

**Memory and Justice Forum
Georgia Institute of Technology**

Genocides and Memories

Russia's War Against Ukraine in Comparative Perspective

Conference

Atlanta, November 13-15, 2023

The war in Ukraine is the most serious armed conflict in Europe since the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. The groundwork for this war was laid by memory wars between Russia and its former satellites in the 2000s and 2010s. These memory wars were mainly focused on the legacy of WWII and crimes against humanity committed by the fascist, communist, and nationalist regimes and movements. Thus, the language of the Russian anti-Ukraine propaganda is based entirely on the Soviet myth of WWII, according to which all anti-Russian forces are Nazi allies.

The dynamics of violence in the region seem to follow a vicious circle: genocides – memory wars – new genocides. Indeed, according to many observers, Russian atrocities on Ukraine's occupied territories seem to fall under the concept of genocide as defined in the 1948 UN Convention. Similar dynamics were also characteristic of the Yugoslav wars.

The return of violence, largely stimulated by populist history politics, came as a surprise to many observers, convinced as they were in the 1980s and even 1990s that the rise of memory, including the memories of past tragedies, promised peace and mutual understanding between different racial, national, ethnic, and religious communities rather than the renewal of hostilities. This is, however, not what we see today. Memory wars are currently raging from East Asia and Australia through Europe and the Near East to the Americas. The war in Ukraine has shown that a memory war can trigger a shooting war.

This conference will focus on the ways in which populist movements and neo-authoritarian regimes weaponize the historical past as a major instrument of their propaganda, as well as on the long-term evolution of modern culture and historical consciousness, which has made possible such manipulations through collective memory.

Sponsored by

School of History and Sociology, Georgia Institute of Technology
School of Modern Languages, Georgia Institute of Technology
Department of Russian and East Asian Languages and Cultures, Emory University
Center for Human Rights and Democracy and the Department of Political Science,
Georgia State University
Department of Political Science, Criminology, and International Studies,
Georgia Gwinnett College

November 13, Monday

Panel 1

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM, hosted by Georgia Tech, online

<https://gatech.zoom.us/j/94957099028>

Panelists:

- Georgi M. Derluguian (New York University, Abu Dhabi) – *Is This World War III Yet?*
- Uladzislau Belavusau (University of Amsterdam, T.M.C. Asser Institute) – *Belarus as a Missing Particle of the Puzzle in the Memory Wars in the Context of Russia's War against Ukraine.*
- Neringa Klumbytė (Miami University, Oxford) – *Post-Imperial Predicament: Suffering and Victimization in Lithuania's Sovereignty.*

Moderator: Nikolay Koposov (Georgia Tech)

November 14, Tuesday

Panel 1

11:00 AM – 12:15 PM, hosted by Georgia Gwinnett College, hybrid

1000 University Center Lane, Lawrenceville, GA 30043, B-1600: <https://ggc-edu.zoom.us/j/89730558695>

Panelists:

- Dirk Moses (City College of New York) – *Armed Conflict and the Question of Genocide in Ukraine and Gaza.*
- Dovilė Budrytė (Georgia Gwinnett College and Vilnius University) with Ana Nolasco Roblero (Georgia Gwinnett College) – *“Critical Situations” and Mnemonic Legislation: Memory Politics in the Baltic States and the War in Ukraine.*
- Violeta Davoliute (Vilnius University), *The Securitization of Memory and the Practice of Public History in the Baltic States.*

Moderator: Laura Young (Georgia Gwinnett College, Department of Political Science, Criminology, and International Studies, Associate Professor and Chair)

Panel 3

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM, hosted by Georgia State University, online

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87035394026?pwd=NnZ3OFI4alYyN2VrTDMzZytsK21XUT09>

Panelists:

- Yana Prymachenko (Ukrainian Academy of Sciences / Princeton University) – *The Shield of the Motherland: Russian Invasion and the End of the Soviet Cult of the Great Victory in Ukraine*.
- Jade McGlynn (King's College, London) – *Three Phases of Putin's Politics of Memory*.
- Jelena Subotic (Georgia State University) – *Russia, NATO, and the View from the East*.

