

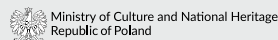


CONFERENCE

The Future of Central and East European Studies in the Light of Russia's War of Aggression Against Ukraine

17–19 October 2024

University of Warsaw (Faculty of Modern Languages)
Dobra 55, 00-312 Warsaw



**The Future of Central and East European
Studies in the Light of Russia's War
of Aggression Against Ukraine**

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Warsaw

Welcome Letter from the Director of the Pilecki Institute

On behalf of the Pilecki Institute, the scientific committee, and our esteemed partners, I would like to welcome you all to the conference “The Future of Central and East European Studies in the Light of Russia’s War of Aggression Against Ukraine.” This is a difficult time to be in Central and Eastern Europe, one of great uncertainty and anxiety for the future of our region. Russia’s war in Ukraine has brought international focus on the area’s geopolitics and histories, and the delicate status quo that settled with the breakup of the Soviet Union has been brought into question. The same imperial thinking that has marked the history of this region for centuries appears to have returned once again with Putin’s doctrine of *Russkiy Mir*.

In these challenging times, it is crucial for us as scholars, activists, and experts in the broad field of CEE Studies to take the lead in shaping a more accurate discourse on the nations and peoples that make up the region. This is a task that must be undertaken in a spirit of cooperation among the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, the West, and the broad array of disciplines and professions concerned with its development and security. We believe that this conference will serve as a powerful platform for such cooperation. We are honored to have with us historians, political scientists, economists, legal scholars, sociologists, activists, and others who are dedicated to understanding and promoting this region. We anticipate three days of stimulating presentations and discussions that will significantly enhance our collective understanding of Central and Eastern Europe.

This is only the beginning. There is much work to be done from here on to counter perceptions and constructions of Central and Eastern Europe that are dominated by Russian expansionism. The Pilecki Institute plans to hold conferences such as this one yearly to confront issues of this region’s history in partnership with as broad a coalition of regional institutes and scholars as possible. We hope you will return in future years to continue the conversation.

I thank our partner institutions and scientific committee members for their invaluable contributions. Your expertise and dedication have been instrumental in making this conference a reality. Without your support, this endeavor would not have been possible.

Dr. Wojciech Kozłowski

Acting Director of the Pilecki Institute

Purpose of the Conference

“The Future of Central and East European Studies in the Light of Russia’s War of Aggression Against Ukraine”

Russian aggression against Ukraine has changed the view of the Russian Federation that had previously dominated politics and scholarship. At the same time, it has brought attention to the role and importance of the countries located in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as changing perceptions of these both in international affairs and in political and scientific discourses in the West. It has also had repercussions in the scientific field, where cooperation between Western research institutions and Russian academic units has been suspended and access to Russian archives has radically narrowed. Along with this, dominant interpretations are being reevaluated and gaps in current approaches to understanding phenomena in Russia and its history have begun to be noticed. One matter of urgency in the current situation is to move the West away from a Russian-centric view of Central and Eastern Europe in favor of other perspectives, including the experiences of the countries located there. What is needed are studies of Central and Eastern Europe that bring to the fore the histories of its member states, treated as entities independent of the Russian center. The above-mentioned factors, however, are not universal: Different views on Russia are also present in the so-called global south, and the dynamics in play since February 2022, like any other, are subject to temporal fluctuations. The aim of this conference will be to review the current state of affairs in the field of research on Central and Eastern Europe and on Russia, to reflect on the past, and to develop new approaches that can help decentralize perspectives and look for alternatives to the previously developed assumptions and models used to study this part of Europe.

Issues to which we would like to attach particular importance include:

- The politics of memory in Russia and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe
- The experience of World War II and communism in Central and Eastern Europe
- Russian imperialism and its influence on the history of Central and Eastern Europe
- Foreign policy of Central and Eastern European countries towards Russia now and in history
- The history and state of research on Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries
- The history and state of research on Russia in the 20th and 21st centuries
- The current and historical political and social system of Russia – its characteristics and distinguishing features
- Russian political traditions and their influence on the shape of the state
- Legal classifications and settlements of Russian and Soviet actions against the countries of Central and Eastern Europe today and in history

The Pilecki Institute and the Center for Totalitarian Studies

The Pilecki Institute has been established to facilitate the interdisciplinary and international analysis of issues and developments that were of key importance for the political history of the 20th century, namely the Nazi and Soviet totalitarian regimes and the global consequences of their actions.

We gather and make available documents concerning selected aspects of the 20th century, provide support for scientific research programs, and help disseminate knowledge about the period through educational projects and events which straddle culture and history.

The Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute gathers researchers who specialize in history, political science, sociology, and other fields of the humanities and social sciences. This unique milieu of scholars implements interdisciplinary research projects devoted to totalitarianism and the history of Poland in the 20th century. Research focuses primarily on events connected with World War II and that conflict's impact on societies and politics in the second half of the 20th century, as well as the cultivation of memory in the postwar period, communism studies, research on totalitarianism, and transitional justice. While conducting their own research projects, employees of the Center utilize collections acquired by the Institute, which together form a digital archive containing documents relating to the history of Poland and Polish citizens in the 20th century. As part of their activities they popularize and disseminate the results of their studies, in particular abroad. To this end they organize debates, seminars, and international scientific conferences.

Conference Partners



Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University

The Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies is the intellectual home of Harvard scholars and students with an interest in this critical region of the world. The Eurasian region is as enigmatic as it is vast, and changes taking place there are felt around the world. The Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University brings people together to learn about this region in original and profound ways. By fostering opportunities for innovative scholarship, creative teaching, and broad learning within a research university, the Davis Center educates future leaders who make enduring contributions and bring deep knowledge to bear on contemporary problems. One of the cornerstones of its mission is to develop and deliver high quality resources and programming that will educate the general public (and specifically K-12 teachers and students) about the history, culture, and current events of Russia and Eurasia. The Center does this by developing and executing high-quality events and programming (including workshops for teachers, in-classroom lectures, cultural events and webinars) as well as developing, disseminating and helping teachers make use of curricular, digital and material resources.



The Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw

The Centre for East European Studies is a research and teaching unit of the University of Warsaw specializing in the field of Eastern Studies, and is one of the preeminent institutions in this field in Poland. It is a leading academic center educating in the field of Eastern Studies, at the first and second degree and postgraduate levels. Educating future specialists in the problems of Eastern Europe, Central Europe, Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus and the Balkans, the Centre coordinates numerous international scholarship programs and scientific internships for citizens of Poland and neighboring countries.



The Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin

The Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin is a scientific unit of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) with its headquarters in Berlin, established in 2006. It is one of six PAN research stations abroad, along with posts in Brussels, Kyiv, Paris, Rome and Vienna. CBH PAN is engaged in research and dissemination of knowledge about Polish-German relations in the context of European history and culture. It carries out scientific, popular science, didactic and cultural projects, both independently and in cooperation with international partners. It disseminates them through publications, conferences, seminars, exhibitions and an online presence. It emphasizes interdisciplinary research in the humanities and social sciences: history, art history, cultural studies, museology, political science, sociology and cultural anthropology. Within the framework of scientific diplomacy, it strives to internationalize the Polish humanities and bring Poles and Germans closer together.



The Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

The Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences brings together leading Polish political scientists, historians and sociologists in order to create a unique environment where innovative knowledge and policy expertise is produced. The Institute's mission is to conduct high-level multidisciplinary research that investigates political and social change at the crossroads between East and West. Their studies of the political and socio-economic transformation in Poland are embedded in in-depth historical reflection on the resistance and opposition movements during World War II and under communism. Joint teams of historians and political scientists study Poland's relations with Germany on the one hand, and the Soviet Union (Russia and Ukraine) on the other, both before and after 1989. A regional outlook on Central and Eastern Europe complements this research agenda.



The Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

The Institute of History was founded in 1953 as a research establishment of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Polska Akademia Nauk – PAN) – a corporation of scholars as well as a community of institutes representing various branches of learning. The Institute is housed in two adjoined burgher houses, nos. 29 and 31, on Warsaw's Old Town Square (on the Kołłątaj side). The founder of the Institute and its first director was the eminent historian of the medieval period, Professor Tadeusz Manteuffel (1902–1970). The Institute conducts research on Polish and World history, from the Middle Ages up to the 20th century. Some of the research projects are being conducted in cooperation with other institutions, both in Poland and in other European countries.



Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University

The Institute of European Studies is one of the research units at the Jagiellonian University based in Cracow. The process leading to the foundation of the Institute of European Studies began in 1993 with the establishment of the Inter-faculty Department of European Studies. In 1999 the Department was transformed into the Centre for European Studies within the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University. In 2001 the Centre was incorporated into the structure of the Institute of Regional Studies – a unit of the newly established Faculty of International and Political Studies. In 2004 the Centre was transformed into the Institute of European Studies. The Institute of European Studies team comprises experienced researchers – experts in the fields they represent, authors of significant European studies publications (in Polish and English) and scholarship holders of prestigious research programmes. The Institute has conducted a record number of European and national research projects, education and training grants (over 90), including the most important of them funded by the European Commission: Horizon 2020, Jean Monnet Networks, Erasmus Mundus. The Institute of European Studies has a rich educational offer. About 500 students study there annually.



The Lithuanian Institute of History

The Lithuanian Institute of History is a state research institute, a public legal entity operating as a state-budget institution, which conducts long-term Lithuanian studies and their social and cultural development, and which has the status of special national importance. The mission of the Institute is to study the development of the Lithuanian nation, the society of Lithuania, its culture, economy and statehood, to collect, systematize, and disseminate the documentary and intangible historical heritage through the development of fundamental and applied research; to contribute to the creation of civic society, the formation of historical culture and critical discourse in society, and the preservation of cultural identity through the results of its research; together with universities, to train researchers in history and ethnology to shape the strategy of the history and ethnology of Lithuania, to participate actively in the creation of a knowledge society, and to broaden links with the international research space.

The Witold Pilecki International Book Award

Witold Pilecki is far from an obvious choice for a patron of a literary prize; and yet the captain was not only a soldier, conspirator, hero, or man of action. His famous reports from Auschwitz-Birkenau provide information about the realities in the camp, and at the same time contain an in-depth analysis of the situation and offer a broader humanistic reflection with their vivid prose. They report on specific events, and especially the crimes committed by Germans in occupied Poland during the Second World War. At the same time, they bear witness to an entire era.

By awarding the Witold Pilecki International Book Award, we emphasize the role of a universal message born from the experience of life under two totalitarian regimes in the 20th century. We focus on writings that uphold the belief in fundamental values: human dignity, the pursuit of truth, a readiness to sacrifice, and solidarity with the persecuted. This year, the special prize will go to an author reporting on events in Ukraine or Belarus. This is our way to empathize with Ukrainians and Belarusians fighting for freedom and defending human dignity. We appreciate the work of all those who provide us with reliable information about this struggle and help us understand its significance.

We pay homage to original academic achievements, and we hold in high esteem the art of reporting at its best. We are interested in books whose profound reflection reaches out to the broadest possible circle of readers.

The award is international. In all categories, we award books published in Polish or English.

CATEGORIES

Academic historical book – for the best monograph or synthesis on the Polish experience of the confrontation with two totalitarian regimes in the 20th century. Awarded for thorough documentation, original interpretation and appealing message.

Historical reportage – for a book that offers the reader an engaging story of the Polish experience of the confrontation with two totalitarian regimes in the 20th century. In addition to classic historical reportage, this category includes biographies, collections of accounts, memoirs or correspondence written by witnesses of history. Awarded for respect given to the source material, good composition and narrative credibility.

The special prize – in the present edition will be awarded for a book detailing Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine since 2014 or the protests in Belarus since 2020 and the repression associated with them. When evaluating books in this category, a broad scope of reflection, determination in the pursuit of truth, and investigative intuition will be particularly appreciated.

In the 3rd edition of the Award, 2023, we honored the following publications. The award in the category of Scientific Historical Book was won by the book *Dziecko wobec Zagłady. Instytucjonalna ochrona nad sierotami w getcie warszawskim* [The Child and the Holocaust: Institutional Protection of Orphans in the Warsaw Ghetto] by Agnieszka Witkowska-Krych, published by the Jewish Historical Institute. Honorable Mentions in this category were given to: *Survivors: Warsaw under Nazi Occupation (Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare)* by Jadwiga Biskupska, published by Cambridge University Press, and *Sowietyzacja Wołynia 1944–1956* [The Sovietization of Volhynia 1944–1956] by Adam Rafał Kaczyński, published by IPN.

The award in the category of Historical Reportage was given to Bartłomiej Noszczak, author of the book *Orient zesłańców. Bliski Wschód w oczach Polaków ewakuowanych ze Związku Sowieckiego (1942–1945)* [The Middle East in the Eyes of Poles Evacuated from the Soviet Union (1942–1945)], published by the Institute of National Remembrance. Honorable Mention in the Historical Reportage category was given to Tomasz Potkaj for the book *Akwarium. Opowieść o Związku Literatów Polskich w PRL-u* [Aquarium. The Story of the Polish Writers' Union in the Polish People's Republic], published by Wydawnictwo Czarne.

The award in the third category – Special Award – was presented to Zbigniew Parafianowicz for the publication *Śniadanie pachnie trupem. Ukraina na wojnie* [Breakfast Smells Like a Corpse. Ukraine at War], published by Mando. Honorable Mention in the third category – Special Award – was awarded to the books *Opór. Ukraińcy wobec rosyjskiej inwazji* [Resistance: Ukrainians Facing the Russian Invasion] by Paweł Pieniążek (W.A.B.), and *You Don't Know What War Is. The Diary of a Young Girl from Ukraine* by Yeva Skalietska (Union Square).

This year's gala for the 4th edition of the Witold Pilecki International Book Award will take place on Friday, October 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Reduta Bank Polskiego at 10 Bielańska Street in Warsaw.

Conference Scientific Committee

Prof. Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw, President, Network on Humanitarian Action
Prof. Maciej Janowski, Director of the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences
Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Deputy Head of the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw
Prof. Igor Kąkolewski, Director of the Center for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin
Dr. Wojciech Kozłowski, Acting Director of the Pilecki Institute
Prof. Krzysztof Koźbiał, Associate Dean for Human Resources of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, Jagiellonian University
Prof. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Project at the Davis Center, Harvard University
Prof. Igor Lukes, Professor of History and International Relations at Boston University
Dr. h.c. prof. hon. Jan Malicki, Director of the Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw
Prof. Grzegorz Motyka, Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences
Prof. Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Director of the Lithuanian Institute of History
Prof. Andrzej Szeptycki, University of Warsaw, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland
Dr. Krystian Wiciarz, Head of the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw
Prof. Justyna Zając, Director of the Polish Studies Center, Indiana University Bloomington

Keynote Speakers

Prof. Marek Cichocki, Historian of Political Thought, Programme Director, Natolin European Centre
Prof. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Project at the Davis Center, Harvard University
Prof. Igor Lukes, Professor of History and International Relations, Boston University, Honorary Consul General of the Czech Republic in Boston
Dr. Tetiana Portnova, Research Associate at the University of Potsdam
Prof. Andrzej Szeptycki, University of Warsaw, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland

Guest Discussants

Prof. Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala, University of Warsaw
Dr. Ian Garner, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute
Prof. Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw, President, Network on Humanitarian Action
Prof. Jan Holzer, Masaryk University, Brno
Prof. Igor Kąkolewski, Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin
Prof. Marek Kornat, Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences
Prof. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Project at the Davis Center, Harvard University
Prof. John Micgiel, East European Centre, University of Warsaw
Prof. Andrzej Nowak, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences
Dr. Tetiana Portnova, University of Potsdam
Prof. Darius Staliūnas, Lithuanian Institute of History & Vilnius University
Prof. Marek Jan Wasiński, University of Lodz
Prof. Anton Weiss-Wendt, The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies
Dr. Aldo Zammit Borda, City, University of London

Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers and Guest Discussants



Prof. Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala, University of Warsaw

Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala is Professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw; a participant in the scientific projects 'Russia's Wars' and 'Western Wars' funded by the National Science Centre (2020–2024, 2013–2017); a participant in the European Network on Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA); Deputy Director for Research and International Cooperation at the Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw (2008–2012); an analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs (2006–2008); scholarship recipient from the Jan Karski Educational Foundation and alumni of the Georgetown Leadership Seminar in 2016. Author of numerous publications on humanitarian issues, mass atrocities and Poland's Foreign Policy.



Prof. Marek Cichocki, Collegium Civitas, Warsaw

Marek Cichocki – philosopher, political scientist and historian of political thought. He is a permanent Professor at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw, Associate Professor at the European Civilization Chair of the College of Europe in Natolin, and a Visiting Professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas – Angelicum in Rome. He was the Editor-in-Chief of *Nowa Europa. Przegląd Natoliński* (New Europe. Natolin Review), and the co-founder of *Teologia Polityczna* (Political Theology Philosophical Annual). His research is in the areas of the history of ideas, political philosophy, history of international relations, Polish-German relations, and European integration.



Dr. Ian Garner, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Ian Garner received his PhD from the Slavic Department at the University of Toronto (Canada) in 2018. A specialist in history and politics, his research interests primarily lie in Russian and Soviet military culture and propaganda. Garner is the author of two books, *Z Generation: Into the Heart of Russia's Fascist Youth* and *Stalingrad Lives*. He has taught at the University of Toronto and Queen's University, Ontario and remains an honorary fellow at the Centre for International & Defence Policy in Kingston, Canada. He regularly comments and writes for major media outlets across the world.



Prof. Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw; President, Network on Humanitarian Action

Patrycja Grzebyk (Dr. Habil. Iur.) is an Associate Professor at the University of Warsaw. Specialist in public international law. Author of over 150 publications, including *Criminal Responsibility for the Crime of Aggression* (Routledge 2013), *Human and Non-Human Targets in Armed Conflicts* (Cambridge University Press 2022), *The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict and War Crimes. Challenges for Documentation and International Prosecution* (Routledge 2025). Editor in chief of two international journals: *ESIL Reflections* and *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*. Member of the Board of the European Society of International Law Board. President of the Network on Humanitarian Action. Member of the International Law Association Committee on the Use of Force. Visiting scholar at, among others, the University of Bologna, National Taiwan University, University of Cambridge and University of Geneva. She is a recipient of the Manfred Lachs Award for the best book on international law.



Prof. Jan Holzer, Masaryk University, Brno

Jan Holzer, Political Scientist and Historian, is a Professor at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic, and E.MA Director in the Global Campus of Human Rights, Venice. Author, co-author and co-editor of thirteen monographs, including *Czech Security Dilemma. Russia As a Friend or Enemy?* (Palgrave Macmillan 2019; with M. Mareš et al.) and *Militant Right-Wing Extremism in Putin's Russia: Legacies, Forms and Threats* (Routledge 2018; with M. Mareš and M. Laryš) and hundreds of articles or chapters (most recently *Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin: A Study of a Rank-and-File Actor in an Authoritarian Regime*, "Europe-Asia Studies" 76(7), 2024, with J. Syrovatka).



Prof. Maciej Janowski, Director of the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences

Prof. Janowski graduated from history studies at the University of Warsaw. In 1993, he defended his doctoral thesis at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, *Liberalizm w kraju zacołanym – demokraci galicyjscy przed I wojną światową* [Liberalism in a Backward Country – Galician Democrats Before World War I]. In 1999, he received his habilitation, presenting the work *Polska myśl liberalna do roku 1918* [Polish liberal thought until 1918]. In 2010, he became a professor. He has been professionally associated with the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences since 1993. He is the head of the Department of the History of Ideas and the History of Intelligentsia in the 19th and 20th centuries. He specializes in the history of Poland and Central Europe in the 19th century. In 2009, he received the *Polityka* Historical Award, the Raczyński Library Award, and the Jerzy Giedroyc Award as co-author of the book *A History of the Polish Intelligentsia* (with Jerzy Jedlicki and Magdalena Micińska) (Peter Lang, 2017).



Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Deputy Head of the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw

Bartłomiej Kapica earned his Ph.D. at the Department of History, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan in 2015. His main interests lie in the history of the communist movement in Poland, the communist party apparatus and postwar intellectual history. He has completed an internship at La Sapienza in Rome, Italy and at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences. At present he is working as an assistant professor at the Center for Totalitarian Studies of the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw. He is the author of *Władysław Bierkowski. Biografia polityczna* [Władysław Bierkowski. A Political Biography] (2022), presenting the life and ideas of the Polish communist and later dissident Władysław Bierkowski.



Prof. Igor Kąkolewski, Director of the Center for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin

Igor Kąkolewski is the director of the Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (CBH PAN) in Berlin and a professor at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (Poland). Historian, educator, exhibition organizer, and a member of the Joint German-Polish Textbook Commission. In his research Kąkolewski deals with the early modern history of Poland in the European context and German-Polish-Jewish relations. From 2012 to 2020 he was the Polish scientific coordinator on the Polish-German joint history textbook "Europe – Our History".



Prof. Marek Kornat, Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences

Marek Kornat is a professor of humanities and historian specializing in diplomacy and Polish political thought. He has been working in the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences since 2000 (currently as the director of the institute for 20th century history) as well as in the legal and administration department of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (since 2008). He focuses on the foreign policy of the Second Polish Republic, Sovietology as a historiographical genre, and the issue of Poland's international relations in the 19th century and during World War I. His publications include the monographs: *Polityka równowagi (1934–1939)*. *Polska między Wschodem a Zachodem* (2007); *Polen zwischen Hitler und Stalin. Studien zur polnischen Außenpolitik in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (2012); *Polityka zagraniczna Polski 1938–1939. Cztery decyzje Józefa Becka* (2012).



