

# **Book of Abstracts**

## ***Cultural Memory - Memory Culture(s): Europe's Past, Present and Future***

**University of Limerick, 9-11 October 2025**

**Organisers:**

**Associate Professor Michaela Schrage-Früh, Dr Anita Barmettler**

## Panel 1 – Literary Perspectives on Cultural Memory

### Trajectories of Contested and Forgotten (Hi)Stories in Jaroslav Rudiš' Novel *Winterbergs letzte Reise*

*Sabine Egger (Mary Immaculate College)*

In *Winterbergs letzte Reise* (2019), Czech writer Jaroslav Rudiš' first novel written in German, the focus is on European events and places that have been largely forgotten. The stories are told by the almost 100-year-old protagonist, in pathological, repetitive "Erinnerungsschüben" on his train journey from Berlin to Sarajevo. Winterberg's listener is his Czech geriatric nurse Jan Kraus, who is specialised in "Sterbebegleitung" and accompanies the old man on his last journey.

Winterberg's *letzte Reise* addresses contested narratives and their historical contexts, while creating transnational and transgenerational connection points. Memories of the Sudeten German Winterberg are retold by his carer, whose own memories are sparked in the process. A network of memory nodes emerges that can be described in terms of Michael Rothberg's "multidirectional memory" and Anil Bhatti's "similarity". With the Czech carer an expellee from the communist ČSSR, similarity emerges through an antinomic structure on various levels. At the same time, German and Czech, Prussian and Habsburg discourses are brought together. The abundance of anecdotes and historical narratives told in the novel combine antinomically with Leerstellen and disinterest on the part of Kraus, and of the imagined reader. Rudiš's novel can thus be read as a diagnosis of historical disenchantment and, at the same time, as a plea for the continuation of story-telling, and for new perspectives on Central Europe emerging from it, questioning current tendencies towards division, imperialist and populist narratives. It therefore places itself in the tradition of what Milan Kundera and György Konrád described as 'Central European' literature in the 1980s, which has taken on a new meaning after the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

**Sabine Egger** (MA Cologne, PhD HU Berlin) is Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer in German Studies at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick). She is Joint Director of the Irish Centre for Transnational Studies and member of the Royal Irish Academy Languages, Literature, Culture and Communication Committee. Her research interests include memory, myth and transnationalism. Her current research focuses on corporeality, physical movement and technology (train journeys), with a specific interest in post-Soviet discourses. Recent publications include *Connections in Motion* (Lexington 2019, co-ed.), *Sarmatia – Germania Slavica – Central Europe* (V&R 2021, co-ed.) and "Train Journeys in Postmemorial Narratives (Jirgl; Janesch)" in *Transit* 14.1 (2024).

**Poetic Techniques of Queer Memory: Antje Rávik Strubel, Kim de l'Horizon and Sasha Marianna Salzmann**

*Helen Finch (University of Leeds)*

What might be particularly queer about queer memory? Is queer memory necessarily characterised by, as Heather Love suggests in her 2007 book *Feeling Backward*, a mournful attachment to the pain of homophobic abuse and queer losses? Is it linked to gender melancholy, as Judith Butler suggested in *Gender Trouble* in 1998? Or does it carry within it, as Elizabeth Freeman has suggested in *Time Binds* (2011), a queer asynchronic potential that resists chrononormativity and can put the past into transformative relation with the present? Can such a poetic relationship of transformation facilitate or be in tension with more politicised practices of queer memory, such as the “grafted memories” mobilised by gay rights groups during the 1970s and 1980s, as diagnosed by W. Jake Newsome (2022)?

In this paper, I examine the techniques of queer memory in three recent German-language novels: Antje Rávik Strubel's *Blaue Frau* (*Blue Woman*, 2021), Sasha Marianna Salzmann's *Im Menschen muss alles herrlich sein* (*Glorious People*, 2021) and Kim de l'Horizon's *Blutbuch* (*Blood Book*, 2022). All three novels mobilise queer memory to explore traumatic transnational histories of genocide, ecocide, rape and displacement. All three explore ways in which queer narration can meaningfully negotiate these traumatic histories to create a queer poetics of memory and relation. This poetics, I argue, serve less to create a coherent counter-memory or queer subjectivity than to disrupt the brutal capitalist chrononormativity of the present and call into question hegemonic European projects that aim to reconcile histories of violence through top-down and patriarchal legislative frameworks.

**Helen Finch** is Professor of German Literature at the University of Leeds. She has published widely on queer topics in German culture and on Holocaust literature including *Sebald's Bachelors: Queer Resistance and the Unconforming Life* (Legenda, 2013) and *German-Jewish Life Writing in the Aftermath of the Holocaust: Beyond Testimony*, Camden House, 2023). She is currently working on a project on queer memory, as well as on Holocaust translation.

## Panel 2a – Narrating Jewish Exile and Internment

### The Joseph Alexander Story

*Mary Honan (Independent Scholar)*

From the outset of WWII until its cessation, children were central to the functioning of Nazi camps, particularly those both fit and strong; in fact: ‘The numbers of forced laborers conscripted by the Nazi regime had steadily grown ... and as the war continued, the regime came to rely upon this exploited and expendable work force to prop up the German economy in terms of agriculture, construction and munitions’.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, those deemed unfit were quickly disposed of on arrival at the camps or died of disease and starvation long before internment. On 3rd July 2021 I had the absolute privilege of sitting down with one such teenage labourer,

just seventeen years old when forced to work in transit, work and death camps. Joseph Alexander, now one hundred years old was born ‘Idel Aleksander ... [but] changed his name to Joseph on becoming a U.S citizen in 1956.’<sup>2</sup> Yosef was the name of his deceased sibling, killed in the Shoah and Joseph is believed to be the only living survivor of twelve Nazi work, transit and death camps, including Kaufering 1 and VII, Dachau, the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Naturally, and for the purpose of this paper I will focus solely on what the everyday experience was for someone such as he being forced to labour for the Reich. I will play a few short clips from that podcast interview. As an introduction to the paper I will read a poem written by my friend, Toronto native, Toba Abramczyk specially for this paper, the daughter of the late Majer Abramczyk who was a young Polish survivor of five Nazi camps including Dachau, Mauthausen and Auschwitz-Birkenau, along with the Death March, and a former member of the IDF.

**Mary Honan** has an M.A and Ph.D in modern English Literature focused on literature about childhood under Nazism; in fact she has conducted the largest research into Children's Shoah Literature written to date; and was the first person in the history of Mater Dei (DCU) to undertake both an M.A and Ph.D in Modern English Literature, Humanities and Shoah/Deportation Literature. Mary has also completed a BA (Hons) in Art and Design and is currently in third year of BA (Hons) – part-time in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, (IACP) accredited to work therapeutically with victims of war and conflict.

In 2018 Mary’s book, *The Literary Representation of WWII Childhood* was published, the signing hosted by Israel Ambassador to Ireland, Mr. Ze’ev Boker (2018) and launched by Mr. Simon Coveney, Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland (2018) and Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2018). It was attended by ambassadors from Finland, Turkey, United Kingdom, Germany,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ushmm.org/collections/bibliography/forced-labor>

<sup>2</sup> Ullman, J, 2014, ‘Survivor: Joseph Alexander’ Jewish Journal, Accessed, 30th June 2022, [online] <https://jewishjournal.com/culture/148059>

Switzerland and other countries as well as media personalities and Shoah survivors. She has recently completed her second book, *Goodbye Mamma*, the ghost-written account of the late Irving Buchbinder, Polish Jew, former member of the Haganah and the Golani Brigade of the IDF and a survivor of five Nazi camps which she hopes to get published.

In 2018 Mary was also honoured by the Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Limerick with a civic reception. Citation stated: *Dr. Mary Honan. In recognition of her ground-breaking academic research on Shoah childhood through the lens of race & ethnic relations, peace & reconciliation; and for her youtube podcast that further focuses on Shoah education and the dangers of antisemitism, through survivor testimony'*

Mary is a regular Keynote speaker on Shoah childhood at Mary Immaculate College, the University of Limerick, the Catholic University of Lille, France and Ecole Privée Bilingue Internationale, Montpellier, France; and has created and run a module aimed at student teachers titled 'Teaching the Shoah Through Human Creativity'.

### **Inheriting Exile: Tracing Transgenerational Memory in German-Jewish Exile Families**

*Monja Stahlberger (Leo Baeck Institute London)*

'My daughter-in-law does not like it when I tell them stories from the time of the Nazis. "Let them grow up normal and unburdened by your sad memories" , she begs me and maybe she is right' - this quote from an unpublished memoir titled *Children and Bicycles* from the Chava Cohn collection held at the Wiener Library encapsulates fundamental questions of survivor families: what should the first generation reveal and pass on; how does the trauma affect different generations and what does memory mean to these generations? This paper addresses these questions by examining oral histories and ego documents using digital methodological approaches reveals subtle patterns of memory transmission that might otherwise remain obscured, providing new insights into how European identities are negotiated through family narratives of displacement and belonging.

By using NVivo software, we can identify patterns in narratives of displacement, trauma, and identity negotiation across generations of German-Jewish exiles in a European and transnational context. Setting out from the immediate experiences of the first generation and Marianne Hirsch's concept of 'postmemory', the analysis reveals how transgenerational memory and memory practices across German-Jewish exile families ensures that National Socialist persecution and the Holocaust is continuously remembered. Furthermore, it challenges notions of intergenerational trauma, epigenetics, and resilience. Comparative analysis of different testimony uncovers distinctive patterns in how memory is preserved and transformed while also

highlighting the interplay between proximity and distance to the Shoah. NVivo's visualisation tools help illustrate these patterns, revealing connections between individual testimonies and collective memory formation.

