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# Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability

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2019 Program Report



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# Foreword

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I write this note at the height of COVID-19 pandemic from the epicenter in New York City. This will shape the immediate and the medium future in ways that we cannot imagine yet. The most frequent planning that is going on is to plan the return to “normal,” late this year, next year, or any other schedule. Possibly. The question is what would the new normal look like. The Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability (AHDA) program that is presented here is the last program to take place under the old normal.

Even before COVID-19 human rights faced assaults in many countries through the executive branch imposing limits on civil society. Yet human rights are also embraced by new local civil society organizations as informing the ethical and political frame for their policies. In a world where Freedom House titled its main report on democracy as “Unpacking 13 Years of Decline”, there have been several unexpected improvements. Especially surprising are countries that moved from dictatorships to partially free, like Zimbabwe or Sudan. In this “old order”, historical dialogue and redress for past structural violence have expanded, not least in the US where domestic rights advocates, locally and nationally, explicated their demands as human rights. An important conversation is unfolding around the demand for reparations for Black and Brown communities who have suffered historical discrimination that has made them disproportionately victims of COVID-19. Whether this is the flavor of the month, or a real movement, we will see in the coming months. But there is little doubt that historical dialogue has become increasingly present in politics, policy, and diplomacy.

This year’s fellows have come from Argentina, Belgium/Bosnia & Herzegovina, Chile, Japan, Lebanon, Serbia, South, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Uganda, and the US. This diverse background together with close collegiality has enabled the fellows to benefit from close interaction and rich comparative perspectives. The report below lays out the numerous occasions and ways in which the fellowship expanded their experiences with historical dialogue.

**Elazar Barkan**  
**Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights**  
**Professor of International and Public Affairs**

# Introduction

**T**he Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability (AHDA) is an innovative interdisciplinary approach that brings together participants—students, civil society representatives, journalists, educators, artists, policymakers and scholars—who work on the issues of historical dialogue in conflict, post-conflict, post-dictatorial and democratic societies. The work of these individuals focuses on political ramifications of the historical legacy of conflicts and the role and impact of the memory of past violence on contemporary politics, society, and culture. The AHDA program has grown over the years and continues to attract significant interest in recognition that addressing violent past and conflicting narratives about the past is integral to the work of reconciliation and democracy promotion.

The uniqueness of the AHDA program comes from various components that weave together a wide spectrum of research and practice. First, AHDA's signature fellowship program continues to welcome to Columbia University an international group of practitioners and scholars working in fragile environments and with vulnerable populations. It uses available resources at the university (classes, workshops, film screenings and speaker series) to strengthen leadership of participants. Fellows reinforce their field-related projects through capacity-building opportunities and networking in New York and Washington, D.C. The projects and collaborations that fellows initiate at the university continue long after the program ends. For example, this year the university's Oral History department has interviewed some fellows from the program. Their experiences will enrich Columbia University's archives. Second, AHDA connects students, scholars and practitioners into a knowledge network. The Historical Dialogues, Justice and Memory network continues to increase in membership. Third, together with the network, AHDA organizes flagship conferences that permit individual researchers and practitioners to exchange ideas, practice and research with others in the field. Fourth, AHDA is at the forefront of advancing research using contemporary means. The digital initiative—Mapping Historical Dialogue Project—serves as a collective resource for best practices and contributes to understanding the impact of historical dialogue initiatives in the field of conflict transformation. Fifth, AHDA alumni are playing a pivotal role in the program's activities. In the future, AHDA will continue focusing on developing geographically specific regional networks and expanding the Regional Network for Historical Dialogue and Dealing with the Past.



AHDA fellows audit courses and connect with the university faculty.

The work of the AHDA program represents a diversity of initiatives in the field of historical dialogue. It takes place in various disciplines such as journalism, education, history, oral history, new media and many others. All AHDA activities contribute to the goal of expanding public discussion about the past, understanding the instrumental use of history and providing a framework for communities to reflect, share, and debate their past in the quest for a more democratic future.

By continuously being engaged in our activities, AHDA fellows, alumni, networks and contributors reiterate that this work is an integral part of reconciliation and democracy promotion. We are grateful for past and future support!

**Sandra Paunksniene**  
Assistant Director AHDA, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University

# Digital Presence

## Historical Dialogues, Justice, and Memory Network

The Historical Dialogues, Justice, and Memory Network ([historicaldialogues.org](http://historicaldialogues.org)) encourages interdisciplinary research and advocacy on issues relating to the memorialization and historicization of conflicts, historical and transitional justice, promotion of sustainable peace, participatory democracy, and conflict transformation. The goal of the network is to connect practitioners, scholars, and others interested in the field of historical dialogue and facilitate the exchange of knowledge between disciplines, national and local contexts, and between theory and practice. Historical Dialogues is a joint initiative of the Historical Justice and Memory Research Network (HJMRN), formerly housed at the Swinburne Institute for Social Research in Melbourne and currently under the auspices of the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability at Columbia University. Aside from a biweekly newsletter, the Network's website contains resources including book reviews and an emerging scholars' paper series. The site is home to various projects and resources and contains information about the Network's conferences, members, events and opportunities related to the field of historical dialogue.

## Mapping Historical Dialogue Project (MHDP)

The Mapping Historical Dialogue Project ([historicaldialogues.org/mhdp](http://historicaldialogues.org/mhdp)) is a digital visualization project that aims to help to better understand how engagement with memory of conflict can be used to develop conflict transformation mechanisms. Based on a crowdsourcing model, the map seeks to gather data about projects that engage in historical dialogue work. The information in the map enables users to understand the impact that the memory of sectarian and national violence has on contemporary politics and establishes the norms of the field of historical dialogue. In doing so, the project facilitates work towards conflict transformation, reconciliation, peacebuilding, and democracy promotion, particularly in post-conflict countries. During the past few years, thanks to a generous grant from the Robert Bosch Stiftung, MHDP has grown significantly and now contains information for over 700 projects from 109 countries. In addition, MHDP has over 20 research affiliates working on components of the map in their specific areas of expertise.



AHDA fellows present at various events and conferences.



AHDA honed my understanding of the historical dialogue toolkit, and helped contextualize those methods within the global movements for redress and transitional justice....In general, I can now see how my work in the field of oral history intersects with these approaches and can be used in tandem with other historical dialogue methods. I have developed an exciting new network of contacts and have deepened my capacities to work on project planning. It's been a wonderful and invigorating experience!

– ERICA FUGGER, USA,

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*



The Mapping Historical Dialogue Project

### Political Apologies Archive

The Political Apologies Archive (<http://www.human-rights.columbia.org/ahda/political-apologies>) examines ways in which apologies have become part of the political and historical landscape. This ongoing initiative was launched by political scientist Graham Dodds and includes an archive of political apologies in modern historical contexts. The list was initially compiled in the late-1990s, and since then it has moved from one institution to another. For many years now, Columbia's AHDA hosts an extensive online list of political apologies and related actions for political reconciliation. The selection criteria for listing an apology in the archive is somewhat loose, but the intent is to include any and all apologies that involve states, nations, or major political groups and actors, generally for significant public wrongs. Apologies by individual politicians for more narrow matters (e.g., alleged personal or criminal failings) are generally excluded. The list aspires to be comprehensive and is updated periodically. As of 2019, the archive records over 750 political apologies from around the world.

## POLITICAL APOLOGIES ARCHIVE

How does the act of apologizing enable societies to come to terms with their past?

Political apologies can be a powerful tool in the re-examination of a nation's history, and the significance this history has on democratic processes. The project includes a working list of political apologies throughout history that political scientist Graham Dodds has researched and compiled.

This is a working list of major political apologies and related events. The selection criteria for compiling the list are somewhat loose, but the intent is to include any and all apologies that involve states, nations, or major political groups and actors, generally for significant public wrongs. Thus, apologies by individual politicians for more narrow matters (e.g., alleged personal or criminal failings) are generally excluded.

