

Anthropology 380
Trauma, Memory, Loss
 (Culture, Memory, History)

Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University

Instructor: Parvis Ghassem-Fachandi

Class time:

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Office Hours:

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Location of course:

Credits: 3

Semester: Spring 2021

This course explores theoretical approaches to memory while retaining an emphasis on empirical knowledge of memory in relation to culture and society. A particularly strong emphasis will be laid on the close reading of foundational authors and their primary texts. In detailed discussions we will situate these authors both in time and place and with respect to one another. The course focuses on memory and its failure: the contortions, transformations, inscriptions, and shifting genres that precede, follow, or accompany the universal experience of loss. How do individuals and collectivities confront, deal with, and absolve themselves from loss? The course takes up three major approaches to memory: psychoanalysis (S. Freud), social organization of memory (P. Nora), and associative temporalities (W.G. Sebald). It examines various genres in which the memory of loss is retained, overwritten, distorted, or displaced: memoirs, graphic novel, films, memorials, reflexive ethnography (F. Bizot), commemorative ritual, historical investigation (J. Gross), and various other forms of inscription. Memory--the process of recalling something of the past--frequently employs narrative form to organize experience into events. Hence part of the course will inquire into the structure of narrative. How is the past experienced and construed as meaningful story in the present? A better understanding of the memory of loss, and the social forms in which it remains active in the present, has the potential to heighten ethnographic sensibility during fieldwork in observing, interpreting, and analyzing various modes of expression by identifying communicative forms in practice and by comparing culturally specific forms of accounting for the past.

General Reference Works in English:

International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, David L. Sills, editor.

(as far as I know this classic reference work has not been digitalized)

Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology, edited by Alan Barnard and Jonathan Spencer, Routledge. (Call number: GN307.E53 1996)

Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory, David Herman, Manfred Jahn and Marie-Laure Ryan (eds.). (Call number: PN212.R68 2005)

The Edinburgh International Encyclopedia of Psychoanalysis, Ross M. Skelton (editor), Edinburgh : Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2006

The Language of Psycho-Analysis, J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis (eds.). Translated by Nicholson-Smith. (Call number: RC437.L313 1974)

Books for Purchase

Books are available at the main store on Reserve at **Mable Smith Douglass Library** and can be bought at the Rutgers University Bookstore:

1. **W.G. Sebald**. 1996. *The Emigrants*. N.Y.: New Directions (Dr. Henry Selwyn, Paul Bereyter, Max Ferber). ISBN 978-0811213660
2. **François Bizot**. 2003[2000]. *The Gate*. Translated by Euan Cameron. Foreword by John Le Carré. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. ISBN 978-0375727238
3. **Jan Gross**. 2001. *Neighbors. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*. Princeton University Press. ISBN-10: 0142002402
4. **Art Spiegelman**. 1986. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*. NY: Pantheon. ISBN 0-394-74723-2

MOVING IMAGES:

September 11 (2002). Selection directed by Sean Penn

In Treatment (2008-2010). HBO Series-Director: Paris Barclay, Rodrigo Garcia (Originally: *BeTipul*/by Hagai Levi, Ori Sivan, and Nir Bergman)

Caché [Hidden] (2005). Director: Michael Haneke (French with subtitles). Call number: 10-744

Waltz with Bashir (2008). Director: Ari Folman, director. Call number: 10-1724

Mother (2009). Director: Bong Jung-Ho (Korean with subtitles)

Ein Deutsches Leben (2017) [A German Life]. Director: Christian Krönes, Olaf S. Müller, Roland Schrotthofer, Florian Weigensamer. (German with subtitles). *Not yet available at Rutgers Library*

Le Temps des Aveux (2014) [The Gate]. Director: Régis Wargnier. (French with subtitles). *Not yet available at Rutgers Library*

?Oppenheimer?

READING LOAD: Variable, but maximally 150 pages/week. All required books are on Class Reserves at **Mable Smith Douglass Library** (8 Chapel Drive, New Brunswick, DC) and selected readings are posted on **Sakai**. Please inform me immediately if movies cannot be watched or the books are either not available for purchase or on **Library Reserve**.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA:

The course will be discussion driven, so it is vitally important that you come to class having read and screened all class materials (this includes both, static and moving material).

