical security studies and International Relations theory, she is the author of *The Politics of Becoming European: A Study of Polish and Baltic Post-Cold War Security Imaginaries* (Routledge, 2010); a co-author of *Remembering Katyn* (Polity, 2012); the editor of the *Journal of International Relations and Development* Special Issue “Uses of ‘the East’ in International Studies: provincializing IR from Central and Eastern Europe” (2021) and of the *Handbook on the Politics of Memory* (Edward Elgar, forthcoming 2023). She has been a visiting research fellow at the Centre of International Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science (2015), and Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies (2012). She received her Ph.D. and M.Phil. in International Studies from the University of Cambridge and has previously worked at the University of Kent, Brussels School of International Studies (2016-2021); the University of Tartu, Estonia (2010-2016); International Centre for Defence and Security, Tallinn (2007-2010); the Estonian Ministry of Defence (2003-2004), and the Office of the President of Estonia (2013-2014). Email: maria.malksoo@ifs.ku.dk.

Dirk Uffelmann studied Russian, Polish, Czech and German literature at the Universities of Tübingen, Vienna, Warsaw, and Konstanz. *Research interests:* Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, and Ukrainian literature and media, Postcolonial research in Eastern Europe, Internet and digital humanities, Migration, etc.



P3.6 Online panel: The Memory of 20th Century Russia

Ekaterina V. Klimenko, Polish Academy of Sciences

Martyrological in Form, Statist in Content: The Russian Orthodox Church and the Memory of the Great Patriotic War

The ROC having become one of the key players on Russia's memory market, its memory project had been mostly focused on the memory of the Soviet terror, and more specifically on the persecution of the Russian Church in the early Soviet years. Memory of the GPW, on the other hand, had been marginal to it. However, since the 2009 enthronization of Patriarch Kirill, the ROC has become more active in advancing its own interpretation of the war and the victory. By focusing on the commemorative activities of the ROC that are related to the GPW, this paper is aiming to unpack this interpretation, and how it is related to the Kremlin's memory politics of war.

The concepts of sin, atonement and martyrdom are foundational to this interpretation that, combining Christianity and militarism, marries perfectly with the "upbeat" tone of official Victory Day celebrations under Putin. Investing violent death with (*patriotic*) sense, this interpretation is statist, too. Not only because it valorizes the state as worthy of suffering and dying for, but also because it forms part of the grand narrative which covers the history of Russia from Kievan Rus' to Putin's Russian Federation and that papers over all its ruptures and chasms. Noncontradictory to the Soviet memory of it, the martyrological interpretation of the GPW is shaped by the politics of today, but also taps into a much older mnemonic culture of war commemoration in Russia.

Ekaterina V. Klimenko has received her Candidate of Sciences degree in Cultural Studies in 2010. Her research interests are ethnicity and nationalism, nation-building and national identity, history politics and political use of the past; her research focus is on contemporary Russia. Her latest articles were published in *Nationalities Papers* and *Problems of Post-Communism*. She is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Her current research project, "Church, State and "Russia – My History": Narrating National History, Legitimizing Vladimir Putin's Regime" is supported by the Polish National Science Centre.

Anna Vichkitova, Harvard University

Memory of the Soviet Union in the Twenty First Century: The New Holy Martyrs of Russia in the U.S.

I examine the phenomenon of the New Martyrdom in the Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia (ROCOR) as a particular way of remembrance of the Orthodox Christians persecuted in the USSR for their religious views. Although the New Martyrdom is primarily associated with the post-Soviet Russian Orthodox Church, the concept of the New Martyrdom emerged in ROCOR almost 30 years before ROC's joining the process of canonization, and this tradition had already been developed by that time. The starting point here was the publication in 1949 and 1957 of the two volumes *The New Martyrs of Russia*



written by an émigré priest Mikhail Pol'skii. The book was published in Jordanville (NY) and was a collection of biographies of Soviet victims that would be turned into hagiographies in the future. In my paper, I want to consider the similarities and differences between ROC and ROCOR's approach canonization of Soviet victims and how the tradition of remembrance has been shaped outside of Russia, free from the pressure of the state's official assessment of the Soviet past.

Anna Vichkitova is a Ph.D. Student in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. Her dissertation is devoted to post-Soviet memory; she compares memory embodied in film art, literature, religion, and oral history.

Maria Matskevich, independent scholar

Soviet POWs' Representations in Soviet and Post-Soviet War Movies Soviet POWs' representations in Soviet and post-Soviet war movies

Memory of Soviet POWs is closely linked to an evolution of the official war narrative and memory politics. In USSR, POWs had ceased to be tabooed only in the early 1960s, when writings and movies started portraying POWs as heroes, whereas the state's brutal treatment of them as unjust. Back then, main story lines and narratives had been established. By the 1970s, a canon of films about POWs had finally settled down, while remaining on a periphery of WWII narratives. In the 1990s, against declining interest in the war topic, new emphases emerged, when Nazi concentration camps was explicitly and implicitly juxtaposed with the Gulag. In the 2000s, along with the growing attention of the Russian government to a memory politics, a number and focuses of war films changed as well. Already using new material and new language, movie makers were turning to a heroic narrative, which centered not only on suffering, but also on agency. This tradition, despite genre similarities with Western WWII 'combat films', still significantly distinguishes Russia from other, primarily European war films. Recent Russian films, although oriented towards this genre, in many ways they inherit the Soviet tradition. At the heart of the European memory tradition is the attempt to build a unifying model, with the Holocaust and victims' suffering at its center. Russia's model of war remembrance diverges markedly from that model, as demonstrated by national war cinematography.

Maria Matskevich, PhD, is a sociologist. Her research interests include surveys, comparative studies, memory studies and memory politics in Russia and post-socialist states. She is the author of research articles on public attitudes, memory and memory politics published in Russian, English, Polish, and Portuguese. Among her recent books and book chapters are co-authored *Soprotivlenie sovetskikh voennoplennykh v natsistskikh kontsentratsionnykh lageryakh i tsentrah unichtozheniya: istoriya i pamyat'* [The resistance of Soviet POWs in Nazi concentration and death camps: history and memory] (2022); co-authored *Idle Memory? The 1917 Anniversary in Russia*. In: *Circles of the Russian Revolution: Internal and International Consequences of the Year 1917 in Russia* (2019).



Day 3: FRI, 22 September, 9.30-11.30, Parallel Panels 4

P4.1 Museum Memories of Socialism

Ina Belcheva, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

Narrating Socialism at the Art Museum: The Bulgarian case

Since the 1990s and the beginning of the (still ongoing nowadays) debate about the establishment of an official narrative of the socialist past, the socialist period's museum representation in Bulgaria has been a topic of tensions and heated discussions. A historical museum exhibition implies a professional reconsideration and systematization of a period of forty-five years and constitution of new or reconfiguration of old collections, but mainly it demands institutional courage to propose a narrative that could potentially find itself in conflict with current political discourses pertaining to the recent past. As a consequence of its absence, the task of a representation of Bulgarian socialism has been assumed by the art museum institutions at national and local level.

Through an approach that covers broadly the 34 years after November 1989, we propose an analysis of the social and cultural impact of the temporary exhibitions that have attempted a narrative of the socialist period through its art production. Of particular interest to us are those exhibitions that deal with questions relating to the different memories of socialism that coexist in Bulgarian society: freedom of expression versus repression; nuanced periodization versus homogenization of the socialist experience; coexistence of everyday life and ideology.

Ina Belcheva holds a PhD in Art history from the Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University. Her research is focused on heritage processes and on the relations between arts and politics, in particular on the way artistic arguments intervene in debates about memories of the past and in memory politics in the present. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, working on the ARCHE (Alliance for Research and Innovation in Cultural Heritage in Europe) project.

Ene Kõresaar, University of Tartu

Museum Memories after Post-Communism: Representing Soviet-time Collaboration in Baltic History Museums

This presentation deals with the question of how the controversies of the communist past are displayed in Baltic history museums by selecting a highly sensitive issue from the immediate post-communist memory narrative: the representation of Soviet complicity and collaboration. The memory of Soviet complicity is not clear-cut, but a fractured phenomenon that is fragmentarily studied academically and museologically. However, it was widely implemented in the post-communist discourse to eliminate political opponents and legitimize social and political reforms thus affecting many groups. The established memory of Soviet collaboration with its black-and-white subject positions can be seen as creating new inequalities in post-communist society. In the presentation, a tour of the major history museums of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will be undertaken, and the possibilities of dis/remembrance of collaboration and complicity offered by them will be analyzed in relation to the dominant post-communist memory discourse - the memory of suffering and resistance. The



presentation shows that the dominant narrative of suffering and resistance acts as a filter in museum discourses depicting collaborationism and results in strategies of condemnation, domestication and marginalization. At the same time, the more multi-perspective museum discourses also closely relate to the narrative of suffering and resistance in the way they negotiate with or rely on the latter.

Ene Kõresaar is a Professor of Oral History and Memory Studies at the University of Tartu, Estonia. She has published on the memory of World War II and Stalinism, the post-communist narrative periodization of the 20th century, and the dynamics of social and cultural remembering since 1989. She has studied mnemonic processes in oral history, grassroots recognition politics, commemorative journalism, and museums. Her current research project investigates Baltic history museums from the perspective of mnemonic pluralism.

Péter Erdősi and Noémi Kertész, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest and University of Miskolc

Representing Solidarność in a Hungarian Museum in the 2000s

Our paper examines how the dissident culture of Poland in the 1980 can be represented in a post-socialist context, in another country of the former Eastern bloc, Hungary, some thirty years after the rise of the Solidarność movement. How the memory of the dissident mass movement can be communicated to museum visitors in a foreign setting? To illustrate this problem with a case study, we present the concept of *Solidarity. Opposition and culture in Poland (1980-1989)*, an exhibition curated by us and held at the Ferenczy Museum of Szentendre in 2008/2009. It aimed to introduce the audience to the iconosphere, media, and messages of Polish opposition culture, reproducing the symbols of public and private spheres, streets and churches and the atmosphere of strikes and demonstrations. Moving among the installations, photographs and contemporary objects on loan from Polish collections and the Open Society Archives, visitors could get some sense of the experience of solidarity. The exhibition contributed to a confrontation with the survivals of Solidarity's negative image shaped by Communist authorities in Hungary where the counterparts of Polish opposition patterns had not been widespread and Hungarian dissident circles, inspired by the movement, had not been influential enough to disseminate a strong counter-image appraising Solidarity. It explained the making of a myth of contemporary Poland, for a Hungarian audience lacking a durable narrative on opposition efforts.

