Introduction
War, Migration, Memory

Viktoriya Sereda and Andrii Portnov

Independent Ukraine emerged in 1991 as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. It has demonstrated *socio-cultural inclusiveness* through the automatic granting of citizenship to all those who lived in the country (regardless of ethnicity, language or religion), *political pluralism* through the regular change of power through democratic elections, and a clear propensity for *peaceful resolution of the most acute political conflicts*. The student Revolution on Granite of 1990, the Orange Revolution of 2004, and the Winter 2013/2014 Revolution of Dignity/Euromaidan – until 22 January 2014 – were fundamentally peaceful. Violence (including deaths) only started in early 2014 on the Maidan. Immediately after the victory of the Revolution of Dignity, Russia occupied Crimea and contributed to the outbreak of war in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Since late February 2014, Ukraine has been at war, and on 24 February 2022, this war took on the character of a full-scale invasion. If not 2014, then certainly 2022 raised the question of rethinking the entire experience of Ukraine and Ukrainians before and after 1991. Was the full-scale war a belated and very high price to pay for the peaceful political transformation of the 1990s? Or should 2022 be considered the year of the final collapse of the Soviet Empire? And what socio-political factors allowed Ukrainian society to resist the military aggression of its neighbour? How does the war affect the historical memory of Ukraine or Europe in general?

These and other questions are addressed by the authors whose texts are collected in this Dossier. They testify to individual searches for the meaning of historical events and to the sincere motivation for the establishment of Ukrainian studies against the background of confusion and trauma imposed by the current Russian aggression. We should not forget for a second the context and circumstances of these inquiries: an ongoing military conflict in the centre of Europe, unprecedented in size and scope since the Second World War, a conflict that has taken on a genocidal character.[1]

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1   As you, dear readers, read this book, you may find that some of the links provided by the authors are not accessible. This research was conducted by the authors under the circumstances of a brutal war. Ukrainian society faces daily missile attacks, affecting not only civilians but

This Dossier focuses on Ukraine in the context of Russian aggression since 2014. What distinguishes the Ukrainian case from other cases of Russian aggression in the region is that it is a long-term conflict with a changing character. Initially, Ukraine faced the occupation of Crimea and its incorporation into the legal body of the Russian Federation. The Russian military aggression in the eastern part of Ukraine did not lead to the immediate integration of these territories into Russia but instead resulted in the creation of the quasi-state entities of the 'DPR' (Donetsk People's Republic) and the 'LPR' (Luhansk People's Republic) in occupied parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. On 12 February 2015, after many long negotiations between the leaders of France, Germany, Russia, and Ukraine, a 'package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements' ('Minsk II') was signed by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine. However, it did not achieve a stable ceasefire and did not prevent Russia's further aggression. The unprovoked Russian full-scale attack on Ukraine in February 2022 brought Ukraine to the attention of an international audience. War and mass displacement exposed millions of Ukrainians to new challenges. These challenges triggered intensive reinterpretations of the past – both the distant and the very recent – and a reevaluation of their memory and sense of belonging through the experiences they are going through.

Extreme events such as war and displacement create ruptures in sense-making narratives and, as suggested by Ryan Quinn and Monica Worline, "tend to strip people of identity, leaving them no sensible narrative to enact"[2]. People need plausible accounts of events to understand what is going on and how to respond through both individual and collective actions. Sense-making is an ongoing retrospective process grounded in personal experiences and is often linked to the construction of identity and a sense of belonging. In this process, history and the past turn into an important interpretive resource for one's attachment or alienation. The imagined past may consist of the memory of recently experienced events (e.g., 'after the beginning of the war'), which is later linked to selected symbolic markers, events, or figures from the past that help explain current events or legitimise individuals or their actions.

