

[...]. Memories are presented as unconditional good, something good. Something that preserves identity, does justice to the past and guards against repeating our mistakes, and so on and so on. So, most of the time when we talk about memory, somehow there is this idea or knowledge around us that this is something good. This is something valuable.

Before I will jump into exactly discussing that I would just want to give you some structure of today, because I think it's always better to understand what's happening. So, there will be lecture. To be very honest, I don't like this part, because I think... again, as I said before, I think cooperation is very important. But of course that's my job, so, of course, lecture will be there. After a lecture if you're going to have any questions, and you can already start collecting your questions while I'm talking, we'll have some time for questions. Also hydration is very important. Heat wave everywhere. Climate change, catastrophes and all of that. So, please, we need to have a break. That's why there will be break.

After it will be this part of workshop, and I hope if we're going to have time, I would like to have some feedback and also what you are thinking after the workshop. Also important part is that today before the presentation, before the lecture Masha and Nadja asked me to send the presentation and the problem was... the reason why I didn't send it in the morning, because today...no, during the night I was like "Oh, I have an idea, what I should change in the presentation". So, the thing is, I never talked about this topic before the way I'm going to do it right now. So I'm going to require some help, because if at some point everyone will realise, okay, I'm talking for too long, I will need someone to tell me "Please, stop". And of course Masha and Nadja I'm looking at you, otherwise it will be a bit rude from participants.

So yes, memory. And again, as I said before, memories are presented as something unconditionally good. And yet behind this almost ritual of repeating how memory is important, there is something that bothers me and something that I'm asking every time when I have any conversation about memory. And I also felt like this question irritates people, they don't like this question sometimes they even get annoyed with that question. So, the question that I think is important to ask yourself every time when we talk about memory is "Remember, but what for?" What is the purpose of that?

Again, since there is kind of sacralisation and the whole idea of "Yeah, yeah memory is important", I think we're used so much to the idea that memory is important, that we stopped asking ourselves why exactly, what is the function of memory. Because nevertheless it is a function, a social function that is in society. That focus will be obvious at the end of the workshop. But right now, I just ask you to trust me and just enjoy the ride, because right now we will just go a completely different topic.

And as a very humble person, I need to explain my book. This book is about decolonization, and the main idea of the book.. I just realized that there is a lot of information about how it is important to decolonize yourself, but I actually wanted to have something simpler, like just a you know...a guide. And I was complaining about that to myself. And after a while I was thinking "Okay, maybe you should stop complaining and do something, and if it's going to be bad, that's fine. If it's going to be good, that's perfect". So, I used all money that I got from the book, from the publisher, the contract and I spent it on the research. Very smart idea. Nevertheless, I got some data. And based on that, I created stages of decolonisation. Right now the book is in Ukrainian. From what I've seen after this year of talking to different people, I realized there are actually a lot of things that could be used not only by Ukrainian people, but others as well. So, what you're seeing in front of you, this is the way of how I'm thinking. Every time I'm doing anything, I'm creating like a huge, strange, crazy sometimes script (because this is a clean version) or scheme. And basically each chapter: anger, shame, confusion, curiosity, grieving, creation, forgiveness they have a kind of connection to each other. First three are more about traps of people that were living under colonization. Next three are the ways how you can go out. And forgiveness is basically an open chapter. I left it open, the book, because I don't think that there is anyone who needs to say to anyone that they need to forgive or forget.

So, today I want to focus on two of them. On confusion, and it's a green one, and grieving. So, about confusion. Important thing in this AI age: all of the illustrations are made by me, there is no AI here. So, in the light of current events, understanding the deep historical processes that shaped the perception of Ukrainians in russian imperialist consciousness become particularly important. And I have become interested in how russian empire constructed and disseminated the

narrative about Ukrainians that later became part of imperialistic culture and was forcibly imposed on Ukrainians themselves. So, basically what exactly created this confusion. Because when for ages you hear from someone else what are you... it's very easy for a hundred times to tell what are you. You are a tomato, and then after 100 times at some point you start to look at yourself in the mirror and say "I am a tomato". But still the inner conflict will remain. Because you know that you're not a tomato, you're a person, but you know empires sometimes don't think that way.