**Monja Stahlberger** is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Leo Baeck Institute London specialising Exile Studies and 20th century German-Jewish history. Her current project investigates how German-Jewish cultural memory and identity evolve across borders and generations through forms of life writing and testimony. Prior to joining the LBI, she held a Bithell Fellowship at the Institute of Languages, Cultures & Societies (Dec 2024-March 2025) where she also completed her PhD in Exile Studies (2020-2024) with a thesis examining diaries of Kindertransport refugees and changing notions of belonging. She is a committee member of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies.

### **Memory in Poetry – Yiddish Poet Yonia Fain and His Poems on Shanghai Jewish Refugee Life**

*Duosi Meng (University of Illinois Chicago)*

This paper explores the life, poetry, and experiences of Yonia Fain, a renowned Yiddish poet and painter, focusing on his time as a Jewish refugee in Shanghai, China during World War II. He witnessed the struggles of refugee living in wartime Shanghai, the ghetto life and expressed them through poetry that combined personal trauma with broader historical suffering. His experience in Shanghai became the cornerstone of his artistic identity.

This paper translates and discusses Fain's poetic output, including his 1947 volume *A Gallows under the Stars*, and his later works. It explores the deep emotional and intellectual connection many immigrants have with their mother tongue, especially in the context of exile and displacement. For poet Yonia Fain, Yiddish was far more than just a means of communication—it was essential to his identity, memory, and expression, especially regarding the Holocaust and Jewish ghetto life. Despite speaking many languages, Fain insisted that only Yiddish could capture his direct experiences and the voices of those who perished.

In his later poetry, Yonia Fain shifted focus away from his refugee experiences in Shanghai and instead concentrated on preserving memory for future generations. His writing reflects a deep sense of responsibility to speak for those who perished in the Holocaust. It affirms the power of memory as both a burden and a gift, entrusted to those who remain to ensure that what was lost is never forgotten.

**Duosi Meng** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Linguistics at University of Illinois Chicago. Her research focuses on comparative literature and immigration literature. She teaches courses in language acquisition, cultural studies and general education. Her Chinese translations of short

stories by Hermann Hesse, Botho Strauss, Herta Müller and Ingaborg Bachman have published in *World Literature and Afraid of Love*. She has also contributed book chapters to *Tradition and Transition: Teaching Chinese culture overseas*. Her current work explores representations of Western diaspora in Asia through literature and media. She is completing a monograph on Shanghai Jewish refugee poetry.

## **Panel 2b - Postcolonial Perspectives on Cultural Memory**

### **Decolonizing (and Reconstructing) Cultural Memory through Adaptation**

*Glenn Jellenik (University of Central Arkansas)*

*"In this day and age Caliban is the favorite, everyone cheers for him." Margaret Atwood, Hag-Seed*

In 1969, Martiniquais writer Aimé Césaire turned to an unlikely source to critique French colonization: William Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest* (1611). Césaire's *Une Tempête* adapts Shakespeare's *Tempest* from a postcolonial perspective, shifting the center of the play away from Prospero and toward Caliban, specifically, toward a focus on Caliban as the indigenous islander and Prospero as a savage colonizer who enslaves him through black magic. Césaire's reworking of Shakespeare enacts what I call adaptive entropy ("*Adaptive Entropy: The Victorian Birth of Caliban*," *South Atlantic Review*, Fall 2023), the process by which an adaptation can challenge and upset the order (and authority) of its source in ways that fundamentally alter it going forward.

This paper argues that adaptation, and specifically, adaptive entropy is part of the process of renovating cultural and collective memory. Césaire's *Tempête* reinterprets its source by centering issues of race and imperialism in ways that become inextricably attached to our notions of Shakespeare's play, essentially rewiring our cultural memory of the text. Put another way, adaptive entropy says that we cannot put the genie of Césaire's interpretation back in the bottle; it reconstructs our memory to the extent that, that even versions of the story that have nothing to do with Césaire's postcolonial adaptation must negotiate his reading of the play. Evidence of this can be found in Julie Taymor's 2010 film adaptation of *The Tempest*.

**Glenn Jellenik** is Associate Professor of English at the University of Central Arkansas. He serves as the Graduate Director for the MA in English and teaches classes on 18th- and 19th-century British lit, literary theory, and film & literature. His research focuses primarily on adaptation, specifically long-Eighteenth-century adaptation. His recent edited collection *Adaptation Before Cinema* (with Lissette Lopez Szwydky. Palgrave, 2023), explores historical approaches to adaptation before the advent of cinema. His current project, *To Make a Short Story Long: Theories of Adapting Short Fiction*, examines the dynamics of film adaptations of short stories.

**"By fair means or foul, by soft words and hard deeds": Depictions of Blackbeard as a means of negotiating colonial memory**

*Caroline Guthrie (College of Charleston)*

The golden age of piracy (from roughly the latter half of the 17th century through no later than 1730) continues to loom large in popular imaginations. In the *Queer Art of Failure*, Jack Halberstam cites the pirates of that era as a potentially potent “alternative political formation” which continue to resonate because they “offer models of contestation, rupture, and discontinuity.” Depictions of piracy represent a mediation of liminal spaces between past and present, as well as between European and American identities. As we continue to negotiate and struggle with the legacy of colonial expansion of their era in our contemporary moment of global capitalism, depictions of piracy offer a reflection of the relationship between past and present in the shaping of how European and American identities relate to state authority.

This paper will focus on select depictions of the most famous European pirate, Blackbeard, to examine how these models have shifted over the years. Despite, or perhaps because, almost no facts about his life can be uncontroversially established (including his actual name), Blackbeard has achieved near-ubiquity in depictions of European piracy. It will also speak to the ongoing intervention of state power in the narrative of piracy’s historical significance, particularly the ongoing lawsuits around the state of North Carolina’s passage of “Blackbeard’s Law.” This statute declared all images of shipwrecks to be public domain, so the state could use copyright-protected images of Blackbeard’s sunken ship without paying licensing fees – a demonstration of the persistent stakes of how piracy is narrativized and remembered.

**Caroline Guthrie**, PhD, is an assistant professor with the department of Communication at the College of Charleston. She is the author of *The American Historical Imaginary: Contested Narratives of the Past* (Rutgers University Press, 2022). Dr. Guthrie’s research focuses on the intersection of biopolitics and mass culture, and her work frequently considers how popular conceptions of the past shape contemporary discourses of national identity.

### **Peripheral Insula and Hip Hop: Contesting the Colonial Legacy Through Cultural Apparatuses**

*Alex Silva Nogueira (University of Lisbon)*

The legacy of colonialism suggests servitude and domination at social, political and economic levels and spheres, so that the effects have been maintained in contemporary times. However, (counter)narratives, decolonial pedagogies, problematisations and resistance have made it possible for epistemologies and knowledge that were fought against during the colonial and post-colonial periods to emerge and be valued. Among the various forms of resistance, we highlight the Hip Hop movement, which was born in the 1970s, against hegemonic interests, valuing

culture, oral, transnational and democratic knowledge and intergenerational solidarity. Hip Hop has established itself on the outskirts of cities where capitalism is developing and exploiting migrants from former colonies, for example, combating narratives of whitewashing. The promotion of indigenous and Afro-diasporic memory, the majority in these territories, through informal organisations has created socio-political activism and raised the morale of young people, playing an extremely important role for the community, questioning meritocratic discourses and the marginalisation spread by the media. The Hip Hop have contributed to the development of the periphery and the promotion of lives, memory and insurgency. In this way, we aim to analyse the role and impact of the cultural apparatuses in the city of Lisbon that promote hip hop in conjunction with the project: *Corpos Geradores. Da Agressão à Insurgência. Contributos para uma pedagogia Decolonial*<sup>3</sup>(FCT Ref. 2022.06269.PTDC) which investigates the insurgency of local communities and compares it with the case of Hip Hop in the state of São Paulo - Brazil, a former Portuguese colony.

**Alex Silva Nogueira** is a PhD candidate in Sociomuseology at Universidade Lusófona de Humanidade e Tecnologia - ULHT (Lusophone University of Humanities and Technologies) from Lisbon and actively engaged in cultural and collectives between Brazil and Portugal with focuses on Global Citizenship, Social Justice and Decoloniality. He holds a degree in Philosophy, a Master's in Education, and currently studies SocioMuseologia at Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologia. Moreover, he is a cultural activist and researcher engaged in grassroots movements. He participates actively in cultural collectives, In Brazil, he was part of the Frente Brasil Popular (ABC Paulista), and served as Director of the Teachers' Union and of Social Communication at Museu Tamoyo. His research is grounded in Afro-diasporic epistemologies, decoloniality, Hip Hop, and urban peripheries (ghettos), focusing on cultural and social issues rooted in African and Afro-diasporic traditions and knowledge production from marginalized communities.

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<sup>3</sup> 2 Generator Bodies. From Aggression to Insurgency. Contributions to a Decolonial Pedagogy

## **Panel 3a - Narrating the Past: Transgenerational Perspectives**

### **Bridging Generations: Vergangenheitsbewältigung and Memory in Annette Hess's *Deutsches Haus* (2018)**

*Paula Riese (University of Limerick)*

The Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial is considered one of the most important trials after 1945, as it not only focused on individual perpetrators but also brought the entire atrocious extent of the concentration camps into the public eye. This paper examines the themes of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) and Memory in Annette Hess's novel *Deutsches Haus*. The narrative centers on Eva Bruhns, a young German woman working as a translator during the Auschwitz Trial in Frankfurt. Through her role, Eva embarks on a personal journey of confronting Germany's historical guilt and her repressed memories. The novel portrays Eva's struggle to reconcile her emerging awareness of the Holocaust with her parents' silence and denial. By analyzing Eva's experiences through close reading, this study explores how her role as a translator facilitates her process of coming to terms with the past because she not only translates the language but also reveals historical truths to the German population that have long been buried. The paper addresses how the novel tackles the topic of repressed memories within the context of the Holocaust and the impact on Eva's personal development and her relationship with her family. As she gradually uncovers memories of her childhood, she realizes that her parents were part of the concentration camp system and that she even lived there as a child. This study aims to contribute to the discourse on cultural memory and the ethical dimensions of remembering historical atrocities, highlighting the importance of confronting and acknowledging the past to foster a more reflective and responsible society.

