



**PASTS AND SOCIETIES IN  
CENTRAL EUROPE:  
AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE “GERMAN  
PAST”<sup>1</sup>**

Between 1945 and 1947, from 12 to 14 million Germans from Central Europe were forcefully displaced towards Germany and Austria. During these transfers, between 500 000 and 1,5 million of them perished. As an immediate consequence of these displacements, millions of individuals from all over Central and Eastern Europe moved towards the territories left empty by the German populations, thus participating in the post-war recomposition of national communities. The arrival of state socialism in the after-war years strengthened these social processes and erased the traces of the German populations. Moreover, the control apparatuses and censorship in socialist countries impeded access to sources enabling the investigation and analysis of the German past, and an interrogation into the sense to be attributed to the forced displacement of these populations, notably in regions that had been the object of ethnic cleansing. While the fall of socialist regimes enabled the re-examination in Central Europe of the past of the Germans, the reunited Germany and Austria were rethinking their respective places in an enlarged Europe, as well as their relations with their Eastern neighbours. In this context, the management of the German past in Central Europe has become both a central element of the political influence of Germany and Austria in this part of Europe and the source of an interrogation into the sense of the history of Central European societies composed prior to the Second World War of significant German minorities (themselves composed also of Jews).

These elements show that the question of the production of knowledge about the German past and its transmission is crucial to understand the social mutations underway in the new member states of the European Union. Despite this, however, this question is treated in a very marginal way. While the German report on the past of the transferred peoples has drawn the attention of specialists, especially in the fields of musealization and collective memory, rare are the observations made on the manner in

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which Central European societies redefine their relations to the past of the deported Germans. Rare also are analyses that deal with the conditions of the production of knowledge about the German past and the intermediaries of their transmission in society. It is in order to reflect on these two aspects, and starting from the hypothesis that cognitive production constitutes the framework for the social relation to the past, that the study days intend to interrogate the presence of the German past in Central Europe and its place in post-socialist societal recomposition.

In order to do so, attention will centre on works developed in **arts and sciences (social sciences and humanities)**. Coming from specialists of several disciplines in social science (history, social anthropologist, geography, political science) the papers explore through the analysis of the management of the past presence of Germans in Central Europe, the interactions between, on the one hand, works produced within sciences and, on the other, the societies that are at the same time both the source and the object of this knowledge. To what extent are the modes of appreciation of the social past in the sciences and in the arts influenced by the way(s) in which these societies construct their relationship with the past? What are the denotative, performative and aesthetic functions of scientific and artistic discourses and their impact on social processes? Finally, to which extent producing knowledge about the past and assuring its transmission equates to the defining and orienting of the future path of a society?

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**Venue: Rytířská 31, Prague 110 00  
Room 201**

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## **9. 15 WORDS OF INTRODUCTION**

**PANEL 1: 9. 30 – 11. 00 CHAIR: MILOŠ HAVELKA** ([milos.havelka@fhs.cuni.cz](mailto:milos.havelka@fhs.cuni.cz)), Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

**CATHERINE PERRON**, ([catherine.perron@gmx.net](mailto:catherine.perron@gmx.net)), CERI-Sciences Po: *§96 Museums Against Forgetting?*

**MIROSLAV KUNŠTÁT**, ([miroslav.kunstat@post.cz](mailto:miroslav.kunstat@post.cz)), Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University: *The Sudeten German Museum in Munich, the Collegium Bohemicum in Ústí nad Labem: Which Collective Memories are to be Saved, Nurtured and Taught?*

**PANEL 2: 11. 15 – 12. 45 CHAIR: TÓTH GYÖRGY** (toth@fsv.cuni.cz) Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

**MÁTÉ ZOMBORY** (matezombory@yahoo.com), Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences: *Silence, Cultivation, Cultural Heritage: An Historical-Contextual Overview of German Self-Identification in Hungary since WWII*

**PAUL BAUER** (paulibauer@gmail.com), Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University: *Remembering the Germans in Czech Republic with Geography*

**PANEL 3: 14. 30 – 16. 00 CHAIR: CHRISTIAN JACQUES** (cjacques@unistra.fr), Université de Strasbourg

**TOBIAS WEGER** (tobias.weger@bkge.uni-oldenburg.de), Bundesinstitut für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im Östlichen Europa, Universität Oldenburg: *The Mental Mapping of the "German East" in German Popular Textbooks*

**BERNADETTE JONDA** (bernadette.jonda@soziologie.uni-halle.de) Institut für Soziologie Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, **SYLWESTR ZAGULSKI** Willy Brandt Zentrum, Wrocław (zagulski@wbz.uni.wroc.pl): *German History As Seen by Young Poles and Germans*

**PANEL 4: 16. 15 – 17.45 CHAIR: BARBORA SPALOVA** (b.spalova@gmail.com) Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

**KATEŘINA ČAPKOVÁ** (katerina.capkova@nyu.edu), Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR: *German-Speaking Jews in Postwar Central Europe*

**JENNIFER R. CASH** (cash@eth.mpg.de), Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology: *In Wine and Work: Moldova's Missing Germans*

**FRIDAY 4. 7. 2014**

**PANEL 5: 9. 00 – 10. 30 CHAIR: PAUL BAUER** (paulibauer@gmail.com), Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

**CHRISTIAN JACQUES** (cjacques@unistra.fr), Université de Strasbourg: *The Expulsion of German-Speaking Czechs in Czech Cinematographic Production after 1989*

**BARBORA SPALOVÁ** (b.spalova@gmail.com), Faculty of Social Sciences Charles University: *The "Sudeten German Question" in Theater: The Artistic Appearance of the German Past in the Public Sphere*

**PANEL 6: 10. 45 – 12. 15 CHAIR: KARINA HOŘENI** (karina@mail.muni.cz), Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University

**DAVID EMLER** (emler@fsv.cuni.cz), Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University: *The Expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia in Czech Historiography after 1989*

**ERIKA REGNER** (erika.regner@univie.ac.at), University of Vienna, Department of European and Comparative Literature and Language Studies // Finno-Ugrian Studies: *Contemporary Hungarian-German Literature and Its (In)Ability to Deal with the Past*

**PANEL 7: 14. 00 –16.00 CHAIR: MAKSYM YAKOVLYEV** (maksym.yakovlyev@gmail.com), National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

**MARIA SZMEJA** (maria\_szmeja@autograf.pl), AGH –University of Science and Technology Krakow: *The Persistent German Presence in Polish Silesia*

**JULIANE TOMANN** (j.tomann@instytut.net), Center for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Science, Berlin: *Coming to Terms with the “German Past” in Times of Structural Change: The Case of the Upper Silesian Metropolis Katowice*

**STÉPHANIE CIRAC** ([stephanie.cirac@cercec.cnrs.fr](mailto:stephanie.cirac@cercec.cnrs.fr)): Center for Russian, Caucasian and Central European studies CNRS-EHESS: *Presentation of a selection of thematic issues of the Revue d'Etudes comparatives Est-Ouest dedicated*