European
Commission

EUROPEAN
POLICY BRIEF

REVISITING THE PAST, ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE:

STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN INTEGRATION THROUGH THE
ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT DISCOURSES

30 October 2021

Overcoming Troubled Past and Prospects for Future Research:
2nd Policy Brief

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1 INTRODUCTION

The **main objective** of the Second Policy Brief is to provide a set of new ideas for further research on troubled past(s) in order to find answers to the general policy problem set in the Horizon2020 call (SC6-CULT-COOP-2016-2017).[1] The general policy problem raised in this call was: *How to overcome the troubled past(s) in European states, how conflict discourses rooted in those pasts re-emerge nowadays in various fields of social life, and how to foster the European integration?* Our consortium responded to the mentioned call by proposing a multidisciplinary project *RePAST – Revisiting the Past, Anticipating the Future* (www.repast.eu), which was selected for funding (May 2018 – October 2021).

At the beginning, it should be noted that the Second Policy Brief complements the policy recommendations earlier specified in the First Policy Brief, which was submitted in June 2021 (see this [link](http://) for more information on the recommendations of the First Policy Brief). As the RePAST consortium has not done any other research in the period between the submission of the First and the Second Policy brief,[2] because all research activities have been completed earlier, we have decided to reach out to a wider audience to gain fresh ideas for a new policy brief. More specifically, we contacted persons who have been acquainted with the RePAST project and/or have been involved in different kind of activities related to troubled pasts through their work, but have not been official partners of the consortium.

In June and July 2021, we sent a generic email to 154 people: policy makers, scholars, experts, museum curators and members of NGOs, who participated in various events organized by the RePAST consortium, and asked them to comment on our First Policy Brief, which consists of our earlier ideas on the future possible research. In addition to this, we sent a similar request to the leaders of the work packages in the RePAST consortium, so as to receive their very final reflections on the project (including what the consortium has missed or neglected in its 3,5-year work).

All experts mentioned above received the following questions:

1. Which topics have been, in your opinion, neglected or under-explored in the RePAST research project on troubled past – but should have been explored, if we want to better address the policy problem of troubled past in European countries?

2. What kind of research (topics, disciplines, methodologies, approaches, etc.) on the troubled past(s) issues should be endorsed by the EU Research Agency in future calls?

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[1] Societal Challenge 6 – Europe in a changing world: inclusive, innovative and reflective societies; call H2020-SC6-CULT-COOP-2016-2017, topic "Understanding Europe – Promoting the European Public and Cultural Space."

[2] The last phase of the RePAST project has mostly been focused on dissemination activities. Hence, no research that could have yielded new policy implications and recommendations took place after June 2021, when the 1st Policy Brief was submitted.

3. Would using some other (innovative) methodological approaches yield different ("better") results?

4. Could other dissemination strategies for academia and a wider audience (interactive games, walking tours, etc.) bring us closer to overcoming the troubled past(s)?

In addition to eight substantial feedbacks received by the RePAST Working Package leaders, 13 experts outside of the consortium sent their answers and reflections.

Last but not least, the RePAST consortium organized a workshop and a conference in the last months of the project. These two events were attended by more than 200 people.[3] As both the workshop and the conference were primarily of a reflective nature – and were partly devoted to future research possibilities as well – certain ideas that "floated" there appear in this policy brief. In other words, this document stems from the ideas provided by several experts on topics on troubled pasts at different occasions.