**Paula Riese** is a PhD candidate in the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics at the University of Limerick under the supervision of Associate Professor Michaela Schrage-Früh. She studied at the Universities of Waterloo and Mannheim for her Joint-degree Master in "Intercultural German Studies", where she focused her research on *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past), Memory Studies and Identity. For her dissertation, she works on trauma, motherhood, and Irish-German connections. She is a member of the University of Limerick's Centre for Irish-German Studies and the German Studies Association of Ireland.

## **Annie Ernaux - Transgenerational Trauma in *L'Autre fille***

*Cathy Jellenik (Hendrix College, Washington)*

In 2011, Annie Ernaux accepted an editorial challenge issued by Claire Debru's collection *Les Affranchis* to "Écrire une lettre, une seule" in order to "s'offrir le point final, s'affranchir d'une vieille histoire" (Foreword, *L'Autre fille*). Ernaux agreed to write a letter before she had considered potential topics or addressees and ultimately published the first installment of *Les Affranchis* in the form of *L'Autre fille*. Debru's collection, as both title and foreword indicate, seeks to free, or "affranchir" authors from difficult pasts via the act of writing a letter, the letter that would allow the author to have the final word regarding—and thus turn the page on—a complicated history. In the inaugural epistle of Debru's collection, Ernaux ostensibly crafts a missive to her sister, Ginette, whom she never knew, a sibling who had died at the age of six in 1938, two years prior to Ernaux's own birth. As *L'Autre fille*'s narrator explains, she had only learned of the predeceased *autre fille*'s existence by mere chance, when at the age of ten she overheard a whispered conversation between her mother and a client at the family *café-épicerie*. The words that alerted Ernaux to her genetic predecessor's existence then plagued her throughout the subsequent decades and resound throughout her writing, thereby suggesting their traumatic legacy. That experience furnishes the background of *L'Autre fille*, where it attains the status of metaphor for the collective and transgenerational traumas of the 20th century.

**Cathy Jellenik** earned her PhD in 20th century French Literature at the University of Colorado, Boulder. She is currently Professor and Coordinator of French at Hendrix College. Jellenik has published articles on Annie Ernaux, Marguerite Duras, Marie Redonnet, and on the theories and practices of literary translation. Jellenik has also chaired conference panels and presented papers on translation, Ernaux, Duras, Mathieu Kassovitz, and Hypermodernity. Her first book, *Rewriting Rewriting: Duras, Ernaux, and Redonnet* (2007), examines the gestures of literary re-articulation and re-publication and offers a theoretical reflection on why those tendencies appear so abundantly in 20th century French literature. At present, Jellenik is writing a book on translation.

## **Recreating Memory in Alain Fleischer's Photographic and Literary Work**

*Jutta Fortin (Universität Klagenfurt)*

Alain Fleischer, born in 1944 in Paris of a Jewish-Hungarian father, is a photographer, cineast, and writer. In his photographic and plastic work, the themes of disappearance and reappearance recur; in his literary work (novels, short stories, essays), often set in Middle European countries,

Fleischer discretely addresses the extermination of his father's family in Auschwitz, as well as his father's reluctance to reveal the reasons of his emigration to France.

In the present paper, I propose to look at some ways in which the private and collective trauma, indirectly passed on to this second-generation artist and author, finds expression in his work. Focusing on the interactive photographic installation, *La Nuit sans Stella*, and the "fictive autobiography", *Moi, Sándor F.*, I will refer to the notion of projection, to examine, on the one hand, the significance of this photographic installation (which relies on projecting photographic images of Jewish women's portraits, rephotographed by Fleischer mostly at the Jewish cemetery in Venice, into a large, dark room, originally a chapel in Arles) and, on the other hand, the narrative dispositive of the novel (which consists of projecting the author's own traits and parts of his life on the literary figure of the author's uncle, Sándor Fleischer, who died in a beast wagon on the way to Auschwitz). In so doing, I will be particularly interested in the site of the chapel as a space of recreating memory and in the notion of postmemory, developed precisely to address the relevance of creative projection in the work of second-generation Holocaust artists.

JF, *Method in Madness: Control Mechanisms in the French Fantastic*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2005.

JF, *Camille Laurens, le kaléidoscope d'une écriture hantée*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2017.

JF and Jean-Bernard Vray (eds), *L'Imaginaire spectral de la littérature narrative française contemporaine*, Saint-Étienne, Publications universitaires de Saint-Étienne, 2012.

JF and Jean-Bernard Vray (eds), *Alain Fleischer écrivain*, Paris, Le Seuil, 2013.

JF, Wolfgang Asholt and Jean-Bernard Vray (eds), *Yves Ravey, une écriture de l'exigence*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2017.

JF and Lydia Bauer (eds), *Écrire le silence, crier, chuchoter*, Berlin, Frank & Timme, forthcoming 2025.

**Jutta Fortin** is a Senior Scientist in French and Italian Literatures at the University of Klagenfurt in Austria; PhD Cambridge on control mechanisms in 19th-C French literature of the fantastic; post-docs at the University of Saint-Étienne and the University of Genova; Habilitation-thesis, submitted to the University of Vienna, on the phantomatic inscription of traumatic experiences of loss in French and Italian contemporary literatures; articles and edited volumes on Alain Fleischer, Yves Ravey, Camille Laurens, Erri De Luca; her research interests include intertextual and intersemiotic relations; psychological and psychoanalytic readings; intergeneric dialogues.

## Panel 3b - Political Constructions of the Past

### “Two Europes”: Utilisation of Images of the Past by Antagonised Political Forces

*Daniil Goncharenko (HSE University), Iliya Duev (University of Padova), Arseniy Karsakov (University of Padova)*

The EU has been treated as a crisis born system (Cross 2017) that emerged as a structure to maintain peace, actualizing warfare among European states as a trauma. Such ideas are rooted in theories of EU integration. This paper tries to answer the question “how EU identity is shaped by antagonized political forces from inside?”. Nowadays the EU finds itself in crisis, with the Russian-Ukraine conflict and Trump’s recent demarche. Our research aims at finding the core units of the European identity in the public discourse of “liberal” and “right-wing” political forces, and how they assemble different “Europes”. The paper states that such an ideological dimension is not simply a wrong dichotomy that neglects other actors, it mostly endeavours to encapsulate two major political forces that shape public EU discourse making other powers to adopt. Moreover, we discover the role of collective memory in constructing common European identities, and how it is used by both “EU-sceptics” and “EU-positivists”.

In order to achieve such aims, we apply content-analysis of parties’ manifestos prior to European Parliamentary elections in 2024, and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MMDA) of selected TikTok videos, which represent the recent “Save Europa” trend and the opposite ones, which promote unity and liberal values, echoing the programmes of parties. Therefore, we cover both official and unofficial discourses. We have identified the most referenced events for both sides, and showed how they are utilized for evoking the collective memories, and attempts to establish hegemony over European identity.

**Arseniy Karsakov** is an MA European and Global Studies student at Padua University. His academic interests encompass environmental discourse, environmental memory politics, language policy, and indigenous studies. He is convinced that studying historical memory construction can help to uncover current political realities. Arseniy Karsakov has participated in international programmes and conferences, including the Study of the U.S. Institutes for student Leaders on Environmental Issues, the World Forum for Democracy 2023 as a Youth Delegation discussant, and the Liberal Education Student Conference 2024 in Freiburg, among others.

**Iliya Duev** is a student of the English taught MA programme at University of Padova, specialising in political science and world politics, particularly in discourse analysis and political theory using interpretivist methods. His academic achievements include the participation in various student conferences. For instance, at the “May Forum”, where he presented his research on the reproduction of “fear” during the COVID-19 pandemic, making assumptions about its

habitualization in everyday practices. Additionally, he was a speaker at the conference dedicated to Symbol Politics in International Relations, where he researched the soft-power erosion of “Global Russians”. These experiences have equipped him with critical analytical skills and a deep understanding of political frameworks that he intend to expand upon in his master’s studies. In addition, he has two publications in student academic journals.

**Daniil Goncharenko** is a BA Political Science and World Politics student at HSE University. He is focusing on studying the issues of European identity, having published several articles regarding this topic. Moreover, he has participated in more than ten conferences on political science and memory studies, and founded a student research group, dedicated to this topic.

### **Discursive Representation of Social Actors in Speeches in General Debates on Holocaust Memorial Day**

*Natalia O. Martiushova (Higher School of Economics, Moscow)*

This study examines UK Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), an annual event dedicated to commemorating victims of genocide and fostering discussions on themes such as discrimination and racism. Focusing on parliamentary debates, the research analyzes how British politicians linguistically represent social actors in their HMD speeches. Given that collective memory is mediated through language, lexical and grammatical choices not only reflect ideological stances but also actively shape public perceptions of historical events and the individuals involved. The study employs Theo van Leeuwen’s framework for analyzing social actors to investigate the grammatical and lexical choices used by politicians in these speeches. The analysis reveals how political discourse influences societal understanding of the past.

