

1. Name of the research group

Diasporic and Divided Memories

2. Coordinator

Dr. Ihab Saloul (UvA) & Dr. Tamara van Kessel (UvA)

3. Members of the research group

Prof. Ieme van der Poel (UvA),
Lise Evers (UvA, PhD candidate)
Sarike van Slotten (UvA, PhD Candidate)
Leila Cherribi (UvA, PhD candidate)

External members:

Prof. Giovanni Contini (Italian Association of Oral History)
Prof. Patrizia Violli (Bologna University)
Prof. Saskia Sassen (Columbia University)
Dr. Stef Craps (Ghent University)
Dr. Sarah de Mul (Open University)
Dr. Tarik Sabry (Westminster University)
Dr. Miryam Cherti (Institute for Public Policy Research, IPPR/ London)

4. Description of the research programme of the research group

This interdisciplinary research group seeks to explore the contemporary experience of Diasporas – communities who conceive of themselves as a national, ethnic, linguistic or other form of cultural and political construction of collective membership living outside of their 'homelands.' Diaspora is a concept that is far from being definitional. Despite problems and limitations in terminology, this notion may be defined with issues attached to it for a more complete understanding. The term, which may have its roots in Greek, is used customarily to apply to a historical phenomenon that has now passed to a period that usually supposes that Diasporas are those who are settled permanently in a country other from where they were born. Thus, this term has lost its dimension of irreversibility and of exile.

In order to increase our understanding of Diasporas and their impact on both the receiving countries and their respective homes left behind, the research group will explore Diaspora's cultural and artistic expressions: Do Diasporas continue to exist and is the world economy, media and policies sending different messages about Diaspora to future generations? Regarding the latter issue, the research group will address pertinent questions about diasporic memory such as:

- How does migration bring individuals to deal with multiple levels of heritage and culture?
- How does an intensified migration age and exile, coupled with broader and more flexible terrains of social structures, give Diaspora communities a window of opportunity to redefine their social position in both the country of origin and the host country?
- What are some of the ways to identity and define the subject in changing political boundaries where cultural interactions are amplified?
- What are the processes of social formation and reformation?
- How are spaces and places transformed in contemporary imaginaries through forms migration, mobility and/or immobility?
- What new cross- 'ethnoscapes' and cross-'ideoscapes' are emerging in contemporary heritage and memory practices?
- In what new methods can we capture the web of forces that influences Diasporas at the same time?

5. Envisaged results

Journal articles & book chapters, monographs and edited volume, workshops, seminars and public lectures, grant proposals, 3-4 PhD dissertations & Post-docs.

6. Work plan and time schedule

2014 – 2018

7. Societal relevance

The motivations of studying Diasporas and divided memories are numerous and offer an innovative perspective on various heritage, memory and material cultural practices, artistic creations, intellectual outputs as well as religious practices which have made a significant cultural and political impact across the world.