

IV Encuentro Interdisciplinario sobre Estudios de Memoria

Veranstalter: Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica (IHNCA)

Datum, Ort: 11.11.2014–13.11.2014, Managua

Bericht von: Laurin Blecha, Wien

„Because the colour of the blood will never be forgotten.“ With these words JOSÉ IDIÁQUEZ, S.J. (Managua), rector of the Universidad Centroamericana finished his welcome speech. Speaking about his own experiences as a Jesuit priest in the 1980s he pointed out how the traumas, caused by the various dictatorships and authoritarian regimes in Latin America, are still present today.¹ As the meeting in Managua demonstrated the multilevel processes of facing the past, the recovery of memories and the construction of the present continue.² Organized by the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica (IHNCA), the conference gathered researchers from Latin America, the United States and from Europe. The main objective was to „amplify and strengthen networks“ between the continents and the different disciplines, as MARGARITA VANNINI (Managua) director of the institute emphasized in her opening statement.³ She also stressed that the results of the meeting would serve as theoretical, methodological and empirical background for the upcoming Master program „*Maestría en Estudios Culturales con énfasis Memoria, Cultura y Ciudadanía*“ at the IHNCA.⁴

The first panel focused, on strategies of exclusion of certain groups and/or individuals based on gender, religion or ethnicity in „official“ memory politics. In his talk HUGO VEZZETTI (Buenos Aires) spoke about the relationships between concepts of citizenship and human rights and emphasized that such interactions not only represented „progress“ and „equality,“ but also represent „a history of inequality,“ as Vezzetti said. The anthropologist LUDMILLA DA SILVA CATELA (Córdoba) dealt with exclusion strategies, namely the memory and the politics of history of indigenous populations in Argentina. ILEANA RODRÍGUEZ (Managua/Ohio) investigated transforming popular cultures in Nicaragua

in the 1990s by analyzing Félix Zurita's movie *Nica Libre* (1997). She demonstrated the Americanization of the Nicaraguan society since the 1990s and showed changing popular cultures, especially in the case of the poor working classes.

The idea behind the second panel was, as MICHAEL LAZZARA (Davis) explained, to disentangle symptoms and effects of memories that interact with victims, militancy and traumas. Lazzara examined the literary work of Mariana Callejas, a Chilean ex-agent of the Pinochet regime and wife of the assassin Michael Townley. He showed the complicity of the narratives in these so-called „confessional texts“, where the ethical ideal is lost, and absolution is requested. In his second talk at the conference Hugo Vezzetti spoke about different „figures of witness“ in the case of memories about the violence caused by the Argentinian guerrilla organizations. In recent years testimonies, books and movies started to address these stories and Vezzetti discovered there a double interest: an apology, but also a demand that now other social actors (e.g. the military, guerrilla organizations) tell their stories. Finally PILAR CALVEIRO (Puebla) talked about different forms of the construction of social memories. She focused on those that constitute a „living memory“, which tries to illuminate the present by using experiences of the past.

The common link of the third panel was to identify different figures of memory in the aesthetics of Latin-American movies. CHRISTIAN WEHR (Würzburg) focused on cinema in the post-national state. Wehr analyzed the movies *Gato negro* (2014) by Gastón Gallo, *El secreto de sus ojos* (2009) by Juan

¹ The phrase (Spanish original: „*Porque el color de la sangre jamás se olvide*“) was also used during the protests against the assassination of more than forty students in the State of Guerrero in Mexico at the end of September 2014.

² The first *Encuentro* was held in 2010 at the Universidad Católica de Chile, the second in 2011 at the Universität Leipzig and the third in 2013 at the University of California, Davis.

³ For the official website of the conference, see: <<http://www.ihnca.edu.ni/4encuentro>> (12.3.2015).

⁴ For further information about the Master's program, see: <<http://www.uca.edu.ni/index.php/612-maestria-en-estudios-culturales-con-efasis-en-memoria-cultura-y-ciudadania>> (12.3.2015).

José Campanella and *Nueve reinas* (2000) by Fabián Bielinsky. WOLFGANG BONGERS (Santiago de Chile) analyzed rhetorical figures of demystification and disorientation in the movie *Un tigre de papel* (2007) by the Colombian filmmaker Luis Ospina. Both, Wehr and Bongers, outlined the formation of new memory-communities and focused on individual (subjective) narratives.

The fourth panel focused on cinema, for example in VALERIA GRINBERG PLA's (Bowling Green) paper, about the involvement of documentaries on the current debate about the importance and legacy of the Sandinist Revolution. The panel also dealt with literature, such as DANIEL NOEMI VOIONMAA's (Boston) talk about the link between intellectual writers (like Gabriel García Márquez) and the state. BRIGITTE ADRIAENSEN (Nijmegen) examined the representation of violence in the novel *2666* (2004) by Roberto Bolaño. She looked at the role of laughter and irony, as discursive strategies, in order to disentangle links between violence and memory.