Figure 1: Sources of Policy Brief
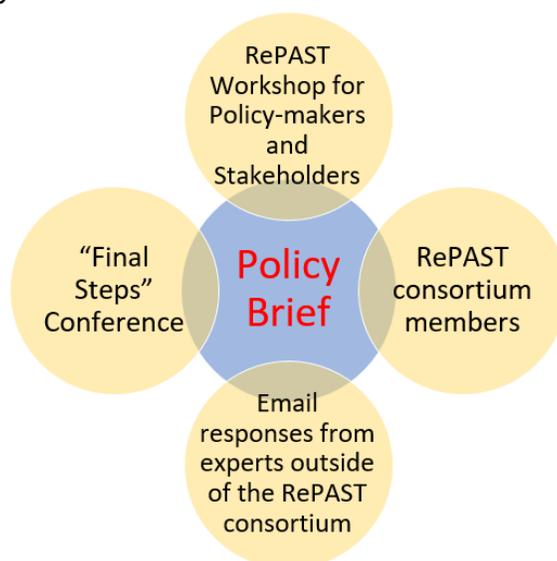
This policy brief aims to create synergies with other research projects, including those that have been financed within the same call as the RePAST project was. The Second Policy Brief, as mentioned earlier, on the one hand, builds on earlier research of the RePAST consortium (reflections on the project provided by RePAST researchers), but on the other hand it goes *beyond* the project findings by incorporating the insights from research on troubled past(s) expressed by other experts who have not been directly involved in the project. However, due to length restrictions of policy briefs, we selected only a handful of ideas that we deemed most important. Other ideas that were suggested, but not included in the main text, appear in the Annex at the end of this document.

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[3] The Final Steps Conference, organized on 15 October 2021, was attended by 65 persons; the International Workshop for Policy Makers and Stakeholders, organized on 26 March 2021, was attended by 142 persons.

1. **The impact of war-related trauma pervades behaviour and well-being of people in conflict- and post-conflict societies**

The impact of war-related trauma pervades not only relations between people on the conflicting sides (in-group *vs.* out-group), it can also affect the health and well-being of people in general (evidence from health science and social psychology on this is abundant). However, our research on troubled past, and similar projects like RePAST, primarily focus on inter-group relations – and often also trauma stemming from this – despite the fact that there are several other layers of trauma that further hinders the improvement of relations (family violence; economic burdens; intra-group pressure etc.).

2. **Limited out-group contact in the countries affected by the troubled past**

Our research supports existing evidence that in many countries investigated in the RePAST project contacts of people with an out-group are limited (Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus and Ireland/Northern Ireland being the most evident cases). This issue has also been raised by several experts who have not been involved in the RePAST project (see Introduction for details). Travelling and spending time with other groups via curricular and extracurricular activities could be beneficial to all youth and could lay the ground for the improvement of intergroup relations.

3. **Living with – rather than overcoming – troubled past**

Our research demonstrated that people living in the places affected by troubled past (if they are not physically separated) are often able to cohabitate and sometimes even collaborate relatively well on certain issues of common interest. There are also examples, when people of two conflicting groups in one "divided town" do not have much or any meaningful contacts (e.g. Mitrovica in Kosovo; Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Nicosia in Cyprus), whereas in another city in the same country people from the same two groups can live relatively normally (e.g. in Kamenica in Kosovo, or in Baljvine in Bosnia-Herzegovina). One of "the everyday life strategies" applied by people belonging to the conflicting social groups is to avoid topics that could ignite fierce debates or clashes. However, much research, including that of the RePAST consortium, is primarily focused on the attempts to *overcome* troubled past and bring people together by all means in order to increase mutual empathy (a final goal). Although this is desirable, such research endeavours often come at the expense of not seeing the cases when people from the conflicting sides are able to co-habit in the framework of a so-called *agonistic peace*, in which former relations of open hostility are reconfigured into that of a relationship between legitimate adversaries.

4. Problematic nexus of troubled pasts, emotions, social media and "post-truth societies"

The emergence of social media radically transformed – some would say *democratized* – public sphere in a way that "having a voice" becomes accessible to almost everyone (a simple tweet, for example, can spark a heated debate). Our research has shown that troubled past as a diverging point seems to further disintegrate societies, especially through the intensive expression of negative emotions on social media. The anonymity of commentators on social media can serve as a smokescreen for the use of derogatory language, which intensifies the polarization of societies. The latter is often even an end goal of populistic politicians, who in such "post-truth circumstances" can manipulate the electorate by spreading fake news and hate speech geared towards vulnerable groups (securitizing certain societal phenomena as "imminent societal dangers").