Dr. Wojciech Kozłowski, Acting Director of the Pilecki Institute

Wojciech Kozłowski is the acting director of the Pilecki Institute, a research institution based in Warsaw, and the chief editor of its scholarly journal "Totalitarian and 20th Century Studies". He holds a Ph.D. in medieval studies from Central European University and a M.A. in history from the University of Warsaw. He was a fellow at the New Europe College and a visiting scholar at the Department of History at Harvard.



Prof. Krzysztof Kozbiał, Associate Dean for Human Resources of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, Jagiellonian University

Professor Kozbiał completed his doctoral studies at the Jagiellonian University, and in 2006 received the degree of Doctor of Humanities in history on the basis of the dissertation *The Czech and German Minority in the Kłodzko Region in the Years 1945–60*. He has been a visiting professor at several universities, including the Technische Universität in Chemnitz (Germany), Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, the University of Presov (both Slovakia), and Peter Pazmany Catholic University in Piliscsaba (Hungary). His research interests include issues related to political systems, foreign and domestic policy of European micro-states and Central European countries (especially the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany) as well as the process of EU enlargement towards the Balkans. He has held scholarships from Erasmus (studies in Heidelberg), DAAD (stay at Ruhr-Universität in Bochum), SYLLF (research in Polish and Czech archives) and the Scholarship and Training Fund of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (research stays in Liechtenstein).



Prof. Mark Kramer, Director of the Cold War Studies Project at the Davis Center, Harvard University

Mark Kramer is Director of Cold War Studies at Harvard University, a Senior Fellow of Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and Director of the Sakharov Program on Human Rights. Originally trained in mathematics at Stanford University, he went on to study international relations as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University and an Academy Scholar at Harvard, where he subsequently joined the faculty. In addition to teaching international relations and comparative politics at Harvard, he has been a visiting professor at Yale University, Brown University, Aarhus University in Denmark, and American University in Bulgaria. He has written or edited many books and articles on a variety of topics.



Prof. Igor Lukes, Professor of History and International Relations at Boston University

Igor Lukes is Professor of International Relations and History at the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University. He is an Associate with the Davis Center for Russian Studies, Harvard University, and a Local Affiliate with the Center for European Studies, Harvard University. His books include *On the Edge of the Cold War: American Diplomats and Spies in Postwar Prague* (Oxford University Press 2012), *Rudolf Slansky: His Trials and Trial* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars 2008), and *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Benes in the 1930s* (Oxford University Press 1996). His scholarly articles have been published in such periodicals as *Journal of Contemporary History*, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, *Studies in Intelligence*, and *Slavic Review*. Dr. Lukes was the recipient of the Central Intelligence Agency 2012 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Literature on Intelligence, and was a Visiting Fellow at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna, a National Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington.



Dr. h.c. prof. hon. Jan Malicki, Director of the Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw

Dr. Jan Malicki graduated from the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw in 1983. In the years 1983–1986 he was a doctoral student at the Institute of History of the University of Warsaw. In parallel with his scientific activity he was active in the opposition. From 1978 he was a distributor of independent magazines, including "Głos", "Biuletyn Informacyjny KOR" and "Placówka". In 1981 he was a co-founder and then one of the editors of the independent magazine "Obóz": in the years 1981–1983 he was the editorial secretary, and in the years 1983–1985 he was the editor-in-chief. In the years 1983–1985 he was the organizer and director of the underground Institute of Eastern Europe and a collaborator of the organization "Niepodległość". In May 1985 he was arrested and in November he was sentenced to 1.5 years in prison suspended for 4 years and a fine. In 1989 he returned to his journalistic and scientific work. He rejoined the editorial board of "Obóz", and in 1990 he participated in the establishment of the Eastern Europe Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw. He is currently the director of East European Studies.



Prof. John Micgiel, East European Centre, University of Warsaw

John S. Micgiel is a historian specializing in the modern history of East Central Europe. Having received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, he spent nearly three decades teaching in the University's School of International and Public Affairs where he was, among other administrative assignments, long-time Director of the Institute on East Central Europe. For many years he has been recurring Visiting Professor at Warsaw University's East European Centre. Professor Micgiel has authored or edited more than a dozen books on the region and is a frequent visitor to its academic institutions. His most recent monograph is on US-Polish intelligence cooperation during World War Two and is entitled *Project Eagle: The Top Secret OSS Operation that sent Polish Spies Behind Enemy Lines* (Essex, CT: Stackpole Books, 2024).



Prof. Grzegorz Motyka, Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

Dr. hab. Grzegorz Motyka obtained his Ph.D. in history in 1998 at the Faculty of Humanities of the Catholic University of Lublin, and his Habilitation as Doctor of Humanities in the field of political science in 2007. He has held positions at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Department of the History of the Eastern Lands of the Second Polish Republic, the Department of Contemporary Political History, and lectures at the Jagiellonian University (Faculty of Political Science, Department of Ukrainian Studies). He conducts research on Polish-Ukrainian relations in 1939–1989, the Soviet security apparatus's combating of the resistance movement in Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine and Estonia in the years 1939–1953, the policy of the PRL security organs towards national minorities. He has published 4 monographs (one of them together with R. Wnuk), over 60 scientific articles and reviews in Poland and abroad. For his scientific work, he received the "Klio" Historical Book Publishers' Agreement Award for 2006, the Przegląd Wschodni Award, the "Polityka" Historical Award, and, presented by Archbishop Józef Życiński, he received the "Memoria Iustorum" award for "building bridges in the cultural dialogue between Poland and Ukraine".



Prof. Alvydas Nikžentaitis, Director of the Lithuanian Institute of History

Alvydas Nikžentaitis is a Lithuanian historian, senior research fellow of the Lithuanian Institute of History and president of Lithuanian National Historians Committee. In 1988 Alvydas Nikžentaitis defended his doctoral thesis on relations between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Teutonic Order in the first half of the 14th century. In 1992 together with Vadas Žulkus he founded Centre of History of Western Lithuania and Prussia (from 2003 – Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology) in Klaipėda. Nikžentaitis was also the first director of the aforementioned centre and from 1993 he was a head of Historical Department at Klaipėda University. In 1999 Nikžentaitis defended his habilitated doctoral thesis on Lithuanian Pre-Christian society in the 13th and 14th centuries. In 2000 he was named director of the Lithuanian Institute of History. To 2004 Nikžentaitis also worked at the Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology and to 2009 he was also professor of Lithuanian History at Vilnius Pedagogical University, Faculty of History. From 2009 Nikžentaitis coordinates research projects on various topics in identity and collective memory. Nikžentaitis is the author of several books and articles published in Lithuania, Germany and abroad.



Prof. Andrzej Nowak, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

Andrzej Nowak (born 1960 in Cracow) is a Polish historian and public intellectual. He is a professor at Jagiellonian University and at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, where he is the head of the Section for the History of Eastern Europe. Before that (1996) he was Visiting Professor at Rice University and lectured in many other academic centers (Harvard, Columbia, University College of London, Masaryk University). He was the co-founder and for many years (1991–2012) chief editor of the prestigious conservative cultural-political magazine *Arcana*. His numerous books on East European history have been translated and published in the UK, Germany, Ukraine, Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia. Among them is his monumental History of Poland series *Dzieje Polski*, published in English as *The History of Poland* by Biały Kruk and Polska Fundacja Humanistyczna. As of August 2024, he has finished six volumes of the planned twelve. He has received several awards and honors, including the Order of the White Eagle (*Order Orła Białego*), Poland's highest state distinction.



Dr. Tetiana Portnova, University of Potsdam

Tetiana Portnova is a historian specializing in intellectual history, urban history and museology. Since November 2023, Portnova has been working as a research associate at the University of Potsdam (DFG position). In 2012–2021 Portnova was an Associate Professor at the Chair of Historiography, Source and Archival Studies of the Dnipro National University. Since 2021 she has been working as a Senior Research Fellow at the Dmytro Yavornytsky Dnipro National History Museum.



Prof. Darius Staliūnas, Lithuanian Institute of History & Vilnius University

Darius Staliūnas is Chief Researcher at the Lithuanian Institute of History, and also teaches at Vilnius University. His academic interests include Russia's nationality policy in the so-called Northwestern Region (Lithuania and Belarus), ethnic conflicts, problems of historiography, and places of memory in Lithuania. He is the author of *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), *Enemies for a Day: Antisemitism and Anti-Jewish Violence in Lithuania under the Tsars* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2015), and, with Dangiras Mačiulis, *Lithuanian Nationalism and the Vilnius Question, 1883–1940* (Marburg: Herder-Institut, 2015).



Prof. Andrzej Szeptycki, University of Warsaw, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland

Political scientist, University Professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw, expert of Institute Strategies 2050 think tank. He lectured, among others, in France, Ukraine and China. Research interests: foreign policies of Poland, Ukraine and Russia, post-colonial studies, politics of memory, national and ethnic minorities and immigration. Currently head of the research project “Wars of Russia: causes, determinants, course and consequences of military combat operations of the Russian Federation in the post-Cold War period” financed by the Polish National Science Centre.



Prof. Marek Jan Wasiński, University of Lodz

Dr. Iur. Habil. Marek Jan Wasiński, an Associate Professor at the University of Lodz, specializes in various theoretical approaches to international law and the protection of human rights in Africa. He serves as a visiting professor at Tbilisi State University (Georgia), Kenyatta University (Kenya), La Universidad de Granada (Spain), and is an external examiner at the North-West University (RSA). His expertise encompasses the provision of legal counsel for civil society in Mozambique, as well as expertise on the law of Sub-Saharan states before Polish courts. Currently, he pursues interdisciplinary project on Eastern Europe as a Distinct Post-Imperial and Liminal Space within the International Legal Order.



Prof. Anton Weiss-Wendt, The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies

Anton Weiss-Wendt is Research Professor at the Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies in Oslo. He holds a Ph.D. in modern Jewish history from Brandeis University (2005). He is the author and/or editor of eleven books, including *Putin's Russia and the Falsification of History: Reasserting Control over the Past* (2020), *A Rhetorical Crime: Genocide in the Geopolitical Discourse of the Cold War* (2018), and *The Soviet Union and the Gutting of the UN Genocide Convention* (2017).



Dr. Krystian Wiciarz, Head of the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw

Krystian Wiciarz is head of the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw. Political scientist, philosopher, specialist in management, he defended his doctoral dissertation at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow at the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations, at the Faculty of International and Political Studies, where he was a researcher and lecturer till he moved to Warsaw. His interests include issues of social and political change and political systems as well as political theory and political thought. He carried out research projects as part of grants obtained from, among others, the National Science Centre and The Foundation for Polish Science. Deputy editor in chief of the "Totalitarian and 20th Century Studies" journal. He managed projects in the field of internal security (Ministry of the Interior and Administration) and in new technologies. He has been also involved in running NGOs as a CEO.



Prof. Justyna Zając, Director of the Polish Studies Center, Indiana University Bloomington

Justyna Zając is Professor of Practice in European Security Studies, Jean Monnet Chair in European Security (2024–27), and Director of the Polish Studies Center at Indiana University Bloomington. She is also Professor of International Relations at the University of Warsaw (currently on leave), and collaborates with the European Academy of Diplomacy in Poland. Her research focuses on international relations, with a special emphasis on Euro-Atlantic and European security, Poland's security, European political integration, and foreign policy analysis. Professor Zając has served as a member of the National Strategic Review Committee appointed by the President of Poland and was the Chairperson of the Council of Young Scientists for the Minister of Science and Higher Education. She also completed two terms as a member of the Steering Committee of the Standing Group on International Relations for the European Consortium for Political Research. She has authored numerous books, articles, and expert opinions.



Dr. Aldo Zammit Borda, City, University of London

Aldo Zammit Borda is a Reader in International Law at City, University of London. He has published extensively in leading journals such as the *European Journal of International Law*, *Human Rights Law Review*, and the *Journal of International Criminal Justice*. His research focuses on international criminal law (ICL), historical narratives, and justice gaps in ICL.

Conference Participants

Dr. Artur Adamczyk, University of Warsaw

Artur Adamczyk – Ph.D. in Political Science; graduated from the Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw (International Studies); Associate Professor at the Centre for Europe, University of Warsaw (CEUW), Editor-in-chief of the scientific quarterly *Studia Europejskie-Studies in European Affairs* published by CEUW. Specialist in International Relations in the field of European Studies. Main fields of research interest: Institutional system of the European Union, Decision making process in the EU, Foreign and Security Policy of the EU (Mediterranean dimension). Author, co-author and editor of over 90 publications, including the books: *Polish Experience in Combating Disinformation – Inspiration for the Western Balkans* (2023), *EU Facing Current Challenges, Opportunities, Crisis & Conflicts* (2019).

Dr. Nurlan Aliyev, University of Economics and Human Sciences, Warsaw

Nurlan Aliyev holds a Ph.D. in philosophy and security studies. His research area is primarily focused on Russia's foreign and security policy, the Arctic, post-Soviet countries, strategic studies, geopolitics and geoeconomics of Eurasia. Currently he is a lecturer in the University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw. He also conducts seminars for Erasmus program students at the University of Warsaw. Nurlan Aliyev is the author of *Reassessing Russia's Security Policy* (Routledge 2004).

Dr. Tania Arcimovich, Justus Liebig University, Giessen

Tania Arcimovich is a researcher whose primary focus is cultural studies, feminist theory, and art and women's history. She earned her Master's in Sociology (Cultural Studies) from the European Humanities University (Vilnius) and defended her dissertation at the International Centre for the Study of Culture (Justus Liebig University Giessen). Currently, she is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Erfurt. She is involved in the project "Protecting Academia at Risk: Towards a New Policy Agenda for Thriving Culture of Higher Education in Europe" funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation.

Dr. Tatsiana Astrouskaya, Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg

Tatsiana Astrouskaya is a postdoctoral researcher at the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe in Marburg and a lecturer on Digital History at the University of Giessen. She is the author of *Cultural Dissent in Soviet Belarus (1968–1988)* (Harrassowitz 2019, Viasna 2022, NLO 2024, forthcoming) and several articles, including "Belarusian Underground Culture" (in *Oxford Handbook of Soviet Underground Culture, 2023*). Currently she is working on her second book project on Jewish Emigration and the Challenges of Socialist Modernity in the Soviet Peripheries.

Dr. Oleksandr Avramchuk, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

Oleksandr Avramchuk is a historian and graduate of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and University of Warsaw. His areas of interest include Polish-Ukrainian relations, history of political thought in Central and Eastern Europe, history of émigré intellectuals from the region and US public diplomacy towards the socialist bloc during the Cold War. He is the author of the book *Rzeczpospolita uczonych. Powstanie studiów ukraińskich i polsko-ukraiński dialog historyków w Stanach Zjednoczonych, 1939–1991*, which will be published in autumn 2024 by the Eastern European Studies at the University of Warsaw. Since 2022 he has been a post-doctoral researcher in the Department of History and Historiography of Central and Eastern Europe, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. Author of the history podcast *Bez wypowiedzenia wojny*.

Joanna Bagadzińska, University of Warsaw

Joanna Bagadzińska is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Warsaw in the discipline of political science and administration. She is an associate at the Centre of Migration Research at the University of Warsaw. Her research interests include language policies and policies toward national and ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan.

Dr. Damian Bębnowski, University of Łódź

Damian Bębnowski – historian and economist. Assistant professor at the Department of History of Economics, University of Lodz. Vice President of the Janusz Kurtyka Foundation, Warsaw. His book *The Importance of Constitutional Rules and Property Rights: The German Economy in 1990–2015* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2022) was distinguished by the Polish Association of Economic History in the Competition for the Franciszek Bujak Award (2024). He has conducted research in the USA (Columbia, Harvard) and Germany (JLU Giessen, Humboldt, Regensburg, RUB Bochum). He is a Kosciuszko Foundation scholarship recipient (Harriman Institute, Columbia, 2024–25). Lecturer at the Zhengzhou University, China (2021–22).

Prof. Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala, University of Warsaw

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Natasha Bluth, University of California, Los Angeles

Natasha Bluth is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research explores gender, family, violence, and international migration with a regional focus on Eastern Europe. In her ongoing dissertation research, she is examining how wartime migration following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine reconfigures relations and practices in Ukrainian households.

Dr. Aleksandra Borowicz, University of Gdańsk, PECSA

Aleksandra Borowicz is an assistant professor at the Department of International Economics and Economic Development at the Faculty of Economics at the University of Gdansk. Dr. Borowicz specializes in international economics, with a focus on foreign direct investment and the economics of European integration. She is coordinator of many European projects and conducts trainings on project management. She has experience in applying for and implementing projects co-financed by the European Union. Member of the Team Europe network at the European Commission in Poland. She is a president of the board of PECSA (Polish European Community Studies Association).

Dr. Mykola Bryvko, National Historical and Memorial Reserve “Bykivnian Graves”, Kyiv

Mykola Bryvko is a researcher at the National Historical and Memorial Reserve “Bykivnian Graves” (Kyiv). He is a member of the National Union of Local Historians of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Heraldic Society and the Ukrainian Oral History Association. In the field of scientific research, his fields of study include political repressions, the history of the city of Snizhne (Donetsk region), genealogy, heraldry, the Holodomor, World War II, and the accidents at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in 1986. Dr. Bryvko is the author and co-author of about 200 historical and scientific publications, and has participated in about 80 scientific and practice-based conferences and round tables.

Karolina Jessica Brzykcy, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

Karolina Jessica Brzykcy is employed in the archives department of the Pilecki Institute. She holds a Bachelor's degree from King's College London (English and French), and attended Sciences Po in Paris (a year-long course in History and Law) prior to being awarded a Masters in Applied Linguistics at the University of Warsaw. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate. Her research interests pertain to revolutions, left-wing movements in Russia and Europe, communism, and totalitarian regimes.

Emmanuelle Chaze, Independent Journalist

Emmanuelle Chaze is a French journalist who has been reporting on Russia's full scale war against Ukraine since February 2022, first for France's international broadcaster France24, then for Germany's international broadcaster Deutsche Welle. In September, she reported from the recently liberated Kharkiv region, where she documented the aftermath of Russian occupation. A month later, she received her postgraduate degree in International Humanitarian Law from the University of Côte d'Azur and the San Remo Institute for International Humanitarian Law.

Prof. Marek Cichocki, Collegium Civitas, Warsaw

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. John Cornell, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

John Cornell received his Bachelors in Music from the University of California, Berkeley, and continued his studies in Modern European History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He received his PhD there in 1997, specializing in modern French musical culture. He moved to Warsaw in 2008, and has been working with the Pilecki Institute since 2016. As an adjunct with the Institute's Center for the Study of Totalitarianisms, his research projects have included relations between the Polish Government-in-Exile and the British Government during the Second World War, and the work of the Polish Government with the United Nations War Crimes Commission. Currently he is studying youth subcultures and popular music during the Polish People's Republic.

Dr. Kinga Czechowska, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Kinga Czechowska holds a PhD degree in history, and is an assistant professor at the Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute in Warsaw. Her research interests include the history of Polish diplomacy, history of Polish-Jewish relations in the 20th century, Holocaust history, and the editing of historical documents. She is the author of the books *Polska dyplomacja wobec „kwestii żydowskiej” w latach 1932–1939* [Polish diplomacy and the 'Jewish question' in the years 1932–1939] and (with K. Kania) *Zainspirować Naród. Przemowy Edwarda Raczyńskiego na obczyźnie 1939–1939* [To Inspire the Nation. Edward Raczyński's Speeches In Exile 1939–1989].

Mukhammadsodik Donaev, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou

Mukhammadsodik Donaev is a senior Ph.D. candidate at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. His doctoral research focuses on the influence of Russian media on the emerging media institutions in Central Asia. He holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the same university. Donaev is passionate about pursuing a career in academia, with a particular focus on the media landscape of Central Asian countries. He aims to contribute insights to the academic community by exploring the connections between media, culture, and politics in the region.

Dr. Oksana Ermolaeva, Complutense University, Madrid

Oksana Ermolaeva earned a Master's and then a Ph.D. degree in the History of Central and Eastern Europe from Central European University (Budapest, Hungary), with a dissertation topic related to a case-study in the social history of the Soviet Gulag in the North-Western Russian borderland. In recent years Dr. Ermolaeva was enrolled as a research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies, New College Europe, Bucharest, Romania, and as a Global Digital Fellow, Council for European Studies (Columbia University); she was a nominee of an "Ab Imperio" Journal Grant "Retaining Critical Historical Scholarship and Supporting Displaced Russian Historians in the Context of the Crisis of Russian War Against Ukraine." (RCHS) (July 1, 2023 – March 8, 2024). From 15 October 2023 she has been a Visiting Researcher at Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, under the aegis of the Scholars at Risk Program, 2023–2025, Gerda Henkel Stiftung, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Prof. Mirosław Filipowicz, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

Prof. Mirosław Filipowicz is a historian specializing in the historiography of Russia and East-Central Europe. He has authored several books, including *Wobec Rosji* (Lublin, 1997) and *Emigranci i Jankesi. O amerykańskich historykach Rosji* (Lublin, 2007). His scholarly work explores the complex relationships between Poland and Russia, and he has played a role in fostering understanding through his editorship of a comprehensive companion on Polish-Russian relations, published in both Polish and Russian (www.polska-rosja.eu). Throughout his career, Prof. Filipowicz has held leadership roles. He served as the Director of the Institute of Eastern and Central Europe (2013–2018) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and led the Institute of History at the Catholic University of Lublin (2008–2010). Additionally, from 2016 to 2019, he was the Polish Co-chairman of the Polish-Russian Group for Difficult Issues, where he oversaw critical discussions and collaborative efforts between the two nations. He continues to contribute to academic discourse on Polish-Russian relations and the historical narratives of Eastern and Central Europe.