So, I decided to make a research and try to figure out what exactly this confusion was consisting of. How exactly russian image of Ukrainian people was created and when. So, the foundation of this research consists of works of russian ethnographers. I mean, right now from modern ethnography we won't call them ethnographers, but nevertheless. Who traveled through the territories of the empire and documented their observations. Typically it will be Fedotov, Belinsky, Aksakov you will see whole names. It is important to note that these ethnographic studies of those times were deeply permitted by racism and chauvinist views. But this is again something that was normal. This mode of communication about colonies was common to all empires.

The condescending colonial tone in which Russian scholars describe Ukrainians was an empire's typical discourse towards subjugated people. And it was through that lens that image of Ukrainians was constructed and then broadcast across imperialistic space. In constructing the image of the colonist culture, imperialists do not seek to grasp the true essence or depth. The goal is to construct convenient, manipulative image, even one riddled with internal contradiction that is not important. It should not be very logical. The empire is not interested in the ethnicity of the colonized culture. It is concerned only with the utility of that culture and the ability to transform it according to its own needs.

So one of the stereotypes that are still used here: Ukraine is not a country. The key strategy of the imperial policy towards Ukraine was the systematic denial of its historical agency and right to self-determination. It is telling that these 19th century narratives are employed by the current russian authorities almost unchanged, equally denying Ukrainians the right to statehood, its own history. Thereby perpetuating the foundations of imperialist myths with russian political culture.

You actually can hear sometimes how Putin is citing Belinsky. But you also need to think about how exactly we perceive ourselves when for centuries we're hearing that our people (there was no idea of nation) are not capable of self-governing.

Emphasis on unity. The concept of the triune Russian people developed in the Russian empire as an ideological construct during the 18th and early 19th century. A period when the Russian state was actively transforming into empire through territorial expansion, and required ideological justification for the policies. There's a lot of discussion between the terms colonialism and imperialism. Something that I use for myself and this is a school of thought that I'm kind of connected more with: empire is more or less an ideology and colonialism is a policy. So, in order to do something and claim yourself as empire and then perceive yourself as empire, you need to create this feeling of entitlement and that thing, that political movement, is actually something that was transforming at some point.

This concept aimed to explain the political unity of three Slavic peoples. Great Russians, which is of course Russians, Little Russians which is Ukrainians and White Russians, which is people from Belarus. To legitimize the concept, historical arguments were frequently employed, religious ones and linguistic ones. So, the whole idea of "everyone is coming from the one country Kiev's Rus", "everyone is believing in one god, Orthodox church" and basically "everyone is speaking one language". The whole idea that Russian language is the main language, everything else is basically a kind of a mistake. Also interesting, because of course my research would predominantly focus on Ukraine, but separately I created the whole notes what they wrote also about people from Belarus, and it was also interesting.

So, this concept gained particular relevance following the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the incorporation of the new territories populated by Ukrainians and Belarusians into the empire. The texts of Russian ethnographers reflect precisely this concept, which was actively used to justify territorial claims and policies of assimilations. The authors manipulate notions of unity attempting to present the colonial policy as a natural process of uniting brotherly people. Particularly striking is the way they acknowledge cultural differences between Ukrainians and Russians only to immediately diminish their significance by framing them as regional peculiarities within a single Russian space.

So, the use of romanticized rhetoric about the shared love or common russian cause conceals the true objective: the complete absorption of non-russian identity. Notably, this rhetoric of unity and brotherhood remains the key element of russian propaganda today, which likewise denies Ukraine's right to have independence. And everything else is separatism.

Here also... to show this picture from Soviet Union. That only "normal" person here is russian. You can see in front a person from Ukraine. You can see on the background someone is colored, but again this is not even important. There is three...representation of white peoples, basically Slavic one. It basically looked like a Halloween with one normal person and normal person is a russian person. As a person who likes to torture myself, I watched a lot of Soviet movies and it was very interesting to see how exactly they're portraying Ukrainians. Not only Ukrainians, but, again, I focus on Ukrainians. And basically Ukrainian person is wearing a suit but instead of a shirt they have a Ukrainian national ethnic t-shirt or shirt.