Moderator: Ryan E. Carlin (Georgia State University, Center for Human Rights and Democracy, Director)

Panel 4

5:00 PM – 6:15 PM, hosted by Emory University, online

<https://emory.zoom.us/j/98075246052>

Panelists:

- Dina Khapaeva (Georgia Tech) – *Terror as National Identity: Russia's War against Ukraine*.
- Amanda Weiss (Georgia Tech) – *Memories of Manchuria in China and Japan*.
- Matthew Payne (Emory) – *Nation, Memory, and History in Central Asia: The Kyrgyz Exodus of 1916 and the Kazakh Famine of 1931-1933*.

Moderator: Juliette Stapanian Apkarian (Emory University, Department of Russian and East Asian Languages and Cultures, Associate Professor and Chair)

November 15, Wednesday**Keynote Event**

11:00 – 12:15, hosted by Georgia Tech, hybrid, Georgia Tech Library, Scholars Event

Network, Room 1280, 686-704 Cherry St NW, Atlanta, GA 30332

<https://gatech.zoom.us/j/92978357920>

Welcoming remarks: Richard Utz (Georgia Tech, Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, Senior Associate Dean and Professor, School of Literature, Media, and Communication)

Keynote speaker: Anne Applebaum (*The Atlantic* and the Johns Hopkins University, Agora Institute)

Moderator: Dina Khapaeva (Georgia Tech)

Book presentations followed by a reception

12:30 – 1:45, hosted by Georgia Tech, hybrid, Georgia Tech Library, Scholars Event Network, Room 1280, 686-704 Cherry St NW, Atlanta, GA 30332
<https://gatech.zoom.us/j/92369945947>

- Dina Khapaeva, *Putin's Dark Ages: Neomedievalism and Re-Stalinization* (Routledge, 2023).
- Amanda Weiss, *Han Heroes and Yamato Warriors: Competing Masculinities in Chinese and Japanese War Films* (Hong Kong University Press, 2023).

Moderator: Dr. John Lyon (Georgia Tech, School of Modern Languages, Professor and Chair)

Panel 5

3:30 – 4:45, hosted by Georgia Tech, hybrid, Georgia Tech Library, Scholars Event Network, Room 1280, 686-704 Cherry St NW, Atlanta, GA 30332
<https://gatech.zoom.us/j/98520358199>

Panelists:

- Dmitry Dubrovsky (Charles University, Prague) and Irina Rebrova (Technical University Berlin, Center for Research on Anti-Semitism) – *The Notion of the “Genocide of the Soviet People” in Putin’s Propaganda*.
- Kate P. Brown (Georgia Tech, HSOC) - *Culture as Toolkit in Selling Russia’s War*.
- Nikolay Koposov (Georgia Tech, HSOC/LMC, and Emory, REALC) – *Left-Wing Populism, Far-Right Authoritarianism, and Cosmopolitan Memory*.

Moderator: Victoria E. Thompson (Georgia Tech, School of History and Sociology, Professor and Chair)

Presenters and Abstracts

Anne Applebaum is a journalist, a prize-winning historian, a staff writer for *The Atlantic*, and a senior fellow at the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University, where she co-leads a project on disinformation and 21st-century propaganda and co-teaches a course on democracy. Her books include *Red Famine: Stalin’s War on Ukraine* (Doubleday, 2017); *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-1956* (Doubleday, 2013); and *Gulag: A History* (Random House, 2004), which won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for non-fiction. Her most recent book is the New York Times bestseller, *The Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism* (Doubleday, 2020). She was a *Washington Post* columnist for fifteen years and a member of the editorial board; she has also been the deputy editor of *The Spectator* and a columnist for several British newspapers. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Review of Books*, *The New*

Republic, The Wall Street Journal, Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Policy, among many other publications.

Dr. Uladzislau Belavusau is a Senior Researcher in European Law at the T.M.C. Asser Institute, University of Amsterdam. Previously, he was an Assistant Professor in EU law and human rights at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (2011-2015). He is the head of the Dutch team in the international research consortium for a study of memory laws and policies (MEMOCRACY), sponsored by the Volkswagen Foundation. His research and teaching cover various areas of EU (especially constitutional and anti-discrimination) law, human rights, and memory politics. Amongst numerous publications in these areas, he authored a monograph and co-edited three volumes, including *Law and Memory: Towards Legal Governance of History* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). He will present on *Belarus as a Missing Particle of the Puzzle in the Memory Wars in the Context of Russia's War against Ukraine*.

