



Witnessing and Documenting Wartime Experiences: The Current Russian War in Ukraine, Historical Perspectives, and Global Alliances

April 16 – April 24, 2023

Description, Objectives, & Tentative Program of the Summer School

ORGANIZING TEAM:

Co-ordinator at Saarland University (UdS): **Prof. Astrid M. Fellner**

Co-ordinator at Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU): **Prof. Oleksandr Pronkevich**

Co-ordinator at West Chester University (WCU): **Prof. Robert Kodosky**

Project Management: **Dr. Alina Mozolevska, Eva Nossem**

Student helpers: **Maleeka Zainab, Viktoriia Karakatsii**

FACULTY MEMBERS:

Prof. Janneken Smucker (West Chester), Dr. Olha Polishchuk (PMBNU/UdS), Anastasiia Mikhieieva (PMBNU), Dr. Viktoria Sereda (UCU/FU Berlin), Prof. Tetiana Shestopalova (PMBNU/UdS), Valeriia Biloshapko (PMBNU/UdS), Dr. Svitlana Kot (PMBNU/UdS), Dr. Cheri Carter (Temple University).

Short description of the Program:

Borders—especially border transgressions—and wars are closely connected: wars are being fought over territorial issues, and borders are often subject to conflicts. Borders are being weaponized, and they are often viewed in terms of military preparedness and confrontation. They are therefore central to our understanding of societies that are affected by war experiences.

This international summer school focuses on wartime experiences, shared and documented by young people and contextualized in a broader global and historical context. It will address issues of border crossings and migration, living conditions and the many challenges that life brings about in times of war. The main aims pursued in this summer school are to give voice to testimonials to empower those who share their stories, to bolster the exchange, and to build strong alliances between youth from Ukraine, Germany/Europe, and the U.S. Students from Saarland University (Germany), and West Chester University (USA) will meet up with students from Ukraine (Lviv and Mykolaiv) for an entire week in order to analyze and talk about first-hand experiences, integrating them into a scientific Border Studies debate, contextualizing them both historically and globally in the long history of border disputes and wars over borders.

Aims and Objectives of this International Summer School:

We want to bring students of the Greater Region (SaarLorLux+) together with students from Mykolaiv and Lviv, Ukraine and West Chester U in Pennsylvania, USA and have them engage in a serious dialogue about lives during wartimes in borderlands. In doing comparative and practical work in Border Studies and digital history, we hope that you will learn from each other. We also hope that you will be able to critically reflect upon border disputes and issues and that you will be motivated to engage in a critical intervention in an identity construction process that involves cross-border or other identity conflicts and power differentials. We hope that you can take with you from this course some deeper understanding of wartime experiences and that the knowledge acquired in this course will enable you to intervene critically in a real-life situation.

The overall intercultural aims of our collaboration are:

- to increase students' mutual understanding between cultures and nations
- to raise students' awareness of the significance of history
- to enable students to function as mediators between cultures
- to foster a transcultural dialogue and interaction in a critical yet respectful way that is framed by students' awareness of their own positionality and corollary interest as cultural subjects.

Structure of the Summer School:

The summer school is structured in three phases: In the first phase of this collaborative class “Identifying Locations,” students share readings on Cultural Studies research. The second phase of this class “History of War and Trauma and Representations in the Arts” will also focus on shared readings and will include master classes. Based on the preparatory theoretical work and the practical investigations during the first couple of days of the summer school, students will then investigate selected topics in more detail in the third phase entitled “(Digital) Storytelling.” The summer school will also include excursions: students will visit battlefields in the Saarland as well as in France.

Pre- and post-summer school work:

This collaborative, international project will consist of a summer school in April 2023, which will take place in Saarbrücken, Germany. It will be followed by independent collaborative work via zoom in the following months. Students will conduct interviews and craft a digital storytelling project, which will then be published in the fall of 2023.

Since students share the same course readings and tasks during the summer school, they have to prepare for this summer school before we meet in April. Students can also get into contact prior to their meeting in April via e-mail and/or the tool wonder.me. After a general introduction to the main themes of the course and a series of classes taught by international experts in the fields of Border Studies, Cultural Studies, Literary Studies, history, digital storytelling, social work and ethnography, you will work independently in small teams. You will do independent research on your topics and you will work together with our core faculty, who will help you produce your multi-media products. You will then present your results to the entire group at a later point in the fall of 2023.

Course platform:

Faculty and students have access to the **e-learning platform OLAT**.

