

CONTESTED MEMORIES AND THE CONTOURS OF THE PAST

Collective memory has historically been contested terrain where tensions and conflicts emerge in constructing and reinterpreting the past. Contestations often arise in the aftermath of war, violence, and genocide—resulting in conflicts between the state and various opposition groups, including survivors, artists, and intellectuals. These divergent narratives also shape the dynamics between individuals and collectives, private and public memories, and intergenerational transmission of memory. Indeed, any process of remembering produces selective commemorations, silences and gaps, where traces of memory may exist in the shadows or fall into oblivion, revealing the complexity of shaping the contours of the past.

This conference is the culmination of a year-long interdisciplinary research seminar devoted to exploring “Contested Memories and the Politics of Change” from a comparative, cross-cultural perspective. It will address central issues in memory studies including national, familial, and intergenerational memories; commemorative struggles in the wake of trauma; witnessing and silences; embodied and visual memories; contested sites and conflicting narratives; and the relationship between collective memory and transitional justice. Scholars will examine these issues from a range of disciplinary perspectives utilizing case studies from diverse geographical regions.

The conference is open to faculty and graduate students.

CONFERENCE LOCATION

Rutgers University Inn and Conference Center
178 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ
Phone: 732-932-9144

EVENING PUBLIC PROGRAM

Monday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m.
Douglass Campus Center, Rutgers University
100 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ

TRAVEL

Rutgers University is easily accessible by NJ Transit trains.
Free parking is available.

REGISTRATION

The conference is free and pre-registration is recommended.
Complete conference information and registration forms are available on the website.

BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu

Meals must be reserved and paid for by April 18.

CONTACT

Jodi Marcou, Conference Coordinator: jmarcou@rutgers.edu / 848-932-4165

RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences

The Allen and Joan Bildner Center
for the Study of Jewish Life
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
12 College Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
New Brunswick, NJ
Permit no. 157

CONTESTED MEMORIES AND THE CONTOURS OF THE PAST

An Interdisciplinary Conference
May 12-14, 2014



The Allen and Joan Bildner Center
for the Study of Jewish Life
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Support for this conference is provided by Rutgers GAIA Centers, the Henry Schwartzman Endowed Faculty Seminar Fund (), and the Leon and Toby Cooperman Fund (**).*

Cover and inside photos courtesy of Genevieve Zubrzycki

CONTESTED MEMORIES AND THE CONTOURS OF THE PAST

MONDAY, MAY 12

1:00 p.m. — Registration and Lunch

2:00 p.m. — Welcome and Greetings

Yael Zerubavel, Director, Bildner Center, Rutgers

James Masschaele, Acting Executive Vice Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers

2:15 p.m. — Keynote Lecture

Jeffrey Olick, University of Virginia, Sociology

*Systems of Memory: Beyond the Matryoshka Doll **

3:30 p.m. — Break

3:45–5:30 p.m. — CONTESTED NARRATIVES AND NATION-BUILDING

Chair: **Rudolph M. Bell**, Rutgers, History

Matt Matsuda, Rutgers, History

Genealogies, Genetics, and Recovered Pasts in the Pacific Context

Jonathan Gribetz, Rutgers, Jewish Studies and History

The Palestinian Memory of Jewish Religious Reform

Jan Kubik, Rutgers, Political Science

Contested Memories of the Fall of Communism and Post-Communist Nation-Building

6:00–7:00 p.m. — Dinner

7:30 p.m. — Monday Evening Program

Jewish Revival in Contemporary Poland **

Geneviève Zubrzycki, University of Michigan, Sociology

Since the fall of Communism, Poland's small Jewish communities have undergone a significant revival, a process occurring in tandem with non-Jewish Poles' soul-searching about their role in the Holocaust and the development of their interest in Jewish culture and in Poland's Jewish past. This interest is visible in the mushrooming of festivals of Jewish culture, the renewed popularity of klezmer music, the dramatic proliferation of Judaica bookstores and Jewish restaurants, new museums and memorials, the emergence of

Jewish studies programs, and artists' and intellectuals' engagements with Poland's Jewish past and Polish-Jewish relations. Professor Zubrzycki shows how the revival of Jewish culture in Poland is part of a broader process of redefinition of Polish national identity and the building of pluralism in contemporary Poland.



