



SESSION 1.

ICMEMO IN COLLABORATION WITH
THE UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
AND L'INSTITUT DES SCIENCES SOCIALES DU POLITIQUE

TITLE OF MEETING:

Memory of Dictatorships in Latin America, Eastern Europe and Post- Soviet States

SPEAKERS:

Nelly Bekus, University of Exeter, UK

Commemorating the Victims of Stalinist Repressions: Case of Two Memorial Sites in Minsk and Astana

Anar Khasenova, Art Curator, Museum ALZHIR, Astana, Kazakhstan

Memory of women-prisoners in "ALZHIR» museum

Barbara Thimms, Trainer „Disconcerting Sites. Dealing with Burdened Past“

Culture vs. Politics? Reflecting the Context of Education at Memorial Sites

Gruia Badescu, Oxford University, UK

Cultural landscapes of war? Reconstruction, museification and memorialisation in post-Yugoslav cities

Ricardo Brodsky Museo de la Memoria y de los Derechos Humanos de Santiago de Chile

Memory Dilemmas and Debates: examples of Argentina, Chile and Peru

Roberto Fuertes, Villa Grimaldi, Santiago de Chile

Didactics of Trauma: How to represent and transmit narratives in museums dedicated to Memory and Human Rights. The Case of Villa Grimaldi, Chile

NELLY BEKUS

Title: Commemorating the Victims of Stalinist Repressions: Case of Two Memorial Sites in Minsk and Astana

ABSTRACT: The proposed paper will compare the institutional and the symbolic status of two memorial sites dedicated to the memory of victims of the Stalinist crimes in Belarus and Kazakhstan: the mass grave at Kuropaty, located on the outskirts of Minsk, Belarus, and the museum at ALZHIR (Akmolinsk Camp for the Wives of the Traitors of the Motherland) located close to Astana.

The proposed paper will explore how these sites dedicated to the memory of victims of repression have been framed and interpreted in the Belarusian and Kazakhstani ideological contexts. For many former Soviet republics and socialist countries, postcommunism has been perceived as a product of double-rejective revolutions, which consisted of the rejection of both external (Russian or Soviet) domination and of the totalitarian regime. Places related to the history of Stalin's repressions, such as mass graves, sites of execution and internment camps have become important elements of the new cultural landscapes of national history that are called upon to evoke a critical perception of the Soviet past. Belarus and Kazakhstan, however, have never framed their national independence and postcommunist development in terms of anti-Sovietness. Studying these memorials to the victims of Stalinist crimes allows to explore, firstly, how the discourse of cultural heritage have been constructed in order to avoid the political radicalization and generalization in the appraisal of the Soviet past in the national history of two nations. Secondly, specific context of memorialization work in the context of nationalizing states and co-existing competing narratives of the victimhood reveals how "national dimension" have been introduced in the discourse of memorials in order to address and attract specific groups of visitors.

The institutional histories of these two sites will be analyzed against the background of the symbolic role, which they play in the cultural landscape of these two nation-states.

BIO: Nelly Bekus, holds PhD in Sociology (2007). Currently works as a Research Associate Fellow at the College of Humanities, University of Exeter, UK. In 2012-2013 had been a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University. In the 2008-2012 period had worked as an Assistant Professor at the East Slavic European Studies Department, University of Warsaw, Poland. Had been visiting researcher at the Remarque Institute, NYU (2007), Institute of Human Sciences, Vienna, Austria (2003). Author of the book "Struggle over Identity. The Official and the Alternative Belarusianness" (Budapest, CEU Press, 2010). Areas of research interests include postcommunist nation-building, postcolonialism in post-Soviet space, cultural heritage, memory and identity, postsocialist urbanity.

ANAR KHASENOVA

Title: **Memory of women-prisoners in "ALZHIR» museum**

ABSTRACT: The paper will discuss the history of the Museum created at the site of former "ALZHIR" camp to commemorate the victims of Stalinist repressions.

