

SPACES OF MEMORY

19.01.2021 | 14:00-16.30

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STUDIES PLATFORM**

PROF. DR. DANIEL RAFECAS
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PROF. DR. ALEIDA ASSMANN
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PROF. DR. TATJANA LOUIS
**PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES,
COLOMBIA**

ANDRZEJ KACORZYK AND TOMASZ MICHALDO
**MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU,
POLAND**

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PROGRAM:

I. WELCOME ADDRESS

Dr. Dorothee Weitbrecht, Managing Director of the Elisabeth Käsemann Foundation, Germany

II. INTRODUCTION

Traumatic spaces of memory in a comparative perspective

Prof. em. Dr. Aleida Assmann, University of Konstanz, Germany

III. PRESENTATIONS

Traumatic spaces as places of "Lessons learned"

Dr. Elke Gryglewski, Lower Saxony Memorials Foundation, Germany

Traumatic spaces as medium for transnational remembrance

Andrzej Kacorzyk, director of the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust and deputy director of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland

Tomasz Michaldo, head of department Methodology of Guiding of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland

BREAK

Scenes of crime and contributions of justice to coming to terms with the past

Prof. Dr. Daniel Rafecas, federal judge, professor for Criminal Law, law faculty, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Too many, too close. Traumatic spaces of the Colombian armed conflict

Prof. Dr. Tatjana Louis, professor at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá and director of the Department of Languages and Culture, Colombia

BREAK

IV. DISCUSSION

Moderation: Prof. Dr. Astrid Erll, professor of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at Goethe-University Frankfurt, founder of the Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform, Germany

V. CLOSING

Prof. Dr. Thomas Fischer, chairperson of the board of trustees of the Elisabeth Käsemann Foundation, chair of Latin American History at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany

Authentic historical sites allow the visitor to directly experience what written or visual media cannot convey: the aura of a place that cannot be reproduced in any medium. [...] While history books provide information about historical events in chronological order, the memory of a nation finds its expression in the memory landscape of its places of remembrance. The unique connection between proximity and distance creates an aura that transforms these sites into contact zones offering an immediate access to the past.

Aleida Assmann: Erinnerungsräume

An important contribution to coming to terms with the past is the juridical, historic and cultural investigation and discourse on places of past violence. Often this process is experiencing different phases and focuses, depending on the current role these "traumatic places", as Aleida Assmann calls them, have been assigned by a country's society. Be it primarily to provide juridical evidence, as in Argentina, or for an educational transfer to serve the "Never again", or as a diplomatic or political instrument.

The seminar "Spaces of Memory" presents various national concepts or focal points in dealing with "traumatic places":

1. the actual juridical function of places of past violence in Argentina
2. the meaning of traumatic places for reconciliation in Colombia
3. the pedagogical significance of traumatic places for present and future generations in Germany
4. the significance of traumatic places in transnational political processes in Poland

Profiled experts present and discuss different national approaches of dealing with places of past violence in reference to questions such as:

- What kind of information and importance do these places carry from a legal and social point? Who assigns which meanings or functions are associated with them?
- What are the legal, cultural, societal and political factors that motivate an interest of the state and civil society of a nation in dealing with places that carry witness of the violent experience of societies?

Presenting a key to understanding a nation's self-concept, and acknowledging the continual and changing discourse on the subject, the digital seminar will discuss different national objectives of investigating, preserving or reconstructing "traumatic spaces" as part of a collective memory, historic culture and democratic development. Furthermore, it shall offer an opportunity to discuss prospects for a "transnational memory" related to traumatic spaces.

The event is organized by the Elisabeth Käsemann Foundation and corresponds to the intention of the organization to examine past authoritarian regimes and conflicts to promote the importance of democratic values and responsibilities, and of human rights.

Thus, this webinar provides the opportunity to discuss the focuses of four different countries. Academic experts will introduce the topic and moderate the exchange.

