

Teaching about Perpetrators: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics

Utrecht University

November 10-12, 2016

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

ABSTRACTS

PARTICIPANTS



Utrecht University



WORKSHOP:

Teaching about Perpetrators: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics

Utrecht University, November 10-12, 2016

Locations:

November 10: Stijkkamer Van Ravensteijn (Kromme Nieuwegracht 80, Room 1.06)

November 11 and 12: A. W. de Grootkamer (Trans 8, Room 0.19)

There is a growing consensus that presenting perpetrators of mass crimes as monsters or psychopaths is ultimately counterproductive, as it obscures the social, political, historical, and cultural mechanisms that enable them and inhibits an understanding of their continued relevance for today. Yet, the representation and reception of perpetrators and, more importantly, the pedagogical approaches to these figures in contemporary culture are still largely characterized by a distancing amalgamation of sensationalism on the one hand and moralistic condemnation on the other. This series of workshops aims to examine how our contradictory attitudes toward perpetrators in society and culture can in themselves be made the object of enquiry. Furthermore, we will explore the opportunities and challenges for teaching and learning about past atrocities through the figure of the perpetrator across disciplines.

This is the third workshop in the series, organized in the context of the ongoing research project *Faces of Evil: The Figure of the Perpetrator in Contemporary Memory Culture* (supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, NWO). This time, we will focus on the ethical, aesthetic, and political dimensions of the representation of perpetrators and the use of such representations in the classroom. What are the advantages and potential dangers of using self-representations, for instance propaganda materials and videos disseminated across social media? How can the ethical, aesthetic and political problems associated with these materials be made productive for educational purposes? What sorts of lessons can be learnt from studying perpetrator (self)representations and what are the problems and limitations associated with them in an educational setting? What about fictional representations? What role do empathy and identification, disgust, fascination, and other strong affects play in pedagogy about perpetrators? Are we 'allowed' to feel empathy for perpetrators? Where is the line between understanding and forgiveness? What role does affect play in the politics of memory and memorialization with regard to the figure of the perpetrator? And, conversely, how can affect be integrated into the fostering of political awareness and engagement?

Workshop Program

Thursday, November 10, Stijkkamer Van Ravensteijn (Kromme Nieuwegracht 80, 1.06)

14.00 Welcome and Introductions

15.00-18.00 Session 1: Aesthetics and Politics

Stephanie Bird (University College London)

Julie Buckner Armstrong (University of South Florida St. Petersburg)

Eva Mona Altmann (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf)

Readings:

Eudora Welty, "Where Is the Voice Coming From?"

Koritha Mitchell, "Love in Action: Noting Similarities between Lynching Then and Anti-LGBT Violence Now"

Rebecca Jinks, "Responding to Genocide: Attitudes and Platitudes"

Peter E. Gordon, "The Authoritarian Personality Revisited: Reading Adorno in the Age of Trump"

The #Charlestonsyllabus: <http://www.aaihs.org/resources/charlestonsyllabus/>

19.00 Dinner at Saigon (Voorstraat 68)

Friday, November 11, A. W. de Grootkamer (Trans 8, 0.19)

9.30-12.30 Session 2: Ethics and Pedagogy

Maria Ecker Angerer (Erinnern.at)

Jonathan Even-Zohar (Euroclio)

Rick Hoefsloot (Euroclio)

Dea Marić (Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and University of Zagreb)

Readings:

Samuel Totten, *Teaching about Genocide: Issues, Approaches, and Resources*, Chapters 2 and 7

Michael Rothberg, "Pedagogy and the Politics of Memory: 'The Countermonument Project'"

Waitman Wade Beorn, "Perpetrators, Presidents, and Profiteers: Teaching Genocide Prevention and Response through Classroom Simulation"

12.30- 14.00 Lunch at Zussen (Korte Jansstraat 23)

14.00-17.00 Session 3: Politics and Law

Eva Willems (Ghent University)

Iva Vukušić (Utrecht University)

Gideon Chitanga (Rhodes University, Johannesburg, South Africa)

Nick Warmuth (Central European University, Budapest)

Readings:

Iva Vukušić, "The Archives of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia"

Jelena Subotić, "The Cruelty of False Remorse: Biljana Plavšić at The Hague"

Mirjan Damaska, "What Is the Point of International Criminal Justice?"

17.00- 19.00 Film (TBA) and Discussion

19.30 Dinner at the Faculty Club (Achter de Dom 7)

Saturday, November 12, A. W. de Grootkamer (Trans 8, 0.19)

10.00-13.00 Session 4: Aesthetics, Politics, and Trauma

Maren Lytje (University College Northern Jutland and Aalborg University)

Stéphanie Benzaquen-Gautier (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

Susanne Knittel (Utrecht University)

Readings:

Rachel Hughes, "The Abject Artefacts of Memory: Photographs from Cambodia's Genocide"

Saira Mohamed, "Of Monsters and Men: Perpetrator Trauma and Mass Atrocity"

Erin McGlothlin, "Empathetic Identification and the Mind of the Holocaust Perpetrator in Fiction: A Proposed Taxonomy of Response," *Narrative* 24.3: 251-276.

