

Workshop

“Dealing with the past – preparing a peaceful future. Experiences from the Alps-Adriatic dialogues”

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“I remain disturbed by the disturbing spectacle of too much memory here, too much oblivion elsewhere, not to mention the influence of commemoration and the abuse of memory - and oblivion. The idea of a politics of just memory is in this respect one of my avowed civic themes.” (French philosopher Paul Ricœur 2003)

“We must all turn our backs upon the horrors of the past and look to the future. We cannot afford to drag forward across the years to come hatreds and revenges which have sprung from the injuries of the past. If Europe is to be saved from infinite misery, and indeed from final doom, there must be this act of faith in the European family, this act of oblivion against all crimes and follies of the past.” (British politician Winston Churchill 1946)

“We can no longer afford to take that which was good in the past and simply call it our heritage, to discard the bad and simply think of it as a dead load which by itself time will bury in oblivion” (German philosopher Hannah Arendt 1958, ix).

“The past is not over yet, between her and the now there is a gulf, which is also found in human beings and in their language. The space of violence continues until today, precisely because everyone insists only on his truth.” (Croatian novelist Marica Bodrožić 2014)

“The resistance to terror is what makes the world habitable: the protest against violence will not be forgotten and this insistent memory renders life possible in communal situation.” (US-American poet and activist Carolyn Forché 1993, 46)

“Becoming concerns the *presence* of the past. If we take this presence to the realm of the social, we can no longer deny responsibility for the injustices of the past, even if we cannot be blamed for it” (Dutch literary scientist Mieke Bal 2015, 158).

“Although nobody wants to be a victim in the present, many would like to have been one in the past. [...] If some community can claim convincingly to have been the victim of injustice in the past, then it acquires an inexhaustible line of credit in the present.” (Bulgaro-French literary scientist, Tzvetan Todorov 2003, 143)

“Dangerous memories are essentially memories that go against the current, that is, they have the potential of being dangerous to hegemonic narratives” (Israeli and Cypriot educators Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas 2012, 22).

“Truth is reasonable to human beings. Who, if not those among you who have met a hard fate, could better testify that our strength reaches further than our misfortune, that one, deprived of many things, knows how to rise, that one is able to disappoint, and that is, to live without deception. I believe that human beings are allowed a kind of pride - the pride of one who, in the darkness of the world, does not give up and does not stop to see what is right.” (Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann 1959)

“I am convinced that this country’s general stance toward the past is what makes our family stories appear so strange and relegates them to such isolation. They have almost no connection to the present. Between the official version of Austria’s history and its actual history stretches a no-man’s land in which it’s easy to get lost” (Austrian novelist Maja Haderlap 2016, 183).

“In Slovenia, history is in fact a part of politics, or rather it is exploited for political purposes” (Slovenian historian Božo Repe 2011, 1).

“Securing peace, the rule of law, a self-critical memory and respect for human rights – are these lessons from history still valid for the present and the future? More than ever, in my opinion.” (German Anglicist Aleida Assmann 2018: 189)

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