Péter Erdősi, assistant professor of history, Candidate of Sciences of the Hungarian Academy (2000), PhD (2004), started his academic career studying early modern history. His teaching activity has been marked by an interdisciplinary approach to cultural history at the University of Miskolc and later at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. He published numerous articles on the historic and contemporary uses of memory and heritage, and became a museum expert (Ferenczy Museum of Szentendre, 2007-12). Erdősi works at the Atelier Department of Interdisciplinary History at the Institute of History, Eötvös Loránd University since 2012, and teaches in the framework of an international Erasmus+ Mundus Master



Program focusing on cultural heritage. His research interest includes urban history and Renaissance/Baroque cultural history as well.

Noémi Kertész, assistant professor of comparative literature, PhD (2002), is a scholar focusing on literary and cultural history. She was a lecturer at Jagellonian University, Cracow, and teaches at the University of Miskolc since 1995. Her courses concentrate on the literature and culture of the Central European region during the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, with special emphasis on Poland. Her research interest includes opposition movements in East Central Europe, the second public sphere and samizdat; the cultural history of Hungary and Poland and the idea of Central Europe, as well as memory and migration in contemporary Polish prose. She translates novels and essays from Polish. Recently, she has studied literary representations of cities in contemporary prose.

Helena Kruder, University of Cambridge

Unresolved Tensions: Representing the East German Experience across Berlin's Memoryscape

“People felt like their history was taken away from them” (former citizen of the German Democratic Republic, GDR). Freed from authoritarianism and economic stagnation, former socialist countries were set on the path to democracy and modern progress, or so the story goes according to a Western liberalist perspective (Mark et al., 2019). A critical look at the representations of Germany’s socialist history exposes the biased politics of memory-making that continues to dominate Berlin’s memoryscape: Representations of the GDR either centre the narrative of oppression and trauma (e.g., the Stasi Prison Hohenschönhausen) or that of an ‘ostalgic’ [East nostalgia] everyday life (e.g., the GDR Museum). Both construct the GDR as an essentialised space that contains an imagined Other, in turn feeding an imagined ‘us’ (Said, 1979; Anderson, 2006). Both consolidate the moral self-image of the German state and the hegemony of capitalism. Using Affect Theory, I suggest that the politics of memory predicts who feels represented by the state and who feels marginalised. Drawing on interviews with former GDR citizens, I investigate in how far personal memory is less concerned with facts but more with feeling and how this view enables fresh understanding of the paradoxical nature of life under dictatorship. Rather than reinforcing binary judgements by asking: “The GDR: trauma site or lost paradise?”, my analysis seeks to reveal the intentions with which institutions and witnesses construct memory. I conclude with proposals for how different historical accounts could exist in productive rather than competitive tension, fostering the critical self-reflexivity of the public.

Helena Kruder: I am an Education finalist at Cambridge. Over the course of my degree, I have developed deep interest in public history and its role in identity- and nation-building. I am passionate about making educational institutions spaces of activism and not spaces of indoctrination, allowing a plurality of perspectives to be voiced and put into dialogue. In my dissertation, I focus on the history of East Germany as one example of the undermining, distorting, and silencing of socialist histories that has taken place since the fall of the Eastern bloc. I grew up in Berlin but was only taught the history of the German Democratic Republic at surface-level, and a history that is not quite part of the bigger history of Germany. In order to understand Germany's political landscape today and to be able to mitigate the rise of



right-wing populism, not to mention the threats to international security, I believe that it is crucial for the meaning of history to remain an ongoing conversation informed by a nuanced understanding and testimony.

P4.2 Translating Memories: Multilingualism, Translation, Transition

Eneken Laanes, Tallinn University

Katja Petrowskaja's Translational Poetics of Memory

Katja Petrowskaja's family history has found widespread interest in the scholarship in regards the multilingualism of her text and its relationship to European memory archive, but little attention as been paid to the poetics of her text, her treatment of German language

and its relationship to remembering. This paper explores the ways in which Petrowskaja writes at the borders of German, Russian and other languages by highlighting the materiality of both oral and written language, using prose rhymes, allegory and association and manipulating idiomatic expressions. The paper argues that the playful erasure of the borders between languages has fundamental consequences also for her poetics and politics of memory.

Eneken Laanes is Professor of Comparative Literature and project leader of the ERC project "Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena" (2020–2024) at Tallinn University. She has been a visiting scholar at the University of Bologna (Spring 2001), the Free University of Berlin (2003–2004), a Juris Padegs Research Fellow at Yale University (2013–2014) and Kone Fellow at Helsinki Collegium (2019). She is the author of *Unresolved Dialogues: Subjectivity and Memory in Post-Soviet Estonian Novel* (in Estonian, Tallinn: UTKK, 2009). She is the co-editor of *Novels, Histories, Novel Nations: Historical Fiction and Cultural Memory in Finland and Estonia* (with Linda Kaljundi and Ilona Pikkanen, Helsinki: SKS, 2015); of the special issue "Entangled Cultures in the Baltic Region" (*Journal of Baltic Studies*, 2020); of the special issue "Cultural Memorial Forms" (*Memory Studies*, 2021). She has also edited the letter from the Gulag by Raimond Kaugver "Kirjad Sigridile. Sõjatandriit ja vangilaagrist 1944–1949" (UTKK, 2020).

Ksenia Robbe, University of Groningen

Re-voicing Post-Soviet/Post-apartheid Transitions and the Problems of Implication in the Writing of Svetlana Alexievich and Antjie Krog

The 1980-1990s 'transitions' from varieties of authoritarian to different democratic and neoliberal regimes were accompanied and facilitated by voices of moral remembrance that shaped the discourses of 'good' and 'evil,' and proposed ways of mourning and assuming responsibility. The Belarusian Svetlana Alexievich and South African Antjie Krog, both of them writers and journalists, became such authoritative voices speaking about post-Soviet and postapartheid transitions, their hopes and impasses, particularly on the global scene. Both developed versions of a hybrid genre of literary nonfiction that entwines testimonies and the



authors' personal reflections in an attempt to imagine new intersubjective connections and communities of remembering.

Two decades after the turbulent change, when the deadlocks of the transitions became more evident, both authors published books that combined their writing from the early 1990s with their reflections on that time in the present. My paper will examine these practices of looking back and 're-voicing' transitions through the question of whether and how the authors revise their narrative methods and perspectives. In particular, I will focus on the questions of 'implication' as theorized by Michael Rothberg. How do the authors reflect on their narrators' and their own implication, and what kind of implicated subjects can be found in their texts? Departing from these cases, I will consider some ways of theorizing implication in relation to transitions.

Ksenia Robbe is a Senior lecturer in European Culture and Literature at the University of Groningen. She works at the interfaces of postcolonial and postsocialist, memory and time, and gender and feminist studies. She is the author of *Conversations of Motherhood: South African Women's Writing Across Traditions* (University of Kwazulu-Natal Press, 2015) and (co-)editor of *Remembering Transitions: Local Revisions and Global Crossings in Culture and Media* (De Gruyter, forthcoming 2023), *(Un)timely Crises: Chronotopes and Critique* (Palgrave, 2021), and *Post-Soviet Nostalgia: Confronting the Empire's Legacies* (Routledge, 2019). She is the PI of the project "Reconstituting Publics through Remembering Transitions: Facilitating Critical Engagement with the 1980-90s on Local and Transnational Scales," supported by the NETIAS programme.

Aigi Heero, Tallinn University

Crossing Borders: Dmitrij Kapitelman's Novel Eine Formalie in Kiew (A Formality in Kyiv)

A Formality in Kyiv (2021) by D. Kapitelman can be seen as a "border-crossing novel" depicting a journey of a young man who travels from Germany to Ukraine and showing how cultural and linguistic border crossings may have an effect upon his self-conception. Based on A. Erll's notion of "implicit collective memory", that is, "narrative schemata, stereotypes, patterns of framing, or world models, which are usually not explicitly known or addressed, but get passed on from generation to generation" (Erll 2022), my paper will show how non-conscious master narratives, cultural stereotypes, values and norms build invisible borders and shape one's imaginations of a country. It will be examined how the main character, Dima, born in Ukraine but raised in Germany, re-interprets during this journey his perception of Ukraine which is influenced by his parents' negative memories of Soviet era on the one hand, and by German media of today on the other and how his travel helps him to understand and accept his Ukrainian origin as well as his Jewish-Ukrainian family history.

Maria Kapajeva, Estonian Academy of Arts
Enforced Memory?

My performative paper links to my current practice-based research on searching my own voice through feminist artistic practices within the postcolonial conditions we live in on post-socialist territories.



I will screen a video work ‘the enforced memory’ which I have produced in response to the removal of a Soviet tank monument in Narva (Estonia) last summer. The screening will be following by performative reading of a few writings, titled ‘Chronicles’, in reference to the removal events and the war in Ukraine.

How are body and memory connected? How can we control (or not) what to remember and what not? How does the memories live in our bodies? What if we want to forget something, can we? What if we do not feel it is our memory but it lives in our body? What if something lives in your body but you don’t remember it? While asking these questions, I am in search of a place from which I can speak as an Estonian + Russian-speaker + a woman + a queer + an artist. I wonder if this place can only be located at the border, in the borderlands, where I am from, a territory in between where everyone’s memories mix up.

The presentation aims to challenge the ways of how we can communicate and deliver our knowledge through an artistic practice within academic settings. Using artistic tools such as performance and video art, I am interested to explore how the discussions about politics of memory can be raised through feminist and decolonial practices.

Maria Kapajeva is an artist who works between Estonia and the UK. Kapajeva’s work often explores a diverse spectrum of cultural identity and gender issues within historical and contemporary contexts. Her second book *Dream Is Wonderful, Yet Unclear* is, published by Milda Books, got The Kraszna-Krausz Foundation Photo Book Award 2021. The first book *You can call him another man*, published by Kaunas Photography Gallery, was shortlisted for Aperture Photobook Award 2018.

Her work exhibits internationally including the most recent shows at Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (2022), Estonian Museum of Art KUMU (2022) and Finnish Museum of Photography (2021). Her works are in collections of Kiasma Museum, Tartu Art Museum and Museum of Feminist Art (MoFA). She is a member of Estonian Artists’ Association from 2019.

After her BA in Economics (Tartu University, 2000), Kapajeva has got her second BA in Photography at The University for the Creative Arts (Farnham, UK, 2009) and her MA in Photographic Studies at The University of Westminster (UK, 2013). She also has PG Certificate in Creative Arts Education (2015) and she is the UK Higher Education Academy Fellow since 2015. Together with her practice, Kapajeva works as a Project Manager at a research project *Fast Forward: Women in Photography* (at UCA, UK) and does a practice-based PhD at Estonian Academy of Arts.