13.00-14.30 Lunch and Concluding Discussion

END OF WORKSHOP

The Participants:

Eva Mona Altmann (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Germany)

Eva Mona Altmann studied Literary Translation (French and English as foreign languages) at Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf. In her diploma thesis entitled "Translational critique of selected excerpts of Jonathan Littell's *Les Bienveillantes* (2006)" she analysed in how far the translation of the originally French bestselling novel had an effect on its reception elsewhere. The reception differed a lot e.g. between France and Germany but also Israel and the United States.

Eva Mona started her Ph. D. in 2009 at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Frank Leinen (Romance Philology), and she has both deepened and broadened her research in that field. Based on the topos of unspeakability that still surrounds and challenges every representation of the Holocaust, especially the fictional adaptations, she aims to analyse if and how the first-person-perpetrator-narrators do speak about their crimes. Using the example of the two French novels *La mort est mon métier* (1952) by Robert Merle and *Les Bienveillantes* (2006) by Jonathan Littell she examines both the self-description of the perpetrators and the description of their victims. Do frequent stereotypes occur, e.g. the Schreibischtäter, or is the image more complex? Do the texts invite the readers to empathize or sympathize with the perpetrators or to even detest their victims?

The second part of her study focuses on the translational critique of Holocaust Literature and especially on the influence of the German translation on the texts (e.g. the frequent Germanisms do not function anymore as foreign bodies in the text). The fact that the voice of a German perpetrator that was originally shaped in French by the novelists is here translated into German builds up a very interesting setting. Is the original text the only reference or do the translators also use historical perpetrator accounts as a source?

One of the central questions that arise while working on this topic is of course that of the acceptability of the perpetrator's account. Is there any use in letting a (fictional) perpetrator tell us his or her story or does it only damage the memory of the victims? The typical characteristics of the perpetrator discourse are e.g. evasion, cover-up, protestation of their own sorrow as well as the use of euphemistic language, the denial of personal guilt and the reference to only doing one's duty. So can a perpetrator be a reliable narrator or witness? Do we maybe need their (even fictional) speech as a counter balance to the voices of the victims and to prevent a so-called Holocaust fatigue? Or is the – at least seemingly – uncritical presentation of their perspective too dangerous especially for younger readers? Does understanding automatically lead to forgiveness? Can fictional accounts of the perpetrator perspective help us with the prevention of future crimes? These questions are also very important for teaching the perpetrator topic.

Eva Mona Altmann has been a research assistant and lecturer at Heinrich-Heine-Universität since 2011. As a part of the "Introduction to Cultural Studies" she teaches one session about Littell's novel and as the students usually show a special interest in this perpetrator account, she aims at possibly doing a whole seminar about the perpetrator perspective in French Holocaust Literature, after hopefully finishing her thesis by the end of this year.

Kjell Anderson (Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies)

My research and teaching on perpetrators is focused specifically on perpetrators of mass atrocities such as genocide. I take an interdisciplinary approach grounded in criminology but also incorporating other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, history, and political science. I focus particularly on perpetrator motivation and how this relates to transitional justice processes. I have predominately engaged in qualitative interview field research in conflict and post-conflict settings including Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Bosnia, Cambodia, India, and Bangladesh. I interviewed around 120 perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity in these countries, as well as twenty or so victims. These interviews form a substantial portion of the empirical research for my forthcoming book (*Killing Without Consequence*, Routledge, forthcoming 2016). I began this project with the intention of comparing different forms of collective violence (such as ethnic pogroms, crimes against humanity, and genocide) and gathering data on the motivation and patterns of violence among perpetrators. However, I soon realized that this research would be distorted by the distortions of the perpetrators themselves, their tendency (like the rest of us) to reframe and revise the moral context and moral agency of their acts of perpetration. This led me to shift my focus to these distortions themselves and to develop and integrate criminological theory explaining the role of the moral context in the perpetration of mass atrocities. More recently my focus has broadened to considering the implications of perpetrator moral choice and motivation for transitional justice and criminal justice. I am currently researching genocidal intent in the case of ISIS atrocities in Iraq, as well as the role of socio-legal analytical frameworks in determinations of genocidal intent. I am also considering the role of transitional justice in transforming (or reinforcing) perpetrator narratives with reference to the specific case of Bangladesh. My research drives my approach to teaching. In particular it has demonstrated the need for a nuanced approach to the question of perpetration. This approach emphasizes the uniqueness of genocidal violence but also its linkages to more universal social tendencies. These linkages, in particular, are useful in my attempts to ground my teaching about perpetrators with students – to relate the perpetration of extreme acts of violence to everyday processes.