The essays of this Dossier aim to reach beyond the politics of history and examine how collective and individual memories and people's sense of belonging are reshaped when used to interpret the shocking realities of the current war. Additionally, they investigate how memory is mobilised on a personal and collective level to

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also critical infrastructure and cultural and academic institutions. Due to destruction, relocation, or power outages, servers may be temporary or permanently inaccessible. Additionally, information is a valuable resource targeted by hackers (as seen in the case of the 'My War' online project) or subject to concealment (as with official Russian statistics on the number of internally displaced persons and migrants).

2   Ryan W. Quinn and Monica C. Worline, "Enabling Courageous Collective Action: Conversations from United Airlines Flight 93", *Organization Science* 19/4, 2008, 497–516, here 501.

deal with the ruptures and threats posed by this war in an attempt to explain what is happening. The main research questions addressed in this volume are not new. Scholars have been working on similar issues for a long time and have developed several explanatory schemes.[3] For example, Peter Gatrell's work on refugees during the First World War illustrates how the outbreak of war can dramatically change the established landscape of social and national identities. He argues that the new category of 'refugee' created by the war suddenly became an important social category and a factor of identity. For millions of people, it outweighed many of their previous statuses and identities, influencing not only their perceptions of themselves but also their destinies.[4]

The reaction of Ukrainian society to all these challenges is quite complex, and this makes our task even more complicated and demanding. Scholars working on the region often simplified the complex transformations in Ukrainian society after 1991 and after 2014 (including the functions of memory and attitudes towards the past) into a binary of East-West divisions, a conflict of two identities (ethnic vs. civic),[5] or two models of historical memory (national vs. Soviet).[6] A more complex

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3   Janet S. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory, and the First World War in Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Sune Haugbolle, *War and Memory in Lebanon*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010; Stephan Milich, Friederike Pannewick, and Leslie Tramontini (eds.), *Conflicting Narratives: War, Trauma and Memory in Iraqi Culture*, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2012; Hariz Halilovich, "Reclaiming erased lives: archives, records and memories in post-war Bosnia and the Bosnian diaspora", *Archival Science* 14/3, 2014, 231–247; and Katrin Stoll, "Transcending the divide between history and memory: Szymon Datner's practical Holocaust historiography in the early post-war period", *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of History and Culture* 21, 2015, 4–23.

4   Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

5   Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs* 72/3, 1993, 22–49; Andrew Wilson, "The Donbas Between Ukraine and Russia: The Use of History in Political Disputes", *Journal of Contemporary History* 30/2, 1995, 265–289; Mykola Rjabtschuk, *Die reale und die imaginierte Ukraine*, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2005; Valeriy Khmelko, "Iz-za chego politikam udaetsia raskalyvat Ukrainu", *Vechernii Lugansk* 24, 2006; Ivan Katchanovski, "East or West? Regional Political Divisions in Ukraine since the 'Orange Revolution' and the 'Euromaidan'", paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, DC, 28–31 August, 2014; Taras Kuzio, "Competing Nationalisms, Euromaidan, and the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict", *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15/1, 2015, 157–169; Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, New Heaven-London: Yale University Press, 2015; and Bruno De Cordier, "Ukraine's Vendée War? A look at the 'resistance identity' of the Donbass insurgency", *Russian Analytical Digest* 198, 2017, 2–6.

6   Viktoriya Sereda, "Regional Historical Identities in Ukraine: Case Study of Lviv and Donetsk", *Naukovi Zapysky: Natsional'nyy universytet "Kyyevo-Mohylyans'ka Akademiya"*, *Sotsiolohichni nauky* 20, 2002, 26–34; Viktoriya Sereda, "Rehional'ni vymiry ukrayinskoho sotsiumu istorychne mynule ta natsionalni identychnosti", *Ahora. Ukrayina–rehional'nyy vymir* 3, 2006, 29–41; Serhey Makeev and Anzhela Patrakova, "Rehional'na spetsyfikatsiya sotsiokul'turnykh

analysis of the variety of Ukrainian experiences in different parts of the country and on the national level could provide a more accurate picture.[7] Accordingly, the essays in this Dossier consider multifaceted issues such as: how to differentiate between models of nation-building in Ukraine before the war (for example, in ethnic and civil regards); how do different perceptions of the nation interact in 2022; how do discourses of decommunisation and decolonisation figure into this interaction; what is the impact of war on the perception and prospects of Ukraine's ethnic diversity; what are shifts in the linguistic of religious landscapes, gender roles, and many more.

