



Mural in Comalapa, Guatemala

**USC Shoah
Foundation**

Center for Advanced Genocide Research

July/August 2016

The countdown to the Guatemala conference has officially begun! Organizing the first international conference dedicated to the genocide in Guatemala has kept the Center's staff busy over the summer as we prepare to host 26 presenters from around the world, eight chairs from four Los Angeles universities and more than 120 anticipated attendees. Combining scholarly panels, a documentary film screening and community events including a keynote speech by a Guatemalan survivor who founded an organization for widows and created a genocide memorial, as well as a concert by a young Guatemalan female hip hop artist, this series of events will hopefully raise awareness about the genocide in Guatemala.

The summer was also an exciting time at the Center as we welcomed our USC summer research fellows, from undergraduate students to senior faculty. You can read more below about some of their exciting research, from French studies to poetry.

This month we are also launching our first Calls for Applications for this year: one for the Center Research Fellowship, which enables an outstanding senior scholar to spend one semester in residence at the Center, and one for our Interdisciplinary Research Week, a unique opportunity worldwide for an interdisciplinary team of scholars from different universities and countries to spend one week together in order to work intensively to address a particular challenge within the field of genocide studies and develop an innovative research project. (Find the CFAs below)

Last but not least, the Center's staff also used the summer break to continue its outreach efforts and to introduce more genocide scholars to the Visual History Archive.

You can read more about all of these activities below.

Wolf Gruner

Director, USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research

Professor of History and Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish Studies



Photos courtesy of FAFG (La Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala)

Events

International Conference about Genocide and Resistance in Guatemala

Entitled "A Conflict? Genocide and Resistance in Guatemala," the first international conference about the Guatemalan genocide will run from Sept. 11-14 and feature 26 scholars from Guatemala, Mexico, Spain, Canada and the United States, who have conducted research on this topic in multiple disciplines ranging from International Relations, Anthropology, History to Latin American and Women Studies. They will discuss the history and impact of the systematic mass violence that during the early 1980s left 200,000 mostly Mayan Guatemalans dead and more than 1.5 million displaced without basic resources – a genocide hidden under the cover of a 36-year civil war that ended in 1996 with a peace accord.

The conference convenes researchers just as the USC Shoah Foundation adds testimonies from survivors of the Guatemalan genocide to its Visual History Archive, a repository of 53,000 testimonies from survivors of 20th century genocides, including the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide and the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. The Institute's local partner, the Guatemalan forensic anthropological organization La Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG), is currently working towards the goal of collecting 500 testimonies from survivors and witnesses of the Guatemalan genocide, some of them speaking in their native K'iche'. The preservation team at USC Shoah Foundation's Information Technology Services has received 150 video interviews so far. Ten of those have been already integrated in the archive, seven are fully indexed, which means the latter are already accessible for scholarly research and their Spanish content is fully searchable in English.

The conference also coincides with ongoing efforts to bring accused perpetrators to trial. In May, a court in Guatemala ruled that former military dictator Efraín Ríos Montt will be retried for his pivotal role in the genocide. In a historic decision, Ríos Montt was found guilty in 2013 for his participation in the genocide, but the conviction was quickly overturned on a technicality on the

heels of a massive "No Hubo Genocidio" ("There Was No Genocide") public relations campaign supported by powerful national economic interests. A retrial began in January of 2015 but was suspended within hours after the defense team accused a judge of bias. In June, another Guatemalan court ruled that eight former military officers will face trial for atrocities that occurred at CREOMPAZ, a former military base where the FAFG conducted excavations, discovering the bones of more than 400 people.

In addition to scholarly panels, the conference will include a special preview film screening of Ryan Suffern's documentary Finding Oscar about the quest for justice in Guatemala through the case of the Dos Erres massacre and the search for a child abducted by a perpetrator. (The film screening is presented in cooperation with Outside the Box [Office] series in the USC School of Cinematic Arts.) The conference will also feature an evening keynote address by a survivor and a panel on Guatemalan refugees, and an evening concert and conversation with Guatemalan feminist hip-hop artist Rebeca Lane (presented in conjunction with USC Visions and Voices).

For more information and to register for events, check the conference website:

<https://sf.usc.edu/cagr/conferences>

In Memoriam

Symposium to honor the memory of David Cesarani

The USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research is hosting a symposium to honor the work of leading Holocaust scholar David Cesarani from Great Britain, who died last year just weeks after being named by the USC Shoah Foundation the inaugural Sara and Asa Shapiro Scholar in Residence. The symposium will be held on September 25 at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica and will feature international scholars David Silberklang and Robert Rozett (both at Yad Vashem) and Todd Endelman (University of Michigan), who will discuss Cesarani's work, his impact on Holocaust studies, and the connections between their own work and his contributions to the field.