But again, the whole point that there is a "normal" and there is something that is "not normal". There's also a lot of discussion about hierarchies inside of Soviet system. Nevertheless, Ukrainians actually were on top. Because, again, when we talk about people of color, it's much more complicated. The whole anecdotal culture of "Chukchas" and ethnic groups in russia. That part is even more complicated and again there's...Nevertheless, I mean russian born are top.

So, another interesting part is individualism. Even though the imperialistic paradigm regarded of Ukrainians as a part of russian people, russian scholars were compelled to acknowledge fundamental differences in the social organization of basically these two peoples. The researchers of that time noted that unlike the Russian community with its coercive character, the Ukrainian community was based on the voluntary association of free individuals. This was reflected even in everyday details. The authors also noted the distinctive capacity among Ukrainians to combine personal freedom within civic cooperation. Equality that stood in particularly sharp contrast to this russian model of communal life, in which the individual was wholly subordinated to the collective.

Again, something that when you as a child are listening to your thinking about "oh, okay, so, my people are not united, they are not together, we don't have a common cause". Even though you know from the perspective of European values or

I mean... I don't know what European values... from European perspective individuality is not so bad. But nevertheless, we need to look at the whole concept here.

Next part is kind of my favorite, because we start to talk about Ukrainians as about Disney princesses. So, the imperialist narrative surrounding Ukrainian song culture and poetic sensibility is the striking example of the colonial exoticization of subjugated people. The texts examined reveal the characteristic strategy: 1) the acknowledgement of certain cultural traits of Ukrainians is filtered through the lens of their supposed natural giftness, which simultaneously emphasizes their simplicity and naturalness; 2) note that distinctly condescending and revealing tone of the description in which Ukrainian culture inevitably appears of something unsophisticated and primitive in comparison to Russian culture.

The Russian authors express admiration for Ukrainian subculture, compare Ukraine to Russian Italy and note its exceptional standing among Slavic people. Yet this admiration has clearly defined limits and it is consistently accompanied by patronizing condescending remarks. It is important to emphasize that the problem lies not in the acknowledgements of the Ukrainian people's musical gifts. For this is indeed a part of our heritage, but in the way this characteristic is deployed to construct a deliberately simplified and primitivized image of Ukrainians.

Again, just continuing the idea of Disney princess.. Naturalness. The passage examined below reveals the important aspect: aspect of the narrative about Ukrainians. The systematic portrayal of them as a people existing in the primordial harmony with nature. The problem lies not in the acknowledgement again of the Ukrainian's deep connection to nature, but in the way this characteristic is used to primitivize their image. Depicting a people as a natural or close to nature may at first glance appear to be a positive characterization, particularly from the contemporary perspective on environmental consciousness and climate concerns.

But it is worth noticing that the modern perception of naturalness differs significantly from the interpretation of 18th and 19th century. At the time, naturalness was regarded as something as antithesis of rationality. While some philosophers called for a return to the natural state, believing that humanity had become excessively captivated by progress and is losing its essence. A concealed hierarchy lurked within this opposition. The nature was automatically perceived as

less developed and progressive, as more primitive. Thus, the naturalness of a particular group of people was emphasized in description. It was typically accompanied by the patronizing tone, rational and developed people, condescendedly described their charming naturalness of those they considered less civilized. This created them and reinforced their hierarchical system in which natural people were automatically positioned as those requiring guidance from more progressive nations. Characterizing people as a natural was an instrument of cultural hegemony, disguised as complimentary description.

It's also interesting because that description is actually very similar how rational philosophers of that time were describing women. But that's again a completely different conversation. We can also here talk about the whole postcolonial discourse and how it is connected to the view on women.

So, phlegmatic, melancholy and laziness. It is telling that the authors while acknowledging positive traces of Ukrainians like sometimes depth of thinking and singing, simultaneously emphasized their supposed lack of practicality and absence of initiative. Such a characterization fits neatly into the police narrative in which Ukrainians were portrayed as people requiring guidance and organization from outside. This stereotype notably continued to be promoted by Russian authorities to this day.

Comicality. By portraying Ukrainians as comic figures prone to exaggerate sentimentality and childlike emotionality. Imperialist authors sought to construct an image of an inferior culture in need once again of an older brother for governance and guidance. Particularly revealing is the way the authors emphasize its comicality through Ukrainian's natural emotional openness and sincerity, transforming these qualities from positive human traits to objects of ridicule. Which is also interesting because sometimes when I was watching some Russian and Soviet movies, the moments of... kind of you know... joke or comic relief. That was the moment when somebody spoke in Ukrainian. So, the whole point of even speaking Ukrainian, it's kind of funny, because Ukrainian is not a language.

