



TedxAstana Margaret Comer

'Why Do Some Pasts Refuse to Die?' Margaret Comer, TEDxAstana

[Why Do Some Pasts Refuse to Die? | Margaret Comer | TEDxAstana](#) [1]

Useful information **Date of publication:** 17-12-2025

Source: [Youtube TEDx Talks](#) [2]

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Researcher Margaret Comer reflected that memory of the past is not just history, but heritage — shaped by what we choose to preserve, from plaques on buildings to museums and memorials. For over a decade, she has studied how Estonia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia remember the victims of Soviet repression. Gulag sites and mass graves, she explains, are not only traces of tragedy but reminders of the value of human life.

“Although memory of past suffering can be mobilized to foment contemporary violence, it can also serve as a warning for the present and future, mobilized to ensure a free and peaceful world,” Margaret emphasized.

Dr. **Margaret Comer** is a Research Assistant on the project “Memories of Soviet Repressions in Post-Multi-Colonial Post-Soviet Spaces”, funded by Poland’s National Science Centre (Grant no. 2020/39/B/HS6/02809) and based at the University of Warsaw. The research underpinning this work is publicly available via DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/5QDFR> [3]

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Links

[1] <https://www.etnologia.uw.edu.pl/en/file/why-do-some-pasts-refuse-die-margaret-comer-tedxastana>

[2] <https://youtu.be/bllgJsFsJOI?si=FQA3sFo9TaGcgem7>

[3] <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/5QDFR>