P.4.3 Online panel on Museum, Theatre and Memory

Yujie Zhu, Australian National University

Hot Interpretations of Difficult Heritage: the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre in China

This paper examines the processes of difficult heritage interpretation at the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre to explore its political implications over the past 30 years. Housing



over 200,000 artefacts relating to the Nanjing Massacre, the Memorial Hall has become a key site for patriotic education in China. The changing interpretation of the Nanjing Massacre reflects China's shifting attitude towards the painful memories of the Japanese invasion during World War II. Over the past decade, the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall has developed various new techniques of interpretation to facilitate visitors' emotional engagement with the event. The Memorial Hall's approach can be regarded as 'hot interpretation,' different from the factual and objective approaches that heritage interpretation has traditionally employed (Uzzell, 1989). However, despite the hot interpretation techniques used to stimulate the emotional impact of visitor experiences, this particular past has been utilised as nation-building practices that legitimise specific histories and form a national image on an international stage.

This study offers a novel contribution to the discussion of heritage interpretation in museum context. It suggests ways in which museum sectors and authorities can achieve social goals, such as public education, reconciliation and peace-building. Using the case study of heritage interpretation at the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre, I argue that to facilitate open dialogue in the heritage interpretation of difficult history, assessment of the past must come from multiple perspectives. Without this form of open dialogue and reflection, the official claims of heritage interpretation achieving peace-building and reconciliation between conflicted peoples remain superficial.

Yujie Zhu is Associate Professor at the Centre for Heritage and Museum Studies at the Australian National University, Australia. His research focuses on the cultural politics of heritage and memory through tourism and museum spaces. His recent books include *Heritage Tourism* (2021), *Heritage Politics in China* (2020, with Christina Maags) and *Heritage and Romantic Consumption in China* (2018). His work has shown heritage to be a powerful instrument of identity-making, nationalism, memory activism and post-conflict reconciliation. He served as Vice-President of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies from 2014 to 2020.

Doris Mironescu and Andreea Mironescu, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

Literary History in Transnational and Transmedial Frames: Dialogic Memory in a Poetry Museum

Our paper investigates the permanent exhibition at the Poetry Museum in Iasi, Romania (opened in July 2021), and focuses on the remediation of specific texts, literary figures and anecdotes in recent Romanian literary history as a means to not only connect the past to the present, but also integrate the local and the national with the transnational memory legacies of socialism and the Holocaust. In challenging the curatorial practice of the socialist era – the original Literary Museum, founded in the 1970s, was rooted in a historical, mostly nationalist narration –, the current Poetry Museum expresses and debates, using poetic reference, issues of geocultural location, transnational communication, and cultural remediation, aiming to reach a contemporary, diverse and multigenerational audience. The exhibition references the heavy-loaded history of the place of the exhibition (which was a site of an ill-famed antisemitic pogrom in June of 1941), and the history of bohemian opposition and merry conviviality of writers during socialism. The framing techniques in the Poetry Museum are



discussed as ways to transnationalize and translate classic tales of literary life and famous quotations from Romanian literary history, which are highly dependent on the national idiom, into real-life ‘memes’, by using various material embodiments such as glass, stone, metal, cloth. In our view, the bold and innovative Poetry Museum has a threefold mission: to make the experience of poetry more tangible, interactive and relevant for present-day visitors; to assess various ways in which poetry, social memory and history interconnect, mirror and critique each other; to address the need of a city at the Eastern periphery of the European Union to inscribe local and national memory legacies on a wider map. The result is a pluralist, dialogic, and transgenerational narrative of (recent) history, using the local literary scene and the history of poetry as a backdrop.

This work is part of the TRANSHIROL project, which has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement No 10111710).

Doris Mironescu, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Romanian Studies at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania and an associated researcher in the TRANSHIROL project at the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania. His scholarship has focused on nineteenth-century nationalism, life-writing, the avant-garde, Romanian modernism, and contemporary Romanian poetry and fiction. His is a contributor to the volume *Romanian Literature as World Literature* (2018), ed. by Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, Andrei Terian. He is currently involved in the collective project of editing an *Encyclopedia of Romanian Memory Writing* at the Institute for Romanian Philology ‘A. Philippide’ of Iași.

Andreea Mironescu, PhD, is a Senior Researcher at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Department within the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași and an associated researcher in the TRANSHIROL project at the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu. Her domains of interest are Romanian modern and contemporary literature, postcommunism, and intermedial forms of memory. Her current research deals with the novel of memory and in particular with its Romanian embodiments both during and after the fall of communism. She coordinates the Young Teams research project *The Novel of Memory in Post-communism: Subgenres, Generations, Transnational Networks*, funded by the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization in Romania (2022-2024).

Jovana Janinovic, University of Montenegro

Tourism between Trauma and Trabant: Silencing Dissonance in European museums of Communism

The paper explores mnemonic topography, curatorial choices and narrative framings of exhibited objects in three private Museums of communism (DDR Berlin, Museum of communism Prague, PRL museum Warsaw) as tools for sanitizing difficult history of dictatorship in CEE. In sharp contrast with the state-owned museums where the focus is usually on condemning the communist crimes and oppression, the private museums mostly address the popular topics of everyday life, as a private, informal and individual, yet highly ideologically permeable sphere of communism. In that sense, instead of overemphasizing



death, violence and suffering, private communist museums “flirt” with the ‘dark’ content, putting forward the ideological ‘trivia’ and ‘softening’ the violent manifestations of dictatorship. Furthermore, the ‘dark’ topics such as labour camps, political persecutions and imprisonments are given no more space in the exhibition than stories of toilet paper shortages (Prague), communist sexuality and drinking habits (Berlin) or washing powder and popular hairstyles (Warsaw). How the contemporary museums of communism (de)constructed the boundary between communism as dictatorship and communism as popular story of everyday life? How through a combination of questionable curatorial choices, tourist-friendly design of historical narratives, facilitation of the interaction between objects and participants and simulation of life “as it used to be” communism in museums becomes debilitated, disempowered and disburdened distant memory. Relying on ethnographic observation, analysis of the TripAdvisor reviews and semi-structured interviews with museum employees, the paper aims to grasp the points of convergence in contemporary museal representations of communism, questioning the variety of mechanisms used to sanitize communist history as an ‘eccentric’ juxtaposition to the Western lifestyle, blurring the boundary between oppressive authoritarian history and nostalgic commodification of memory.

Jovana Janinovic is lecturer at University of Montenegro. In 2022, she submitted a PhD thesis “Tourism and beyond: Commodification of communist memoryscapes in Central and Eastern Europe”, in the framework of the cotutelle between University of Pavol Jozef Safarik in Kosice, Slovakia and University of Valladolid, Spain. She holds a Masters degree from Charles University in Prague and EHESS Paris in European heritage and a Masters degree in economics from University of Nice. She held fellowships at University Paris-Est, Slovak Academy of Science, Leipzig Graduate School Global and Area studies, Bielefeld University and ZEIT Stiftung. Her main research interests include heritage tourism, collective memory and urban studies, but she also deals extensively with higher educational policies, academic integrity and societal impact in research.

Joanna Niżyńska, Indiana University in Bloomington

Oedipus 2018: Justice, Investigative Theater, and the Polish-Jewish Past

My paper focuses on *Justice (Sprawiedliwość)*, a theater play written and directed by Michał Zadara in 2018 and since then regularly performed in Teatr Powszechny in Warsaw. The play was created specifically for the 2018 commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the 1968 antisemitic campaign. The campaign orchestrated by the echelons of the communist party resulted in the harassment and forced emigration of some 13,000 Polish Jews, practically sealing Jewish absence in Poland. Contrary to other commemorative plays, *Justice* does not place at its center individual experience, but law. Written and performed in the style of investigative journalism (and evoking visual strategies from American films about famous investigations), the play reconstructs a real process undertaken by the director and his team of lawyers to bring to justice those responsible for the 1968 antisemitic propaganda. My paper analyzes the play and its reception in the context of Poland’s post-1989 cultural memory and its politics. I pay special attention to the theme of legal identification of the 1968 antisemitism as “a crime against humanity” and the play’s references to *Oedipus the*



King with its “tragedy of justice.” My initial hypothesis is that the play is an act of performative justice and an innovative way to address the unresolved Polish-Jewish past; at the same time, it is an act of displacement of social anxieties related to the legacy of the communist system onto the legal realm.

Joanna Niżyńska is Associate Professor of Polish Literature and Culture at the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures at Indiana University in Bloomington, USA. Joanna’s research interests focus on trauma and cultural memory in post-communist Poland, comparative memory studies, and the “glocalization” of Western theory in Eastern Europe. She is the author of *The Kingdom of Insignificance: Miron Białoszewski and the Quotidian, the Queer, and the Traumatic* (Northwestern UP, 2013) and co-editor of *Germany, Poland, and Postmemorial Relations: In Search of a Livable Past* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) and *Being Poland: A New History of Literature and Culture since 1918* (University of Toronto Press, 2018). As a 2022-2023 Fulbright US Scholar, she is currently working in Warsaw on a book project investigating cultural memory of the 1968 antisemitic campaign in contemporary Poland.

P4.4 Traveling in Time: Changing Cultural and Social Carriers of Memory in Post-Socialist Hungary

Memories of regime changes and historical traumas are very much affected and conditioned by the experience of earlier ruptures, traumas, and “ends”. Also, new forms of political authority contain elements of former systems of power. In East-Central Europe the memory of the 1989 political transitions is equally impure as that of 1949, or 1918-19 and imagining certain versions of state socialism would be impossible without the memory of the past thirty years of transitions. It would be equally difficult to form an opinion on the transitions in a temporal vacuum, i.e. without considering former turning points. Memories, however, also change in time, and there can be a history of memory of change in any national or transnational/transcultural history. This panel will focus on attempting to capture elements of change in different segments of post-socialist social and cultural practices and discourses that relate to past events, or processes of larger social change in the context of contemporary Hungarian history. Through case studies, speakers will address the dynamics of marginalisation and dominance. Anna Menyhért will look at changes in the representations of bystanders in the Holocaust from the 1960s until today across different media and platforms. She will interpret the phenomenon of bystander from a transdisciplinary perspective. Edit Zsadányi’s paper combines gender and narratological perspectives with ethical issues. Through László Krasznahorkai’s novel, *Satantangó* and Sofi Oksanen’s *The Purge*, she shows how in the age of globalization and global crises, literature can act as partner in working through our (post-)communist and personal past and what possibilities of resistance there are for victims of history, the so-called “new subalterns” (Spivak). Characters do not have the slightest chance to influence historical events, yet despite their often miserable circumstances, they are able to survive historical and personal trauma. Attila Pók will analyse continuities and discontinuities between communist and post-communist memory politics



focusing on various types of social and political agents such as formal institutions of memory, media platforms, and collective memorialisation practices. Special attention will be paid to the conflict between scholarly and public historical uses of memory. Finally, Izabella Agárdi will look at transcultural memories of social change in post-socialist rural society. Through women's memories, she analyses irreversible changes that the meaning of work and worker communities have suffered in transitioning neoliberal economies.