Kjell Anderson is a social scientist and jurist focused on collective violence, in particular mass atrocities. He holds a doctorate in International Human Rights Law from the National University of Ireland, as well as an LLM in International Human Rights Law from Utrecht University, and MA and BA degrees in International Affairs (conflict studies) from Carleton University and the University of Saskatchewan, respectively. His work experience includes the National University of Ireland, National University of Rwanda, Hague Institute for Global Justice, Forum des Activistes Contre la Torture (FACT-Rwanda), and the Organization of American States. He has participated in Transitional Justice and International Criminal Justice training programs in South Africa, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates, and been a visiting researcher at the University of the South Pacific (Fiji) and the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (India). He is currently a researcher/lecturer at the Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, as well as a member of the Board of Directors of the Sentinel Project for Genocide Prevention and the Vice President of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

Maria Ecker-Angerer (Erinnern.at, National Socialism and the Holocaust: Memory and the Present, Austria)

Maria Ecker-Angerer (PhD) is a historian and educator at *_erinnern.at_*, Austria. She has been developing educational material focusing on National Socialism and the Holocaust since 2003. In 2014 she co-organised an international colloquium on „Teaching about Perpetrators“ in Bregenz.

The most recent project she headed aimed at the development of educational material about perpetrators. It was finalized in spring 2016: „‘Wer ist schuld am Tod von Edith Winkler?’ Völkermord als gesellschaftliche Verantwortung“. The lessons (aiming at students from the 8th grade upwards) are based on biographical cards which stimulate discussion of perpetrators and bystanders. The main goal is to understand mass murder as a social act, where responsibility cannot be reduced to a few direct murderers.

The starting point is the life story of Edith Winkler, who was born in 1930 in Vienna and was killed in the Holocaust. Who is responsible for her death, who is to blame? Students discuss the life stories, choices and responsibilities of various persons who may have contributed to her death – directly and indirectly. By dealing with concrete persons, with their actions and omissions, widespread misconceptions about categories such as perpetrators, bystanders, helpers and resisters become obvious. Students question their preconceptions and they gain an understanding of how ordinary people contribute to mass murder - or to rescuing people.

Maria Ecker-Angerer studied history and PPP (Philosophy, Psychology and Education) at the University of Salzburg and graduated in 2006 with a dissertation on *Tales of edification and Redemption? Oral / Visual Audio Holocaust Testimonies and American Public Memory, 1945 – 2005*.

Since then she has been involved in numerous projects at the University of Salzburg, for example "The "Austrian Heritage Collection": Written and Oral memories of Austrian Jewish immigrants in the United States" and "Hörspuren. Mit Geschichte in Beziehung treten", where she developed audio guides about the March and November Pogroms in Vienna.

She has also been part of the newly established educational department of the Mauthausen Memorial and developed a new concept for school classes visiting the Memorial together with Yariv Lapid and Christian Angerer. (See: Christian Angerer, Maria Ecker, Yariv Lapid: "What does it have to do with me?" The pedagogical concept at the Mauthausen Memorial, Vienna 2011, published in: Maria Halmer, Anton Pelinka, Karl Semlitsch (Hg.): *What remains of the Shoah? Context, practice effects* (Vienna, 2012): 145-156.

Since 2009 she has been working at *_erinnern.at_*, organizing and facilitating numerous teacher training seminars on National Socialism and the Holocaust, especially the annual "Eyewitness Seminar" where Holocaust survivors and teachers encounter each other.

She has published among others, the book *Nazism in Upper Austria. Victims, perpetrators, opponents*. Innsbruck, 2014 (with Christian Angerer).

Julie Buckner Armstrong (University of South Florida St. Petersburg)

How my students see themselves in relation to perpetrators brings me to the workshop. In class, we often talk about responsibility for acts of racial violence. For example, Eudora Welty's 1963 short story "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" – told from the perspective of Medgar Evers's murderer – sees him as a product of society rather than independent actor. Students are fairly comfortable discussing historical connections between systemic racism, bystander silence, micro-aggression, and overt forms of violence. Conversations on Welty's story tend to damn the murderer's whole society, placing blame for racism "down there" in Mississippi and "back then" before the civil rights movement supposedly fostered social change. Conversations about present acts of violence become more complex, however, because responsibility is less easily deflected.

A recent situation occurred in a class following the [#CharlestonSyllabus](#), a list of readings crowd sourced on social media after a young white man named Dylann Roof shot and killed nine African Americans inside a Charleston, South Carolina church. A session last week required groups to write questions on the board. "Would you forgive Dylann Roof as easily as the church members?" one group asked. "I have to forgive him," a white woman said, "I created him."

I seek strategies to help students navigate these oppositional responses – deflecting and internalizing – to perpetrators that appear in the literature we read. I bring twenty years of experience teaching and writing about the literatures of racial violence and the U.S. civil rights movement, fields that I helped to define through books such as *Mary Turner and the Memory of Lynching* and, most recently, the *Cambridge Companion to American Civil Rights Literature*.