The fifth panel „Memory, literature and the future in Latin America“ tried to answer the question of how the generation after the dictatorships in Argentina, Chile and the violence in Mexico dealt with the traumatic past and the realities of the post-dictatorial states. The panel put additionally a strong emphasis on women and their experiences of violence during this period. ALICIA SALOMONE (Santiago de Chile) talked about poetry of women in South America, who were children of militants and guerrillas in the 1970s and 1980s. UTE SEYDEL (México D.F.) examined how cultural memory is constructed on the basis of authoritarian experiences, by analyzing the documentary *La guerrilla y la esperanza: Lucio Cabañas* (2005) by Marina Stavenhagen. Finally CLAUDIA GATZEMEIER (Leipzig) showed that there is a preference for specific literary devices and a trend towards „meta-textual reflection“ in recent Latin-American novels.

The framework of the sixth panel was „Youth“ and allowed young researchers to present their findings. It was the first of the two panels that concentrated on Central America. LAURIN BLECHA (Vienna) talked about the politics of history in Nicaragua

from the Revolution in 1979 to the end of the Chamorro-government in 1996. He stressed the theoretical and methodological interdisciplinarity of memory studies. DULCINEA FLORES (San Salvador) based her presentation on the question, how young people in El Salvador remember the violent conflicts in the 1980s. EMILY DAVIDSON (Tacoma) analyzed the documentaries *Curundú* (2007) by Ana Endara Mislov and *One Dollar, el precio de la vida* (2001) by Hector Herrera, both set in Panama City. She showed how the (hegemonic) patriotic narrative of Panama, created and framed by the national symbol of the Panama Canal, is contested in these documentaries. On a discursive level this „reflects ongoing racial and social exclusions in Panama,“ as Davidson said.

The seventh panel was also dedicated to Central America. DAVID DÍAZ ARIAS (San José) analyzed the role of Costa Rican intellectuals and academics in the construction of memory and public opinions considering the international policies of Costa Rica in the 1980s. PABLO HERNÁNDEZ (San José) spoke about visual culture, especially photography portraying the conflicts in Central America in the 1980s. And, WERNER MACKENBACH (San José) analyzed the literary work of the Guatemalteco Franz Galich, especially his book *Huracan. Corazón del cielo* (1995). Mackenbach concluded that the work of Galich represents two tendencies, which can also be seen as major patterns in the memory-studies. First, allowing an ethical approach to victims from an „esthetic distance,“ as Mackenbach said, and, second, supporting the necessary connection between memory and the present.

Panel eighth started with TANIA LIZARAZO (Davis) who talked about the construction of *Afrocolonianity*. Lizarazo highlighted recent initiatives and research projects which try to visualize historically marginalized sectors (Afro-American people) of society, by including oral history or forms visual sources. ARELIS RIVERO CABRERA (Davis) talked about the representation of the Cuban Revolution in the works of Patricio and Camilla Guzman, who were father and daughter. In a comparative approach Rivero Cabrera examined the documentaries *La*

Batalla de Chile (1975), *La Memoria Obstinate* (1997) and *Salvador Allende* (2004) by Patricio and *El telón de azúcar* (2005) by Camilla Guzmán, showing how different generations reformulated the Cuban Revolution and highlighting their various concepts of social utopias.

The ninth panel was opened by DIETER INGENSCHAY (Berlin) who talked about the representation of homosexuals in Spanish, Argentinian and Chilean literature. Ingenschay portrayed not only methods of exclusion concerning homosexuals used by the three states, but also how activism developed and how their memories in the post-dictatory states unfolded in literature. ANTONIO MONTE (Managua) analyzed the movie *Nica Libre*, which had already been addressed by Ileana Rodríguez in the first panel. Monte focused on images of business people showing that on a meta-level they used a certain discursive narrative, to „teach“ the lower classes of Nicaragua their way of life (e.g. competition, risk). In her second talk at the conference Ileana Rodríguez spoke about the testimonials of intellectuals inside and outside of Nicaragua and their memories on the Sandinist Revolution of 1979, stressing the utopias and failures of the Revolution.

The last panel dealt with different commemoration practices in Latin America. ALFONSO DÍAZ TOVAR (México D.F.) showed how the „Dirty War“ of the 1960s and 1970s is presented in the Mexican public. LILIAN PAOLA OVALLE (Mexicali) talked about consequences of „narcoviolencia“ on the Mexican society and the ways in which the violence of the drug-traffic is dealt with. Finally MARTA CABRERA (Bogotá) spoke about a local initiative in Bogotá, carried out by the „Vividero Colectivo“, which uses cultural commemoration practices like performance, poetry and music.

