TIME, HISTORY, AND MEMORY

Eviatar Zerubavel

January 23   TOWARD A SOCIOLOGY OF THE PAST

History and memory; social memory; the sociomental topography of the past; a formal-structural approach to social memory


January 30   THE SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF MEMORY

Shared memories; collective memory; mnemonic communities; mnemonic synchronization; mnemonic traditions; norms of remembrance; mnemonic socialization; impersonal sites of memory; the politics of memory: official memory and counter-memories, mnemonic battles

February 6  PLOTLINES AND NARRATIVES I

History as a narrative: historical plotlines; progress: development, improvement, evolutionism; decline: Golden Ages, regression, degeneration; zigzag narratives: transitions, turning points


E. Zerubavel, Time Maps, pp. 11-20.


February 13  PLOTLINES AND NARRATIVES II

Unilinear and multilinear plotlines: teleology, determinism; linearity and circularity: recurrence, historical “rhyming,” mnemonic typification


Bowler, Theories of Human Evolution, pp. 41-42, 213-23.


February 20  THE SOCIAL MARKING OF THE PAST

Physico-mathematical and sociocultural time; marked and unmarked time; metrical and topological approaches to chronology; mnemonic density; norms of historical attention; social “eventfulness”; sacred periods and “empty lulls”; social time and chronology; commemograms


E. Zerubavel, The Seven-Day Circle, pp. 107-08, 113-20, 133-38.

Y. Zerubavel, Recovered Roots, pp. 6-10.


E. Zerubavel, Time Maps, pp. 25-34.


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February 27 ANCESTRY AND DESCENT

Predecessors; symbolic immortality; succession; lineage; bloodlines; symbolic ancestry and descent; genealogical identity; genealogical fantasies; historical contact chains; dynasties; genealogical depth; pedigree


March 5 KINSHIP

Multilinear narratives of descent; common ancestry and co-descent; relatives; genealogical distance; cladistics; family trees; evolution, speciation, and phylogeny; genealogical communities: families,
clans, ethnicity, nationalism

Bowler, *Life’s Splendid Drama*, pp. 45-52.

March 19  THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENEALOGICAL RELATEDNESS

Consanguinity; genetic essentialism; genetic ancestry testing; “roots”; “race”; rules of genealogical lineation; unilineal descent systems: matrilineality, patrilineality, genealogical denial, genealogical amnesia; the one-drop rule; rules of genealogical delineation


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**March 26**  
**THE POLITICS OF DESCENT**

Genealogical continuity; origin myths; monogenism and polygenism; taxonomic inflation and deflation; genealogical purity; genealogical tactics; genealogical engineering: integration and segregation, endogamy and exogamy, multiculturalism vs. the “melting pot”


- Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, pp. 54-58.


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**April 2**  
**THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL CONTINUITY I**

Continuity and discontinuity; gradualism and catastrophism; traditionalism and conservatism; nostalgia; mnemonic “bridging” and “pasting”; ruins, pilgrimage, preservationism, archaeology; relics and memorabilia, antiques, commemorative monuments, museums; imitation, replication, restoration and revivals, repetition, ritual reenactment; invented traditions

Shils, *Tradition*, pp. 43-54, 63-73, 163-68.

April 9  
**THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL CONTINUITY II**

Symbolic simultaneity: holidays and other anniversaries; historical analogies: models, parallels, and "lessons"; discursive continuity; biographical continuity


April 16  
**THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL DISCONTINUITY I**

The sociomental partitioning of the past: history as a classification system, the social construction of historical “periods”, historical assimilation and differentiation, mnemonic inflation and compression, the politics of periodization; the social punctuation of the past: staccato narratives, historical “watersheds”; identity transformation, rites of passage, social death and rebirth


April 23  \hspace{.5cm} \textbf{THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORICAL DISCONTINUITY II}

History and pre-history: points of historical departure, collective amnesia; the social construction of beginnings and endings; origins and symbolic birth; antiquity and legitimacy; priority and out-pasting; natives, aborigines, and indigenous people


April 30  \hspace{.5cm} \textbf{CONCLUSION}

**Mini-Paper I** – due on February 27

**Mini-Paper II** – due on April 2

**Mini-Paper III** – due on May 7