Please look at the instruction sheet, so that you can create an account with OLAT (if you don't already have one). Here is the url: <https://olat.vcrp.de/dmz/>
In order to access our course, go to: <https://olat.vcrp.de/url/RepositoryEntry/4071064081>
Passcode: SummerSchool23

Students' projects will be published on the NamLitCult website:

<https://www.amerikanistik.uni-saarland.de/tad/tad-home>

Some selected projects could be archived at the Nunn Center at the University of Kentucky.

Here is the Zoom link, if you want to follow the lectures online:

Topic: Summer School Saarbruecken April 2023

Zoom-Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83587895273?pwd=WDh2RDIKSGkzNGpaTk1BQ3R1SDN3dz09>

Meeting-ID: 835 8789 5273

Kenncode: V5XmmW

Venue of the Summer School:

Europa-Jugendherberge

Meerwiesertalweg 31

66123 Saarbrücken

<https://www.diejugendherbergen.de/jugendherbergen/saarbruecken/>

Saarland University

Graduate Center

Campus C9 3

66123 Saarbrücken

<https://www.uni-saarland.de/standort/saarbruecken/lageplan/interaktiv.html>

Tentative Schedule

We will immerse students in readings and discussions about history of war, wartime experiences, trauma, and representations of war and traumatic experiences in the arts. We will do daily thematic readings from the fields of history, literature (especially drama) and we will work in groups to discuss these texts and reflect upon them.

Group-Activities: We will pair up students in the following way:
5 groups of 4 with chances to cross pollinate: 1 Saarland, 1 WCU with 2 Ukrainian students

During this week, we will do peer interviews (as practice) and will teach students how to conduct interviews, how to construct multi-media projects and/or craft digital storytelling projects, which will later be archived.

On the last day, we will also review our work, share our ideas, and reflect upon them.

Sunday, 16.04: Arrival of participants

Dinner and informal exchange

Phase 1: “Identifying Locations”

Monday, 17.04: War, Memory, and Identity

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

9:30-10:30 Welcome: Getting to know each other

(Prof. Astrid M. Fellner, Prof. Oleksandr Pronkevich, Prof. Robert Kodosky, and Prof. Janneken Smucker)

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30 Transatlantic Dialogues and Intercultural Learning

(Prof. Astrid M. Fellner)

This interactive class will focus on the development of intercultural competencies. It will present a model which can serve as the basis for our collaboration.

→ Reading: Flower, Linda. "Talking across Difference: Intercultural Rhetoric and the Search for Situated Knowledge." *College Composition and Communication*. 55.1 (September, 2003): 38-68.

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 Masterclass: How to do Cultural Studies Research: Identifying Locations (Prof. Astrid M. Fellner)

This lecture will present some key concepts of Cultural Studies – identity, discourse, and power.

Location as the starting point for research: essentialist vs. contextualist understandings of identity; importance; research ethics

Task: All participants: Identify your own location: i.e. become aware of your subject positions

→ Readings: Excerpt from: Johnson, Richard, et al. *The Practice of Cultural Studies*: London: Sage 2004.

15:00-17:00 Masterclass: Rearticulation of belonging: the regionalism, identities, linguistic and religious landscape of contemporary Ukraine (Dr. Viktoria Sereda)

This will be an interactive module aimed to help students to chart basic issues in discussions about Ukraine. It aims to equip them with the knowledge about where to look for reliable open-access data and skills how to analyze various types of sociological data that would include opinion polls, in-depth interviews and uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to map and analyze sociological data. Mapping data on the region (oblast) level avoids arbitrary scaling into predefined macro-regions, and allows researchers to explore and explain intraregional and cross-regional differences and similarities in the changing social and political context of 2013 and 2015 Ukraine.

→ Read/watch in advance:

- Digital Atlas of Ukraine. Religious Pluralism in Ukraine <https://harvard-cga.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9d7160c9e77a4f7bbd0384fe60eb3e2a>
- 2 sample interviews with Ukrainians (available on Olat)
- Oksana Mikheieva, Oxana Shevel (2021) *The Development of National Identities in Ukraine from "the Ukraine" to Ukraine. A Contemporary History, 1991–2021*, edited by Matthew Rojansky, Georgiy Kasianov and Mykhailo Minakov

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Phase 2: “History of War and Trauma and Representations in the Arts”

Tuesday, 18.04: History of War

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

9:30-12:00 The Long Twentieth Century: In Search of Battlefield Decisiveness
(Prof. Rob Kodosky)

This discussion will be guided by the reading (below) about the development of warfare through the 20th century into current times. It will ask students to interrogate war theorist Karl von Clausewitz’s maxim that war constitutes politics by other means.