The conference closed with a general evaluation by the organizing committee. Bongers, Cabrera, Grinberg, Lazzara, Rodríguez and Vannini stressed the interdisciplinarity of the conference and its participating researchers. In addition the used and presented material (audio-visual, text or artistic performances) showed the multiple approaches and concepts as effective sources for memory stud-

ies. The participants also expressed an idea for the next conference, which should include a broader audience and, in the words of Ileana Rodríguez, „the researchers have to step out of their comfortable terrain and physically go to the so called places of memory.“

Conference Overview:

Opening

José Idiáquez, S.J./Margarita Vannini (Managua), „Palabras de bienvenida“

PANEL 1: „Genealogías de la memoria, la cultura y la ciudadanía“

Hugo Vezzetti (Buenos Aires), Ciudadanía, violencia y derechos humanos: una historia política.

Ludmilla da Silva Catela (Córdoba), Génesis de la memoria en Argentina: de las prácticas micro-individuales a los procesos de estatuización.

Ileana Rodríguez (Managua/Ohio), Genealogías de la cultura.

PANEL 2: „El espacio biográfico: abusos y usos de la memoria en la actualidad“

Michael Lazzara (Davis), Obediencia civil: las aventuras ideológicas de Mariana Callejas.

Hugo Vezzetti (Buenos Aires), Nuevas memorias del pasado reciente en la Argentina. La violencia revolucionaria en primera persona: del crimen y las víctimas a las escenas de la „reconciliación“.

Pilar Calveiro (Puebla), La memoria y el testimonio como asuntos del presente.

PANEL 3: „Figuras de la memoria (elipsis, ironía, alegoría) en el cine y la literatura latinoamericanos (I)“

Christian Wehr (Würzburg), Escenarios postnacionales en el cine argentino actual.

Wolfgang Bongers (Santiago de Chile), Un tigre de papel de Luis Ospina: figuras del desencanto y del desacato en el cine latinoamericano contemporáneo.

PANEL 4: „Figuras de la memoria (elipsis, ironía, alegoría) en el cine y la literatura latinoamericanos“ (II)

Daniel Noemi Voionmaa (Boston), Si cobrara

cuatro millones, me comería uno y haría una revolución: nostalgia y memoria de la Guerra Fría (el poder y García Márquez).

Brigitte Adriaensen (Nijmegen), Memoria, ironía y comunidad: 2666 de Bolaño.

Valeria Grinberg Pla (Bowling Green), De sueños y nostalgias: figuras de la memoria en el cine reciente sobre la revolución sandinista.

PANEL 5: „Memoria, literatura y futuro en América Latina“

Alicia Salomone (Santiago de Chile), Poesía e imaginación poética. Reflexiones a propósito de la poesía contemporánea de mujeres del Cono Sur.

Ute Seydel (México D.F.), La creación de la memoria cultural en torno a la experiencia autoritaria.

Claudia Gatzemeier (Leipzig), La representación de la memoria en textos de la „generación de los hijos de la dictadura“.

PANEL 6: „Memoria y juventud en Centroamérica“

Laurin Blecha (Vienna), Políticas de la historia en Nicaragua desde 1979 hasta 1996.

Dulcinea Flores (San Salvador), Recuerdos no vividos: Jóvenes y sus memorias de guerra.

Emily Davidson (Tacoma), La violencia es „pretty“: retratando „la realidad“ en los gueto-documentales panameños.

PANEL 7: „Memoria y convivencia en Centroamérica“

David Díaz Arias (San José), Memorias de guerra y paz: la confrontación del pasado en la celebración del plan de paz Esquipulas 2, 1987-2012.

Pablo Hernández Hernández (San José), Comunidad y memoria visual fotográfica: el caso de las guerrillas.

Werner Mackenbach (San José), Reflexiones sobre el estatus epistemológico de las „narrativas de la memoria“. El caso de Centroamérica como paradigma.

PANEL 8: „Museos, utopías y archivos visuales: memorias desde los espacios de con-

flicto y solidaridad“

Tania Lizarazo (Davis), Memorias y archivos visuales de la Afrocolombianidad.

Arelis Rivero Cabrera (Davis), Re(generaciones) de una utopía: Cuba en las memorias de Chile.

PANEL 9: „Memorias ciudadanas“

Dieter Ingenschay (Berlin), Escrituras autobiográficas y su papel en el archivo gay postdictatorial.

Antonio Monte (Managua), Ciudadanías empresariales, masculinidades abyectas.

Ileana Rodríguez (Managua/Ohio), Ciudadanías ejemplarizantes, huella, vestigio y rostro.

PANEL 10: „Huellas corporales y espaciales de la memoria. Ejercicios de ciudadanía y construcción de lo público“

Alfonso Díaz Tovar (México D.F.), Lugares de memoria y prácticas conmemorativas de la guerra sucia en México.

Lilian Paola Ovalle (Mexicali), Prácticas corporales y construcción de comunidades de Esperanza. Memoria de la „narcoviolenia“ en México.

Marta Cabrera (Bogotá), Marcas en la memoria: cartografía sensorial de una zona de alto impacto.

Tagungsbericht IV *Encuentro Interdisciplinario sobre Estudios de Memoria*. 11.11.2014–13.11.2014, Managua, in: H-Soz-Kult 23.03.2015.