ALEIDA ASSMANN, PhD

is professor em. of English Literature and Cultural Studies. She studied English Literature and Egyptology at the universities Heidelberg and Tuebingen. From 1993 – 2014 she held the chair of English Literature and Literary Theory at the University of Konstanz, Germany. She taught as a guest professor at various universities (Princeton, Yale, Chicago and Vienna). Her main areas of research are historical anthropology, history of media, history and theory of reading and writing, cultural memory, with special emphasis on Holocaust and trauma. In 2014 she received the Heineken Prize for History and in 2017 the Balzan Prize, together with her husband Jan Assmann and the Peace Prize of the German Booktrade (2018).



ASTRID ERLI, PhD

is professor of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at Goethe-University Frankfurt. She has worked on German, British, South Asian, American, and South African literatures and media cultures. Her research interests include literary history, media history, English and comparative literature, cultural theory, media theory, narratology, transcultural studies and – last not least – memory studies. She has published numerous books on culture memory including an introduction to memory studies which was originally published in German as "Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen" and has also been translated into Chinese, Spanish, and Polish. In 2011, she founded the "Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform", a vibrant forum for memory studies across the disciplines, connecting researchers both in Frankfurt and internationally. In 2016, she received a research grant from the VolkswagenStiftung for an „Opus Magnum“ on the reception of Homer as cultural memory ("Odyssean Travels: A Literary History of Cultural Memory").



ELKE GRYGLEWSKI, PhD

is managing director of the Lower Saxony Memorials Foundation in Germany. Before she was deputy director and for many years head of the education department of the memorial and education site of the "House of the Wannsee Conference" in Berlin. She is Member of the two "Independent Experts Group on Antisemitism", constituted by the German Bundestag. International activity: Since 1996, regular cooperation (conferences, training, etc.) with representatives of Latin American – especially Chilean and Argentinean – Sitios de Memoria on relevant questions of mediation. Member of a bilateral expert commission set up by the governments of Chile and Germany, that aims to create a concept of a documentation center and memorial on the ground of the former „Colonia Dignidad“.



ANDRZEJ KACORZYK

is a Polish educator, director of the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust and deputy director of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim. He has been associated with the Auschwitz Museum since 1997, initially as a guide and then as a staff member. In September 2001, he suited a managerial position at the Education Center. While the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust came into existence he became its organization manager and since March 2010 a head manager of the Visitor Service Section. Currently, he is the ICEAH Director. He is the author or co-author of many innovative educational projects, among others for uniformed services, people with special needs.



TATJANA LOUIS, PhD

is associate professor at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá and the director of the Department of Languages and Culture at the same university. Her research interests focus on the narrative construction of historical memory and the teaching and learning of history. She has published several articles on the narrative construction of internal displacement in Colombia and on the role of conflictual pasts in school contexts, including a comparative, German-Colombian perspective. Currently, she is conducting a DFG-funded study on historical consciousness among Colombian students in collaboration with the FU Berlin.



TOMASZ MICHALDO

is head of department "Methodology of Guiding" of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau. Graduated from history, with specialisation in modern Jewish history at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow and Postgraduate Museum Studies at the Jagiellonian University. He has been involved with the Auschwitz Museum as a guide since 2011, and since 2013 also in the Methodology of Guiding. He is responsible for cooperation with guides, training and recruitment of candidates for guides, as well as for the development of qualification for guides cooperating with the Museum. Among others, his fields of interest are modern Hebrew, history of the State of Israel and history of the Middle East conflict.



DANIEL EDUARDO RAFECAS, PhD

is federal judge of Argentina, professor for Criminal Law at the University of Buenos Aires and member of several organizations like e.g. the academic council of the Holocaust Museum in Buenos Aires. He is, among others, responsible for the trials that bring to justice crimes against humanity committed during the Argentine military dictatorship.

As a Federal Judge N° 3, Criminal Circuit, Buenos Aires, from 2004 until now Daniel Rafecas deals with a wide criminal investigation known as First Region of the Army of the Argentinian junta which, involved thousands of crimes against humanity committed by members of the last Argentinian military dictatorship (1976-1983) and several dozens of clandestine centers of kidnapping and torture such as "Olimpo", "El Vesubio", "Mansion Sere" between many others.