→ **Read in Advance:**

[Demise of Short War](#); [Weaponizing Helicopters](#); [The Good War](#); [Start With Political Resilience](#)

Key Questions:

1. In what ways did warfare evolve between the 18th and 20th centuries? What resulted from these changes?
2. Are there commonalities between America’s wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan that lend insights into Russia’s invasion of Ukraine?
3. How does psychology factor into modern warfare? How do various actors, state and non-state, seek to utilize it?

11:00-11:15 Coffee Break

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-16:00 Diplomacy (Prof. Rob Kodosky)

This is a simulation where, in teams, students will role play decisions based on Europe's early 20th century borders: France, UK, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman empire, Russian empire and Italy. The simulation involves negotiation, subterfuge, alliance building and will lead to discussion/reflection on real world state craft and the value of simulation. Students will pre-read the rules

16:00-18:00 Introduction to Oral History and Digital Storytelling with Professor Janneken Smucker

In this introduction to oral history, we will discuss readings on oral history, trauma, and memory, setting the stage for practice interviews students will conduct as homework. Come prepared to consider, in Portelli's words, „What Makes Oral History Different?“ The session will include an overview of the digital storytelling project including introduction of the project contract template and small group work analyzing digital storytelling projects.

→ **Read/watch in advance:**

- *What Is Oral History?*, Self-Evident: Asian America's Stories (Self Evident, 2022), <https://selfevidentshow.com/oral-history-toolkit/lesson-02-what-is-oral-history>.
- Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different," in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), 45–58.
- Alessandro Portelli, "So Much Depends on a Red Bus, or, Innocent Victims of the Liberating Gun," *Oral History* 34, no. 2 (October 1, 2006): 29–43, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40179895>.

Key questions:

- How does memory work in oral history?
- What is the utility of oral history?
- What should we consider in preparing to share stories about war and trauma?

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Phase 3: (Digital) Storytelling

Wednesday, 19.04: Field-Trip

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

Lunch: Lunch box

**11:00-16:00 Visit Battlefield Saarbrücken: Spicherer Höhen and Gedenkstätte
“Gestapo-Lager Neue Bremm”**

→ Reading for discussion in advance of excursions (pdfs on OLAT):

Spicheren:

- Emma Login, “War Memorials in Sedan and Metz,” *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*, Sept. 2012.
 - Geoffrey Wawro, “Wissembourg and Spicheren,” *The Franco-Prussian War*, Cambridge, 2003.
1. What happened at Spicheren?
 2. What characteristics about the battle do you find noteworthy?
 3. What can we learn by studying the memorials to the Franco-Prussian War constructed by the French and the Germans in the shared space of Alsace-Lorraine?

Verdun:

- Tonie Holt and Valamai Holt, “Verdun,” *Major and Mrs. Holt’s Concise Guide Western Front South*, Pen and Sword, 2006.
 - Paul Jankowski, “Verdun: The Endless Battle,” *The Historian*, Summer 2016.
1. Waged within 50 years of one another, what commonalities and differences emerge about warfare between the Battle of Spicheren and the Battle of Verdun?
 2. Given its immense number of casualties, do any lessons exist from the Battle of Verdun that prove applicable to contemporary conflicts?
 3. Why does Jankowski identify Verdun as an “endless battle?” Is this an apt description? Why?

Staff ride: Students will consider the [history](#) of this battlefield in advance, exploring the battles, its context and the memorials built on site. Students will be paired to present on some aspect briefly during the visit that aims to provoke discussion on site. Students will write a short reflection after (500) words to share with the group by posting on our class platform OLAT.

Afternoon: free time in town

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Thursday, 20.04: Representations of Trauma and (Digital) Storytelling

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

9:30-12:00 Master Class: Narrating Traumatic War Memories in Digital Spaces

(Dr. Olha Polishchuk, Dr. Svitlana Kot)

Introducing students to the basic terms and tools of trauma studies. Engaging students into brainstorming and group work aimed at exploring various digital spaces to find war testimonies and examining the stages of narrating and living through trauma.

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 Master Class: Documenting Russia's War in Ukraine in Digital Archives, Voices of Memory project *(Anastasiia Mikhieieva)*

The “Voices of Memory” project is not unique in the sense that the genre of collecting video evidence is actively used these days, especially in times of crises and wars, but my project is relevant for the Mykolaiv region and for Trauma Studies. In this master class, I would like to share the process of managing communications, filming and producing these videos. Also, it is important to talk about the difficulties of filming traumatized experiences, and the approach to the hero plays a crucial role. That is why I would like the students to practice setting objectives to their projects, writing a script and questions and also film a small interview on a chosen subject.