**Natalia O. Martiushova** is a lecturer and researcher at the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. She teaches the course “Modern Linguistic Studies: Analyzing discourse” designed for graduate students, as well as Storytelling for Business Communication for undergraduate students. Her research interests include discourse analysis, narrative studies, memory studies. She holds a master’s degree in Linguistics and is currently pursuing a PhD in philology, with her dissertation focused on the ontological basis of memorial discourse.

## **Debating History on the Walls. The Use of Republican Murals in Derry and Belfast, 1990-2025**

*Naomi Rice (University of Limerick)*

The vibrant mural scene that forms the backdrop to everyday day life in the North of Ireland often attracts the attention of the media due to the artform's controversial past. Although the majority of the Troubles violence came to an end with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, the mural art scene continued to flourish. The artform served many functions during the conflict working as a propaganda tool, a voice to the voiceless, a method of claiming boundaries and a general place to express identity and emotions. In post-conflict decades the functionality of murals continues to develop as social and political changes take place. Despite these ongoing changes the value of the artworks within these communities appears to remain unshaken.

Murals cover many themes and their newfound purpose in society can be considered from various perspectives. This study aims to prove that murals can be used to rewrite historical narratives through depicting events and figures from the perspective of local republican communities. The main point of focus for this research will be the famous Bobby Sands mural which stands on Sevastopol Street in Belfast.

**Naomi Rice** is a PhD student entering her second year of research. She is being supervised by Dr Ruan O'Donnell through the School of History and Geography at the University of Limerick. In January 2025 she graduated from the MA History after completing a dissertation which compared Republican murals in Derry and Belfast. She is continuing to develop this topic throughout her ongoing research.

## **Keynote: Historical Transformations of the European Dream**

*Aleida Assmann (University of Konstanz)*

The building up of a German historical memory and a European memory community did not start directly after the end of World War II, but arose only slowly out of long periods of silence 4 and 5 decades after 1945. It is part of what I call 'the European Dream', a term that signifies a shared project. We are dealing here less with a solid reality than with a precarious vision that is always up against right wing propaganda. Therefore, to identify and to discuss it itself a discursive form of supporting it. My paper will cover various stages of this European dream and mark some of its important historical changes.

**Aleida Assmann**, professor (retired) of English literature and general literary studies at the University of Konstanz, is known far beyond the confines of the university, not least for her comprehensive studies on memory and remembrance. Among other things, she and Jan Assmann, with whom she has published several volumes, coined the term "cultural memory," which has been an integral part of the discourse on the subject for several decades. In addition to the many other awards Aleida Assmann has received to date, Aleida and Jan Assmann were jointly awarded the prestigious Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 2018. Her most recent book, *Gemeinsinn. Der sechste, soziale Sinn* (Munich: C.H. Beck), was published in 2024.

## Panel 4a - Transnational Postwar Memory

### Remembering Together. Dutch-German Cross-Border Memory Work on WWII at the Dutch National Hideout Museum in Aalten

*Marieke Krajenbrink (University of Limerick)*

Eighty years after the end of the Second World War and at a time of multiple crises and upheaval, memory culture has arguably become more significant in shaping current identities and values. With the passing of time, transnational and cross-generational processes of remembering have gained importance and remind us how a shared history can be a site of both reconciliation and contestation. This paper explores such questions of cultural memory and memory culture by focusing on the National *Onderduikmuseum* (Dutch National Hideout Museum) in Aalten as a case study (<https://nationaalonderduikmuseum.nl/>). The rural border town of Aalten played a special role during the war. Families lived and worked on both sides of the border and were strongly connected until World War II. With ca. 12.000 inhabitants, Aalten gave shelter to around 2500 people hiding from the Nazis, one the highest percentages in the country. Aalten also housed some 500 evacuees from Scheveningen. This paper discusses processes of remembering by exploring practices of curation and education at the *Onderduikmuseum* in Aalten and examining the choices made in presenting this history in its many facets. I will briefly situate these in developments within Dutch memory culture. In particular, I will look at the different forms of Dutch-German connection and cooperation the museum is engaged in, which at the same time often involve cross-generational transmission of memories of WWII. Drawing on interviews with staff of the museum, e.g. on their experiences with Dutch and German school visits and the ongoing extension of the museum, the paper aims to explore the dynamics of "remembering together" across the Dutch-German border and across generations.

**Marieke Krajenbrink** is emeritus Associate Professor in German at the University of Limerick, Ireland. She studied German and Theatre Studies at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and has published widely on German and Austrian literature. Her research focusses on intertextuality and intermediality, memory studies and questions of identity both in German-language literature of the 20th and 21st centuries and from a comparative perspective. More recently, she has published on literary representations of landscape, memory and identity in Dutch literature. Additional key research interests include Austrian and international crime literature, German

Romanticism and the reception of Richard Wagner, and German-Irish and Dutch-Irish literary relations.

She is co-founder of the International Crime Genre Research Network and the Comparative Literature Association of Ireland (CLAI) and member of the Centre for Irish-German Studies at the University of Limerick. Her book publications include *Intertextualität als Konstruktionsprinzip. Transformationen des Kriminalromans und des romantischen Romans bei Peter Handke und Botho Strauß* (1996), *Beziehungen und Identitäten. Österreich, Irland und die Schweiz* (2004, edited with Gisela Holfter and Edward Moxon-Browne) and *Investigating Identities. Questions of Identity in International Crime Fiction* (2009, edited with Kate Quinn).

### **Disrupting the Dichotomy: Armando's Transcultural Interventions in Postwar Memory**

*Britta Bendieck (University of Amsterdam)*

The Dutch multidisciplinary artist Armando (1929–2018), renowned for his provocations, arrived in Berlin in 1979 on a DAAD artists' grant and thereafter reported regularly for the Dutch national newspaper NRC Handelsblad on the city and its inhabitants. In his columns, he challenged the still-occupation-shaped image of Germany held by his compatriots, as well as their deeply ingrained narratives about the war. By transcribing, without commentary, the everyday remarks, overheard snippets, and debates of ordinary Berliners — collected in cafés and on the street — he gave voice to the previously unheard and exposed the full, often confrontationally contradictory spectrum of the past. A similar method had already provoked controversy in the mid-1960s, when Armando and the writer Hans Sleutelaar had published unedited testimonies of Dutch volunteers who had joined the Waffen-SS in De SS'ers. In an era marked by a revived dichotomous thinking of good versus evil, that volume generated widespread debate. Armando did more than humanize for his Dutch readers the once-suspicious former occupiers: he also forced a confrontation with their own, largely unquestioned patterns of memory and perception of the war. Without passing judgment, he called national memory into question and revealed a hybrid landscape of remembrance in which generalizations and moral certainties are fundamentally problematized. His provocations expanded the boundaries of collective memory and thus diversified the national discourse. Through his work as journalist, writer, and visual artist, Armando became an unintentional mediator between cultures and generations. In this paper, I will show through examples how Armando's artistic strategies challenged and broadened the national memory.

**Britta Bendieck** is Lecturer in German Language and Culture at the Universiteit van Amsterdam and Head of the Germany Desk at the Duitsland Instituut Amsterdam. Her research focuses on German-Dutch cultural relations, transfer and mediation studies, memory cultures,

interculturality, and contemporary German-language literature. Selected publications: Armando aus Berlin: Ein niederländischer Künstler auf den Spuren der deutschen Geschichte. In: Susanne Klengel; JuYa Müller-Tamm, Lukas Niels Regeler et. al. (Hrsg.). Berlin International: Literaturszenen in der geteilten Stadt (1970–1989), Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2023, 81-99; The Franco-German Reconciliation Narrative from the Dutch Perspective, in: Nicole Colin, Claire Demesmay (Hrsg.): Franco-German Relations Seen from Abroad. Post-war Reconciliation in International Perspectives, Cham ZG 2021, 51–68 (mit Nicole Colin); Aufzeichnungen über den Feind. Armando, Deutschland und der niederländische Erinnerungsdiskurs, Heidelberg 2020

### **Remembering the Past, Imagining the Future: Twenty-First-Century Negotiations of the ‘European Dream’**

*Julia Wiedemann (University of Eichstätt)*

In the past two and a half decades, the topos of the “European Dream”, based on and differentiated from the “American Dream”, has found entrance into discussions of Europe’s past, present and future. Jeremy Rifkin’s *The European Dream: How Europe’s Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream* (2004) and Aleida Assmann’s *Der europäische Traum: Vier Lehren aus der Geschichte* (*The European Dream: Four Lessons from History*, 2018) are two prominent cases in point. Both books were written in different contexts and at different times. Thus, Rifkin, a US-American economic and social theorist, published his book at a time when the ratification of the European constitution was still possible. In it, he primarily conceptualises the EU as an ideal for US-American society. The book of German literary scholar and cultural historian Aleida Assmann, on the other hand, was published after 2015 and concentrates on (German) memory cultures and their impact on the creation of a future Europe. In contrasting these two books with others discussing the “European Dream”, such as Ivan Krastev’s *After Europe* (2017), the paper aims at showing that these negotiations are themselves “historical”. Furthermore, the paper will demonstrate that these texts can be characterised as either “progressive” or “declinist” narratives. In this context, special attention will be given to the metaphors linked to the “European Dream” and to the role memories of the past play in imaginations of Europe’s future.

**Julia Wiedemann** is a researcher in English Literary Studies and coordinator of the European Studies / European Languages and Cultures programmes at the Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt. She received her PhD in 2018 with a work on the systems of literature and science in the writings of Aldous and Julian Huxley. She has co-edited several volumes, among them *Wessex: Landscapes, Histories and Identities* (2024, with Andrew Pickering) and *Remembering Places: Perspectives from Scholarship and the Arts* (2019, with Richard Nate). Her current

research focuses on narrativisations and spatialisations of the Anglo-Saxon past in nineteenth-century historical and literary discourses.

