

IR 227 / HIST 245A-1

War and Memory in Eastern Europe

MW 16:50 - 18:05

Lattimore Hall 210

Fall 2023

Marcin Jarzabek



Two photos from the same place – Jedwabne in N-E Poland:
(2021) wall mural commemorating the battle of Kluszyn (Klushino) in 1610;
(2011) cleaning the monument of the pogrom victims at a Jewish cemetery from swastikas.

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Office hours (Harkness Hall 101 C):

- Monday, 6:10-7:10 PM
 - Wednesday, 3:45-4:45 PM
- (or at another time by appointment)
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Course description

This class is about the usage of the past in Eastern Europe, predominantly in the 20th and 21st centuries. Current political conflicts and open wars both use the memory of past confrontations. Central and Eastern Europe is no exception here; only the Russian aggression on Ukraine in 2022 made us fully aware of those historical interconnections. The memories of wars matter – they affect the decisions of policymakers, voters, parents, and even businesses. That is why we will begin with the gateway to the lively developing area of memory studies that develops research methods to grasp those phenomena. Then, we will discuss the memory of key military conflicts in the 20th century in the region called “Bloodlands” (by Timothy Snyder): World War I and its aftermath, but predominantly World War II, the Holocaust, and crimes of fascist and communist regimes. Last but not least, we will touch upon the memory-in-progress of the current Russian-Ukrainian war.

The course will be in the form of a seminar, which includes some lecture introductions from the instructor but predominantly students' presentations on chosen case studies and in-class discussions. Those cases are predominantly from Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia, but also from Germany and Russia. I wish our discussions focus on three essential questions: **what** kind of past is used, **how** do people and institutions make use of it, and **why** do they do so?

This class has no prerequisites or preconditions; however, some basic knowledge about European history and politics might be helpful.

Course objectives:

- (1) to introduce you to memory studies, a rapidly growing and developing interdisciplinary study area (see: https://www.memorystudiesassociation.org/about_the_msa/)
- (2) to present the main (collective) memory conflicts (related to the memory of wars) in Eastern and Central Europe, their histories, AND their historical backgrounds. That does not mean we will make a kind of top 10 but rather a paysage with several close-ups.
- (3) to examine the usage of the past in current memory politics in Eastern Europe as a case study of a region of memory and memory politics.

Literature

There is no manual dedicated solely to the topic of this class. Therefore, we must use books and papers covering one or another topic from within the area of our interest. I recommend you start with one of the general introductions to memory studies, e.g., *Memory in Culture* by Astrid Erll (Palgrave Macmillan 2011) or *Theories of Social Remembering* by Barbara A. Misztal (Open University Press 2003). You can also look to *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies* (2010) – a reader gathering founding and essential texts for memory studies. All these books are accessible in the Rush Rhees Library.

In the library, there are also many books on **Course Reserve**. A full list of them you can find [HERE](#). These are either some historical works that may help you get some context about the region's history or monographic studies of some memory phenomena there. I recommend using them when preparing your presentations (some readings in class come from those books) or final papers.

If you want to learn a bit about the historical context of one or another event or a person, then for some factual, basic data, even Wikipedia entries are usually okay. You can

Rubric

- Regular and active participation in the class (4 possible absences, no notice needed; if more, they need to be covered individually during office hours)
- Reading responses to each assigned obligatory text in the form of one question you can pose after reading the text or a 3-6 sentence long comment to it (0-1 point every RR)
- Mid-term (preferably 10/09 or 10/11) map test: You will get up to three contour maps of Eastern Europe from different time periods of the post-1918 20th century, and your task will be to put on the right places names of selected countries and capital cities. This is a Pass/Fail test, but you can get up to an extra 5 points for an outstanding result.
- In-class presentation of a chosen reading/topic (0-10 points). In most cases, the presentation is on the obligatory reading, but sometimes there is an extra text/s to be presented. The presentation shall take no more than 15 minutes and includes, i.a., some basic info about the author/s (if needed), an explanation of the context of the problem the reading is referring, a summary of its main thesis and/or structure of arguments/plot; last but not least presenters are encouraged to add their own comments, questions, opinions that might be a good kick-off for the discussion.
- Final paper/exam (0-20 points) in one of the possible forms:
 - In-class open-book essay on one of three topics; date: 12/11.
 - An annotated bibliography on a chosen topic (12-20 positions, min. 5 pages); submission deadline 12/06
 - A paper on a chosen topic (6-10 pages), submission deadline 12/06
 - Other forms (after the agreement with the instructor)

By the end of October (last class in October: 10/30), you have time to decide about the exam form. If you want to develop further your interest in the topic (or topic-related themes), I encourage you to choose a paper or annotated bibliography. By mid-November (11/15) (or preferably earlier), you should inform me about the topic you think to write about – by email or, most preferably, office hours talk.