Right now, when I'm listening to Russian propagandists, they're basically saying something in Ukrainian, and by saying that in Ukrainian that means that the word has an opposite meaning. So, for example, they're using the word "independence" (незалежність) and when they're saying that, it means that

"oh, actually Ukraine is very dependent of something". I think again it's another interesting conversation of how language is ridiculed here. And if we are going to look at people, who were speaking Ukrainian predominantly in Ukraine for all these years, there is also a lot of subjugation and also this colonial trauma through the language.

My personal history is a bit different, since my father was from Afghanistan. And Russian was the main language in my family, because my father was studying in Moscow with my mother. Even in that case... I think each Ukrainian...something that we're discussing all the time ...language is a big discussion. Which is kind of funny, because what we're discussing right now... to another interesting ...stereotype: is Ukrainian is the Wild East. Which is funny, because you know geographically it is in the west, but as said, orient is not a geographical place it's a symbolic place.

It's not important where you're: in the east or west, you are still going to be portrayed as something in the east, something as orient. So, in the imperialistic ethnography of 19th century there was a tendency to construct the asianness of Ukrainians, despite the geographic location in the west of Russia. The text revealed a systematic attempt to attribute eastern Asian characteristics to Ukrainians, both physical appearance (conversion to the Tartar, Turks and Caucasian peoples) and into social political organizations. Particularly telling, it is the way the author insists on the supposedly Asian character of Ukrainian statehood.

This orientalizing of Ukrainians served imperialistic aims, by presenting Ukrainians as the people of the east trait. Russian authors sought to justify the civilization mission of the Russian empire, and legitimize colonial domination. Notably, this rhetoric developed in parallel with the construction of Russian national identity as European, created an artificial contrast between civilized Russia and Asian Ukraine, despite the fact that geographically, again, it's a bit different. So, all of that, of course, was created long time ago, but evolution of thought and political situation changed, following the collapse of the Russian empire in 1917.

During the period of national liberation and transformation, the Ukrainian people's republic was established as an independent state. Despite its brief existence, it demonstrated both the availability of Ukrainian statehood and the presence of such aspiration. After this with the consolidation of Soviet power, any manifestation of statehood-oriented or independent-minded sentiments within



Ukrainian political intelligencia began to be portrayed as an inherently separatistic and negative.

In the communist state the stereotypical image of Ukrainian was constructed as simple-hearted, cheerful, but poorly educated character. Such figure often spoke in a simplified form of Ukrainian, one that would be comprehensible for a Russian speaker, which was used as a device for comic effect. This gave rise to image of the "jolly hohol". It's always complicated to explain. You know, the words. So, most of the time all of the ethnographers that I was quoting, they were using "hohols" to describe Ukrainians. It was important to project conflict-free friendship of people, and a peaceful local ukrainianness, in which Ukrainian speaking character frequently appeared as a pleasant, but secondary element in a broader picture.

Following the collapse of USSR, Russian cinema initially preserved the Soviet stereotype of "jolly hohol". However, after 2014, a sharp shift occurred. The image of Ukrainian became overly negative, following the annexation of Crimea and Ukrainian society's concrete desire to achieve political separation. Russians returned to the stereotype of Ukrainians as traitors, driving this image in the portrayal of Ukrainians.

So here it's important to say: because of these desires at the beginning of 20th century to create their own state, anything connected to that was portrayed as a separatism. And a Ukrainian, well, a "jolly hohol"... again, they were portrayed as a brother, as a little brother. But now, well, in that time, it was also a brother, who is jealous. He's stupid, but he is smart enough to be jealous, but he's not smart enough to do something about that. So, there's also a reasoning behind that. They were trying to explain why exactly Ukrainians are jealous. And they're jealous because Russians are so great, and we have the loop. So, after 2014 that idea of separatism just comes back and we start to discuss again, how Ukrainians are just constantly jealous.