It will explore the narrative on the life and tragic experience of the former prisoners, the wives of "traitors to the Motherland", whose husbands were imprisoned or executed during the political purge.

Their dreadful experience at the camp was paradoxically combined with their often preserved belief that their sentence was a mistake caused by the system failure, thus, never questioning the system per se.

Paper will also discuss the Museum's activity on the creation of the network of the descendants of former camp prisoners and their involvement into the commemorative activities.

BIO: Anar Khasenova is Art Curator at Museum ALZHIR, Astana, Kazakhstan

BARBARA THIMM

Title: Practicing Democracy at Memorial Sites? A training experience (not only) in Belarus

Belarus has suffered extremely during World War II. As part of the Soviet Union it fought against the German Wehrmacht, which followed a scorched earth policy all over the country and destroyed the capital Minsk nearly in total. The figures differ but a number between every third, but at least every fourth inhabitant died during the war. Nearly the entire Jewish population was killed and a large number of Austrian, Czech and German Jews were transferred to the ghetto in Minsk in order to be murdered either there or near the SS-camp "Maly Trostenez".

Memorials in Belarus are run by the state, focusing on the partisans. For long time there was no official recognition of the Jewish victims. Presenting history is controlled by the government.

Due to the fact, that the Nazi-Regime had established a huge number of concentration and extermination camps in Germany and other occupied countries in Europe, Germany is hosting many different memorial sites. Learning about the Nazi-Regime is part of the school curriculum and many students would visit a memorial site. There is a wide belief that these visits would strengthen the democracy in Germany today. Automatically?

About ten years ago a group of professional educators at memorials (from Germany, Austria and Poland) felt that a critical reflection on the educational approaches at memorial sites from a *democratic* point of view is needed. How can a pluralistic culture of remembrance be practiced? How can we insure that there is no indoctrination? Are controversial subjects treated controversial? In order to discuss these questions the training concept *Disconcerting Sites. Dealing with Burdened Past* was developed and a number of memorials have offered the training to their staff (for further information in German see: www.verunsichernde-orte.de). Meanwhile the team had the chance to work with this concept besides Germany in Chile, Belarus and Cambodia.

The presentation will explain the concept of *Disconcerting Sites* in brief and will reflect the training experience in Belarus. Images of the just recently inaugurated Memorial Site "Maly Trostenez" will be presented to illustrate the official concept of World War II commemoration at present in Belarus.

Barbara Thimm

Trainer *Disconcerting Sites. Dealing with Burdened Past*, Trainer *Betzavta/ Democracy Education (Israel)* and Consultant in Organizational Development

Barbara Thimm is holding a Graduate Degree in Cultural Education (Germany). In the 1990s she was working at the educational department of the Memorial Site Buchenwald and later as director of the educational department at the International Youth Education Centre „Max Mannheimer“ in Dachau. Since the end of the international project on reflecting education at memorial sites, which Barbara Thimm was codesigning and coordinating (2007-2010), she is working as a free lancer offering trainings and consulting specially at memorial sites in different countries. At present she lives and works in India.

GRUIA BADESCU

Title: Cultural landscapes of war? Reconstruction, museification and memorialisation in post-Yugoslav cities Gruia Badescu

ABSTRACT: This contribution examines the debates about museification and memorialisation of sites related to the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. It explores how ruins of the 1999 NATO bombing over Belgrade, as well as sites of the 1992-1995 siege of Sarajevo have been displayed and reimagined in the last decades. I discuss how sites like the Sarajevo tunnel have been reshaped into tourist attractions and scrutinize the current debates on the reconstruction of a number of ruins, including Belgrade's TV building and the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army, which highlight various facets of memorialization, dark tourism and the shaping of war landscapes and traumascapes.

BIO: Gruia Badescu is a Departmental Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Oxford, with an affiliation to St John's College. His research explores urban space as a mediator of memory and affect, discussing the process of making sense of places with a difficult past in the aftermath of war or dictatorship. His PhD, conducted at the Centre for Urban Conflicts Research, University of Cambridge, examined the relationship between the reconstruction of cities after war and the process of coming to terms with the past. He is one of the convenors of the Places of Amnesia group.