50+ points = 100 %

Grading

- A 93 % or more
- A– 90 % or more
- B+ 85 % or more
- B 80 % or more
- B– 75 % or more
- C+ 70 % or more
- C 65 % or more
- D 60 % or more
- E 55 % or less

Academic Honesty Information

“Academic honesty means acting with truthfulness and sincerity in carrying out all aspects of our individual and collaborative work, maintaining ownership over our work, and acknowledging our debt to the work of others.” (taken from <https://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/>). I operate on the assumption that every student in the course is familiar with and abides by the College policies on Academic Honesty. Suspected violations of academic honesty (like plagiarizing or ghostwriting) will be passed along to the Board that oversees such matters.

When it comes to the usage of AI (Bing, Chat GPT, Perplexity, etc.), you are allowed to use them in this class as an AUXILLIARY tool, e.g., for proofreading text pieces or some basic queries. However, you must not use it to prepare reading responses or write for you the final paper or a part of it. If you used AI-prepared materials in the paper or polished some part of the text, please indicate that with a relevant (foot)note.

Schedule of topics and readings:

Bloc I: Brief history and geography of the region

08/30 Introductory class / Why the past matters, or on reading the history backward.

09/04 Labor Day – no classes

09/06 Historical Geography I

09/11 Historical Geography II

- Robin Okey, “Central Europe / Eastern Europe. Behind the Definitions,” *Past and Present* 137 (Nov. 1992): 102-133.

Bloc II: Collective memory

09/13

- Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, transl. Sara B. Young (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1-37.

Auxilliary (non-mandatory reading):

Barbara Misztal, "Chapter I: Memory experience," in *Theories of Social Remembering* (Maidenhead and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003), 9-26.

09/18

- Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust In the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 1-29

Presentation: Gregor Feindt, Félix Krawatzek, Daniela Mehler, Friedmann Pestel and Kieke Trimçev, "Entangled Memory. Toward a third wave in memory studies." *History and Theory* 53 (February 2014), 24-44.

09/20

- Aleida Assmann, "Europe's Divided Memory," in *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, eds. Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind, and Julie Fedor (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 25-41.

Presentation: Félix Krawatzek and Geogre Soroka, Circulation, "Conditions, Claims: Examining the Politics of Historical Memory in Eastern Europe" *East European Politics, Societies and Cultures* 26, no. 1 (February 2022):198-224.

Bloc III: Pre-WWII past that matters

09/25

- Włodzimierz Borodziej, Maciej Górny, "Wars over War Memory," in *A New Europe 1918-1923*, eds. Bartosz Dziwanowski-Stefańczyk, Jay Winter (London: Routledge, 2022), 194-211.

In-class reading: https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/commemoration_cult_of_the_fallen_east_central_europe

Presentation: Gerald Lamprecht, "Jewish Soldiers in Austrian Collective Memory 1914 to 1938," in *Jewish soldiers in the collective memory of Central Europe. The remembrance of World War I from a Jewish perspective*, eds. Gerlad Lamprecht, Eleonore Lappin-Eppert, Ulrich Wyrwa (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2019), 311-330.

09/27

- Adam Kozuchowski, *The Afterlife of Austria-Hungary. The Image of the Habsburg Monarchy in Interwar Europe* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 1-22 and 149-165.

10/02

- Gábor Egry, "The greatest catastrophe of (post-)colonial Central Europe? The 100th years anniversary of Trianon and official politics of memory in Hungary," „Rocznik Instytutu Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej” 18 (2020), z. 2,123-142.

In-class reading: <https://cz.boell.org/en/2021/01/15/narratives-trianon-trauma>

Presentation: Margit Feischmidt, "Memory-Politics and Neonationalism: Trianon as Mythomoteur," *Nationalism Papers* 38, vol. 1 (2020): 130-143.

10/04

- Ewa Ochman, "When and why is the forgotten past recovered? The Battle of Warsaw, 1920 and the role of local actors in the production of memory," *Memory Studies* 13, issue 2 (2017): 176-190.

10/09

- Lydia Klymenko, "The Holodomor law and national trauma construction in Ukraine," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 58, no. 4 (2016): 341-361.

Presentation: Georgiy Kasianov, "Holodomor and the Holocaust in Ukraine as Cultural Memory: Comparison, Competition, Interaction," *Journal of Genocide Studies* 24, no. 2 (2022): 216-227.

10/11 Mid-term

10/16 No classes

Bloc IV: WWII, Holocaust and Gulag

10/18

- Karolina Wigura, "Declarations of Forgiveness and Remorse in European Politics," *The European Legacy* 22, no. 1 (2017): 16-30.

Presentation: Jasna Dragović-Soso, "Justice and Apology in the Aftermath of War and Mass Crime Contemporary Serbia and the German Model," *History and Memory* 34, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2022): 69-99.

