

## **Present Past: Time, Memory, and the Negotiation of Historical Justice**

December 7-9, 2017

Columbia University, New York City

In considering the politics and policies of commemorating the past, this conference probes how public discourses about memory change over time. Papers that explore how the past is known, interpreted, conceptualized, or articulated, and how such representations evolve with the passage of time, are welcome. How has the passage of time changed the way memories of historical violence, atrocity and genocide are represented in the public sphere? In what ways do political, social and cultural forces influence, appropriate, or stifle these memories in different ways as the original event recedes into the more distant past? Related topics include the globalization of memory, and with it the increasing popularity of commemorative memorial practices. The proliferation of museums and memorials, the increase in confessional or memorial literature, and the surge of memory laws against Holocaust and genocide denial are some examples of the historical, cultural and legal phenomena that speak to questions of how individuals and communities remember. These modes of ‘making the past present’ speak not only to the passage of time and the forces of multidirectional memory, but also to the ways in which communities understand issues of justice and accountability, memory and amnesia, prevention and the culture of ‘never again’. This conference thus seeks papers that explore the ways in which communities negotiate narrativization of the past over time, and what the implications of such changes in public discourses of memory suggest in terms of present and future political realities, conflict transformation and atrocity prevention, and the role that history itself has in shaping or re-shaping the ways in which individuals and groups relate to the past and future.

The Historical Dialogues, Justice, and Memory Network ([www.historicaldialogues.org](http://www.historicaldialogues.org)) is coordinated by an international Steering Committee and the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability (AHDA), at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR), Columbia University.

Instructions for submitting abstracts for panels, roundtables and individual presenters are below. **The deadline for submitting abstracts is May 15, 2017.** Please note that we have a specific call for a panel on Genocide Prevention for which travel grants may be available.

### **Panel Submissions**

Panels consist of a chair and three 20-minute papers or four 15-minute papers. The chair is expected to start the panel in a timely manner, to introduce each panelist (no more than 1 minute), to ensure that speakers keep to their allotted time, and to moderate the Q and A. More information about submitting an abstract can be found below.

### **Roundtables**

Roundtable sessions consist of 4-5 discussants and a moderator, who participates more fully in the session than a panel chair would in a traditional panel. Participants in roundtables do not

present or read formal papers, but rather engage in a discussion or exchange about a specific question, text, or issue. The focus of discussion must be clearly articulated in the abstract, and participants are expected to prepare their remarks in advance, even if the nature of a roundtable is less formal than a traditional panel.

**Conference participants may deliver one paper and participate in one roundtable; they may not participate in more than one formal panel presentation. More information about submitting abstracts can be found below.**

### **Using History in Genocide Prevention Panel**

History and the examination of root causes of conflict are a critical long term line of defense against genocide and other identity based crimes or atrocities. While the work of genocide prevention experts focuses on important issues such as economic, political or security incentives, historical aspects of the conflict at hand—the identity of the stakeholders, their animosity towards each other, and other root causes of conflict—are viewed as something that should be set aside, even forgotten, but not engaged. This panel welcomes submissions from both practitioners and scholars that explore ways in which history has been or can be engaged as a form of genocide prevention. Topics can include, but are not limited to, education curricula, museums or media, journalistic and scholarly writings, commemorations and memorials, and other contexts that provide space for discussion and engagement regarding how issues of identity and history can be used in a prevention framework. **More information about submitting an abstract can be found below.**

### **Submission guidelines:**

To submit a proposal for a panel, please prepare a 350-word abstract that includes the title of the panel and the panel's scholarly rationale. The abstract should list the names and e-mail addresses for all participants (chair and panelists), a brief bio (2-4 sentences) of each individual, and a title and 100-word abstract of each paper included in the session.

To submit a proposal for a roundtable, please prepare a 350-word abstract that includes the title of the roundtable and the theme, question or challenge that the roundtable seeks to discuss. The abstract should also list all participants (discussants and moderator), their e-mail addresses and a brief bio (2-4 sentences) of each individual.

To submit a paper proposal, please submit a 350-word abstract that includes the title of your paper, a description of the topic you intend to discuss, your e-mail address and a brief bio (2-4 sentences). If you are interested in participating in the Genocide Prevention panel, please indicate this in your submission. Please note that travel grants may be available for participants in the Genocide Prevention session (and only for this session).

**The deadline for submitting abstracts is May 15. Please e-mail your submission as a single document to [ahda.conference.2017@gmail.com](mailto:ahda.conference.2017@gmail.com).**

Acceptances will be announced (and e-mails sent) in August 2017. Please note that all rooms are equipped with basic A/V equipment (projector, screen and speakers) for presentation needs. Please have any digital presentation you have prepared saved to a flash drive and to your laptop

for easy access. Please also note that no presentations can be made in absentia or by Skype; all presenters must be present and must be able to present in English. **Please e-mail further questions to [ahda.conference@gmail.com](mailto:ahda.conference@gmail.com).**