Should you wish to add to the list, please e-mail [ahda@columbia.edu](mailto:ahda@columbia.edu).

Start Year:  End Year:  Keyword search:

Date of Apology	Title	Summary	Source
1077	Church-State Conflicts	Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV apologizes to Pope Gregory VII for church-state conflicts by standing barefoot in the snow for three days.	"Once More, With Feeling." Time. September 21, 1998.
1403	1403 Proclamation Apologizing to the Peasantry	Queen Margaret I of Denmark issues a proclamation apologizing to the peasantry for the "great burden and much toil" caused by the "wantonness, greed and wilfulness" of her clerks, bailiffs, and herself.	Moberg, Vilhelm A. A History of the Swedish People. University of Minn 2005. Vol. 1, p208. I am indebted to Steven Pinker for this reference.
1697	Salem witch trials of 1692	One judge and twelve jurors apologize for the Salem witch trials of 1692, as the colony declares a	Norton, Mary Beth. "The Called It Witchcraft." New York Times. October A27.

Political Apologies Archive

# Events, Initiatives & Collaborations

## **Annual Conference: Prevention Activism**

The Historical Dialogues, Justice, and Memory Network ([historicaldialogues.org/](http://historicaldialogues.org/)) coordinated by a Steering Committee and the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, held its annual conference on December 12-14, 2019 at Columbia University, New York City. The title of the conference was **“Prevention Activism: Advancing Historical Dialogue in Post-Conflict Settings.”** The conference hosted over 100 panelists, held 26 panels, 3 roundtables and was attended by over 400 participants.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Pablo de Greiff, who is a Chair of the Advisory Board of the Open Society’s Justice Initiative, and a member of the advisory board of the International Center for Transitional Justice, of Universal Rights Group, of the International Center for the Study, Prevention and Treatment of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma, and of the Archives and Dealing with the Past Project. In 2012, he was appointed as the first UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence, a position he held until May 2018.

The conference focused on prevention activism—that is, the effort to record, acknowledge, address and redress the violent past—which seeks to counter nationalist myths and identities that are central ingredients of ethnic and political violence. The goal of prevention activism is to deny the propensity for the future escalation of violence by acknowledging the role that the misuse of history has played in dividing societies. In other words, by enhancing public discussions about the past, prevention activism has become a central part of the efforts in post-conflict societies, as well as in democratic societies, to come to terms with their violent past.

The conference explored activities that can be defined as “prevention activism” and their academic analysis. What forms do projects and initiatives take to address past violence, and what impact have they had? These projects often range from civil society initiatives, to government-instituted commissions, to the work of international bodies. The conference particularly examined how specific body have worked to address past violence. Other topics included evaluating the

successes and failures of such initiatives; exploring the challenges faced by prevention activism; and understanding the ways in which pressures, from funding resources to political developments, affect, suppress, or inform activism.

## **Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research**

The Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research (CHRDR, <https://library.columbia.edu/libraries/chrdr.html>) is the official repository for the archives of major human rights organizations such as Amnesty International USA, Human Rights First, and Human Rights Watch. The director of the Center and archivist Pamela Graham serves as a resource, advisor for fellows and others interested in working on archival projects in their home countries on documentation projects for digital and physical materials that are at risk of disappearing or being destroyed.

## **AHDA Alumni Network**

AHDA’s alumni network expanded to 83 past participants coming from approximately 45 countries around the world. AHDA’s ongoing collaboration with alumni grew as well. In 2019, there were numerous initiatives that involved program alumni. Alumni visited AHDA to meet current fellows, participated in the annual conference and contributed to regional connections among alumni. Past fellowship participants continued to collaborate among themselves to create innovative projects and shared their successes in receiving prestigious awards and nominations.

## **Regional Network for Historical Dialogue and Dealing with the Past (RNHDP)**

The Regional Network for Historical Dialogue and Dealing with the Past (RNHDP) was established in 2012. It was born out of a collaboration between the AHDA program, the Istanbul-based NGO Hafiza Merkezi (Truth, Justice, and Memory Center), and Columbia Global Centers/Turkey. The RNHDP is a regional network open to civil society professionals, scholars, and students working in the MENA and Caucasus regions. The network focuses on issues relating to dealing with the past, such as historical dialogue, memory studies, truth and accountability. The program alumni are supporting AHDA work by initiating similar activities in other regions.



# The Fellowship Program

**H**istorical Dialogue is a growing field of scholarship and practice that emerges from the legacy of historical violence and its ties to contemporary politics. The AHDA fellowship program seeks to contribute to the field of historical dialogue by building a network of advocates working in the field, fostering a dynamic academic environment for fellows to initiate and develop new projects in the field of historical dialogue, and facilitating discussion about the past in their respective societies. The success of the AHDA fellowship program is due in no small part to the history of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of working with educators and scholars, advocates and practitioners, to strengthen skills and knowledge of those working in the field of human rights.

AHDA 2019 fellow Erica Fugger noted: “What I appreciated about AHDA is that it is like an ‘incubator’ program, which may be common in other fields like tech, but there seem to be very few of these opportunities in the humanities for early and mid-career professionals. I liked that we had the opportunity to focus on developing our own projects that we could then receive feedback on, while deepening our knowledge and connecting with prospective funders that could help support our work.”

The AHDA curriculum is organized around four components. First, in seminars with scholars and experts in historical dialogue, the fellows explore major theoretical and methodological issues relating to historical dialogue as a field. Second, the program juxtaposes theoretical and methodological issues with on-the-ground case studies. Third, the fellows learn in the capacity-building workshops and during site visits focused on practical skills and networking with organizations and individuals whose work is relevant to historical dialogue. Finally, the fellows audit Columbia University courses that are relevant to their particular context or approach to historical dialogue. As members of Columbia University community, they give presentations about their work. In addition, each fellow develops a project proposal with an expectation that it will be implemented upon their return to their home community.

We see these program components as essential to expanding the impact, efficacy, and implementation of work in historical dialogue as an emerging field.

Ten fellows in 2019 were selected from a pool of approximately 169 applicants. Fellows came from a variety of professional backgrounds and places: Argentina,

Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Chile, Japan, Lebanon, Serbia, Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Uganda, and the United States. All 2019 fellows had already worked on issues related to historical violence, transitional justice, dealing with the past, and conflict transformation before coming to Columbia University. Professional and geographical diversity of the group is one of the strengths of the program. Fellows learn from and share their experiences with their peers as well as the broader Columbia University human rights community.

In the following section, we asked fellows to share with us what historical dialogue means to them, and how their work connects history and human rights advocacy. Each entry is followed by details regarding the fellows’ activities during their time in New York City.

The following staff of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights contributed their time and expertise to develop the AHDA curriculum and shape the program. Professor Elazar Barkan, the Director of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights and founder of the AHDA program, led seminars over the course of the semester. Sandra Paunksniene, Assistant Director of the AHDA program, developed curriculum and the series of workshops. Other staff and board members of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights contributed guidance and mentoring.

A special thanks to the members of the Columbia University community who welcomed fellows, agreed to meet with them, and served as advisors, mentors and experts in a wide range of fields. These individuals are acknowledged by name in the [Networking@Columbia](#) segment.



AHDA fellows attend courses and workshops.



## EVELYN DISSANAYAKE

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Sri Lanka

**Asian Press Institute**

*Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow*

The three-decade civil conflict in Sri Lanka, which personally affected me, also molded me into who I am today, leading me onto the path of human rights education and advocacy. As a past victim and survivor of the conflict, I witnessed mass human rights violations, injustice, and victimization during and after the war. This increased my interest to engage with victims and support them in dealing with violent memories and seeking truth and justice.

Realizing that women and girls were affected not only during the war, but also in the aftermath of conflict, I found a profound need for a space for women and girls to speak out. This led me to establish the Asian Press Institute, a nonprofit organization that promotes and protects the rights of marginalized communities—especially women and girls—through storytelling, awareness-raising, training, capacity building, advocacy, research, and reporting. The organization's programs include internal displacement and forced migration, reconciliation and social justice, youth peace and leadership, young girls as human rights advocates, school civic education, gender and social inclusion, and women civic journalism.

