



IKON SEMINAR SERIES 13/2011

INSTITUTE OF OCCIDENTAL STUDIES
in cooperation with the
INSTITUTE OF ETHNIC STUDIES

Seminar on Oral History, Living Memory and Social Integration

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22 December 2011
Sudut Wacana ATMA
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

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Abstract

The goal of this seminar is to introduce oral history work. It will explore existing personal local memories as manifested in oral history work already conducted in other parts of the world and then localize these results for a Malaysian environment. While official memories shape much of what people believe, individual ones carry a personalized weight oftentimes adding significant details to the former. The seminar will examine existing oral history work, deconstruct it and then, together with the participants, work on ways to undertake such work in Malaysia. The seminar will provide a theoretical background to such projects and then will analyse how they differ depending on demographics, viewpoints and cultural circumstances. It will also address issues of multiethnic communities and how such projects are able to strengthen citizenship values and tolerance. In this regard, Holger Briel is an expert. He teaches at the University of Nicosia and has been instrumental in drafting European Union documents on the role of oral history projects in sensitive political areas. Recently, he has also been running such a project in Cyprus and, with other European colleagues, in several other European countries. In the Cyprus project, it became clear that it was especially the similarities in experiences told that held hope for the future and that it was the social cohesions prior generations possessed that allowed them to coexist peacefully. And while oral histories have been told and archived before, digital storytelling has only become available over the last few years through technology's progress and this will newly define the narrative and its region culturally and socio-politically. Enlisting ways to make such projects sustainable and to create archives will round out the seminar.

Short bio-history



Holger Briel received his Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst with a dissertation on the aesthetic theories of Adorno and Derrida. His most recent book publication is *Glocalisation: Electronic Media in South Eastern Europe* (2009). Earlier books included *German Culture and Society: A Glossary* (2002) and *Adorno and Derrida, or where lie the ends of modernity?* (1993). Other publications of his center on European Arts and Literature, (Trans-)Cultural Studies, New Media, Manga and Anime. Over the last few years Holger Briel has been focusing on an EU funded oral history project setting up and conducting oral history projects in Cyprus and its neighboring countries. His research interests include international Human Resource Management, Inter-cultural Studies, Broadcast Media in the Digital Age, Visual Media and the Sociology of the Digital World. Presently, he teaches Media and Communication Studies at the University of Nicosia, Cyprus and the Indian Institute of Learning and Management, New Delhi.

Seminar Schedule

Seminar on Oral History, Living Memory and Social Integration

Thursday 22 December 2011 from 9 am to 4.30 pm (Seminar)

Friday 23 December 2011 from 9 – 12.30 pm (Workshop)

9:00-9:45	What is Oral History? Its theoretical underpinnings. Why is it a useful tool? How has it been used? The beginnings of oral history research and its projects.
9:45-10:30	How oral history and digital storytelling interfaces affect intellectual, social and identity development Exploring existing personal local memories as manifested in oral history work already conducted in other parts of the world
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 – 12.00	Getting started I What is required to run such projects? Who is running them and who are the target audience? This session will briefly introduce issues concerning the processes and benefits and risks of oral history. Then it will explain the specific contents of the training and methodological approaches generally applied -- Sharing/allocation of tasks, getting organized.
12.00-13.00	Getting started II What is essential for building a simple story visually -- Basic techniques. Participants will learn the basic shots, framing, angles, movements, video interviewing techniques, video/audio continuity and other important elements needed for building a simple visual story.
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-15:30	Case Study: Cyprus An example of how an Oral History Project was run will be discussed, including the analysis of footage.
15.30-15.45	Coffee Break
15.45-16.30	Localizing Oral History Projects in Malaysia. What are specificities (cultural, geographical, technical, etc.) which need to be analysed and observed in order to run a successful local project?