Dr. Ian Garner, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Prof. Joanna Getka, University of Warsaw

Prof. dr hab. Joanna Getka – head of the Department of Intercultural Studies of Central and Eastern Europe at the University of Warsaw (KSIEŚW UW), philologist in Belarusian and Russian studies, specialist in East Slavic cultures. Author of monographs and articles on the literary culture of the Belarusian and Ukrainian cultural areas and the formation of the modern cultural identity of Belarusians and Ukrainians.

Dr. Olga Gontarska, Independent Researcher, Warsaw

Olga Gontarska is a researcher with a diverse academic background. She holds a PhD in history from the Polish Academy of Sciences and has completed postgraduate studies in journalism and mass culture at the University of Warsaw. She is an experienced journalist, NGO project coordinator and media manager. She has conducted research for various international academic projects at prestigious institutions, including the Hannah-Arendt-Institut, Columbia University, University of Melbourne, and the German Historical Institute Warsaw. Her publications mainly focus on the memory politics and cultural infrastructure of independent Ukraine within the context of ongoing changes in Central and Eastern Europe.

Dr. Justyna Góral, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Justyna Góral – Assistant Professor at the Department of Public Administration, Warsaw School of Economics. Her research interests include markets of production factors, economic efficiency of enterprises, analysis of the results of EU policies, circular economy, sustainable development and energy security. She is supervisor of the Student Scientific Club of Circular Economy. She coordinated the project titled “Market structures and prices in the food chain in the light of the level of margins, the degree of its transparency and competitiveness and regulations” in 2018–2019. Examples of her publications are: *Measurement of marketing margins and added value on food and food markets* (monograph, IAFE-NRI); *Impact of Common Agricultural Policy on Technical Efficiency of Farms* (monograph, LAMBERT Academic Publishing).

Dr. Dawid Gralik, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Dawid Gralik – Ph.D. in history, research assistant at the Faculty of History of the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań. His research interests include military history of the 18th–20th centuries, particularly the Napoleonic Wars period, as well as historical content in modern culture and historical policy of Poland. He was awarded a scholarship by the Fondation Napoléon in 2021.

Prof. Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw, President, Network on Humanitarian Action

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Iuliia Hoban, College of Arts & Sciences, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University-Worldwide

Iuliia Hoban is Assistant Professor and Program Chair of the M.S. in Human Security and Resilience at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Worldwide. Dr. Hoban's research focuses on children and childhood(s) in peace and security, how strategic narratives shape policy responses and the implications of the Russia-Ukraine war on vulnerable populations. Before her role at Embry-Riddle, she held academic positions at Radford University and the College of New Jersey. Iuliia also applied her research skills in NGOs such as Watchlist for Children and Armed Conflict (New York, NY) and the Institute of World Policy (Kyiv, Ukraine).

Dr. Ondrej Holub, Institute of Contemporary History, Prague

Ondrej Holub is currently affiliated with the Institute of Contemporary History, in Prague, where he is working as a junior research fellow at the Department for the History of ideas. His field of research interest covers mainly the political and intellectual history of the political Left in the area of Central Europe and the transnational history of socialism.

Prof. Jan Holzer, Masaryk University, Brno

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Lizaveta Kasmach, Independent Researcher

Lizaveta Kasmach holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Alberta in Canada and is the author of *Belarusian Nation-Building in Times of War and Revolution*. Her areas of specialization include modern Belarusian history, the First World War and nationalism.

Prof. Igor Kałolewski, Director of the Center for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Aleksandra Konopka, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Aleksandra Konopka is a second-year student at the Doctoral School of Social Sciences at the University of Warsaw in security studies. Her interests include issues on humanitarian law, with a particular focus on children's rights. OSCE for Peace and Security Scholarship winner for 2024. She works at the Center for Totalitarian Studies of the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw.

Prof. Marek Kornat, Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Mariia Kovalchuk, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Mariia Kovalchuk is a doctoral student at the Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies at the Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich and recipient of several scholarships, Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes among them. She writes about exiled intellectuals from Soviet Ukraine in postwar Europe, her academic interests lie in the fields of intellectual history, memory studies, educational media and transnational Polish-Ukrainian entanglements. In 2022 she was a research assistant and lecturer at the LMU Munich, previously working on the German-Ukrainian textbook research financed by the German Federal Foreign Office. She earned her BA and MA from the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and the Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, studying Ukrainian philology, literature and East European history.

Prof. Mark Kramer, Davis Center, Harvard University

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Bartłomiej Krzysztań, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Bartłomiej Krzysztań – political and cultural scientist, assistant professor at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, independent analyst. Graduate of political science at Université Libre de Bruxelles and political science and cultural studies at the University of Wrocław. His research interests include political anthropology, cultural and political memory, genocide studies, postcolonialism, and history of political thought. Head of the Richard Pipes Laboratory of the Institute of Political Studies. Author of, among others, the monograph *Pamięć, polityczność, władza. Reprezentacje pamięci zbiorowej w Gruzji, Armenii, Górskim Karabachu i Abchazji* (English edition by Palgrave Macmillan) upcoming in November 2024. Ministry of Higher Education scholarship recipient (2022–2024), visiting fellow at Armenian Genocide Museum Institute in Yerevan (2021), Erasmus Mundus grantee at Ilia State University in Tbilisi (2014–16).

Dr. Oktawian Kuc, University of Warsaw

Formerly a Legal/Policy Officer at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Dr. Kuc holds a position of Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Warsaw after having graduated from Harvard Law School (LL.M.) and the University of Warsaw (PhD in Public International Law, Master of Laws, Master in International Affairs). Admitted to the bar in Poland and New York State, he has practiced law in international and boutique law firms as an In-House Counsel, as well as in the government. His latest works consist of a monograph published in the UK by Routledge titled *The International Court of Justice and Municipal Courts: An Inter-Judicial Dialogue* and a book on the Supreme National Tribunal and the Polish perspective on prosecuting war criminals after WWII.

Dr. Bakhytzhon Kurmanov, University of Central Asia, Bishkek

Dr. Bakhytzhon Kurmanov is a research fellow at the Institute of Public Policy and Administration at the Graduate School of Development at the University of Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan). Dr. Kurmanov previously worked as an Assistant Professor at the Maqсут Narikbayev University (Astana, Kazakhstan) and various Kazakhstani think tanks. His research interests encompass open government, digital activism, authoritarian politics, social and economic policy, as well as memory politics and nation-building, with a primary focus on Central Asia. Dr. Kurmanov's work has been published in several leading journals, including *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, *The Information Society*, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, *Central Asian Survey*, *International Journal of Educational Research*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, and *Asian Development Review*.

Dr. Tomasz Lachowski, University of Łódź

Dr. Tomasz Lachowski is a doctor of law and legal researcher in the Chair of International Law and International Relations at the Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Łódź, Poland. His recent scientific research touches, firstly, the international legal consequences of the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine; and secondly, the process of dealing with historical Soviet crimes in the different states of Central and Eastern Europe, in both abovementioned aspects with a special reference to the crime of genocide.

Prof. Ewa Latoszek, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Prof. dr hab. Ewa Latoszek – Full Professor (economist), Warsaw School of Economics, Head of Jean Monnet Chair and Director of Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (CEWSE), focusing on international economics, sustainable development, European Integration, coordinator of many national & international grants including EU grants. Visiting Professor in many Universities including EUI (Florence), LSE, Canterbury University (New Zealand). An expert for Horizon 2020, and for the process of Polish accession to EU. The Director of joint Post-diploma studies of WSE with Ernst & Young Co. Main functions: President of PECSA- Polish European Community Studies Association, Member of a Steering Committee of the Research Alliance for Development, the World Bank, Member of Polish Academy of Sciences, Deputy Dean at WSE, Coordinator of European Studies, Member of ECSA Board, member of editorial boards of a number of internationally valued academic journals. She is the Author of more than 200 publications including articles & monographs related to European Integration & International Organizations, the latest one being published by Brill in 2023.

Prof. Simon Lewis, University of Bremen

Simon Lewis is Associate Professor of Eastern and Central European Cultural History at the University of Bremen, Germany. He has published articles on diverse aspects of the cultural history of East-Central Europe, and is a co-author of *Remembering Katyn* (Polity Press, 2012). His monograph *Belarus – Alternative Visions: Nation, Memory and Cosmopolitanism* is published by Routledge (2019). He is co-editor of *Regions of Memory: Transnational Formations* (with Jeffrey K. Olick, Joanna Wawrzyniak and Małgorzata Pakier; Palgrave Macmillan, 2022) and *Multicultural Commonwealth: Poland-Lithuania and its Afterlives* (with Stanley Bill; University of Pittsburgh Press, 2023).

Dr. Ganna Liulikova, Humboldt University

Ganna Liulikova is a researcher specializing in cultural and social studies, focusing on speech behavior and its relationship to sociocultural transformations. Using a linguocultural approach, her work explores how language reflects changes in societal mindsets. After earning her PhD in Literature from Kharkiv University (Ukraine), Ganna began her academic career at Crimean University. She was awarded research fellowships at Tel Aviv University and the University of Mannheim, where she later became an Assistant Professor in the Philosophy Department. Currently, she is a researcher at the Centre for Advanced Study, *Inherit. Heritage in Transformation*, at Humboldt University of Berlin, where she focuses on the heritage of Eastern Slavs and explores the broader concept of Soviet and Russian culture.

Prof. Igor Lukes, Boston University

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Prof. Sławomir Łukasiewicz, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

Sławomir Łukasiewicz, Dr hab., professor at the Catholic University of Lublin. Historian, political scientist and Europeanist. Fernand Braudel Fellow 2024, European University Institute, Florence; visiting scholar at the Davis Center for Russian, and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University from 2019–2023. Recipient of the 2019/2020 Fulbright Senior Award, as well as a grantee of the Kosciuszko Foundation, the Foundation for Polish Science and the National Science Center. With research interests encompassing the history of Polish and Central European Cold War exile and related intelligence operations, intellectual history, European integration concepts, the history of Polish historiography, and Sovietology, he is widely published, including his chapter "Poland" in: *East Central European Migrations during the Cold War. A Handbook*, edited by Anna Mazurkiewicz (Münich: The Gruyter Oldenbourg 2019); *Christian Democracy across the Iron Curtain: Europe Redefined*, co-edited with Piotr Kosicki (Palgrave, 2018), *Third Europe: Polish Federalist Thought in the United States, 1940–1971* (Helena History Press, 2016), *Partia w warunkach emigracji. Dylematy Polskiego Ruchu Wolnościowego "Niepodległość i Demokracja"* (ISP PAN, IPN: 2014).

Dr. Wojciech Łysek, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Dr Wojciech Łysek – political scientist, Department of Recent Political History (Institute of Political Studies PAS), author of, among others, two monographs *Zadanie Polski jest na Wschodzie (Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN 2020)* and *Intelektualny włóczęga. Biografia Stanisława Swianiewicza (Instytut Pileckiego 2023)*. He was awarded the Juliusz Bardach Award and Przegląd Wschodni (Eastern Review) Award, XXXI edition. His research area is European states created after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Polish Eastern policy, theory of realism. Participant in scientific projects: "La Grande più 100 anni" (European for Citizens Programme), "Richard Pipes Laboratory" (Dialogue Program, the Ministry of Science), "Polish 20th Century. New Perspectives" (Pilecki Institute Program).

Dr. Francesco Magno, University of Trento

Francesco Magno obtained his Ph.D. at the university of Trento in 2021. His dissertation focused on the influence of imperial legal systems on Romania's judicial system after 1918. He is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Trento. His new project explores the troubled transboundary management of the lower Danube during the Cold War and its effects on the current configuration of the river.

Dr. Damian Markowski, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Damian Markowski (born 1986) - graduate of the Institute of History at the University of Warsaw, received his doctorate in 2016 and his habilitation in 2024. He is one of the few young Polish historians who discuss the events of Eastern Europe. Author of several books and many scientific publications. Since 2024, he has been an employee of the Pilecki Institute's Center for Totalitarian Studies. He researches the political, economic and social aspects of the sovietization of Eastern Europe in the 20th Century. He is also an employee of the Institute of War Losses in Warsaw.

Oleksandra Matviichuk, Center for Civil Liberties, Kyiv

Oleksandra Matviichuk is a human rights lawyer focusing on issues in Ukraine and the OSCE region. She leads the human rights NGO Center for Civil Liberties and coordinates the activities of the initiative group Euromaidan SOS. Oleksandra has authored numerous reports submitted to various UN bodies, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the OSCE, and the International Criminal Court. She was awarded with multiple international prizes, including the Nobel Peace Prize (2022, awarded to the Center for Civil Liberties); Global Civic Leadership Award (2024); Pahl Peace Prize (2024).

Prof. John Micgiel, East European Centre, University of Warsaw

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Prof. Simo Mikkonen, University of Eastern Finland

Simo Mikkonen is Professor of Sociocultural Remembering at the University of Eastern Finland. He specializes in 20th Century Russian and Eastern European cultural history, research on Cold War era culture and memory politics. He has published extensively on transnational East-West connections, including the edited volumes *Beyond the Curtain: Entangled Histories of the Cold War-Era Europe* (Berghahn 2015), *Music, Art, and Diplomacy: East-West Cultural Interactions and the Cold War* (Routledge 2016), as well as *Entangled East and West. Cultural Diplomacy and Artistic Interaction during the Cold War* (De Gruyter 2018).

Dr. Dagmara Moskwa, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Dagmara Moskwa, Ph.D. in Human Sciences, is an assistant professor at the Institute of Political Studies with the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw) and a lecturer at the Collegium da Vinci (Poznan). A graduate of the Faculty of History and the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism at Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznan), she is author of the book *MATKA OJCZYŻNA WZYWA! Wielka wojna ojczyźniana w edukacji i polityce historycznej putinowskiej Rosji*. Research interests: memory studies, Polish memory studies traditions, and contemporary Russian politics of history.

Prof. Andrzej Nowak, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Jacek Nożewski, Koźmiński University, Warsaw

Jacek Nożewski – Doctor of social sciences, media scholar and political scientist. Graduate of the University of Wrocław. His scientific activities include socio-political communication, analysis of media, public agenda structures and media organizations. In his research he strives to apply an interdisciplinary approach. His research is based on quantitative and qualitative methods, including network analysis. He has actively participated in research projects in the fields of new media, communication and journalism. He is a member of the Polish Society of Social Communication and the International Communication Association. Since 2021 he is a researcher and teacher at the Koźmiński University in Warsaw.

Dr. Iryna Odrekhivska, University College London, SSEES

Dr. Iryna Odrekhivska is Lecturer of Ukrainian and East European Culture in University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies (UK). She is also Associate Professor of Translation Studies at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine), where she has held the position of the Director of the Center for Academic and Cross-cultural Communication. Prior to that, she was affiliated as Visiting Senior Researcher in the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences (2022), Wayne Vucinich Fellow at CREEES, Stanford University (2019), and Coimbra Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Translation Studies, University of Graz (2018). Her research interests fall into the broad area of Ukrainian, Slavic, Translation and Culture studies. She has published widely in international academic press on the problems of Ukrainian literary history and cultural identity, ideology and politics of Ukrainian translation, translatorial agency and editorial studies of literary translation in East-Central Europe, transnational image building of contemporary Ukrainian literature through Anglophone translations, and the role of translation in Habsburg Galizien.

Ardak Orakbayeva, University of Warsaw

Ardak Orakbayeva is a second-year master student at the University of Warsaw (Centre for East European Studies), in the program of Eastern Studies. Her main specialty is Russia, with a second specialty in Eastern Europe. Participant of the Scholarship Program of the Government of Poland for Young Scientists in 2019. Her research interests include the history of the USSR, dissident movements, hybrid wars, propaganda, the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, human rights and memory studies.

Yulia Ostropalchenko, Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick & Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University

Yulia Ostropalchenko is a senior lecturer at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, and a Research fellow at the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media | Georg Eckert Institute. Her research concerns media education, political and history textbook analysis.

Dr. Ewa Osuch-Rak, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Dr. Ewa Osuch-Rak is an assistant Professor at the Jean Monnet Chair of the European Union, Warsaw School of Economics (SGH). She holds a Ph.D. in economics and finance, with 15 years of experience in R&D project management across public and private sectors. Her research focuses on sustainable development, innovation policy, and EU development policy. She coordinated the Jean Monnet Module EU4AFRI (2019–2022) and participated in international projects such as the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence. She is also a laureate of the prestigious Top 500 Innovators program and a former Visiting Scholar at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business.

Dr. Marta Pachocka, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Marta Pachocka – Economist and political scientist. Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Studies of SGH Warsaw School of Economics. Co-coordinator of the Laboratory of Urban and Regional Migration Policies at the Centre of Migration Research (CMR) of the University of Warsaw (UW) (2022–present), and former Head of the Migration Policies Research Unit at CMR (2018–2022). She supports the European Commission Representation in Poland as an EU expert member of the Team Europe Direct Poland network. She is the Vice-president of the Polish European Community Studies Association (PECSA) and on the Board of the Research Committee RC46 “Migration and Citizenship” of the International Political Science Association (IPSA).

Dr. Aliaksandr Paharely, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

Aliaksandr Paharely, educated at the Belarusian State University (Minsk, 2006, MA in history), received his PhD in history from the University of Białystok in 2021. He has been a visiting scholar at the Center for Belarusian Studies, Southwestern College, Winfield, KS. He has twice won the International Congress of Belarusian Studies best article prize, in 2017 and 2022 respectively. His research interests include the history of Belarusian national movement and Belarusian periodical press in the Second Polish Republic, interwar Belarusian Christian Democracy, Belarusian debates on modernisation and nation-building, sociocultural dimensions of social change and nation-building processes in East-Central Europe in 1850–1940.

Hanna Perekhoda, Institute of Political Studies, University of Lausanne

Hanna Perekhoda is a historian from Donetsk, Ukraine, and a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of Political Studies at the University of Lausanne. Her doctoral research focuses on the 1917 revolution in Ukraine, examining how local Bolsheviks navigated the tension between their substantialist modern social imaginary and the complexities of a revolution unfolding in an imperial context. Hanna's articles on Russian-Ukrainian relations have appeared in various outlets, including *OpenDemocracy*, *New Politics*, *Jacobin*, *Contretemps*, *Le Courrier d'Europe Centrale*, *Politis*, *European Alternatives Journal*, and *Widerspruch*.

Prof. Kaarel Piirimäe, University of Tartu

Kaarel Piirimäe is an Associate Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Tartu. In 2009, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge with a thesis on the Big Three Allies and the Baltic question during the Second World War, published as *Roosevelt, Churchill and the Baltic Question: Allied Relations during the Second World War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Piirimäe has edited several volumes and journal special issues on the history of the Baltic states in the twentieth century. His recent articles include "Gorbachev's new thinking and how its interaction with perestroika in the republics catalysed the Soviet collapse," *Scandinavian Journal of History* (2022) and "Geopolitics of Sympathy: George F. Kennan and NATO Enlargement," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* (2024). He is currently writing a monograph on the history of the Estonian national movement and the Soviet collapse from the 1970s to the 1990s.

Dr. Julien Plouchart, CY Clergy Paris University

Julien Plouchart is a high school history and geography teacher and a research fellow in modern history at CY Clergy Paris University. He specializes in the study of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and has written a thesis on the Challenges of the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict (2003–2023) in which he explained how a regional conflict became a globalized confrontation.

Dr. Tetiana Portnova, University of Potsdam

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Michał Przeperski, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences & Museum of Polish History

Michał Przeperski is Assistant Professor at the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences and spokesperson of the Museum of Polish History in Warsaw. He specializes in the history of Central Europe in the 20th century. Dr. Przeperski is the author of the following books: *Nieznosny ciężar braterstwa. Konflikty polsko-czeskie w XX wieku* [The Unbearable Burden of Fraternity: Polish-Czech Conflicts in the 20th Century] (2016), *Mieczysław F. Rakowski. Biografia polityczna* [Mieczysław F. Rakowski: A Political Biography] (2021) and *Dziki Wschód. Transformacja po polsku 1986–1993* [Wild East. Transformation in Poland 1986-1993] (2024).

Prof. William Pyle, Middlebury College

William Pyle is the Frederick C. Dirks Professor of International Economics at Middlebury College. He holds a B.A. in History from Harvard College, an M.A. in Russian and East European Studies from Indiana University, and a Ph.D. in Economics from Duke University. This fall, he is a Visiting Researcher at the Bank of Finland's Institute for Emerging Economies (BOFIT). His research has transitioned of late from a focus on the behavior of Russian firms to an exploration of the shorter- and longer-term social consequences of Russia's early-1990s economic shock, particularly for public opinion.

Dr. Waldemar Rapior, University of Warsaw

Waldemar Rapior is a research assistant at the Centre for Figurative Research, Department of Sociology, University of Warsaw. His current research focuses on the interconnections between activism and Polish-Ukrainian relations, as part of Marta Bucholc's project entitled "The national habitus formation and the process of civilisation in Poland after 1989: a figurational approach".

Dr. Jerzy Rohoziński, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Jerzy Rohoziński (born in 1971), Doctor of Humanities, is a historian, anthropologist of culture and lecturer at the Center for Totalitarian Studies (the Pilecki Institute). His interests focus on the social and religious history of Tsarist Russia and the USSR. He has authored the following books: *Święci, biczownicy i czerwoni chanowie. Przemiany religijności muzułmańskiej w radzieckim i poradzieckim Azerbejdżanie* [Saints, Flagellants and Red Khans. Developments in the Sphere of Muslim Religiosity in Soviet and Post-Soviet Azerbaijan] (2005); *Bawelna, samowary i Sartowie. Muzułmańskie okrainy carskiej Rosji 1795–1916* [Cotton, Samovars and Sarts. The Muslim Peripheries of Tsarist Russia 1795–1916] (2014); *Gruzja* [Georgia] (series: "Beginnings of States", 2016); *Narodziny globalnego dżihadu* [The Birth of Global Jihad] (2017) and *Najpiękniejszy klejnot w carskiej koronie. Gruzja pod panowaniem rosyjskim 1801–1917* [The Most Beautiful Jewel in the Tsar's Crown. Georgia under Russian Rule 1801–1917] (2018). The newest book by him is *Pionierzy w stepie? Kazachstańscy Polacy jako element sowieckiego projektu modernizacyjnego* [Pioneers in the Steppe? Kazakhstan Poles as an Element of the Soviet "Modernization" Project] (*Instytut Pileckiego 2021*).

