



| le savoir vivant |

# pluralistic memories project

9:00 – 10:30 Johanna Ray Vollhardt, Clark University, USA  
Collective victimhood after conflict, war, and genocide: International perspectives

11:00 – 12:30 Rajmohan Ramanathapillai, Gettysburg College, USA  
The Politicization of Memories in Sri Lanka

14:00 – 15:30 Sonia Nimr, Birzeit University, Palestine  
Oral history and Palestinian collective memory

16:00 – 17:30 Rezarta Bilali, New York University, USA  
Why do the stories we tell matter? Media interventions to prevent violence and promote reconciliation in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC

Open thematic workshop

Monday 5 May, 9:00 - 17:30

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FONDS NATIONAL SUISSE  
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9:00 – 10:30 Johanna Ray Vollhardt, Clark University, USA

## **Collective victimhood after conflict, war, and genocide: International perspectives**

Although the social psychological literature on collective victimhood has treated this phenomenon in a rather uniform way, there are different ways in which people think about and construe their group's experiences of collective victimization in relation to other victim groups. Drawing on empirical findings and case studies from several different contexts, I will discuss the consequences of different construals of collective victimhood for intergroup relations, social movements, and reconciliation—addressing destructive, constructive, and strategic motivations and outcomes. I will also discuss the role of acknowledgment and exposure to other groups' victim narratives in shaping construals of victimhood and their outcomes.

11:00 – 12:30 Rajmohan Ramanathapillai, Gettysburg College, USA

## **The Politicization of Memories in Sri Lanka**

Traumatic events and memories are seldom in dispute but traumatized people choose how to present and make sense of events. Particular memories are selected, kept alive, and retold as a collective way of understanding and relating experiences. Nonetheless, trauma memories are vulnerable to political manipulation to perpetuate the power of leaders. This presentation will address various aspects of trauma memories in Sri Lanka and how these memories became effective tools in attracting and recruiting combatants. It will discuss the forms of interventions including the use trauma narratives for healing and peace building and restoring the dignity of victims of war.

14:00 – 15:30 Sonia Nimr, Birzeit University, Palestine

## **Oral history and Palestinian collective memory**

The complete destruction of the economic, social and political structures of Palestine in 1948, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, the two Intifadas in 1987 and 2000, and the lack of official institutions to document and preserve the history have made oral history and collective memory especially significant to the Palestinian people. In this talk I will discuss the Palestinian collective memory in general, the Palestinian scholarly and popular attempts to collect and document oral narratives, the role of these narratives in sustaining collective identity, and the challenges that face these attempts.

16:00 – 17:30 Rezarta Bilali, New York University, USA

## **Why do the stories we tell matter? Media interventions to prevent violence and promote reconciliation in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC**

In societies plagued by violent conflict as well as in post-conflict settings media is increasingly used as an intervention tool for conflict prevention and reconciliation. In this talk, I will discuss media interventions that use entertainment education strategy (i.e., weaving messages based on psychological theories of intergroup conflict into fictional stories) to change past narratives, prevent violence and improve intergroup relations. Then, I will present a series of studies that aim to assess the impact of entertainment education programs in Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC.