

Call for Applications

The Return of History: Memory, War and the End of the "Post"

Memory Summer School Course (7.5 ECTS)

The Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES), Södertörn University, Sweden

Date: **12-17 August, 2024**

Location: Sigtunastiftelsen, Sigtuna, Stockholm county, Sweden

The course is devoted to in-depth studies of central theories of cultural memory, with particular focus on the relationship between cultural memory, politics and history writing in Eastern Europe today.

During the three decades after the end of the Cold War, George Santayana's 1905 aphorism became the motto of the global West: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Yet, Eastern and Central European societies continue to be haunted by the difficult memories of the past and those issues that post-Cold War international democratic agendas failed to address. Since then, new tensions have been arising in the region, first between East and West and then between North and South, which process virtually exploded when Russia went on a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Thus, a catastrophic rupture occurred in the apparently logical peaceful development "after the End of History".

Recently, the new agenda of decolonization has shifted to the forefront of Ukrainian resistance and demands a political and intellectual re-contextualization of the Baltic and Eastern European region and the whole of the former Soviet space. In this decolonizing move, again, memory acquires a central role, even though on different grounds and no longer as a universalist temporality of progress – but on what grounds, in this case?

In the present situation, both on an intuitive level and in expert discourses, memory re-actualizes in comparisons and analogies in various figures, symbols, and images of

Repetition and Return. Not only as symptoms of trauma and regression, these can also function as constructive elements of understanding. Through the discussion of concepts such as *rupture*, *return*, *resistance*, *repetition*, *reconstruction*, and *reconciliation*, this Summer School seeks to address shifting temporalities of memory, knowledge, and action, particularly in relation to war and violent regimes.

- At this time of war and destruction, what traces of history and memory do we bring with us from the past, and what (new) ruptures and resistances can be identified?
- How can we understand the imaginations of the return of history in the present? Can we distinguish between destructive and constructive uses of the past? What epistemologies can be produced based on these new interpretations?
- What visions and hesitations with regard to the future can we discern? Can reconciliation bring not only reparation but also transformation?
- What could be concepts, theories and methods to understand the “after the end of the post”?

We welcome applications from PhD students working on the Baltic, as well as Eastern and Central Europe, with a particular interest in the issues of memory and history. The summer school seeks to develop critical thinking in the interdisciplinary field of Memory Studies, and we expect interest from students from a range of subjects in the humanities and social sciences, including history, political science, ethnology, philosophy, aesthetics and similar.

Developing academic writing skills will be one of the central concerns of the Summer School. Students are expected to present their work and produce a paper that will be further considered for online scholarly publication in the journal *Baltic Worlds*.

Students are awarded 7.5 ECTs for the completed course and also provided with a Certificate of Completion.

Participation in the Summer School is free of charge. All costs will be covered, *excluding the travel costs to and from the location*.

Applicants are invited to send a short CV (max. two pages) and a two-page long description of their project (in Word/pdf, Times New Roman, 12, 1,5 line spacing) through the following [LINK](#) or <https://forms.office.com/e/xphJ1UUqg5>

The deadline is 15 March, and successful applicants will be notified by early April.

If you have questions, please contact summeruniversity@sh.se.

Organisers of the CBEES Summer School 2024:

- **Florence Fröhlig**, Associate Professor, Södertörn University
- **Johanna Mannergren Selimovic**, Research Coordinator and Associate Professor, Södertörn University
- **Irina Sandomirskaja**, Professor, CBEES, Södertörn University
- **Yulia Yurchuk**, Senior Lecturer, Södertörn University