Izabella Agárdi, Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK), University of Pannonia

Memory at Work: The Changing Notions of Work and Female Workers in Rural Societies during the Period of Transitions and Globalisation

Izabella Agárdi is a women's and gender historian from Hungary. She holds a Ph.D. from Utrecht University, The Netherlands, where she was a Marie Curie fellow hosted by the Research Institute for History and Culture. She also holds an MA in Gender Studies from Central European University, and an MA in English Studies from the University of Szeged, Hungary. She is currently permanent research fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK), and a lecturer at the University of Pannonia. Her research interests are oral history, rural women's history, and transcultural memory and heritage, with a special focus on how marginalised individuals (women and ethnic minorities) in rural areas understand and narrate historical transformations – including localized forms of understanding Central-European-type state socialism, and the legacy of totalitarianisms in a larger context of global changes and continuities. Besides women's oral histories, she has formerly published chapters on the material culture and political rhetoric of former socialist countries. She previously was member of several European research networks of excellence (e.g. Cltohres, Athena later ATGENDER). Her two current research projects concern a comparative research on memories of the Holocaust and the Pharrajmos, and inter-ethnic relations, forced population exchange and inhabiting space in Hungarian-Schwab villages in the Bakony mountains. Her monograph *On the Verge of History. The Life Stories of Women from Serbia, Romania and Hungary, 1920-202* (Ibidem-verlag, 2022) has been shortlisted at the MSA First Book Award.

Anna Menyhért, Budapest University of Jewish Studies, *Changing Representations of Bystanders during the Holocaust: From Hungarian Novels of the 1960s to Digital Platforms of the 2010s*

Anna Menyhért is a Full Professor of Trauma Studies at the Budapest University of Jewish Studies. She is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Kőszeg, an affiliated researcher at the Democracy Institute of the Central European University. She was a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow at the University of Amsterdam, a Research Fellow at the Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies in Vienna, a Visiting Professor at the University of Florence, and the head of the Trauma and Gender in Literature and Culture Research Group at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, as well as the head of the Hungarian Studies Department at the Balassi Institute. She was the Vice President of the European Writers' Council. She is the author of five monographs, including 'Women's Literary Tradition and Twentieth-Century Hungarian Women Writers' (Brill, 2020), and the



bestselling fictional biography of the early 20th century woman writer Renée Erdős, ‘A Free Woman’ (2016). She is working on a book entitled ‘Trauma in the Digital Age: The Representation, Transmission and Processing of Trauma on Social Media’ (De Gruyter, 2023). She is the co-editor of the book series Transdisciplinary Trauma Studies at De Gruyter, the co-chair of the Trauma and Memory Working Group of the Memory Studies Association, and the course director of the CEU Summer University Course ‘Transdisciplinary Trauma Studies’.

Attila Pók, Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg

Agents of Change: Tensions between Scholarly and Public Historical Uses of Memory in Post- socialist Hungary

Attila Pók is a historian from Hungary. He is former deputy director of the Institute of History at the Research Centre for Humanities at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. Currently he is chief academic advisor at the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg and vice-president of the Hungarian Historical Association. He is also a permanent Visiting Professor of History at Columbia University in New York. His publications and courses cover three major fields: 19th-20th century European political and intellectual history, history of modern European historiography with special regard to political uses of history and theory and the methodology of history writing. His works in English include: *Remembering and Forgetting Communism in Hungary* (iASK: 2017); *A Selected Bibliography of Modern Historiography* (Bibliographies & Indexes in World History, Number 24, Greenwood Press, New York-Westport, Connecticut-London, 1992); *The Politics of Hatred in the Middle of Europe. Scapegoating in Twentieth Century Hungary: History and Historiography* (Savaria Books on Politics, Culture and Society. Savaria University Press, Szombathely, 2009); volume co-edited with Randolph L. Braham: *The Hungarian Holocaust after Fifty Years* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1997); volume co-edited with Stuart Macintyre and Juan Manguerra: *The Oxford History of Historical Writing* (Vol. 4. Oxford University Press, 2011).

Edit Zsadányi, Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest

The Wisdom of the Subaltern in the Novels of László Krasznahorkai and Sofi Oksanen

Edit Zsadányi is associate professor at the Cultural Studies Department of Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest. She was formerly a senior lecturer at the Finno-Ugric Department of the University of Groningen from 2009 till 2014. Her fields of research are women writers in the 20th century, modern and postmodern Hungarian and American literature, with particular emphasis on Cultural Theory and Gender Studies. She is the author of five books, one published in English and four in Hungarian. Her recent books include “Bazsali, rezeda meg kisasszonycipő”: Kulturális másság feminista kritikái megközelítésben. [Basil, Reseda and Touch-Me-Not Flower: The Cultural Other in the Perspective of Feminist Criticism] Budapest: Balassi Press, 2017; *Gendered Narrative Subjectivity: Some Hungarian and American Women Writers*. Peter Lang Academic Publisher, Frankfurt am Main, 2015.; *A másik nő: A női szubjektivitás narratív alakzatai* [The Other Woman: The Narrative Figures



of *Female Subjectivity*], Budapest: Ráció, 2006.

P4.5 Local and Individual Agency in the Memory of War and Occupation, from the Second World War to Russia's Attack on Ukraine

This panel seeks to develop novel perspectives on the memory of military aggression and occupation by unearthing the complexities of local agency that very quickly get obscured by grand narratives after the fighting ends.

Kristo Nurmis, Tallinn University

“A Highly Developed System of Lies and Deception”: How the Soviets Made Sense of Nazi Propaganda in the Baltics, 1944-49

Kristo Nurmis is a historian and a research fellow at the Tallinn University School of Humanities. He received his Ph.D. from Stanford University in the field of Russian and Eastern European History (2022). He is currently working on a book project exploring the politics of legitimacy and mass influence in the Soviet and Nazi occupied Baltic States from 1939-53.

Mischa Gabowitsch, RECET, University of Vienna

Commemorating War and Occupation in Provincial Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia, 1945-65

Mischa Gabowitsch is a Lise Meitner Fellow at the Research Center for the History of Transformations (RECET), University of Vienna and one of the founders of PoSoCoMeS. He is the author or editor of a number of books on protest, memory, and commemoration, and is currently working on several book manuscripts on different aspects of Soviet and post-Soviet war memorials and commemorative practices.

Yevgenia Belorusets, independent artist

Fragmented Memories. Executed Past. How and for What Purpose to Preserve Individual Memories and Perceptions of the Past, if the Past Becomes One of the Battlefields of an Ongoing War of Aggression?

Yevgenia Belorusets is a Ukrainian artist, writer, and photographer. In her works, which have won numerous awards, she calls attention to the most vulnerable sections of Ukrainian society. She is a co-founder of the journal *Prostory*, a member of the interdisciplinary curatorial collective *Hudrada*, and author of the photo series *Victories of the Defeated* and the books *Lucky Breaks*, *A Cycle of Lectures on the Modern Life of Animals*, and *Anfang des*



Krieges.

Aapo Roselius and Tuomas Tepora, Tampere University

“Debt of Honor”: Finnish World War II Memory Culture and the Estonian “Soomepoisid” War Veterans in the Early 1990s

The end of the Cold War marked major changes in memory culture in Finland. A new world opened in the bordering regions, especially in Russian Karelia and Estonia inviting new forms of remembrance. Although Finland had developed into a Nordic welfare state during the Cold War, it is argued that politically and mentally it could be situated in a grey zone between east and west. This position was illustrated in the rapid development of commemorative field in the early 1990s. The memory culture became more plural and transnational with new emerging memory activists vigorously seeking dialogue with actors in the neighboring countries.

This paper focuses on the Finnish-Estonian commemorative contacts in the early 1990s. Within a rising Finnish neo-patriotic movement, the nation’s past was increasingly presented as a list of silenced topics, white spots and injustices. At the same time the remaining Estonian war veterans who had fought in the Finnish army during WWII sought contact with Finnish veterans and were met by an increasing Finnish interest, especially on the vernacular level. The early-1990s Finland witnessed a large commemorative movement in which the idea of a Finnish “debt of honor” towards the Estonian and Ingrian veterans became central. Drawing theoretically from the history of experiences, the paper shows how the major push for the movement originated in non-governmental heritage organizations rather than on an official level.

Aapo Roselius, University Researcher, has specialized in the history of the 1918 Civil War in Finland and the remembrance of the war. He has also published on Finnish rightwing mobilization during the 1930s and on the resettlement of Karelian refugees during and after the second world war. Since 2022 he works in the Academy of Finland project “A Dim Light of Dawn: Finnish Post-Cold War Experiences Between East and West, 1989–1995” at Tampere University.

Tuomas Tepora, University Researcher, has held positions at the University of Helsinki, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, and currently at the Center of Excellence in the History of Experiences (HEX) at Tampere University, and visiting fellowships at Queen Mary College, University of London and Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. He has studied and published on the history of emotions, commemoration, and the cultural history of war in connection with 20th-century conflicts. At the moment he works as PI of the Academy of Finland project “A Dim Light of Dawn: Finnish Post-Cold War Experiences Between East and West, 1989–1995”.



P4.6 Difficult Heritage in Eastern Europe: Remembering Violence across the Region

The papers in this panel bring together examples of changing treatment of numerous sites that symbolize the difficult past in Eastern Europe after 1945 and after 1989/91 region. The papers discuss ruptures and continuities in terms of treating the sites where violence occurred as a result of armed conflicts. These are sites of violence towards local communities, including minorities as well as the sites where loss of life was interpreted as an act of heroism. Remembered at the authentic sites or at the new memorials in various cities, historic violence deeply impacted the ways the societies and communities identify themselves after 1945 and after 1989/91. The panel seeks to unfold the conflicting and reconciliation potential of these symbolic sites by discussing case studies that emphasize the dynamic nature of uses of memory in the region.