Dr. Maxim Rust, Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw

Maxim Rust – Ph.D. in Political Sciences, Assistant Professor and researcher at the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw (SEW UW), contributing editor and political analyst of the magazine *New Eastern Europe*. Expert and secretary of the international analytical group "BELARUS-UKRAINE-REGION".

Dr. Anton Saifullayeu, Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw

Anton Saifullayeu – Assistant Professor at the Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw. His areas of academic interest include postcolonial studies, the theory of historiography, post-Soviet nationalism, the cultural anthropology of post-Soviet Eastern Europe, as well as the history of ideas in Belarus. He is the editor-in-chief of the portal *Belarus2020-Ukraine2022-Studium*.

Dr. Steffen Sammler, Technical University Carolo Wilhelmina and Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick

Steffen Sammler studied History and French at the universities of Leipzig, Rouen, and the European University Institute in Florence. He holds a Ph.D. in Modern History from Leipzig University and a habilitation in Modern and Contemporary History and History Education from the Technical University Carolo Wilhelmina at Brunswick. After teaching positions at the Universities of Leipzig, Lyon II and Emlyon Business School he joined the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media | Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) in 2010, where he is a Senior Researcher and head of the European Forum for Reconciliation and Cooperation in History and Social Sciences Education. He is adjunct professor of Modern and Contemporary History and History Education at the Department of History at the Technical University Carolo Wilhelmina at Brunswick.

Dr. Paweł Sasanka, Institute of National Remembrance, Warsaw

Paweł Sasanka – PhD in humanities. His research interests focus on the political and social history of crises in the Polish People's Republic. He is the author of the book *Czerwiec 1976. Geneza, przebieg, konsekwencje* (2006), and co-editor of the volume *Nie tylko 'Po Prostu'. The Press in the Thaw Period (1955-1958) Nie tylko "Po prostu". Prasa w dobie odwilży 1955–1958 [Not just "Po Prostu". Press in Poland During the Thaw 1955–1958]* (2019). He is working on a comprehensive account of the 1956 crisis in Poland.

Tetyana Sheptytska, National Historical and Memorial Reserve "Bykivnia Graves", Kyiv

Tetyana Sheptytska is a Ph.D. candidate in Philological Sciences. She is a literary editor, poet, public figure, and Deputy General Director for Scientific Work at the National Historical and Memorial Reserve "Bykivnian Graves". She worked at the Center of Ukrainian Studies of Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University (2001–2015). Host of "Radio Promin" in 2015–2017 and from October 2021 Radio "Voice of Donbass". Author of 6 monographs (5 of them co-authored), manuals, educational programs (co-authored) and about 120 scientific and popular science articles, author of poetry collections. Laureate of the Les Tanyuk Prize "For Preservation of Historical Memory" (2024), winner of the Literary Internet Competition "Osmachka-126" (2021).

Prof. Grzegorz Skrukwa, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Grzegorz Skrukwa – Ph.D., associate professor of history at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Faculty of History, Department of Eastern European History. His research interests include the history of modern Ukrainian nation-building and Ukraine's independence struggles 1914-1921, revolutions and civil war in the former Russian Empire 1917-1920, the history of the Black Sea Region (South of Ukraine), national identities in Eastern Europe, history of communist and post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe. Author of books: *Formacje wojskowe ukraińskiej "Rewolucji Narodowej" 1914–1921 [The Military Formations of Ukrainian National Revolution 1914–1921]* (2009, Toruń); *O Czarnomorską Ukrainę: procesy narodotwórcze w regionie nadczarnomorskim do 1921 roku w ukraińskiej perspektywie historycznej [For the Black Sea Ukraine. The Nation-Building Processes in the Black Sea Region (till 1921) in the Ukrainian National Perspective]* (2016, Poznań).

Kamila Smagulova, Leiden University

Kamila Smagulova is a Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate School of Humanities of Leiden University, specializing in history, and an associate researcher at EUCAM (Europe-Central Asia Monitoring) at the Centre for European Security Studies. She has conducted research in the fields of civil society, nationalism, and decoloniality in Kazakhstan.

Prof. Darius Staliūnas, Lithuanian Institute of History & Vilnius University

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Agnieszka Stec, Le Centre de Recherche Politique CRP, Warsaw

Agnieszka Stec, a Ph.D. in political science, is also a Ukrainian and Russian philologist. An expert at Le Centre de Recherche Politique CRP, she is associated with the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. For more than two years she has been dealing with the foreign and domestic policy of the French Republic, French-Russian and French-Ukrainian relations, France's policy towards the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine, and the impact of the Russian and Ukrainian narratives on the thinking of the French about the Eastern European region. Her recent works include: "French Foreign Policy towards Russia, Ukraine and the War of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in the 2022 Presidential Campaign in France", and "The Clash of Political Interests of France and Russia in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Context of Russia's War against Ukraine".

Dr. Roman Syrota, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

Roman Syrota is an associate professor in the Department of History at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine). From 2004 to 2008 he held a research appointment at Harvard University and was a visiting research fellow at the London School of Economics. His research focuses on twentieth-century international history and East-West relations, especially Britain's policy toward the Ukrainian question in the first half of the 20th century. He has published over 30 articles/chapters including in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* (2008, 2011), *Ukraina Moderna* (2010) and *Visnyk Lvivs'koho Universytetu* (2005, 2010, 2016, 2019).

Prof. Andrzej Szeptycki, University of Warsaw, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Rafał Tarnogórski, Polish Institute of International Affairs

Rafał Tarnogórski is an analyst and the duty editor of the 'PISM Bulletin' and 'PISM Commentaries'. He obtained his law degree from Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. He has been affiliated with PISM since 2000. From 2002 to 2012, he served as secretary of the editorial board of the Polish Diplomatic Review. He is currently a member of the editorial board of the relaunched PPD. In 2008, he served as an advisor to the Polish delegation at the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly. He currently represents the Institute in the Commission for International Humanitarian Law, operating at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He collaborates with the Juliusz Mieroszewski Centre.

Dr. Dominika Uczkiewicz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Dominika Uczkiewicz is a lawyer and historian. Currently she is working as assistant professor at the Center for Totalitarian Studies at the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw, where she is co-chairing the research project (Un)tried Crimes. The Approach of the Law Enforcement Agencies and the Judiciary of the Federal Republic of Germany to German Crimes in Poland (1939–1945). Her recent publications include a monograph on the war crimes policy of the Polish government in exile in London (*Problem odpowiedzialności karnej za zbrodnie wojenne w pracach rządu polskiego na emigracji 1939–1945*, Warsaw 2022, English edition forthcoming) and a volume edited together with Patrycja Grzebyk *The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict and War Crimes. Challenges for Documentation and International Prosecution* (Routledge 2025).

Maddelena Valacchi, University of Trento

Maddelena Valacchi is a Ph.D. candidate in International History at the University of Trento. Her Ph.D. project investigates the different perceptions of *Solidarność* across Western Europe and Poland drawing on her visiting research period at the University of Warsaw (Center for Europe) and research in several Polish archives. Her broader research interests include human rights protection and European integration during the Cold War. She has published articles on these topics, with a particular focus on Argentina and Poland.

Dr. Alexey Vasilyev, University of Warsaw

Alexey Vasilyev – visiting professor of the Centre for East European Studies at the Warsaw University. He received his Ph.D. in history from Moscow Pedagogical State University in 1996. He left Russia in 2022, after having developed Polish studies in Russian universities and research centres for many years. His research area covers Central and East European studies, Poland's history and historiography, memory studies, and nationalism studies.

Dr. Lorenzo Venuti, University of Bologna

Lorenzo Venuti is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Bologna and an adjunct professor at the University of Florence. He serves on the editorial boards of the Italian scientific journals *Storia dello sport*, *Rivista di studi contemporanei* and *Passato e presente*. He has published the book *Hungary as a Sport Superpower: Football from Horthy to Kádár (1924–1960)* (De Gruyter, 2024) and numerous articles in Italian, English, and Hungarian journals.

Dr. Pavel Voinitski, Independent Researcher

Pavel Voinitski is an independent researcher, artist, and educator. He received his Ph.D. degree in Art Theory from the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Pavel served as a Lecturer at the Belarusian State Academy of Arts and held the position of Professor in the Architectural Design Department at the Belarusian National Technical University till 2021. In his capacity as a practicing artist, he has been involved in over 250 art events worldwide. As a researcher, Pavel has published a monograph, several essays for art catalogues, and nearly 160 articles. He also has a professional background in writing for Belarusian art journals, including *Art* and *pARTisan*.

Nadia Volkova, Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group

Nadia Volkova is a lawyer practicing in Ukraine and specializing in international humanitarian and international criminal law. She is also the founder and director of the Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group (ULAG), an organization focused on monitoring, analyzing and continuously assessing the legal landscape in Ukraine through the prism of international standards of due process, litigating strategic cases at the national and international courts and tribunals, and advocating for and implementing legislative and institutional changes in Ukraine. Nadia has extensive work experience from the UK, France and the US. In 2015, she started working on cases of alleged atrocity crimes committed in Eastern Ukraine and internationally. In 2022, Nadia was a recipient of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) Human Rights Award for her outstanding commitment to human rights and the rule of law in Ukraine and internationally.

Prof. Marek Jan Wasiński, University of Lodz

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Prof. Anton Weiss-Wendt, The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Prof. Wiktor Werner, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Wiktor Werner – Ph.D. in history (with habilitation), associate professor at the Faculty of History of the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań. Research interests: methodology of history, history of historiography, digital history, history of mass culture and public history (19th–21st centuries.) Author and co-author of six books and more than a hundred scientific articles on issues of historical awareness using digital methods of source acquisition and data research. Since 2021 he is a head of the grant of the National Science Centre “Historical narrative in Web 2.0 as part of the functioning of national identities in Central and Eastern Europe”.

Dr. Marcin Wiatr, Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick

Marcin Wiatr studied German studies, history and education at the universities of Opole and Kiel from 1994 to 1999. From 2010 to 2013 he was a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Magdeburg University and at the Technical University Brunswick; Since 2013 he has been a research fellow at the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media | Georg Eckert Institute, where he is responsible for the German side of the Joint German-Polish Textbook Commission and the German-Polish textbook series "Europe – Our History". Since 2021 he has also coordinated the work of the Joint German-Czech Textbook Commission. In 2016 he completed his Ph.D. dissertation on the Upper Silesian politician Wojciech Korfanty in literary and historical discourse and memory politics during the interwar and postwar periods.

Dr. Krystian Wiciarz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Dr. Anna Wójtowicz, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Anna Wójtowicz – Assistant Professor at the Jean Monnet Chair of the European Union, Warsaw School of Economics (WSE). Her research interests include international energy markets, EU energy policy and energy transition to combat global climate change, sustainable development, renewable energy development and EU energy security. She is the author and co-author of numerous publications in this field. She participated in many national and international conferences. Her academic teaching refers to issues related to European integration, economic situation and international energy markets and the natural environment. She is on the board of the Polish European Community Studies Association (PECSA) as well as of the editorial board of the *Review of European Affairs*.

Dr. Kseniya Yurtayeva, Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs

Kseniya Yurtayeva is an Associate Professor of the Department of Criminal Law and Criminology at Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs. She holds an LL.M Degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law and a Ph.D. in Criminal Law, Criminology and Criminal Executive Law from the State Research Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. In 2022–2024 she was a Visiting Fellow at the Weiser Center for Europe & Eurasia, University of Michigan. Her scientific interests relate to counteracting international crime, cybercriminality, international justice, hybrid methods of modern warfare, challenges in prosecuting violations of laws and customs of war.

Dr. Aldo Zammit Borda, City, University of London

[See Scientific Committee, Keynote Speakers, and Guest Discussants]

Lena Zhivoglod, "Honest People" Initiative, Belarus

Lena Zhivoglod – Belarusian social and political activist, project coordinator and head of "Honest People" Initiative. Previously she was the Vice-Speaker of the Coordination Council of Belarus, Coordinator of the People's Anti-Crisis Management and also co-founder of a non-profit project to help NGOs in Belarus.

Day 1 | Thursday October 17

9:30–10:30

**Keynote Address: Prof. Igor Lukes,
Boston University**

From “Containment” to “Persistent
Engagement”: An Optimistic View of NATO’s
Response to Russia’s War Against Ukraine

Every day brings additional evidence of the human and material cost of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and its war on the West. NATO’s response to the evolving tragedy and strategic threat has been far from flawless. The western alliance is committed to sustaining Ukraine “as long as it takes,” rather than aiming at victory. This has needlessly prolonged the war and, understandably, led many to despair. Parallels with the thirties, when the West thought that Neville Chamberlain and the Sitzkrieg would keep Nazism away from its territory, come to mind. Yet, the overall message of my presentation is one of optimism. Previously, the West reacted to crises in East Central Europe by appeasing Hitler and Stalin. It made deals with the dictators in Munich and Yalta. During the Cold War, western strategy was to contain the Soviet Union, effectively falling back on the 16th century principle *Cuius regio, eius religio*. Invading Ukraine in 2022, Putin calculated that the world’s reaction would be similar to the toothless measures employed after his conquest of Crimea and parts of Donbas. He had failed to note that the present-day security environment and balance of power have given rise to novel approaches to outside threats. A 2018 DOD doctrine states that the United States will defend forward and commits it to persistent engagement against any malicious activities by its opponents. In the 21st century, NATO and the EU cannot afford to give up on Ukraine and Eastern Europe in general because their national security and economic interests are on the line.

10:45–12:15

Session I-a
Discussion Panel: Do Belarusians Need
History?

Moderator: Dr. Maxim Rust

Panelists:

Prof. Joanna Getka, University of Warsaw

Dr. Anton Saifullayeu, Centre for East European Studies at the University of Warsaw

Lena Zhivoglod, “Honest People” Initiative, Belarus

The aim of the discussion panel is to analyze how broadly understood historical factors influence the development of the socio-political dynamics of contemporary Belarus. Before 2020, Belarus did not have a distinct historical policy; however, the situation changed significantly after the 2020 political crisis. Historical narratives are increasingly playing a crucial role in state politics. The official Minsk, reverting to Soviet sources, is attempting to introduce a new historical model. Some segments of civil society and democratic forces view Belarusian historiography and the sources of Belarusian statehood quite differently. The participants will address questions such as: What historical narrative models are currently functioning in Belarus? Has history become an important factor for political decision-makers? How is history used by the media and propaganda apparatus? And how do historical factors influence the social and political agenda of the Belarusian state and society?

Session I-b

Challenges Arising From Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine for EU-Ukraine Relations

The aggressive face of Russian imperialism was already making itself known before the outbreak of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 (the war in Georgia in 2008, the illegal annexation of Crimea, or the war in the Donbass since 2014). However, it was only Russia's full-scale aggression that prompted decisive action by the European Union (EU) to move away from cooperation with Russia and provide multidimensional support to Ukraine. The EU faced the challenge of greater engagement in the security sphere. The need to become independent from Russian raw materials has revised the assumptions of EU energy policy. Large-scale forced migration to EU Member States has revitalised the discussion on the directions of EU development policy and the shape of migration policy. The war in Ukraine has also created an atmosphere of geopolitical instability, causing significant changes in trade patterns, investment flows and regulatory frameworks. EU-Ukraine cooperation is now complex, multidimensional and involves a variety of aspects and policy areas. The aim of this panel is to attempt to answer questions about the changes that Russia's aggression against Ukraine has brought about in the EU's mutual relations with Ukraine, the nature and sustainability of these relations, and the translation and effectiveness of actions taken in support of mutual cooperation.

Moderator: Prof. Ewa Latoszek, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

The Impact of the Full-Scale War in Ukraine on the Migration Situation and Policies in the EU and its Member States. Dr. Marta Pachocka, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 completely changed the migration reality in Europe, including EU countries in the CEE region. In the first weeks of the war, a significant increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) on Ukrainian territory was recorded and several million people fled to neighboring countries. Among them were EU member states, especially Poland, whose land border with Ukraine is more than 535 km long with eight border crossings. Poland became the main host country for forced migrants from Ukraine in less than two months. In March 2022, temporary protection (TP) was applied for the first time across the EU based on Council Directive 2001/55/EC of July 20, 2001 on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof. Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, the EU temporary protection for forced migrants was extended until March 4, 2025. Amendments planned to the Polish Law on Assistance as of April 2024 are expected to extend this protection status until September 2025. In this speech, we will consider the impact of the full-scale war on the migration situation in the EU and its policies. In addition, we will discuss the case of Poland more extensively, whose response particularly stands out among EU member states due to several factors – including geographical proximity and large Ukrainian migration before 2022.

The Future of European Agriculture: Implications of Ukraine's Accession to the European Union. Dr. Aleksandra Borowicz, University of Gdańsk, PECSA

The forthcoming accession of Ukraine to the European Union (EU) presents a significant moment for the future of European agriculture. This article aims to assess the potential impact of Ukrainian agriculture on EU member states, with reference to Poland's accession in 2004. By analyzing the selected aspects of agricultural landscape, economic dynamics, and policy frameworks, this study seeks to explain the implications for EU agriculture and rural development. Through comparative analysis and scenario evaluation, it endeavors to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The assessment of Ukrainian agriculture's significance for EU countries encompasses considerations of market integration, production capacity, environmental sustainability, and geopolitical dimensions. Drawing on historical experiences and current trends, this research offers valuable perspectives for policymakers, stakeholders, and scholars navigating the evolving area of European agriculture.

EU Energy Security After Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine Dr. Anna Wójtowicz & Dr. Justyna Góral, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

The issue of energy security in the EU has become increasingly important over the last few years. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, this policy acquired a whole new dimension, as the turbulence in EU energy markets contributed to significant economic difficulties, including rising inflation in all EU Member States. Since then, the main priority of EU energy policy has become security and stability of energy supply. This article aims to present and evaluate the effectiveness of the main EU measures taken to improve energy security in the EU, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In order to guarantee long-term energy security for its Member States, the EU should strive to reduce energy consumption and thus improve energy efficiency, accelerate the introduction of energy from renewable sources, and increase the diversification of energy supply as well as multidimensional cooperation with Ukraine on energy security.

Ukraine's Conflict: Catalyst or Constraint? The Impacts on SMEs and Innovation in Eastern Europe. Dr. Ewa Osuch-Rak, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, PECSA

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has catalyzed a series of socio-economic shifts, particularly impacting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across Eastern Europe. This paper delves into the multifaceted repercussions of Russian aggression in Ukraine and subsequent changes witnessed in the SME landscape of the region, especially in the context of its innovativeness. The war in Ukraine has generated a climate of geopolitical instability, prompting significant alterations in trade patterns, investment flows, and regulatory frameworks. In response to geopolitical uncertainties and trade disruptions, SMEs are embracing innovation-driven strategies to optimize operations, enhance resilience, and explore new markets. Digitalization, automation, and e-commerce are increasingly integrated into SME workflows, facilitating efficiency gains and market diversification. Moreover, the war-induced constraints have catalyzed collaborative R&D efforts, as SMEs, research institutions,

and governmental agencies unite to address pressing challenges and foster technological advancements. Cross-border partnerships and knowledge exchange initiatives are fostering a culture of innovation resilience, enabling SMEs to leverage collective expertise and resources to surmount obstacles. However, the war's impact extends beyond immediate disruptions, influencing long-term R&D trajectories and innovation ecosystems. Scarce resources, shifting priorities, and geopolitical instabilities pose formidable obstacles to sustained R&D investments and technological breakthroughs, necessitating adaptive strategies and international cooperation frameworks to safeguard innovation continuity. What is more, profound changes in the EU's political priorities may result in reduced expenditure on innovation, R&D activities and supporting the competitiveness of enterprises with EU programs.

Session I-c

Autonomy, Independence and Security in the Post-Soviet Space

Moderator: Aleksandra Konopka, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Belarus and the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict (2014–2023): Has a Belarusian Autonomy vis-à-vis Russia Been Possible?

Dr. Julien Plouchart, CY Cergy Paris University

Since 2014 to 2019, there has been a Belarusian willingness for a mediation between Ukraine and Russia. When the war broke out in Donbass in 2014, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko wanted to promote peace. He therefore made the Belarusian capital Minsk a venue for negotiations between the pro-Russian republics of Donbass, Russia and Ukraine, and repeatedly proposed sending Belarusian peacekeepers to the Eastern Ukrainian region. At first glance, Lukashenko maintained Belarusian neutrality. The Belarusian leader thus accepted the regime change in Ukraine in February 2014 and did not recognize the annexation of Crimea by Russia, whereas he allowed the leaders of the pro-Russian rebels in Donbass to negotiate with the Ukrainian authorities in Minsk. Since 2020 there have been deepening Belarus – Russian ties. Lukashenko has even become embroiled in a conflict between Russia and the West due to domestic political reasons: Western countries did not recognize his re-election while Russia actively helped Lukashenko stay in power. Since February 2022, Belarus has been used as a base for the Russian army that attacked the Ukrainian capital from Belarusian territory. However, the Belarusian armed forces did not participate in the fighting. To put it in a nutshell, this communication aims to show the paradoxical geopolitical situation of Belarus: this East Slavic country not only constitutes a stronghold for the Russian army and a very close geopolitical ally of the Russian Federation against NATO but also manages to maintain a reduced but real autonomy vis-à-vis the Russian ally regarding Ukraine and the current Russo-Ukrainian war.