So, all of that crazy situation when we are actually don't know who we are. Because again, when you are described as something... I think it's always nice to talk sometimes about the personal experience. In my case, I could never understand both parts of my identity. Because when I was reading... and I was like...you basically have this teenage crush in Russian authors. And then I'm reading what they're writing about Ukrainians, I feel kind of conflicted, because I don't want to be

like those Ukrainians. I want to be something else, and something else is being russian. So, basically the tendency of the russian literature created this feeling of you actually want to be separated from Ukrainians, you want to be that smart, brilliant, blah blah blah russian. At the same time there is also image of of Afghan people, and I can...I think we can just describe and talk about this differently, but there's also... there is still a problem for me to find interesting and good representation of people from Afghanistan.

So basically when you don't know who you are for a long time, there is a feeling of confusion, feeling of "what am I?" In the book I'm trying to describe that that feeling could be not cured, but kind of... you could feel better with curiosity. And curiosity is kind of a virus that you can share with others, but it should be genuine. But nevertheless, since we're talking about remembrance today, it is important to say that "okay, if I'm lost, if I don't know, who am I, what I should be grieving about? What I should remember?" And here I want to talk what kind of grief colonial people are experiencing and that will kind of ...unfold through the whole workshop.

So, colonial trauma is something huge. In the illustration I was trying to describe that thing, that something big. I didn't know how. So, I represented this as a big, huge dark blob. The colonial trauma. So, the person who has experienced colonial influence, has had much taken away from them. Perhaps, it is easier to identify what was not taken, what remains, than to count everything that they were deprived of. And the problem with colonial grief is that it is enormous, and sometimes seems incomprehensible. Colonial trauma is not the trauma of a single historical period like colonialism itself. Yes, again, this is not a moment of... or example of Ukrainian colonialism, because Ukrainian colonialism doesn't have a specific date. But in some cases, when we talk about overseas colonialism, there is a very specific date, when somebody came and said, "Okay, you know what? Now you are you're us." And someone can say, "Oh, you know, colonial trauma ends with the moment when imperialistic force just fled." But no, the whole point is that it's still there. It is a pervasive phenomenon that penetrates all spheres of life and appears difficult to grasp in its magnitude.

A colonial society is a wounded society. And to comprehend the old pain, to live through it, and to continue living, one must experience colonial grieving and understand how it operates at both societal and personal levels. As you can see

here, colonial trauma may include collective trauma, religious trauma, linguistic trauma, environmental, ecological, many more. Although the internal concept of historical traumatic events certainly differs in each case, they are united by the transmission of this trauma from generation to generation, the transgenerational nature of it.

As Tamanda Hundorova wrote in her book "Transit culture and postcolonial trauma", a distinctive feature of trauma is that its symptoms do not simply return from the past, but are carried into the future so that the future becomes already lived past. This was the representation of transgenerational trauma.

Some studies of cultural and historical trauma note that experience of colonization creates repetitive patterns of trauma. When traumatic experience does not end with those who directly experience it, but continues to be transmitted to subsequent generations. Imperialism not only destroys the external world, but also continues destructive processes within families and societies. So, unfortunately the consequences of communism must be addressed by more than one generation after imperialist aggression has already ended.

Colonial grieving is not limited to the past events or present circumstances. The experience of colonialism extends beyond clearly defined beginnings and endings of violence. As we have already understood, the colonialism does not conclude with one defeat of an empire. It leaves a metastases and consequences for society and continues to influence the future. The process of mourning the past is also complicated by the fact that empire systematically destroyed historical evidence of violence, depriving us from possibility of having an objective picture of the world. I mean objective... as a big fan of post-structuralism I do not believe in some type of objective. But nevertheless.

Taking all these aspects into account, in my opinion, colonial grief and the process of colonial grieving include different stages of grieving. And let's start with first. Grieving for what was destroyed and we know about this. Each of us has a family history of destruction. Someone was killed, taken away, relocated, tortured or disappeared. This is something that passed from parents to us and to them in the past from their parents.

These are stories about what was destroyed and we know about this. Our existence is an echo of that grieving. From history of our country we are aware of

numerous strategies that our society has experienced over the centuries. Sometimes when reading a school textbook about such tragic events, we may recall family stories.