5. Limited impact of professional historians in shaping discourse on troubled past

Research has shown – and this issue has also been raised by experts outside of the consortium – that the role of professional historians in fashioning the discourse on troubled past in many states is limited. The discourse is more often shaped by persons less competent or even non-competent in historical issues, but who do not shy away from explaining "real truths" to a wider audience. The increase of social media has provided more space to such voices, as almost everyone can share their opinion widely. It can be said that the reach of professional historians – academically "immersed" in research on their specific topics, which are often not linked to troubled pasts at all – into a national consciousness is limited.

6. "Blossoming" of interactive learning e-tools in the field of troubled past

Many research projects develop sophisticated and often costly interactive e-tools, aimed at increasing the likelihood of educating the youth about troubled past (the RePAST project, for example, developed a virtual game Fact Finders[4] and eight Virtual Tours,[5] one from each of the explored countries with troubled past). With a significant increase of such learning tools – and given the fact that time does not permit research projects to assess the (medium-/long-term) impact of such tools within the lifetime of a project – it remains unknown how much they will actually be used after the projects' end and how much learning on the past and change of perceptions has happened and continues to happen.

7. Meaningful inclusion of civil society on research on troubled past is limited

The practice-based goals and civil society engagements are important components of project proposals related to troubled past; the project proposed by the RePAST consortium was not an exception in this regard. That said, the structure of the work is not always conducive to effective engagement and contribution of civil society. Had civil society been better integrated in the project,

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[4] See: https://appadvice.com/game/app/fact-finders/1538147667
[5] See: https://www.photoconsortium.net/educationalportal/2021/03/23/repast-virtual-tours/

its contribution may have been more substantial, as civil society actors could become co-owners, promoters and implementers of project results.[6] As it was, the consortium often struggled to see the benefit of doing the "real world" (non-academic) tasks, which had to be done in the course of the project in accordance with the Grant Agreement. This may be because the call required too many things, which had to be crammed into the research agenda without being properly integrated.

8. Inadequate linkage between project outcomes and educational institutions

Substantial portion of European research funds are channeled towards non-academic organizations, which are often tasked with developing tools for addressing individual members of targeted social group(s) (e.g. pre-defined number of Roma people, LGBTQ+ community via project application). While this is important, we should not shy away from the fact that such tools only benefit a small portion of the most engaged or the "lucky" (e.g. specific primary or high-school teacher engaged in a research project). The outcomes of the research, thus, rarely result in much-needed positive spillover effects. A vivid example can be found with public authorities working in the field of educational policy, who are not familiarized or interested in the project results that suggest the need for reforms, as they do not "feel ownership" over them (e.g. recommendations on revising curricula of history courses). This is not surprising, though, given the fact that the public authorities that have the power to introduce changes in most cases are not included in projects in a meaningful way (as project partners, for example).

9. Well-intentioned efforts of actors can become part of the problem

Continuous entrapment of a country in a troubled past is beneficial for certain social groups. Hence, not everyone is interested in the end goal of overcoming historic cleavages. Therefore, for each conflict emerging from troubled pasts it is necessary to understand who profits from conflict remaining unresolved. Also related is the fact that even well-intentioned efforts, for example, pursued by international actors who aim to assist a country to overcome troubled past can become part of the problem. In particular, the efforts (and financial resources of international actors in particular, including those of the EU) can become part and parcel of the conflict, as they unintentionally provide resources ("fuel") for the continuance of a protracted conflict.