Kate Pride Brown is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Georgia Tech. She studies environmental politics in Russia and the United States. Her book, *Saving the Sacred Sea: The Power of Civil Society in an Age of Authoritarianism and Globalization* (Oxford University Press, 2018), develops a new theory of power through an ethnographic study of environmental activism around Siberia's Lake Baikal. Her research has been funded by a Fulbright Fellowship, the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, the American Councils, and the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy, among others. Her work can be found in such journals as *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, *Energy Research and Social Science*, *Environmental Politics*, *Environmental Sociology*, *Ethnography*, *Memory Studies*, *Nature and Culture*, *Research in Political Sociology*, *Social Movement Studies*, *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, *Water Policy*, and *WIREs Water*.

Her presentation will consider the relationship between culture and power, particularly how the legacies of the Soviet propaganda machine impact governance in Russia today. To justify the war in Ukraine and bolster public support for the war effort, the government and its spokespersons have deliberately wielded culture as a weapon. However, because building shared understandings and values is a basic, fundamental, human activity, the choice to treat culture as a form of power is deeply consequential for society. The talk will consider both short term and likely long term consequences of the Putin regime's weaponization of culture.

Dr. Dovilė Budrytė is a Professor of Political Science at Georgia Gwinnett College. She also works on *EUROPAST: Facing the Past: Public History for a Stronger Europe* research project (funded by Horizon Europe Programme) at Vilnius University in Lithuania. She was the recipient of research fellowships at Europa University Viadrina (Germany) and Carnegie Council on Ethnic and International Affairs. In 2019, 2018, and 2015 she was a visiting professor at Vytautas Magnus University and Vilnius University in Lithuania. Her articles on minorities, women, and historical trauma in Lithuania have appeared in *The Journal of Baltic Studies*, *Gender and History*, *Holocaust Studies*, and *Journal of International Relations and Development*. Her most recent book is *Crisis and Change in Post-Cold War Global Politics: Ukraine in a Comparative Perspective*, co-edited with Erica Resende and Didem Buhari-Gulmez (Palgrave, 2018). Her other publications include books and articles on minority rights and historical memory in Eastern Europe. She is President of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS). Dr. Dovilė Budrytė is working with **Ana Nolasco Roblero** on a project

related to this presentation. Ana is a Senior majoring in Political Science at Georgia Gwinnett College, and she is researching memory politics in the Baltic states.

Dr. Budrytė will present on “*Critical Situations*” and *Mnemonic Legislation: Memory Politics in the Baltic States and the War in Ukraine*. Studies of the memory politics pursued by the Baltic states suggest that they are inseparable from the memory politics and wars pursued by Russia. The repressive policies of the Soviet Union and a long history of aggression pursued by the Soviet Union and later Russia are related to memory legislation in the Baltic states which includes (in the case of Latvia and Lithuania) laws on denial of Soviet crimes. All three Baltic states have enacted laws to prosecute the perpetrators of Soviet crimes and have institutionalized anti-Soviet narratives in museums, educational programs, and other fora. The legitimization of resistance to aggression in the Baltic states included privileging certain historical narratives over others, which has resulted in new mnemonic conflicts, including confrontation with Russia. Mnemonic conflicts with Russia were closely related to the actual wars waged by Russia, thus resulting in what Ontological Security scholars have referred to as “critical situations” – ruptures when there are major changes in states’ identities and discourses and when they feel an existential threat. This paper argues that such “critical situations” are related to changes in the mnemonic policies of states, including legislation related to historical memory. It sets out to analyze changes in the mnemonic policies related to three “critical situations”—the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the 2013/14 crisis in Ukraine, and Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The focus here is on Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. How is this “critical situation” similar to or different from the other two “critical situations”? What major developments in memory politics are linked to this war? The paper will explore how and why the parliaments in the three Baltic states decided to use the term “genocide” to refer to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the debates and tensions surrounding the removal of Soviet-era monuments. The paper will also address the new lines of internal divisions that have emerged as the Baltic states have engaged in “vicarious identification” with Ukraine, identifying with its trauma and demonstrating various expressions of solidarity.