As an AHDA Fellow, I concentrated on an oral history and memory project based on my research on enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka. The goal of the project is to promote freedom of expression and right to information by creating a space for the families of the enforced disappeared to share their past and current memories through oral narratives. The recorded stories will be digitally archived and shared with diverse civil society organizations, human rights groups, policymakers, and duty-bearers to encourage them towards open dialogues on enforced disappearance in the country. This also opens up an opportunity to bridge diverse ethnic communities to initiate interethnic dialogues and create space for the families of the disappeared to share their memories with each other in order to minimize the perceptual gaps that further misunderstanding and lead to conflicts. The project also aims to digitally map enforced disappearance in Sri Lanka in order to document these cases for future reference and pressure legal bodies and the government to probe into the issue of enforced disappearance and initiate remedial mechanisms for the families of the enforced disappeared such that they may receive redress and justice.

Sri Lanka is currently going through a political process in which democracy and freedom of expression have come into question. Encouraging dialogue between diverse communities and the sharing of narratives among different ethnic communities will help bring out different views and interpretations of historical narratives and promote reconciliation and future coexistence.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Alex Gil, Digital Humanities at  
Columbia University

Amy Starecheski, Oral History  
Master of Arts Program

Elazar Barkan, School of International  
and Public Affairs

Kaoukab Chebaro, Columbia University  
Libraries

Kristina Eberbach, Institute for the  
Study of Human Rights

Pamela Graham, Center for Human Rights

Zoë West, Oral History Master of Arts Program

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Amnesty International

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and  
Reconciliation

Heinrich Böll Foundation North America  
Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

National Democratic Institute

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History  
and Culture

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and  
Human Rights

Search for Common Ground

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
Woodrow Wilson Center

**Courses:**

Human Rights and Oral History,  
Professor Z. West

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented at the International Scholar Panel  
“Human Rights and Community Memories  
in Chile, South Sudan and Sri Lanka,” orga-  
nized by International Students and Scholars  
Office, Columbia University

Presented at the “Introduction to Human  
Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan,  
Columbia University

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar  
Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human  
Rights, Columbia University



Fellows present their final project proposals at the mini-AHDA conference.



## MILENA DURAN

Argentina

**Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo**

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

I studied history at the Universidad de Buenos Aires and currently work as an oral historian and educator focused on recent history, memory, and human rights. My interest in these fields began while I was in college, where I deepened my understanding of the last military dictatorship in Argentina and its long-lasting consequences and traumatic effects in society. Shortly before 2010, Argentina was going through (and still is) a strong process of memorialization. After many years of silence and deliberate oblivion, a large and diverse number of initiatives—many of them state-sponsored—were taking place in the country to create memory spaces, archives, and research projects concerning the period, among others. In this context, I got involved and started participating in the oral history archive of Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo.

This organization was created in 1977 with the aim of finding children who were kidnapped and appropriated by the military during the dictatorship and restoring them to their legitimate families. In 1998, an oral history archive, the Family Biographical Archive, was founded with the purpose of reconstructing the life stories of the disappeared through testimonies of relatives and friends, and giving those to the children when they were found. I started working with the archive in 2010, first as a volunteer interviewer, and continue today as one of the main interviewers, researchers, and archivists. My work is to manage this large archive containing over two thousand interviews that is an extended and diverse testimony of recent Argentinian history. Since 2014, I also carried out educational activities and guided tours in The Identity House, the museum branch of Abuelas in the Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos (ESMA). These activities and workshops are offered to students of all levels and focus on the problem of children's appropriation during the dictatorship and aim to raise awareness among youth of the importance of defending human rights and, in particular, the right to identity.

As an AHDA Fellow, I developed the project entitled “The Identity House: an educational and research center for memory, identity & human rights.” This is an integral project for the museum that seeks to turn it into a center for educational and research activities that will allow society to learn and build on Abuela's experience to deal with current problems related to human rights and identity.

The project implementation involves three phases. First, the creation of the Institutional Archive of Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo that will include the historical documentation and audiovisual materials of the organization, some of which will become available for educational and research use. Second, the development of an oral history project for the Family Biographical Archive that will collect the voices of grandchildren and great-grandchildren regarding their experiences with restitution. The goals of this oral history project will be to create an opportunity for intergenerational dialogue between restored grandchildren and their own children, to involve young people in the work and cause of the organization and to learn about the ripple effects that appropriation of children has had and continues to have over the next generations. Finally, the third phase of the project is the design of an oral history curriculum to carry out an educational program with students and train teachers, in order to transmit our experience and promote the use of oral history as a tool to address current human rights and identity issues.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Amy Starecheski, Oral History  
Master of Arts Program

David Olson, Oral History Archives

Elazar Barkan, School of International  
and Public Affairs

Kaoukab Chebaro, Global Studies,  
Columbia University Libraries

Kerry Whigham, Auschwitz Institute  
for Peace and Reconciliation

Louis Bickford, Institute for the  
Study of Human Rights

Mary Marshall Clark, Columbia Center  
for Oral History Research

Nara Milanich, Department of History  
at Barnard College

Pamela Graham, Center for Human Rights Docu-  
mentation and Research

Sheila Dauer, Institute for the  
Study of Human Rights

Sócrates Silva, Latin American and Iberian Stud-  
ies, Columbia University Libraries

Zoë West, Oral History Master of Arts Program

**Courses:**

Human Rights and Oral History, Professor Z. West

Museum Anthropology: Digital Media, Materiali-  
ty and Cultural Practice, Professor M. Castro

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Amnesty International

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Center for Research Library

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Fanny Garcia, OHMA Alumna

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

Local Projects

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History  
and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Public History Program, New York University

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human  
Rights

Search for Common Ground

StoryCorps

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Voices of Witness

WITNESS

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented at “The Danger of Forgetting:  
Memorialization, Memory and Transitional Jus-  
tice,” Columbia Law School

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights”  
class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia  
University

Presented at the “Global Communications”  
class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan,  
Institute for the Study of Human Rights,  
Columbia University



Presenting “The Identity House” project.



## ERICA FUGGER

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USA

**Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience**  
*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

I am an oral historian and peace educator based at Washington College's Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience (Maryland, USA). I currently manage a World War II public memory initiative that focuses on collecting and preserving civilian memories of World War II on the American homefront. Through our community partnership program, the National Home Front Project trains organizations across the United States to record new oral histories and helps archive civilian interview collections that have previously been inaccessible to the public.

During the AHDA fellowship this fall, I had the opportunity to deepen our archive's capacities to reckon with the human rights violations that occurred on American soil during World War II, most notably the wartime incarceration ('internment') of over 120,000 Japanese Americans. AHDA particularly helped me put the Japanese American movement for redress into a larger global context intersecting human rights, historical dialogue, and transitional justice. The program further encouraged me to explore how Japanese Americans are using their community's experiences of racist imprisonment during World War II to advocate for immigrants' rights today. This activism includes efforts like resisting the 'Muslim travel ban' the U.S. federal government recently instituted and protesting outside of former American concentration camp sites that are currently being used or considered for use as 'migrant detention centers.'

My project development included connecting with core institutions that have long worked on documentation efforts addressing this important subject, especially the Denshō Digital Repository and the National Park Service. It also pertained to learning about the public education and historical interpretation around these legacies from staff at the Topaz Museum, Facing History and Ourselves, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. This process culminated through opportunities to speak with Japanese American artists, scholars, and activists; visiting the Topaz concentration camp site in Utah; and attending a Japanese American Films of Remembrance Showcase in New York to gain further perspective on how World War II legacies are represented within this community.