10. Overly broad scope of (Horizon2020) research calls

In a well-intentioned aspiration on the one hand, and the actual economic possibilities for research funding on the other, it comes as a no surprise that Horizon2020 research calls in social science are very broad in their scope. Hence, the consortiums, if they want to increase the likelihood of selection for funding, have to propose broad research agendas, attempting to cover a multitude of research areas at the same time. This pertained to the RePAST project as well. Although a

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[6] For more, see Gall, E., Millot, G., Neubauer, C. (2009): Participation of Civil Society Organisations in Research. Available at: https://www.livingknowledge.org/fileadmin/Dateien-Living-Knowledge/Library/Project_reports/STACS_Final_Report-Partic.research_2009.pdf

comprehensive approach was needed to address the challenge posed in the call, such an approach inevitably leads to a more general analysis scattered around different Work Packages. In other words, the RePAST consortium had to "sacrifice" depth for each specific case in order to get a broader, and inevitably more abstract picture.

11. Role of science(s) as agent(s) in the discourse on troubled past

In the so called "post-truth world" and the current pandemic, which vividly exposed several problems European societies have been struggling with, it remains unknown what the general role of sciences for improving well-being of people in today's world is (the topics related to troubled past are not an exception). As evident, the voice of scientists regarding specific issues resonates adequately within limited spheres of society only (and the impact of "scientific voice" changes from country to country). Last but not least, nowadays even policy decisions are often being made without taking scientific evidence seriously into account, which renders difficult an objective debate based on arguments – not only in the realm of troubled past, but on a wider societal level.

3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Implication & Recommendation 1: *Studying traumas of troubled past and those emerging from current life integratively*

Explanation. Future research projects should not focus on trauma caused by troubled past only but should rather explore these phenomena in an integrative way. Namely, it is an interplay of several layers of trauma (those occurring nowadays within families or because of social/economic consequences etc.) on the one hand, and the historic traumas on the other hand that affect people's pro-social behaviour and their attitude towards out-group (if a person lives in a poverty or is socially isolated, it is likely that such a person would not develop positive attitude towards other people, because in her view, the world as such is dangerous; research on how such issues mutually feed each other could be endorsed to get better insights into the complexity and intertwined layers of trauma).

Policy Implication & Recommendation 2: *Conducting research on the efficiency of "the contact hypothesis" (instead of taking its "successfulness" for granted)*

Explanation. Several activities aimed at bringing people of opposing sides together in order to increase understanding (e.g. seminars, workshops etc. organized within the paradigm of the contact hypothesis), are being supported by the EU and other actors. However, it is not known what kind of events (approaches, formats, duration etc.) really contribute to an increased understanding or even empathy with an out-group; research on these topics is needed.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 3: *Broadening research agenda with studies on agonistic communities*

Explanation. Exploring attempts on how troubled past could be *overcome* often receive generous research funding, which is normally positive. However, the cases of *agonistic* communities, in which relations among former enemies are not harmonious, but are anyway regulated by a set of democratic measures respected by different sides, should receive more research attention in the future calls on troubled past.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 4: *Putting emotions at the centre of research and exploring the efficient strategies for counter-acting or preventing the abuse of emotions in the narratives on troubled past*

Explanation. It is yet to be understood which strategies and measures work efficiently in attempts to counter-act or prevent the abuse of emotions in the narratives on troubled past. As this problem is on the rise in the EU member states as well, where populistic politicians often manipulate people's emotions, future research could investigate these phenomena. Last but not least, even countries referred to as *consolidated* democracies have been struggling with similar problems (e.g. the USA, the United Kingdom), which provides an additional reason to endorse such research.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 5: *Identifying approaches for strengthening the role of professional historians in shaping discourse on troubled past*

Explanation. As the voice of professional and internationally recognized historians in shaping debates on historic issues is often unheard, as politicians' voices often prevail, it is recommended to look for ways to increase historians' impact in this regard. This can be done, for example, in media outlets, which produce serious documentaries, stories, etc. To do so, research centres and universities should develop capacities to promote scholars' work to a wider audience. In this respect, also the historians researching troubled past should be encouraged to participate in such debates. Last but not least, in attempts to strengthen the role of professional historians in shaping discourse on troubled past, it is encouraged to look for ways to implement recommendations from previous works.[7]

Policy Implication & Recommendation 6: *Exploring effectiveness of modern e-tools for learning on troubled past*

Explanation. Significant portions of funding in research projects are spent on developing sophisticated e-tools, aimed primarily at youth and their learning on troubled past (through apps, virtual games, digital archives etc.). However, it remains unknown how effective such tools really are in their attempt to promote learning on tragic histories. We recommend launching research that would investigate the actual usage and the efficacy of these tools in a period of 3-5 years after the product has been put on the market/disseminated in society.