Changes in Ukrainian society can be studied in various contexts and perspectives – local, regional, national, and global – and focus on certain topics. This Dossier combines two approaches: Through a variety of case studies and themes, it offers a multi-scalar perspective on the transformational effects of war; on the macro-level, it considers how war influences memory and its politics. While the perspectives on the transformational effects of war provide insights of and into shifts of memory and symbolic representations, experiences of dislocation, and the repercussions of war on minority groups, the focus on memory considers how war influences discussions on the politics of memory in official discourses, in the educational system or in the media in Ukraine, in the region and the world. Through this approach, some issues, such as the Polish-Ukrainian "memory wars", are marginalised, while others, like the frameworks of understanding and commemoration of the Second World War, are reassessed. The essays reflect how the war fuels an antagonism between pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian versions of historical and cultural memory. They address and illustrate the shifts in writing styles and in identities of Ukrainian writers. In

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vidminnostey v Ukrayini", *Sotsiolohiya: teoriya, metody, marketynh* 3, 2004, 109–125; Volodymyr Kravchenko, "Fighting the Shadow: The Soviet Past in the Historical Memory of Contemporary Ukrainian Society (RUS)", *Ab Imperio* 2, 2004, 329–369; Oleksandr Hrytsenko, *Prezydenty i pamyat': Polityka pamyati prezydentiv Ukrayiny (1994–2014), pidgruntya, poslannya, realizatsiya, rezul'taty*, Kyiv: KIS, 2017; and Georgiy Kasianov, *Memory Crash*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2022.

7   Serhii Plokhy (ed.), *The Future of the Past: New Perspectives on Ukrainian History*, Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2016; Julie Fedor, Markku Kangaspuro, Jussi Lassila, and Tatiana Zhurzhenko (eds.), *War and Memory in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; André Liebich, Oksana Myshlovska, and Viktoriia Sereda, "The Ukrainian Past and Present: Legacies, Memory and Attitudes", in: Oksana Myshlovska and Ulrich Schmid, *Regionalism without Regions. Reconceptualizing Ukraine's Heterogeneity*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2019, 67–134; Barbara Törnquist-Plewa and Yuliya Yurchuk, "Memory politics in contemporary Ukraine: Reflections from the postcolonial perspective", *Memory Studies* 12/6, 2019, 699–720; Natalia Kudriavtseva, "Contested names in the toponymic landscapes of post-soviet space", *Ideology and Politics Journal* 1/15, 2020, 4–10; and Andrii Portnov, *Poland and Ukraine: Entangled Histories, Asymmetric Memories*, Berlin: Forum Transregionale Studien, 2020.

relation to war-induced migration, the politics of counting displaced or gendered experiences of war are analysed: How does war (re)define roles and divisions within Ukrainian society? Another avenue of exploration delves into the ways different media outlets narrate and represent wartime realities. What, for example, are the main markers of victory and resistance? Which symbols (including famous literary characters, religious or territorial imaginaries) are employed to mobilise certain identities, to create a sense of belonging, or to draw new lines of division? Moreover, media coverage of events or situations in the occupied territories at times significantly depends on an editorial perspective, on state policy, or on military conditions that restrict journalists' personal access to information. The case study of Mariupol illustrates how media messages (which are often prone to propaganda distortions and information restrictions) result in a multitude of perspectives and representations of the event and its participants. These narratives later might have a strong impact on the postwar reintegration of Ukrainian society. Moreover, several texts focus on the community level and explore the socio-cultural aspects of refugees' adaptation, shifts in collective memories and identities, motives for returning or prolonging their stay, new forms of self-aid and self-organisation, and on topics that become salient or silenced in closed social media channels.

