After the Violence: Memory

The 45th Wisconsin Workshop

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What does it mean to think about societies marked by past structures of violence and exclusion? What happens to people so steeped in oppression that personal and social traumas are inscribed in their community relations even when the violence ends? Are there models of reconciliation that can overcome the asymmetry of perpetrators and victims? Is this binary itself adequate for capturing the complexities of complicity and guilt? “After the Violence” seeks to explore the work of memory and the ethics of healing in societies that have experienced political and social rupture. Europe in the twentieth century witnessed genocides, ethnic cleansing, forced population expulsions, shifting national borders, and other massive disruptions. Scholarly discourse continues to generate approaches and models that accompany the process of remembering and forgetting dramatic pasts in literary and cinematic representations, monuments and museums, school curricula and history books. Especially in post-authoritarian societies that have experienced difficult national histories of state-perpetrated violence, such discourse needs to account for memorial cultures and how the past is remembered and forgotten, confronted or repressed, or how it keeps haunting the present. This means going beyond a narrow focus on contestation, “resistance” to dominant discourse, and power relations in the public sphere to include trans-generational encounters, performances, rituals, and practices of remembrance and reconciliation. The conference sessions will focus on models and transformations of memory work globally: after the Holocaust and the fall of the Berlin Wall, after Stalinism in post-Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe, after the Vichy collaboration and Algerian War in France, after the Civil War in Spain, the military dictatorship in Argentina, and apartheid in South Africa.
Thursday, 20 September 2012
3:30-4:45 pm: Graduate student panel I – Memory, Narratives, and the Everyday
Moderator: Sabine Gross, German, UW Madison
   Aliza Luft, Sociology, UW-Madison
       Remembering the Holocaust in France
   Laini Kavaloski, English, UW-Madison
       Space, Time, Identity, and the Politics of Memorial Narratives in Israel
   Emily Swafford, History, University of Chicago / Christine Fojtik, History, UW-Madison
       Bridgeable Space? Women and Postwar Reconciliation in West Germany, 1945-1960

5:00-6:15 pm: Graduate student panel II – Artifacts of Memory
Moderator: Florence Vatan, French and Italian, UW Madison
   Lauren Hansen, German, University of Illinois, Urbana
       Photographs and Diaries in Maron’s Pawels Briefe and Timm’s Am Beispiel meines Bruders: A Case of Convergence in Post-Memory Projects
   Erin Paul-Schuetter, Spanish, UW-Madison
       Objects as Mediators of Guilt in Juan Goytisolo’s Señas de identidad
   Corbin Treacy, French, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
       Rethinking Reconciliation: Intergenerational Memory in Maïssa Bey’s Entendez-vous dans les montagnes

6:30 pm, VandeBerg Auditorium: The Mildred Fish-Harnack Human Rights Lecture
   Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Advocate at the High Court of South Africa
   Introduction: Heinz Klug, School of Law, UW-Madison
8:00 pm, Reception (VandeBerg lobby)

Friday, 21 September 2012
9:00-12:30 pm: Session I: Post-Holocaust Memory in Germany
Moderator: Michael Bernard-Donals, Center for Jewish Studies, UW-Madison
   Bill Niven, History and Heritage Department, Nottingham Trent University, UK
       Reactive Memory: The Holocaust and Flight/Expulsion in Postwar Germany
   Michael Rothberg, Department of English, and Yasemin Yildiz, Department of German, University of Illinois, Urbana
       Working Through the Past, Turkish/German Style
   Anke Pinkert, Department of German, University of Illinois, Urbana
       Toward a Reparative Practice in Post-1989 German Literature

[lunch break]
2:00-5:30 pm: Session 2: Confronting the Past
Moderator: Steve Stern, History, UW-Madison
Richard Golsan, Department of French, Texas A&M University
  Memory and the Law in Contemporary France: From Crimes against Humanity to "Lois Mémorielles"
Ofelia Ferran, Department of Spanish, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
  Unfinished Business: Confronting the Past in Contemporary Spain
Robyn Autry, Department of Sociology, Wesleyan University
  Breaking the Collective: The Illusion of Consensus at Post-Apartheid Museums

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7:30-9:00 pm: Patricio Guzman, Nostalgia for the Light (documentary film, Chile, 2010)
Marquee Theater, 1308 W. Dayton, in the Union South
This screening is a co-presentation with the Film Committee of the Wisconsin Union Directorate (WUD), courtesy of Icarus Films

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Saturday, 22 September 2012
9:00-12:30 pm: Session 3: Making Memory in Eastern Europe
Moderator: Winson Chu, Department of History, UW-Milwaukee
Francine Hirsch, Department of History, UW-Madison
  The Nuremberg Trials as Cold War Competition
Karl Schloegel, Cultural Studies, Europa Viadrina University, Frankfurt/Oder
  The Cube on Red Square: A Memorial for the Victims of 20th Century Russia
Geneviève Zubrzycki, Department of Sociology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
  Beyond Trauma, Denial, and Nostalgia: Polish Memory-Making in the 21st Century

[lunch break]

2:00-5:30 pm: Session 4: Memory-Scapes
Moderator: Laurie Beth Clark, Department of Art, UW-Madison
Robert van der Laarse, History and Cultural Studies, University of Amsterdam
  Beyond Auschwitz. From Holocaust to Occupation Paradigm in Post-1989 Europe
Daniel Levy, Sociology, Stony Brook University
  From Post- to Past-Violence: The Cosmopolitanization of Victimhood
Marc Silberman, Department of German, UW-Madison
  After-Words: Lessons in Memory and Politics