Midterm Take-Home Exam (30%), max. 4-5 pages. **Final Take-Home Exam** (30%), max. 4-5 pages, due by May 11. **Class Participation** (40%).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To provide undergraduate-level competency in narrative theory, social construction of memory, psychoanalysis, associative temporalities, the symbolic/imaginary/real distinction, competency in diverse theoretical approaches to history and historiography, society and culture. They will also

learn to critically discuss, argue, and appraise, modern and classic anthropological and other texts with and among their peers. Fore-grounded are classic texts that deal with individual and collective forms of memory, rituals of commemoration, structure and function of myth, the configuration of plot structures, individual and national narrative expression, the difference between meaning and sense, representation and identification, explanation and interpretation, construction and deconstruction.

To help advanced students gain proficiency in the use of critical thinking skills in their assessment of analytical texts on history, society and culture, social theory, anthropological and ethnographic narrativization, writing, media representation, and psychoanalysis.

To provide students with the training of reading and presentation skills, the use of central concepts, and a comparative approach to historical depth, as well as cultural and social difference.

To provide students with the academic tools for specialized work through the use of professional dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Week 1. What is Memory? (Thurs January 23rd)

1. **Jorge Luis Borges.** 1962. Funes the Memorious. Labyrinths, N.Y.: A New Directions Book, pp. 59-66 [7 pages]
2. **Sigmund Freud.** 1963[1925] A Note Upon the Mystic Writing-Pad. *In* General Psychological Theory, Chapter XIII, pp. 227-232 [5 pages]

Week 2. Symptom & Fixation (Mo 27th January and Thurs January 30th)

1. **Sigmund Freud.** 1960[1920]. The Meaning of Symptoms. *In* A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis. New York: Washington Square Press, pp. 268-283 [15 pages]
2. **Sigmund Freud.** 1960[1920]. Fixation upon Traumas: The Unconscious. *In* A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis. N.Y.: Washington Square Press, pp. 284-296 [12 pages]

View:

In Treatment, Season 3, "Sunil"- view first 4 Sunil-episodes (of overall 7).
Each episode is ½ hour long.

Week 3. Mourning, Memory, Melancholia (Mo February 3rd and Thurs February 6th)

Sigmund Freud. 1963[1917]. Mourning and Melancholia. *In* General Psychological Theory, 164-179. N.Y: Collier Books [15 pages]

View:

In Treatment, Season 3, "Sunil"- view final 3 Sunil-episodes (of 7), and "Adele," episode 7.
Each episode is ½ hour.

Week 4. Objects: Internal and External (Mo February 10th and Thurs February 13th)

1. **Melanie Klein.** 2002[1940]. Mourning and its Relation to Manic-Depressive States. *In* Love, Guilt, and Reparation and Other Works, 1921-1945. (*The Writings of Melanie Klein*, Vol.1), pp. 344-369. N.Y. Free Press
[25 pages]
2. **Judith Butler.** 1997. Melancholy Gender/Refused Identification. *In* The Psychic Life of Power, pp. 132-150, Routledge [18 pages]

Week 5. The Social Organization of Memory (Mo February 17th and Thurs February 20th)

1. **Pierre Nora.** 1996[1992]. General Introduction: Between Memory and History. *In* Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Vol. 1: Conflicts and Divisions. N.Y.: Columbia University Press, pp. 1-23 [23 pages]
2. **Antoine Prost.** 1999. The Algerian War in French Collective Memory, Chapter 8, 161-176. *In* War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century, ed. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, Cambridge: CUP [15 pages]

View:

Caché, Michael Haneke, director, 2005 (French with English subtitles)

Week 6. The Literary Organization of Memory (Mo February 24th and Thurs February 27th)

W.G. Sebald. 1996. The Emigrants. N.Y.: New Directions, (Dr. Henry Selwyn, Paul Bereyter, Ambros Adelwarth, Max Ferber). *Selections, TBA* [TBA]

Midterm Take-Home Exam.

Due on Thursday March 5th in class. Maximum 4-5 pages, double-spaced.