These conversations have led me in the direction of developing a project proposal with the hopes of supporting grassroots documentation efforts around the upcoming Japanese American pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. in June 2020. Organized by Tsuru for Solidarity, community members from across the country will be descending on Washington for a "Close the Camps" rally, further connecting Japanese Americans' shared memories of World War II incarceration with contemporary human rights struggles. It is my hope that the National Home Front Project's interview resources may be helpful in conducting new oral histories around this event, and that our program may subsequently be able to collaborate with other institutional and community stakeholders in developing narrative-based educational materials around this solidarity activism. I see these efforts drawing upon American historical consciousness and national dialogue around World War II in particularly impactful ways, and look forward to exploring how we can best offer support to this important cause.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Alex Gil, Digital Humanities at Columbia University  
 David Olson, Oral History Archives  
 Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs  
 Felisa Tibbitts, Teachers College  
 Lara Nettelfield, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Alliance for Peacebuilding  
 American Association of University Women  
 Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation  
 Denshō Digital Repository  
 Facing History and Ourselves  
 Heinrich Böll Foundation North America  
 Human Rights Watch  
 International Center for Transitional Justice  
 International Coalition of Sites of Conscience  
 National Endowment for Democracy  
 National Museum of African American History and Culture  
 National Park Service  
 National September 11 Memorial and Museum  
 New York Peace Institute  
 Open Society Foundation  
 Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights  
 Search for Common Ground  
 StoryCorps  
 Topaz Museum  
 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
 WITNESS

**Courses:**

Global Perspectives: Peace and Human Rights Education, Professor F. Tibbitts

**Speaking Engagements:**

Chaired “From Institutional Affiliations to Grass-roots Collaborations: Documenting World War II Across America” at the 2019 Oral History Association Annual Meeting

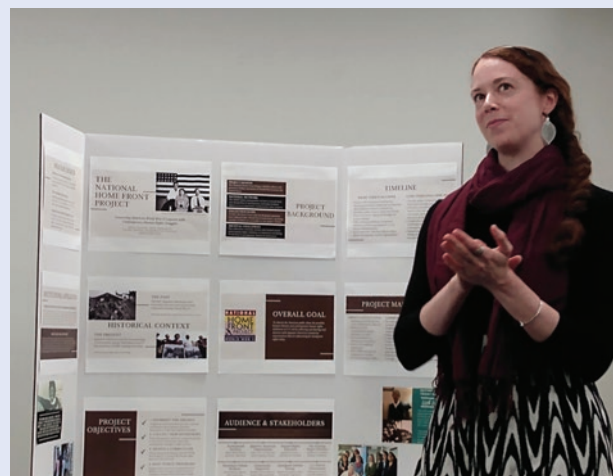
Presented “Collecting, Archiving, and Preserving Oral Histories from the Muslim American Community” at the 2019 Oral History Association Annual Meeting

Presented “Visualizing History: Museums, Memorials, and the Visual Arts as Modes of Dialogue” at the 2019 Historical Dialogues, Justice & Memory Network Annual Conference, Columbia University

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



Presenting World War II project.



## JASMINA LAZOVIĆ

Serbia

Center for Public History

Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow

I am the co-founder and program associate of the Belgrade-based non-governmental organization, the Center for Public History. My educational background is in political science, journalism, international humanitarian law, and human rights. My first professional engagement in the sphere of transitional justice was at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Netherlands from 2008 to 2009, where I conducted an internship in the Media, Outreach and Web department. Through my ten-year engagement at the Youth Initiative for Human Rights, a regional organization with offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia, I worked mainly on projects focusing on transitional justice, activism related to the legacy of past conflict, and regional cooperation. I was extensively involved in the advocacy campaign for the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans. In 2014, I participated in a professional exchange program between Kosovo and Serbia supported by the Balkan Trust for Democracy. Since 2014, I have been a member of the trans-European network of memory practitioners called the Memory Lab.

Together with several historians and anti-war and human rights activists, I established the Center for Public History (CPH) in May 2018. CPH aims to promote the application of history in the service of society by developing critical thinking about the past and its implications on the present. We fight against historical revisionism and rehabilitation of war criminals and Nazi and fascist collaborators, as well as for the preservation of the culture of remembrance through commemorative practices and marking places that bear memory of a violent past. I am particularly engaged in projects related to the legacy of the 1990s wars in the former Yugoslav territories.

As an AHDA fellow, I am working on developing a project that deals with the culture of remembrance in Serbia of the 1990s wars. The project, entitled *“Forbidden and Forgotten Memories: Combating Serbia’s restrictive policies on the 1990s war memories,”* has been designed to contest the recently adopted Law on War Memorials. This law imposes the official narrative about the so-called “liberation-driven” nature of the Serbian armed forces’ involvement in the wars in the region. At the same time, it also censors alternative memory initiatives that are not in line with the official narrative. In order to advocate for the amendment of this law, I plan to do comprehensive analyses of Serbia’s memory policies and practices, researching both publicly recognized and suppressed memories of the 1990s wars. Apart from mapping, documenting, and creating an online database of the existing war memorials, this project also focuses on unmarked places of memory related to crimes committed in Serbia, as well as neglected memories of the anti-war movements of the 1990s.



**Networking@Columbia:**

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Lara Nettelfield, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

Tanya Domi, School of International and Public Affairs

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Archives and Public History Program, New York University

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Committee to Protect Journalists

Cultural Tourism

Hasna

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

Institute of Culture and Memory Studies

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights

Ruti Teitel, New York Law School

Search for Common Ground

Transitional Justice Working Group

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Vladimir Petrovic, Boston University

WITNESS

**Courses:**

Human Rights & Human Wrongs, Professor B. Cronin

Education, Conflict & Peacebuilding, Professor G. Russell

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



Presenting ‘Forbidden and Forgotten Memories’.



## SUNJI LEE

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Japan

**Japan Society for the Promotion of Science**

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

I work as a research fellow for the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and as a teacher at Hosei University. I specialize in research concerning education, especially the education of traumatic memories. Traumatic memories are, for instance, the memories of an earthquake, world war, or nuclear plant accident. I also research the role of media in education from a philosophical perspective. My recent article, “The Concept of Attention in Bernard Stiegler: Focusing on the Concept of Retention,” won the Prize of the Japanese Educational Research Association. My work appears in national and international academic journals, including the Philosophy of Education Society of Japan, Japanese Educational Research Association, History of Educational Thoughts Society, and Educational Philosophy and Theory.

During my time as an AHDA fellow, I began designing a project regarding the education of disaster and calamity called “School Trip to Traumatic Memory: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Okinawa and Fukushima.” This project aims to organize trips to the cities to raise awareness about incidents that drastically change society. This project is composed of three parts: study in school, talk with victims, and then tour around the place that suffered damage in the past. In this project, education is engaged with not only information or knowledge, but also how to motivate individuals to think of how to build a peaceful society and be empathetic to victims. Ultimately, the project aims to impact policymakers, civil society, and the international community to create a paradigm shift towards a more gender-sensitive approach to transitional justice. This is also an opportunity for dialogue about the future of areas affected by disaster because children will visit, talk, and think of that area, bridging the area’s past and future.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Tomoko Kubota, MA Oral History Program

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Exhibition by Gaku Tsutaja, Japanese artist

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Okinawa Memory Institute

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights

Search for Common Ground

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

WITNESS

Woodrow Wilson Center

**Courses:**

International Perspectives on Peace and Human Rights Education, Professor F. Tibbitts

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented on “The School Trip in Japan,” at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College Baruch College

Presented on “The Philosophy of Passing Down Memories” to the 2019 Weatherhead Institute Fellows

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



Sunji Lee presenting the project about Japan's past.