A prolific researcher and author, Cesarani's books include *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes*; *Arthur Koestler: The Homeless Mind*; *Justice Delayed: How Britain Became a Refuge for Nazi War Criminals*; *Major Farran's Hat: Murder, Scandal and Britain's War Against Jewish Terrorism 1945-1948*; *Disraeli: The Novel Politician (Jewish Lives)*; and *Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949*.

In addition to serving as a research professor at Royal Holloway, University of London, Cesarani was an active public intellectual and historical advisor on many film, TV and radio documentaries in the United Kingdom. He was also an early supporter of the USC Shoah Foundation.

Read more about the David Cesarani's work [here](#) and learn about the symposium held in his memory [here](#).

Research

Beatrice Mousli-Bennett, USC Faculty Summer Research Fellow

A literary historian, an associate professor of French and the director of the USC Francophone Research and Resource Center, Béatrice Mousli Bennett is the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research's 2016 Faculty Summer Research Fellow. This fellowship provides support for a USC faculty member to conduct research in the Visual History Archive while in residence at the Center for one month.

During her residency, Bennett explored testimonies discussing the act of writing under threat. She has been focusing on Holocaust literature and writing by survivors for over 20 years and she is particularly interested in researching the experience of Max Jacob. Jacob was a French writer and artist who was born Jewish but later converted to Catholicism. He was a contemporary of Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau, and Amedeo Modigliani and is considered an important link between symbolism and surrealism. As a fellow, Bennett was able to access testimonies about Jacob, thereby tremendously enriching her research.

[Read more about her research here.](#)



Lacey Schauwecker, USC Graduate Research Fellow

A Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at USC, Lacey Schauwecker received one of the Center Graduate Summer Research Fellowships. Her dissertation critiques existing human rights paradigms by exploring screaming in art and testimony in Central America. Her dissertation's first chapter focuses specifically on testimonies from the Guatemalan genocide and during her residency Schauwecker was able to watch a dozen testimonies from the Institute's new Guatemalan genocide collection in which she was able to identify mentions of screaming and other moments of non-narrative interruption.

[Read more about her research here.](#)



Piotr Florczyk, the Center's Inaugural Artist-in-residence Fellowship

Piotr Florczyk is the recipient of a special "Honorable Mention" abridged fellowship, a fellowship the Center created especially in order to support his artistic endeavors involving the Visual History Archive.



Florczyk is a Ph.D. Candidate in Creative Writing and Literature. He is a poet, a literary translator and a university instructor and his work has long been focused on history, World War II and the Holocaust, but he now wants to write poetry in an entirely new way – by using the words of survivors in the VHA to inspire him. During his two-week residency, Florczyk focused his research on testimonies of Polish Jews who talk about places in and around Krakow that Florczyk himself knows very well from his childhood and visiting his family who still lives there. He was very excited about this opportunity and is looking forward to translating this experience into his creative work.

[Read more about his research here.](#)

Outreach:

Center Director Visits Royal Holloway University



In July, Center Director Wolf Gruner visited Royal Holloway, University of London, in Egham for a lecture and a VHA workshop hosted by the European Summer Institute on the Holocaust and Jewish Civilization. This program is an intensive 10-day residential course designed to broaden and deepen the background of about 20 international scholars including PhD candidates, early career academics, and educators in Holocaust and genocide studies. There, Gruner gave a lecture on his current research topic - Jewish defiance and resistance during the Holocaust - followed by a special introductory workshop on the Visual History Archive for the Summer Institute scholars. This Summer Institute provided the perfect opportunity to reach out to promising young Holocaust scholars and, while some knew of the VHA, Gruner's workshop enabled all participants to become more familiar with the research

and teaching potential of the archive.

[Read more about his visit here.](#)

Spotlight on USC Resources

Part Three: The Original Transcripts of the Nuremberg War Crime Trials

As part of our series on unique USC genocide studies resources, we would like to bring attention to the original transcripts of the

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 1, 2016:

[Film Screening: "The Other Side of Home" in collaboration with the USC Institute of Armenian Studies and the USC School of Cinematic Arts.](#)

September 11-14 2016:

Nuremberg War trials. Only a dozen original copies exist worldwide and USC acquired this 300-box collection in 2009/2010.