Julie Buckner Armstrong is Professor of Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, where she teaches courses in African American, American, and women's literatures. She has authored and edited multiple publications on the literature of civil rights and racial justice, including the *Cambridge Companion to American Civil Rights Literature* (Cambridge UP, 2015); *Mary Turner and the Memory of Lynching* (U of Georgia P, 2011); *The Civil Rights Reader: American Literature from Jim Crow to Reconciliation* (U of Georgia P, 2009); and, with Susan Hult Edwards, Houston Roberson, and Rhonda Williams, *Teaching the American Civil Rights Movement: Freedom's Bittersweet Song* (Routledge, 2002). Armstrong is currently working on a collection of essays, *Birmingham Stories*, about everyday people and places in the iconic civil rights movement city where she was born.

Stéphanie Benzaquen-Gautier (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

The way images of Khmer Rouge crimes are disseminated and preserved worldwide changed dramatically from 1975 to the present day. So did the forms of identification these images offer to Cambodians and non-Cambodians alike. Understanding these changes is at the core of my PhD research project—exploring the dynamics of Khmer Rouge memory from the perspective of visual history. What role do images play in the social construction of Khmer Rouge memory? To what extent do images clarify shifts in the identity of stakeholders involved in memorializing Khmer Rouge atrocities? How do images of Khmer Rouge crimes relate to transformations on a larger scale in terms of memory culture, technologies, and geopolitics? The study situates these questions in a transnational realm that emphasizes the interaction of Cambodians and foreigners in producing and circulating images of Khmer Rouge atrocities. If Pol Pot's regime lasted 'only' 3 years, 8 months, and 20 days, the history of the Khmer Rouge movement itself spans more than half a century, from WW II to the present, as the trial of top Khmer Rouge leaders continues to stir up controversies within Cambodian society and beyond. It involves many actors (colonizers and insurgents, capitalists and communists, civilians and military) from the Asia-Pacific area, Euro-America, the former Soviet bloc, and China. These different groups have been re-writing the Democratic Kampuchea past "to meet the needs of the present, asserting their legitimacy and moral authority" (Alexander Hinton, "Truth, Representation, and the Politics of Memory after Genocide," 2008).

Transnational dynamics of memory reflect the ongoing interaction of Cambodians and foreigners since the demise of the Khmer Rouge regime. This interaction produced over the years a great variety of visual representations in terms of mediums, genres, and styles. I approach these materials through the concept of visual history, which I define as an open interdisciplinary structure for analyzing the documentary and performative functions of images. My research retraces through images the history of Khmer Rouge memory since the 1970s, identifying actors, phases, and narratives, with a focus on social processes rather than individual recollections. It tells the story over time of a selected set of images mediating Khmer Rouge crimes to the public in Cambodia and abroad. The dissertation examines photographs, documentary movies, magazines, posters, drawings, paintings, exhibitions, memorial sculptures and social/digital media. This range of documents makes it possible to assess how much the medium affects both the modalities of circulation of images and the formats of perception.

Stéphanie Benzaquen is an art historian and a PhD researcher at the Centre for Historical Culture, Erasmus University Rotterdam. She received MA and BA degrees in art history from the Université La Sorbonne Paris I in 1997. She also works as curator and has organized exhibitions and projects in Israel, France, Germany, Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Thailand. She is a recipient of a Leon Milman Memorial Fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC (2012), a recipient of a fellowship at the Stone Summer Theory Institute at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago, Illinois (2010), and was a researcher in the Theory Department at Jan van Eyck Academie in the Netherlands (2004-2005). Recent publications include: "Looking at the West looking away? Khmer Rouge, western blindness, and documentary images," in *On Not Looking: The Paradox of Visual Culture*, edited by Frances Guerin (New York: Routledge, 2015); "Post, update, download: Social media and the future of Auschwitz remembrance," in *Auschwitz heute—dzisiaj—today* (Berlin: Hentrich and Hentrich, 2015); "Looking at the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes, Cambodia, on Flickr and YouTube," *Media, Culture & Society* 36:6 (2014).

Stephanie Bird (University College London)

My interest in and work on perpetrators relates to three distinct but inter-related strands. First is my work on narrative ethics and the ways in which representing forms of abuse or perpetration can be understood to be ethical or not. Robert Musil's exploration on the relationship of ethics and aesthetics are of particular interest here, particularly in *Törleß*, where critics have long struggled with the apparent lack of moral condemnation of a protagonist complicit in torture as a boy. The novel is crucial in demonstrating how fiction can play a vital role in exploring perpetrators, their motivation and their self-representation precisely by eschewing conventional notions of morality and discourses of moral judgement – discourses that did not prevent the abuse in the first place.

The second is my interest in the overlap between fact and fiction: what can fiction add to the representation of historical atrocity? Crucially fiction is free to explore interiority, both on the part of victims and perpetrators. It is also free to do what it wishes with the facts. But given that fiction contributes to wider discourses and contributes to the cultural imaginary in a way that itself can influence how history is understood, this raises the question of whether there is a limit to its freedoms, particularly when it represents events that still have an impact on peoples' lives.

