

VINCENT CRAPANZANO

Vincent Crapanzano is currently revising the Jensen lectures on the Anthropology of Imagination which he delivered in spring, 1999, in Frankfurt. These include lectures on the genealogy of the imagination; on landscape as narrated and moralized, on intransigent moments (those inner and out of time/articulation) in exchange of gifts, communicative exchanges, and ritual passages; on hope as a category of and for social and cultural analysis; with special emphasis on cargo cults; on the body and pain as anchoring linguistic systems, emphasizing trauma and memory; on ecstasy, less in a mystical sense and more in a sense of a stepping-out, a distanciation, achieving a transcendent position; on memory as a sort of backward/justificatory frontier, in which he argues for considering memory, both individual and social as a memorialization rather than as simply a "content"; and on end-of-world scenarios, in which he discusses Fundamentalist apocalypses, and phantasies, in which he treats of a Swiss peasant's belief in the end of the world.

He is also working on a final chapter to a collection of essays on the articulation of dramatically transformative experiences. Three of the four essays have been published: 1.) on Herculine Barbin, a 19th century "woman" whose gender identity was legally changed to a man -- she was thought to be a hermaphrodite; 2.) on the "paranoid" Schreber's Memoirs about his illness; 3.) on a case of Rhodesian anti-terrorist soldier who was also a born-again Christian and the messy way in which he articulated his military and religious career; 4.) (yet to be written) on legal constructions of biographies of people in vegetative states who can no longer make any decisions about their fate.

[The Harkis: The Wound That Never Heals](#)

Published by University Of Chicago



Review quotes

"This is an extraordinary book written with great tact and delicacy on the complex weaving of themes of violence, betrayal, grief, and inheritance of responsibility in the worlds of the Harkis who find themselves on the wrong side of history. The style of writing mirrors the shifts of perspectives on the Harkis in French and Algerian social worlds, and it makes us feel the difficult terrain traversed by the ethnographer as he confronts his own taken-for-granted moral assumptions about what it is to listen to those who must confront

violence from positions for which there are no standing languages of either heroic virtue or suffering victims. This is a stunning achievement.”—Veena Das, Johns Hopkins University

“A moving account of a people haunted by the past and imprisoned in the present. This is vintage Crapanzano: learned, sophisticated, and sharply aware of the moral contradictions and willful blindness of human life.”—Tanya Luhrmann, Stanford University

“If Vincent Crapanzano had only sought to offer his visceral account of the enduring ways in which the experience of political exclusion, personal estrangement, and social apartness saturates multiple generations of Harkis, their bodies and minds, this book would be an extraordinary achievement. But it piercingly and powerfully does so much more. Betrayal, despair, and rage are the seared marks of successive political violences that permeate the intimacies of family relations, that haunt the emotional lives of the young who remain tethered to and torn by the guarded silences of their fathers and by their stories that cannot be told. Should we imagine we already know what it means to belong nowhere, to be shorn of the possibility of accounting for oneself, here is a book whose political and psychological insights recast what it is to write a history of the present at new depths and new heights.”—Ann Stoler, The New School

“A work of rare sensitivity and deep psychological insight, *The Harkis* is magnificent. At once a history of one of the darkest chapters in French history and a profound reflection on human emotion, pain, suffering, and most importantly betrayal, this is a stunningly original exploration of the recesses of the human condition.”—Paul Stoller, West Chester University

“*The Harkis* sheds light on one of the most somber chapters of the Franco-Algerian relationship. By means of extensive multigenerational interviews, Crapanzano brings to life the tragedy of the Algerian men who fought for France during the Algerian war of independence and were then abandoned. These men and their families were initially condemned to death, literally, by their country of origin and, metaphorically, by their country of adoption. Herded into camps on their arrival in France and later into out-of-the-way communes their shabby treatment past and present is a stark reminder that the wounds of the war are still very raw. Fluidly written and skillfully analyzed, Crapanzano demonstrates the power of memory, both in its articulation and in its silences. This is oral history at its very best.”—Patricia M. E. Lorcin, University of Minnesota

Recent Publications

- Serving the Word
- French translation of The Hamadsha
- Italian translation of Tuhami
- Hermes' Dilemma and Hamlet's Desire