Grieving for what was destroyed and we know about this is about continuity and understanding. In this type of grieving, we understand, why things happened the way they did, what occurred and what consequences it led to now. This is the part of colonial grieving that is easier to accept, because usually we are not longer the first generation to experience it or it is not longer silenced. The grieving already becomes memory for us and part of understanding who we are, part of our identity. We know that these stories will also pass to the next generation, but not as the bleeding wounds but as a visible scars on the body of our history.

Usually this part of grieving is already easier for all of us to experience and articulate. It is less painful. We have already learned to live with it. We will tell our foreign friends about it, because it is important to understand who and what we are. And this process of digesting grief into values has already occurred, usually not by us not by our generation but by previous ones. We are carriers of memory but not longer of the burning pain. At least this part of colonial grief has already been partially articulated, which makes it easier to experience. We realize that each of us has lost something, and it is precisely this awareness that facilitates the process of living through trauma, because there are situations, where such understanding is lacking.

Second part, grieving for what is being destroyed right now. So, the world of Ukrainians is being destroyed right now before our eyes. We receive messages about current shelling, and we find out where the rocket drone is flying. And in real time Ukrainians can see how what existed just a moment ago is being destroyed. This is constant grieving for what was in our hands just a few seconds ago and that Russia brutally took away. This can be a life of our loved one, our life, homes, memories, opportunities or simply time, something so familiar or necessary. Russia with this imperialist policy destroys not only physical objects but also what constitutes a stable part of our daily life. Not something abstract and distant, but something familiar, normal, like sleep, which until recently was normal for Ukrainians, but now is a rare joy.

The survey results that I conducted for the book: of 749 Ukrainians confirmed the scale of losses. Among respondents, the question, "What did Russia take from you?", three types of losses proved most painful. Most often people spoke about the loss of peace of mind. 315 people mentioned this lost tranquility, sense of security, peaceful life and carefreeness. The second most common loss was home. 149 Ukrainians indicated the loss of their house, sense of home, housing, apartment. Also 74 people pointed to deteriorating health in various aspects. Here are some quotes from the qualitative part of the research for the book. I asked people, "What did Russia take from you?" Quote: "Health, nerves, daily life. Thank God, I still have a roof above my head. I didn't lose it. But health and nerves. Military person: "Family, not completely, thank God, not completely, but the opportunity to spend time with children, communicate, raise them, watch their achievements. All this happened at the distance now and for a very long time I didn't see how they grow up. Russia is taking away my time". So, among the 749 people surveyed, 64 people specifically mentioned the loss of faith in anything.

Grieving for what is being destroyed right now is a grieving for our daily life. It's the horror of what we have to experience in this moment, but also the loss of basic guidelines, faith in certain social values and just world. The illusion which is shattered before our eyes. This is the feeling of how the heart breaks from the reality with which we can do nothing

Grieving for what we know will be destroyed in the future. Every time we look at the name of another human being killed by Russia, we all silently understand that this is only tip of an iceberg. We reconcile ourselves with the realistic...through thought that Russia will continue to kill, that in future it will continue to destroy our people, our cities and our future. And understanding this, we already grieve for it. Because the empire will not stop destroying, even when all weapons are exhausted. The empire does not destroy something only here and now.

The problem with human atrocities is not only imperialism, it is that they do not end, when they formally come to an end. That is horrific events do not stop with the last shot. The consequences continue to live on, leaving the deep scars in society and the memory of generations. And people have to live with the consequences. Counting all those who have died now, we understand that this is not final losses, that destruction will continue in the future. Because a person who

had experienced the influence of empire knows one thing: as long as empire does not collapse, as long as the political situation does not change, the destruction will not stop. And we must as a part of this colonial grieving, mourn now what we know may be destroyed in the future. We prepare ourselves for inevitable losses, because as long as the empire exists, violence will continue. This precisely is in this practices of understanding that murders will continue that we talk about death more often.

And not [only this happens] in communication with loved ones, but this is something that a lot of people are discussing right now. They discuss death and how they should be...the whole process of burying them and all of that. As Albert Memmi wrote in "The Colonizer and the Colonized", he, the colonized person, is forbidden to plan and build the future. Therefore, he must limit himself to the present only. And even this present is limited and abstract. A person living in the consequences of colonialism gets used to this aftertaste of grief and pain, preparing themselves for the losses that have not yet occurred. After all, as long as empire exists, these losses will inevitably happen.