Dr. Violeta Davoliūtė is a Professor at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius University, and the Project Leader of *EUROPAST-Facing the Past: Public History for a Stronger Europe* (funded by Horizon Europe Programme). She is a specialist in matters of historical trauma, the politics of memory, and national identity. She is the author of *The Making and Breaking of Soviet Lithuania: Memory and Modernity in the Wake of War* (Routledge, 2013) and many articles on memory politics in the leading peer-reviewed journals. Davoliūtė was Visiting scholar at Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena, Yale University, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Uppsala University, and Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies.

She will present on *The Securitization of Memory and the Practice of Public History in the Baltic States*. The launch of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has had surprisingly little impact on historical discourse in the Baltic States because a long-standing model of public history, born of the independence movements of the late 1980s, had already been securitized in the wake of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine in 2014. Since then, both civilian and military authorities across the region have become vigilant to hostile information operations. But while the historical memory of the Second World War has indeed become a referent of populist

political discourse throughout the region, this has not led the Baltic States to adopt the kind of state-sponsored historical revisionism predicted by theorists of ontological security and observed in certain other states in the region, like Poland or Russia. This presentation will argue that securitization of memory has indeed occurred in the Baltics, insofar as exceptional and urgent measures relating to public discourse of the past have not only been proposed but also implemented. However, the identification of the security challenge and the actual policies developed to solve it bear very little resemblance to the stylized facts invoked in the literature on securitization in Eastern Europe. Securitization in the Baltics has not generated a 'security dilemma' because the means used to respond to foreign information operations have not mirrored the threat. Instead, the decade following Russia's invasion of Ukraine has, thus far, been marked by the consistent development of a preexisting model of public history, understood as the measures used by state and non-state actors to engage the citizenry in the co-creation of the past to promote democracy and social cohesion while maintaining professional standards of truthfulness.

Dr. Georgi M. Derluguian, a Soviet-born Africanist, served in Mozambique during the 1980s. In 1990-94, he worked at Fernand Braudel Center in Binghamton, New York. After fifteen years as a professor of sociology at Northwestern University (Chicago), he moved to the new campus of New York University in Abu Dhabi and, therefore, closer to his native Armenia. His scholarly works include *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer in the Caucasus* (The University of Chicago Press, 2005) and *Does Capitalism Have a Future?* (co-authored with Immanuel Wallerstein, Randall Collins, Michael Mann, and Craig Calhoun, Oxford University Press, 2013).

He will present on *Is this World War III Yet?* Is Immanuel Wallerstein proved massively wrong in his geopolitical predictions? Instead of America drawing China into its Pacific-rim orbit, we might soon see a war over Taiwan or Korea. In Europe, instead of the grand Europe along the axis of Paris-Berlin-Moscow, **there is currently** a war on a scale not seen since 1945. And then, the Caucasus and the Middle East. Does this amount to a world war, at least like in the 1930s, from the Spanish Civil War to the Japanese militarism in East Asia? If any predictions sound accurate now, it's neither those of Wallerstein nor Fukuyama. It is Samuel Huntington's Clash of Civilizations. But here we might suddenly return to Wallerstein's thinking. Do the civilizations exist? Or are they rather claims to a grandiose imaginary past made by the likes of Putin, Erdogan, Xi, Modi, and the ayatollahs? Still, Turkey, Russia, Iran, China, India, and Burma all are the 'gunpowder empires' of the early **sixteenth century**. So, is the EU a club of former empires? Is this rather the assault of semi-periphery on the core? Could this be the shape of another, probably the last hegemonic transition in the modern world-system, or what Immanuel Wallerstein also predicted as the coming 'Hell on Earth'?