Finally I am concerned with the ways in which through fiction we are licensed to enjoy other peoples' pain and the infliction of pain on others. I am particularly interested in the relationship of comedy and suffering. Comedy is expressly concerned with pleasure, so what can be added to our understanding of historical trauma and the perpetration of violence if representations include comedy? Comedy as a mode of representation undermines resolution or congruity and frequently undermines redemptive modes of narration. This can be deemed problematic if comedy is not in the service of moral condemnation of perpetrators.

These strands come together in my recent work on Jonathan Littell's novel, *The Kindly Ones*. I argue that at the level of the narrator, of the intertext and through the use of comic devices, the novel invokes the language of tragedy and justice while staging its failure and offering a rejection of tragic catharsis and the notion that justice has been done. I am currently developing my ideas on the representation of perpetrators by looking at novels that feature a Nazi perpetrator who assumes the identity of a Jew in order to survive persecution. The novels are all fictional explorations of justice, resentment and forgiveness. This forms part of a much wider project on the representation of perpetration and complicity across Europe, involving Universities, memorial sites and school educationalists.

Stephanie Bird is Senior Lecturer in German at University College London. She has published on topics ranging from the interaction of fact and fiction in the biographical novel, the relationship of female and national identity, and the representation and ethics of shame. As Co-Investigator on the AHRC funded project 'The Reverberations of War' she has been working on a comparative study exploring the significance of the comical in German-language cultural representations of suffering. Her latest book, *Comedy and Trauma in Germany and Austria after 1945: The Inner Sider of Mourning*, analyses how the comical interrogates the expectations and ethics of representing suffering and trauma. It does so by integrating a critique of dominant paradigms, such as that of trauma and of victim identity. The study focuses on the work of Ingeborg Bachmann, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, W. G. Sebald, Volker Koepp, Reinhard Jirgl, Ruth Klüger, Edgar Hilsenrath and Jonathan Littell.

Gideon Chitanga (Rhodes University, Johannesburg, South Africa)

Gideon Chitanga has extensive experience working with civil society and political parties. His academic interests include a focus on Conflict and Security, Democracy and Governance. Sponsored by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) he conducted policy research on youth and politics in Africa focusing on the main political parties in Ghana and Kenya. Additionally, he has also conducted research on Elections and Democratic Transition in Zimbabwe and consults for several NGOs in Zimbabwe on issues of elections, governance and democracy. He is an awardee of the UPEACE doctoral grant, has published several articles on democratization in Zimbabwe in the Africa Peace and Conflict Journal and regularly provides political analysis in the media. He holds a Masters in Development Studies with a specialization in Governance and Democracy from the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Netherlands, a BA from the Great Zimbabwe University, a Diploma in Education, University of Zimbabwe and is currently finalizing his PhD at Rhodes University.

Gideon is currently involved with setting up the Gukurahundi Project, which seeks to explore issues of truth, peace and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The Project looks at historical conflicts in Zimbabwe, focusing on its darkest moments, with a view to addressing the cyclical nature of politically motivated violence. The project is informed by the need to revisit historical conflicts with a view to facilitate truth telling, dialogue, investigating past violations-and exploring remedies with affected communities, opening dialogue amongst and within affected communities. Such processes are the foundation of peacebuilding processes facilitating democratic consolidation, respect for rule of law and human dignity as well as empowering communities of survivors. The process of dialogue will explore possible short term and long term remedies, with a major focus on the preferences of the community of survivors in resolving conflict, that is whether they prefer international prosecution or local remedies such as various forms of reparations.

This project takes Gukurahundi (1983-1987) as an entry into dealing with the many conflicts and cycles of violence, including violence related to elections. Gukurahundi is probably the darkest moment since independence, yet it has not been officially recognised or acknowledged nor resolved. Communities of survivors continue to suffer from its socio-economic, social and political consequences. Families and individuals are still exposed to personnel pain, spiritual challenges (understood in the African context in relation to properly burying the dead) and psychological consequences. At regional and national level Gukurahundi raises concerns of social cohesion, nationhood and statehood, with affected communities feeling excluded and marginalised. This has fundamentally affected democratization processes reinforcing negative fragmentation which deepens ethnic cleavages. There is also need to address atrocious punitive impunity as a national problem in Zimbabwe. Where the government has treated Gukurahundi as a regional issue for a particular ethnic group, the project seeks to open dialogue locating it at the center of what have become cycles of violence in the country. The pattern of strategies and tactics of violence used during Gukurahundi are the same as those used by the settler regime against the liberation movements, and in intra-party violence within the liberation movement itself. The same measures, tactics and strategies have been replicated in all cases of violence since 1980. The project will for the first time since independence open a wider, broader dialogue attending to such continuities (the violent past persistently repeating itself) focusing on Gukurahundi, and possibly more recent conflicts at a later stage.

