

**T**he conference enquires into the fundamental shifts in the literary representations of World War II which have taken place in East-European literatures in the last decades. 70 years after the end of the war, the breakdown of state socialism in its specific instantiations and the vanishing of the generation of witnesses are causing massive changes in modes of remembrance. In Eastern Europe today, cultural memory is both post-socialist and post-memorial. This coincides with increased pluralisation and diversity in the region. Conflicting claims to an authoritative representation of World War II dispute the former hegemonic narratives of remembrance. At the same time, literature has gradually lost its role as a key genre of collective and individual memory, as other, mostly visual media, have become more important—and not just in Eastern Europe.

The conference takes these observations as a starting point to explore literature's changing role in shaping the memory of World War II in a comparative perspective. The conference panels discuss fictional representations of formerly marginalized or forgotten histories, constructions of traumatic, heroic or transnational histories as well as poetic devices, narrative strategies and affective models which form our understanding of the past.

### Conference Organizers

Matthias Schwartz (Center for Literary and Cultural Research Berlin, ZfL) *in cooperation with*

Nina Weller (Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) *and*

Heike Winkel (Institute for East European Studies / Peter Szondi Institute of Comparative Literature, Freie Universität Berlin)

The cover motif is taken from Radka Denemarková's *Peníze od Hitlera* (Host 2006)

### VENUE

ZfL Berlin  
Schützenstraße 18  
3rd floor  
10117 Berlin  
[www.zfl-berlin.org](http://www.zfl-berlin.org)

### REGISTRATION

If you are interested in attending, please register for the conference in advance by contacting Sarah Affenzeller, [affenzeller@zfl-berlin.org](mailto:affenzeller@zfl-berlin.org)


### DAILY SCENES—AN EASTERN TRAVELOGUE

During the conference, video material from an ongoing art project by Matei and Andrea Bellu will be on view.

### ORGANIZERS

**zfl** Zentrum für Literatur- und  
Kulturforschung Berlin

*in cooperation with*

 Graduiertenschule  
für Ost- und  
Südosteuropastudien

Freie Universität  Berlin

# AFTER MEMORY

CONFLICTING CLAIMS TO  
WORLD WAR II IN CONTEMPORARY  
EASTERN EUROPEAN LITERATURES



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
NOVEMBER 6—8 2015, ZFL BERLIN

## FRIDAY, 6 NOVEMBER

14:00 Opening of the conference, Words of welcome

### 14:30 Keynote

**Legacies of Stalinism and the Gulag: Manifestations of Trauma and Postmemory**

Ernst van Alphen (Leiden)

*Coffee*

### 16:00 Panel 1: Beyond Socialism: Figurations of National Heroism

Chair: Matthias Schwartz (ZfL)

**Death of a Hero: WW II in Russian Fiction and Cinema under Putin**

Valerij Viugin (St. Petersburg)

**Conflicting Narratives: Contemporary Serbian Literature between Četniks and Partisans**

Davor Beganovič (Tübingen/Zürich)

*Coffee*

### 18:00 Panel 2: After Oblivion: Post-Socialist Reinventions of a Contested Past

Chair: Stefan Willer (ZfL)

**Zombie-Stories as Reinventing the Past: Holocaust (Post)Memory in Polish Literature after 1989**

Aleksandra Ubertowska (Gdańsk)

**United by History, Divided by Memory? The Volhynian Massacres in 1943-44 and Attitudes to Polishness in Western Ukrainian-based Intellectual Polemics**

Eleonora Narvselius (Lund)

## SATURDAY, 7 NOVEMBER

### 10:00 Panel 3: Documentary Fictions: Changing Devices of Remembrance and Testimony

Chair: Aurélie Kalisky (ZfL)

**Bodies of Evidence: Memory, Forensics, and “Documentary” Literature about Ex-Yugoslavia**

Stephenie Young (Salem, Massachusetts)

**The Thrusts of Ghost-Writing: Eastern European Survivors’ Memories of the Holocaust in Post-Cold War Western Societies. On Sara Tuvel Bernstein’s *The Seamstress* and Leah Kaufman’s *Live! Remember! Tell the World!***

Dana Mihăilescu (Bukarest)

*Coffee*

### 12:00 Panel 4: Postmemory Literatures: Rewriting the Textual Space

Chair: Tatjana Petzer (ZfL)

**Demythologizing History: On the Phantasmatic Dismantling of the Leningrad Blockade Narrations**

Nina Weller (Munich)

**“... within the uselessness we have to get from somewhere to somewhere, if we see more sense in speaking than in silence ...” The “Textual Space” of Holocaust and WW II Memory in Contemporary Hungarian Literature**

Stephan Krause (Leipzig)

*Lunch*

### 15:00 Panel 5: Affective Media: Textual and Visual Representations

Chair: Erik Martin (Frankfurt/Oder)

**Pictures from the Past: The Graphic Novel *Alois Nebel* as Drawn Postmemory of WW II**

Madlene Hagemann, Gernot Howanitz (Passau)

**Feeling History: Szczepan Twardoch’s Affective Revisions of National Representations**

Matthias Schwartz (ZfL)

*Coffee*

### 17:00 Panel 6: Beyond the Nation State: Reshaping the Memory of World War II

Chair: Yael Almog (ZfL)

**Transnational Aspects of Postmemory in Third-Generation Fiction on WWII and the Holocaust. The (Contrapuntal) Cases of Piotr Paziński and Erwin Mortier**

Kris van Heuckelom (Leuven)

**The Legacy of the Holocaust and World War II in (Post-)Yugoslav Writing and its European Echo**

Tatjana Petzer (ZfL)

## SUNDAY, 8 NOVEMBER

### 10:00 Panel 7: Postmemory and Affect: Post-Traumatic Refigurations of War Histories

Chair: Stephan Krause (Leipzig)

**Traumatic Fantasies: Memory, Affect and Compensation in Contemporary Polish Literature**

Joanna Niżyńska (Bloomington; Indiana)

**Ambivalent Victims: Figurations of Expulsion in Contemporary Czech Literature**

Heike Winkel (Berlin)

*Coffee*

### 12:00 Panel 8: Beyond Postmemory: Comic and Dramatic Enactments of War Stories

Chair: Nina Weller (Munich)

**(Im)Possible Modes of Laughter in Historic Narration of the Great Patriotic War**

Brigitte Obermayr (Berlin)

**War, Media, and Capitalism: Remembering WW II as Social Criticism (Paweł Demirski’s Plays)**

Magdalena Marszałek (Potsdam)

### 13:30 Concluding discussion