Week. 7. The Literary Organization of Memory II (Mo March 2nd and Thurs March 5th)

1. **François Bizot.** 2003[2000]. The Gate [Le Portail]. Translated by Euan Cameron. Foreword by John Le Carré. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. *Selections, TBA* [TBA]

Watch short report on anthropologist François Bizot's deposition in the trial against former Khmer Rouge leader "Duch" (Kaing Guek Eav) on NTD.TV in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in 2009.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obwp17vSPPw> (in English). The actual deposition of the accused can be viewed here, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7J9zw9BY9ns>.

Recommended: Short interview (6:31) on French TV with François Bizot on his experiences in 1971 as prisoner of the Khmer Rouge: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQYBb0o2kTQ> (Unfortunately, this is in French without subtitles). Feature film on François Bizot's experiences: *Le Temps des Aveux* [The Gate], 2014, by director: Régis Wargnier (with English subtitles)

Week 8. Discourse and Narrative Form (Mo March 9th and Thurs March 12th)

1. **Hayden White.** 1987. The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality, *In* The Content of the Form. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, pp. 1-25 [pages 25]
2. **Louis O. Mink.** 1978. Narrative Form as Cognitive Instrument. *In* The Writing of History. Literary Form and Historical Understanding, ed. Robert H. Canary and Henry Kozicki. Madison: U of Wisconsin Press, pp. 129-149 [20 pages]

Spring Recess From March 14th to March 22nd**Week 9. Memory and Historiography (Mo March 23rd and Thurs March 26th)**

1. **Jan Gross.** 2001. Neighbors. The Destructions of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland. Princeton University Press. *Selections, TBA* [TBA]

Recommended:

1. Equal Justice Initiative. 2015. *Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror*. Montgomery, Alabama: EJI.
2. The case of renaming of the Woodrow Wilson at Princeton University; see New York Times, 2015.

Week 10. Story, Plot, Discourse (Mo March 30th and Thurs April 2nd)

1. **Jonathan Culler.** 1983. Story and Discourse in the Analysis of Narrative. *In* The Pursuit of Signs. Ithaca: Cornell U P, pp. 169-187 [18 pages]
2. **Peter Brooks.** 1984. Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 3-36 [33 pages]

View:

Waltz with Bashir (2008)-Director: Ari Folman

Week 11. Trauma & Repetition (Mo April 6th and Thurs April 9th)

1. **Lawrence Kirmayer.** 1996. Landscapes of Memory: Trauma, Narrative, and Dissociation, pp. 173-198. *In* Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory. Antze and Lambek (eds.), New York: Routledge [25 pages]
2. **Alexandra Fuller.** 2004. The Soldier. *The New Yorker*, March 1, pp. 54-67 [13 pages]
3. **Elena Lappin.** 1999. The Man With Two Heads. *Granta: The Magazine of Writing*, 66, pp. 9-65 [56 pages]

Week 12. Memory Project I: South East Asia (Mo April 13rd and Thurs April 16th)

1. **Angela Hobart.** 2014. Retrieving the Tragic Dead in Bali: Regenerating rituals after the 1965-6 massacre. *In Indonesia and the Malay World*, Vol. 42, No. 124, pp. 307-336 [29 pages]
2. **Katherine E. Gregor.** 2013. Memory Studies and Human Rights in Indonesia. *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 350-361 [11 pages]

??Kidron?**Week 13.** Memory Projects (Mo March 20th and Thurs November 23th)

1. **Art Spiegelman.** 1986. Maus: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History. NY: Pantheon. Graphic Novel [159 pages]
2. **James E. Young.** 1992. The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today. *Critical Inquiry* 18, pp. 267-296 [29 pages]

Week 14. Mother & Memory (Mo April 27th and Thurs April 30th)

1. John Borneman. 2015. Knowledgeability and the Materiality of Child Sex Abuse, *In Cruel Attachments*, Chapter 4. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 142-159 [17 pages]
2. **Roland Barthes.** 1982 [1980]. Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography. Part Two, pp. 63-110 . New York: Hill and Wang [47 pages]

View:*Mother* (2009)-Director: Bong Jung-Ho (Korean with subtitles)**Week 15.** Conclusion and Take-Home Exam (Mo May 4th)

Last Day of Classes!

Final Take-Home ExamDue May 11th (or later but *before* grades are due). Maximum 4-5 pages, double-spaced.