

DAAD „GO EAST“ Summer School:

German-Czech-Polish Summer School „Memory Cultures in Central Europe. Poland and Czech Republic – Prague / Szczecin 2012“

Szczecin and Prague, 9–23/09/2012

Even two decades after the demise of the socialist regimes in East Central Europe, debates about the past are still provoking irritation and political conflict in international relations between Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic as well as within these countries. A major reason for this situation may be seen in the formation and constant change of memory cultures. They are negotiated by actors and actor groups in specific local, national and transnational contexts, and they comprise discussions, controversies and conflicts over the interpretation of individual events or sites of memory as well as of whole regimes or epochs. In an era of steadily accelerating communication all these levels have become increasingly entangled, since conflicts that are sparked by local sites of memory quickly reach national or international levels – and vice versa.

In East Central Europe, memory conflicts even today often emerge from disputes of how to judge and treat the legacy of socialism and the German past. Debates about the nature of socialism mainly take place within a national framework with supporters and opponents of the old regimes often being irreconcilable. Arguments over the German past, however, referring to flight / expulsion / deportation of the German population as well as how to deal with the German cultural heritage always include transnational implications in the Czech Republic and Poland. The lack of consensus on key aspects of the European history after the Second World War, therefore, raises the question about present and future of a common European culture of commemoration being time and again politically requested.

The Summer School will address three dimensions: First, the participants shall be given an overview of current approaches to the study of memory cultures. In a second step, the major debates on memory politics in the Czech Republic and Poland since the end of socialism will be presented and analyzed. The third and largest part of the summer school will explore places of memory that have been in the focus of political controversies on memory with on-site visits guided by local experts. Finally, the results will be summarized in order to compare cultures of remembrance in Poland and the Czech Republic and their local manifestations in Szczecin and Prague, respectively. This will lead into a discussion about the prospects of forming a common European culture of remembrance.

Szczecin and Prague offer excellent preconditions for exploring the issues addressed above, due to their diverging histories and their manifold layers of memories. Among the topics to be addressed in the local context are:

- In Szczecin: The appropriation of urban space by the Polish population after the Second World War; confrontations with and debates about the German legacy and the German cultural heritage; sites of memory of the socialist People's Republic of Poland – in particular, the shipyard, the riot of 1970/71 and the strike in 1980; controversies over coming to terms with socialism and about remembering the Soviet Army.
- In Prague: Dealing with the German and the Jewish past of the city, outstanding places of memory and "invented traditions" of the Czech national history; the German occupation of Prague and in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 1939-1945; debates about the "deportation" of the German population; controversies over socialism and its places of memory.

The international Summer School addresses MA and PhD students from Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic and beyond. It will examine cultures of memory in East Central Europe, and discuss approaches to the solution of political conflicts over contested memories. In talks and panel discussions with prominent experts (historians, art historians, scholars of culture and literature, social scientists) and representatives of relevant organizations, and by preparing own presentations of selected topics, the participants will analyze and understand current debates on the politics of memory in the region. On-site visits and excursions to important places of memory and museums will constitute a major part of the schedule.

The Summer School will be held in English.

Eligibility: Application with a one-page letter of motivation, resume, application form, recommendation by a university teacher.

Polish or Czech language knowledge is appreciated, but not required.

Participation fees:

620 EUR for participants from Germany and western countries (please note: the DAAD has agreed to support up to 10 participants – for further information, please contact the organizers). Participants from Eastern Europe should contact the organizers for information about their participation fees.

Application deadline: 15/05/2012

Organizers:

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Registration Form for the DAAD "Go East" Summer School 2012:
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9-23/9/2012**

Last Name

First Name

Date of Birth

University Degrees (Subject, City, Year)

Topic of (MA) Thesis

Current University

Current Subject and Year of Studies

Language Skills and Level

Which historical and political topics are you particularly interested in?

Which topics of the Summer School are you particularly interested in?

Which topics would you like to discuss besides those mentioned in the outlines?

Please return this form to joerg.hackmann@univ.szczecin.pl or torsten.lorenz@ff.cuni.cz