

COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE. EMERGENCE, EXPERIENCE, REMEMBRANCE

International Workshop

Center for Interdisciplinary Memory Research (Essen)

Date: June 6-10, 2007.

Location: Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Deadline: November 17, 2006.

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Proceedings:

Your contribution may be either a case study or a solely theoretical study of the processes of collective violence and mass murder as social practice.

Additional Information:

In addition to scientific discourse, a one-day excursion to Srebrenica and the Potočari Memorial Cemetery are planned. The program will also include examples of cinematic handlings of collective experiences of violence.

The workshop language will be English.

There has been an upsurge of new research on the escalation of violence and mass murder in National Socialism in the past two decades, expanding our knowledge of the period tremendously. Explanatory models, terminology, sources, research methods and narrations are numerous and differentiated. The same is true of research on the transmission and discourse of memory and the forms memories of violent crimes in National Socialism can take. There have also been many, albeit less numerous, new studies of other cases of collective violence, for example in Yugoslavia and in Rwanda. The comparative study of processes of collective violence however, including the study of the cultural and psychological consequences of violence, is still in its infancy. The subjects of this research are extensive and complex, making comparative study very demanding. This complexity often leads comparative study to be written off directly as unprofitable. In practice however, current comparative (violence) research, particularly genocide research, proves the theoretical and practical benefits comparative study can bring. Often, the particularities and commonalities of genocidal processes only become clear in the process of comparison. Research from other disciplines and other countries on other areas and epochs can widen our perspective and expand our knowledge.

Our workshop aims to initiate a forum for new generation of researchers studying the processes of collective violence. We want to gather the understanding of violence which has been gained by researches from all parts of the world working in diverse disciplines. Collective violence is a complex and global phenomenon. Research on collective violence should be the same.

The workshop will offer young researchers a chance to present and discuss innovative approaches to the study of violence. It will present a platform from which new points of access can be examined and within which researchers can take a fresh look at their own methods of analysis, use of terminology and research methods. The workshop is explicitly not for one discipline only. We assume that events with a strong societal impact, such as collective violence and mass murder, can and should be the object of transdisciplinary scrutiny. The call for papers is aimed at doctoral candidates. This workshop shall help these candidates build networks and take part in an international dialogue.

Possible foci and questions for discussion are:

- *Discourse/Semantics*
Is collective violence set up on a discursive level? What function do concepts of self, other and the enemy have? Do violent societies experience an aesthetization and heroization of violence?
- *Gender*
Are there gender specific roles in the formation of violent processes? Are particular concepts of masculinity and femininity developed within processes of violence? Can we identify particular practices of violence along gender lines?
- *Violent practices/Violence as Social Practice*
How and by what means is violence practiced? Do violent practices change in time? What effects do violent practices have on the society in which it occurs?
- *Space*
What space does violence require? How do violent people form space? How does space form violence?
- *Actors/Figuration*
Who enacts violence? What is the triangulation between perpetrators, victims and bystanders? What role do neighbors, observers and correspondents play? Are there turning points in the escalation of violent processes? How and why do groups or individuals become helpers or rescuers?

- *Remembrance / Transmission*
How is a violent event remembered and handed down in retrospect? How are memories transmitted? What are the differences in the memories of perpetrators, victims and bystanders? Which media of memory can be identified as typical for the collective/society at hand? What determines the individual narratives and the objectification of the past?