## BEATRIZ AGUILA MUSSA

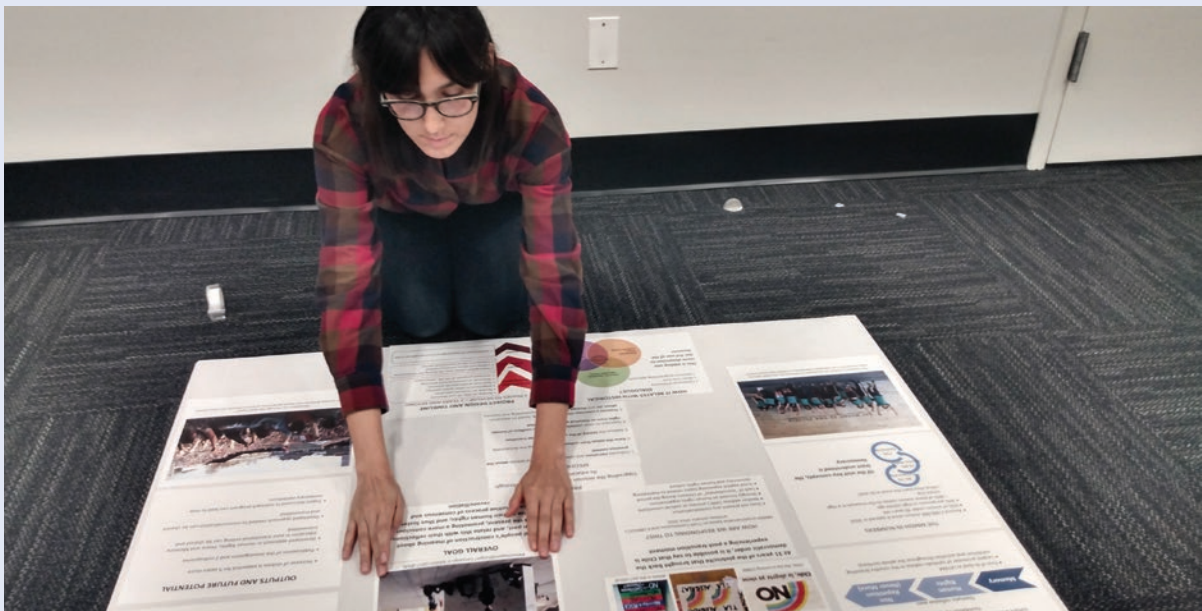
Chile

**Museum of Memory and Human Rights**

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

I am a sociologist from the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and a grantee fellow from the Latin-American Laboratory of Museum Management 2018, organized by the Fundación TyPA (Argentina). I have dedicated my academic and professional work to projects that assure citizen participation or use participation as a methodology. Since 2017, I have been working in the Education Department at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, where I have developed studies to understand the significant learnings of visitors in order to include their reflections as an essential part of the museum, making it a more visitor/citizen-centered space. I have also worked in memorialization and musealization of violence within the institution. Now, I am investigating human rights, memory, and civic education models for post-dictatorship and post-transitional societies.

The AHDA project that I designed at Columbia University aims to aid visitors, especially the young ones, to construct meaning about Chilean troubled past and relate this with their reflections about the present of the world and in Chile. The project seeks to encourage a more conscious exercise of citizens' rights and provide them with tools to strengthen a culture of democracy and human rights, thus promoting a constructive process of reconciliation. The project consists of creating and updating the mission and vision of the museum through its educational plan. The project implementation has three phases over two years. First, developing new pedagogies of museum education to support dialogic memory and promote active citizenship. Second, organizing two lines of investigation - one about daily life during the dictatorship and another related to the transitional period to add to the museological script. And finally, modifying the museography on the permanent exhibition to boost visitors' engagement.



Preparing to speak about education in Chilean Museum.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Alex Gil, Digital Humanities at Columbia University  
 Anjli Parrin, Columbia Law School  
 Camila Vergara Gonzalez, Columbia Law School  
 Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs  
 Felisa Tibbitts, Teachers College  
 Kaoukab Chebaro, Global Studies, Columbia University Libraries  
 Kristina Eberbach, Institute for the Study of Human Rights  
 Olga Hubard, Teachers College  
 Pamela Graham, Center for Human Rights  
 Sally Yerkovich, Museum Anthropology Program, Columbia University

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation  
 Center for Strategic and International Studies  
 El Museo del Barrio  
 Global Network of Women Peacebuilders  
 Heinrich Böll Foundation North America  
 Human Rights Watch  
 International Center for Transitional Justice  
 International Coalition of Sites of Conscience  
 Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art  
 Local Projects  
 Museum of Modern Art  
 Museum Studies Program, Johns Hopkins University  
 Museums and Digital Culture Program, Pratt Institute  
 National Endowment for Democracy  
 National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum  
 New York City Museum Educators  
 New York Historical Society  
 Noguchi Museum  
 Polly McKenna-Cress (independent consultant)  
 Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights  
 Search for Common Ground  
 Smithsonian Institution  
 The Center for the Humanities, The Graduate Center, City University of New York  
 The Drawing Center  
 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
 University of the Arts  
 WITNESS

**Courses:**

Global Perspectives: Peace and Human Rights Education, Professor F. Tibbitts  
 Museum Anthropology: Digital Media, Materiality and Cultural Practice, Professor M. Castro

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College  
 Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University  
 Presented at the International Scholar Panel “Human Rights and Community Memories in Chile, South Sudan and Sri Lanka,” organized by International Students and Scholars Office, Columbia University  
 Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



## STIPE ODAK

Belgium/Bosnia & Herzegovina

Université Catholique de Louvain

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow/Fulbright Fellow*

I am a researcher at the Université catholique de Louvain and a Fulbright fellow at Columbia University. My rather eclectic academic background is in the fields of sociology, theology and religious studies, and comparative literature. I received my Ph.D. in Political and Social Sciences from UCLouvain (Belgium) and a doctorate in Theology from KU Leuven (Belgium). For the last six years, my research has focused on the intersections of religion, conflict, and collective memory, primarily in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As a country with a centuries-long legacy of multireligious life, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a paradigmatic case of a diverse society at the heart of Europe. The history of the region, however, is also marked by numerous tragedies stemming from world wars, dissolution of empires, the experience of totalitarian regimes, and interethnic conflicts. In such circumstances, political and social issues are inseparable from collective memory. Reconstruction of civic life, in other words, coincides with the processes of coming to terms with the past. “How do we remember past tragedies?” is a question at the heart of that quest. It inquires as to whether there is a common we; how past relates to present and future; and what valence tragedies should have in social memory.

My project at AHDA, entitled *Divided Bridges*, aims at (re)discovering peacebuilding potentials in the major religious traditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Religions understand themselves as bridges between people, spiritually grounded instruments of peace. A growing percentage of the population worldwide sees religion as one of the central aspects of their identities. At the same time, it is undeniable that religious traditions have been implicated in intergroup violence, human rights violations, and different forms of cultural oppression. The goal of this project is to (re)discover pro-social elements in religions, in view of traumatic experiences of ex-Yugoslav wars in the 1990s and their aftermath. The emphasis on *re*-discovering implies that many of these peacebuilding elements have been forgotten or overshadowed by past violence. The project is envisaged as a combination of a website, workshops, and public talks. It aspires to provide a platform for open and inclusive discussions about the social role of religion. Far from being apologetic or oblivious towards past crimes, it desires to address “difficult history” in a direct yet responsible way. By engaging in the concrete theological and spiritual heritage of local religious traditions, while remaining conscious of the history of religiously inspired violence, the project aims to develop strong and resilient networks of peace-oriented citizens.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Marianne Hirsch, English and Comparative Literature and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Gregory Sholette, Artist