This volume uses a cross-sectional approach to discuss the transforming impact of war on minority groups (ethnic, religious, or people diagnosed with cancer). In this collection, readers are presented with an exploration into the process of reclaiming the history of Crimea and Crimean Tatars through the lens of a single family's narratives. It illustrates how minority groups use family memories to create narratives of belonging to a community or a particular space.

Studies focusing on the personal level look at how war transforms individual communicative and cultural memories and people's experience of time, for example, when the natural flow of biographical time is disrupted by a 'before and after the beginning of the war'. How do people reference to certain symbolic markers, events or historical figures, redefine their identities, legitimise, explain current events, or make a nostalgic escape from reality? References to the past might also help overcome the traumas of the present. These phenomena are discussed in this volume in contributions analysing personal stories of common Ukrainians posted by the witnesses of war on the "My War" platform or narrated by Ukrainian refugees in Poland and Germany during the in-depth interviews conducted by the authors.

The first section on War and Memory begins with an examination of memory. Roman Holyk introduces the question of competing historical memories through the use of symbols of the World Wars I and II to interpret the ongoing war in Ukraine. Ihor Dvorkin reviews the newest Ukrainian history textbooks as indicators of current ideological trends. Denys Shatalov analyses the Ukrainian official rhetoric of war and illustrates the scale of the challenge of Ukrainian competition with the Russian Federation over the Victory of 1945, while simultaneously seeking

a consistent dissociation from Soviet experience and symbolism. Olha Polishchuk writes about nonfiction personal stories on the "My War" platform in an effort to better understand "the current collective trauma of Ukrainians caused by Russian aggression in 2022". The text by Olha Haidamachuk deals with another important concept: the tonality of archives. The author discusses this on the basis of interviews conducted with forcibly displaced people. She also touches upon the exceptionally important discourse of decolonization. The widespread reference to it in current Ukrainian discussions reflects both an attempt to legitimately join the already established Western mainstream and, at the same time, an attempt to deconstruct it and give the desired legitimacy to "Ukrainian voices".

Among the tests on representations in the second section, Alina Mozolevska draws attention to the unprecedented visualisation of the current war and offers an interesting analysis of its geographic imagery. Yuliya Yurchuk contributes to the discussion on postsecularity and analyses the application of religious imagery and symbols in wartime Ukraine. Oleksandr Zabirko created a careful and thoughtful analysis of the rhetorical strategies for naming the enemy. In his analysis, he engages literary works and films, from Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings" to Romero's "Night of the Living Dead" and comes to an important conclusion about the significance of situations where Russian and Ukrainian war rhetoric reinforce each other. No less important is his conclusion that the constant exchange and cultural negotiation between the state and society "reveals the highly decentralised structure of Ukrainian war rhetoric". Tetiana Shestopalova focuses on the attempts of Ukrainian writers from Donbas to rethink the issue of being a Russian-speaking person and author and discusses the choice of language as a factor of cultural and political security. An equally complex, painful, and controversial topic is touched upon in the article by Yuliia Soroka, who analyses Ukrainian, Russian, and English-language media reports on Mariupol produced in Spring 2022. Soroka emphasises the importance of the spectrum of perceptions of the character of occupation and assessments of the behaviour of the population of the occupied territories, both by the international media and within Ukrainian society.