Laura Demeter, University of Bamberg

Monuments to the Heroes, Soviet Legacy in the Romanian Space Post-1945

Laura Demeter is a researcher at the Centre for Heritage Conservation Studies and Technologies (KDWT) at the Otto Friedrich University Bamberg, as part of the interdisciplinary research consortium UrbanMetaMapping (Mapping and Transforming: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of City Maps as a Visual Medium of Urban Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe, 1939–1949). Her current research focus is on heritage in conflict, reconstruction and preservation processes during the second World War and communist regimes in Romania.

Georgyi Kasianov, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University

Babyn Yar as a Stolpersteine: How Politics of History Turns into History of Politics

Georgyi Kasianov is a Head of Laboratory of International Memory Studies at Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland. He is an author, co-author and co-editor of more than twenty books on the history of Ukraine in the 19th to 21st centuries, nations and nationalism, social and intellectual history and memory politics. His most recent publication is a monograph “Memory Crash. Politics of History in and around Ukraine” (CEU Press, 2022).

Margaret Comer, University College London

Contested and Competing Memory in the Baltics: Narratives of Suffering at Sites of Holocaust Violence in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania

Margaret Comer is a postdoctoral researcher on the European Research Council-funded project 'Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena', based at Tallinn University. She is also the Research Assistant on ‘Safeguarding Sites: The IHRA Charter for Best Practice’, an interdisciplinary project funded by the International Holocaust



Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Her research focuses on the heritage of mass repression, Soviet and post-Soviet memorialization and heritagization, Holocaust memorialization and heritage, grievability and memory, and contested memory.

Anastasia Felcher, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives at CEU
Jewish Past in Moldova as Memory: Between Anti-Jewish Violence and Peaceful Neighborhood

Anastasia Felcher is a cultural historian and cultural heritage specialist with a focus on East European borderlands. She is employed as the Slavic Archives Specialist at the Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives at Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. She is also teaching at the CEU Cultural Heritage Studies Program (CHSP) at CEU in Vienna. She has published on the heritage of minorities in pluralistic societies, dilemmas of Jewish heritage in the post-Holocaust age, and literature and politics in Eastern Europe. In 2023, as a research fellow at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), she researched Soviet Jewish samizdat periodicals through a lens of memory studies.

Day 3: FRI, 22 September, 15.30-17.30, Parallel Panels 5

P5.1 Memorialization and Materialization of the (Difficult) Past

Olha Martyniuk, University of Regensburg; Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) Regensburg,

Remembering the Fallen Soviet Soldiers in World War II in Ukrainian cities (1991-2021)

After the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many Ukrainian cities began the so-called de-Russification of urban landscapes with the renaming of streets and the demolition of monuments. Among them were monuments to fallen Soviet soldiers in World War II. The initiators of such decisions were local political elites and/or activists. This raises the question of how fallen Soviet soldiers were represented at the local Ukrainian level in previous years. The article analyzes which images (heroes, liberators, occupiers, victims) of fallen Soviet soldiers in World War II were used by local actors from 1991 to 2021. I am considering three Ukrainian cities as cases: Zaporizhzhia, Vinnytsia, and Ternopil. The local actors I examine include local authorities and historians, as well as individual actors specific to each city: factories in Zaporizhzhia, military pilots in Vinnytsia, and former political prisoners in Ternopil. I specifically mention the decisions of these actors to preserve or demolish monuments to fallen Soviet soldiers after February 2022 and analyze what preceded them. Sources for the analysis include interviews, newspaper articles, online sources, visual and textual materials, and public statements. The article is based on research visits to these cities in September 2020 and September 2021. The presentation is a part of my dissertation project, in which I am researching the culture of memory of fallen Soviet soldiers



and veterans of World War II in Ukraine in a broader context.

Olha Martyniuk is a doctoral student at the University of Regensburg and a DAAD scholarship holder at the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) Regensburg. She received her Master's degree in German and European Studies from the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Friedrich Schiller University of Jena in 2017 and her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy in 2015. Previously, Ms. Martyniuk worked in Ukrainian NGOs and at the Buchenwald Memorial in Weimar. She has been working on her dissertation since October 2020 with the topic “Fallen Soviet Soldiers and Veterans of World War II: Remembrance at the Local Level in Ukraine”.

Anna (Ania) Greszta, University of Amsterdam

“The Russian Military Disneyland”: Conspiratorial Memory in the Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces

In 2020, the Main Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces was opened on the outskirts of Moscow. Dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War, the temple is located in the Patriot Park, a place labeled by media and visitors: “a military Disneyland,” an entertainment-commemorative space dedicated to Russian army and its history. Both in the theme park and its symbolic center – the Cathedral, Russia’s Tsarist and Soviet past are intertwined with Orthodox iconography and the present events. Some of the mosaics depicting Soviet (and Russian) armies are embellished with the list of commemorated conflicts, among them: “forcing peace on Georgia” or “the return of Crimea.” The Russo-Ukrainian war (2014-present) is as much a military conflict as it is an information war, and its most explosive manifestations pivot on imaginations of memory and conspiracy. Propagandistic Russian media outlets painted the Euromaidan protests as a “USA-led uprising” and an illegitimate installation of a “fascist” or “neo-Nazi regime.” Against this backdrop, prevalent stories and images in Russian media and culture have mobilized World War II narratives to present the current war as a “special military operation to de-nazify Ukraine,” a heroic Russian battle against the dangers of Ukrainian “fascism,” activating thus the myth of the Great Patriotic War. Against this backdrop, in this paper I will analyze the Cathedral as a cultural object through the concept of conspiratorial memory to trace the “fascist everywhere” template and (ab)uses of memory in Kremlin’s rhetoric to legitimize the military interventions in Ukraine.

Anna (Ania) Greszta is a PhD researcher at the University of Amsterdam (Literary Studies and Cultural Analysis). She is a part of the research team of the Conspiratorial Memory. Cultures of Suspicion in Post-Socialist Europe project, funded by the European Research Council and led by Boris Noordenbos. Her PhD concerns cultural objects engaging with the topic of the Russo-Ukrainian war (2014-present). As such, she zooms in on Ukrainian and Russian film, literature and commemorative practices regarding the war through the method of close reading and theoretical frame of memory and conspiracy studies. She received a MSc in Anthropology from the University of Copenhagen, and BA in Ethnography and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Warsaw. Her previous research endeavors included studies of nationalism and beauty ideals in Ukraine, the memory of Polish-Jewish relations in



former shtetls and Hassidic pilgrimages to Poland. Outside academia she is an activist and co-leads an Amsterdam-based volunteer group Collect4Ukraine that raises awareness about the Russian aggression on Ukraine as well as funds for those who suffer due to the war.

Pille Runnel, Estonian National Museum, **Inês Moreira**, Lab2PT-University of Minho, **Nico Carpentier**, Charles University, **Ruth-Helene Melioranski**, Estonian Academy of Arts
Palimpsestic Memorializations of World War II: A Visual Study on the Estonian Memorialscape

The paper combines visual research with textual contextualizations to analyse the attempts to reconstruct the Estonian memorialscape through the removal of Soviet memorials primarily in the second part of 2022. Our rapid-response fieldwork at the Estonian memorialscape investigated attempts to fixate history, but also the resistance they generated, by paying attention to the human contestations (mainly through a politics of mourning) but also the material resistance and the recalcitrance of historical traces, through everyday life's routines, novel infrastructures, and material decay and neglect. Even if the visual study is only a snapshot, it shows that the Estonian memorialscape is palimpsestic, a complex, multi-layered assemblage, with a variety of discursive-material struggles, interventions and contestations, attempts to establish hegemonies, and attempts to counter these hegemonies. The study also reflects on the mechanisms to transform the Estonian memorialscape in a more agonistic, participatory-dialogic and diverse space for the remembrance of World War II.

Nico Carpentier is Extraordinary Professor at Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic) and President of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (2020-2023). He is also a Research Fellow at Loughborough University. His theoretical focus is on discourse theory, his research is situated in the relationship between communication, politics and culture, especially towards social domains as war & conflict, ideology, participation and democracy.

Inês Moreira is Principal Researcher in Visual Arts at the Lab2PT-University of Minho, Portugal. She completed a Postdoctoral project at Universidade Nova de Lisboa (2016-2022) and created the research cluster Curating the Contemporary: on Architectures, Territories and Networks (2018-21). PhD in Curatorial/Knowledge (University of London), Master in Urban Culture (Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya/CCCB) and Architect (FAUP).

Pille Runnel is research director at the Estonian National Museum. With a background in audience and media studies, her current research focus is on museum communication, cultural heritage and cultural policy. In the Estonian National Museum she is responsible for museum's research agenda. Member of the European Heritage Label expert panel (2019-2021).

Ruth-Helene Melioranski is dean at the Estonian Academy of Arts, Faculty of Design and a design researcher. She develops the future of design and technology, exploring how design can solve societal challenges. She is a founding member of the Estonian Design Center.



Dzmitry Suslau, UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies

Mission [Im]possible: Lithuania's New National Monument

For over thirty years, the Lukiškės Square question remains the biggest monumental and mnemonic dilemma in Vilnius. Known as Lenin Square during the Soviet occupation, it used to have a focal point – Nikolay Tomskiy's statue of the Leader of the World Proletariat – and a clear function – the principal site of mass gatherings and official ceremonies. Furthermore, with key administrative buildings, including the Council of Ministers of the Lithuanian SSR and the KGB Headquarters in its vicinity, this square was the representational lynchpin of Soviet power for the entire country.

The restoration of independence sealed the fate of the Lenin statue. Its removal amidst the cheering crowds on 23 August 1991 (the fifty-second anniversary of the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact signing) gave tangibility to a highly symbolic act: the Pact's reversal. However, the urge to fill in the void left after Lenin's departure with a national monument proved to be as great for the city authorities as it was difficult to realise.

This paper will examine the continued attempt to find an unambiguous unifying national symbol to grace Lukiškės Square following its designation as a preeminent (national) representative space in 1999. Today, after several competitions, heated debates, and court hearings, the square remains monument-free, suggesting that a shared vision of the past exemplified by conventional commemorative forms is inevitably at odds with a discourse of competing memories.

Dzmitry Suslau is a Lecturer at the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies (Languages and Cultures division). A specialist in public art, he is also the Creative Director of Climate Art, an independent public art commissioning platform. Prior to his work at UCL, Dzmitry worked at the Victoria and Albert Museum, contributing to their exhibition research and public programming. His research interests include cultural memory, human ecology, and a broader connection between culture and environmental change. Dzmitry is currently working on a book, *Between Public Art and the Monument: National Identity and Memory in Contemporary Kaliningrad, Minsk, and Vilnius*.

