In Europe and all over the world, mass violence and genocide have been a structural feature of the 20th century. Our research programme, Corpses of Mass Violence and Genocide, aims at questioning the social legacy of mass violence by studying how different societies have coped with the first consequence of mass crime: the mass production of cadavers. What status and what value have indeed been given to corpses? What symbolic, social, religious, economic or political uses have been made of dead bodies in occupied Europe, the former Soviet Union, Bosnia, Spain and also Rwanda, Argentina or Cambodia, both during and after the massacres? Bringing together the perspectives of social anthropology, law and history, and raising the three main issues of destruction, identification and (re)conciliation, this research team conducted by anthropologist Elisabeth Anstett and historian Jean-Marc Dreyfus, will enlighten how various social and cultural treatments of dead bodies simultaneously challenge common representations, legal practices and morality. The programme outputs should therefore open and strengthen the field of genocide studies by providing new theoretical tools for a better understanding of mass violence and its aftermath. This research programme, which has started in February 2012 and will develop over four years, is funded by a grant from the European Research Council.

www.corpsesofmassviolence.eu

SEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION OF CORPSES AND HUMAN REMAINS IN POST-GENOCIDE AND MASS VIOLENCE CONTEXTS

2nd ANNUAL & INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME CORPSES OF MASS VIOLENCE AND GENOCIDE

9th, 10th & 11th September 2013
University of Manchester (UK)
Room 4/5, Staff House

Information & Registration: L.Radford@corpsesofmassviolence.eu
SEARCH AND IDENTIFICATION OF CORPSES AND HUMAN REMAINS IN POST-GENOCIDE AND MASS VIOLENCE CONTEXTS

Following a first conference in Paris in September 2012 focusing on the treatment of corpses in the phase of destruction, this second annual meeting of the research programme “Corpses of mass violence and genocide” aims to explore another post-Killing severe manipulation of the bodies: addressing their search and identification. The beginning of the 21st century has already experienced more occurrences of this phenomenon, be it the opening of mass graves from the Spanish Civil War, the identification of corpses by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the long-standing search for disappeared political detainees in Argentina or the large-scale exhumations pursued in Rwanda. Whether bodies have been destroyed through industrial processes, mutilated, buried individually or collectively or even required in secondary or tertiary sites, the search and identification of these victims remains undertaken in various circumstances and raise a wide range of questions. The conference organisers have therefore gathered multidisciplinary contributions dealing with the search and recovery of bodies in various contexts of mass crimes, focusing in particular on the twentieth century. Studies will deal with a variety of geographical areas (Europe, Africa, America and Asia) and focus on the methods and processes involved in the search and identification of victims, as well as the motivations and interests behind these pursuits aiming at understanding what is at stake in conducting exhumations and human remains identification. From understanding these historical objectives, can we learn as much about the ‘searcher’ as we can about the ‘searched’?

Monday 9th September 2013

14.00-15.30
Introduction address by Elisabeth Anstett (CNRS, France)
& Jean-Marc Dreyfus (University of Manchester, UK)
Key note speech: Tony Platt (San Jose State University, USA) “Bitter Legacies: A War of Extermination, Grave Looting, and Culture Wars in the American West”

16.00-18.00
Methods for exhumation
Chair & Discussant: Tim Thompson (University of South Carolina, USA)
- Francisco Fernandez & Luis Rios (CsIC-UB, Spain), “Scientific Rituals in Contemporary Spanish Civil War Exhumations”

Tuesday 10th September 2013

9.00-12.30
What is at stake in DNA analysis?
Chair & Discussant: Belen Rodriguez Caruso (Banco Nacional de Datos Genéticos, Argentina)
- Ernesto Schwartz-Mann (University of Manchester, UK) & Arelly Cruz, “Articulating Forensic Science, DNA Databases and Kinship as a Civic Response to Everyday Disaster in Mexico and Colombia”

11.10-12.30
Exhumations and agents
Chair & Discussant: Luis Fonleobier (AAT, Argentina)
- Remi Kimman (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, France), “Search and Identification of Corpses from the Rwandan Genocide since 1994: Rwandan and international agents”

14.00-15.30
Exhumations post-WW2
Chair & Discussant: Jean-Marc Dreyfus (University of Manchester, UK)
- Gabriel Trogor (University of Vgnina, USA), “Depicting the Exhumation and Repatriation of Holocaust Victims in Yizkor Books”

16.00-18.00

Day and night, Shinta tirelessly draws portraits of her five sons, currently reported missing. Like thousands of other women in Srebrenica, she lives in her dreams and takes part in the protests demanding that justice be done. For the first time in history, a large-scale initiative has been launched to search for the 72,731 people who went missing during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. “Earth Promised Sky” portrays the painful process of searching for and identifying the bodies through the personal accounts of Eva, Amor and Jasna. They attempt to go beyond the horror of it all by returning human beings to their dignity and doing them justice.

Screening followed by a round table with Sabina Subasic (film director), Svetlana Garbjan (Université de Genève, Switzerland) and Elisabeth Anstett (CNRS, France)

Wednesday 11th September 2013

9.00-10.30
Exhumations, peace building & state legitimacy
Chair & Discussant: Jon Shute (University of Manchester, UK)
- Nicky Rousseu (University of the Western Cape, South Africa), “The Political Lives of Dead Bodies”
- The Disciples of the Dead: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Exhumation of Human Remains and Echoes from the Past”
- Rachel Hatner (University of Saskatchewan, Canada), “Forests of Bodies: How Exhumations Make Legible and Extend the Reach of the State in Guatemala”

11.10-12.30
Exhumations and politics
Chair & Discussant: Elisabeth Anstett (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France)
- Veaceslav Buhatchkiy (Memorial, Russian Federation) “Exhumation of Gulag’s Mass Graves in the Voronej Region”

14.00-15.30
Exhumations and territories
Chair & Discussant: Caroline Fourret (Groningen University, The Netherlands)
- Caroline Bennett (University of Kent, UK), “Embodied and Contested Spaces of Mass Graves in Cambodia”
- Frances Ivy (University of Manchester, UK), “Multiple Exhumations in Malaysia”

15.30-16.00
Conclusive remarks and perspectives

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