The third section of the Dossier addresses experiences of displacement. The opening text by Lidia Kuzemska discusses the challenges in obtaining accurate data on the displacement of Ukrainians to Russia since the full-scale invasion in February 2022. She draws on the "politics of numbers" concept and illustrates how intentional efforts to inflate or lower displacement figures can serve political agendas. The essay by Olena Strelnyk explores the complex and contradictory nature of gender transformations in the context of Russia's war and the related forced displacement in Ukraine. The war challenges and reinforces traditional gender roles, particularly regarding men as 'protectors' and women as the 'protected.' Gender expectations shape the divergent attitudes of the Ukrainian population towards forcibly displaced refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The following three essays delineate the experiences of Ukrainian refugees residing in Poland and Germany, detailing their adjustment within their newfound host communities and elucidating how displacement transforms their notions of belonging. Ivan Kozachenko's research shows how Ukrainian refugees in Poland reevaluate their sense of national belonging to Ukraine, marked by the shifting role of the Ukrainian language and the heroisation of resistance. He describes an attenuation of the pro-Russian 'supranational' identity and an increased criticism towards the Soviet past and its mythology. Participants assign blame to both Putin's regime and the Russian people for the invasion and deliberately distance themselves from the Russian language, culture, and literature. Concurrently, Poland is viewed favourably and closer in terms of culture and geography as an effect of the support and welcome. Natalia Zaitseva-Chipak's text assesses the potential for future return migration of Ukrainian refugees to postwar Ukraine and focuses on the motivations guiding individuals' decisions. She advocates for a qualitative approach and reveals two distinct behavioural strategies of displaced people: those who put their lives on hold, awaiting the end of the war before returning, and those leveraging opportunities in Germany to improve their future prospects. Factors that influence the decision to stay or return encompass social connections and status, language proficiency, educational opportunities, and perceived social or medical security, as well as emotional motivations such as family reunification, homesickness, or the intensity of national identity. Taisiia Ratushna examines another aspect of displaced communities: their self-aid practices. She explores how displaced Ukrainians use social media platforms, particularly Telegram channels, to share information, seek assistance, and connect with others in similar situations. Ratsushna also explores key communication topics over time and offers insights into the processes of adaptation and integration, as well as community building and isolation.

The text of the fourth section on minority experiences by Denys Brylov and Tetiana Kalenychenko examines ongoing transformations of religious identities in Ukraine during the last decade and especially after Russia's full-scale aggression. Ukraine's religious landscape is often mistakenly described by external viewers as predominantly Orthodox. However, in Ukraine, over one-third of all believers resist aligning themselves with specific denominations and affiliations with specific religious institutions. This has visible regional variances, steadily decreasing from west to east.[8] The authors describe how the Russian invasion not only caused a profound internal crisis within the once biggest Orthodox denomination, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, but also how the increasingly salient

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8   Religious Pluralism Story Map, *Mapa. Digital Atlas of Ukraine*, 2019, https://harvard-cga.map s.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9d7160c9e77a4f7bbd0384fe60eb3e2a [accessed 18.06.2024].

position of a national component over a religious one constitutes a major transformation within Ukrainian religious communities. The following two essays uncover the experiences of two ethnic minority groups – Roma and Crimean Tatars – who are becoming more visible and acknowledged as part of the Ukrainian political nation. Mykola Homanyuk and Janush Panchenko illustrate how one notable incident reported in the media (an alleged theft of a Russian tank by Romani individuals from the village of Lyubymivka in the Kherson region) made not only a substantial impact on the Roma community but also may overcome negative stereotypes towards their perception as Ukrainian Roma within Ukrainian society and the nation at large. A rather personal essay by Emine Ziyatdinova recounts the experiences of three generations of Crimean Tatar women – the author's grandmother, mother, and herself – spanning from 1937 to 2022. It brings attention to the difficulties faced by Crimean Tatars in reclaiming their history, from the 1937–1938 repressions, the 1944 deportations to the ongoing struggle to preserve the Crimean Tatar language and culture. The essay questions the historical narratives imposed by Russian and Soviet authorities and the current occupation. She argues that the inclusion of ethnic and other minority groups into the idea of Ukrainian statehood remains potentially fragile if only measured in terms of position and contribution during wartimes. The last text of the Dossier brings to attention another invisible group – cancer patients. Olha Labur discusses the severe effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the oncological care system of Ukraine, including the destruction of medical infrastructure and the termination of cancer treatments. The text analyses the intersection of war and cancer, highlighting the militarisation of the cancer-related media space through the use of military vocabulary and metaphors in discussing cancer, drawing parallels between the two fronts – the war with Russia and the battle against cancer. She also explores the experiences of cancer patients who became refugees, leaving Ukraine to seek treatment abroad. Their stories reflect the temporary nature of the 'window of opportunities' in accessing medications, innovative treatments, and the high cost of care, as well as the prominent role of voluntary organisations in overcoming those difficulties.