## **Panel 4b - Migratory Memory and (Un)Belonging in Grace Nichols's Poetry**

*Özgün Yurtcu (Ankara Bilim University)*

The legacy of colonialism continues to impact European memory cultures, notably in migrants' experiences of displacement and identity. This study examines how Grace Nichols's poetry reflects the memory of migration and the intergenerational negotiation of (un)belonging among Caribbean migrants in Britain. This study uses close readings of "Island Man," "First Generation Monologue," and "Ink of Exile" to investigate how Nichols depicts the psychological and cultural dislocation of first-generation migrants who struggle to reconcile their memories of home with life in England. Her poetry contrasts the warmth of the Caribbean with the chilly, unwelcoming environment of Britain, demonstrating the emotional weight of postcolonial displacement. Nichols's later poetry represents a shift in perspective, with a second-generation migrant embracing a transnational identity rather than feeling exile. This generational shift mirrors broader European discussions about migration, integration, and memory transmission. By situating Nichols's poetry within theories of postcolonial and transnational memory, this paper demonstrates how literature functions as a repository of cultural remembrance, influencing current European understandings of identity and belonging. Nichols's work provides a critical perspective on Britain's colonial past and its ongoing influence on national and European memory cultures. Her poetry contributes to Europe's changing migration story by highlighting how postcolonial memory travels across borders and generations.

**Özgün Yurtcu** is currently doing her PhD at Hacettepe University. She received her MA in English Language and Literature from Hacettepe University. Her thesis is titled as "The Changing Status of Women in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*." She received her BA from Ege University. She is currently working as an English lecturer at Ankara Bilim University. Her research interests are Gender Studies, Contemporary Drama, Postcolonial Literature, and Gothic Fiction.

**Envisioning Emancipation: Photographic Collections of African Liberation Struggle in the Context of Mário Soares and Maria Barroso Foundation**

*Henrique Godoy A. de Souza (Lusófona University, Lisbon)*

Over the last decades, there has been a significant increase in the presence of memory and non-official history in the public debate, namely testimonies and communitarian perspectives in museum exhibitions. The so called ‘memorial museums’ have exponentially emerged in societies that suffered estate violence, dictatorships or conflict. Commonly, these alternative points of view turn out to be divergent from general collective memory, sparking political debate.

Considering a larger historical and cultural spectrum, we identify various social entities dedicated to research and memory, including the archives. In this work, we intend to reflect upon the role of photography in supporting political memory narratives, and imagine how these debates can be reincorporated by the archive digital platforms. In a dialectical relation, the archive would not only be able to provide a substantial visual resource but also to reassimilate interpretations of the content that was produced through its own funds as means to broaden and update itself.

The case of Mário Soares and Maria Barroso Foundation (FMSMB) — historically known for safeguarding collections of former resistance figures, anti-colonialists, anti-fascists, and African revolutionaries such as Amílcar Cabral and Mário Pinto de Andrade — represents the potentiality of archives in expanding its public outreach and engagement with society. The relevance of these archives is also highlighted by recent national commemorations, particularly the 50th independence anniversaries of three Portugal’s former African colonies (Angola, Cape-Verde and Guiné-Bissau) and the 25<sup>th</sup> of April Revolution. In this context, it is also intended to put photography and political memory into perspective.

**Henrique Godoy A. de Souza** graduated in Photography in São Paulo, has a Master degree in Museology and is a PhD Candidate in Sociomuseology in Lusófona University in Lisbon. Has been studying the relations of photography in dictatorial contexts and has been working on the subject of political memory museums in Portugal. Since 2024 has been under a FCT (Foundation for Science and Technology) grant for an individual research project (2024.01663.BDANA) ‘Arquivos compartilhados: Uma proposta de descrição coletiva para as coleções de fotografia da Fundação Mário Soares e Maria Barroso’.

**Literary Fetishism & Mirror-Memoir: Michel Leiris’s *Phantom Africa* and Jean Genet’s *Prisoner of Love***

*Timothy Keane (CUNY)*

Two towering figures in French literary modernism, Michel Leiris and Jean Genet, wrote sprawling anti-narrative memoirs about living in colonized and postcolonial spaces -- regions that continue to trouble contemporary European political consciousness. As a poet who had broken with the Surrealist movement by 1929, Leiris trained as an ethnographer and worked as secretary-archivist for the Mission Dakar-Djibouti, an expedition that trekked eastward across sub-Saharan Africa from 1931 to 1933, spanning colonized territories that straddle at least 10 present-day independent nations. In the process, Leiris kept a controversial journal published in France as *L'Afrique fantôme* [Phantom Africa] (1934), recording idiosyncratic candid responses to the expedition, including critiques of its imperialist thievery of African artifacts. At the end of his life, Jean Genet published *Un Captif amoureux* [Prisoner of Love] (1986), about itinerant residencies among Black nationalists in the United States in 1968 and 1970, and living in Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan from late 1970 and 1972, including a subsequent sojourn in Lebanon in 1982, which included witnessing the immediate aftermath of the Chatila massacre. Notably Genet composed this final memoir as he was facing his impending death due to inoperable throat cancer. In reconnoitering these two autobiographical projects, this talk examines their authors' acknowledged cultural contradictions – two white European men bankrolled by leading French institutions dissecting erotically charged subjectivities through problematic engagement with dispossessed non-Western populations. Within these literary experiments, Leiris recontextualized the anthropological concept of “fetishism” into a radically antinarrative approach to life writing while Genet’s self-conscious voyeurism of postcolonial trauma led the famously anarchical writer to conceive of the destabilizing “mirror memoir.”

**Tim Keane**'s research interests include avant-garde autobiography, intersections between poetry and visual art, and crosscurrents between Modernist aesthetics and 20th century popular music. His writings have appeared in *Creative Exchanges* (Pollock Krasner House & Study Center, 2023), *Irish Urban Fictions* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018), *Joe Brainard's Art* (University of Edinburgh Press 2019) and *Abstract Expressionist Women of the 9th Street Show* (Katonah Museum of Art, 2019). He holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from the CUNY Graduate Center and is Professor of English at BMCC, CUNY.

## **Keynote Panel - Holocaust Memory before and after 7<sup>th</sup> October**

### **Berlin Holocaust Memorial and Artistic Interactions with It Before and After 7th October**

*Bill Niven (Nottingham Trent University)*

The term metamemory refers to people's cognitive engagement with memory. In analogy, I would like to introduce the concept of the metamemorial - a memorial which becomes the focus, in the course of its design evolution, its construction, or its reception, of developing and contrasting ideas of how something is, can or should be remembered. I apply the term in my paper to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. I wish to explore artistic responses to it which do not seek to "counter" a particular perspective (as in a countermemorial), but to raise questions about memorialisation and the way we connect with memorials. The paper will therefore concentrate on aspects of the post-inauguration history of the "Holocaust-Mahnmal". I will examine three engagements with it: German composer Harald Weiss's musical composition "Before the Silence", performed at the memorial in 2008; Israeli-German Shahak Shapira's 2017 online project "YOLOCAUST"; and, finally, "Cacti", a 2003 photographic project by the Palestinian artists Rasha Al Jundi and Michael Jabareen. All three projects transform the Berlin Holocaust Memorial into a metamemorial.

**Bill Niven** is Emeritus Professor for Contemporary German History at Nottingham Trent University. He is author of *Facing the Nazi Past* (Routledge 2001), *The Buchenwald Child* (Camden House, 2009) and *Jud Süß: das lange Leben eines Propagandafilms* (Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 2022). In collaboration with Amy, Bill has been researching the Kindertransport. Their joint book *Memory of the Kindertransport in National and Transnational Perspective* appeared in 2023 (Camden House). In 2024, Bill published a book reflecting on his wife's long illness and death *Du bleibst da: ein Abschied* (Mitteldeutscher Verlag).

### **Memorials Relating to 7<sup>th</sup> October and the Subsequent War, as well as Attacks on Holocaust Memorials**

*Amy Williams (The Association of Jewish Refugees)*

This paper considers attacks on Holocaust memorials since 7th October 2023. Many Holocaust memorials, particularly those to resistance and rescue, have been vandalised with graffiti. In some cases, messages of "Jews are perpetrators" have been inscribed into the memorials. In other cases, red hands recalling the Ramallah lynchings have been represented. Some commentators have referred to such acts as a form of street art, i.e. as a legitimate form of

protest against the war in Gaza and what is felt to be Israel's overdominance of Holocaust memory in the public sphere. The paper will argue that such vandalism seeks to seriously undermine empathy for Jewish victimhood in the Holocaust and brand Jews as perpetrators. That these memorials are targeted also suggests that Jews should not have been helped then any more than they should be helped now because it is they who pose a threat to society. The talk will also reflect upon who is carrying out these attacks. For example, in some cases they are carried out by far-right activists but in other instances it is not clear who is responsible.

**Dr Amy Williams** has recently been appointed the new Kindertransport scholar in residence at the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR). She will be working on several new projects in the lead-up to the 90th anniversary of the Kindertransport in 2028. Amy is writing her second co-authored book with Prof. Bill Niven on the transnational history of the Kindertransport for Yale University Press. Her first co-authored book with Prof. Niven for Camden House focussed on national and transnational memories of the Kindertransport.