Four. This is [point four]. There are five of them, and this is [number] four. The grieving for what will never be. The future that is impossible because the possibility was destroyed. Often when reading through books of Ukrainian history, question arises about all of our unrealized possibilities of what would have happened to our culture, society, politics if not... And here one must insert an appropriate historical event. What would happen to Ukrainian intelligencia, Ukrainian language, church or landscape? Stable development is anything... is a primal continuity, is a gradual chance that build upon each other. It is a chain of different events that influence one another, and as a result we get a possible outcome.

When we examine the history of our country, we see chains of development and we see how they were destroyed, thus, forcing us to start everything from the beginning. These missing pages of our history are not simply past losses, but also unborn possibilities that could have changed our present. How many times each of the Ukrainian were asking themselves "What if...?" We cannot help but ask and try to find the answer. Colonial grieving is also grieving for the future that is not destined to come because of the consequences of what the empire is doing now. This is how empire is taking away from us the dream of the future that we believe we deserved.

This part of the grieving is also right now connected with... somebody calls it fifth, somebody calls it fourth wave of immigration. Because this is also representation of the kids that need to acquire not one identity, but sometimes couple. And again, in the time of globalization one must say "oh, but it's good to have multiple individualities and multiple cultures inside of you". And yes, I can agree, but also as a consequence of refugee marriage, I can say for sure that psychological effect of forced immigration is not the same as migration for possibilities. Even though it's still traumatic.

And the fifth one [point], the most complicated one, the most heavy one. I will just let this... let it be here. So, fifth [point] is grieving for what we never knew we lost. One day I came across the published archives of victims of the famine, Holodomor of 1932 and 1933. I was curious to check if there is any information about my relatives on my mother's side. As she's Ukrainian. Although it seemed that all my family stories were already well known to me. When I entered Surnames and village names into the search engine, I saw names that I had never heard of. Among them were children. I was suddenly overwhelmed by the sound of the abyss. All those strategies that are unknown to me. I got frightened by the thought of how much more I don't know. Whether or not this pain has a bottom or an end. I'm not sure if I will ever be able to learn from everything what my Ukrainian family went through. And somehow I have to continue living with this unknowing.

Part of the colonial grief is a longing for that portion of history, an identity that was destroyed, but we, the following generation, didn't even know of its existence. It is impossible to speak through the voice of pain, because we don't know what to voice. There are no words with which to speak, and the grief, about which we don't know. There are no words to convey this feeling of misunderstanding and ambiguity about the past. It is as if there is a scar on our body but we don't remember what happened. As if we weren't witness to our own mutilation. We only see our body feel the consequences, but we don't know the causes and there is no one who can tell us.

This one is the most painful and complex part of colonial grief when we don't understand what we exactly lost and how much more we still don't know. Once I was working on articles, for which I conducted interviews with families of fallen Ukrainian soldiers. This is quite complex, and painful, and delicate work. You hear abundance

of pain, but you have to focus not on your own emotions but on the people. At the same time you should not completely suppress your pain, since you act as a mediator of what family feels. Balancing between self-control during the conversation and allowing yourself to experience emotions while writing a text, can be difficult. Especially when you realize that similar pain is lived daily by 10,000 of Ukrainians. I think actually more. Additionally you need to be attentive what you need... what you don't understand. Such topic of insufficient understanding for me became an importance of having a body of a loved one.

I didn't fully realize, how important it is for families. And this is precisely the reason why so many people turn to fortune tellers, astrologists and psychics. Because finding the body of a loved one is critically important for the grieving process. Without the body this is an ambiguous loss. Ambiguous loss is [something] that remains unclear and unresolved. This is a concept developed by Pauline Boss that describes a particular type of loss: lacking closure and clarity. It exists in two forms. First form is when the person is physically absent but psychologically present. For example, missing. Or psychologically absent, but physically present. For example, dimension. Unlike unambiguous loss, such as death, where there is clarity in the form of death, in certificate, morning rituals and shared social understanding how to respond. Ambiguous loss creates a chronic uncertainty that freezes the grieving process, provokes ambivalence and often goes unrecognized by society.

