



Cultural Memory and Oral History in Global Perspective

10-11 March 2016

Emeroteca, Badia Fiesolana

Please register with Laura Borgese at laura.borgese@eui.eu

■ PROGRAMME

Thursday, 10 March

- 14:45-15:00** Introduction by Prof. Pieter M. Judson, Professors Luisa Passerini and Alexander Etkind
- 15:00-15:10** Moving Images: Memory in Words, Monuments, and Films
Chair: Prof. Alexander Etkind
- 15:10-16:10** Mischa Gabowitsch: *Treptow Island. Migration, Commemoration and Geopolitics in Berlin*
- 16:10-17:10** Bohdan Shumylovych: *"Ironic kitsch" in Soviet media-spectacle of the 1970s*
- 17:15-17:45** Coffee Break (Antirefectory)
- 17:45-18:45** Suzan Meryem Rosita Kalayci: *It thus makes us orphans all*
- 19:30-22:00** Dinner (Sala Bandiere, Villa Schifanoia)

Friday, 11 March

- 09:30-09:40** **Visual and Sensorial Memory in Historical Perspective**
Chair: **Prof. Luisa Passerini**
- 09:40-10:40** **Prof. Marina Nordera:** *Bodily ways of knowing and remembering: movement, kinaesthesia and mobility* (**Discussant: Prof. Gabriele Proglia**)
- 10:40-11:40** **Dr. Konstantinos Kornetis:** *Reading the "Project BABE" through the Senses* (**Discussant: Prof. Gabriele Proglia**)
- 11:40-12:00** **Coffee break** (Antirefectory)
- 12:00 – 12:15** **Dieter Reinisch:** *Contested Memories, Oral History, and Irish Republican Prisoner's Experience;*
- 12:15-13:00** **Concluding Discussion**
- 13:00** **Lunch**

■ PARTICIPANTS

FACULTY

Prof. Alexander Etkind (EUI)
Dr. Mischa Gabowitsch (Einstein Forum)
Prof. Pieter M. Judson (EUI)
Dr. Konstantinos Kornetis (Carlos III, Madrid, UC3M
CONEX Marie Curie Fellow)
Prof. Marina Nordera (Université de Nice Sophia-
Antipolis)
Prof. Luisa Passerini (Principal Investigator-BABE
Project)
Prof. Gabriele Proglia (ERC Project - Assistant
Professor, University of Tunis El Manar)

PHD RESEARCHERS

Suzan Meryem Rosita Kalayci (EUI)
Dieter Reinisch (EUI)
Bohdan Shumylovych (EUI)

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I SESSION

Treptow Island. Migration, Commemoration and Geopolitics in Berlin

Mischa Gabowitch

In 2013 and 2015, I co-directed large multi-sited fieldwork projects that studied commemorations of Victory Day -- 9 May, according to the Soviet tradition -- across the former Eastern bloc: 25 cities in 11 countries in 2013, 17 regions in six countries in 2015. My own fieldwork as part of the project was in Eastern Germany: Berlin and Wittenberg. The most striking discovery in my interviews and ethnographic observation was the sheer variety of ways in which different people--East Germans, West Berliners, migrants from Western Germany or the former Soviet Union, post-Soviet commemorative pilgrims--relate to the Soviet war memorials that dot the German landscape. The famous memorial in Berlin's Treptower Park in particular serves as something of an island within Germany's overall landscape of memory. A commemorative space that attracts varied kinds of memory activists, especially on and around 9 May, it nevertheless remains largely isolated from the dominant memorial culture--ignored at best, caricatured at worst. Discussing several ways in which migrants of different origins inhabit Treptower Park and other Soviet war memorials in Germany, I argue that these relationships go beyond mere appropriation: monuments that were once built for both commemorative and geopolitical purposes and continue to play that role have also become intensely personal objects of attachment for a variety of people from different backgrounds.

“Ironic kitsch” in Soviet media-spectacle of the 1970s

Bohdan Shumylovych, EUI Researcher

Right after the Second world war the officials of the USSR strived to build modern media infrastructure and already in the end of the 1960s Soviet Union was not just a specific form of socialist empire but also a media empire. Like in the capitalist countries media created Soviet media-culture within which evolved diverse media-spectacles. Media spectacles embodied contemporary society's basic values, served to initiate individuals into its way of life, and to dramatized its controversies and struggles, as well as its modes of conflict resolution. They included media extravaganzas, films, sporting events, political happenings and news (D.Kellner). Thus media-spectacles most overtly were presented in the field of popular culture, in the hybrid conjuncture of television and music, cultural memories and contemporary Soviet myths.

In my presentation I will analyze the two instances of Soviet media-spectacle: the movie created for the Central Television in Moscow (*The irony of faith* [Ironiia Sud'by], 1975) and the music film made in the western peripheries of USSR (*Red Rue* [Chervona Ruta], 1972). Both films were conceived as a certain form of media-fairly tales and extensively represented figures of (different Russian and Ukrainian) cultural memories while turning at the same into new memories. They combined ideals of high culture with popular vernacular concerns for privacy, love and searching for new substance. Memories embedded in these television films preserved the symbolic traditional heritage combined with Soviet myths and imaginary to which individuals resorted in order to build their new identities and to affirm themselves as part of a group. But what kind of group if Soviet culture could now restrain various forms of remembering?

It thus makes us orphans all

Suzan Meryem Rosita Kalayci, EUI Researcher

Certainly one of the more abiding questions, when thinking about the Armenian genocide after more than a century, is why so little has been written about the ways in which it inscribed itself into the everyday lives across generations and communities. In an attempt to understand the afterlife of this specific historic trauma, my essay takes two entry points: the novel *Remnants/Mnatsortats* written by the Western-Armenian writer Hakob Oshagan (1883-1948) as an example of a literary text that testifies to the historic trauma of the Armenian genocide and the Great War as its specific historical context.

II SESSION

Bodily ways of knowing and remembering: movement, kinaesthesia and mobility

Marina Nordera (Université de Nice Sophia-Antipolis)

Starting from the experience of movement in every day life and in dance as a social and artistic practice, this paper aims to explore in cultural terms the intertwining between kinaesthesia (perception of his own movement) and kinaesthetic empathy (perception of the movement of somebody else). In particular, through some examples, it will analyse the ways in which the changing perceptions of balance, walking and space are visualized and conceptualized in different contexts and how they construct individual and collective memory of movement for people moving across borders.

Reading the “Project BABE” through the Senses

Konstantinos Kornetis (Carlos III, Madrid, UC3M CONEX Marie Curie Fellow)

This presentation intends to make use of the experience of the SonorCities project on soundscapes across time and space, applying insights from the study of the history and memory of the bodily senses on Project Babe. In this respect the qualities of the key concepts of *kinaesthesia* – alongside *synaesthesia* – as employed by archaeologist Yannis Hamilakis - will be explored in relation to Babe’s work on individuals crossing borders. The memory of their senses, the combined work of their sensorial abilities, the assemblage of emotional and affective practices - sensorial and corporeal flows, in other words - will be seen as privileged tools for analyzing the topic. Especially BABE’s emphasis on “embodied subjects” but also “cultural memory” will be seen and analyzed through this powerful methodological but also theoretical lens.