Dr. Dmitry Dubrovskiy is a Research Fellow at the Department of Social Sciences, Charles University (Prague), a Professor at the Free University (Riga), and a Research Fellow at CISRUS (Washington, DC). An alumnus of St. Petersburg State University and the European University at St. Petersburg, he founded and directed the Ethnic Studies Program at the European University Petersburg from 1999-2005. He was also the founding director of the Human Rights program at Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Science, St. Petersburg State University from 2004 to 2015. Until March 2022, he was an Associate Professor at the Higher School of Economics (Moscow). He was a Galina Starovoitova Fellow in 2007/2008 (Kennan Institute, WWCIS) and

an Academic in Exile in 2015-2017 (Scholars at Risk-Institute of International Education Fellowship). He was a Visiting Lecturer at Bard College (New York), Witwatersrand University (Johannesburg), an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Harriman Institute, Columbia University (2015-2017), and a Research Fellow at Helsinki University (2011, 2020) and Kennan Institute (2007/2008). Russia declared him a "foreign agent" in April 2022. His research interests include academic rights and freedoms, freedom of speech, minority rights. Dr. Dubrovsky and Dr. Irina Rebrova will present on *The Notion of the "Genocide of the Soviet People" in Putin's Propaganda*.

Dr. Dina Khapaeva is a Professor and Russian Program Director at the School of Modern Languages (Georgia Institute of Technology). Among her most recent books are *Putin's Dark Ages: Political Neomedievalism and re-Stalinization in Russia* (Routledge, 2023) and *Crimes sans châiment* (Editions de l'Aube, 2023). She received a Fellowship from the University of Strasbourg Institute for Advanced Studies (2023), Invited Professorship at Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris (2016), and is a member of the Advisory Board of the book series *Russian History and Culture*, Brill Publishers (Leiden).

Her presentation, *Terror as National Identity: Russia's War Against Ukraine*, examines how the Kremlin's manipulation of history has sanctioned Russia's violence against Ukraine and fortified domestic support for Putinism. It argues that post-Soviet memory politics has celebrated, since the mid-2000s, two notorious instances of Russian state terror - Ivan the Terrible's oprichnina (1565–1572) and Stalin's purges. Implemented in parallel with re-Stalinization, the neomedieval memory politics advocates for the return to a society of estates and presents it as an alternative to democracy. This two-fold propaganda aims to convince Russians that state terror is the traditional Russian way of governance, best suited for the restoration of the empire.

Dr. Neringa Klumbytė is a Professor of Anthropology and Russian and Post-Soviet Studies and Director of the Lithuania Program at the Havighurst Center for Russian and Post-Soviet Studies, Miami University. She is the author of *Authoritarian Laughter: Political Humor and Soviet Dystopia in Lithuania* (Cornell University Press, 2022), a co-author of *Social and Historical Justice in Multiethnic Lithuania* (Vilnius, 2018), and co-editor of *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964–85* (with Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, Lexington Books, 2012). Her current projects focus on the Holocaust, sovereignty, and historical justice in Lithuania.

She will present on *Post-imperial Predicament: Suffering and Victimization in Lithuania's Sovereignty Politics*. Since 2014, the suffering and resistance of the Lithuanian people have become a dominant narrative describing Lithuania's Soviet history in the context of the war in Ukraine. This narrative, emergent from memories of deportees, political prisoners, and dissidents, was prominent earlier, especially during Sąjūdis, however, it was not integrated to the same extent into the public discourse and did not have its unifying potential until the war in Ukraine. Since 2014, this history has even become part of the EU and NATO discourse on the Baltic countries' heroic struggle against the USSR. After 2022, in the context of the war in Ukraine, this history serves as a blueprint to imagine the future in Lithuania and beyond. By focusing on narratives of suffering and victimization of the Lithuanian people this presentation explores affective political rationalities underlying this history in Lithuania's sovereignty politics, including legislative and policy agendas, and public initiatives of commemoration. She

argues that affective political rationalities are intrinsic to projects of sovereignty in the context of geopolitical uncertainty and serve to provide legitimacy and recognition to nationhood nationally and internationally. The public circulation of memories and narratives of deportations, exile, occupation, and resistance record Lithuania's post-Soviet and post-imperial predicament, as the war in Ukraine unfolds.

Dr. Nikolay Kuposov is a Distinguished Professor of the Practice at the School of History and Sociology and the School of Literature, Media, and Communication at Georgia Institute of Technology and a Visiting Scholar at Emory University. His academic interests include modern European intellectual history, historiography, historical memory, and comparative politics of the past. He has authored six books, including *Memory Laws*, *Memory Wars: The Politics of the Past in Europe and Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), *Strict-Security Memory: History and Politics in Russia* (The New Literary Observer, 2011, in Russian), and *De l'imagination historique* (Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2009).