What is commonly referred to as the Nuremberg Trials is actually two different sets of trials. First were the trials of 22 “Major” Nazi war criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in 1945 and 1946 for charges of crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, and conspiracy to commit such crimes. The second set was a subsequent series of 12 trials conducted by US military tribunals of groups of high-ranking German officials of the killings squads, the German foreign office, German businesses and other German institutions, between 1946 and 1949. The USC Nuremberg Trials collection contains transcripts of these proceedings in English and documents in German from both the “major” war crimes trials and the subsequent military tribunals.

Combined with the VHA testimonies of War Crime Trials participants held by the USC Shoah Foundation, this collection makes USC a unique place to study not only the trial proceedings themselves but also the actual experiences of those involved.

[Read more about this acquisition here.](#)

[A Conflict? Genocide and Resistance in Guatemala. An International Conference at USC](#)

September 22, 2016:

[Paula Cuellar Cuellar’s lecture: “A Tale of Two Genocides: Scorched Earth Operations as Genocidal Practices in El Salvador and Guatemala.”](#)

September 25, 2016

[Symposium to honor the memory of the inaugural Sara and Asa Shapiro Annual Holocaust Testimony Scholar David Cesarani.](#)

September 27, 2016

[Stefanie Coché’s, “How Madness Works: Labor in the Process of Psychiatric Commitment in Germany \(1941-1963\).” Co-sponsored by the Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies.](#)

October 10, 2016

[Anna Holian’s lecture: “Afterimages of the Holocaust: The Theme of Jewish Children in Fred Zinnemann’s ‘The Search’ \(1948\).” Co-sponsored by the Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies.](#)

October 11, 2016

[Benjamin Madley’s lecture: “An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846-1873”](#)

November 7, 2016

“Reconceptualizing Nazi Camps: Changing Categories, Shifting Purposes, and Evolving Contexts.” A panel including Martin Dean (USHMM), Verena Buser (Alice Salomon University Berlin), Andrea Rudorff (Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Munich) and doctoral candidate Sari Siegel (USC) on new research regarding forced labor camps during the Holocaust.

Opportunities

Call for Applications

Center Research Fellowship 2017-2018: due November 15

The Center Research Fellowship is awarded to an outstanding senior scholar from any discipline who will advance genocide research through the use of the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive and other USC resources. The incumbent will spend four months in residence at the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research during the 2017-2018 academic year.

For more details, [click here](#)

Interdisciplinary Research Week 2017: due November 15

Each year, the Center hosts an interdisciplinary team of scholars from different universities and countries for one week so that they can meet in person and work together intensively for a week to address a particular challenge within the field of genocide studies and start creating, or keep advancing, a cooperative research project. This unique opportunity, the week spent as a group together at the Center, allows researchers to prepare the groundwork for future cooperative research grant applications. The Center for Advanced Genocide Research will cover travel costs and accommodation for a team of five or six scholars for up to seven days and will provide them with expert staff assistance for their research as well as a dedicated workspace at the USC Shoah Foundation during the stay.

For more details, [click here](#)

Donate to Special Collections

Please consider donating private papers, documents, photographs or films regarding the Holocaust and other genocides.

The Center for Advanced Genocide Research works with USC Libraries Special Collections to preserve private collections and make them accessible for academic research and student investigation.

While the USC Shoah Foundation has tremendous expertise in preserving and making audiovisual materials accessible, the USC Libraries provides that same level of expertise for rare artifacts, papers, photographs and the digitization of those materials. USC Libraries — which includes the largest Holocaust and Genocide Studies collection in the United States, the Special Collections at USC Doheny Library, and the internationally renowned Feuchtwanger Memorial Library — provide an excellent environment to manage archival and book collections relating to the Holocaust and other genocides thus ensuring the preservation, processing, and long-term care of these unique and important collections. Donated materials will be processed by experienced archivists and maintained in USC Libraries' Special Collections, alongside other rare and unique materials. USC Libraries' online finding aids, catalog, and the USC Digital Library will ensure that donated materials are accessible to all USC students, staff, and faculty, as well as to researchers worldwide.

Although as a donor your first contact will likely be with the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research, you will be working with USC Libraries staff to finalize donation paperwork and transferring the physical materials to USC. USC Libraries staff will walk you through the gift process and will be available for any questions you may have.

To find out more about donating materials, email us as cagr@usc.edu or call 213-740-6001.

For more information about the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research and its work, please visit our website at: cagr.usc.edu

To subscribe to the Center's mailing list, [click here](#).

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