

HIST31841: War, Memory and Politics of Commemoration in Eastern Europe

Tutor: Dr Ewa Ochman ewa.ochman@manchester.ac.uk

This course considers how the memory of past events contributes to the formation of new identities in turbulent times and will critically engage with key concepts and issues in the cultural history of Eastern Europe and the Second World War.



Indicative Content:

Collective Memory: What is it? Why does collective memory matter? What determines how the past is remembered?

Sites of Memory: How is collective memory maintained and reproduced?

Politics of Memory: When and why is the forgotten past recovered? To what extent is it possible to politicise personal trauma?

The Ethics of Memory: Does collective responsibility equal collective guilt? Can we remember 'constructively' without sanitising war and without reinforcing prejudice?



Case studies:

Commemorating the victims of Nazism and Stalinism in the former East Germany.

Transitional Justice and Difficulties of Reconciliation in the Former Yugoslavia.

Remembering the Holocaust in Poland, Hungary and Romania.

Memory of the Red Army in the Baltic States.

Moscow's and Kiev's 9 May Commemorations and the Maidan Revolution.

Soviet Monuments: Hungary's Szoborpark and Lithuania's Grutas Park.

Historical Apologies and the Challenges of EU Accession for Post-communist Poland.



Past dissertation topics:

'Representations of the Siege of Sarajevo, 1992-1996 in the Western Media'

'The Myths of Bleiburg and Jasenovac in the Nation-Building Processes'

'Coming to Terms with the Stasi Past in Reunified Germany'

'Reflection on a Dark Past: An Analysis of Contemporary Responses to the Debate around Jan Gross's *Neighbors* in Poland'

'Auschwitz-Birkenau: Battlefields of Memory'

'The Politics of Identity and the Bosnian Community in Britain'

'Putting Differences Aside: The Imagined Community of Bradford's Ukrainians'

Indicative reading

The Collective Memory: A Reader, ed. by Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Daniel Levy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Commemorations. The Politics of National Identity, ed. by John, R. Gillis (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994).

Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Bringing the Dark Past to Light The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe, ed. by John-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2013).

