Why Remember? Memory in Times of War and Its Aftermath - Border Poetics and Politics: 1989 and the Fall of the Wall

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Call for Papers
Date:
July 9, 2019 to July 10, 2019
Location:
Bosnia Herzegovina
Subject Fields:
Anthropology, Contemporary History, Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, Human Rights, Humanities

2-Day Symposium
July 9th-July 10th, 2019 - Hotel Europe, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina
Keynote Speaker: Mladen Miljanović, Artist, http://www.mladenmiljanovic.com/

Sponsored by
Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Salem State University
Holocaust, Genocide & Interfaith Education Center, Manhattan College
London College of Communication, University of the Arts London
WARM Festival, Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Organizers:
Dr. Paul Lowe, University of the Arts, London, UK
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Dr. Manca Bajec, Independent Artist, UK
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In his book, In Praise of Forgetting: Historical Memory and Its Ironies, David Rieff questions whether the age-long "consensus that it is moral to remember, immoral to forget" still stands in our contemporary era. What should we remember, what should we forget, and why? Do we need to reconfigure the way that we think about memory and its potential impact on issues such as reconciliation and healing in the wake of war? Is memory impotent as a social, political, or aesthetic tool? Rieff's questions appear more pertinent than ever as wars and conflicts continue to rage in many parts of the world with no end in sight.

These questions of memory (and forgetting) are intensely political and have far-reaching consequences. Yet, how do they reverberate in the context of post-war societies, post-conflict reconciliation, conflict prevention, questions of memory and past events? To what extent do we remember the past and how do we choose what to remember and why we remember? How could and should (consciously and unconsciously) memory processes shape the present and future? How might

public institutions (such as museums and other heritage sites that support education/awareness) deal with the past? What is the difference between commemoration and memorialization? Where do they intersect and how might they impact the process of reconciliation and prevention? What are landscapes of memory?

"The Wall will be standing in 50 and even in 100 years"
- *GDR head of state Erich Honecker*, East Berlin, January 19th, 1989

For summer 2019 we continue our conversation on aesthetics that we initiated in our 2017 conference in Sarajevo but with a specific focus on the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 to mark this important 30-year anniversary. The Berlin wall as a physical, geographical, conceptual and theoretical space, has made and continues to make a significant impact on global politics as part of a greater discussion about what we refer to as "border poetics and politics." Global society continues to grapple with significant border-related issues that so many are directly or indirectly affected by. For example, UNHCR currently report that as many as 68.5 million people https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html have been forced out of their homes, and for many border disputes are part of the displacement. From the U.S/Mexican "wall" debate, to the evershifting borders of Crimea and the Caucasus, to the still unsettled territories of the former Yugoslavia, the way that borders are represented through the lens of aesthetics and memory is now, more than ever, of interest. For this conference we are seeking papers that address how the memory of both pre-1989 and post-1989 has been
constructed, reconstructed, and even annihilated over the past three decades. We are concerned with aesthetic representations and practices that analyze and engage in border politics, and that address the formation, status and challenges faced by communities interacting with or living at the border regions. Papers might consider the contemporary status of issues that not only directly address the politics and representation of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and its associated regimes, but of borders in a more general global perspective.

Our guiding questions include: What constitutes a border? How are literary and artistic border stories used both as a hegemonic discourse to support the status quo and as a counter-discourse of resistance to the status quo? How are communities established around borders and what impact might they have on a community? What kind of aesthetic intervention does visual culture, such as photography or painting, play in these considerations? Can art transform a contested border from a "barrier," through which the other side is invisible, to a place where reconciliation, cooperation, coexistence and visibility can then take place?

We seek papers from a wide-range of historical and geographical spaces that address the discursive limits of contemporary memory studies, particularly drawing on these areas of study:
• Film/Media Studies
• Comparative Literature/Narrative/Fiction/Non-Fiction/Poetry
• Museum Studies/New Materialism
• Music/Performance/Dance
• Necropolitics/Forensics/Anthropology/Archeology
• Pedagogy/Education
• Politics and Aesthetics
• Visual Arts including Photography

**Inter/Trans disciplinary approaches are especially encouraged.

We welcome abstract submissions from early career researchers and post-docs as well as established scholars. We encourage applications from a range of academics including current PhD students, particularly from those outside of Western European
institutions. All papers will be delivered in English.

**<u>Paper proposals for a 20-minute presentation should include author name(s), affiliation(s), paper title, a paper abstract (300
words max), and short bio (200 words max).</u>**

This academic conference is part of the larger WARM festival, which takes place in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina each summer, and "is dedicated to war reporting, war art, war memory. WARM is bringing together people – journalists, artists, historians, researchers, activists – with a common passion for 'telling the story with excellence and integrity'." See this link for more information:
http://www.warmfoundation.org

<u>Registration cost: 150 Euros. Concessionary rates of 50 Euros</u> are available for all graduate students, for faculty applying from non-EU/US institutions, and for those can present a case for reduced fees. We can also waive the conference fee for a number of attendees; this is need-based. Information about hostels and hotels will be provided for participants upon acceptance and on our website.

**<u>Please submit your proposals no later than March 1st, 2019 to
why.remember.conference@gmail.com.</u>**

Acceptance decisions will be made by before the end of March and all applicants will be contacted.

Contact Info:

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