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

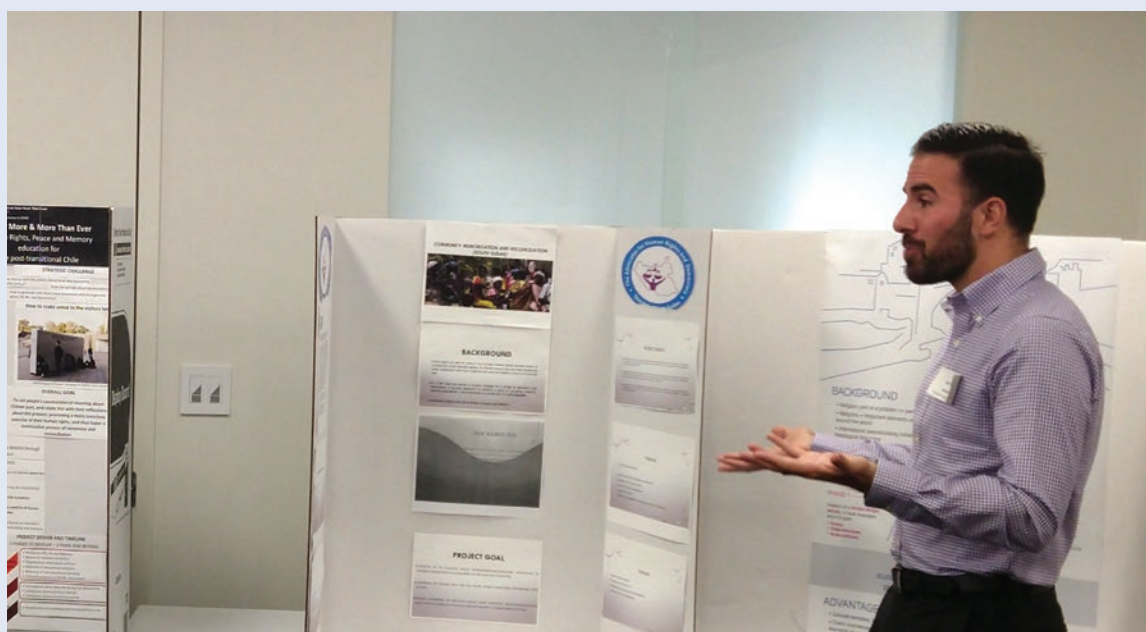
Sogang University Critical Global Studies Institute

**Speaking Engagements:**

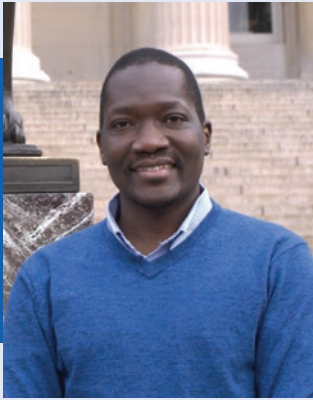
Presented at the "Introduction to Human Rights" class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presented at the "Global Communications" class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



Discussing project "Divided Bridges".



# FRANCIS OPIO

Uganda

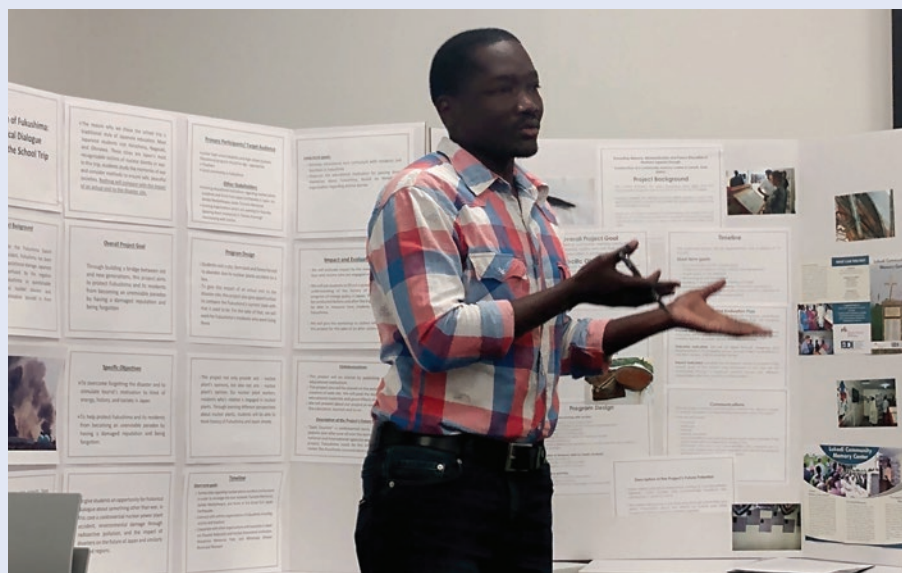
Foundation for Justice and Development Initiative (FJDI)

Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow

As a transitional justice and peacebuilding practitioner, I have implemented traditional reconciliation and reintegration projects to help victims of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war reintegrate with ease and live dignified lives in areas where they have resettled.

Working for the Foundation for Justice and Development Initiative (FJDI) in Gulu, Uganda, I have led the documentation of victims' reparations needs and overseen the implementation of capacity-building and advocacy programs to help victims agitate for their reparations needs. I also contributed to the passage of the National Transitional Justice Policy in Uganda.

As an AHDA fellow, I am working towards the establishment of a community memorial space to preserve documented testimonies and/or narratives of survivors of the LRA war, victim profiles, timelines of events, and artifacts intended to empower victims to heal and promote reconciliation among the Acholi community. The project seeks to establish a bigger space to house the existing community memory center in Lukodi village, Gulu District. The community memory center will be used for remembering victims of the Lukodi massacre and Northern Uganda conflict, providing victims with the space to reflect and acknowledge that conflict happened and contributing to individual healing. It will further build a sense of shared identity as victims will be able to listen and/or read the collected narratives and testimonies of others who also suffered the conflict. Overall, the establishment will further provide space for people near and far to reflect on the dangers of violence.



Presenting about the Memory Center in Gulu District.



**Networking@Columbia:**

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Mahmood Mamdani, Department of Political Science and Department of Anthropology

Rhiannon Stephens, Department of History

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Avocats Sans Frontières

Enough Project

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

National Democratic Institute

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights

Search for Common Ground

U.S. Agency for International Development  
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
WITNESS

**Courses:**

Human Rights and Oral History,  
Professor Z. West

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented on “How Far Can Justice Go? Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding in Africa”, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Panelist for “Dangers of Forgetting: Memory, Memorialization and Transitional Justice,” Columbia Law School

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



## REINA M. SARKIS

Lebanon

MoHR

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

I am a psychoanalyst spearheading a number of groundbreaking initiatives in Lebanon and abroad. I currently run my own practice and, for nearly two decades, have been focusing my research and work around topics related to human rights. Most recently, I established a program to provide group therapy for torture victims, breaking with social norms that pressure the victim into silence. The program is the first of its kind in Lebanon and the region, attracting the attention of both local and international media.

I have led multiple initiatives, such as co-founding the group Springhins, which carried out an extensive survey of reforms in Lebanon, culminating with the publication “Reforms: the Spring of Interrogations”. I also established Citizen L, a group of academics interested in political matters and reforms that places the Lebanese citizen at the center of its priorities. My aim is to generate debate and grassroots movement to galvanize Lebanese society towards reforms and better policies. In 2014, I founded an organization called MoHR, with the goal to push for the creation of a meta-structure for Human Rights and past conflicts in my country.

I applied to the AHDA program to advance my research and projects. During my fellowship, I focused mainly on education, particularly bringing human rights Masters’ level students to Lebanon by creating collaboration and partnerships between Columbia University and the American University of Beirut.

AHDA has also allowed me to further develop my Group Therapy for Torture Victims initiative through connections and meetings that always proved enriching and constructive. As a fellow here, I had the unique privilege to access inexhaustible resources and exclusive access to outstanding material and connections. The program has also permitted me to take part in key seminars about Historical Dialogue. Based on this experience, my goal in the near future is to put together my experience working with torture victims in a book.



Presenting a project about torture victims.

