

Call for Book Chapters: Memory Studies Meet Literary Studies. Voices from the Eastern Europe in the 21st Century

22.02.2021

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Historia, Kulturoznawstwo, Literaturoznawstwo
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Vernon Press invites chapter proposals for a volume on the contemporary memory and literary studies edited by Aleksandra Konarzewska (University of Tübingen, Germany) and Anna Nakai (Central European University, Hungary/Austria).

General Scope of the Book:

- Relevant Fields: Memory Studies, Literary Studies, Eastern European Studies, Cultural and Media Studies, Digital Humanities, Archival Studies, Library Sciences
- Area: Eastern and Central Europe incl. Balkan Peninsula, Caucasus, Central Asia, Post-Soviet space in a broad sense
- Period: The 21st century and contemporary (roughly after the millennial 2000)
- Target audience: General audience whose primary interest lies in literature and memory studies

The volume aims to have two different sections, each of which covers theory and practice of memory and literature.

1. Theory: New and Old Narratives

The first part of the book will accommodate overviews, theoretical approaches, and detailed case studies on existing memory paradigms in Eastern and Central Europe and post-Soviet space. Are there any grand narratives of collective memory that dominate the region? The editors particularly welcome paper proposals focusing on theoretical debates based on the analyses of individual authors and artists. Possible themes for this section would be as follows:

Main Topics in Memory and Literary Studies:

- Problematic 'grand narratives' of collective memory still dominant in Eastern and Central Europe: eurocentrism, chronological understanding (discourses such as 'post-1968' or 'post-1989'), (neo)liberal discourse, ethnocentrism and its variations (Russian, Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, etc.).

- Methodology: theories of cultural memory, contemporary methodological debates concerning public remembrance praxis in Eastern and Central Europe;
- Creation of new taboos: contemporary modes of canonization of memory paradigms and their challengers: strategies of distinction, backlash, and resentment.

Discrepancies between Global and Local Narratives:

- Problematic 'Westernization' or 'globalization' of the memory paradigms in Eastern and Central Europe: tensions between 'global' and 'local' collective memory, adaptations of categories originally specific to 'the West', strategies of copying and mimicry,
- The remembrance of the horror: the twentieth-century European genocides and ethnic cleansing in transnational, transcontinental, and de-colonial perspectives, recent cultural (mis)representations and banalizations in cultural/literary works.

Contributions of the Institutions of Memory and the Digital Humanities in (I)

- Degree of institutionalization of the DH: online archives and databases, digitalization of manuscripts/typescripts, online museums and exhibitions, growing challenges (copyright issues, forgeries, political pressure, bot attacks, etc.);
- Contemporary 'memory wars' on the Internet: amateur commemorative productions on the Internet (memes, videos, etc.), their 'carnival' (M. Bakhtin) and antagonizing potential ('flame wars', 'trolling'), questions of taboo-breaking.

1. Praxis: New Texts and Modes of Voice

After 2000, Central and Eastern European/Post-Soviet literary and artworks saw a radical change in subjects and objects. Public discussions have become fierce as oppressed, marginalized voices appeared and radically questioned traditional values. The editors encourage authors to submit articles particularly dealing with phenomena such as gonzo literature, queer literature, slam poetry, "hauntology" (as proposed by O. Drenda), and new literary genres in digital media (e.g. Internet copy-pastas, Facebook or Instagram posts, blog/vlog posts). Case studies and papers concentrated on a single issue/piece of work/author would be highly appreciated. Possible themes for this section would be as follows:

General Characteristics of the Twentieth-First Century Literature

- Blurring borders between fiction & non-fiction: contemporary ego documents, reflectional pieces, literary biographies of places and institutions, "gonzo" journalism, literary journalism;
- New canonical authors in East and Central Europe and Post-Soviet Space: works by authors such as S. Alexievich, M. Sznajderman, K. Petrowskaja, H. Krall, M. Stepanova, M. Gessen, and O. Tokarczuk. Post-millennial perspective, LGBTQ+ themes in literature.

Digital Humanities in Eastern and Central Europe (II)

- New literary forms of commemoration on the Internet: blog contributions, copy-pasta culture, memes, Internet comic stories, Facebook statuses and posts, Twitter activities (cf. the Twitter activity of the Auschwitz Memorial Museum);
- Memory discourses in the amateur internet art: Navigating topoi and aesthetics of memes, short films, and comic stories.

Post-Truth Practices of Memories:

- Forgeries and false memories: the issue of "reliability" and "authenticity" in memory/literary studies in the era of fake news; fallibility of memory as a literary motive;
- Remembrance and taboo-breaking: cultural texts whose genres allow overstatements (stand-ups, memes, cabaret sketches, tabloid press graphics, graffiti, performance, etc.), controversial ways of presenting collective and personal traumata.

Requirements & timeline

Abstract Submission: March 15, 2021.

Abstract requirements: American English, max. 500 words in total; please specify your thesis/hypothesis and methodology and include a provisional bibliography. Please send your abstract with short CVs (max. 2 pages).

Acceptance of the Papers: April 30, 2021

Full Paper Submission: August 31, 2021

Chapter requirements: A chapter should be max. 6,500 words including footnotes and bibliography. The details concerning layout and citation style will follow.

All submissions should be sent directly to both editors' email addresses: [aleksandra.konarzewska \[at\] uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:aleksandra.konarzewska@uni-tuebingen.de) and [sugiyama_anna \[at\] phd.ceu.edu](mailto:sugiyama_anna@phd.ceu.edu).

After Submission: All publication procedure is free of charge for authors. The authors, however, may be requested to have their papers additionally proof-read by professional editors.

For further information or questions about the book, please contact the editors, too.

Kontakt

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