## **Panel 5 - Berlin Museums and Memorials as Sites of Memory**

### **A Space of Agency: Memory Practices and Eyewitness Testimony at the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial**

*Deirdre Byrnes (University of Galway)*

Located on the site of the main remand prison for people detained by the Stasi, the Gedenkstätte Berlin-Hohenschönhausen was established in 1994. Eyewitness testimony plays a central role at the site. Former prisoners (Zeitzeugen) conduct guided tours, recalling and, on occasion, re-enacting their experiences of incarceration. Since October 2013 visitors can view the permanent exhibition “Inhaftiert in Hohenschönhausen: Zeugnisse politischer Verfolgung 1945-1989”. Exploring the role of eyewitness testimony at the site, this paper will demonstrate that the memorial functions as a space of agency, allowing for the articulation of once-silenced voices and for their inscription into the complex post-unification memorial landscape.

**Deirdre Byrnes** is Associate Professor and Head of German at University of Galway. Her research interests include GDR- and post-GDR literature, memory in contemporary German literature, and forms of memorialisation in post-unification Berlin. She is author of *Rereading Monika Maron: Text, Counter-Text and Context* and co-editor of *German Unification: The Legacy of GDR Literature and Culture* and of *Perceptions and Perspectives: Exploring Connections between Ireland and the GDR*.

### **Translating the Past Beyond the Nation: Prosthetic Memory at the Deutsches Historisches Museum**

*Joy McClean (Queens University Belfast)*

The Deutsche Historische Museum in Berlin is currently running a temporary exhibition entitled ‘Roads Not Taken: Or Things Could Have Turned Out Differently’. This exhibition looks at 14 different ‘turning points’ of German history throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, asking at each point if things could have been different. Through a critical examination of the content and construction of this exhibition, this paper proposes to investigate the extent to which it is possible to present the events of the German past in such a way that critically engages visitors from Germany as well as those from other nations. The process of working through the past (a concept known as *Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung*) has long been an important issue within German society, and historical museums have played an active role in this process since it truly came to the fore

in the 1980s (Dierl 2021). Against this background, this paper will investigate how the ‘Roads Not Taken’ exhibition attempts to address an international audience with questions that previously have been targeted towards German nationals; namely, questions of how we can learn from the horrific events of the German past in order to ensure it does not happen again. This manner of engagement can be understood through Landsberg’s ‘prosthetic memory’ concept, where a person is affected by a collective memory to which they do not belong (2004). Ultimately, this paper argues that the ‘Roads Not Taken’ exhibition uses Germany’s difficult past to promote a present-day image of the country as a democratic, Europe-focused nation by extending the responsibility for *Vergangenheitsaufarbeitung* to an international audience through the process of prosthetic memory.

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**Joy McClean** is currently undertaking a PhD in Translation Studies at Queen’s University Belfast. Her research examines how history exhibitions within museums act as translations of the difficult national past in Germany and Northern Ireland. Prior to this, she completed her Undergraduate Studies in French and German at the University of Cambridge (2017-21), and Master’s Studies in Translation at Queen’s University Belfast (2023-24).

## **The Depths of Memory: The Past as Subterranean in Berlin Museums and Monuments**

*Paul Leworthy (University of Edinburgh)*

This presentation explores how memory is spatially configured in a selection of museum and memorial sites in Berlin, including the Topography of Terror, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the Humboldt Forum. Across these spaces, I identify a shared reliance on metaphors of depth, arising from the presentation of the past as located below ground-level, submerged amongst the sediments of the city’s subterranean strata. My central question is: what are the implications of this spatial troping for how the past is understood and experienced in the present?

Building on recent work in cultural memory studies and critical museum practice, I argue that this spatial arrangement is neither inevitable nor incidental, but rather significant both in establishing

a narrative relating to the site in question and in shaping our understanding of the relationship between past and present in general. The invocation of the subterranean spatially segregates the past from the present, casting it as separate and categorically different.

As well as thinking about the genealogy of spatialising time in this way, I examine whether it efficiently articulates or effectively obscures the extent to which the past is constructed in the present and to which the present is shaped by the past. Through close readings of the sites' architecture and display arrangements, I also ask to what extent metaphors of depth and layering contribute to the sites' self-reflexive critical consideration of their own contribution to the construction of narratives about the past.

**Paul Leworthy** is currently Teaching Fellow in German Studies at The University of Edinburgh. He completed his PhD in Comparative Literature at The University of Edinburgh in 2021 with a doctoral thesis examining the role of objects and spaces in memory work in novels by Grass, Perec, Modiano and Walser. A monograph based on the thesis, *The Shape of Memory: Containers, Surfaces and Forms of Remembering in Post-War European Literature*, will appear this year. An International Fellow of the Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform, he is host of the *Connecting Memories* Podcast series and a founding co-Editor-in-Chief of *Memory Studies Review*.

## Panel 6a - World War II, the Holocaust and the Ethics of Memory

### Drawing Comparisons: Visual Journalism, Witnessing and Memory

*Linda Shortt (University of Maynooth)*

Bringing together a variety of recent graphic works - including, for example, Joe Sacco and Art Spiegelman's NEVER AGAIN!.. AND AGAIN... and Again... and Again (2025), Wie geht es Dir? Sechzig gezeichnete Gespräche nach dem 7. Oktober 2023 (2025), Nora Krug's Diaries of War: Two Visual Accounts from Ukraine and Russia (2023), and Emmanuel Lepage's Springtime in Chernobyl (2019) - this paper explores how graphic narratives on conflicts and disasters blend reporting and comics in a way which responds to and archives the challenges of past and the present. By interweaving personal narratives, testimony and caricature with broader historical narratives, these graphic narratives use witnessing to slow down our engagement with conflicts and disasters. They direct our gaze and capture individual experiences. Risking representation and "drawing to tell" (Chute) stories that counteract an accelerated and sometimes amnesiac media culture, these graphic works try to actively shape our understanding of events, contributing to discourses on memory, identities and values in Europe.

Drawing on Chute's reading of comics as archival boxes that store and display info, this paper explores the role of references, links and comparisons (e.g. between individual testimonies and stories, or historical references and experiences) for their storytelling and it explores and how these graphic narratives try to create opportunities for solidarity and an ethical engagement with the past and the present.

**Linda Shortt** is a lecturer at Maynooth University. She completed her PhD in German (Pathologies of Belonging? Generation, Place and Rebellion in Post-Unification German Literature) as part of the UCD Humanities Institute of Ireland interdisciplinary research programme on "Memory, Identity and Meaning." Her monograph (German Narratives of Belonging) stemmed from this research and was published as part of the Legenda Germanic Literatures series in 2015. She has co-edited two volumes in the area of memory studies [Memory and Political Change (2011) and Debating German Cultural Identity since 1989 (2011)]. She also works on migration and border studies and on representations of ageing and illness.

### A Different Second World War? National Memories and the War Film

*Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż (University of Warsaw)*

In 2007, commenting on the effects of the 2004 enlargement of the European Union, French historian Emmanuel Droit argued that there emerged an “iron curtain” dividing Western and non-Western national memories of the Second World War. That such a division continues to exist can be observed in the realm of the war film. The focus of my presentation will be three films as representative of their respective national collective memories of the Second World War: *Katyń* (dir. Andrzej Wajda, 2007, Poland), *1944* (dir. Elmo Nüganen, 2016, Estonia), and *Tuntematon sotilas* (dir. Aku Louhimies, 2017, Finland). One may venture the claim that to understand a nation one should watch its war films. The significance of these films resides in how their showings of the Second World War reflect the nations’ contemporary self-image and how they help to understand these countries’ attitudes towards the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

**Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż** is Associate Professor at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland, where she teaches courses on contemporary British and Commonwealth literature. Her research interests focus on the ethical vicissitudes of the representations of war in literature, film, and commemorative practice from the theoretical perspectives of trauma theory and memory studies. She is the author of *Reimagining the War Memorial, Reinterpreting the Great War: The Formats of British Commemorative Fiction* (2012) and *The Myth of War in British and Polish Poetry, 1939-1945* (2002), and co-editor of *The Great War in Post-Memory Literature and Film* (2014) and *The Enemy in Contemporary Film* (2018).

### **Crime and (No) Punishment: The Figure of a Lithuanian Perpetrator in Popular Non-Fiction Holocaust Narratives**

*Greta Štikelytė (Vilnius University)*

Since Lithuania’s independence in 1990, the material expressions of Holocaust remembrance and the differences in how the Holocaust has been treated in Western and Lithuanian historical narratives have sometimes broken out into public conflicts of memory, such as the debate over the commemoration of victims of the Soviet regime who are also considered Holocaust perpetrators. The lack of nuance in the discussions taking place in the media has been challenged in non-fiction writings by Lithuanians (Rūta Vanagaitė and Arkadijus Vinokuras) and authors of Lithuanian origin (Rita Gabis, Julia Šukys, Silvia Foti). These authors investigate familial histories as well as national narratives surrounding Holocaust perpetrators and offer several viewpoints of the perpetrator through the individual and collective, national and transnational lenses. Considering the relation between the concepts of the perpetrator, the bystander, and the implicated subject, this paper analyses how the figure of the perpetrator is constructed and manifests itself in these popular non-fiction Holocaust narratives. The main points considered to

be significant to the narrative choices surrounding perpetratorship are the impact of the lack of punishment for alleged perpetrators, agency under the conditions of occupation, Holocaust perpetratorship as an individual and communal act, mnemonic strategies and devices for layering all these factors into a cohesive narrative, and the role of dialogue in the construction of the image of the perpetrator.

**Greta Štikelytė** is a junior assistant professor at the Vilnius University Department of French Language, Literature and Culture. She is currently in the process of preparing to defend her PhD dissertation “The Structure and Representation of Mnemonic Conflicts in (Post)Memory Literature by Authors of Lithuanian Descent”. The dissertation centres on conflicts that arise from the intentional and unintentional formation of individual, familial, and (inter)national narratives related to the crimes of the Holocaust committed in the territory of present-day Lithuania, focusing on how individual literary practices intersect with historical writing.