Susanne C. Knittel (Utrecht University)

My research project, *Faces of Evil: The Figure of the Perpetrator in Contemporary Memory Culture* traces the figure of the perpetrator through post-1989 memory culture in Germany and Romania, where the joint legacies of Fascism and Communism render questions of perpetration and victimhood inherently ambiguous and complex. I analyse the role of perpetrators in literature, drama, film, and at sites of memory in order to elucidate how these cultures create narratives about their own history through which they negotiate questions of complicity and collaboration in order to ascribe or disavow guilt and responsibility. Through a comparative and interdisciplinary analysis of the figure of the perpetrator across different literary and visual media in these two countries I will shed new light on how questions of perpetratorship and collaboration influence the construction of cultural identity, both at the national level and within the broader framework of European memory.

The year 1989 marked the beginning of a large-scale re-evaluation of the past and the double legacies of Fascism and Communism in both countries. This coincided with a turn to *Alltagsgeschichte*, focusing on the embeddedness of state violence in people's everyday lives and troubling the separation between perpetrators and civilians, making questions of guilt and responsibility, and the nature of 'perpetration' more complex. The focus on daily life foregrounds a contrast between the engagement with the memory of Nazism and that of Communism, namely the recent emergence of nostalgic depictions of the GDR (so-called "Ostalgie") and Communist Romania. The relationship to the Communist past is further complicated by the memory of the Fascist regime that preceded it, and vice versa. The same people may have been victims under Fascism and perpetrators under Communism, or vice versa. In this context, questions of guilt, complicity, and resistance loom large, and it is precisely the irreducible complexity of assigning clear labels of victim or perpetrator that makes Romania an ideal case study alongside the two Germanys. I explore how one memory may serve as a prism through which to approach the other, and conversely may also act as a screen blocking an engagement with the other.

Susanne C. Knittel holds a PhD in Italian and Comparative Literature from Columbia University, New York, and has been Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at Utrecht University since 2011. She is the author of *The Historical Uncanny: Disability, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Holocaust Memory* (Fordham UP, 2015), which explores the cultural mechanisms by which certain memories become inscribed into the heritage of a country or region while others are erased or forgotten. *The Historical Uncanny* is a comparative study of German and Italian post-WWII memory culture, with a particular focus on the memory of Nazi euthanasia in Germany and the memory of fascism and the German occupation in North-Eastern Italy. Other publications include 'Beyond Testimony: Nazi Euthanasia and the Field of Memory Studies', *The Holocaust in History and Memory*, vol. 5 (2012), and 'Borderline Memory Disorder: The Risiera di San Sabba and the Staging of Italian National Identity' in: *Death Tourism: Disaster Sites as Recreational Landscape*, edited by Brigitte Sion (2014).

Maren Lytje (University College Northern Jutland and Aalborg University)

I hold a Ph.D. in history (2015) and currently work as assistant professor at the teachers training college, UCN, Aalborg, Denmark and as external lecturer at the department of Culture and Global Studies at Aalborg University.

My Ph.D. dissertation focused on the relationship between sovereignty, justice and justification in just war theory and in the political justification of warfare. A substantial bulk of the dissertation was dedicated to the role that trauma plays in the justification of war. In particular, I have been interested in the concept of secondary traumatization and identification as a means of collapsing the distinction between victim and perpetrator in relation to warfare.

My post-Ph.D. research interests focus on two different areas: one area relates to the concepts of "presence" and "trauma" which have become significant within the field of history and theory over the past twenty years. Where presence refers to an ontological approach to the past which emphasizes its presence rather than its absence and thereby seeks to overcome the problem of historical representation posed by the linguistic turn, trauma refers to the different ways in which history is used to come to terms with collective violence. I am particularly interested in these concepts in relation to the historical trauma of the Holocaust and imaginations of its victims and its perpetrators. My second area of interest is in European intellectual history in the interwar years and the relationship between the French "civilizing spirit," German "culture" and the "Jewish question."

My primary teaching areas at UCN and Aalborg University are theory and philosophy of history, didactics of history and the history of Interwar Europe. The courses that I teach all include the concepts of historical trauma and historical justice, often in relation to the re-workings of the Holocaust experience.

I am currently developing an extended course on victims and perpetrators to be taught co-jointly between UCN and Aalborg University.

Jonathan Even-Zohar, Rick Hoefsloot (EUROCLIO, European Association of History Educators) and Dea Marić (Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and University of Zagreb)

EUROCLIO's work with relation to reconciliation in the Balkans tries to address the often contested history in a multi-perspective way. We aim for history, heritage and citizenship education that does not attempt to transmit a single truth about the past; that deconstructs historical myths and stereotypes; that raises awareness of the fact that the past is differently perceived according to one's background; that addresses sensitive and controversial topics in a responsible and multi-perspective way; and that promotes long-term reconciliation in divided societies by developing empathy skills and respect for different interpretations. Our current project on teaching the '90s wars in the Balkans aims to provide students and the public at large with opportunities to study the history of the 1990's war in the context of clashing memories and the various perspectives on the achievements of international law and transitional justice. We are especially focussed on connecting teachers, promoting multi-perspectivity when dealing with sensitive issues, and supporting other projects that took initiative to deal with the recent wars through education.