→ **Read/watch in advance:**

- Presentation of the project Voices of Memory

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z6kHAPm7ZJ9NDntianFYRD_eeTV2gCZA/view?usp=sharing

- Collecting real time testimonies after shelling in Mykolaiv region, August 2022
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eey-jKXwVhc>

15:00-15:30 Coffee break

15:30-17:00 Oral History and Digital Storytelling amid Ongoing Crisis, with Professors Janneken Smucker and Cheri Carter

Building on Prof Mikhieieva's discussion of trauma, this session will prepare students for conducting practice interviews outside of class. Of special consideration is the role trauma and memory play in recalling stories, and readings will frame the issues of trauma amid ongoing crises. Students will work in small groups to develop interview agendas and question banks. Students will leave prepared to conduct practice interviews with one another.

→ **Watch/read/explore in advance:**

- *Preparing Yourself as the Interviewer*, Self-Evident: Asian America’s Stories (Self Evident, 2022), <https://selfevidentshow.com/oral-history-toolkit/lesson-04-preparing-yourself-as-the-interviewer>.
- Valerie Yow, “Preparing for the Interviewing Project,” in *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2nd ed. (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2005), 68–91.
- Jennifer A. Cramer, “‘First, Do No Harm’: Tread Carefully Where Oral History, Trauma, and Current Crises Intersect,” *The Oral History Review* 47, no. 2 (July 2, 2020): 203–13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00940798.2020.1793679>.
- Anna F. Kaplan (2020) Cultivating Supports while Venturing into Interviewing during COVID-19, *The Oral History Review*, 47:2, 214-226, DOI: [10.1080/00940798.2020.1791724](https://doi.org/10.1080/00940798.2020.1791724).

Key questions:

- What are the risks in interviewing in the midst of crisis?
- How can oral history help in processing trauma? How can it hinder?
- What considerations must you make as an interviewer in preparing to interview about traumatic situations?

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Friday, 21.04: Narrating & Reporting War in Media

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

9:30-12:00 Master Class: Representation of War Trauma in Audiovisual Arts Part 1
(Oleksandr Pronkevich, Tetiana Shestapolova, Valeriia Biloshapko)

The objectives of this masterclass are, firstly, to study the phenomenon of war trauma and the types of its representation in the performative arts; secondly, to analyze the film *Amputation* by Ihor Pomerantsev and Lidiia Starodubtseva and the play *The Book of Sirens* written and staged in Kyiv in March 2022 in shelters. The students will watch the videos and discuss how both artworks treat the trauma caused by war. Thirdly, the masterclass will offer group and individual activities with other forms of artistic representations of war trauma to let the students analyze effective ways of including the image of trauma in the broad context of culture and/or our contemporary world. Finally, students will gain a basic understanding of the ways and purposes of depicting trauma in the arts, which will encourage them to choose and formulate the topics and tasks of their own final projects.

→ **Readings: Links to the film and the play:**

- Amputation <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wGMAxxfsUTBaYB-ekJkPMOlutDLIZI22/view?usp=sharing>
- Performance of Natalka Marynychak “A_literation:4.5.0” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znQzgSM0HI0&t=3625s>

- The Book of Sirens
<https://www.facebook.com/ProEnglishTheatre/videos/1860645630797935/>
- Interview with Anabelle Ramirez "Book of Sirens as Testimony"
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WGYZA7gwZrfuYG7QehYsJidL8GMx3A-h/view?usp=share_link

12:00-13:30 Lunch

**13:30-16:00 Master Class: Representation of the War Trauma in the Audiovisual Arts:
Part 2 (Oleksandr Pronkevych, Tetiana Shestapolova, Valeriia Biloshapko)**

16:00-18:00 Digital Storytelling Project Pitches

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Saturday, 22.04 Excursion to Verdun

7:30-9:30 Breakfast

8:30 Departure time

Return in the late afternoon

18:00-19:30 Dinner

Sunday, 23.04: Multi-Media Storytelling Projects

7:30-9:30 Breakfast & Walk to Saarland University

9:30-12:00 Preparation of students' projects

12:00-13:30 Lunch at Jugendherberge

13.30-16.00 Reflections and Wrap-Up (Saarland University)

18:00-19:30 Dinner at Jugendherberge

End of Summer School

Monday 24.04: Departure