His presentation, *Left-Wing Populism, Far-Right Authoritarianism, and Cosmopolitan Memory*, examines how Russian propaganda uses criticism of the EU official politics of memory by left-leaning philosophers and historians in the West to legitimize Putin's anti-Western myth of the Second World War.

Dr. Jade McGlynn is a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow at the Department of War Studies, King's College, London. She completed her DPhil at the University of Oxford, where she worked on Russian politics of memory, identity, and representations of Ukraine. She is the author of *Russia's War* (Polity, 2023) and *Memory Makers: The Politics of the Past in Putin's Russia* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2023).

Her presentation, *Three Phases of Putin's Politics of Memory*, separates Putinist politics of memory into three phases: pre-2012; 2012-2022; post 24th February 2022. It examines how the role and function of memory politics has changed under Putin's rule. In so doing, it argues that the state's creation of a Russian mnemonic identity – or the cultural memory that one chooses to espouse – has shifted from being a political device to a marker of nationhood and is now used as an ideological substructure by the regime. The paper also hypothesizes that Russian understandings of, and socio-political change in, Ukraine have increasingly played an outsized role in accelerating and defining this evolution and the forms and content of Russian memory politics. To test this hypothesis, the paper applies process analysis formed of key junctures in Russian memory politics and investigates the presence of any connection, or reaction, to Ukraine, as measured by: references to Ukraine and memory in elite discourse; major political disputes with Ukraine at the time of the given juncture; antithetical Ukrainian memory events at the time of the given juncture. A juncture is defined here as a significant act or intervention by the Russian President or Presidential Administration designed to influence Russian official and/or cultural memory. The paper finds that not only do junctures become more frequent during Putin's time in power, they also become more connected to Ukraine.

Dr. A. Dirk Moses is the Anne and Bernard Spitzer Professor of International Relations at the City College of New York. He is the author of *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) and *The Problems of Genocide: Permanent Security and the*

Language of Transgression (Cambridge University Press, 2021) and edits the *Journal of Genocide Research*.

He will present on *Armed Conflict and the Question of Genocide in Ukraine and Gaza*. Armed Conflict and genocide are routinely distinguished in the concept of both phenomena, leading to the excusing of civilian casualties as “tragic” incidental effects of attacks on military targets. This paper explores how this — in my view, problematic — distinction plays out in the theory and practice of armed conflict and impacts upon the armed conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.

Dr. Matthew Payne is an Associate Professor of Russian history at Emory University. He received his doctorate from the University of Chicago and is the author of the monograph *Stalin's Railroad: Turksib and the Building of Socialism* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001). His research interests include modern Central Asia and Soviet modernization.

He will present on *Nation, Memory, and History in Central Asia: The Kyrgyz Exodus of 1916 and the Kazakh Famine of 1931-1933*. The Kyrgyz anti-colonial revolt of 1916 and the Kazakh famine of 1931-33 were major historical events that shaped the national memory of these nations in the post-Soviet period. Long interpreted through a particular Soviet lens or neglected completely in the historiography, both events re-emerged in the post-Soviet period to be re-imagined as national tragedies and constitutive of colonial oppression.

Dr. Yana Prymachenko is a Senior Researcher at the Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. In the fall of 2022, she joined the history department at Princeton as a Visiting Research Scholar. Her research interests vary greatly, ranging from the Soviet culture in the 1920s-30s, the history of the Second World War, the memory politics in Russia and Eastern Europe to the study of Soviet propaganda and informational wars. She is a co-author of 10 books dedicated to the history of Ukraine. Among them *‘Russkiy Mir’ in Donbas and Crimea: Historical Background, Political Technology, Tools of Aggression. Analytical report* (2018, in Ukrainian). Her current research focuses on the mediatization of history and historical fakes in media.

