

Call for Papers

Regions of Memory. A Comparative Perspective on Eastern Europe


International Conference

Warsaw, 26-28 November 2012

Research on historical identities of Eastern Europe in the 20th century has developed from two main perspectives. One is the proliferation of historical studies, which brings to light the experiences and consequences of two world wars, political and economic dictatorships, genocide, border changes and population resettlements, as well as profound national, ethnic and religious divisions. The other, is the currently quickly developing research on present memories of those experiences. Many of the latter studies have been influenced by the theoretical and normative framework of West European scholarship and political sensitivity. During this conference, we propose to shift the perspective and to compare genealogies of memory in Eastern Europe with other regions in the world, beyond Western Europe. The aim is twofold: to determine to what extent established concepts in memory studies are suitable to properly describe the various regional and local specifics of social memory processes; and secondly, to fuel the debate on European memories by research perspectives from beyond Europe. In this respect, we propose to focus both on the commemoration and the forgetting of experiences of mass violence in the 20th century.

Memories of violence have been a key field of investigation in memory studies. However, the intensity and character of mass violence in the 20th century varied, uneven both in time and space among the regions of Europe, and other continents. Eastern Europe, as Timothy Snyder argues in his recent book *Bloodlands*, was particularly affected: Experiences of mass murder, forced labor, rapes, hunger, ethnic cleansing, expulsions or revenge were common in this part of the continent during the turbulent times of the first half of century. Afterwards, for the purpose of political myths and stability, memory eradication programs were introduced, under which individual memories and group memories were hushed up for years to come. The 'Bloodlands' concept views Eastern Europe as a historically specific ecosystem of violence. During this conference, we will attempt to compare the memory processes of this region with those of Southern Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa or Latin America, and examine whether and how mass violence contributed to regional memories and forgetting.

Vis-à-vis the lasting memory boom now emerging as a global trend, we are asking then about regionally specific memory processes and research upon them in different parts of the globe.



We welcome papers that answer one or more of the following questions: What kind of memory of mass violence accounts for regional specificity? What are the genealogies of collective and individual memories and forgetting related to mass violence in various regions? How and why do these images, narratives, and practices change and evolve? How do they influence the contemporary identity of a given region? And finally, how do scholars describe and interpret them? Do their concepts, categories and approaches follow the established Western patterns of memory studies?

We invite speakers from various disciplines of humanities and social sciences, who research memories in Eastern Europe and in other parts of the world that have been affected by mass violence in the twentieth century. We prefer original research papers devoted to key issues of regional histories and identities, with sound theoretical and empirical underpinning and (if possible) transcending national boundaries or applying a comparative perspective.

Organizational information:

Languages of the conference: English, Polish (with simultaneous translation)

Please send an abstract of no more than **300 words** and a short biographical statement by **20 June 2012**. Abstracts will be selected by the academic committee. We will notify you of acceptance of your proposals by 20 July 2012. You will be asked to submit your final conference paper by November 1st, so we may have it translated and distributed to chairs and commentators.

Participation in the conference is free of charge. The organizers will provide accommodation and catering for the conference speakers. However, only a limited number of travel refunds for younger scholars and doctoral students will be available.

We plan publication of selected papers in a peer-reviewed journal or in a volume by an international publisher.

Please send your abstract and all inquiries to: **genealogies@enrs.eu**

We invite you to visit the website www.genealogies.enrs.eu, where you will find information about the program *Genealogies of Memory in Central and Eastern Europe*, as well as information regarding last year's conference which focused on theories and methods of memory research in Eastern Europe as compared to Western Europe. At the 2011 conference, we hosted nearly 100 scholars from Europe and the United States. *Genealogies of Memory in Central and Eastern Europe* program is organized by the European Network of Remembrance and Solidarity. Its aim is to facilitate academic exchange between Central and Eastern European scholars of individual and collective memory as well as to promote the region's studies of memory among the international academic community.



Conference Committee:

Convenors: Prof. Jeffrey Olick (University of Virginia), Dr. Małgorzata Pakier (Warsaw School of Social Science and Humanities), Dr. Joanna Wawrzyniak (University of Warsaw).

Advisory Board: Dr. Burkhard Olschowsky (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity), Prof. Gertrud Pickhan (Free University of Berlin), Prof. Jan Rydel (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity), Prof. Dariusz Stola (Collegium Civitas; Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences).

Organizers: European Network Remembrance and Solidarity; Free University of Berlin; Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw; Institute of Sociology, Warsaw School of Social Sciences and Humanities.

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