10/23 "The Last Witness" movie (2005)

- Harald Welzer, "Re-narrations: How pasts change in conversational remembering," *Memory Studies* 3, no. 1 (2010): 5-17.

10/25

- Marek Kucia, "The Europeanization of Holocaust Memory and Eastern Europe," *East European Politics, Societies and Cultures* 30, no. 1 (February 2016), 97-119.

Presentation: Thomas Sniegon, "The Slovak War History Goes to Europe," in *Vanished History. The Holocaust in Czech and Slovak Historical Culture* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 166-200.

Movie (fragments): *Shoah*, by Claude Lanzmann

10/30 [deadline for the decision about the exam form: a paper / open book exam]

- Geneviève Zubrzycki, "'Oświęcim'/'Auschwitz.' Archeology of a Mnemonic Battleground," in *Jewish Space in Contemporary Poland*, eds. Erica Lehrer, Michael Meng (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 16-45.

11/01

- Maciej Janowski, Jedwabne, "July 10, 1941: Debating the History of a Single Day," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller, Maria Lipman (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012), 59-89.

"Golden Harvest" movie (before the class)

11/06

- Sergii Plokhyy, "When Stalin Lost His Head: World War II and Memory Wars in Contemporary Ukraine," in *War and Memory in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine* (Cham: Springer International, 2017), 171-188.

Presentation: Per Anders Rudling, "'Unhappy Is the Person Who Has No Motherland': National Ideology and History Writing in Lukashenka's Belarus," in *War and Memory in Russia...*, 71-105.

11/08

- István Rév, "Liberty Square, Budapest: How Hungary Won the Second World War," *Journal of Genocide Research* 20, no. 4 (2018): 607-623

11/13

- Lidia Zessin-Jurek, "Whose Victims and Whose Survivors? Polish Jewish Refugees between Holocaust and Gulag Memory Cultures," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 36, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 154-170.

11/15

- Andrew Demshuk, *The Lost German East. Forced migration and the politics of memory, 1945-1970* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), 161-184 and 263-276.

Presentation: Krzysztof Jaskułowski, Piotr Majewski, "Politics of memory in Upper Silesian schools: Between Polish homogeneous nationalism and its Silesian discontents," *Memory Studies* 13, no. 1 (2020): 60-73.

11/20

- Andrii Portnov, "Polish-Ukrainian Historical Controversies. An overview," in *The Politics of Memory in Poland and Ukraine. From Reconciliation to De-Conciliation*, eds. Tomasz Stryjek, Joanna Konieczna-Sałamatin (London: Routledge, 2021), 21-35.

Presentation: Oleksandr Grytsenko, "Politics of memory in Ukrainian-Polish relations Poland's hyper-activeness and Ukraine's reactiveness," in *The Politics of Memory in Poland and Ukraine...*, 36-52.

11/22 Thanksgiving Recess – No Classes

Bloc V: New Memory Wars: (Post)Communism and War in Ukraine

11/27

- Mikołaj Kunicki, “Lustration and the Roman Catholic Church in Poland,” in *Churches, Memory and Justice in Post Communism, Memory Politics and Transitional Justice*, eds. Lucian Turcescu, Lavinia Stan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 21-44.

11/29

- Jade McGlynn, “Past as Present: The Historical Framing of Ukraine, Sanctions and Syria,” in *Memory Makers. The Politics of the Past in Putin's Russia* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023), 51-101.

In-class reading: Oksana Zabuzhko, “No guilty people in the world? Reading Russian literature after the Bucha massacre,” *Times Literary Supplement*, April 22, 2022.

- Testimonies from war (Maidan Collection from the Center of Urban History in L’viv)

12/04

- Ieva Zeke, “The Exempt Nation. Memory of Collaboration in Contemporary Latvia,” in: *Secret Agents and the Memory of Everyday Collaboration in Communist Eastern Europe*, eds. Péter Apor, Sándor Horváth, James Mark (London: Anthem Press 2017), 59-80.

Non-mandatory reading: Barbara Klich-Kluczewska, *Goodbye Communism. Hello Remembrance. Historical Paradigms and the Institute of National Remembrance in Poland*, in *Secret Agents and the Memory of Everyday Collaboration in Communist Eastern Europe*, eds. Péter Apor, Sándor Horváth, James Mark (London: Anthem Press 2017), 37-58.

12/06 (Paper submission deadline)

- Veronika Pehe, “Privatization comedies as media of memory of the Czech(oslovak) economic transformation,” in *Remembering the Neoliberal Turn Economic Change and Collective Memory in Eastern Europe after 1989*, eds. Veronika Pehe, Joanna Wawrzyniak (London: Routledge, 2023), 201-216.

12/11 Open-book in-class exam

12/13 Final Class