Dea Marić is a senior advisor in The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes in Zagreb, Croatia. She is also a Teaching Associate at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb on courses on History Didactics. Her research interests fall in the field of History education, teaching materials, actors and practices, with a special focus on education on sensitive and controversial topics. She is actively engaged in several national, regional and international initiatives and organizations for the promotion of Human rights and the innovation of History and Civic education.

Jonathan Even-Zohar, MA, has a degree in History from Leiden University, relating to world-historical perspectives in history education with an honorary Crayenborgh-degree in Islam and Europe. At EUROCLIO he has managed history education projects in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Former Yugoslavia including various visits to the countries, international conferences, seminars and workshops. Within these projects, many aspects of publishing, curriculum development, political influence and general attitudes towards history education are developed. At the EUROCLIO Secretariat he is responsible for office and financial operations and staff coordination, as well as the running of the programme History that Connects, How to teach sensitive and controversial history in the countries of former Yugoslavia.

Rick Hoefsloot, trainee at EUROCLIO (September 2016 - January 2017). Rick studied history at the University of Groningen, and will soon be a masters graduate in Holocaust and Genocide Studies from the University of Amsterdam. The figure of the perpetrator seems to always retain a high level of controversy. Indeed, as for example in the Netherlands, it is still not possible to also incorporate German victims during our commemoration of the Second World War more than 70 years after its end, the black and white frame of the victim/ perpetrator relationship still stands. Thanks to the micro-turn in genocide research however, perpetrator studies have taken a flight. But can we also make this turn within broader society? Can we also come to 'understand' the process of becoming a perpetrator in classrooms, in public life?

These are very interesting questions that have stimulated me within my own research during my masters in Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the University of Amsterdam. I've namely come to study the 'elephant in the room' during every conversation I had in Rwanda about the genocide: the killings of refugees in Eastern-Zaire after the genocide. As the new Rwandan RPF regime went on a campaign to eliminate the so called *genocidaires*, after these *genocidaires* had been living among ordinary refugees who had fled Rwanda in fear of reprisals for more than two years, they attacked the whole refugee population indiscriminate of age or gender. The status of the ordinary refugees therein, is quite fascinating, as they were still under the spell of the propaganda and government structures of their old leaders. Indeed, the refugee camps were set up according to old Rwandan prefectures, thus making the *Bourgemesters* (who had often played a notorious role during the genocide) still in charge of their constituents. The distinction between victim and perpetrators therefore is blurry in the case at hand, and it will in all probability still take a long time before this 'elephant in the room' will even be discussed in Rwanda. It certainly does not fit a black and white approach to the perpetrator/victim relationship.

The traineeship at EUROCLIO has furthermore given me the opportunity to work practically on an adjacent topic, namely how to teach the 90s wars in the Balkans. In particular, as the project will deal with how and if to incorporate the ICTY proceedings in teacher materials, the discussion of the perpetrator comes to mind. One interesting case, would for example be the testimony of Dražen Erdemović, as published in Slavenka Drakulić's *They Would Never Hurt a Fly: War Criminals on Trial in The Hague*. Erdemović tells an interesting story on how he became a member of the Srpska army as a result of being in dire need of a job, which ends in him being a member of an execution squad. Can we use such a testimony in teaching materials? Probably not yet, but discussing such instances within our EUROCLIO project could certainly make a start.

Iva Vukušić (Utrecht University)

Iva Vukušić, M.A, is a PhD Candidate within the NWO-funded VIDI project titled 'Paramilitarism, Organized Crime and the State' at the History Department of Utrecht University. Her project focuses on Serbia during the 1990s. From 2009, Iva has worked in The Hague, covering trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). From 2007 to 2009, she was an analyst and researcher at the Special War Crimes Department of the State Prosecutor's office in Sarajevo. Iva worked on a project focusing on visual material in war crimes trials at the Department of War Studies, King's College London, as well as with others researching judicial responses to mass violence, their impact on post-conflict societies and more broadly, writing about challenges in the field of transitional justice. Previous writings include a chapter in *Prosecuting War Crimes: Lessons and Legacies of the ICTY* (Routledge, 2013), an article about ICTY Archives in the UK journal *History* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) and a chapter in *State-Building and Democratization in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Ashgate, 2015).

For over a decade and in different professional capacities, I have been studying mass violence and judicial responses to it, mainly in the form of war crimes trials at international, hybrid or domestic courts. I followed proceedings as a journalist in Zagreb, worked on investigations and trials in Sarajevo, studied the ICTY archives and trials in The Hague and followed proceedings at various tribunals. I have been teaching at two summer schools (NYU and Groningen University, respectively) and presenting regularly to groups of journalists, researchers and students about war crimes trials, the challenges, the benefits and shortcomings. One of the topics that regularly come up is who the perpetrators are and what evidence is presented.

Currently I am conducting research on Serb(ian) paramilitary units active during the 1990s in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The aim of the project is to follow the path of several paramilitaries and their connections to the regime in Belgrade and organized crime. It explores formal ties the paramilitaries had with institutions (e.g. police, military, state security) as well as personal connections between paramilitary leaders and political elites. The main question the research will answer is to what extent these groups were created and supported by the security apparatus in Belgrade with the purpose of outsourcing violence and creating plausible deniability, or if they may have been just a consequence of the lawlessness of war.

