

Conference: Epistemologies of Memory

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Type:

Conference

Date:

September 12, 2019 to September 13, 2019

Location:

United Kingdom

Subject Fields:

European History / Studies, Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, Humanities, Philosophy, Sociology

Conference: Epistemologies of Memory

King's College London

Exact location to be confirmed

Confirmed Speakers: Silke Arnold-de Simine, Astrid Erll, Sarah Gensburger, Alma Jeftic, Wulf Kansteiner, Jessica Rapson, Anna Reading, Brian Schiff

Memory studies has in the last three decades quickly grown from a 'nascent' to an established field of study with its own association, networks and journals to which multiple disciplines in the humanities and social sciences contribute. However, at the same time, broader debates on methodology are only starting to emerge. The same is true for the reading of key authors for memory studies by multiple disciplines. Rarely addressed epistemological concerns are very often the grounds for those debates and struggles in this fast extending multidisciplinary field.

At this point in time of institutionalisation of the field we think it is highly appropriate to pause and engage in a debate about the various underlying epistemological positions of our multidisciplinary endeavour to understand memory. Such a debate will strengthen arguments and understanding made about methodologies, about the relation between the individual and the collective, about how ethics and analysis relate to one another, and about the development of analytical concepts in memory studies. Finally, in a time where part of academia calls for an integrative approach of memory, from neurobiology to sociology, it seems urgent for social sciences and humanities to directly address these issues. Here a reflection on epistemologies of memory is a first step towards a debate on ontology of memory, most often left aside in the current discussions on the presence of the past.

Questions this conference will address include:

- How can collective and cultural forms of memory be known, understood and researched?
- Does the distinction between cultural and collective memory studies affect our epistemologies? What different approaches exist within memory studies exist to research practices and agency?
- Which epistemologies could assist us in conceptualising the link between the individual and the collective and/or cultural level?

- What constitute researchable traces of cultural and collective memories?
- Can we distinguish between national schools and disciplinary traditions in the field of memory studies?
- Is there a need to disciplinarise memory studies? And if yes, how will it affect how memory is researched?
- Is there a possibility to reconcile different epistemological positions to engage in interdisciplinary research?
- How do critique and analysis relate in memory studies? What should that critique be based on? How could critical theory within memory studies relate to other epistemological paradigms such as positivism, postpositivism, constructivism and interactionalism?

During the conference, a few invited speakers will address the key questions of the conference during interactive round tables. Preliminary round table plans include 'Practices and Agency: the diversion between cultural and collective memory studies', 'Memory and the self', 'A Discipline of memory studies', 'Memory: analysis, criticism and activism'.

We welcome abstracts and panel proposals that reflect on these questions in the broadest sense. Case study based papers are also welcomed. We welcome abstracts and proposal from the arts, humanities and social sciences including these disciplines:

- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Economics
- Fine Arts
- History
- International Relations
- Literature Studies
- Media Studies
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Semiotics
- Sociology

300-word abstracts and a biography of a few lines can be submitted by e-mail to kclmemorygroup@gmail.com. The deadline for abstract submission is **May 2, 2019**.

The organisers also plan to publish selected papers in an edited volume. More information about the possibility of publication will be provided to the presenters during the conference.

Abstract submission deadline: May 2, 2019

Deadline for registration: July 15, 2019

Conference dates: September 12-13, 2019

We are grateful to the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at King's College London for supporting this

conference financially.

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