### **Specters and Ghosts: Memory Games in Croatian Modernist and Postmodernist Cinema**

*Višnja Pentić (University of Zagreb)*

This paper explores the act of preserving the memory of the deceased by resurrecting them in the present, allowing for encounters and conversations with the past. In the modernist classic *Monday or Tuesday* (1966), Vatroslav Mimica delves into themes of memory and the Holocaust through visual depictions of consciousness and traumatic recollections. The protagonist, Marko Požgaj, a journalist whose father died during World War II, experiences a stream of consciousness that mirrors his struggle to remember. In the film's conclusion, a resurrection scene reunites father and son, allowing them to converse—a symbolic moment of remembrance. A more recent example of conversing with the dead appears in Juraj Lerotić's *Safe Place* (2022), an autobiographical work depicting the director's failed attempt to prevent his younger brother's suicide. In this narrative, Lerotić, playing himself, brings his brother back to life after his death, seeking to explain the film's creation and their shared history. Similarly, in *House on the Sand* (1985), Ivan Martinac directs a story in which a protagonist, having committed suicide, is accompanied by his best friend as he transitions into the afterlife. These three encounters with the deceased, spanning different periods of Croatian cinema, will be analyzed through Jacques Derrida's concept of the “spectre” in *The Work of Mourning* (1982), where he reflects on the loss of friends and colleagues. Derrida's notion of the spectre will be linked to Gilles Deleuze's idea of virtuality in film—an idea that allows the invisible and the absent to permeate a film's texture, as seen in these works. Memory, as a collection of purely virtual images, exists not psychologically but ontologically—preserved not in time or space, but as an omnipresent virtuality of the real world.

**Višnja Pentić** graduated in Comparative Literature and English Language and Literature from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, where she also earned a PhD in Film Studies. She teaches film theory at both the Academy of Dramatic Art and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

In 2012, she received the Vladimir Vuković Award for Best New Critic and, in 2016, the annual Vladimir Vuković Award for Best Critic. Višnja contributes essays on literature, cinema, and visual arts to Croatian Radio Channel 3 and various magazines. She also regularly conducts film criticism workshops in non-institutional settings.

In 2020, she launched an annual program of free public lectures on cinema at the Cinema Club Zagreb.

## Panel 6b - National Memory Cultures in European Contexts

### Textiles and Memory: Fabricating the "Frenchness" of Toile de Jouy

*Melissa Percival (University of Exeter)*

Known principally in the form of floating, languorous pastorals, toiles de Jouy are historic printed textiles whose popularity endures to this day. In 1760 Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf established a manufactory at Jouy-en-Josas near Versailles, to produce printed cotton or cotton-mix fabrics known as indiennes. After its closure in 1843, toile de Jouy enjoyed many afterlives, in antique and in reproduction. Oberkampf's name was memorialized in a Paris street and métro station, and in 1977 a museum was opened.

This paper focuses on the legacies of manufacturing at Jouy, showing how and why the myth of a deluxe yet accessible national product was sustained through collective memory and the formation of patrimoine (heritage). In fact toile de Jouy was made by a German Protestant immigrant, highly connected within the wider European Protestant mercantile and banking diaspora. Raw materials were sourced globally, including West Africa and the slave plantations of the Americas. Toile de Jouy was promoted as a national success story to compensate for France's tardiness in matters industrial, and its struggles to keep up with the British in particular. The hagiography of Oberkampf as a "French" industrial genius peaked during the Second Empire and Third Republic, just as French industry was jostling for position in international expositions. To this day the sheer contingency of Jouy-en-Josas as a site of manufacture is negated by powerful lieux de mémoire comprising industrial remnants and evocative toiles: these project a pastoralized model of industrial production embodying the Ancien Régime's lost elegance.

**Melissa Percival** (m.h.percival@exeter.ac.uk) is a Professor in the Department of Languages, Cultures and Visual Studies at the University of Exeter, UK, teaching across programmes in art history and languages. A specialist in eighteenth-century France, she has written on diverse subjects in visual culture, including physiognomy, facial expression, portraiture, pastiche and fantasy. Among her publications is the monograph *Fragonard and the Fantasy Figure: Painting the Imagination* (2012). Her latest research, on textiles, is funded by a 2-year Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship, and her book in progress is entitled: *Toile de Jouy: French Printed Textiles and Cultural Memory*.

**Bare life memories in *El hijo del acordeonista* [*The Accordionist's Son*] (2003) by Bernardo Atxaga**

*Judith Meddick (Independent Scholar)*

In this paper I explore how *El hijo del acordeonista* is a plural reading of history that counters Spain's "Veinticinco años de Paz" ["Twenty-five Years of Peace"] commemoration of 1964 to mark the anniversary of the end of the Civil War, and implicates the reader in constructing a textual memorial. Drawing on Giorgio Agamben's theory of "biopolitics", I argue that the novel shows how the Basque language memories of the war were constituted as 'bare life' at the level of language and, through their re-inscription, represents the movement of bare life to political life and the restoration of humanity. While the novel is a text of mourning it does not, however, culminate in closure of the memory of the Civil War and Francoist past. I demonstrate how *El hijo del acordeonista* both reveals and addresses the lack of knowledge about the memory of the Civil War and Francoist past amongst contemporary generations. Atxaga's work of memory contributes to the construction of a collective cultural memory of the Civil War by representing it as such: through writing and cultural production. At the same time, I trace how *El hijo del acordeonista* maps a trans-national memory by various means, including one of translation. In particular, I emphasize that the novel imbricates Spain's post-war legacy with that of Germany, and thus places the Spanish post-war consciousness in a European context.

**Judith Meddick** is an Independent Researcher and an Honorary Research Associate in the Centre for Visual Cultures at Royal Holloway, University of London. She was previously a researcher in the arts and design for various organisations, including the Arts Council, and a Senior Lecturer in Contextual Studies. Her research focuses on cultural memory and trauma, and, in these contexts, haunting, mourning and ethics. She is currently revising her PhD thesis about the memory of the Spanish Civil War and Francoist past in the contemporary Spanish novel for publication.

**Choosing (for) the Future: Feminist Literary Fabulations on Citizenship – Contemporary Italian Perspectives**

*Alice Flinta (University of York)*

What was referred to as "migrant literature," falling today into the "transnational" or "transcultural" literature category, has played, and continues to play, a pivotal role in conversations on identity, belonging, and the relevance of the national paradigm in an ever more mobile society. Within this context, the Italian literary landscape has seen, in recent years, a much-necessary, renowned interest for the country's forgotten colonial history which has proven

to be a fertile field for establishing conversations around, and for fabulating on, the question of citizenship. This paper analyses two recent interventions on the matter: the first is Afroitalian writer Saba Anglana's debut novel *La Signora Meraviglia* [Mrs. Wonder] (2024), and the second is feminist thinker Michela Murgia's essay *Futuro Interiore* [Inner Future] (2016). In the first part I focus on the imagery of blood and roots that in Anglana's text are narrative devices working as metaphorical imagery of the past and the future, the colonial trauma passed down through generations on the one hand, and the power of choice on the other. In the second part I draw on Murgia's essay – and specifically on her concept of *jus voluntatis* – to contextualise this reading within the European context, arguing for a need to rethink the principles underpinning European citizenship in a feminist fashion, and in light of the continent's colonial history.

**Alice Flinta** is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie doctoral fellow at the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of York (UK). Part of the EU- and UKRI-funded project [EUTERPE: European Literatures and Gender from a Transnational Perspective](#), her thesis focuses on contemporary Afroitalian literature, and its contributions to constructing a Mediterranean consciousness. Alice investigates literary interventions and activism around race, colonial past and citizenship through the works of Igiaba Scego, Saba Anglana and Espérance Hakuzwimana.

She holds a BA in English and Related Literature from the University of York and a Masters in Comparative Literature from the University of St Andrews.

### **The Corporeal Archive: Dance and the Transmission of Irish Memory**

*Alexandra Glazovskaya (Russian Academy of Sciences)*

As an inherently interdisciplinary field, memory studies provide a unique lens through which to examine dance as a medium of transmission. This paper explores how Irish traditional step dance functions as a vehicle for preserving and communicating historical memory, aligning with Paul Connerton's (1989) theory on ritual performances that encode images of the past within bodily practices. Key historical and cultural influences (such as the Great Famine, 19th-century mass migration, British colonial rule, and the role of Catholic Church on the everyday life) have profoundly shaped Irish identity. Choreographic expression serves as a form of embodied history, allowing traumatic experiences to resonate across generations. Dance, being tightly intertwined with the historical narratives, often reflects and even reinforces collective memory. Moreover, the interpretive flexibility of dance enables an active engagement (both of the creators and the audience) with history, transforming it into a lived experience. By analysing modern choreographic works in the field of Irish step dance that reinterpret historical events, this study examines Irish step dance as a dynamic tool for revitalising the past. Since the name of the style

itself includes the word "traditional" in it, I will try to examine how this tradition is shaped, lived, and relived in the twenty-first century.

**Alexandra Glazovskaya** is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Russian Academy of Sciences (IEA RAS), holds an MA in Irish Traditional Dance Performance (University of Limerick, Irish World Academy), and a Master's degree in Social Anthropology (Moscow State University). Her main research interest lies in the field of dance anthropology, Irish studies, heritage and memory studies, which she is currently trying to incorporate in her PhD thesis.