Nick Warmuth (Central European University)

Originally from California (with a BA in History from San Diego State University and an MA in Modern European History from King's College London), I am currently a PhD student at Central European University, in Budapest. My project, entitled *On the Border of Totalitarianism: Camp Society Between Ideology and Practice in KZ Flossenbürg, 1938-1945*, explores Flossenbürg's camp socialization through a microhistorical approach. The principal objective is to reassess the general understanding of the concentration camps from a social perspective, in order to gain a comprehensive yet progressive explanation of how both internal and external factors helped to develop unique operational distinctions between such sites. This interpretation of camp life adds to the latest trajectories of study that contradict the more traditional narratives of the camps as a monolithic, singularly cohesive apparatus of forced labor and human extermination, managed directly by top SS officials. By focusing on one specific case study (KZ Flossenbürg), it is possible to test more accurately the levels of local, regional and centralized authority applied to the development and maintenance of the camps. It also provides the opportunity to question several aspects of the theoretical concept of Totalitarianism as it relates to National Socialism, particularly Hannah Arendt's and later, Wolfgang Sofsky's claim that the concentration and extermination camps were the 'laboratories for testing total domination'.

The project is interested in revealing the individual and collective agencies among the functioning camp community, including but not specifically limited to: victims, bystanders and perpetrators. The majority of camp research, due to postwar legal nomenclature, has depended heavily on the study of these three character types, often resulting in a rigid division of primary 'participants'. Engaging with these concepts is not only unavoidable, but necessary to apply a more critical assessment of personal and group identity, as well as their contextual impetus. As an example, according to witness testimony, sometimes even personal motivation among the SS affected positively on some or all of the inmates, and conversely the prisoners' primary struggle for survival was not always a virtuous practice.

One particularly biting concern within camp life deals with the various so-called camp elders and capos; those who were awarded an amount of unrestricted authority over the rest of their fellow prisoners. The dilemma is trying to accurately place these individuals among the victims or the perpetrators. Some were actually accused, sentenced and punished for their war-crimes (often rightfully so). Yet does that automatically annul their own victimization as concentration camp prisoners? Given this example, one quickly realizes the inherent problems with employing such static conceptual characterizations. Based on the testimonies, it has been confirmed that such people could exist as both, and that possibly their actions within a defined context should be considered above their overall person. It is however extremely difficult to build a generalization based on a few testimonials, which is why an understanding of the immediate influences and developments on a microhistorical level are so imperative. Far from a revisionist position, the project looks less to humanize the abhorrent deeds of the Nazis, as much as it will respectfully attempt to remove the prevailing blanket interpretations of righteous and immoral behavior in the face of domination and obedience, as it is expressed by theoretical thinkers of the subject. The study will thus provide a more nuanced appreciation for daily life and social development inside the camps; something I feel is extremely important when explaining concentration camps and the Holocaust, or any other instance of human subjugation and persecution in history.

Eva Willems (Ghent University)

Research project "History, time and memory after violent conflict: a metahistorical analysis of the Peruvian transitional justice process (1980 – present)."

Between 1980 and 2000 a civil conflict between the Maoist group Shining Path and the state forces took the lives of 70 000 Peruvians. More than a decade has passed since the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2003) was published. It is now clear that remembering the most deadly episode of Peruvian history is not on the political agenda of state actors. However, many Peruvians are still struggling with the memories of this recent past. This project starts out from the insight that a tension exists in Peruvian transitional justice practices between indigenous survivors, the state and NGOs. As a hypothesis I state that this tension is shaped by, among other factors, the collision between transitional justice's search for closure on the one hand, and the presence of the past felt by survivors of violent conflict on the other hand. This tension is complex and requires a nuanced analysis. My research aims both to fill the knowledge gap on contextual diversity in transitional justice and to contribute to scholarship on the nature and functioning of memory and historical consciousness by testing these theories empirically in the case study of Peru. By introducing a culturally-sensitive meta-historical analysis to transitional justice discourse and practice in post-conflict Peru, this research will make a contribution to both the meta-historical field of memory-studies and the interdisciplinary field of transitional justice.

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Eva Willems is a PhD Candidate of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO), affiliated to the History department of Ghent University. She holds a bachelor and master degree in History from Ghent University and the University of Seville. Eva is part of the research group 'Social History after 1750' and coordinator of the interdisciplinary research forum Thinking About The Past ([TAPAS](#)) at Ghent University. Her research interests include uses of history and memory in post-conflict situations, transitional justice strategies in non-western frameworks, Peruvian and Latin American history, indigenous groups and socio-economic exclusion and ethnography.

This academic year, Eva will be teaching a seminar on the topic 'Between victim and perpetrator: discourses on history, memory and trauma' to 3rd year bachelor students in history at Ghent University.