Russian Expansionism in the Hybrid Occupation Strategy of Ukraine

Dr. Kseniya Yurtayeva, Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs

Expansionism is the core basis of the contemporary national policy of the Russian Federation. Russia having positioned itself as the sole successor of the USSR, never truly accepted independent self-determination of the peoples formerly incorporated in the “prison house of nations”. Contemporary Russian occupation of Ukraine is viewed here through territorial, social, cultural and economic lenses. Implementation of the Russian occupational strategy is analyzed from the beginning of the 2000s which provided the basis for the Russian full-scale invasion and annexation of vast territories of Ukraine. The author examines

theoretical concepts of Russian expansionism and practical implication of the Russian occupational strategy in Ukraine: organization of illegal referenda, forceful passportization, deportation and transfer of populations, persecution of unreliable Ukrainian citizens, changing ethnic composition of the occupied territories, nationalization of property, ruining Ukrainian critical infrastructure and increasing the reliance of the Ukrainian occupied population on Russian resources, restricting Ukrainian information and educational services, using disinformation to indoctrinate the local population. Exploiting a smokescreen of “denazification” of Ukrainians with the guise of humanitarian concern, the Russian Federation seeks to establish a permanent and irreversible occupation of the Ukrainian territory. Analyzed grey-zone occupation tactics are specific to hybrid methods of warfare and can be implied extraterritorially, creating opportunities for onward expansion.

Is the Soviet Legacy of Russia's Security Policy a Threat for the Future of Central and Eastern Europe?

Dr. Nurlan Aliyev, University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw

This research analyzes how similar non-military methods and approaches in security policy were used during the Soviet Union and presents the functions of these methods. It explains why asymmetries in strategic approaches were preferable for the Soviet Union even between the 1960s and 1980s when it had its nuclear weapons arsenal and was at its most powerful. It discusses how and why Moscow used proxy wars to weaken or diminish the influence of adversaries during the Cold War. The paper emphasizes information warfare, cryptography or code breaking, insurgency or guerrilla warfare, and the use of asymmetric strategies in conventional military deterrence, such as developments in weapons programs during the USSR. It compares similar security cases of the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. As a part of my book project on Russia's security policy, this paper argues that since the beginning of post-Soviet Russia's security policy formation in the 1990s, the Soviet legacy has been playing a key role, especially during Putin's presidency. The topic of the research is chosen for its significance as one of the main problems of contemporary international security – the evolution and function of contemporary Russia's security policy. The project emphasizes the necessity of asymmetry in the strategic interaction for the Russian security strategy, including the Soviet period.

De-orientalizing the History of the Baltic Revolution, ca 1980 to 1994

Prof. Kaarel Piirimäe, University of Tartu

Since 2004, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been members of both the EU and NATO. They have taken advantage of the North-Atlantic security system to build prosperous societies on Western models. They are still unique among all the countries that once made up the Soviet Union, the only ones to break away from the shadow of Russia. We are witnessing how Ukraine is struggling to do the same at tremendous cost. Western scholarship has not understood why the Baltic transformation was such a success. Constrained by ideological blinders, Western liberals looked upon the region as a potential conflict zone. Observers were especially concerned about Baltic efforts, after fifty years of Soviet colonialism, to consolidate their societies around policies of nationalism. Indeed, in the case of Estonia and Latvia, the national movements were convinced that without efforts to curb immigration and protect their cultures, they could face “ethnic death”. In this paper, which is part of a book project, I look at how Western scholars presented Baltic politics as driven by identity crises that required the othering of Russia and Russian minorities. Baltic arguments about past colonialism were perceived as a drowning in dangerous memory politics, seen as a malaise of Eastern Europe. The fears of Estonians and Latvians about their



ethnic extinction were construed as a ploy of dangerous nationalists. I suggest that the Western gaze was a form of Orientalism: uninterested in the history of the Baltic nations and indifferent toward their concerns, it passed judgements based on double standards. Western societies had themselves not applied many norms that the Baltic states were required to implement. How these small nations could preserve their distinct cultures never seemed to bother scholars, whose own nations had never faced the possibility of extinction.

13:15–14:15

Keynote Address: Prof. Marek Cichocki, Collegium Civitas

From the End of History to the New Cold War. Changing Historical Paradigms in Studying Central and Eastern Europe

Since the 18th century, Central and Eastern Europe has resembled a “moveable” region. This phenomenon was caused by European geopolitics, empires and totalitarian regimes that tried to shape the fate and place of the region for at least two centuries in line with their interests and beliefs. The breakthrough of 1989 raised hopes that the region would finally find its historical subjectivity and political place in Europe. However, this was identified with the general image of the end of history and the vision of post-political and post-historical peace that dominated the minds of many people in the West. Now, with the war in Ukraine and an increasingly aggressive Russia and other revisionist powers, the illusion of the end of history has been replaced by a new narrative of the Second Cold War. What does this change mean for the fate and place of Central and Eastern Europe? Can we take it seriously as a new paradigm in studying Central and Eastern Europe? And what fruitful lessons can we really draw from the history of our region?

14:15–15:45

Session II-a

Colonialism and Imperialism, From the 18th Century to the Present Day

Moderator: Emmanuelle Chaze, Independent Journalist

The Myth of “Novorossiya” in the Russian Imperial Narrative and its Deconstruction. Prof. Grzegorz Skrukwa, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Since 2014, Russia has begun to use the term “Novorossiya” as a tool to undermine Ukraine’s territorial integrity. Historically, the term “Novorossiya” in the Russian imperial narrative from the late 18th century until 1920 meant lands on the northern coast of the Black Sea, conquered by the Russian Empire. In fact, it was the only longer-lived colonial-type geographical term in Europe. A myth of Novorossiya was also created, which served the function of representing Russian imperialism as legitimate and bringing civilizational development. The term Novorossiya disappeared from the official narrative during the Soviet period, reappearing ephemerally only in 1990. But between 1990 and 2014 the key elements of the Novorossiya myth functioned in Russian and pro-Russian narratives, exerting a significant influence on local and regional historical narratives in the South of Ukraine.

The Intriguing Resilience: Untangling the Ukrainian Knot of Russian Vulnerability in Relation to the West. Hanna Perekhoda, Institute of Political Studies, University of Lausanne

The Russian political imagination about Ukraine was shaped during the 19th century as Russian imperial elites sought to maintain their great power status amidst inter-imperial rivalry and the spread of European nation-centered modernity. The obsession with Ukraine appears to have endured throughout the 20th century and beyond, despite major historical shifts in 1917 and 1991. What explains the endurance of this fixation? To untangle the knot that ties Ukraine to Russian elites’ great power ambitions and to their struggle against perceived subalternity in relation to the western “significant Other”, it is essential to explore the complex interplay between ideology and the material realities of international and domestic power dynamics. We posit that a contradiction exists between Russia’s internal heterogeneity as an empire and the geopolitical and intellectual imperative to become “Western” and “modern” (and thus national and homogeneous), creating persistent internal tension. Convinced that integrating Ukrainians into the Russian *nation* is crucial for maintaining their *imperial* status vis-à-vis the West, Russian elites are engaging in nation-building efforts that paradoxically undermine the very foundations of their governance. Ukraine, therefore, stands at the center of a contradiction between imperial ambitions and nationalist ideology, a trap in which Russian elites repeatedly find themselves ensnared.

The National Question in Russia in the Years 1917–1924. Marxism and Ethnic Minorities of the Former Russian Empire. Karolina Jessica Brzykcy, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

This study focuses on the national question in Russia in the years 1917–1924, with a particular focus on Central Asia and the Caucasus. Through a thorough examination of archival sources, Lenin's and Stalin's writings based on the Marxian idea of nationality and nationhood, the politics of the early period, and via particular case studies in the Caucasus and Central Asia, the article examines the disparity between the declared aims of Communism as a system promoting national sovereignty and its imperial nature in practice. The above questions will be considered within the context of a wider institutional and ideological chaos that ensued after the October revolution.

The Russian Narrative in Scientific Discourse in France Concerning Ukraine, Russia and the War of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine. Dr. Agnieszka Stec, Le Centre de Recherche Politique CRP, Warsaw

The paper will include consideration on the following issues: 1) The perception of Russia and Ukraine in scientific research in France through the Russian narrative, since the fall of the USSR (indicating the most important trends). 2) French scientists' responses to the problem of Ukraine's position in Europe as an independent political entity with its own history and culture. 3) Changes in the scientific discourse in France after the outbreak of the war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, consisting in an attempt to subjectify Ukraine and the rejection of the Russian narrative (main directions, centers, figures of this discourse). Will this change at last and initiate modern research on the history and culture of Eastern Europe in France? Or is the Russian narrative about its own history and the region of Eastern Europe and the Slavic peoples living there so deeply rooted in France that the possibilities of rejecting it are small and concentrated only around small groups of Ukrainian sympathizers? It should not be forgotten that Ukraine is only beginning to build its narrative in the West, which has been developing since the Russian Federation's aggression against the country.

Session II-b

Youth, the Future, and Russia's War Against Ukraine

Russia's full invasion of Ukraine has provoked heated responses across the territories formerly occupied by the Soviet Union and within Russia. Real and staged demonstrations, artistic movements, and social media conflicts pertaining to young people have sprung up throughout the region as new views, alliances, and identities are shaped in response to war. Some analysts and pundits have suggested that the war represents a decisive—perhaps decolonizing—moment in the relationship between inhabitants of Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and other former communist countries and the former imperial metropole, Russia. Others have suggested that a new generational divide has sprung up between young residents in regions bordering Russia and those in Russia itself, suggesting that the war has provoked an intergenerational, and potentially unhealable, traumatic divide in culture, worldview, and experience. In this interdisciplinary panel, contributors discuss how the first 2 years of the war have produced changes in youth culture and political awareness and behaviour in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine.

Moderator: Dr. Ian Garner, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Language Activism in Kazakhstan: Decolonial Sentiments and (Post)-Soviet Reality. Kamila Smagulova, Leiden University & Joanna Bagadzinska, University of Warsaw

This paper explores the phenomenon of language activism in Kazakhstan, examining its roots and contemporary manifestations within a decolonial framework. Despite Soviet colonialism not being traditionally classified as typical colonialism, it resulted in significant sociolinguistic inequalities, particularly between the Russian and Kazakh languages. This research highlights how modern Kazakh language activists challenge this imbalance by promoting the use and prestige of Kazakh, addressing issues of linguistic justice and national identity reconstruction. The study emphasizes the impact of nation-building policies and the role of grassroots activism in navigating the complexities of bilingualism and ethnic identity. It argues that the current wave of activism not only reflects decolonial sentiments but also contributes to a broader discourse on linguistic justice in a multi-ethnic society. The analysis is grounded in the socio-political context of (post)-Soviet Kazakhstan, with particular attention to recent geopolitical shifts and their influence on language dynamics.

Media Literacy and Uzbek Youth Perceptions of the Russia-Ukraine War. Mukhammadsodik Donaev, Zhejiang University

This study examines how media literacy influences the perceptions of young people in Uzbekistan regarding the Russia-Ukraine war. With the media's pervasive role in shaping public understanding of global events, this research explores the extent to which media literacy—defined as the ability to critically analyze and evaluate media messages—affects the views of Uzbekistani youth on this conflict. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey involving 927 participants under 35 years old. The findings indicate that higher levels of media literacy among Uzbekistani youths correlate with more critical perspectives on the war, a greater capacity to identify bias, and a reduced susceptibility to one-sided narratives. The research also uncovers the significant influence of socio-cultural factors, including family dynamics and educational background, in shaping media literacy and perceptions. Notably, exposure to diverse media sources and educational attainment emerged as key factors in fostering skepticism towards biased portrayals of the conflict. Additionally, the study highlights how broader geopolitical dynamics, such as the Israel-Palestine conflict, intertwine with the youth's perceptions of the Russia-Ukraine war, further complicating their understanding. It also stresses the need for developing comprehensive media literacy programs in Uzbekistan that are specifically designed to reflect the unique socio-cultural contexts of the youth. Enhancing media literacy through these programs can equip young people with the skills needed to critically evaluate media content and develop well-informed perspectives on international conflicts.

Behind Their Eyes: Photography as a Lens for Children's Agency and Resilience in the Russia-Ukraine War. Prof. Iuliia Hoban, College of Arts & Sciences, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University-Worldwide

The full-scale war waged by Russia against Ukraine has profoundly affected the nation's children, displacing, wounding, and even killing many of its youngest citizens. Despite the severe effects of this armed conflict, Ukrainian children created spaces to express their agency by using diaries, poems, and art and engaging in political activities related to war. Scholarship on children's roles in conflict and peacebuilding emphasizes the "comprehensive silencing of children's voices" within institutional frameworks concerned with children in armed conflict (Berents, 2019). However, it demonstrates how children exhibit resilience by reclaiming



agency and seeking meaning amidst trauma. Therapeutic photography has emerged as a powerful medium for allowing children to process their experiences of trauma. By engaging in the everyday practice of taking photos, children can articulate their perspectives of the war, empowering themselves and asserting their roles as active agents in their narratives. Drawing on critical childhood studies and feminist theory, this paper examines “Behind Blue Eyes,” a therapeutic photography program implemented during the ongoing war in Ukraine. The analysis examines the tension between providing children with the means of expressing themselves, and the risk of adults assigning meaning to these photographs, potentially commodifying their trauma and weaving militarism with their everyday experiences. This article contributes to the scholarship on the ambivalent nature of children’s experiences in the context of war, examining how their agency can be articulated, manipulated, and restricted. It deepens our understanding of children’s lived experiences in conflict zones and highlights the significance of arts-based methods for expressing their narratives and processing trauma.

Waging a “War of Words”: The Impact of Russia’s War Against Ukraine on Central Asian Young People. Dr. Bakhytzhon Kurmanov, University of Central Asia

This paper examines the reactions of young Central Asian people to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Specifically, we demonstrate how online involvement bleeds into the offline political activity of young people related to the war in complex ways. While Central Asians rely on online activity to discover and interact with news about the war, the war has catalyzed a variety of political activities both online and offline, though the war is but one of many political traumas that have elicited responses from society. Our interviews with young activists reveal common themes across Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In both cases, the war brought about conflicts within the activist community and vibrant discussions in the arenas of language politics and decolonization. This newfound political activism may not result in increased formal political participation (e.g., voting), but it could have a lasting impact on the everyday contribution and efficacy of young people in their societies.

Session II-c

Societies and Economies in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Space: Issues and Approaches

Moderator: Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Exiled Polish Economic Historiography on the Soviet Model of Development. Dr. Damian Bębnowski, University of Łódź

Exiled Polish economic historiography (1939–1989) is still marginalized in research. The most important communities of Polish historians in exile were established in the UK and the USA. World War II and the communist takeover of Poland led to a break with the impressive achievements of domestic economic historiography of the interwar period. The Communists imposed a Marxist paradigm on the humanities and social sciences. Scholars avoided controversial recent political history, turning

more often to socio-economic history. Research on economic history in exile did not develop spectacularly. The work of Stanisław Swianiewicz, Władysław Wielhorski, Paweł Zaremba, Piotr Wojtowicz, Alfred Zauberman, Stanisław Kościalkowski, or Feliks Gross were a few of the exceptions. For patriotic reasons, historical study in exile focused on recent political and military history, as these areas remained free of censorship and were fundamental to Poland’s fate in the 20th century. In the case of economic history, no broader transdisciplinary, institutional, or transnational cooperation was initiated. It remained in the shadow of domestic study (despite the “ideological corset” there) and on the sidelines of world economic historiography. Among the glorious exceptions were Swianiewicz and Zauberman, making international scientific careers. The paper discusses the achievements of three leading Sovietologists dealing with the Soviet economy: Wielhorski, Swianiewicz, and Zauberman. They attempted an objective and critical assessment of the effectiveness of the Soviet economic system, drawing on Western approaches. This type of analysis was not possible at home.

Democratic Values and the Legacy of the Early 1990s in Russia Prof. William Pyle, Middlebury College

Communism’s collapse in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union was greeted, broadly speaking, with relief and jubilation. But in Russia, it resonated differently. There, the pain of the economic transition was not cushioned by the emotive high of national liberation experienced in other countries. Instead, the economic pain was compounded by the loss of regional and global status. Many have speculated that the early-1990s’ shocks of economic collapse and imperial dissolution provided the social basis for the authoritarian turn Russia embarked on under Vladimir Putin. At least two testable hypotheses follow from this line of thinking: (1) within Russia, those that experienced greater economic hardship in the early 1990s turned harder against the democratic values that animated the transition away from communism; and (2) Russians abandoned those same values more comprehensively than their contemporaries in other former communist countries. We test and confirm both. Drawing on multiple cross-sectional surveys, we demonstrate that compared to post-communist citizens elsewhere, Russians de-prioritized democratic values between 1990 and 1995, opening a “values gap” that lasted through at least 2017. Within Russia, we further show that regional asymmetries in the early-1990s economic shock explain both the initial turn against and the enduring weak support for democratic values.

Wartime Relations: Polish National Habitus, Polish-Ukrainian Friendship and Participatory Action Research. Dr. Waldemar Rapior, University of Warsaw, Department of Sociology

Seyla Benhabib has written about the curse of “poor man’s sociology”, which simplifies the world and social reality to fit our concepts. We can avoid this. Sociology has conceptual and theoretical tools to study the “present” and the social mechanisms that shape the “river of history” (T. Snyder) here and now. One such tool is the “anthropologisation” of social structures: the study of how social structures are embodied as habitus in the experiences of particular individuals. Using this perspective, I study Polish-Ukrainian relations through ethnographic research (in-depth interviews and, to use Josh Seim’s term, the “Observant Participation” in the field) with activists and volunteers, as well as groups, collectives and organizations that provide humanitarian aid, equipment

(cars, drones, excavators, tourniquets, etc.), medical supplies and support Ukrainians. The research is part of the project 'National habitus formation and the process of civilisation in Poland after 1989: a figurational approach', funded by the Polish National Science Centre. I will present the results of the research and answer the question: what do the grassroots initiatives, activist groups and volunteers supporting Ukraine tell us about the Polish national habitus? Using M. Mauss' concept of "gift" and M. Herer's concept of "friendship", I will show how Polish-Ukrainian relations have changed in the last two years due to the national and global context. I will conclude with a question about the usefulness of sociological research in the paradigm of "public sociology", "activist research", "participatory action research" and "citizen science" for the study of human relations in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of war.

Back in the USSR: the Popularity of Modern Russian TV Series About the Soviet Era Among Young People in the Post-Soviet Space

Ardak Orakbayeva, University of Warsaw

In recent years, Russian cinematographers have often revived the spirit of the Soviet era on the screen, taking the viewer back to the Khrushchev 1960s with life boiling in the streets and classic "Muscovites", then to the perestroika 1980s with eternal queues and empty counters. Films and TV series about the Soviet era, but filmed in our time, have always been particularly popular with viewers in the territory of the post-Soviet space. Such popularity can be explained by nostalgia (the fashion for nostalgic cinema) among the older generation. Many people nostalgic for the USSR did not really live in it. How to explain the popularity of the USSR theme (music, fashion, films, paraphernalia, Soviet symbols) among young people now? For example, Russian TV series are now popular among young people: "Pishcheblok" (based on the novel of the same name by Alexey Ivanov) directed by Svyatoslav

Podgaevsky (season 1, 2021) and Eduard Bordukov (season 2, 2023); "The Boy's Word: Blood on the Asphalt" (2023) directed by Zhora Kryzhovnikov. Is this popularity among young people natural or is it skillfully guided by state policy for the purpose of propaganda (for example, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation)?

16:00–17:30

Discussion Panel. Empire and Imperialism: What Do These Terms Mean Now and How Should They Be (Re)Interpreted Historically in the Wake of the Russian War Against Ukraine?

Moderator: Prof. Andrzej Nowak, Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences

Panelists:

Prof. Marek Kornat, Historical Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences

Prof. Darius Staliūnas, Lithuanian Institute of History & Vilnius University

Prof. Jan Holzer, Masaryk University, Brno

Is empire an anachronistic, essentially ancient formula for ordering space in the unequal relations between human groups? Imperial violence, expansionism ("objectiveless disposition on the part of the state to unlimited forcible expansion", as Joseph Schumpeter put it) and a particular ideology justifying and even sacralising expansion – these aspects, were highlighted by a section of Western historiography during the years of the Cold War. Gradually, however, studies of the functions of imperial politics and the relations of various social groups revealed an increasingly pronounced shift in the center of gravity of research in a different direction. Neither the unequal relations between center and periphery nor the autocratic nature of power turn out to be relevant in the very notion of empire anymore, or in any case, are exposed. Issues of imperial violence and expansion disappear or are consistently marginalized almost entirely. Is there any point, then, in returning – in the wake of the Russian war against Ukraine – to those aspects of the history of the Russian and Soviet empires which have been "condemned" as old-fashioned or even unscientific? To the history of the violence organized by the imperial centers against their 'own' population and against their neighbors; to the political, propagandistic and ultimately military game for external expansion; to the ideologies (and historiographies) that also justify such functions of empire and effectively, through various media, mobilize the emotions and imaginary world of their addressees? Is there any point in returning to the question of the place and significance of imperialism in the historical development of the Russian (and Soviet) empires? These questions are to organize a debate of three distinguished scholars of the Russian/Soviet imperial history.

