



HERDER-INSTITUT
für historische Ostmitteleuropaforschung
INSTITUT DER LEIBNIZ-GEMEINSCHAFT

Digitalities of Russia's War against Ukraine

Living Archives Workshop and Research Studio

24 June 2026

Venue: Herder Institute Lecture Hall (Behring Villa), Gisonenweg 5-7, 35037 Marburg

Abstract

The workshop is structured in two parts. The morning session (hybrid) explores different 'digitalities' of Russia's war against Ukraine, with a particular focus on living archives. These archives represent forms of contemporary memory that often emerge from the need to document experiences during times of crisis. These days they are often digitally collected and curated by volunteers, researchers, and activists, and are frequently shaped by community expectations. At the same time, they are profoundly influenced by digital tools and contemporary digital memory practices. As such, living archives raise important questions concerning the ethical handling of data, the challenges posed by their scale and potential incompleteness, issues of access and power asymmetries between users and curators, as well as the potentially re-traumatizing nature of archival materials in wartime contexts.

The first panel explores the digitization of established memory practices, including cultural heritage preservation and wartime diaries. The second panel examines how the war is shaped and experienced through digital platforms, and how online interactions—from social media engagement to the gamification of military achievements—produce tangible effects in the offline world. The presentations are based on research projects developed within the LivArch Fellowship Programme 2026 and reflect the interdisciplinary approaches of the current cohort of fellows.

The afternoon session also welcomes participation (in person only) and is designed as a small-scale collaborative research space. Its purpose is to support the presenters in advancing their individual research projects through peer empowerment while fostering dialogue, feedback, and interdisciplinary exchange.

Objectives:

- Explore emerging research on the digital dimensions of Russia's war against Ukraine, including digital heritage, wartime documentation, digital memory practices.
- 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.
- Encourage participants to contribute their own expertise, perspectives, and methodological approaches to ongoing research projects.
- Experiment with the collaborative research studio as a format for shared knowledge production beyond conventional conference presentations.
- Support the development of the fellows' research projects while fostering new connections and future collaborations.

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

Agenda

10:00–10:10	Welcome & Introduction (hybrid)
10:10–11:15	Block I: Cultural Memory & Wartime Documentation • Nadiia Bedrina (State Academy of Culture, Kharkiv): Living archives of resilience: a multidisciplinary framework for documenting war-torn Ukrainian heritage through academic and civic engagement • Ilami Yasna (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw): Between institutional archives and grassroots initiatives: methodological insights from building an open-access corpus inventory of public wartime diaries (Ukraine, 2022–2026). ○ Chair: Tabitha Redepenning (Herder Institute)
11:15–11:25	Coffee Break
11:25–13:00	Block II: Publics, Participation & Wartime Social Dynamics (hybrid) • Olena Shevchenko (Archaeological Museum, Odesa & King's College, London): Ukrainian Humour about Power Outages in Wartime (2025–2026) • Veronika Barankevych (University of Economics, Cracow): Digital Architecture of Resistance: A Multi-Level Evolution of Gamification, Military Branding, and Social Media Narratives in Ukraine's Drone Warfare (2025–2026) • Jakob Krüger, Johannes-Andreas Becker (University Marburg): Rebuilding a Telegram Research Crawler: Experiences and Challenges from a Student Project ○ Chair: Simon Doing (Herder Institute)
13:00–14:00	Lunch (self-paid)

14:00–15:30	Open Research Studio / Collaborative Working Session (in person only) Open workspace. Each participant has a set-up of: • project materials (print-out or laptop) • Paper with prompts: “I can help with...” / “I am looking for...” Participants may move freely between projects to discuss. Collaborative work is encouraged.
15:30–16:00	Closing Reflection (in person only)
16:00	Guided City Walk (60 min): “Urban Authenticity in Marburg”
18:00	Informal dinner (optional, self-paid)