RICARDO BRODSKY

Title: Memory Dilemmas and Debates: examples of Argentina, Chile and Peru

ABSTRACT: The presentation is about the experience, the debates and dilemmas of projects associated with the construction of memory of victims of political violence and state terrorism occurred in Chile, Argentina and Peru. In the three cases, with significant differences in the development of the political crisis, post-crisis and subsequent recovery of society, it has been addressed based on the paradigm of truth and justice, creating paths, Truth Commissions and with greater or lesser difficulty, making judicial processes that have allowed to judge and condemn many of those most responsible. The paper concerns the role of memory of victims in the construction of these outputs and their role in building the future and political struggles of the present. The examples are the experiences of Memory Park in Buenos Aires, the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago and the sculpture "The eye that weeps" in Lima.

BIO: Ricardo Brodsky Baudet (1956) Graduate in Literature from the University of Chile. Director, Museum of Memory and Human Rights, 2011-2016. He developed a project to convert the museum into a space for reflection and education of broad audiences, promoting the collection and permanent exhibition and giving a prominent place to the visual arts, various cultural manifestations and debate of ideas related with memory and human rights. He was Head of Indigenous Policy Program funded by the Ford Foundation, Chief of Division for the Inter-ministerial Coordination in the Ministry Secretariat General of Government under President Michelle Bachelet (2006 -2010), Ambassador of Chile in Belgium (2000-2004), Head of Cabinet of the President of the Chamber of Deputies. Consultant for the formulation of cultural policies of the National Council of Culture and Arts (2004 -2007). Secretary

(Bio Ricardo Brodsky continued)

General of the Federation of Students of the University of Chile during the dictatorship. Founder and Executive Secretary of the Foundation "Chile 21" and the Corporation "Proyectamérica" and director of the Santiago Visual Arts Foundation. Organizer of the first Triennial of Chile. Member of the Board of the Corporation of Friends of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of Chile. Commentator in various newspapers and magazines on issues of culture, politics and memory.

ROBERTO FUERTES

Title: Didactics of Trauma: How to represent and transmit narratives in museums dedicated to Memory and Human Rights. The Case of Villa Grimaldi in Chile

ABSTRACT: Currently in the international context we can find many museums, places and sites of memory that focus their work on the narrative and representation of traumatic historical events associated with political violence, armed conflicts and terrorism of state, among other issues, with a view to disseminate the host society's awareness about what happened, and encourage non-repetition of these historical experiences.

This lecture seeks to reflect on the forms of representation and communication of traumatic events in museum spaces. What does it tell us? How is it transmitting? What is it exposing? How can the horror be addressed? How can the museum and its narratives be linked with the visitors? How does the museum affect the audience? These are some of the topics examined, along with analyzing the role of museums concerning the creation of authorities dealing with the past, and its relationship with the social problems of the present.

Finally, and as an example, the lecture describes the experience of the Peace Park Villa Grimaldi in Santiago de Chile, which in 2017 will turn 20 years of existence.

BIO: Master in Didactics of the Cultural Heritage by the University of Barcelona (Spain), Professor of History and Geography by the Metropolitan University of Science Education (Chile), with studies of Social Anthropology at the University of Chile. In recent years has worked in the field of cultural heritage, memory and museums, developing various projects for the heritage in Chile, both tangible and intangible, and in the collection, cadastre and diffusion of cultural goods. During the years 2010 and 2011 he took part of the team that developed the project Memory Museum at Villa Grimaldi, a proposal which aims to project the work of the memory of Villa Grimaldi from the perspective of the museums of site related to the violation of human rights and the memory. Since 2012 he is Coordinator of the Museum Area of the Corporation Parque por la Paz Villa Grimaldi, Coordinator of the Chilean Committee for Museums in Memory of Victims of Crimes Public, belonging to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), and project officer for the Heritage Consultant Occitania.