P5.2 Translating memories: Mass Culture of Suspicion, Templates

Dorota Anita Pluwak, Tallinn University

“They Did a Bad Thing”: Historical Fantasy Novel, the Galician Peasant Revolt of 1846, and Contemporary Debates on Democracy and Social Justice

In 2020 Poland's top literary prize, the *Gazeta Wyborcza*-sponsored *Nike* award, went, for the first time, to a fantasy novel. Radek Rak's *Tale of the Serpent's Heart* (2019) is, in fact, as much a fantasy as it is a counterfactual historical novel that draws on national debates about social justice, racism, and the relationship between serfdom in Eastern Europe and slavery in North America. *The Tale* deals with the 1846 *rabacja galicyjska*, also known as the 'slaughter of the nobles' or 'the last jacquerie in European history,' and is but one recent contribution to a steady stream of accounts that have, for the past 170 years, explored this highly contested



event.

My presentation will examine the critical reception of Rak's novel and focus on two aspects. First, I look at how revolution and popular culture become intertwined objects of suspicion. Not only did the peasants do a 'bad thing' in 1846, as Rak himself emphasized in interviews, but so did, according to some critics, popular novels, incl. Rak's own, by indulging in sensation and 'cheap thrills.' Second, I explore how the critics approach the intertextual relations between Rak's novel and the cinematic allohistory of Quentin Tarantino's *Inglorious Basterds* (2009) and *Django Unchained* (2012), as well as Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* (1980; Polish translation 2016). All three were a major influence on Rak's work.

Anita Pluwak is a postdoctoral researcher on the ERC project "Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena" at Tallinn University. Her research focuses on contemporary literature, popular genres, and cultural controversies in postsocialist societies. The topics Pluwak is currently working with include popular crime fiction's usage of conspiracy theories about plots driven by the former communist establishment; female celebrity memoirs; and counterfactual history novels.

Balazs Varga, ELTE University Budapest

Imagined Socialism – Post-socialism and Post-Cold War in Contemporary Eastern European Screen Culture

The proposed paper will analyze a recent trend in contemporary Eastern European films and series dealing with the memory of socialism. This transnational trend is characterized by the presentation of the times of Soviet-type socialism as alternate history and/or as an imagined and invented world, while (post) Cold War politics and world-vision continue to play an important role in the stories of these productions. This trend is present in recent Eastern European films and series produced and/or distributed by global streaming services, and in terms of genre, in variations and hybrid forms of spy film, noir, crime, horror, musical, comedy, and satire. The wider context of the phenomenon is the social and cultural climate change of the region in the 2010s, the radical memory politics of illiberal regimes, and the global trends in contemporary popular streaming productions, combining post-Cold War fantasies and reflections on the growing insecurity associated with the economic, migratory, political, and other crises.

The presentation will thus look for novel features in the politics of representation by such films and series as Netflix's first Polish series *1983*, HBO's local series (the Czech *Sleepers*, 2019, the Hungarian *The Informant*, 2022), *Liza the Fox Fairy* (Károly Ujj Mészáros, 2015, HUN), *Lajkó – Gypsy in Space* (Balázs Lengyel, 2018, HUN), *Comrade Drakulich* (Márk Bodzsár, 2019, HUN), and *The Lure* (Agnieszka Smoczyńska, 2015, POL), among others, from the perspective of how the visual and sensual contemporary fantasies and pastiches of these films and series rewrite the memory of socialism and the binary logic of the Cold War – with a particular focus on the construction of Eastern Europe(annes), Cold War nostalgia, questions of local/regional/global reception, the anxieties regarding contemporary social and political crises, the issues of female agency and bodily experience, and the visual emblems of



the socialist era.

Balázs Varga is an Associate Professor of Film Studies at ELTE, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. He writes and lectures on modern and contemporary Hungarian cinema, contemporary European cinema, production studies, popular cinemas, and documentaries. He is a founding editor of *Metropolis*, a scholarly journal on film theory and history based in Budapest. He has published several articles and essays in English, Italian, Polish, Czech and Hungarian books and journals. His recent book in Hungarian *Filmrendszerváltások. A magyar játékfilm intézményeinek átalakulása 1990–2010* [Film regime changes. Transformations in Hungarian Film Industry 1990–2010] is brought out by L'Harmattan Publishers, Budapest. His current project focuses on popular Hungarian and East European screen cultures during and after socialism.

Maria Plichta, University of Amsterdam, TBA

On April 10, 2010, an aircraft of the Polish Air Force crashed near the Russian city of Smoleńsk, killing all 96 passengers on board, among them the then-president Lech Kaczyński and his wife, along with many high-ranking government officials. The symbolic density of the circumstances of the catastrophe contributed to the immediate emergence of a complex “Smoleńsk mythology” (Deutschmann, Herlth and Woldan 14; Sendyka 43), as well as an almost immediate outpour of theories questioning whether the crash was accidental or rather, the result of an organised plot. As conspiratorial meaning-making relies on historically formed cultural (meta)narratives, the paper first traces the mnemonic resonance of the Katyń massacre, which occurred during World War Two, for the ways in which the Smoleńsk catastrophe has been received, highlighting the pivotal role of the ‘conspiracy of silence’ that followed the events of Katyń in creating a pervasive sense of distrust in official narratives. How is affect transferred from Katyń to Smoleńsk, or rather, how does it circulate between the imaginations of the two events, speaking to the transmedial drift of memory? A central media object discussed in the paper is the feature film *Smoleńsk* (2016), which exploits the symbolic ‘doubling’ of Katyń in its representation of the catastrophe. The paper seeks to explore the transmission and circulation of memory and affect between Katyń and Smoleńsk, as well as the transformation of past tragedy into a ready-made mnemonic lens through which the catastrophe has been perceived — as an uncanny repetition and a possible continuation of a perennial struggle against malignant forces bent on undermining ‘the nation’ and its sovereignty.

Maria Plichta is a PhD Researcher at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam. Having graduated from the University of Łódź with a Cultural Studies degree, she relocated to the Netherlands to pursue a Research Master’s degree in Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Currently, she works as a member of the ERC-funded research project ‘Cultures of Suspicion in Post-Socialist Europe. Conspiratorial Memory’. Her work investigates how the narratives of conspiracy around the 2010 Smoleńsk catastrophe are represented, primarily in visual culture, and the ways in which these representations function within a complex network of preexisting affective attachments, and within established cultural and social frameworks of memory.



Kinga Polynczuk-Alenius, Polish Academy of Sciences

Anti-Russian Conspiracy Theories and Cultural Memory of Russian Imperialism in Poland

This paper analyses the entanglements of anti-Russian conspiracy theories with the cultural memory of Russian imperialism in the Polish ‘identity journalism’, practised by the media aligned with the illiberal Law and Justice (PiS) government. ‘Identity journalism’ is an emic term invented by right wing Polish journalists to describe journalism bent on constructing identities and strengthening conservative communities without staking claims to factuality, neutrality, or objectivity. Theoretically, this paper proposes that the identity journalism’s drive towards consolidating communities is enacted through the entwined usage of cultural memory – the interpretation of the past from the present and for the future – and conspiracy theories, which view history as premeditated and pre-planned by powerful secret forces. As explanatory templates, conspiracy theories are rooted in cultural memory in that they connect alleged conspiracies to past traumas to devise apocalyptic scenarios for the future.

Taking the full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 as a moment when Russian imperialism became a globally intelligible explanatory framework, this paper empirically investigates how the cultural memory of Russian imperialism from the eighteenth century on is woven into the recent identity-journalistic coverage of events seen as concocted by Russia behind the scenes, such as the 2010 Smoleńsk plane crash and the Polish-Belarusian border crisis that began in 2021. This interweaving serves to legitimise the illiberal politics of the PiS government. However, the instrumentalisation of Russian imperialism for domestic uses and the concomitant positing thereof as the hidden force in a conspiracy theory of history inadvertently trivialises the threat it poses.

Kinga Polynczuk-Alenius is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie PASIFIC Cofund Fellow at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS), where she works on the project titled ‘Mediated re/making of democratic imagination in Poland’. Prior to joining PAS, she was a Core Fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies. Kinga’s articles have been published in major academic journals across disciplines, including ‘Journalism’, ‘Nations and Nationalism’, ‘History & Memory’, and ‘International Journal of Cultural Studies’.

P5.3 Memory Agency: Old and New Mnemonic Actors

Marju Meschin, Tallinn University

Estonian State Propaganda Agency and its Influence on the Estonians’ Historical Memory in the Era of Silence (1934–1940)

The proposed paper examines the Estonian State Propaganda Agency and its influence on the Estonians’ historical memory in the Era of Silence (1934–1940) from the perspective of



memory studies.

The State Propaganda Agency was founded after the *coup d'état* in 1934 by the authoritarian regime of K. Päts and aimed to consolidate Estonian civic and cultural identity and legitimise the new regime via nationalist propaganda. The Bureau often emphasised the remembrance of historical events that reinforced unity among the masses; moreover, anachronistic parallels were drawn between past and current political events with the aim of justifying the establishment of the authoritarian regime. The paper analyses various media of cultural memory the Bureau managed to influence the most: performative practices and commemorative rituals, tangible and intangible folk heritage, drama, film, literature, speeches, and visual culture.

The Agency's policies regarding the assimilation efforts of various minority groups in Estonia and Latvia is also explored. Namely, policies implemented by State Propaganda in education, language and religion in Estonian border areas and in Latvia (namely amongst Setos, Ingrians, Leivu, Livonian, Ludza peoples).

The Estonians' cultural memory was highly susceptible to the Bureau's various influences and strategies, because the same messages were repeated in different, carefully premeditated media of cultural memory. The interwar period was considered a political and cultural role model during the restoration of Estonia's independence, and therefore, the realms of memory of the 1930s continue to be canonical in the Estonian cultural memory to this day.

Marju Meschin is an Editor-Project Manager at the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory and a PhD student in History at Tallinn University. She has previously studied at Tallinn University, University of Tartu and University College London. Her research focuses on Baltic state propaganda agencies and their influence on identity politics, nationalism and Baltic historical memory in the 1930s. Meschin's research covers various pursuits concerning the assimilation of minority groups, efforts in regulating education policy and various media of cultural memory, and other similar developments in the Baltic states in the 1930s during the authoritarian regimes.