## **Panel 7: Teaching and Manipulating the Past: From Textbook to Digitization**

### **Lessons in Bias – How Language Classes Shape Historical Perception**

*Theresa Langer (Trinity College Dublin)*

How is GDR history taught to migrants? This paper presents a textbook analysis of the leading materials used in teaching GFL in Germany to adult learners. While every classroom is made different by the dynamics between teachers and learners, these textbooks have an influence on a broad audience. The only common historical topic in these textbooks are processes and events surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall and German Reunification, focussing on a GDR perspective before 1989/1990. The paper will touch on historical learning targets, before turning to concrete examples from different course books. These examples will be used to illustrate how learning targets are addressed. They will also form the basis for identifying common themes in GFL materials. It will be illustrated how course books present the GDR one-sidedly, simplifying complex issues, addressing the disadvantages of the regime while leaving out any positives as well as all alternative reasonings. The paper will work towards alternative approaches to the teaching of history that put the constructive character of history into the centre, hence shifting the focus from perceived historical facts to critical thinking processes. In a political climate which sees elected representatives demanding a 180-degree turnaround in the politics of remembrance and labelling Adolf Hitler as communist and socialist, it is now more important than ever to destroy the common misconception that history can ever be an unbiased version of the past. If teaching materials do not pick up on the constructive character of history, people remain blind to the power the past has on the present.

**Theresa Langer** is DAAD Lecturer at Trinity College Dublin. She received a master's degree in German as a Foreign Language of the Universities Leipzig and Stellenbosch and is working on her doctoral thesis at Bielefeld University. Her research focusses on historical learning processes in the GFL classroom. [langert@tcd.ie](mailto:langert@tcd.ie)

### **Reconstructing WWII Trauma Memory of Germans Through COTS C-RPG Gameplay to Whomever Forgets: A Theoretical Proposal Using Battlefield V: The Last Tiger**

*Zhaoyin Zhang (University of Limerick) and Shuya Xiang (University of Limerick)*

In Germany, the trauma of World War II (WWII) and the Holocaust remains the core component of cultural memory, reinforced through critical reflection and legislation. However, on Chinese social media, inappropriate behaviors by Z-generation netizens including the trivialization of the Holocaust and the use of Nazi symbolism, highlights a significant cultural memory gap, indicating inadequacies in current intercultural instructions in China. Addressing this, the study examines the theoretical potential for the deployment of Commercial Off The Shelf Computer based Role-Playing Games (COTS C-RPGs) as medium for bridging this gap through experiencing cultural memory in the classroom context.

Specifically, this research analyses the 30-minute-single player campaign *The Last Tiger* from *Battlefield V*, investigating how its comprehensive storytelling perspectives with first person narrator and immersive gameplay with showcase the cruelty of WWII enable individuals from non-German cultural backgrounds to internalize German society's collective trauma and tapped the limitations of videogames' capabilities of performing memories proposed by Kingsepp (2018). By embodying the Panzer VI (Tiger tank) commander Müller and experiencing his psychological struggles and introspection from North Africa to the eve of Köln's liberation by Allied Armies, the player's empathy toward historically contextual trauma is developed. Feedback in the players' community further confirms this interactive narrative effectively encourages emotional engagement and nuanced discussion.

Employing an autoethnographic approach, my co-author with less gameplay experience and I as an experienced player document detailed personal gameplay experiences respectively and make comparisons. Complemented by previous research on related discourses, we present triangulated critical discussions through textual analysis. The findings suggest that COTS C-RPGs can address limitations of current used didactic media in the Chinese context, especially regarding intercultural of historical trauma and help establish collective memories among certain groups. Such an approach is particularly necessary in China and carries broader significance in other non-German cultural communities for combating fading WWII memories and the resurgence of right-wing extremism in Europe.

**Mr. Zhaoyin Zhang** is a PhD student at the University of Limerick (UL), Ireland, researching Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL) and the cultivation of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) through the use of Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) videogames under the supervision of Dr. Michaela Schrage-Früh. He holds a BA in Translation and Interpretation from Dalian University of Foreign Languages, China, and an MA in TESOL Studies from the University of Leeds, UK. Mr. Zhang currently has two journal articles under consideration, both investigating the potential of COTS RPGs in intercultural instruction, with particular emphasis on cultural elements within Victorian Britain and ancient Chinese mythology. His work demonstrates a profound interest and solid academic background in cultural studies and the pedagogical implementation of

videogames.

**Ms. Shuya Xiang** is a PhD student at the University of Limerick (UL), Ireland, researching Journalism and Communication. Her primary research focuses on analyzing the characteristics of political propaganda on social media under the supervision of Dr. Fergal Quinn and Dr. Henry Silke. She completed her BA in Broadcasting and Hosting at Sichuan Film and Television University, China, and obtained her MA in Journalism at UL. Shuya has published the journal *“The Development, Challenges, and Influence of Investigative Journalism in China”*, which examines Chinese investigative journalism from a political economy perspective. Her work demonstrates a keen analytical perspective on communication studies, particularly in the areas of media representation, political discourse, and ideological influence in digital spaces.

### **From the Archive to the Algorithm**

*Nikita Kobolov (St. Petersburg State University)*

Previously, the autonomy of a subject was formed through resistance to social structures, but now autonomy itself is becoming a product of platforms. By analyzing our likes and reposts, VKontakte or Facebook algorithms not only predict behavior, but also construct our selves through feedback loops. We are what algorithms see in us, and this vision becomes part of our identity. Traditional "places of memory" — museums, monuments, archives — are losing their monopoly on embodying the past. They are being replaced by digital rituals: hashtag campaigns, online memorials, and virtual reenactments. This shift from human agency to the algorithmic calibration of the self forces us to reconsider the Heideggerian question of technology. If Heidegger saw technology as a way to "reveal secrets" — that is, the mechanism through which the world reveals itself to a person — then platform algorithms turn this "disclosure" into a prescribed process, predetermined by the parameters of machine learning. Technology no longer serves as an ontological questioning tool, but becomes Gestell, an ordering system that imposes memory and identity as "resources" for data extraction. Let's recall how the recommendation systems in TikTok or YouTube not only reflect our preferences, but form them, locking the user in a cycle of self—replicating gestures - likes, reposts, scrolling. This logic resonates with Ortega y Gasset's warning: technology, being initially a "projection of man," risks becoming his antipode - an environment where the difference between live action and automated reaction disappears. Digital rituals of remembrance — whether it's #MeToo flash mobs or virtual candles in honor of victims of violence — increasingly look less like collective bonding practices. The task now is not to save the collective from disintegration, but to learn to exist in an environment where the future of the collective lies in the realization that memory no longer belongs to us — it has become a hybrid organism, a symbiosis of human and machine.

## **New Imaginaries by Digitization of World War II and Holocaust Remembrance in the Context of the Russo-Ukrainian War**

*Hedwig Wagner (Europa Universität Flensburg)*

The Holocaust was postulated as a global memory (Levy/Sznaider 2006), and genocide was seen as a foundation for universal morality, "becoming the cultural basis for global human-rights politics" (Levy/Sznaider 2006, p. 4). As the commemoration of World War II and the Holocaust focuses on the future and calls for political action, it is now understood within the context of digitization and the widespread use of social media by younger generations, framed by new imaginaries. I aim to highlight the transformations and impacts these new developments—transnationalization and digitization—have had on memory. The Russo-Ukrainian war, labeled a "participatory war" (Boichak/Hoskins 2022), demonstrates how the manipulation of war memory, particularly in digital spaces, contributes to the polarization and radicalization of political discourse. Governments, especially the Kremlin, along with other actors, use memory to shape narratives, while the rapid churn of digital information fosters competing and often contradictory interpretations of history. Digital memorialization leads to a blending of past and present. The visual fusion of WWII with the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian information and cyber war (alongside the armed conflict) stacks layers of memory onto ongoing digital narratives. The radical past (Ford/Hoskins 2022) forms a new "war ecology" (Ford/Hoskins 2022, p. 135), while the participatory nature of this war creates a juxtaposition between individual and collective memory, global mainstream media, and national politics.

My presentation aims to shed light on the journalistic "mises-en-scène" of the war narrative in Ukraine for younger audiences, focusing on the (political) radicalization of memory politics through digitization.

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**Hedwig Wagner** has been Professor of European Media Studies at the Europa-Universität Flensburg (EUF), Germany, since 2016 and a member of the directorate of the Interdisciplinary Centre for European Studies (ICES) at the EUF from 2017 to 2023. Her main research interests are the intersection of Europe and media, memory culture, border studies, and geo-media. Recent publications include Nanz, Tobias and Wagner, Hedwig. *Cold War Europe: A Space of Communication*, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110733242> and Hedwig Wagner et al. (Hg.): *Media Discourse of Commemoration. The Centenary of World War One in Europe*. Springer Link /Palgrave Macmillan. 2021; <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-90079-3>

## **Keynote: Memory, Place and Identity: The Political Murals of the North of Ireland**

*Bill Rolston (University of Ulster)*

Unionists in the North of Ireland have been painting political murals since 1908. On the republican side, mural painting only took off fully in 1981. The talk will look at these two traditions, charting how they have changed and developed over the years. It will examine the themes of the murals – history, mythology, current developments, memorialisation of heroes and dead comrades, prisoners, victims and survivors, conflict and conflict resolution, and international references. All in all, these themes build a picture of each group's take on their history, their fears and their aspirations and ultimately reveal their separate identities, how each sees its place on this island and in the wider world.

**Bill Rolston** is an emeritus professor of Sociology at Ulster University. He is also the former director of that university's Transitional Justice Institute. He has researched and written on a range of themes during his career, including mass media representations of the Irish conflict, politically motivated prisoners, victims and survivors, and community struggles for truth and justice. He has published five highly illustrated books on the murals of the North of Ireland, all titled *Drawing Support*, as well as many articles on the subject. He has also published articles on the political murals of Chile, Colombia, the Basque Country, Orgosolo in Sardinia, Iran and Gaza.