



Call for Papers

Role of Culture in Times of War and Post-war Reconstruction. The Case of Ukraine

4EU+ Alliance International Workshop; 21.-22. 9. 2023; Charles University, Prague

Barrier-covered church windows, empty-gallery walls, bubble-wrapped, flame-retardant blanketed and sandbags piled sculptures and monuments - in just a few days after Russia invaded Ukraine, the cityscapes of the country were hardly recognisable. People were not trying only to protect themselves, they were also racing to secure their cultural heritage. Accumulated over the centuries, representing history, memories, intangible beliefs and practices, and playing a crucial role in Ukrainian self-determination, Ukrainian cultural heritage has become an important target of Russian aggression. Whatsmore, its denial stands as one of the justifications for the war.

In 2004, Piotr Sztompka wrote that “wounds inflicted to culture are most difficult to heal” because “culture is a depository of continuity, heritage, tradition, the identity of human communities.” Indeed, culture is not merely about pieces of art. People live by metaphors and culturally mediated intellectual representations of the world, by their shared historical experience, and by their emotional attachment to cultural communities, which determine their understanding of daily life and influence their decisions.

As war once again ravages European country leaving thousands of people with immense trauma, a number of questions arise - What exactly does war mean for the cultural landscape? How does it affect cultural representation(s)? What role does the culture play in dealing with war trauma? What role should it play in post-war reconstruction? Finally, how can we as junior researchers can position ourselves to be of actual use, instead of circulating knowledge among the academic community?

To address these questions, we are looking for papers focusing on, but not limited to:

- Preservation of art and culture in times of war
- Protection and reconstruction of cultural heritage
- Role of culture in dealing with war trauma
- Re-production and promotion of cultural memory

During this workshop, we will explore multiple dimensions of culture and put them in a dialogue with national and transnational actions within Europe. The programme will consist of a keynote speech, meet-and-greet sessions, and a panel discussion. By bringing together experts from within and outside academia, our workshop aims to provide junior researchers interested in Ukrainian culture with a valuable opportunity to exchange findings with other scholars as well as with representatives from societal actors. In turn, societal actors are presented with substantial and potentially refreshing ideas and experiences surrounding their challenges concerning the creation of cultural products and the role of culture in dealing with war trauma and defining the values of society.



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The workshop is intended for junior researchers (PhDs and outstanding MA students) affiliated with any of the 4EU+ universities (Charles University, University of Warsaw, Sorbonne University, Heidelberg University, University of Milan, University of Geneva and University of Copenhagen). It will take place on 21-22 September 2023 at Charles University and aims to cover accommodation for workshop participants.

In addition, a limited number of fellowships for Ukrainian junior researchers currently residing in Ukraine is also available. Under special circumstances, these researchers can participate online.

Applicants are invited to submit their proposals, which must include:

- A title and abstract of their presentation (approx. 250-300 words)
- A short biblio-biographical note of the candidate (academic discipline/field of study, short academic biography and university affiliation)

Proposals should be sent to Klára Kosová (klara.kosova@fsv.cuni.cz) with the subject line “Role of Culture in War and Post-War” by 12 June 2023. Contributors will be informed by 20 June 2023 and are asked to send their papers (approx. 6000 words) for pre-circulation by 1 September 2023.