Ulla Savolainen, University of Helsinki

Memorability through Postmemory: Reception of Memory of Stalinist Repression of Ingrian Finns in Finland

In January 2019, Helsingin Sanomat published a feature article "My grandmother, deported in Siberia" by journalist Lea Pakkanen. Reflecting on her recent journey to Yakutia, Siberia, Pakkanen discusses her grandmother's past and the history of Soviet repression of the people called Ingrian Finns during Stalin's regime. In 2020, a museum exhibition "Ingrians – The Forgotten Finns" focusing on Ingrian Finns 20th century history and memories created by Lea Pakkanen, her father Santeri Pakkanen with Meeri Koutaniemi was held at the National Museum of Finland, and attracted an exceptionally broad popular and media interest in Finland. Later in 2020, Lea Pakkanen published an award-winning autobiographical non-fiction book with her father. One of the central themes in all these works are Lea Pakkanen's personal history as a migrant from Russia to Finland in the beginning of the



1990s, her Ingrian Finnish family's tragic past in the Soviet Union, and the allegedly absent public memory of Ingrian Finns' history in Finland. By exploring the parallels between multiple scales of remembrance and the mnemonic affordances of media present in this journalistic-artistic project, I will discuss the reasons why it managed to transform Ingrian Finns' pasts as relevant, relatable, and memorable in Finland. My presentation contributes to the discussion of memorability within the field of memory studies by arguing that postmemory with its affective, aesthetic, economic, and political potency, is one of the factors that enabled the mnemonic success of this multimedia project in the beginning of the 2020s in Finland.

Ulla Savolainen (PhD, Title of Docent) University lecturer, Department of Cultures, University of Helsinki. She is a folklorist specializing in memory studies, oral history, and narrative research, with an interest in experiences and expressions related to (forced) migration, transnationality, and materiality. She has analyzed the mnemonic capacities of e.g. memoirs, fiction, museum exhibitions, and photographs and explored the political and aesthetic values and ideologies related to memory in culture more broadly. Savolainen's current research project focuses on memories and experiences of Stalinist repression and displacement of Ingrian Finns. Previously, she has researched oral histories of internments of German and Hungarian citizens in Finland in 1944–1946 as well as the reception of compensation for past injustice. Savolainen's doctoral dissertation (2015) focused on the life writings of former Karelian child evacuees in Finland and the poetics of life writing and reminiscing. She has published her research in e.g. *Memory Studies*, *Narrative Inquiry*, *Journal of American Folklore*, *Oral History*, *Ethnologia Europaea*, and *Poetics Today*.

Mykola Makhortykh and Maryna Sydorova, University of Bern

Memory Warriors or Memory Peacemakers? How Generative AIs Deal with Memories about the Holocaust in Ukraine

The rise of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, signifies a fundamental shift in the field of historical remembrance. In contrast to other constituents of the algorithm-driven memory ecosystem, such as search engines, generative AI does not only curate human-generated content, but also generates its own historical narratives. Under these circumstances, it goes beyond the memory gatekeeping functions of earlier algorithmic systems, and becomes a memory producer itself.

The effects of such a fundamental shift, however, currently remain unclear, in particular in the context of memory contestation and instrumentalisation common for post-socialist memory regimes. Considering the tendency of less advanced algorithmic systems to reiterate human bias, it is likely that generative AIs will turn into memory warriors facilitating appropriation of the past. Simultaneously, complexity of these systems might allow them to facilitate production of more nuanced narratives and to go beyond a single memory discourse.

To understand how generative AI deals with the contested past, we look at how two generative AIs - ChatGPT and Chatsonic - produce narratives about the key episodes of the Holocaust (e.g., Lviv pogrom) in Ukraine in Russian, Ukrainian and English languages.



Using historical and discourse analysis, we examine how AIs interpret these events, which has been long debated in Ukraine and instrumentalized by Russia in the wake of the 2022 invasion. We aim to understand to what degree AIs are capable of dealing with historical nuances, how their performance varies depending on the language, and whether it is affected by memory instrumentalization.

Mykola Makhortykh is an Alfred Landecker lecturer at the Institute of Communication and Media Science, where he studies the impact of algorithmic systems and AI on Holocaust memory transmission. His other research interests include trauma and memory studies, armed conflict reporting, disinformation and computational propaganda research, cybersecurity and critical security studies, and bias in information retrieval systems.

Maryna Sydorova is a data engineer at the Institute of Communication and Media Studies at the University of Bern. Her research interests include the use of natural language processing for studying algorithmic bias in media and heritage sectors and the role of digital technologies in representation of mass violence.

Inge Melchior, University of Maastricht

The Power of Personal Stories in Translating Memories from CEE to WE

This presentation will be a personal reflection on me as a ‘translator of memories’ from Central Eastern Europe (CEE) to Western Europe (WE) and the possible role that personal/life stories can play in this translation. As a Dutch anthropologist, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Estonia from 2007 onwards, focusing on the meanings of Estonia’s national history.

On one side of the translation I was interacting with biased WE scholars. I needed their support when applying for Dutch grants (how would I prevent my book to become a fascist work?), and later on for publishing my findings. I struggled with rightfully translating Estonians’ stories to a western frame of reference – dominated by the Holocaust memory – and into English (e.g. translating *rahvustunne* into nationalism adds a negative connotation).

On the other side of the translation I was interacting with my Estonian informants. On the one hand they saw me as an opportunity to get their story (and that of many other Estonians) heard in the west. On the other hand, there was always the question of me – as a young, Dutch person – not truly ‘owning’ the memory.

In this presentation I will explore how personal stories can help the WE students in my course *Lifting the Iron Curtain*, to better understand major historical developments in CEE. I will also analyze data that I gathered in 2015, when conducting interviews with Estonians who reside in the Netherlands, and argue how storytelling can turn one into an ‘agent of change’ (Melchior, 2017).

Inge Melchior conducted ethnographic research in Estonia between 2007 and 2015. She defended her PhD thesis at the VU University in Amsterdam. Her book was published as part of the *Heritage and Memory Studies* series at Amsterdam University Press under the title: *Guardians of Living History – an Ethnography of Post-Soviet Memory Making in Estonia* (2020). Since a couple of years, Inge works at the University of Maastricht, where she teaches courses on life-story writing, memory studies and Central and Eastern Europe.



P5.4 Situated Border Memory Regimes in Transition

The panel brings together experts who are doing long-term research on memory regimes along Russia's northern border. Our discussion will focus on two major topics. The first is the concept of a 'situated border regime of memory,' which stresses the idea of local and embodied memory rooted in close border interaction, daily routine, face-to-face contacts, shared activities, and familial relationships of cross-border situated communities (Appadurai 1996). Since World War II, all border regions have developed quite liberal cross-border regimes, some more open than others, such as the Russian-Norwegian case, but all creating conditions for the emergence of diverse levels of cross-border neighboring (Bogdanova, Brednikova, Zaporozhets 2021), resulting in empathic cross-border memory, supported at the international level by a cosmopolitan consensus on the past (Bull, Hansen 2016). In recent years, these regimes have begun to shift, and the events of 2022 have culminated in their fundamental restructuring. And here is our second question: how do border memory regimes respond to these transitions and alterations, given the specifics of everyday cross-border relations and contacts? We'll talk about three border cases - Russian-Norwegian, Russian-Finnish, and Russian-Estonian, with the goal of questioning recent shifts in situated and vernacular border memory.

Ekaterina Melnikova, independent scholar

'Border Memory' Economy in the Russian-Finnish Borderland: Tourism, Grassroots Memory, and Politics

Ekaterina Melnikova is oral historian and ethnologist, she was involved in a number of joint Russian-Finnish research initiatives and is a participant of the international research project "Memory politics of the North, 1993-2023. An interplay perspective (NORMEMO)" headed by UiT the Arctic University of Norway.

Virpi Kaisto & Elena Nikiforova, University of Eastern Finland; CISR, Helsinki,
History and Memory in the Russian-Finnish Borderland: Neighbourship under Transformation

Virpi Kaisto is a researcher at University of Antwerpen, Belgium and a PhD Researcher at University of Eastern Finland. Her research focuses on the Finnish-Russian borderland. Most recently she has studied the borderland in her PhD as an everyday living space and a space that people attach with different meanings. Her current research project focuses on transformations taking place at the Finnish-Russian border in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine: How have these events shaped the landscape, people's everyday life and sense of place in Finnish and Russian border cities?

Elena Nikiforova is a research fellow at the Centre for Independent Social Research (Helsinki, Finland). She has conducted research on the politics of identity and memory in the



Estonian-Russian and Russian-Finnish borderlands. Currently, she explores a role and place of memory in the Russian-Finnish neighbourhood under transformation. She also follows the memory and heritage work that is going on in the border city of Narva, Estonia with a particular interest in performative means of working through the Narva borderland heritage and visions of the future.

Elena Nikiforova, CISR, Helsinki

Exploring Narva's Past and Future: Documentary Theatre and Other Projects

Petia Mankova, University of Tromsø

Memories of War and Cold War at the Norwegian-Russian Border: Recent Developments

Petia Mankova is Associated professor at UIT The Arctic University of Norway and has done extensive research in Northwest Russia and Northern Norway combining anthropological and historical perspectives in her work. She is also part of the project “Normemo: Memory politics of the North 1993–2023”

P5.5 The Politics of War and Memory

Yurii Latysh, Visiting Researcher of the European Humanities University Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Politics of Memory of Ukraine During the Russo-Ukrainian War

The theoretical framework of my talk is based on the understanding of Central and Eastern Europe as a particular region of memory, where a specific culture of historical remembrance has been formed.

To justify the aggression against Ukraine, the Russian authorities use "historical arguments". Russian politicians, journalists and historians abuse historical arguments. They deny the existence of the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian language, argue that the Ukrainian state has no history and no right to exist, put forward the concept of the “Russian world”, the divided Russian people, Ukraine as a Nazi state and other falsifications of history.

Therefore, Ukraine is forced to consider historical memory as a sphere of national security policy. The securitization of memory threatens Ukraine's historical research, but is a forced response to Russia's humanitarian expansion.

My presentation will examine the use of history by representatives of the Ukrainian authorities (in particular, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy), the “struggle” for the heritage of Kyivan Rus, the continuation of decommunization and de-Russification initiatives while the authorities use certain Soviet narratives of the World War II, the construction of the concepts of “rashism” and genocide of the Ukrainian people during the Russian aggression.

