

PROGRAM

Digitalities of Russia's War against Ukraine

LIVING ARCHIVES WORKSHOP II

October 8-9, 2026

VENUE: Herder Institute (Lecture Hall), Gisonenweg 5-7, 35037 Marburg

The workshop explores how the war in Ukraine can be documented and represented in ways that adequately reflect the complexity of wartime experiences in the respective medium.

The workshop will kick off with a keynote speech on the movie *Ember*, a 12 minute animated documentary produced within the U CORE project at the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH), University of Luxembourg. U CORE, active in Ukraine, Poland, and Luxembourg, collects, archives and analyses testimonies of Ukrainian civilians displaced by Russia's full scale invasion launched in February 2022. *Ember* translates one of the testimonies collected in Luxembourg into animated form, following an elderly Ukrainian woman and her husband as they endure Russian occupation and ultimately flee their home in the Kyiv suburbs during the early weeks of the war.

The presentation examines the transformation of this oral testimony into an animated documentary that relies almost entirely on non verbal communication. It investigates the visualisation strategies used and their interpretive implications. It compares systematically the soundscape, the colour palette, and the emotional landscape of the original testimony and of the animated film, in order to assess the power of animation to narrate the witnessing of displacement and war.

The second part of the workshop focuses on the emergence of new practices, both in scientific knowledge production and the stewardship of testimonies, as well as in military funerals, where evolving rituals are reshaping musical traditions. In addition to examining and questioning established practices, the workshop will address the legal dimensions of documenting war crimes and the protection of personal data when archiving sensitive materials.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- › Explore emerging research on the digital dimensions of Russia's war against Ukraine, including digital heritage, wartime documentation, media representations of wartime experiences.
- › Foster dialogue on living archives, including questions of ethics, access, preservation, representation, and digital methodologies.
- › Create opportunities for interdisciplinary exchange between fellows, researchers, practitioners, and invited guests.

Registration for online participation is required; however, registrations can be accommodated at short notice.

Registration for in-person attendance is appreciated to facilitate planning.

Please register via: livarch@herder-institut.de

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

06:00 p.m. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

06:10 p.m. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Machteld Venken & Iryna Yeroshko

From Voice to Visual. The Transformation of a Ukrainian Testimony of the War to an Animation Documentary

07:00 p.m. DISCUSSION

07:30 p.m. Informal Dinner (self-paid)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

09:30 a.m. Bus Arrival

09:45 a.m. Welcome Coffee

SESSION I: EMERGING PRACTICES. TESTIMONY STEWARDSHIP AND RITUAL REINVENTION

10:00 a.m. Nataliia Otrishchenko & Anna Wylegała

Sensitive Information in War Testimonies: Temporal and Social Dimensions

10:35 a.m. Inna Shvorak

Military Funerals as Living Archives: Sound, Ritual, and Digital Documentation in Wartime Ukraine

11:10 a.m. Coffee Break

SESSION II: LEGAL DIMENSION OF WAR DOCUMENTATION. BETWEEN EVIDENCE AND ARCHIVE

11:40 a.m. Viktoriia Hulenکو

Ukraine as a Laboratory for Living Archives: Digital Technologies and the Documentation of War Crimes

12:15 p.m. Ganna Sarybaieva

From Working Records to Living Archives: The Legal Status of Wartime Documentary Materials and the Limits of Archiving

12:50 p.m. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION AND CLOSING REMARKS

01:30 p.m. Lunch Break / Free Time

02:30 p.m. OPTIONAL GUIDED TOUR of the Herder Institute and its Collections

SPEAKERS

Machteld Venken

is a Professor of Contemporary Transnational History at the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH) and Head of its Research Area on the Contemporary History of Luxembourg. She studied Slavic Languages and Cultures, European Studies and History in Belgium, Poland and Ukraine. Venken earned her PhD in 2008 at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and her habilitation in 2018 at the University of Vienna (Austria). She has been a Principal Investigator of nine research projects funded in five European countries. Her main research interests are transnational, transregional and comparative histories of Europe, migration, borderlands, oral history, the history of families and children, and citizen science.

Iryna Yeroshko

is a doctoral researcher at the Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C2DH), University of Luxembourg, where she has been pursuing her PhD in history since March 2024. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Linguistics from Lesya Ukrainka National University and a Master's degree in Curating and Exhibition Studies from the Saar Academy of Fine Arts. Her research examines visual representations of Russia's war against Ukraine across multiple media, including propaganda television, exhibitions, animated documentary, and graphic narrative. Within the collaborative U-CORE project (Ukraine, Poland, Luxembourg), she serves as the doctoral researcher and the animation producer for *Ember* (2026), a short animated documentary based on testimonies of Ukrainians forced to flee the war. Her interdisciplinary practice spans photography, curation, and exhibition-making.

Nataliia Otrishchenko

is a prominent Ukrainian sociologist, researcher, and oral historian who serves as a core researcher and coordinator of oral history projects at the Center for Urban History in Lviv, Ukraine. She is widely recognized for her academic work in documenting firsthand civilian experiences following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, as well as her research into urban sociology and late-Soviet planning. Since 2022, she has headed the Ukrainian team of the *24/02/22, 5 am: Testimonies from the War* documentation initiative. She was a member of the international research project *Researching the Collecting, Preserving, Analyzing, and Disclosing of Ukrainian War Testimonies (U-CORE)* and worked at ZOIS.

Anna Wylegała

is a leading Polish sociologist and an Associate Professor at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IFiS PAN). Her academic research sits at the intersection of history and sociology, focusing primarily on qualitative social research methodology, memory studies, and the social history of Poland and Ukraine during World War II and the immediate postwar era. She is the author of *'Displaced Memories: Remembering and Forgetting in Post-War Poland and Ukraine'* (2019) and *'Był dwór, nie ma dworu. Agrarian reform in Poland'* (2021). She has also co-edited two other volumes: *'The Burden of the Past: History, Memory and Identity in Contemporary Ukraine'* (2020) and *'No Neighbors' Lands: Vanishing Others and Postwar Europe'*.

Inna Shvorak

is an (ethno)musicologist and holds her PhD in Art Studies on the Theory and History of Culture. She currently pursues her postdoctoral research on military rituals and traditions during the Russo-Ukrainian war, folk music revival, cultural heritage, memory, and wartime identity as an independent researcher from Ukraine. She is a LivArch Fellowship holder.

Viktoriia Hulenko

is a PhD researcher at the Université Côte d'Azur, France, where her dissertation examines the prosecution of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights committed in Ukraine since 2014, with particular attention to judicial cooperation between national and international accountability mechanisms. She holds a master's degree in International and European law, with a specialisation in international security, defence and economic intelligence. She previously worked as a legal intern at the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, where she contributed to the analysis and documentation of alleged violations of international humanitarian law on the basis of open-source and digital materials. Her research sits at the intersection of international criminal law, documentation practices, and the ethics of preserving sensitive sources produced during ongoing conflict. She is a LivArch Fellowship holder.

Ganna Sarybaieva

is a Doctor of Science of Law, Associate Professor at the National University "Odesa Law Academy", Ukraine. Founder of the NGO "Open Dialogue Platform" (Austria), a civil society organisation focused on the rule of law, human rights, legal culture and interdisciplinary dialogue. She is a LivArch Fellowship holder.



HERDER INSTITUTE
for Historical Research on East Central Europe
INSTITUTE OF THE LEIBNIZ ASSOCIATION



With funding from the



Federal Ministry
of the Interior

by decision of the
German Bundestag



HESSEN
Hessisches Ministerium
für Wissenschaft und Forschung,
Kunst und Kultur