

Culture and Heritage Studies Track:

War, Memory and City. Shaping Collective Remembrance and Re-Articulation of Past in Ukraine in European Contexts

Course coordinator: Tetiana Vodotyka (Institute of Ukrainian History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Senior Research Fellow, currently at the University of Göttingen)

This course aims to examine how contested memory of the First and Second World Wars and mass violence was reshaped in Ukrainian and East European urban social space after 1989/1991, and how the Russian invasion of Ukraine and destruction of Ukrainian cities influenced current cultural perception of the twentieth-century past. The course starts with an overview of the dominant theoretical concepts of memory studies and then re-examines them by discussing specific features of the politics of memory and commemorative practices in the region. It also seeks to deconstruct identity-driven interpretations of past events which aim to neutralize accounts founded on truthfulness. The course will address the role of state, academia, public intellectuals and new mnemonic actors (including new business elites) in the reshaping of collective memory and will focus on selected urban sites of memory in this process. We will also explore how historical memory can be instrumentalized and used as a weapon, and how the Russian state managed to move the historical debates from the university to the real battlefield in Ukraine.

The course will consist of the following components:

1. Key theoretical approaches. A brief overview of memory studies in Ukraine
2. Political transformations and memory: independence, decommunization, decolonization.
3. Spaces and places of memory. City as a text. Symbolic marking of public space and narrative practices.
4. Historical memory as a battlefield. The case of Russian hybrid aggression
5. Social actors: state, academia, civil society, business

The course is planned to be co-taught by the international team of scholars. Invited scholars include:

Eva-Clarita Pettai (Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena, Research Associate)

Katrin Stoll (Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena, Research Associate)

Oksana Dolhopolova (Illyia Mechnikov National University of Odessa, Department of History)

Maksym Gon (Rivne State University, Department of History)

Yana Prymachenko (Institute of History of Ukraine National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Senior Researcher)

Marci Shore (Yale University)