

## **[REMINDER] CfA: Workshop "Non-Sites of Memory and Their Witnesses: The Testimonies of the Holocaust by Bullets", Krakow, 23 September 2019**

Announcement published by Aleksandra Szczepan on Monday, July 15, 2019

Type:

Workshop

Date:

September 23, 2019

Location:

Poland

Subject Fields:

Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, Oral History, Cultural History / Studies, Eastern Europe History / Studies, Jewish History / Studies

The Research Center for Memory Cultures at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University and the Yahad - In Unum association kindly invite you to the workshop

### **Non-Sites of Memory and Their Witnesses: The Testimonies of the Holocaust by Bullets 23 September 2019, Krakow, Faculty of Polish Studies at the Jagiellonian University**

More than 2 million Jews and tens of thousands of Roma were killed by German units in the occupied territories of Soviet Union and Poland between 1941 and 1944, in numerous executions across hundreds of villages and towns. This method of murder by special firing squads has come to be known as the "Holocaust by bullets". The executions took place on the outskirts of human settlements, in fields, woods or swamps, in the view of neighbors, and sometimes with their complicity. Now, most these killing sites are invisible: unmarked and unmemorialized, overgrown and littered, repainted, demolished and repopulated. They are specific non-sites of memory: non-remembered but also unforgotten by the local communities, characterized by an ambiguous, unsettling status. In order to locate and recognize these sites, we need memory of eyewitnesses to the events that happened there. These witnesses, who are becoming harder and harder to find, have in most cases spent their entire lives next to the killing sites, yet nobody asked them to tell their story. They are our last link to the difficult heritage of the dispersed Shoah.

**The Research Center for Memory Cultures at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University and the Yahad - In Unum association kindly invite students enrolled in master's and doctoral programs as well as early career researchers to the one-day workshop dedicated to the non-sites of memory and their witnesses.**

The French organization Yahad - In Unum, founded in 2004 in Paris by Father Patrick Desbois, researches the "Holocaust by bullets" in Central and Eastern Europe by collecting video testimonies of the eyewitnesses to the Shoah and identifying the killing sites. Until today, Yahad - In Unum has gathered almost 6,500 accounts and created the biggest collection of Holocaust bystanders'

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testimonies. The Research Center for Memory Cultures - within the research project dedicated to the unmemorialized sites of genocide (supported by the National Program for the Development of Humanities), led by Prof. Roma Sendyka - has researched on sites of this kind and their impact on local communities for three years.

The workshop (held in English) will have an open, seminar-like structure and will engage its participants in work with both archival documents and video testimonies related to killing sites. It will take a multidisciplinary approach to the sites of the dispersed Shoah and the testimonies of the eyewitnesses to the genocide. We will discuss the following issues: How to locate and identify a killing site; How to interpret archival documents related to them; How to find eyewitnesses and interview them; What is the relevance of space where an act of witnessing takes place as well as the language and gestures of a witness; How do the bystanders' testimonies differ from the survivors' accounts; Can only humans be witnesses; How to use eyewitnesses' testimonies in transmitting the knowledge about the Shoah to the next generations; How do history (and oral history), sociology, as well as memory, cultural and performative studies help us understand video testimony; How was the Holocaust by bullets possible?

After the workshop, the participants are invited to a lecture by Father Patrick Desbois, the founder of the Yahad - In Unum. The lecture will open the two-day international conference (24-25 September) "Sites of Violence and Their Communities: Critical Memory Studies in the Era of the Post-Human", featuring, among other guests, Prof. Ewa Domańska, Prof. Caroline Sturdy Colls, Prof. Erica Lehrer and Dr. Bryce Lease.

**Applications, consisting of a 1-page CV and a short description (no more than 500 words) of the applicant's research relevant to the topic of the workshop, should be submitted before 21 July 2019 to the address [memorycultures@gmail.com](mailto:memorycultures@gmail.com). Notifications will be sent via email by 31 July 2019. Any questions regarding the workshop should be directed to the aforementioned email address.**

The organizers will provide catering during the workshop as well as accommodation for the night of 23/24 September.

The organizing team are Dr. hab. Roma Sendyka, Aleksandra Szczepan, Dr. Kinga Siewior and Dr. Karina Jarzyńska from the Research Center for Memory Cultures, Patrice Bensimon and Michał Chojak from Yahad - In Unum and Dr. Stanley Bill from the Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages of the University of Cambridge.

Contact Email:  
[memorycultures@gmail.com](mailto:memorycultures@gmail.com)