I will give you some example. There is a mother of a person missing in action. And if you're going to write to her "I'm so sorry", she could answer to you: "Why sorry? I still have a hope. Why you're saying that "I'm sorry" like he's dead". So, you basically cannot mourn someone because there is no clarity. But at the same time, if you say something like "Oh, but there is still hope". The same mother could say: "But I mean, he's not here. What kind of hope is that? It's not hope, it's just unknowing". So, there is no right way. Of course, we can discuss here, what is the right way to mourn. And reaction of the society is still kind of complicated when we talk about that. It is still not very clear. But again, it's kind of... no, even from the standpoint of the work relationship. When family member, you know, is passing away, there is like an amount of days that you can take off, but it's not the same when somebody's missing in action. So, and we have a lot of situations like that. The whole point of having a body is so crucial for families, that there is a business in on



the front line. When the Russian brigades can actually communicate with families... the family who basically lost someone. And they're sending the videos of drones, how they basically killed that person. As a proof But you can... the next question is what is the business part of it? If you want to save this video to show that to the state, you cannot save it, because you need to pay approximately 5k or 1k. So, and I know couple of families in Ukraine who actually were very grateful. Again, that's death and war, there's a lot of complicated feelings, because at least they got some certainty. And I remember this moment when I was talking to a mother and she's very happy because there was a picture of dead bodies, and she figured out that this was her son. And she was actually genuinely happy about this.

So, ambiguous loss is something that society needs to discuss. Such loss is not limited to dementia or personal disappearance or personal disappearance. It also can encompass the experience of becoming a refugee, divorce and the reality faced by soldiers and their families. The loss of one's former life, routine, relationship and one's former self. The central premise of the theory is that the problem lies not in the person but in the context of uncertainty. So, the therapeutic goal becomes not overcoming grief, but to develop a tolerance for ambivalence and finding meaning in spite of the absence of closure. The presence of ambiguous loss in society is compounded by how accustomed or unaccustomed the society is to speak about what is painful.

A significant part of the trauma passed down from generation to generation is transmitted precisely through silence. Often what matters is not so much what we said, but what we left untold, avoided in conversation deliberately, didn't tell or try to shield our loved ones from knowing. Over time these unspoken words accumulate a form of the kind of zone of silence. The psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok described how such silence turned not merely into an unspoken history, but into psychological crypt and hidden place for unbearable memories. Building on this when we compare the working of a silent past to the being haunted by ghosts, people bury violent or shameful episodes, erecting the kind of tomb within themselves. And these concealed secrets, and lived pain, and disguised shame continue to damage their lives: both those directly involved and their relatives. So, repressed histories erode the psych from within and what's left turns into imitation of normality. The ghosts of

the past eventually come to affect, even in person's language, undermining their ability to communicate and express themselves freely. Such crypt and its language crypt or yeah... mental crypt holds the secret and silence created by traumatic events and they may be personal, familial, collective or national.

Silencing traumatic experience is a very typical defence reaction. And one can hardly blame any particular generation for it. Since silence was in its time precisely what helped them to survive. And this is exactly what I would like to work on, on the workshop. The whole idea of this crypt and how we work with it.

So, here, what you see on the screen, for me it is a very good representation of kind of ambiguous loss, but also need for remembrance, a way to remember. So, this is not a state memorial. This is something that just happened there since the full scale invasion. And each small flag is representing one dead soldier. Right now it's much much bigger, because this is 2022-2023. There is no normal memorial right now. But there is a need to do something like that. And basically for families...one of my friends, for example, was lost in action for three years and only last year they found a piece of his DNA. This also could be a part of how they can grieve together.

The whole idea of the grievance chapter is that this is a decolonial move, because we actually have... all of us, we have a lot of different trauma. And remembering, as we discussed at the beginning, "Remembering for what?" Remembering to not be subjugated again, because here in our case, in ukrainian case, memory works as a shield. Because memory, again in ukrainian case, it is also something that is connected to knowledge. And knowledge for sure is an imperialistic tool.

Here I would just leave you with this on your screens, just you know... just an example of that memorial. Because that for me is a good representation of.. that we have a desire to remember, and that we have a desire to remember together. And that should be visible, because this is the most visible center. Now I want to stop, and am waiting for the questions.