All texts collected in this Dossier were written by Ukrainian scholars under the duress of war and displacement.[9] Many of the authors base their contributions on interviews they conducted on social media and online resources. We think that, individually and together, the essays underline the need for a nuanced understanding and invite more research into the evolving consequences of the Russian war in Ukraine, for Ukraine, for Europe, and for its neighbouring regions. The identification of key questions and research problems related to War, Migration, and Memory through a Ukrainian prism is the basic idea of our publication. We consider this collection to be a significant step towards establishing the intellectual legitimacy of

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9   All texts of this Dossier underwent a double blind peer review process.

Ukrainian voices as well as a contribution to the search for an appropriate comparative framework, methodological perspectives, and, ultimately, a new analytical language for describing our part of Europe.

Acknowledgements

This publication emerged from a web of various institutional and intellectual impulses. One was Prisma Ukraïna – Research Network Eastern Europe, initiated in 2014 by Andrii Portnov (Professor of Entangled History of Ukraine, European University Viadrina and Co-Director of the Viadrina Center of Polish and Ukrainian Studies) and hosted at the Forum Transregionale Studien since the beginnings. Prisma Ukraïna is based on the cooperation of scholars from various institutions in and around Berlin.[10] The central idea of the program is to look at Ukraine not as an object but as a site and a prism for questions that are relevant to Europe and its neighbouring regions. Prisma Ukraïna probes the idea of open area studies and analyses questions in and of Ukraine by employing Ukrainian and regional expertise and transregional comparisons. With funding from the Land Berlin and private foundations, it invites scholars from Ukraine and neighbouring countries for fellowships and arranges workshops and transregional academies held in Berlin, Dnipro, Sofia, or Warsaw on themes such as history and memory, the politics of history or the shadows of empires.

Based on these legacies and networks, and in reaction to Russia's full-scale invasion, a new interdisciplinary research group of Ukrainian scholars in Ukraine and Germany, Prisma Ukraïna: *War, Migration, Memory*, was constituted in summer 2022 based on the ideas of Viktoriya Sereda and the experience of the Forum Transregionale Studien in arranging decentral college-like groups of scholars. Sereda was appointed as a Senior Fellow of the Forum Transregionale Studien for the years 2022–2023 to direct the research group. The main idea of the research group has been to investigate the transformational effects of war and dislocation on people's memory, history, and sense of belonging. The change of memory, historiography, perhaps even of history itself in times of upheaval certainly raises questions and interest not only in Ukraine or Eastern Europe but also in its former west, north,

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10   Centre Marc Bloch, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Osteuropakunde (DGO), Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), Osteuropa-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Slawistik, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Sozialwissenschaften, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Slawistik, Universität Potsdam, Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung, Berlin, Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam, Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Zentrum für Osteuropa- und internationale Studien (ZOiS).

and south as well. The research group currently consists of ten Ukrainian academics in Ukraine and at their places of refuge in Germany and Switzerland.