Day 2 | Friday October 18

9:00–10:00

Keynote Address: Prof. Mark Kramer, Harvard University

Archival Research in the Former USSR. The Situation Before and After February 2022

For more than 30 years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, invaluable opportunities for archival research in Ukraine and Russia were available for faculty, graduate students, and other scholars from around the world. Archival access in Ukraine had been very good starting in the 1990s, and it became even better after the 2014 Maidan revolution. The former Ukrainian KGB archive was opened after 2014, and it functioned extremely well, with excellent access and working conditions. In Russia, the archival situation was more complicated, but it was far better than most outsiders realized. From 2012 through February 2022 the decade before Russia embarked on its large-scale invasion of Ukraine the archival situation in Russia improved a great deal despite Vladimir Putin's forceful authoritarian clampdown. The political situation in Russia kept getting worse and worse, but access and working conditions in the country's federal archives steadily improved. Archival openness often goes hand-in-hand with democratization, but that was not the case in Russia. Democratization was non-existent under Putin, yet the archival situation hugely improved. Opportunities to explore Soviet history and the Cold War based on documents from the Russian archives were much better as of mid-February 2022 than at any time in the past. Unfortunately, the immensely rewarding archival research opportunities that existed in Ukraine and Russia as of mid-February 2022 are gone for the indefinite future. Incoming graduate students have had to adjust to that grim reality. In my lecture I will discuss how to judge the situation, how to cope with what could become a prolonged interim period (already well into its third year), and how to decide whether and when it might be worth trying to work in the archives again. Despite the exceptionally bleak outlook, there are numerous steps researchers can take.

10:00–11:30

Session III-a

Epistemic Violence and Transitional Justice. Intellectual History and Politics of Memory Approaches From the Former (Imperial) and Soviet Space

This panel discussion explores the intricate dynamics of epistemic violence, transitional justice, intellectual history, and politics of memory across different intellectual contexts of the former imperial Russian and Soviet space. Epistemic violence, defined as the harm inflicted upon individuals and communities through the suppression or distortion of knowledge and memory, has been a pervasive aspect of post-imperial societies, including Poland and its perception of Central and Eastern Europe. An example of a research direction that assumed an exit from epistemic and symbolic imperial violence and politically suggested the necessity of memorial transitional justice was the so-called Polish perspective in Sovietology. The 'Polish perspective' (Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) of Sovietological research, also referred to as the 'cyclical

school' (Martin Malia), entails seeing the similarities between tsarist autocracy and the Soviet Union with its imperial activity, methods of expansion and persecution (this strand includes Zbigniew Brzezinski, Jan Kucharzewski and Richard Pipes, among others). Its adoption opens the research field to comparisons with contemporary Putinist Russia. A thorough examination of historiography and knowledge production will provide an interpretation of the role of historical research in shaping narratives of Russian imperialism and Soviet domination and how these narratives are evolving considering decolonial theories. It will also discuss the intersections of power, identity, and postimperial discourse in Poland, focusing on how these dynamics shape memory politics and historical interpretations vis-à-vis Russia and the Soviet Union. At the same time, a process-oriented analysis and interpretation of the transition over time (before and after the Russian aggression against Ukraine) will enable a discussion on the reconstruction of policies towards the past within a discussion of transitional justice and its components – trauma healing and reconciliation. Through comparative analysis, this panel aims to examine how various intellectual strategies of resistance and opposition to epistemic violence cope with the legacies of violence, oppression, and historical trauma in their pursuit of transitional justice through memory politics and intellectual history.

Moderator: Dr. Bartłomiej Krzyszczan, Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

Generations of Discontinuity: Polish Russian and Soviet Studies in the Interwar Period and Emigration Research after 1945

Prof. Mirosław Filipowicz, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

One of the most intriguing phenomena of Polish Russian and Soviet studies is the high and original level of scholarship developed in Poland during the interwar period, followed by its near-total obscurity in the West and its lack of recognition in domestic historiography (due obviously to communist censorship), as well as in émigré circles. This interwar generation and its achievements were only brought back to collective memory in Poland after 1989, although some works had been known to a wider audience of non-professional readers at least since the publication of uncensored editions (circa the late 1970s and early 1980s). An example of this is the heavily abridged edition of Jan Kucharzewski's seven-volume work *From the White Tsar to the Red*. This has resulted in a paradox: neither domestic historiography (with a few laudable exceptions, such as Wiktoria Śliwowska) nor Polish Sovietologists in the West referenced Kucharzewski's work. This was especially true for those émigré scholars whose works were translated and cited in Western literature. This paper will focus on exploring the reasons for this lack of continuity and the effective relegation of a significant portion of these works to oblivion. While individual reasons played a role in each case, I believe it is possible to identify several overarching factors. One of these was the label of "Russophobia" that was applied to much of the interwar scholarship. In some cases, this label was justified, though not in Kucharzewski's case. Among the serious reasons for the discontinuity, we must also consider that the elites of Polish Sovietology in the West did not see themselves as heirs to the work of their predecessors. Their distance from the scholarship of the interwar period was arguably as great as their distance to Soviet studies. Yet, they were the ones read in the West.

Concepts of the West, Europe and Russia Developed by Polish Émigrés During the Cold War Era. Prof. Sławomir Łukasiewicz, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

The main aim of this paper is to reconstruct the panorama of political concepts developed by Polish émigrés during the Cold War in which they referred to such geopolitical and cultural entities like the West, Europe and Russia. As the theoretical framework for this reflection I will merge an intellectual history approach with questions about production and transfer of knowledge, e.g.: how did Polish (or more broadly Central European) emigration affect our understanding of the world and its divisions during the Cold War? How did its provenance affect ideas about the world, especially Poland's place in Europe, the concept of Central and Eastern Europe (with different mutations), ideas of the West, Europe, or Russia? Their historical experience of Russia could not remain unnoticed. Especially if one takes into account the fact that an important part of these migration waves was the so-called intelligentsia – scientists, engineers, doctors, writers, journalists, diplomats, officers and so on. Many years of research on émigré federalists and émigré Sovietologists leads me to ask about the points of contact between their visions, i.e. how the federalists thought about Russia, and how the Sovietologists thought about Europe. The paper will serve to deepen methodological reflection in relation to such research questions as the role of migration in knowledge/concepts transfer between émigrés and the Western intellectual world.

East-Central Europe in Cold War America: The Rise and Fall of an Intellectual Concept. Dr. Aleksandr Avramchuk, John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin

This paper will explore the origins of the concept of East Central Europe and its impact on the intellectual history of the United States during the Cold War. Developed by exiles from Communist-occupied Europe

at the onset of the Soviet-American confrontation, this idea served as a potent tool for challenging the post-Yalta order. However, efforts to portray the region between Germany and Russia as a distinct historical area with unique nations and cultures struggled to align with the prevailing "Eastern Europe" stereotypes in American thought, which were deeply rooted in Enlightenment-era perceptions and further solidified by the Iron Curtain. In my paper, I will examine how Polish and Ukrainian émigrés sought to challenge these dominant narratives by promoting the concept of East Central Europe, both through publications and within specific academic institutions. By focusing on the Institute on East Central Europe at Columbia University and the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University, I will illustrate the strategies employed to counter the "epistemic violence" of Western academia and to bring attention to the peoples living between the Oder and the Don, often overshadowed by their more powerful neighbors.

Between 'the Grand Failure' and 'the Choice' (1989–2004). The Collapse of the Soviet Union and its Results in the Views of Zbigniew Brzeziński. Dr. Wojciech Łysek, Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Zbigniew Brzeziński, a Polish-born political scientist and Sovietologist, was skeptical about the existence of the Soviet Union due to the nationality issue. The decline of the Soviet Union in the 1980s was in line with his predictions. This paper aims to show Zbigniew Brzeziński's views on the process of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the rebirth of Russian imperialism between 1989 and 2004. The analysis will concentrate on selected aspects, especially concerning Ukraine. The starting point will be the presentation of 'The Great Failure' (Brzeziński's book in 1989) of the idea of communism and the complex reasons for the fall of the Soviet Union. Next, it will outline the out-of-control situation in Central and Eastern Europe in the 90s of the 20th century. The last point I want to make shows the choice, which was being faced in the Eurasian Balkans by the West of the strengthening of Russia in the early 21st century. The paper will be based on four books and a collection of many scientific articles and interviews with Zbigniew Brzeziński. Of course, the author will outline the broader context of the post-Cold War order. Subject literature, selected correspondence and other sources will be used. As a result, the answer will be given to what extent Brzeziński succumbed to 'the epistemic violence' of the West towards the nations subordinated to Russia or retained the perspective of Polish Sovietologists, taking into account the non-Russian nations of the Soviet Union.

Freedom Without Liberation? Prometheism, the Polish School of Sovietology and Contemporary Political Discourse towards the Caucasus and Central Asia. Dr. Bartłomiej Krzysztań, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

The aim of the text is to show the ruptures and continuities in the Sovietologist political thought concerning the liberation, acquisition of sovereignty and subjectivity of the peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia. The first element of the analysis is to show what perspective Richard Pipes had on the Caucasus and Central Asia. Pipes' perspective will be juxtaposed with the perception of this space presented by the most important representatives of the Promethean movement intellectuals (Bączkowski, Otmar Berson, Schaeztl, Hołowko, Wasilewski), as well as contemporary visions of the disintegration of Russia present in public discourse in Poland. However, all three orders of discourse are based on orientalizing narratives, objectifying and instrumentalizing national liberation struggles and strategies of resistance to oppression in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The question remains to what extent these visions coincide with the decolonization processes and narratives



in the Caucasus and Central Asia increasingly present in the public discourse and politics of memory following the escalation of Russian aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. Thus, an additional aim of the article is to reflect theoretically on the possibility of de-orientalizing Polish reflection on the Caucasus and Central Asia. For only this will allow for the rejection of discursive violence, historical visibility, a change in the system of knowledge production, a renegotiation of political memory, and thus the achievement of epistemic justice as a specific component of transitional justice. Methodologically, the article is based on content analysis, comparative textual analysis, and discourse analysis, mainly referring to the genealogy of discourse.

Session III-b

Sovietisation, Russification, and Decolonization

Moderator: Dr. Krystian Wiciarz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Polish Diplomacy, the “Jewish Question” and Soviet Russia in the 1930s. Dr. Kinga Czechowska, The Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

In December 2019 Wladimir Putin gave a speech, in which he not only blamed Poland for the outbreak of World War II, but also accused Polish ambassador in Berlin Józef Lipski of being an anti-Semite. The speech has already – rightly – been met with many responses and polemical voices, with the figure of Lipski in the center of them. In my paper I will try to show that the first Soviet accusations of anti-Semitism against Polish diplomacy in the context of its activities related to the ‘Jewish question’ were made in the 1930s. When in 1936, at the League of Nations, Polish diplomats presented postulates of Jewish emigration from Poland, Soviet delegates called it “the result of the racist anti-Semitic policy of the Polish government” and an expression of alleged German-Polish rapprochement. Polish delegate to the LoN Tytus Komarnicki considered these accusations unfounded and treated them as part of a wider propaganda campaign. Ambassador Lipski’s infamous statement, on the other hand, about his intention to erect a monument to Hitler in Warsaw should he find a solution to the ‘Jewish question’, came two years later, in September 1938. In my paper I will argue that it cannot be considered representative either of Lipski’s actions at the Berlin post or of the actions of Polish diplomacy towards the ‘Jewish question’ during this period.

Decolonizing Research and Knowledge? Paradigm Shifts in Studying Central and Eastern Europe. Dr. Krystian Wiciarz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

The aim of this paper will be to present the most important paradigmatic disputes concerning the analysis of socio-political changes in Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th century. I will try to answer the question of which paradigms have most influenced the perception of the region in recent decades in Anglo-Saxon studies and what problems are associated with this, as well as which theoretical approaches seem promising for understanding this area of the world. Attempts to understand and also to subjectify the area that stretches between Germany and Russia have often aroused numerous controversies. It is not only important

to ask whether there is such a thing as a common area of Central and Eastern Europe, but also to seek what contextualised theoretical lenses to adopt for a proper understanding of this area. Controversies have evolved around such important issues as imperialism and nationalism and the formation of so-called young and small nations, modernization and countermodernization, young vs. old democracies, recently post-colonialism and coloniality, but above all totalitarianism and post-totalitarianism as a key concept for understanding the history of this area in the 20th century.

The Russian/Soviet Imperial Narrative of the Hungry Steppe Irrigation in Southern Kazakhstan. The Case of the Museum of the History of Cotton Growing in the Turkestan Region

Dr. Jerzy Rohoziński, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

The Museum of the History of Cotton Growing in the Turkestan (South Kazakhstan) region in Atakent (former Ilich) dates back to 1944, and the impetus for its creation was the exhibition on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the “model” sovkhos of cotton cultivation “Pakhta-ara”. In 2005, financing from the regional (*oblast*) budget was introduced. Until then, funding came from the district (*raion*) budget. It is the only museum of its kind in all of Kazakhstan. However, dating back to 1930, the building is in need of a major overhaul. The museum’s narrative is quite clear: Soviet modernization in the Hungry Steppe is a straightforward continuation of steps taken before the revolution, with pre-revolutionary irrigation projects having failed and only the Soviet management making them effective. Such a belief could also be found in Soviet propaganda literature and scientific works from that period. This is, of course, a profoundly dishonest narrative (in terms of successes and lack thereof), which is evident even in the exposition photos – while the pre-revolutionary photos show machines, the Soviet-era photos are dominated by manual labor performed by the human masses. Nevertheless, this narrative is consistently upheld in the museum, although it does not correspond at all with the historical policy of independent Kazakhstan.

Session III-c

Memory Studies, Monuments & Memory Politics

Moderator TBA

Russian Memory Politics in Contemporary Belarus: The Case of Minsk’s Nevsky Equestrian Monument. Dr. Pavel Voinitski, Independent researcher

“Monumental propaganda” is a concept coined by Vladimir Lenin in 1918 for his “Plan of Monumental Propaganda.” According to this plan, the sculptural landscape of cities captured by the Bolsheviks was transformed – old monuments and memorials were destroyed, and new ones created. This strategy was aimed at customizing and enhancing the ideological impact of sculptural objects of memory in the urban environment. Taking its cue from Soviet monumental propaganda, large-scale sculpture traditionally plays a significant role in Russia and post-Soviet countries (former republics of the USSR), primarily as a means to

persuasively visualize their state ideologies. Furthermore, the modern Russian Federation persists in employing monumental propaganda as a means of exerting its influence in neighboring countries. Consequently, in recent years, a plethora of corresponding monuments have been erected beyond Russia's borders. Monuments dedicated to Alexander Nevsky – the revered Russian prince and patron saint of the military – have been installed in various cities, including Minsk in 2023. I will examine the unveiling of Minsk's monument within the context of Belarus, exploring its connection to recent socio-political situations in the region and within Belarus itself, as well as its alignment with ongoing trends in Belarusian monumental art. Specifically, I aim to delve into the significance of the newly erected monument to Alexander Nevsky in Minsk as a clear visual tool for conveying the Russian Federation's ideological messages, extending the colonial dissemination of Russian historical memory beyond the borders of Russia in a forceful manner.

The Politics of Memory Regarding the Burial Places of Victims of Political Repressions in Ukraine and Russia: Between Memory and Oblivion. Dr. Mykola Bryvko & Tetyana Sheptytska, The National Historical and Memorial Reserve "Bykivnya Graves"

Today, when Ukraine is defending itself from Russian aggression, and the whole world is defending itself from Putin's regime, it is extremely important to have a true picture of the historical past, especially the Soviet one, which the Russian Federation not only appropriated, but also distorted in favor of its newest totalitarianism. Without condemning the crimes of Stalinism, it began to consistently reproduce repressive practices, cynical propaganda and methods of manipulation. Russia's deceitfulness is very clearly manifested in its attitude to the burial places of victims of political repressions. In 2017, Russian President Vladimir Putin formally declared respect for the memorials associated with the Great Terror. Instead, reality shows efforts not just to silence the bloody pages, but also to erase them from memory. At the same time, Ukraine has for a long time chosen and defended a coherent, consistent and balanced memory policy regarding the burial places of victims of political repression, seeing in this not only a tribute to historical justice, but also a proof of the formation of a civil society. A peculiar example of such processes can be considered the National Historical and Memorial Reserve "Bykivnya Graves", which has gone through a long path of transformation from an institution that preserves the historical memory of the repressed to an institution that tries to influence the formation of Ukraine's memory policy. And in this attitude, there is a significant difference between Ukraine and Russia.

Memory Laws in Contemporary Russia: Regulating the Narrative of the Russo-Ukraine War. Dr. Dagmara Moskwa, Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

In 1999 Putin came to power and started to design a carefully molded politics of history based mainly on the rehabilitation and glorification of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' great power policy (especially Joseph Stalin's regime) and the myth of the Great Patriotic War. Russia started to become a consolidated authoritarian regime using memory (on a unique global scale) for its legitimization. Moreover, Putin uses memory laws as an ideological basis for the creation and implementation of a politics of history and as a tool for justifying his non-democratic regime. For that reason I call the Russian Federation a mnemonic authoritarian regime. I intend to prove that politics of history in Putin's Russia contributes to the creation of the Russian consolidated authoritarian regime. The main aim of my paper is to analyze legal acts governing the interpretation of war within the context of V. Putin's politics of history. Additionally, the paper highlights parallels between legal acts regulating the interpretation of World War II and those concerning the

Russo-Ukrainian war. The most important value of the paper is to show threats resulting from the penalization of the past (threat to civil liberties and human rights) in non-democratic states (modern Russia). Moreover, my research will contribute to the expansion of knowledge about the possible opportunities for Russian civil society to develop. It could also indicate what changes should be introduced in the politics of memory in case of a future democratic breakthrough in Russia.

**State-Building Efforts of Belarusian National Elites in the Upheaval of the First World War From a Comparative Perspective
Dr. Lizaveta Kasmach, Independent Scholar**

As the First World War shattered the existing world order and contributed to the imperial decline in East Central Europe, many nationalities grasped the self-determination momentum. My paper will focus on the state-building efforts of Belarusian national elites in the early 20th century amid challenges of national identity formation in a heterogeneous and multi-confessional borderland region, where the First World War fundamentally transformed governance, while more opportunities opened up with the fall of the Russian Empire. The Belarusian independence proclamation in 1918 was preceded by major debates within the national milieu that revolved around federalism-based concepts as opposed to establishing an independent state. By focusing on various strategies employed by Belarusian activists in this period on both sides of the Eastern Front of the Great War, the paper will trace the evolution of their thinking towards the idea of a separate Belarusian statehood and its implementation. Comparisons with the Lithuanian and Ukrainian cases should contextualize and expand the discussion.



11:45–12:30

Keynote Address: Prof. Andrzej Szeptycki, University of Warsaw, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland

Central Europe Strikes Back

The Russian aggression against Ukraine led to the redefinition of borders inside Europe. The largely amorphous Eastern Europe, understood often as an area between the enlarged EU/NATO and the Russian Federation has definitely disappeared. Today there is no third way between Europe and the “Russian world”. The war in Ukraine has also considerably strengthened Central Europe (EU new member states) which received the biggest part of the Ukrainian refugees and confirmed their key role as NATO Eastern flank. In that context there is a growing need to develop Central European Studies not only to help Central Europeans to understand themselves better, but also to affirm their identity within EU and NATO and strengthen their independence vis-a-vis Russia. The development of Central European Studies is also to be a major path towards a mental decolonisation of the region after the domination of the Russian/Soviet empire, which had long dominated the Western imaginarium. Poland and Ukraine, the two biggest countries in the region bonded by a multi-level “strategic partnership”, can play a major role in the elaboration of this new field of regional studies.

13:15–14:45

Session IV-a

Strengthening European Self-Confidence: Western European Perspectives on the History of Ukraine in School History Textbooks

From a comparative perspective the panel discusses specific characteristic narratives on Europe in Ukrainian, Russian, and Western European history textbooks. The panel also presents considerations on how bilateral and multilateral transnational history books can develop perspectives on European history that help overcome stereotypes and underlying assumptions that strengthen divisions in the self-understanding of the history of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, and invites discussion on the particular place (role) of Ukrainian historians and history teachers in the writing of a shared European (school) history.

Moderator: Prof. Igor Kąkolewski, Centre for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Berlin

Europe in Ukrainian History Textbooks. Perspectives on Shared History. Mariia Kovalchuk, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

The Ukrainian textbook landscape since the 1990s has undergone significant changes, in form, variety, and methodology, but probably most of all in its content and storytelling. The concept of Europe has been a crucial part of these changes, influencing how Ukraine imagined Europe and defined its West, East and Center, but even more so how Ukraine portrayed and placed itself in the European and international context. Analyzing textbooks since the 2010s, my paper will explore the evolution of the European image from a highly idealistic but abstract and

uncritical representation to a more ambiguous and complex, increasing in realistic evaluations but also searching for shared historical roots and a platform for today's partnership.

Interplay and Dissonances of Ukrainian History in Narratives of Textbooks and Political Leaders (2020–2023). Yulia Ostropolchenko, Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick and Kyiv

This paper presents an overview of interpretations of the history of Ukraine in modern Russian media and history textbooks. The content of school historical literature in Russia, especially after 2014, is mainly correlated with the ideas of the Kremlin bureaucracy about why and how it is worth telling the Russian population about the past. It is about the state-centric and imperial-centric representation of the history of Russia. In school textbooks, as well as in the media, the actual identification of the history of Russia with the history of the Russian states and emphasis on their historical greatness and achievements is noticeable. One of the greatest achievements of Russia is the creation and functioning of the Russian “multinational empire”, which confidently “united” peoples and painlessly civilized them. As the analysis shows, these interpretations continue to change after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The factors affecting the change in the previous positions of the authors of Russian history textbooks are determined. The subordination of the content of modern textbooks on the history of Russia to the key historical and political ideologues of today's Putin state is emphasized. The textbooks of 2020–2023, speeches by political leaders and mass media formed the empirical basis of this study.

