

Debating Feminist Perspectives on Commemoration, Symbolic Reparation, and the Arts

29-30 June
King's College London
Room K4U.12

Organisers: Jelke Boesten & Siúan Póirtéir

If you are interested in attending this conference please write an expression of interest to
jelke.boesten@kcl.ac.uk and suanp@gmail.com

The *Debating feminist perspectives on commemoration, symbolic reparation, and the arts*, is held at Kings College London, Department of International Development. The conference is the first in a series of three international events organized under the banner of the AHRC/Global Challenges Network 'Debating, Performing & Curating Symbolic Reparations and Transformative Gender Justice in Post Conflict Societies'.

The field of memory and transitional justice is booming, but little attention is paid to how symbolic reparations might help unsettle harmful gender norms, promote gender sensitive human rights, and contribute to transformative gender justice. Much of the violence women suffer in conflict precedes conflict and persists afterwards. The post-conflict moment could then be a moment in which "transformative" justice might be enacted, a perspective and practice that explicitly aims for long-term social change. This is also the objective of "symbolic reparations". Reparations aim to repair past wrongs, as well as help build sustainable peace.

Apart from public recognition and state-sponsored memorials recognising the role of women and the harms done to them as a way to break with a male-centred narrative of conflict and victory, we also believe in the importance of bottom-up cultural products more broadly such as literature, theatre, visual arts, or interventions in the public space. A feminist perspective upon post-conflict commemoration, top-down and bottom-up, official as well as counter-narratives, is urgently needed.

With this in mind, speakers are asked to explore ways in which post-conflict symbolic reparations –recognition of harms done through, for example, memorials, museums, poetry, arts or media- can contribute to debating and unsettling harmful gender norms that may have contributed to specifically gendered harms in conflict. Presentations include reflections on existing memory projects from a gender perspective, analysis of gender and symbolic reparations, the absence of women in commemorative projects, counter narratives, visual or oral representations of gendered memory, the struggles for symbolic reparations, questions of representation and voice, and other relevant questions and perspectives.

Thursday 29 June

9.00 Introduction: Jelke Boesten

9.30-11.15 Commemorations

Chair: Helen Scanlon (University of Cape Town)

Robin Greeley and Michael Orwicz, University of Connecticut, Symbolic Reparations project:
'Symbolic Reparations, Gender, and Memorialization in Mexico: the Campo Algodonero Case'

Alex Stonehouse, University of Cape Town

'Where are the Women? Women's Representation at the Namibian Independence Memorial Museum'

Maria Emma Wills, Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, Bogotá
'Colombian women's memories on war & peace: Can we really learn from the past for a better future?'

11.30-12.45 Affects

Chair: Vikki Bell (Goldsmiths)

Natalia Iguiñiz, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú
'What's inside the houses? Short histories of distance and emptiness'
'*Que hay dentro de las casas? Pequeñas historias sobre la distancia y el vacío*'

Yvette Hutchison, University of Warwick
'Narratives, silences and embodied resistance: exploring the 'stickiness' of emotion in transitional justice'

12.45-13.30 Lunch

13.30-15.15 Consolations

Chair: Helen Scanlon

Courtney Cole, Regis College
'Countering official regimes of commemoration and reparations: Sierra Leonean and Liberian women's narratives of civil war, identity, and sexual violence'

Margarita Saona, University of Illinois at Chicago
'Touching Pain: The Haptic Experience of Mourning in the Work of Two Women Artists'

Alex Hibbett, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú
'Cultural Memory of Gendered Violence in Peru: The Case of *La sangre de la aurora* by Claudia Salazar Jiménez'

15.30-17.15

Representations

Chair: Jelke Boesten

Nayanika Mookherjee, Durham University
'Cinematic Reparations: Feminist Films on the public memory of wartime rape during the Bangladesh war of 1971'

Choman Hardi, American University in Sulaimani, Iraq
'The imagery of commemoration in Kurdistan- Iraq'

Margarita Palacios, Birkbeck College, University of London
'Aesthetic Interventions and Affective Counter-Archives: Rethinking the Politics of Representation'

17.15 Poetry Reading: Choman Hardi

19.00pm- Dinner party for panelists and chairs

Friday 30 June

10.00 -11.00 Steering committee meeting

11.00- 12.45 Making Noise

Chair: Vivienne Jabri (War Studies, King's College London)

Michelle LeBaron, University of British Columbia
'Women and 1916: Expanding the Stories'

Awino Okech, SOAS, University of London
'Feminist Theatre Praxis: Reflections on The Mothertongue Project'

Inés Ruiz Alvarado, University of Kent
'Social Documentary Film: New platforms for justice, symbolic reparations and victim empowerment. Forced sterilizations in Huancabamba Perú'

12.45-13.30 Lunch

13.30-15.15 Memorialisation as transformation?

Chair, 'Funmi Olonisakin (African Leadership Centre, KCL)

Nicola Palmer, Kings College London
'Collaborative Contact Zones in Rwanda'

Jackson Odong, National Memory and Peace Documentation Centre (NMPDC)
Refugee Law Project, School of Law, Makerere University
'Countering invisible narratives in transformative memory projects'

Helen Scanlon, University of Cape Town
'Memory Politics and Reinterpreting Narratives of the Past: Gender and Symbolic Reparations in Southern Africa'

15.30-16.30 Wrap up discussion + launch of website

Chair: Jelke Boesten & Helen Scanlon

17-18.30pm Public Event in the Great Hall, King's College London

Mshai Mwangola "But There Was Also Memory...Performing Massacre, Re-membering the Nation"

18.30-20.00pm Closing reception