My hypothesis is that in war conditions, memory becomes an object of strict control by the state, which cultivates heroism, uses the tragedies and traumas of the past, revives the language expressions of the World War II and tries to destroy everything related to the memory of the enemy (monuments, toponyms, literature). However, in Ukraine the



government does not have monopoly control over the politics of memory, but shares it with local governments and civil society.

Yurii Latysh has a Ph.D. in History (2007 Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv); Associated Professor of Faculty of History at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. Author of more than 100 academic articles. Research Interests: Memory Studies, Historiography, History of Ukraine, Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies.

Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, University of Tartu

Layers and Encounters From Within and Without: The Defence Forces Cemetery in Tallinn

Drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork, media representations and historical documents, this presentation examines how mnemonic borders between ethnolinguistic communities are put on display, reflected on, and possibly reconfigured at the Defence Forces Cemetery in Tallinn. Used as a burial ground since the late 19th century, this cemetery is the final resting place of around 4,500 servicemen of different rank, nationality and of different armed forces. There are layers of wars, burials, ideologies, of monuments erected, erased, and rebuilt. Remembrance of participants in the Estonian War of Independence (1918–1920) is juxtaposed with the commemoration of Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War. The latter attracts annually thousands of Russophones of diverse socio-economic background, creating an inclusive space that is at the same time highly divisive and exclusive and the meanings of which seem to be always already overdetermined from without.

The presentation takes these many layers, overlaps and juxtapositions to be found in the Defence Forces Cemetery in earnest, looking at how they give a physical form to Estonia's turbulent history and open up a potential for encounters that would not take place otherwise. Commemorative practices conducted by groups and individuals within this space bring to the fore the country's contemporary ethnolinguistic diversity as well as challenges ensuing from Russia's weaponization of the past, on the one hand, and Estonia's struggles to come to terms with mnemonic plurality within its bounds, on the other.

Elo-Hanna Seljamaa is Associate Professor of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu with a long-standing interest in ethnic interactions, nationalism, and minority representations in Estonia. Her recent research projects include "Performative Negotiations of Belonging in Contemporary Estonia" (PI, 2018-2021) and "Transnational Memory Cultures of Ingrian Finns: A Comparative Perspective on the Dynamics of Personal and Cultural Remembrance" (2020-2022, PI Ulla Savolainen).

Milica Popović, Po CERI

The Silence of Saying No: Remembering Deserters

At the intersection of political sociology and memory studies, the paper aims to understand the discursive interpretations and memory narratives on desertion in the (post)Yugoslav



space. The few reports on desertion in the Yugoslav wars that can be found are reflecting mostly the openly performed anti-war protests and accompanying acts of desertion. The desertion rates, all unofficial, appear in various reports in the range between 40% and 90%. Amnesty International estimates that with the amnesty laws, since 2001, Serbia pardoned approximately 26,000 men. The ones who fled Serbia are estimated to be over 100,000; in Croatia it is assumed that there were indeed thousands of deserters from the Croatian army. The numbers remain unclear, but sufficiently significant to ask for further meticulous research on the act of desertion as a resistance act against the wars in Yugoslavia.

The often traumatizing acts of desertion, some of which performed as public suicides, are commemorated within the small activist communities in Belgrade and across (post)Yugoslav space, yet these commemorations barely make it to the local news, and let alone make part of the mainstream memory discourses. Organized forgetting, as much as organized remembrance, serve the ideological aims of contemporary political struggles and enlightening the silences help us understand the groundedness of ethno-nationalisms and communitarianisms at the wake of wars. Desertion is a political act that some wish to glorify and some wish to forget.

The paper presents initial literature review and archival research on the topic, along with critical discourse analysis of framing of desertion in media and discourse of the political elites in power at the time of the wars. Within this paper, I also explore opportunities for a bigger project on the commemorations of the act of desertion which we hope to be enhanced through bringing together different (inter)national contexts, different types of conflict, different countries and different temporalities.

Milica Popović (Postdoctoral Fellow and Project Lead, Central European University) is a political scientist, specialized in Memory Studies, Political Sociology and Higher Education Studies. Popović is currently working as a Postdoctoral Fellow and Project Lead within the Global Observatory on Academic Freedom at Central European University in Vienna. She has obtained her PhD (cotutelle) in Comparative Political Sociology at Sciences Po Paris and in Balkan studies at the University of Ljubljana. The current focus of her academic research interests is in the field of Memory Studies, looking into the generational transmission of memory; influences of memory and nostalgia onto the political identities and the relationship between (neo)nationalisms and academic freedom.

Siobhan Kattago, University of Tartu

The Shock of the Abyss: Totalitarianism as the Burden of Our Time

Throughout her life, Hannah Arendt was preoccupied with the question of how to understand totalitarianism as the central event of the 20th century. More than a regime type, totalitarianism represented the ‘abyss’ or ‘*Abgrund*’ of understanding, requiring a different approach to the past that would pay attention to the discontinuities and gaps in tradition. In writing about totalitarianism, Arendt looked for its subterranean elements in the 19th century and highlighted two features of its hidden structure: policies that defined human beings as superfluous and administrative processes of total domination. By describing the camps as the abyss, she confronted the groundlessness of the problem of evil in the 20th century. If Arendt’s response



to totalitarianism was that a break had occurred in which individuals were forced to face the old problem of evil in an unprecedented way; since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, similar questions are raised after the fall of the very totalitarian regime that she wrote about. Moreover, while the shock of the atom bomb remained in the background of Arendt's writing, the spectre of nuclear war has never been closer than with Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

P5.6 Roundtable: Reconstituting Publics through Remembering Transitions: Notes from the 'Fieldwork' in Poland and Germany (hybrid)

The proposed roundtable aims to present and open to discussion the work-in-progress on the collaborative research project "Reconstituting Publics through Remembering Transitions." The project investigates how dialogic memory practices can be facilitated and developed around memories of the 1980-90s political, socioeconomic, and cultural transformations in (post)socialist Europe (with case studies in Poland and Germany). By dialogic remembering, we refer to the processes that create a space for sharing varied memories – voicing difference and dissent, relating to stories of others, and potentially creating new narratives that interlink divergent visions of the past. Such memories have the capacity to address the problems of social disconnection and fragmentation of publics by interrelating the experiences and 'languages' or different social groups and possibly creating transnational solidarities. During the roundtable, participants of the project will outline the main ideas and approaches and share the first findings from the parts of the project that have been conducted at and in collaboration with the European Centre of Solidarity in Gdańsk and the Humboldt Labor of the Humboldt Forum in Berlin. Along with the general conceptualization of methodology for this project, we will discuss, more specifically, our 'notes' from the public events and closed workshops – the findings as well as the questions and dilemmas that are relevant for research on memories of 'transitions' and non-antagonistic remembering.

Ksenia Robbe, University of Groningen *Introduction and Methodology*

Ksenia Robbe is a Senior lecturer in European Culture and Literature at the University of Groningen. She works at the interfaces of postcolonial and postsocialist, memory and time, and gender and feminist studies. She is the author of *Conversations of Motherhood: South African Women's Writing Across Traditions* (University of Kwazulu-Natal Press, 2015) and (co-)editor of *Remembering Transitions: Local Revisions and Global Crossings in Culture and Media* (De Gruyter, forthcoming 2023), *(Un)timely Crises: Chronotopes and Critique* (Palgrave, 2021), and *Post-Soviet Nostalgia: Confronting the Empire's Legacies* (Routledge, 2019). She is the PI of the project "Reconstituting Publics through Remembering Transitions: Facilitating Critical Engagement with the 1980-90s on Local and Transnational Scales," supported by the NETIAS programme.

Agnieszka Mroziak, Polish Academy of Sciences



Dialogic Remembering through Public Events (Film Reception and Discussion)

Agnieszka Mrozik is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences. She is affiliated with two research teams: The Centre for Cultural and Literary Studies of Communism, and the Archives of Women. She explores emancipatory discourses, transition memories, auto/biographies and women's literature in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe. She is the author of *Architektki PRL-u. Komunistki, literatura i emancypacja kobiet w powojennej Polsce* (Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2022) and *Akuszerki transformacji. Kobiety, literatura i władza w Polsce po 1989 roku* (Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2012). She has co-authored and co-edited *Reassessing Communism: Concepts, Culture, and Society in Poland, 1944–1989* (CEU Press, 2021), *Gender, Generations, and Communism in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond* (Routledge, 2020), and *Historical Memory of Central and East European Communism* (Routledge, 2018). She was a guest editor of the following journals: *Teksty Drugie* 1/2016, *European Journal of Life Writing* 10/2021, *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 2/2022.

Andrei Zavadski, Technical University Dortmund
Dialogic Remembering through Workshops

Andrei Zavadski is a Research Associate and Faculty Member (*wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter*) at the Institute of Art and Material Culture, TU Dortmund University, Germany. He works at intersections of memory studies, museum studies, public history, and media studies, with a focus on Eastern Europe. After receiving his PhD in media and communication studies from Freie Universität Berlin (2020), he was a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage (CARMAH), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and a fellow at the Leibniz-Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam (ZZF), University of Potsdam. He is a co-editor of *Politika affekta: Muzei kak prostranstvo publicnoi istorii* [Politics of Affect: The Museum as a Public History Space] (NLO, 2019) and of *Vse v proshlom: teoriya i praktika publicnoi istorii* [All Things Past: Theory and Practice of Public History] (Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2021). He has also co-edited a special issue of *Problems of Post-Communism* tentatively titled “The Gulag and Stalinist Repression in Russia’s Museums” (forthcoming September 2023). His work has appeared in *Media, Culture & Society*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Problems of Post-Communism*, *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie*, and other journals.

Discussants:

Joanna Wawrzyniak, University of Warsaw

Karen Worcman, Director of the Museu da Pessoa, São Paulo

Joanna Wawrzyniak is Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Research on Social Memory at the University of Warsaw.

Karen Worcman is the founder, director and curator of Museu da Pessoa, a virtual museum of Life Stories founded in 1991 in São Paulo with the objective of registering, preserving and disseminating life stories of any and all people in society. She is a historian with a



postgraduate degree in Linguistics and a PhD in Sciences from the Postgraduate Program in Humanities, Rights and Other Legitimacies. She has been an Ashoka fellow since 1999 and has been a member of the Folha de Empreendedores Sociais since 2005. She is a co-author of *Social Memory Technology: Theory, Practice, Action* (Routledge, 2016) and has edited and co-edited *História Falada: Memória, Rede e Mudança Social* (2006), *Social Technology of Memory* (2009), *Transformações Amazônicas* (2010), *Todo Mundo tem uma História para Contar* (2012), *Quase Canções* (2017).