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Ramapo College to Host Dr. Grudzinska Gross for New Work on Confiscation of Jewish Property in Holocaust

(MAHWAH, NJ) - Dr. Irena Grudzinska Gross, co-author with Jan T. Gross of "Golden Harvest: Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust" (Oxford University Press, 2012), will speak at Ramapo College of New Jersey on Tuesday, October 16 from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Trustees Pavilion about "Plunder from Jews during the Holocaust." The Law and Society program will co-sponsor the talk with the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The College's Platinum Series will support the event.

The grainy black-and-white photograph on the cover of "Golden Harvest" captures the story of a group of peasants digging atop a mountain of ashes at Treblinka, where some 800,000 Jews were gassed and cremated. The picture symbolizes the vast, continent-wide plunder of Jewish wealth that went hand-in-hand with the Holocaust.

The seizure of Jewish assets during World War II occasionally generates widespread attention when Swiss banks are challenged to produce lists of dormant accounts, or national museums are forced to return stolen paintings, but among the perpetrators were ordinary people. Lyrical and often heartbreaking, "Golden Harvest" exposes the economic plunder of Jewish property across the entire continent of Europe.

Grudzinska Gross teaches East European literature at Princeton University. She emigrated from her native Poland after the student unrest of 1968. She studied in Italy and in the United States. A graduate of Columbia University '82, she taught at Emory University, New York University, and Boston University.

In addition to "Golden Harvest," her books include "Czesław Miłosz and Joseph Brodsky: Fellowship of Poets" (Yale University Press, 2009), and "The Scar of Revolution: Tocqueville, Custine and the Romantic Imagination" (University of California Press, 1995). She edited books on literature and the transformation process in Central and Eastern Europe, and is the author of numerous book chapters and articles on these subjects published in the international press and periodicals.

Between 1998-2003, she was responsible for the East-Central European Program at the Ford Foundation. From 2000 till 2003 she was co-chair of the Trust for Civil Society in East-Central Europe. Currently, she is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Stefan Batory Foundation and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Borderland Foundation in Poland.

The presentation is free and open to the public. For more information or to reserve a seat, please call 201.684.7409.

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as sixth in the Best Regional Universities North category for public institutions, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers five graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.