**Networking@Columbia:**

David L. Phillips, Peacebuilding and Rights Program

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Felisa Tibbitts, Teachers College

Kristina Eberbach, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

Naomi Weinberger, School of International and Public Affairs

**Networking/Site Visits:**

American University of Beirut

Amnesty International

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

International Trauma Studies Program

National Democratic Institute

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights

Search for Common Ground

U.S. Agency for International Development

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

WITNESS

**Classes:**

Writing about War: Seeking Narratives in Conflict, Professor A. Cambanis

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented on “Lebanon and Iraq Rising Up,” School of International and Public Affairs

Presented on “The Danger of Forgetting: Memorialization, Memory, and Transitional Justice” at the Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presenter at the International House Foreign Policy Talk, “Lebanon’s Revolt for Human Rights and the Arab Spring Second Wave,” Columbia University

Presented at the class “Writing About War,” Columbia University by Professor A. Cambanis

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University



# DORCAS FRANCIS LOLY WERSON

South Sudan

**The Advocates for Human Rights and Democracy (TAHURID)**

*Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow*

I work as an Advocacy Officer for the non-profit organization called The Advocates for Human Rights and Democracy (TAHURID). My role in the organization is to advocate for the advancement and protection of the human rights of the South Sudanese people through advocacy and education and by empowering the community on human rights principles and democratic concepts guaranteed by the South Sudan Constitution, applicable laws, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Before I joined the organization, I worked as a community liaison officer in the Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring Mechanism, which was one of the bodies established to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement in the country. In this role, I engaged directly with the community to investigate and report any violation of human rights or the peace agreement to the duty station disseminating the peace agreement information to the community. My experience in the 2013 South Sudan Civil War was the main factor driving me to become a human rights advocate. I learned that we need to stand against all the violations and abuses of human rights.

While at Columbia University, I developed an oral history project entitled “Community Memorialization and Reconciliation in South Sudan”. This project aims to document stories of the women victims living in camps as internally displaced persons. The main objectives of the project are to support inclusive societies; advance sustainable peace and development; protect women and girls from violence, exploitation, and abuse; and provide activists with the tools necessary to develop human rights advocacy plans.



Discussing ‘Community Memorialization and Reconciliation in South Sudan’.

**Networking@Columbia:**

Elazar Barkan, School of International and Public Affairs

Mahmood Mamdani, Department of Political Science and Department of Anthropology

Rhiannon Stephens, Department of History

**Networking/Site Visits:**

Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation

Globalizing Gender

Heinrich Böll Foundation

Human Rights Watch

International Center for Transitional Justice

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

National Democratic Institute

National Endowment for Democracy

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National September 11 Memorial and Museum

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OXFAM

Public International Law Policy Group

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights

Search for Common Ground

The Enough Project

U.S. Agency for International Development

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

WITNESS

**Classes:**

Human Rights Research and Reporting, Professor I. Levine

NGOs and the Human Rights Movement, Professor L. Bickford

**Speaking Engagements:**

Presented at the “Global Communications” class by Professor Sarah Bishop, Baruch College

Presented at the “Introduction to Human Rights” class by Professor Andrew Nathan, Columbia University

Presented at the International Scholar Panel “Human Rights and Community Memories in Chile, South Sudan and Sri Lanka”, organized by International Students and Scholars Office, Columbia University

Presented at a seminar by Professor Elazar Barkan, Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University

Presented on “How Far Can Justice Go? Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding in Africa”, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University



AHDA Fellows' Trip to Washington, D.C. November 2019.

## AHDA Fellows' Trip to Washington, D.C. November 2019

In November 2019, the AHDA fellows took a three-day trip to Washington, D.C. The purpose of the trip was to bond as a group outside the formal structure of the program in New York and to take advantage of historical and networking opportunities in Washington, D.C. During the meetings and visits, fellows were able to gain valuable insights into areas of focus related to historical dialogue, human rights, and peacebuilding for their specific regions, as well as general exposure to a wide array of institutions.

Fellows' individual and small group meetings are listed on their profiles. Here we name organizations and institutions that generously invited the fellows to visit as a group, among others:

### Washington, D.C. Networking:

Heinrich Böll Foundation North America  
National Endowment for Democracy  
National Museum of African American History and Culture  
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights  
Search for Common Ground  
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

“

I would like people to understand how historical dialogue can be effective when the context is understood by society, and how memorialization plays a tremendous role in peacebuilding. My organization will directly benefit from my experience in the program through activities that I will conduct when I go back home, such as workshops, training activities, and conferences. I was also able to create a strong network that I believe will assist me in my future career.

— DORCAS FRANCIS LOLY WERSON,  
SOUTH SUDAN, *Robert Bosch Stiftung*  
(Foundation) Fellow



The program alumni connected with the current fellows.

## Workshops and Seminars

What are the potential advantages and impact of different vehicles and media on different types of audiences? What are the tropes, possibilities, limitations of print publications; school curricula and museum education programs; exhibits; websites; social media; documentary film; live events (public dialogues, processions, pilgrimages); site preservation; and memorialization? The AHDA curriculum addresses these questions through a series of workshops and seminars that help the fellows explore the concepts and applications of historical dialogue. The program is deeply appreciative of the instructors of the workshops and seminars, who generously gave their time, often making themselves available outside of scheduled sessions to ensure that fellows had the support and resources necessary to develop successful projects and further their work in and understanding of the field of historical dialogue.

### Archives and Documentation

[Pamela Graham, Columbia University](#)

Dr. Graham is a Director of the Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research at Columbia University. In her workshop with fellows, Dr. Graham explored the Center's work archiving the materials of human rights organizations around the world and practical applications of such work. She also discussed how archiving can become an effective tool for advocacy and coalition-building. Columbia University holds many unique archives from around the world. The fellows were able to explore very rare human rights archives documenting historic events in their countries of origin dating a few decades back.

### Capacity Building Workshops

[Joanna Brucker, New Knowledge](#)

The training led by Joanna Brucker focused on developing front-end evaluation tools for project planning, including defining intended audiences and goals for impact and indicators of success. The workshop explored some of the topics: What categories/groups

of people are implicated in the past trauma you are remembering? What social change are you trying to effect through your work? Who are you targeting in order to effect that change? Why are they the most effective group(s) to target in order to effect that change?

### Community Engagement for Human Rights and Social Justice Practitioners

[Nahal Zamani, Center for Constitutional Rights](#)

Nahal Zamani is an Advocacy Program Manager at the Center for Constitutional Rights, where she directs CCR's advocacy and campaigns in the U.S. Nahal's advocacy portfolio includes challenging the NYPD's abusive stop and frisk practices and other discriminatory policing practices, advancing economic and gender justice work, and confronting the persecution and criminalization of LGBTQ communities. Her workshop focused on how to critically examine and implement community engagement as a valuable approach to human rights and social justice work.



Fellows were engaged in workshop at WITNESS.



Site and museum visits are part of the program.

## Designing Museums, Memorials, and Exhibits Workshop

Paul Williams, Ralph Appelbaum Associates

Dr. Williams is a Senior Content Developer at the museum design firm, Ralph Appelbaum Associates. Dr. Williams' work for Ralph Appelbaum Associates involves planning, research, and conceptualization of content for globally significant new museum projects with a human rights focus. In his seminar, Dr. Williams explored the problems of "exhibiting" trauma and different strategies and challenges of confronting violent pasts through visual media and museum modes.

## Engaging with the Media on Human Rights: Finding, Crafting and Advancing your Story

Lonnie Isabel, Reporter

Lonnie Isabel is an established journalism instructor who served for five years as a full-time faculty mem-

ber at Columbia University's Journalism School. This workshop provided training on how human rights and social justice actors can effectively engage with the media in order to advance their work, including by developing media engagement strategies and crafting and distributing messages.

## Fundraising Strategies Workshop at Candid

Catalina Spinel, New York Lead at Candid

In this workshop, the fellows were introduced to the resources available through Candid (formerly Foundation Center). The presentation touched upon the basic concepts of fundraising, concept papers, and key budget requirements. The workshop also addressed approaches to raise funds for projects, individuals, and organizations. In addition, Catalina Spinel presented human rights and peacebuilding databases that show the current philanthropy landscape.