Western European Perspectives on the History of Ukraine in School History Textbooks. Prof. Steffen Sammler, Technical University & Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick

This contribution looks in a comparative perspective on the question of how the history of Ukraine is represented in history textbooks in various Western European countries (France, Germany, Spain, United

Kingdom) in a categorical relation to Europe. It analyses which themes, concepts and narratives of European history are formative for the representations of Ukraine and how the representations have changed since the 1990s. It asks what significance is ascribed to Ukraine's European past, with what specific values is such a European past of Ukraine associated, and to what extent does the reference to Europe function as a discursive resource? The contribution explores future possibilities for a closer cooperation between academic history and history education strengthening the history of Ukraine in European history education.

Multiperspectivity as a Method of Teaching History in the Transnational Textbook Series: The Polish-German "Europe – Our History" and the Franco-German "Histoire/Geschichte" in Comparison With the German-Russian History Book "Stations of Common History. Places of Remembrance"

Dr. Marcin Wiatr, Leibniz Institute for Educational Media, Brunswick

Binational history textbook projects have an important role in the reconciliation processes between nations divided by a traumatic past, especially the difficult experiences of World War II. The first examples of the transnational textbook series in the European Union are the Franco-German "Histoire/Geschichte" and the German-Polish "Europa – Unsere Geschichte / Europa. Nasza historia", published at the beginning of the 21st century. The latter publication also includes chapters on the history of Ukraine and the Polish-Ukrainian relations of the past 500 years. This paper presents various didactic approaches and didactic methods of teaching the Polish, German and Ukrainian history proposed in these two textbook series in comparison with the German-Russian history textbook "Stations of Common History. Places of Remembrance".

Session IV-b

Cultural Histories of Belarus from Transnational Perspectives

In Russia's decade-long war against Ukraine, Belarus has been an important third actor: as a mediator for the Minsk accords (2014–2015) and supporter of the 2022 full-scale invasion on the side of the Lukashenko regime, and from the point of view of civil society, as a structurally linked victim of Russian military aggression – above all in the Russia-backed suppression of the 2020–2021 protests in Belarus. Just as contemporary Belarusian cultural politics cannot be discussed without reference to the war, a complete view on the war itself also requires that a Belarusian perspective be taken into account. This panel offers a view on the future of Central and East European Studies by focusing on decolonial, transnational and non-Russocentric perspectives on the cultural history of Belarus. Reaching back into the Soviet period to shed light on lesser known archives of transnational subjectivity, it discusses Belarusian cultures and identities in the 20th and 21st centuries, demonstrating from different disciplinary angles – social history, theatre studies, and literary studies – for different periods that the country's historical multiculturalism and multilingualism have played important roles in social developments and knowledge production. While most scholarly attention on Belarus has tended to focus on national perspectives, the three papers presented here all argue that border-crossing, regional, decolonial and cosmopolitan narratives are a vital component of Belarus's cultural history.

Moderator: Prof. Simon Lewis, University of Bremen

The Jewish Movement for Emigration and Belarusian Intelligentsia Under Late Socialism: Points of Intersection.

Dr. Tatsiana Astrouskaya, Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Marburg

Late Soviet Belarus was a rapidly modernizing and urbanizing republic with a quickly growing share of Belarusians, as a titular nation, and the Russophone Soviet culture starting to dominate in all spheres of society. Yet despite enormous war population losses and the homogenizing politics of the Soviet state, Belarus' prewar multi-national, multi-language heritage was still, at that time, a visible part of the cultural landscape and public life. This paper focuses on the 1970s–1980s, when the beginning of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, which was an extraordinary event for Soviet society, coincided in Belarus with the summit of its socialist reconstruction on the one hand and the intensifying attempts of the Belarusian intelligentsia to oppose cultural unification on the other. During these two decades, thousands of Jews emigrated from Belarus, but in this very short moment (compared to the 500-year history of Belarusian Jewry) Jewish identity and Jewish life were revived once again and became visible. Simultaneously, while Belarusian Soviet culture was at its peak, alternative ideas and cultural spaces began to arise. Bringing together the history of Jewish emigration from the USSR and the history of late socialism in Belarus, which until now have appeared in scholarship as separate fields of study, this paper explores how emigration exposed and brought to the surface antisemitism and national and cultural contradictions nurtured by the national policies of the Soviet state but also motivated to rethink a centuries-old history of Belarusian-Jewish interaction.

"I Do Not Know Why I Learn It": The New Drama Turn in the Context of Political Turmoil and the War. Dr. Tania Arcimovich, Justus Liebig University Giessen

The paper explores shifts in the linguistic realm of New Drama, a literary and theatre phenomenon that emerged in the post-Soviet space in the 1990s–2000s as a purely Russian-language phenomenon. Different reasons caused these shifts. The annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 and the beginning of the war in Ukraine sparked a pivotal linguistic moment in New Drama – a transition from Russian to "national" languages, particularly in the Ukrainian context. This event triggered a new generation of playwrights in Belarus, leading to the emergence of New Drama in the Belarusian language. After the political turmoil in Belarus in 2020 and the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, another linguistic shift took place. The older generation of playwrights, for whom Russian was the primary mother language and professional tool, began to delve into and rediscover the Belarusian language "in order to distinguish 'we' from 'they'", as one author put it. The paper argues that the turn to Belarusian as a primary language in these new dramatic texts does not serve to homogenize Belarusian culture, which remains a multilingual and hybrid phenomenon. On the contrary, the modes the authors use and their experimentations with language are part of the dynamics of the linguistic realm in Belarus (including its decolonial history), signifying a new turn in the New Drama phenomenon.

Polyphonic Memory in Belarus: Literary Multilingualism and Pluriform Remembrance. Prof. Simon Lewis, University of Bremen

Post-Soviet societies are multilingual and multicultural. In the states of the former Soviet periphery, Russian coexists with the "titular" language, as well as a multitude of minority languages such as Tatar, Yiddish and Polish. Yet such multiculturalism is often politicized, creating tensions and fractures; in Belarus, for example, the cultural canon and major literary prizes tend to favor the Belarusian-language output of local authors,



whilst the use of Russian is more associated with the dictatorial regime of Aliaksandr Lukashenka and its supporters. Meanwhile, contemporary scholarship has offered relatively few insights into the relationship between cultural multilingualism and the polyphony of memory. How does the fact of being e.g. a Russophone writer outside Russia affect one's modes of intervention in memory narratives? This paper examines the multilingualism of contemporary Belarusian literature from a decolonial perspective. It shows how authors such as Sasha Filipenko and Viktor Martinovich have created an alternative poetics of Russian that hybridizes and provincializes the language itself, articulating a decentralized, non-Russian Russian language in which to narrate the past. Additionally, code-mixing and language-switching serve to construct alternative decolonial narratives of the Belarusian periphery, such as in Alhierd Bacharevič's magnum opus, *Sabaki Euroapy* (The Dogs of Europe, 2017). Finally, the first Ukrainian-language novel published in Belarus, Natałka Babina's *Bodai Budka* (2019), reveals another aspect of the decentered polyphony of the Belarusian cultural landscape: the existence of minoritarian borderland narratives that articulate unexpected points of contact with the wider region.

Session IV-c

Russian & Soviet Crimes: Survival and Punishment

Moderator: Dr. Oktawian Kuc, University of Warsaw

Gendered Violence, Genderless Frames: Discourses of Domestic Violence in Russia and Ukraine, 2011–2021. Natasha Bluth, University of California, Los Angeles

Although the global women's rights movement has helped institutionalize resolutions against gender-based violence, enduring contestations over women's rights have stymied the even diffusion of anti-violence laws across nation-states. Russia and Ukraine provide cases in point: Despite overlaps in history and culture and similar exposure to transnational feminism after the Soviet collapse, Ukraine criminalized domestic violence in 2017 while Russia made it a crime in 2016, only to reverse course the following year. However, notwithstanding their different laws on the books, debates about domestic violence in both countries retain a genderless character. To explain this puzzle, I discursively analyze 85 legislative and popular texts from 2011–2021, identifying three core frames – 'family,' 'foreign influence,' and 'human rights' – that structure discussions about domestic violence in both countries. Though the instrumentalization of these frames by state and non-state actors varies within and between Russia and Ukraine, their effect similarly taps into concerns about the 'traditional' family, as well as national identity and sovereignty, glossing over the gendered realities of domestic violence. These findings highlight local discourse as a critical mechanism for (1) understanding the divergent, albeit interrelated and uneven politics of gender in Ukraine and Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union, as well as (2) explaining the potential for and actual instances of gender policy reversals.

"Dispersed Nuremberg 2.0" for Soviet Crimes. Some Reflections on the Relevance of the Crime of Genocide in the Process of Dealing With the Communist Past in Central and Eastern Europe

Dr. Tomasz Lachowski, University of Łódź

In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the crimes of the USSR have neither been condemned, nor punished by the Russian Federation. On the contrary, modern Russia under Vladimir Putin is guided by historical policy based on the idea of rehabilitating the USSR. During the ongoing aggression against Ukraine this historical narrative plays a role of a weapon of Russian imperialism and the cornerstone of its path towards a new totalitarianism. In spite of the lack of 'Nuremberg for communism', a few states coming from the region of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) decided to implement different legal mechanisms aimed at dealing with the communist crimes, including those committed directly by the representatives of the USSR. The main aim of this paper is to analyze the chosen domestic endeavors undertaken by CEE countries, including Poland, the Baltic states or Ukraine, of settling accounts with its totalitarian past and Soviet domination. It is argued that the use of legal constructions of international core crimes, notably the crime of genocide, in the process of dealing with the Soviet criminal legacy, was an important factor of ensuring historical justice and furthering accountability, alongside fighting against the propaganda and misinformation policies of the past used by the Kremlin to this day. Therefore, these activities may be named as 'Dispersed Nuremberg 2.0' for Soviet crimes.

Forced Displacement of Children in Russian and Soviet Crimes – From Survival to Justice. Aleksandra Konopka, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw

This paper will delve into the tragic history of the forced displacement of children as a component of Russian and Soviet crimes, highlighting the devastating impact on the lives of the youngest and most vulnerable. Focusing on historical and contemporary instances of child abduction, deportation, and assimilation policies, the presentation will examine how state-led programs targeted children as a means of cultural and political control. By drawing on case studies, the talk will attempt to compare historical and contemporary child displacement practices. The paper will also explore ongoing efforts for legal accountability and the role of international institutions in addressing these crimes, emphasizing the need for global cooperation to ensure justice and protection for the displaced children.

14:45–16:15

Session V-a

Book Release Panel: “The Russian-Ukrainian War. Challenges to the Documentation and to the Prosecution of International Crimes”

This panel will present the results of a multidisciplinary examination of the international crimes committed in the Russia-Ukraine War and the challenges of their prosecution and documentation identified by authors of the book *The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict and War Crimes Challenges for Documentation and International Prosecution*, eds. Patrycja Grzebyk and Dominika Uczkiewicz (Routledge 2025). These results will be also addressed by external commentators, including Oleksandra Matviichuk, the head of the Center for Civil Liberties (Ukraine) and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022. The editors and authors will refer to ongoing proceedings concerning crimes in Ukraine in different jurisdictions and will address current doubts related with the process of ratification of the Rome Statute by Ukraine.

Moderator: Rafał Tarnogórski, Polish Institute of International Affairs

Panelists:

Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw

Mark Kramer, Davis Center, Harvard University

Oleksandra Matviichuk, Center for Civil Liberties, Kyiv

Dominika Uczkiewicz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Nadia Volkova, Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group

Session V-b

From Historical Politics to War. The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict Over Identity in the Media Space

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has demonstrated the relevance of the information war waged not only through traditional media (press, television), but also through the Internet, especially social media. One part of this is the dispute over the past, visible especially in the face of Russian efforts to undermine important elements of Ukraine's history. This panel will present four papers on the sphere of historical politics and the coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the Internet. Through this combination, the relevance of the Internet for the creation of narratives, both historical and those dedicated to current events, as well as the relevance of the historical context itself to the genesis and course of the conflict will be shown.

Moderator: Dr. Dawid Gralik, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Russian Historical Revisionism as an Ideology. Structure, Origins and Consequences. Prof. Wiktor Werner, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

This paper will explore the phenomenon of Russian historical revisionism in the form of official speeches by politicians, assertions made in the state media and also in numerous state-sponsored media products. The view of the past practiced in Putin's Russia largely has the character of a quasi-historical myth, which emphasizes the unique historical role of

Russia in its many forms. The historical “mission” of Russia portrayed in these narratives is supposed to justify efforts to politically and militarily subjugate other states. Our research aims to show the components of this narrative, its conceptual structure, as well as its links to analogous revisionist conceptions of history cultivated beyond Russia's borders. In order to carry out the research, we have prepared a database showing various forms of links between the phenomena that build up historical revisionism both in Russia and in other countries: publications, authors, institutions, as well as ideas present in specific narratives and media messages. To analyze the database, we used the method of complex network analysis (CNA), which involves making a graph – a complex structure of data showing the relationships between them. The interpretation of the graph makes it possible to see how the phenomena that are real components of the ideology of historical revisionism (ideas, publications, authors, institutions) form groups whose interrelationships can be identified.

Putin's Narrative About the History of Ukraine: Sources and Structure. Prof. Alexey Vasilyev, University of Warsaw

The topic of this report is the analysis of “Putin`s narrative” of Ukrainian history from the historical genetic and structural points of view. The question of the sources of the narrative can be considered in two aspects. Firstly, from the point of view of its philosophical, methodological and ideological foundations. Putin's statements about Ukrainian history, of course, do not contain explicit philosophical and methodological reflection, however, they implicitly contain quite obvious methodological prerequisites (essentialism, primordialism, elements of Hegel's philosophy of history etc.). Secondly, from the point of view of the content of Putin's historical narrative about Ukraine. In this perspective, we can say that this narrative is constructed from elements of historical narratives of the 17th century, historiography of the Russian Empire, as well as Soviet historiography. Structurally (in this case, I rely on the concept of Eviatar Zerubavel's cognitive sociology of memory), it is necessary to consider the historical depth of this narrative, the reference points of the narrative, i.e. the key historical events that became its “turning points”, as well as the type of connection of these events into a holistic narrative.

The Russia-Ukraine War in International Digital Media News Coverage. Dr. Jacek Nożewski, Kozminski University

Media agenda is defined as a set of issues considered most important during a specific period. Creating particular informational frameworks is closely related to selecting certain aspects of reality and presenting them in a unique way for each medium. The importance given to information lies in the hands of professionals who determine the shape and scope of the media agenda, which is also a collection of communicative relationships resulting especially from journalistic activity. The situation in Ukraine has led to the activation of many channels allowing for the dissemination of information about current events. The project's assumption is the evaluation of the unique structural frameworks of media agendas of selected news services covering the situation in Ukraine. The analysis includes the use of semantic network analysis derived from mathematical graph theory, based on a quantitative and qualitative perspective. It has been applied to examine the relationships between selected issues present in the coverage of selected services and their attributes. Thanks to the quantitative nature of the created database, graph theory, and the use of network analysis-related statistics, it was possible to observe the structural properties of graphs resulting from the analysis – the so-called concept of network



agenda-setting. The research also has revealed particular shifts and changes in the digital news media coverage characteristic for a given bunch of digital media. The departure point for quantitative analysis in this regard is an attempt to determine the distribution of information provided by selected newsrooms.

The War in Ukraine in the Light of Non-Mainstream Polish Social Media Channels. Dr. Dawid Gralik, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Since 24.02.2022, the topic of the new phase of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has become one of the main topics in the Polish media. The Russian attack also brought about the development of a group of channels on the Internet dealing mainly with the subject, so-called OSINT people. From the beginning, the picture created by the Polish mainstream media was basically homogeneous and limited to full support of the Ukrainian side. Only over time did this picture begin to become more nuanced. In addition to the mainstream media, the war in Ukraine led to the creation of a group of channels in social media, primarily YouTube and X (formerly Twitter), presenting a different picture of the conflict, definitely more critical of Ukraine, emphasizing the mistakes of the Ukrainians and mainstream experts. Among them can be mentioned the YouTube channels of, for example, Dr. Leszek Sykulski and *Wbrew cenzurze* (Against Censorship) and also Krystian Jachacy's X profile. Despite the strong creation of these creators as "Russian agents", these channels are able to develop sometimes quite a large reach.

Session V-c

When History Repeats Itself. Paradigms of the 20th Century East-Central European Experience With Russia

Moderator: Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

"Why Is the Soviet Union Not a Socialist State?" Polish Socialists on the USSR Before the Second World War. Dr. Bartłomiej Kapica, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

External perceptions of the Soviet Union in the interwar period were subject to fluctuation. They depended not only on geographical (Western vs East-Central Europe) and political factors, but ideological and moral ones as well. The popular belief that socialists were particularly naive in following Soviet mystifications is misleading. For the majority of Polish socialists its essence was clear – it was a new form of the Russian imperial project, enslaving its working class. However, that non-arguable stance became more vague as the crisis of capitalism embodied by the Great Depression took its toll and as Popular Fronts across Europe were organized. Poland was a particular case as it had had the experience of Soviet aggression in 1919–1920, vivid memories of which blocked the temptation of cooperation with the communists on a higher level. Nevertheless broad stances on communism represented within the lively Polish socialist movement brought original and in-depth interpretations of the Soviet system.

The 1989 Transformation as a New October Revolution

Dr. Michał Przeperski, Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences; Museum of Polish History

Mikhail Gorbachev did not want the communist system to fall, he wanted it to be rebuilt and reborn. Perestroika, glasnost, and uskorenienie were factors of the crisis which also were supposed to be factors of the system's rebirth by means of the crisis situation. The 70th anniversary of the Revolution clearly showed that the Soviet transformations were to become a new October, just as Gorbachev's speech at the UN in 1988 was to become a new Fulton (in relation to the post-war division of the world after the Second World War). My analysis indicates the Soviet assumptions, their reception by the satellite states, and the reaction of the West – these three elements will allow us to grasp the logic of the events and explain their unplanned consequences, i.e. the failure of the entire project.

A New Soviet West Once Again? The Sovietization of Western Ukraine 1944–53 and its Similarities to the Russian Occupiers' Policy in Ukraine. Dr. Damian Markowski, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

This article is about deep and radical changes which took place in the Western Ukraine region in the post-war period during the brutal and widespread process of sovietization. The Soviet State authorities tried to annex, once again, the region conquered in September 1939. For this reason, they forced most of the Polish citizens to leave the oblast and settle in Central and Western Poland. What is more, the Soviet authorities brought their own communist officials and former soldiers to the region as well as some Ukrainians uprooted from post-war Poland. They changed the ethnic structure of the region, its economy, and, furthermore, tried to change the mentality of local people in order to create a so called New, Soviet Man. In that period, which lasted only eight years and a half, the Soviet authorities had radically changed not only the multi-national and multi-cultural Polish-Ukrainian borderland region but – above all – the city of Lviv. The city was transformed into the main industrial and political center of Western Ukraine. After the open aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine on February 2022, the Russian authorities widely used the old methods of russification on the occupied territories of Ukraine and started the ongoing anti-Ukrainian propaganda campaign. They also managed to resettle a part of the Ukrainian population and replace it with Russians. These kinds of Russian politics were deeply similar to the sovietization process of Western Ukraine in 1944–1953.

The Years 1953–1956 in Central and Eastern Europe as a Window of Opportunity. Dr. Paweł Sasanka, The Institute of National Remembrance, Warsaw

Changes in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death initiated the stratification of its European sphere of influence. Although the Yalta division of the world was permanent, a window of change opened in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of the paper is to focus on the satellite countries of the Soviet Union and the changes taking place in them during this period.

16:30–18:00

History & Law – A Rocky Relationship. The Prosecution of International Crimes in Central-Eastern Europe: Are We Able to Escape From Our History?

History and law often clash in the courtroom as well as in academia. However lawyers and historians have a tendency to stand in their methodological trenches and comfortably avoid interaction. As a result, it is hard to paint a full picture of the motives and intentions of perpetrators of mass crimes which would help to address and prevent them. The panel will try to answer questions: To what extent does historical context need to be taken into account in the analysis of principles of responsibility for international crimes? In what way does the past still influence the current practice of states and individuals? Is Central-Eastern Europe doomed to the repetition of the mass atrocities? What history lesson can be drawn from the proceedings of international courts?

Moderator: Prof. Patrycja Grzebyk, University of Warsaw, President, Network on Humanitarian Action

Making History: Soviet & Post-Soviet Russia and the Instrumental Interpretation of the Genocide Convention. Prof. Anton Weiss-Wendt, The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies

Ever since the crime of genocide entered the international legal discourse, the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation have variously been intent on linking it to the Second World War. During the debates on the draft genocide convention on the UN floor in 1947–1948, Soviet representatives took the high moral ground by declaring genocide as the ultimate crime of the Nazis. Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, who reviewed and edited the draft Soviet proposal, removed all references to genocide as an international crime that could have a political form. Contrary to the common belief that Stalin scrapped references to political genocide to avoid responsibility for prosecuting political opponents in 1936–38, his real concern was the destruction of the opposition during the Sovietization of Eastern Europe. At that time, the Soviet Union was on the defensive. After ratifying the Genocide Convention in 1954, Moscow used it as a rhetorical weapon against the West, particularly the United States, which submitted the instrument of ratification only in 1988. The glaring lack of impartial, legal studies on genocide in the Soviet Union has persisted into post-Soviet Russia. References to genocide resurfaced concurrently with Russia's aggression against Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014, as an *ex post facto* justification for military intervention. The tired Soviet interpretation of genocide as primarily a Nazi crime has been revamped in the wake of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The Russian Federation has belatedly and expediently adopted a victim ethos. The new legal concept of "genocide of the Soviet people" conveniently blends the atrocities committed by the Nazis during World War II and the alleged offenses of Ukrainian "fascists" since 2014.

