



The Politics of Memory as a Weapon: Perspectives on Russia's War against Ukraine

8–10 February 2023, Berlin

The instrumentalisation of history and culture in order to achieve political aims has a long history. For many years now, Vladimir Putin and the Russian authorities have been advancing falsified historical narratives and highly fictional historical and cultural arguments as geopolitical weapons. While Russia's war against Ukraine continues, it is crucial to recapitulate this caesura in the European order and to ask how the view of Ukraine and the relationship with Russia in individual European states has changed since 24 February 2022 and what further effects this war has had.

These issues will be the subject of the international conference 'The Politics of Memory as a Weapon: Perspectives on Russia's War against Ukraine' organised by the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity and the Federal Institute for Culture and History of the Germans in Eastern Europe (Oldenburg) in cooperation with the Documentation Centre for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation (Berlin).

The conference aims to examine the stereotypes, patterns, mechanisms and methods used in the political and social implementation of historical disinformation and the portrayal of the enemy, and discuss ways in which these can be prevented or mitigated. This will entail a (self-)critical analysis of political and scholarly dealings with history in various European countries. We shall also reflect on what happens when warnings from political and academic voices are not taken seriously enough and on the consequences of the way in which attention has shifted from Russia to Ukraine.

Questions to be discussed during the conference include: when is it appropriate not only to speak out against and to engage in political or even judicial countermeasures when dealing with the falsification of historical facts? Where do propaganda and social manipulation begin? What should we expect from 'public intellectuals' in times of war and crisis? How can we ensure that civil society is enlightened and immunised, while at the same time guaranteeing the free exchange of ideas and historical interpretations? How effective can literature and art be in this endeavour? Is it possible for the concepts used in public history to be properly understood, and what part can dissidents play here? What digital tools can be deployed to deflect propaganda and trolls on social media?

The conference will cover a wide range of panels with historical, political, cultural and legal topics as well as references and with speakers from Eastern and Western Europe. The Ukrainian historian Andrij Portnov will hold the opening lecture. Among the participants is Irina Scherbakova, co-founder of the "Memorial" reappraisal initiative and human rights organisation, which has been banned in Russia since December 2021.

The conference 'The Politics of Memory as a Weapon: Perspectives on Russia's War against Ukraine' will take place online and onsite at the Documentation Centre for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation in Berlin (entrance for the public: Stresemannstraße 90, 10963 Berlin).

Conference languages: English and partly German

For programme and more details visit: <https://cutt.ly/politicsofmemory2023>

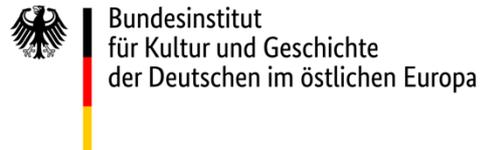
Registration for onsite and online event (free of charge):

<https://cutt.ly/politicsofmemory2023register>

The conference will be streamed on the YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@fluchtvertreibungversöhnung>

Organisers:



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The European Network Remembrance and Solidarity is an international initiative whose aim is to research, document and enhance the public's knowledge of 20th-century European history and the European cultures of



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remembrance, with particular emphasis on periods of dictatorship, war and resistance to political violence. The members of the network are Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, with representatives from Albania, Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia and Lithuania present on its advisory bodies.

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