Global Comparative Colloquium on “Cultural Memory”

**Topics:** The colloquium introduces an interdisciplinary and comparative approach to the study of memory drawing on historical, sociological, anthropological, and literary perspectives. The course is designed to provide a broad framework to explore major theoretical and methodological issues and key concepts related to memory studies. Readings and class discussions address the relations between history and collective memory; memory, invented tradition, and forgetting; monuments, memorial sites, and the politics of commemoration; diaspora and heritage tourism; testimonies, objects, and silence; denial, countermemory, and memory activism; media and memory; trauma, awakening, and narrative plot structures.

**Individual research projects:** The development of a research project is an important component of the course. Students are encouraged to contact me and set time to meet to discuss their ideas and are welcome to propose their topic of research, disciplinary perspective, and methodology according to their field of interest. Time table for the research project and the final research paper is indicated below.

**Students** are encouraged to bring to classes current news, share readings, and information about events that are relevant to the study of cultural memory. The syllabus leaves room for a session to be determined by seminar participants’ interests.

**Core Learning Goals:**
- **S1:** Communicate complex ideas effectively
- **U:** Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly
- **V:** Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights
- **S2:** Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers and instructor through successive drafts and revision

**Additional Learning Goals:**
- Learn key concepts and analytical approaches in memory studies
- Learn how to plan and pursue an independent research project through its various phases
- Produce an original, well-written paper based on the analysis of research and drawing on readings

**Course Requirements:**

(1) Students are expected to come prepared to class with responses to assigned readings and ready for class discussion about key concepts and main points raised in these readings.
(2) Students are expected to progress with their research projects according to plan and submit the assignments on time according to schedule below.

(3) A final paper drawing on an independent research project and the readings and discussions in class, about 20 pages (double space, including notes and bibliography) is due at the end of the term.

**Research Project Schedule**

- Research topic approval by ………….  Sept 19
- Research proposal due by ………….  Sept 28
- Progress report in class ………….  Oct. 26
- Oral presentation in class……….  Nov. 30
- Final paper due ………….  Dec. 14

**Academic Integrity**

Students are required to follow current Academic Integrity Policy as indicated in the website: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml). Violations include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. For further information on how to avoid plagiarism in your work, see [http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml) and take a 20 min. interactive-tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity at [http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html](http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html)

**Grading**

Reading assignments and class discussions …………. 30%
Research proposal and a preliminary bibliography….10%
Oral Presentation…………………………………….10%
The final paper……………………………………… 50%

**Readings**

Two readers to purchase at Barnes & Noble Bookstore, Somerset St & College Ave, or online:

  Noted in syllabus as CMR

  Noted in syllabus as Companion

All other readings are placed on sakai.rutgers.edu.
Class Schedule

Sept 7 – Introduction

- Review of course plan, readings, and goals.
- Review of major questions, themes and methodologies in the study of memory.
- A preliminary discussion of students’ research interests.
- Setting time for individual meetings

*Wed. Sept 13, 7:30pm – Douglas Student Center, Trayes Hall
Prof. Jeffrey Shandler’s lecture, “Holocaust Memory in the Digital Age”*

Sept 14 – Theoretical Approaches and Key Concepts

Readings

Maurice Halbwachs, “The Collective Memory,” *CMR*, 139-49
Alon Confino, “Memory and the History of Mentalities,” *Companion*, 77-84

➢ Research topic to be approved by Sept 19.
➢ Research proposal and preliminary bibliography due in class, Sept 28

Sept 28 -- Memory, Invented Tradition, and Forgetting

Aleida Assmann, “Canon and Archive,” *Companion*, 97-107
Eric Hobsbawm, “Inventing Traditions,” *CMR*, 271-74
Terence Ranger, “The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The Case of Colonial Africa,” *CMR*, 275-78
Orlando Patterson, “From Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study,” *CMR*, 279-82

Oct. 5 – Monuments, Memorial Sites, and the Politics of Commemoration

James E. Young, “The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History,” *Companion*, 357-65
# Genevieve Zubrzycki, “Oswiecim/Auschwitz: Archeology of a Contested Site and Symbol,” in *The
Oct 12 – Diaspora and Heritage Tourism


Oct 19 -- Testimonies, Objects, and Silence

# Shoshana Felman, “The return of the Voice: Claude Lanzmann’s Shoah,” ibid, 204-32.

[Make sure to get Art Spielberg’s Maus for Nov. 16]

Oct 26 – Denial, Countermemory, and Memory Activism


Nov 2 – Progress reports in class

Nov 9 -- Media and Trauma

Jeffrey Alexander, “Cultural Theory of Trauma,” CMR, 307-10
Barbie Zelizer, “Journalism’s Memory Work,” Companion, 379-87

Screening: “Waltz with Bashir” (Ari Folman, 2008)
Nov 16 – Trauma, Awakening, and Narrative Plot Structures


*** Graphic novel -- Art Spielberg, *Maus*.

Nov 21 – Topic to be decided

[The class may expand on earlier themes or explore other topics such as as art & memory, literature & memory, food, Music & memory, offer a field trip to a memorial site according to students’ interests.]

Nov 30 – Oral presentations in class

Dec 7 – Oral presentations (cont) & discussion of final papers and students’ future work.

Wrap up -- future directions in memory studies

**Final papers are due Th. Dec. 14 at noon at the Bildner Center.**