Reinterpretation of Crimes in Central-Eastern Europe Within a Post-Imperial Paradigm. Prof. Marek Wasieński, University of Lodz

Scholarly efforts have explored the past-present-future continuum of Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) through various analytical frameworks, including post-colonial studies. These span disciplines such as political economy, history, literature, political theory, and sociology. However, scholars of international law from CEE have only recently adopted this

path of inquiry, notably in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. A key focus has been on advocating for the establishment of a Special Tribunal for Aggression, countering the cautious or overtly hostile stance of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) scholars, predominantly representing the Global South. Dissident scholars from CEE challenge stereotypical geographical narratives that diminish the region's uniqueness by portraying it as merely an extension of the West. Instead, they emphasize the relationships between institutions, peoples, and ideas that support neo-imperial enterprises in both CEE and the Global South. These parallels suggest that a post-imperial conceptual framework, typical of TWAIL and marked by distinct sensibility, can also be applied to CEE to critique the notions of neutrality, fairness, impartiality, and equality – the foundations of international criminal justice. This approach aims to encourage TWAIL scholars to recognize the unique geopolitical and historical context of CEE, as well as its similarities to the Global South. I draw on this example to examine international law as a socio-cognitive field where knowledge is produced and distributed as cultural capital. In particular, the adoption of the post-imperial paradigm offers a contextual argument supporting initiatives such as the Special Tribunal for Aggression, thereby adding both moral, historical, and political dimensions to the discourse. Several questions arise against that backdrop, such as: Why has international law scholarship in CEE lagged behind other humanities, as well as behind TWAIL, in adopting the post-imperial approach to international criminal law? What are the implications of neglecting the CEE perspective expressed in post-imperial terms? How can the post-imperial approach be applied to reinterpret international criminal law?

The Commission of War Crimes as a Pattern of Conduct of Hostilities Prof. Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala, University of Warsaw

War crimes, as defined by international humanitarian law, represent severe breaches of the laws and customs of war, often emerging as systematic patterns rather than isolated incidents. The commission of war crimes as a pattern of conduct of hostilities has been a recurrent issue in modern warfare, particularly evident in the experiences of Central-Eastern Europe during World War II and in the context of Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine. During World War II, Central-Eastern Europe bore the brunt of some of the most horrific war crimes, systematically employed by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as strategic tools to terrorize and subjugate populations. Mass executions, forced deportations, and the deliberate targeting of civilians were integral to their military operations. The Nuremberg Trials brought to light the extent of these atrocities, establishing a precedent for international accountability and emphasizing the region's central role in the broader narrative of wartime atrocities. In the 21st century, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has revived fears of a return to such brutal patterns of warfare in Central-Eastern Europe. Reports of war crimes, including indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas, torture, and extrajudicial killings, have drawn disturbing parallels with the atrocities committed during World War II. These actions not only violate international norms but also highlight the enduring vulnerability of Central-Eastern Europe to the resurgence of unlawful methods of warfare. This pattern of war crimes, from the devastation of World War II in Central-Eastern Europe to the present conflict in Ukraine, underscores the ongoing challenges in enforcing international humanitarian law and the urgent need for robust mechanisms to ensure accountability and the protection of civilians in this historically turbulent region.

History Written by International Criminal Tribunals Dr. Aldo Zammit Borda, City, University of London

This presentation will focus on some of the lenses through which international criminal tribunals (ICTs) process and write historical narratives



of the conflicts before them. It will focus on two such frameworks: the individual-centred lens and the crime-driven lens. The individual-centred lens focuses on the actions and responsibilities of specific perpetrators, emphasising personal accountability and the legal principle of individual criminal responsibility. This approach's strength lies in its capacity to highlight the human agency behind mass atrocities, thereby personalising justice and making it relatable to the public. However, one limitation is that it may obscure the broader systemic and structural factors that contribute to conflicts, leading to a potentially narrow and decontextualized historical record. In contrast, the crime-driven lens prioritises the categorisation and legal analysis of specific crimes, such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. This lens provides a forensic understanding of the legal qualifications of acts committed during

conflicts, offering clarity and precision in the historical record. The strength of this approach is its ability to establish a clear legal framework for understanding the nature and gravity of crimes committed, which is critical for establishing criminal responsibility and respecting fair trial safeguards. However, one limitation is that it tends to be reductionist, reducing complex historical events to a series of legalistic categorisations. This presentation will argue that all writers of histories face limitations, and the histories written by ICTs are no exception. However, when approached with caution and a clear understanding of the frameworks through which they construct these narratives, the histories produced by ICTs can serve as a valuable contribution to the broader historical record of conflicts.

Day 3 | Saturday October 19

9:30–11:00

Session VI-a

Central-Eastern Europe Beyond Sovietization and Westernization: Environmental History, Sport Diplomacy, and Transnational Challenges

The conventional bipolar paradigm, which places significant emphasis on the roles of the Soviet Union and the United States in shaping the history of Central-East European (CEE) countries during the Cold War, has become inadequate for comprehending contemporary developments in international politics. Recently, a new line of research has emerged within the realm of CEE history where scholars such as L. Crump, S. Erlandsson (2020); J. Mark, A. M. Kalinovsky, S. Marung (2020); T. Dragostinova, (2021) and A. Komornicka (2024), have challenged the bipolar perspective. This new wave of research highlights the imperative of reassessing CEE history by decentering the predominant bipolar narrative and accentuating local experiences. This panel seeks to contribute to this branch of research, by providing an overview of the state of research on CEE history during the Cold War and prioritizing national experiences that transcend the bipolar influences. The three contributions of the panel focus on the state of the art of environmental history (in the Lower Danube), sport diplomacy (in Hungary), and transnational policies (in Poland). Through this approach, the panel offers fresh perspectives that contest the conventional understanding rooted in the depiction of a monolithic Bloc governed solely by superpower influence, thereby underscoring the complexity and richness of the region's historical developments.

Moderator: Dr. Artur Adamczyk, University of Warsaw

Environmental History of Central and Eastern Europe During Communism: New Lines of Inquiry. Dr. Francesco Magno, University of Trento

For a long time, scholars who investigated the human-nature relationship in Eastern Europe during the communist period remained under an excessively dichotomous prism. Western historiography of the 1990s emphasized the dramatic environmental consequences of state socialism, thus reinforcing the narrative of the triumphant capitalist order. Contrastingly, since the mid-2000s, new works have engaged in a comprehensive reinterpretation of the period, trying to demonstrate that communist regimes were not insensitive to environmental issues. The present proposal aims to indicate original lines of inquiry that can enrich our current understanding of the topic, specifically addressing the importance of local and contingent factors in the emergence – or ignorance – of specific environmental issues. By providing examples from the author's current research on the lower Danube, the presentation will focus on the role of particular groups of experts in conceiving, contesting, and ultimately shaping different natures, highlighting the importance of national scientific practices, internal power dynamics, and geo-physical peculiarities in setting the terms of the environmental agenda.

Challenging the Idea of a Uniform Eastern Bloc: Sports Diplomacy and the Autonomy of Individual Countries. Dr. Lorenzo Venuti, University of Bologna

Sport was a particularly important symbolic battleground during the Cold War, sublimated by the last-second finals between Soviet and US teams and the respective boycotts in the 1980s. While historians, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, have mainly focused on the antagonistic dimension between the blocs, concentrating on the US-Soviet opposition, a new sensibility has emerged in recent years. In fact,

a new generation of scholars has emphasized sport not only as a terrain of confrontation, but also of continuity in the relations between the two blocs, stressing the limited freedom of action that individual actors, especially sports managers, could enjoy in international relations. This attention was also the result of the interest aroused by “non-superpower” countries interested in pursuing their own autonomous sports policies. Based on these assumptions, the author will focus on the sports diplomacy of Hungary, a particularly important player in European sport in the 20th century, and the peculiar position that Hungarian leaders occupied during the Cold War, highlighting how the Eastern Bloc was already far from homogeneous from a sporting point of view in the 1950s.

Solidarity Across Borders: A Comparative Analysis of Solidarność’s International Literature and Primary Sources. Maddalena Valacchi, University of Trento

Solidarność is a globally recognized movement that has significantly influenced both Polish and international history. An analysis of existing literature reveals a distinct difference between Polish-language sources and those intended for an international audience. Polish literature comprehensively analyzes the movement’s national and regional impact. In contrast, international literature often emphasizes its global significance within the bipolar dynamic of the Cold War, frequently overlooking the movement’s unique national characteristics. This work delves into English-language literature within the realm of international history, aiming to thoroughly explore prevalent themes and debates in existing literature and the international perceptions it engenders. Its objective is to pinpoint and bridge gaps, accentuate strengths, and propose novel avenues for research. Additionally, to provide a thorough overview of research on Solidarity’s transnational experience, this paper includes a brief analysis of the existing primary sources related to Solidarity. The author will discuss the complexities of studying the Solidarity experience through primary sources dispersed worldwide. In this context, the paper will also briefly address the peculiarities of social movement archives and the unique Polish experience.

Session VI-b

Central Europe vs. Russia as Seen in Literature, Culture, Ideology

Moderator: Dr. John Cornell, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

The Lures of Modernity and Panslavism: Czech National Socialism Between East and West. Dr. Ondřej Holub, Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences

In the first half of the 20th century, Czech National Socialists (1897–1948) epitomized a vigorous progressive, democratic force on the domestic political scene. They belonged to leading proponents of social reformism and evolutionary socialism in Central Europe. While integrating a manifold scale of political myths into nationalist, progressive, populist, and semi-liberal discourse, the party elites asserted a heterogeneous, yet appealing ideology that successfully addressed a large mass of voters. In the presented paper, I aim to discuss the specific ideological position of Czech National Socialism between the Western tradition of social reformism and social liberalism, and the Pan-Slavic orientation the party embraced before the Great War. I intend to address some characteristic features of Czech National Socialist ideology in a transnational and global comparison to some of its European

counterparts, such as the German National Social Association or the various forms of Russian populism and socialism. It is my goal to outline the particular position of Czech National Socialism between East and West since its adaptation to various cultural and ideological trends of the first half of the 20th century can tell us more about the origin and nature of reform socialism in Central and Eastern Europe.

Resisting Russification in Soviet Estonia Through Musical Networking, 1960–1985. Prof. Simo Mikkonen, University of Eastern Finland

The latter half of the 1980s in the Baltic Countries is known as the period of the Singing Revolution. Musical culture played an important role in the national revival of all three republics. There is, however, little research about how the Singing Revolution came about. Historical narratives usually emphasize the hardship of national cultures under Soviet rule. In my presentation, I argue that national musical cultures were carefully nurtured through international networking creating the basis for later national revival. For Estonia, Finland was an important contact point, through which contact with the rest of the western countries – Sweden in particular – was possible. Particularly after 1965, when a constant ferry connection between Helsinki and Tallinn was established, chances for networking increased and intensified. Conductors like Neeme Järvi and Eri Klas, in particular, visited Finland and were active in conducting works by Estonian composers – and made sure they were seen as Estonian, rather than as Soviet composers. Instead of open resistance to Soviet authorities and Russification, musical networking formed an area of subtle resistance. If they would have resisted the Soviet rule openly, they would have been denied their travel permits. In order to keep their networks alive, they needed to be able to travel, and therefore had to balance between authorities’ demands and attempts to emphasize Estonian culture. Through a few cases of notable Soviet Estonian musicians, this presentation focuses on subtle resistance against authorities and russification in Soviet Estonia. At the same time it discusses the changes in the research environment with access denied to Russian archives and its impact on the research of Soviet history.

The Transforming Of Values In Eastern Slavic Culture: From Russian Imperialism to National Identity. Dr. Ganna Liulikova, Humboldt University of Berlin

Cultural transformations amid political and social upheavals in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine have driven a prolonged process of changing values within Eastern Slavic culture. This process highlights the emergence of Belarusian and Ukrainian cultures from marginalization, as the declining dominance of Russian culture – once the prevailing influence during the Soviet era – creates space for these cultures to flourish. The Soviet policy of depersonalizing the national diversity of non-Russians led to a perception, both within and outside the post-Soviet area, that Russian culture encompassed not only itself but also Belarusian, Ukrainian, and other national cultures. By focusing on speech behavior and examining mechanisms of national identity – how it is identified, self-identified, and identified by others – this approach explores the national narratives of Eastern Slavs shaped by Soviet and Russian cultural imperialism on their path to national self-identification. This study of the evolving national narratives within Eastern Slavic culture significantly expands the scope of cultural studies. It enables deeper exploration of how Belarusian and Ukrainian cultures have liberated themselves from the marginalized status imposed by the legacy of Soviet and Russian cultural dominance.



Neighbor, Brother, and Role Model to Emulate, or How Belarusian Intellectuals Viewed the Progress of Ukrainian Nation – and State-Building From the Late 19th to Early 21st Centuries **Dr. Aliaksandr Paharely, Pilecki Institute, Warsaw**

This paper focuses on selected cases of how Belarusian intellectuals viewed the development and achievements of the Ukrainian national movement and statehood in the crucial periods of Belarusian and Ukrainian nation and state formation. The task is not to cover and examine all instances of these encounters but to show that Belarusian intellectuals saw Ukraine and Ukrainians as not just brotherly people and neighbors to the south but as a role model and a normative example to achieve their own goals and ultimately gain the status of an independent nation-state. The cases range from correspondence between Belarusian journalist and poet Vajnislaŭ Savič-Zablocki (1850–1893) and Ukrainian intellectual Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895) in the 1880s to the time of the Orange revolution of 2004 in Ukraine.

Session VI-c

CEE Studies From a Historical Viewpoint.

Moderator: Dr. Krystian Wyciarz, Center for Totalitarian Studies, Pilecki Institute

Russian or Slavonic (and East European) Studies? Politics, the Personality Factor and Ukrainian Studies Positioning at the SSEES in the 1920s–30s. Dr. Roman Syrota, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

Since the founding of the London School of Slavonic Studies in 1915, its academic doctrine has been grounded in a methodology now recognized as area studies, where political borders assumed primacy in circumscribing the domain of study. As a result, scholarly discourse on the demarcation between Russian and Slavonic studies during the interwar period was significantly shaped by the field of Ukrainian studies. This phenomenon can be attributed to a multitude of factors spanning from political to interpersonal dynamics. Pares, who served as the director of the School and held professorial appointment in Russian history, language, and literature, adopted a fervent Russophile stance. Another founder of the School and professor of Central European history, Seton-Watson, by contrast, appears to have acknowledged that the prospects for Ukrainian studies, distinct from Russian studies, were viable primarily within the framework of Central European scholarship. Within this context, Ukrainian studies could be integrated into the broader domain of Slavic studies. The most contentious debates regarding the incorporation of Ukrainian themes into the realm of Slavic studies transpired within the editorial board of *The Slavonic Review*, a publication affiliated with the School since 1922. Pares and Seton-Watson, serving as co-editors, espoused divergent perspectives. Pares opposed the inclusion of what he deemed “political” articles, principally those addressing Ukrainian affairs, within the journal’s pages. Seton-Watson instead actively sought contributions from Ukrainian authors and advocated for their publication. Unfortunately, despite his endeavors, the prevailing political circumstances in Eastern Europe posed insurmountable obstacles, impeding any substantive advancement in emancipating Ukrainian studies from the overshadowing influence of Russian studies.

CEE Studies in Poland: Reframing the University Curriculum **Dr. Olga Gontarska, German Historical Institute, Warsaw**

The Russian aggression against Ukraine has undoubtedly forced scholars to rethink and review their current understanding of the entangled relationships in Central and Eastern Europe. But has a full-scale invasion really changed the scholarship and scientific discourses? I argue that the Russian-centric approach still remains dominant. However, it is often hidden behind a new discourse, which does not necessarily mean a change of approach, just as was the case of the internalization of Western concepts by Ukrainian post-Soviet historiography, described by Andrii Portnov in his essay in 2009. My paper will be an invitation to discuss the history and state of research on Russia and Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries, using the university curriculum as a case study. Based on long-term observations, analysis of the thematic scope and the courses offered, especially at the University of Warsaw and the Jagiellonian University, I will present the dynamics of change over the last 30 years. I will identify discursive traps and comment on challenges related to the interdisciplinary approach. I argue that the change within this field has remained an ongoing experiment, rather than following Western patterns or a consistent idea based on local experience. Given the widespread call for a decolonization of scholarship on Central and Eastern Europe, it seems essential to honestly review persistent patterns of the Russian-centric approach. The analysis of the courses offered for future experts and analysts, but also for those who will develop the cooperation in the region, seems to be just as important as theoretical concepts in academic research.

Decoloniality as Translation: Re-Positioning the Transnational Image Building of Ukraine’s Culture. Dr. Iryna Odrekhivska, University College London

As the humanities and social sciences embrace both the decolonial (Gallien, 2020; Maldonado-Torres & Cavooris, 2017) and translation (Bachmann-Medick, 2013; Bassnett, 2003) turns, which enable a detachment from entrenched narratives, a critical interrogation of their legitimacy, and a renewed inter-epistemic dialogue, this conference paper seeks to explore the transformative potential of integrating Translation and Decolonial studies within the field of Slavic Studies. Specifically, it aims to examine how this symbiosis can disrupt existing paradigms and reconceptualize Ukraine’s cultural narrative. I argue that past translations of Ukrainian material (both literature and academic discourse) into English, a lingua franca of our modernity, involved deliberate selection, categorization, and appropriation, resulting in the exclusion of elements that did not align with the predetermined boundaries of the established epistemic domain, namely the Russian imperial and later Soviet lens. I will illustrate my argument through three representative case studies: one from the mid-19th century (Benjamin Beresford’s translatorial agency), another from the mid-20th century (Soviet positioning of Ukrainian literature via the pivot of Russian), and a third from the early 21st century (appropriation strategy in contemporary translation). This will demonstrate how past patterns inform the present and shape the framing of future narratives for Slavic Studies in general and Ukrainian studies in particular.

**“Common Crime Offenses” in Times of Political Repression:
The Case of the Soviet Northwestern Borderland in the 1930s
Dr. Oksana Ermolaeva, Complutense University, Madrid**

In today’s Russia, real or alleged non-compliance with state policy leads to an almost imminent “social death” of an individual. And the state is increasingly using non-political, or administrative tools of an individual repression to achieve “political” aims. The current repressive policies, marking a step towards a “digital gulag,” had its historical predecessors in Stalin’s Soviet Union during the 1930s. Scholars have amply researched the ways the Soviet state classified, excluded, displaced, and annihilated those deemed dangerous to the regime with much attention paid to distinctions between “political” and

“non-political” modes of “society cleansing” (Shearer, 2009; Khlevniuk, 2015; Viola, 2022; Saramo, Savolainen, 2023). Much less is known about how the politics actually interfered with “non-political” justice in the Soviet provinces. This paper is based on archival criminal cases from the 1930s started in the territory of the AKSSR (Autonomous Karelian Soviet Socialist Republic). The research focuses on procedural contradictions and conflicts among various provincial Soviet law enforcing agencies oscillating between the “common crime” and “political” articles of the Soviet penal code. It studies in detail how in the 1930s the Soviet Political Police (the NKVD) tackled such cases, facing resistance from the local People’s Courts and the prosecutor’s offices; and determines the factors that conditioned the outcome of such cases and the fate of defendants.

11:00–12:00

**Keynote Address: Dr. Tetiana Portnova,
University of Potsdam**

**Reshaping Ukrainian Studies in the Context
of the War**

Since Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine started, a lot of academic discussions about the importance of Ukrainian studies for understanding the whole East and Central European region were held, calling for a renewal of terminology and methodological approaches, institutional support, and curriculum changes, and a general development of historiographic legitimacy of Ukrainian studies in the eyes of Western academia. Now it is possible to give some preliminary observations about what was successfully done, and what is still seen as “that noble dream”. Special attention will be given to the following three questions: the problems of institutionalization of Ukrainian studies and the impact of the influx of Ukrainian scholars to European universities; key periods, topics and problems chosen as important for rethinking; and perspectives and challenges of decolonization approaches to the field.

12:15–13:45

**Panel Discussion: Central and Eastern Europe
as Subject or Object? Perspectives on CEE
Studies in the Global Public Discourse**

Moderator: Dr. Ian Garner, Center for Totalitarian Studies,
Pilecki Institute

Panelists:

Prof. John Micgiel, East European Centre, University of Warsaw
Dr. Tetiana Portnova, University of Potsdam
Prof. Mark Kramer, Harvard University
Prof. Igor Kąkolweski, Centre for Historical Research of the Polish
Academy of Sciences in Berlin

In this final panel discussion we aim to wrap up the conference by considering the status of Central and East European Studies within a global context. Russia’s war against Ukraine has certainly brought focus to the region, and it is to be hoped that – given the naked imperialism of Putin’s invasion – a reassessment of the political, cultural, and historical character of Central and Eastern Europe will be called for within academia worldwide. But is this in fact happening? Can we say that Central and Eastern Europe as a distinct region has obtained its own agency, and that research in and of this area has become more subject oriented? We will ask, too, about the relationship between scientific discourse and political discourse – is the former guided by the latter, and if so to what effect? How shall CEE Studies be positioned within the global “market-place of ideas”? What are the unique characteristics and challenges of the CEE discourse, and what might it potentially contribute to Western scholarship? Lastly, we shall consider which research perspectives are most useful and need further exploration, and how researchers across disciplines might find ways to address these needs.

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