“

Through this program, I have learned the educational significance of oral history. The experience of oral history gives students opportunities to think of catastrophe deeply. I also appreciated the connection with organizations and practitioners. I plan to transfer the new knowledge and skills I gained into future conferences and articles. — SUNJI LEE, JAPAN, *Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*



“

Overall the program is a great learning platform with so many new experiences and learning... I came with many questions, and through the seminars and classes, the questions were answered and knowledge increased. [The program] has supported me to grow as a person, and also professionally. It has equipped me with the knowledge and skills to engage myself in a better way with my community. — EVELYN DISSANAYAKE, SRI LANKA, *Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow*

## Historical Dialogue as Conflict Transformation Seminar

Elazar Barkan, Columbia University

Dr. Elazar Barkan is a Professor of International and Public Affairs and the Director of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Policy Concentration at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, as well as the Director of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights. A historian by training, Dr. Barkan has a particular interest in historical memory. During the semester, fellows examine goals, objectives and questions raised within the field of historical dialogue through the workshop.

## Oral History and Human Rights: Methodologies and Practice

Mary Marshall Clark, Columbia University

Mary Marshall Clark is a Director of the Columbia Center for Oral History and co-founder/director of Columbia's Oral History Master of Arts degree program. Prior to this, she was an oral historian and filmmaker at The New York Times. Her workshop provided fellows with an introduction to oral history theories and practices, interview techniques in oral history, and the application of oral history to historical dialogue projects.

## Teaching History and History Education Workshop

Karen Murphy, Facing History and Ourselves

Dr. Karen Murphy is a Director of International Programs for Facing History and Ourselves. Her work focuses on history education, particularly in communities where contested narratives about the past lead to pressing challenges regarding how to teach history. The workshop explored some of the educational approaches and techniques that Facing History and Ourselves employs in its work in post-conflict societies.

## Teaching Human Rights Workshop

Kristina Eberbach, Columbia University and Sandra Sirota, Advocacy Lab

The workshop provided training and professional development and addressed both practical skills and thematic issues intended to enhance the work of those engaged in human rights, historical dialogue and social justice work. These include research and documentation, human rights campaigns and advocacy, organizational leadership for human rights, teaching human rights, and business and human rights.



AHDA held an annual conference on December 12-14, 2019.



AHDA fellows designed their projects in various workshops.

“

To me the program provided a space to reflect and challenge myself to a new way of dealing with the past...Given that fellows came from various contexts of conflict, I valued the experience of sharing the most. It helped me reflect on different ways of approaching conflict situations.

— FRANCIS OPIO, UGANDA,  
*Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow*

“

What I appreciated most about AHDA was being around people from different contexts. The program also really made me better at writing grant proposals, and I learned a lot of theories and good practices through the courses I took.

— BEATRIZ AGUILA MUSSA, CHILE,  
*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

“

The program is a good combination of different opportunities to improve your academic, activist, and other professional skills. It gives you the opportunity to reflect on your professional engagement in the field of historical dialogue while being removed from your regular environment and surrounded by people who are fighting the same fight, but in some other part of the world.

— JASMINA LAZOVIC, SERBIA,  
*Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation) Fellow*

## Tenement Museum

Exhibits and tours: “Hard Times” and “Shop Life”

The Tenement Museum presented fellows with immigrant life in New York through stories and artifacts. The exhibit “*Shop Life*” shared the stories of New York City immigrants since the mid-1900s by exploring the stories of building on 97 Orchard Street in an interactive, multimedia exhibit. The tour “Hard Times” showcased how immigrants coped with economic hardship through the stories of the Gumpertz family and the Baldizzi family. These two families lived in different centuries but shared similar struggles, hopes, and survival strategies as they worked to create new lives.

## Video Advocacy Workshop

Isabel Pinheiro, WITNESS

Isabel Pinheiro is program staff at WITNESS and currently oversees the organization’s work in the U.S. Pinheiro’s workshop gave an overview of video advocacy with specific examples from around the world. The workshop shared insights regarding the challenges and benefits of the media landscape. The workshop also included hands-on exercises on digital advocacy, and advised participants on how it might fit into the fellows’ historical dialogue work.



Pablo de Greiff was a keynote speaker during the conference in 2019. (photo courtesy of B. Wardaya)

## War Crimes Investigations Workshop

Anjli Parrin, [Columbia University](#)

Anjli Parrin is a Legal Fellow with the project on War Crimes and Mass Graves at Columbia Law School, Human Rights Clinic and Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, working on the project on war crimes and mass graves. The workshop introduced the use of forensics tools and human rights to further truth and criminal accountability for mass atrocities in the Central African Republic.

## Web Design, Digital Media, and Historical Dialogue Workshop

Alex Gil, [Columbia University](#)

Dr. Alex Gil is a member of the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and serves as the Digital Scholarship Coordinator in the Office of the Digital Humanities. In his workshop on digital and web projects, he discussed with fellows about the potentials and problems of using web and websites as a vehicle for historical dialogue projects. He also introduced fellows to the digital resources available at Columbia for those interested in developing media/websites on specific topics.

“

The program was a good chance to meet people working in the same field as mine and learn about their different perspectives. I learned about the methodology for writing grant proposals and developed my skills in oral history...I also appreciated the chance to take courses in the university and network. Many of the people that I contacted were very helpful.

— MILENA DURAN, ARGENTINA,

*Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*

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The program gave me a much deeper understanding of what historical dialogue represents, how it can be implemented, and what ramifications for social life it can have. It also significantly expanded my knowledge of other cultural and political contexts while giving me concrete know-how related to project writing and its funding.

— STIPE ODAK, BELGIUM/BOSNIA &

HERZEGOVINA, *Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow/Fulbright Fellow*

# Institute for the Study of Human Rights

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights was established in 1978 at Columbia University as the Center for the Study of Human Rights (CSHR). In spring 2010, Columbia University elevated CSHR to the level of an institute. ISHR is committed to its three core goals of providing excellent human rights education to Columbia University students, fostering innovative interdisciplinary academic research, and offering its expertise in capacity-building to human rights leaders, organizations, and universities around the world.

ISHR (then CSHR) was the first academic center in the world to be founded on an interdisciplinary commitment to the study of human rights. This remains one of our most distinctive features. We recognize that human rights research must transcend traditional academic boundaries, departments, and disciplines, reaching out to practitioners to address the ever-increasing complexities of human rights in a globalized world. ISHR's emphasis on interdisciplinarity, engagement, and globalism draw from and complement the strengths that have long characterized intellectual life at Columbia University.

## Institute for the Study of Human Rights Staff

**Irene Atamian**, Business Manager

**Elazar Barkan**, Director of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights

**Joanna Bauer**, Senior Researcher, Business and Human Rights

**Kristina Renee Eberbach**, Deputy Director, ISHR

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**Stephanie V. Grepo**, Director, Capacity Building Program

**Gergana Halpern**, Director, Education

**Purvaja S. Kavattur**, Staff Associate

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**David L. Phillips**, Director, Peacebuilding and Rights Program

**Breandra Pichon**, Finance Coordinator

**Elsa Stamatopoulou**, Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program

**Inga Winkler**, Director of Undergraduate Studies



The whole experience was unique. But what stands out is the dynamism and stimulation one gets from meeting and collaborating with highly professional people met thanks to the AHDA system and mission. I particularly appreciated being exposed to authorities who excel in what they do, each in their field of specialty. As to historical dialogue, advocacy and skills, the richness and connections that the program facilitates opens a whole different dimension of potential to advance one's projects and aspirations. The group dynamics, formed by fellows coming from all over the world, creates a valuable collaboration and a strong bond that would otherwise be inaccessible.

— REINA M. SARKIS, LEBANON, *Institute for the Study of Human Rights Fellow*



# Support

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Robert Bosch Stiftung (Foundation)

## **At Columbia University:**

Center for Human Rights Documentation and Research  
Columbia University Seminars: History, Redress and Reconciliation  
Columbia University Seminar on Cultural Memory  
Human Rights Studies Program  
Oral History MA Program

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