The first phase (2022–2023) of Prisma Ukraïna: *War, Migration, Memory* was realised with funding from the Berlin Senate Department for Higher Education and Research, Health, and Long-Term Care. The ZEIT STIFTUNG BUCERIUS and the Marga and Kurt Möllgaard Foundation provided funding for sur-place or non-resident fellowships for scholars in Ukraine affected by the war. The support of the Forum, the Land of Berlin, and the two foundations enabled the group to conduct their individual and collaborative research projects through fellowships and academic events. For instance, in October 2022, the first larger hybrid workshop for the project, "Studying Migration and Memory in Times of War", organised at the Forum, brought together the Ukrainian members of the group, other Ukrainian scholars displaced in Germany with similar research foci, and scholars from different German and Austrian institutions and foundations researching memory or displacement to discuss methodological questions. The Fellows also broadened their network and thematic insights during the monthly online Prisma Ukraïna seminar, "Rethinking East European Studies in Times of Upheaval", chaired by Andrii Portnov. In February 2023, the "Prisma Ukraïna Book Talk" series was launched, where scholars discussed their recently published books on Ukraine or other topics related to the project. All public and hybrid events provided opportunities for networking and connecting across disciplines, countries, and regions during times of war and displacement. All these activities helped us and the contributors to this Dossier to generate new research questions, crystallise conceptual frameworks or research designs, and opened avenues for reciprocal learning and knowledge sharing. We are grateful to the Forum Transregionale Studien, its staff, and all donors for their support of the project activities and for the publication of this volume, as well as to all participants and authors for their involvement in this fruitful exchange of ideas. The vibrant, international environment of the Forum further enabled the Fellows to develop comparative perspectives due to the exchange of ideas and experiences on currently debated questions in the fields of science policy, epistemology, and ethics, among other things.

A major part of the contributions to this volume emerged from the work of our *War, Migration, Memory* research group. All its members contributed to this volume. First, we had to adjust the umbrella topic of "War, Migration, Memory" to provide for individual research and for cohesion between an interdisciplinary group of scholars (coming from history, sociology, philosophy, anthropology, social linguistics, arts, and religious studies) in a way that provided meaning to all participants. It was important to find issues that are relevant not only for Ukrainian scholars or German academia but also for scholars from other regions of the world to stimulate a multivocal discussion and mutual rethinking instead of 'dialogical' structures or ways of 'monological informing' by a particular side or a particular group of experts.

One of the unexpected effects of the project was that all scholars, irrespective of their disciplinary approach, felt that it was important to record and document the experiences of their compatriots and the changes in their society concerning the war. We discussed the significance of records and archival materials for an understanding of past events and felt responsible for the collection of data and documentation of current history. As one Fellow wrote in a feedback, "everything is unfolding in front of us, and it is important to record and understand it". In their personal accounts published on the TRAFO – Blog for Transregional Research and in feedback form, many Fellows admitted that the war either made them radically shift their focus or return to problems they studied earlier. War brought about a new sense of relevance. The collaborative work and publications of the group members were facilitated by the science communication and administrative team at the Forum Transregionale Studien, namely Tamara Beresh, Natasha Klimenko, Simon Kötschau, Sophie Schmäing, and Judith Sieber. We highly appreciate their considerate editorial expertise, the respectful and engaged cooperation, and their administrative support. Based on the principle of non-hierarchical openness, the project members defined the focus, structure, and content of their work and collaboration. They discussed ideas and themes in seminars and workshops and shared them on Trafo-Hub, the Forum's virtual communication platform. The research group members developed the concept for this volume in cooperation with the editor and suggested additional external contributors. We would like to thank all those involved for the invaluable discussions and the respectful and productive collaboration on this volume. Many thanks to all authors, Fellows, and the Forum Transregionale Studien, especially Georges Khalil, for their continuous support and mindful feedback. Many more people made this publication possible. We are grateful to Mark Berman and Natasha Klimenko for thoroughly copy-editing the articles, as well as to Alex Favalli and Martin Lochthofen for proofreading the contributions to this volume.

This volume is a result of these ongoing collaborative efforts. It is published during the second phase of the project (2024–2025), which itself is another result of our joint work, made possible on the basis of a renewed research agenda developed collectively by the members of the group and the generous funding by the Gerda Henkel Foundation, which supports the research group with individual stipends for the Ukrainian researchers and additional funds for academic events and science communication. The Berlin Senate Department for Higher Education and Research, Health, and Long-Term Care provides funding for personnel costs for the Forum, whose staff, inspiration, and support we would like to acknowledge with gratitude.

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