

HIST31842: War, Memory and Politics of Commemoration in Eastern Europe

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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 determines how the past is remembered? To what extent have national histories of World War II been re-written in Eastern Europe? What are the driving forces behind this process?

Sites of Memory: Do “ordinary people” actually care about statues and street names that others want to change?

Politics of Memory: When and why is the forgotten past recovered? To what extent is it possible to politicise personal trauma? How do memory laws influence the formation of collective memories of the societies in which they are issued and how do they influence professional historiography?

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.

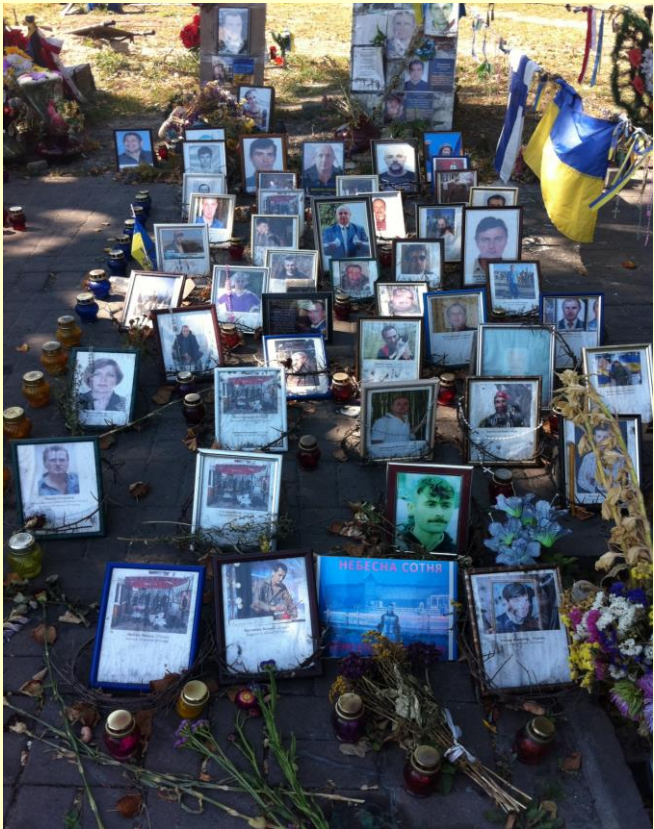
Remembering the Holocaust in Poland, Hungary and Romania.

Memory of the Red Army in the Baltic Sates.

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

History in Times of War: Witnessing the War in Ukraine.

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



Assessment:

Group presentation	Formative	10 minutes	
Source analysis	Summative	1,000 words	30%
Essay	Summative	3,500 words	70%

Zoom consultation: Monday 12 June 10am
<https://zoom.us/j/96655663810>

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).