She will present on *The Shield of the Motherland: Russian invasion and the end of the Soviet cult of Great Victory in Ukraine*. Since the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2014, Russia has weaponized the Soviet memory of World War II, excluding Ukraine from the club of victors of Nazism. Decommunization laws, adopted in 2015, established new commemorative practices in Ukraine. However, the real challenge remained the Soviet memorial complexes, such as *The Ukrainian State Museum of the History of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945*. Together with the Monument of Motherland, this complex perpetuated the cult of Great Victory in Ukraine. Since 2015, the place has been renamed and underwent the deconstruction process. In 2023, the Ukrainian power initiated the replacement of the Soviet coat of Arms with the Trident on the shield of the Monument to the Motherland. However, after the all-out Russian invasion, the shield became the trope representing Ukrainian resilience in public discourse. It acquired broad meaning close to Aleksey Lidov’s notion of the *image paradigm*, creating a rupture with Soviet memory politics and military culture. Based on the transformation of *the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War* since 2014, the paper

focuses on strategies dealing with the contested past in the time of war and the multidimensional notion of shield in Ukrainian public discourse.

Dr. Irina Rebrova is a historian of the Holocaust and other NS-victim groups in the Soviet Union. She defended her PhD thesis at the Center for Research on Antisemitism at Technical University, Berlin. The title of her PhD thesis, published in 2020 as a book, is “Re-constructing Grassroots Holocaust Memory: the Case of the North Caucasus.” She holds a Russian PhD degree (candidate of science in history) and an MA in sociology (Gender studies). She has published a number of articles on oral history, gender history, and social memory of World War II in Russian, English, and German academic journals and edited volumes. Among others, she was a fellow at the Claims Conference Kagan Fellowship in Advanced Shoah Studies in 2015-2017, at the Center for Holocaust Studies at the Institute for Contemporary History, Munich, in 2016, at the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research in 2017. During 2014-2022 she was a Research Associate in Hadassah Brandeis Institute at Brandeis University, USA. Since 2022 she is a member of the board of the German non-profit association KONTAKTE-KOHTAKTY that promotes intercultural tolerance, education about history and donations for the victims of the Nazi era in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia through international exchange. Her latest project, “Remember Us...” dealt with the history and memory of people with disabilities who became Nazi victims in the occupied regions of Russia during the Second World War (<http://nsvictims.ru/>). In November 2023, she will begin her term as Alfred Landecker Lecturer at the Center for Research on Antisemitism TU Berlin. Dr. Rebrova and Dr. Dmitry Dubrovsky will present on *The Notion of the “Genocide of the Soviet People” in Putin’s Propaganda*.

Dr. Jelena Subotic is a Professor of International Relations in the Department of Political Science at Georgia State University in Atlanta. She is the author of, most recently, the award-winning book *Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism* (Cornell University Press, 2019) and co-editor (with Jeffrey Kopstein and Susan Welch) of *Politics, Violence, Memory: The New Social Science of the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press, 2023).

Her presentation, *Russia, NATO, and the view from the East*, responds to some of the arguments made by realist International Relations scholars regarding the root causes of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. In contrast to realist accounts that place the blame for the invasion with NATO’s enlargement to the East, this presentation looks at the issue of NATO enlargement from the perspective of Eastern European countries. She argues that East European countries’ own agency needs to be taken seriously in any analysis of NATO enlargement, and especially the historical context of their prior relationship with Russia.

Dr. Amanda Weiss is an Associate Professor of Japanese at Georgia Institute of Technology, where she teaches courses on Japanese media and society. She is also the editor and founder of *Hivemind: Global Speculative Fiction*, a science fiction and fantasy magazine with a focus on language and culture. Her book, *Han Heroes and Yamato Warriors: Competing Masculinities in Chinese and Japanese War Cinema* (Hong Kong University Press, 2023), explores contemporary East Asian remembrance of WWII.

Her presentation, *Memories of Manchuria in China and Japan*, investigates how women—as symbols of national identity and as writers of history—have both exposed and repressed colonial memory of Japanese imperialism in China. She focuses on contemporary literature and television productions featuring colonial wives, army wives, “left-behind women” (zanryū fujin), and kamikaze mothers (tokkō no haha) to reveal how Chinese and Japanese literature has—often through the idiom of gender—shaped the remembrance of Manchuria for present-day audiences. Some of the works she will examine include Yamasaki Toyoko’s influential novel *Child of the Good Earth* and the media spectacles surrounding the return of Japanese women left in China after the war.