This lecture is open to the public. Location: Douglass Campus Center

Website: BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu

TUESDAY, MAY 13

8:15 a.m. — Breakfast

9:00–10:45 a.m. — MNEMONIC BATTLES: TRAUMA AND AFTER

Chair: **Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi**, Rutgers, Anthropology

Thomas DeGloma, CUNY, Hunter College, Sociology

The Strategies and Tactics of Mnemonic Battle:

Patterns in the Dynamics of Conflict Over the Past

Paul Schalow, Rutgers, Asian Languages and Cultures

Victimhood's Meaning and Materiality: Ruins as Memorial Sites in East Asia

Laura Cohen, Rutgers, Global Affairs

Memorial Sites as Centers for Public Memory, Space, and Healing: The Case for the

Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial Center and Cemetery to the Victims of the 1995 Genocide

10:45 a.m. — Break

11:00–12:45 p.m. — MAPPING MEMORY IN CONTESTED SITES

Chair: **Michael Curry**, UCLA, Geography

Natasha Zaretsky, Rutgers, Bildner Center, Aresty Visiting Scholar

Sites, Spaces, and Borders: The Politics of Body and Time in Democratic Argentina

Anita Bakshi, Rutgers, Center for Cultural Analysis

The Politics of Heritage: Cityscape and Nationalism

Yael Zerubavel, Rutgers, Jewish Studies and History

History and Space Metaphors: Contested Memories in Israeli Popular Culture

1:00–2:00 p.m. — Lunch

2:00–3:45 p.m. — THE PREDICAMENT OF INTIMATE MEMORIES

Chair: **Alisse Waterston**, CUNY, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Anthropology

Ziva Galili, Rutgers, History

Inter-generational Reflections on Subject, Collective and Memory

Galit Hasan-Rokem, Hebrew University, Folklore; Rutgers, Bildner Visiting Scholar

A Contestable Auto-ethnography of a Childhood on the Coast of the Baltic: Between the Litvaks and the Pollacks

Ethel Brooks, Rutgers, Women's & Gender Studies and Sociology

Fraught Intimacies: Entwined Histories of the (post) Holocaust

3:45 p.m. — Break

4:00–5:45 p.m. — VISUAL MEMORIES

Chair: **Freddie Rokem**, Tel Aviv University, Theatre Arts

Carol Zemel, York University, Art History; Rutgers, Bildner Visiting Scholar

Time Between Time: Early Visual Accounts/Narratives of the Shoah

Ken Aptekar, Independent Artist

"Jesus Christ is next door!" Progress Report on NACHBARN: an Exhibition by Ken Aptekar in Lubeck, Germany

Shelley Salamensky, UCLA/University of Louisville, Performance Studies/Humanities

"Jewface" and "Jewfaçade": Cultural Re-enactment and Contested Memory in Poland, Spain, and Asian Russia

6:00–7:00 p.m. — Dinner

7:30 p.m. — Tuesday Evening Program

Mapping Ararat: Remembering an Imaginary Jewish Homeland

Melissa Schiff, University of Toronto, Art;

Louis Kaplan, University of Toronto, Art History

What if an autonomous Jewish homeland had been founded in 1825 on the Canadian-U.S. border? Mapping Ararat stages an historical fiction using digital multimedia and geo-locational software including augmented reality in order to image and imagine Mordecai Noah's unrealized dream to transform Grand Island, New York into Ararat, a city of refuge for the Jews. Through the creation of vernacular cultural artifacts and the staging of an on-site augmented reality walking tour, the project playfully summons the cultural memory of an imaginary Jewish homeland.

Image credit: Melissa Schiff, Louis Kaplan, John Craig Freeman, Mapping Ararat, 2012



WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

8:15 a.m. — Breakfast

9:00–10:45 a.m. — WITNESSING AND SILENCES

Chair: **Judith Gerson**, Rutgers, Sociology and Women's & Gender Studies

Belinda Davis, Rutgers, History

Speaking Out, Holding Back: Memory and the Mouth among West German Activists

Edna Lomsky-Feder, Hebrew University, Sociology & Anthropology, and Education; and

Orna Sasson-Levy, Bar-Ilan University, Sociology & Anthropology

Testimony from a Gendered Perspective: Women Breaking the Silence as a Case Study

Hillel Cohen, Hebrew University, Middle Eastern Studies; New York University, Israel Studies

Massacres and Lynchings in 1929 Palestine: Who Remembers What and Why

10:45 a.m. — Break

11:00–12:45 p.m. — CONSTRUCTING NARRATIVES OF HISTORY AND MEMORY

Chair: **Alex Hinton**, Rutgers-Newark, Anthropology

Paul Hanebrink, Rutgers, History and Jewish Studies

The Problem of Jewish "Visibility" in the Central European Revolutions of 1919

Seth Anziska, Columbia University, History

Revisiting the 1982 Lebanon War: History, Memory and the Making of Akram Zaatar's Letter to a Refusing Pilot

Robin Wagner-Pacifici, The New School, Sociology

Reconfiguring Memory Studies as Event Studies

1:00–2:00 p.m. — Lunch

2:00–3:15 p.m. — Roundtable: MEMORIES AND THE CONTOURS OF THE PAST

Michael G. Levine, Rutgers, German and Comparative Literature

Jeffrey Olick, University of Virginia, Sociology

Robin Wagner-Pacifici, The New School, Sociology

Eviatar Zerubavel, Rutgers, Sociology