

Academic workshop and public lecture organised by the Historical Institute and the Walter Benjamin Kolleg (WBK), University of Bern, Switzerland
Bern, 28-29 November 2023

The Conflict(s) in Chechnya: Past and Present (1986-2023)

Zoom link for workshop participants connecting from abroad (Wednesday, 29 November only):

<https://unibe-ch.zoom.us/j/61190093573?pwd=OW4wN0E3RmpxMmxpYWVJR3ovQT09>

Contact: Cécile Druey, cecile.druey@unibe.ch, +41 77 4418968 (also Whatsapp, Signal)

Venue of public lecture (Tue, 28 Nov, 12-14h): “Unitobler”, room F 021 (entrance: Lerchenweg 36, 3012 Bern/ ground floor)

Workshop venue (Wed, 29 Nov, 13-19:00, Swiss time): “Unitobler”, room B 128 (entrance: Länggasse 49, 3012 Bern/ 2nd floor, 3012 Bern); some participants will join in via Zoom.

Rationale of the workshop:

This public lecture and scientific workshop assemble international key experts on the North Caucasus/Chechnya. It aims to unpack the complicated protracted conflict in Chechnya, with a special focus on the role of historical memory. In addition to historical reflections, the workshop will also address questions about the present, in particular the consequences of the Russian attack on Ukraine for the situation in the North Caucasus since 2022.

The present workshop builds upon a first meeting of the working group “On conflicts and Peace in Chechnya”, held in December 2021 in Bern. Most of its participants have also contributed as authors to the anthology “Fighting for Self-Determination, Participation and Control in Post-Soviet Chechnya”, which is about to be published by Peter Lang Publishers under the editorship of the Institute of History. The workshop thus also serves to discuss the book’s content and to ask questions and exchange between authors.

During the meeting, each author-participant should please prepare a 5-10 min input to present the main arguments of his or her article; each input will be followed by a short discussion. The general discussion at the end of the workshop will be dedicated to the changed situation in the North Caoucasus since the last meeting of the working group in late 2021, and to the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on research on in Chechnya/the North Caucasus since February 2022.

Language

Presentations and discussion are held in both English and Russian – every participant should please choose the language that is most convenient for him or her.

Draft programme

MONDAY, 27 NOVEMBER
Arrival of participants in Bern

TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER: Public lecture (in person only)
Public lecture at the University of Bern (panel discussion with Mairbek Vatchagaev and Marat Iliysov, moderation: Cécile Druey)
WEDNESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER: Workshop (hybrid event)
13:00, Welcome and introduction Murat Shogenov, Valentina Tanaylova and Cécile Druey: Mapping of conflicts in Chechnya, 1986-2023
13:30, Block 1 (1986-1991)
<u>Victor Shnirelman</u> : “The social, political and cultural situation in Chechnya in the 1990s” <u>Cécile Druey</u> : “Memory – Mobilisation – Independence: the Case of Chechnya (1986 – 1991)”
14:30, Block 2 (1991-1999)
<u>Murat Shogenov</u> : “Construction, Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Memories: the case of the Deportation Memorial in Chechnya (1994-2019)” <u>Yavus Akhmadov</u> : “Chechen Civil Society Resistance to the Dudayev Regime in Ichkeria during the Chechen Crisis”
15:00 – 15:30, Coffee break
15:30, Block 2 (1991-1999, continuation)
<u>Mairbek Vatchagaev</u> : “The transformation of Sufism in Chechnya at the turn of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries”.
16:00, Block 3 (1999-2023)
<u>Anna Nemzer</u> : “The Marketing of Memory, and How It Affects the Remembrance of the Wars in Chechnya”
<u>Evgeniya Goryushina</u> : “From War to Victory: Narratives of the Past in Chechnya (1999-2021)”
<u>Marat Iliysov</u> : “Russia and the Russian-Chechen Conflicts in the Collective Memory of Chechen Migrants in Europe”
<u>Valentina Tanaylova</u> : “Father and Son: the Heroisation of Akhmat Kadyrov as a Political Tool”
18:00, Wrap-up
Discussion: Researching the North Caucasus in a context of the Russian-Ukrainian war (since February 2022) Planning of next steps
19:00, joint dinner
THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

List of participants (alphabetic order)

Akhmadov, Yavus –Russian Academy of Sciences, Rostov (Russian Federation) *Zoom*

Druey, Cécile –University of Bern (Switzerland); organiser of the workshop

Goryushina, Evgeniya – Russian Academy of Sciences, Rostov (Russian Federation) *Zoom*

Iliysov, Marat – Los Angeles University (US)

Nemzer, Anna – Dozhd TV Channel, Moscow (Russian Federation) *Zoom*

Shnirelman, Victor – Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow (Russian Federation) *Zoom*

Shogenov, Murat – University of Nalchik, Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (Russian Federation)

Tanaylova, Valentina – Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow (Russian Federation)

Vatchagaev, Mairbek – Journal “Caucasus Survey”, Paris (France)