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[7] See, for example, Stevens, M. (2010) Historians in Public Life in France and the UK, *The Public Historian* 32 (3): 120-138.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 7: *Exploring the effectiveness of possible contribution of civil society in EU projects on troubled past*

Explanation. The EU Commission strongly advocates for the inclusion of civil society organizations (CSO) in research projects in order to take care of societal perspectives.[8] Projects exploring troubled past are not an exception. However, in many projects CSOs have not been involved in the development of a project proposal, but were rather invited to join the consortium at the last stage, just before submission, in order to increase the likelihood of selection for funding; this limits the potential CSO could otherwise have. Thus, a study on how CSOs can be efficiently integrated in the projects aimed at overcoming troubled past at all stages could be supported (instead of allocating a certain CSO a role in such projects and take it for granted that its contribution will positively contribute to bridging historic difficulties).

Policy Implication & Recommendation 8: *Investigating the potential of educational institutions' cooperation in EU projects*

Explanation. In order to pursue the changes at a societal level that EU research calls tend to facilitate, future calls related to troubled past should explore the most effective ways of involving educational institutions in research projects, especially from the aspect of dissemination and communication activities. In other words, it would be beneficial that educational institutions not only "receive" the project results and outputs when they are completed (e.g. through publications, e-learning tools, leaflets), but that teachers, students and other potential users collaborate in the development of products, the data collection phase etc. This could not only increase the feeling of ownership of products among users, but also increase the usability and sustainability of research projects after a project ends.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 9: *Shaping research calls in a more focused way*

Explanation. More focused calls – and more focused projects – on troubled pasts would have allowed for more depth and room for a more cohesive analysis. Sometimes "less is more", and small focused projects might serve the purpose of identifying key barriers to integration rooted in troubled pasts more effectively. More focused projects would also enable researchers to publish articles of high quality that go in depth.

Policy Implication & Recommendation 10: *Investigating the general role of sciences in "the post-truth world"*

Explanation. Future calls could investigate more closely the role of sciences (social sciences, humanities, and STEM) as agents in the public discourse on conflict and the past. Taking into

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[8] This was fostered with the introduction of "Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)" which invites several societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business, third sector organizations, etc.) to work together during the research and innovation process. See further: Ahrweiler, P., Gilbert, N., Schrempf, B., Grimpe, B. and Jirotka, M. (2019): The role of civil society organisations in European responsible research and innovation, Journal of Responsible Innovation 6(1): 25-49, DOI: 10.1080/23299460.2018.1534508

account that trust in science cannot be taken for granted (as the current pandemic has rather dramatically shown), it is important to understand to what extent scientific discourses resonate within contemporary societies, what appeals and what does not appeal to public opinion at large and specific publics, as well as what fosters public trust (and what evokes distrust) into scientific perspectives and discourses regarding past and present discourses. Therefore, further research is needed into the capacity of scientific discourses to play a role in the formation of opinions/emotions of people with regard to troubled pasts.

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4 RESEARCH PARAMETERS (DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT)[9]

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The RePAST project investigates how European societies deal with their troubled pasts today through the analysis of conflict discourses rooted in those pasts, with a view on the impact of those discourses on the European integration. RePAST studies comparatively eight cases of countries whose troubled pasts sit squarely on legacies that still endanger the European integration: Cyprus, Germany, Poland, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Ireland, and Spain. In each of the eight countries, the conflict discourses rooted in troubled pasts are being studied in four fundamental spaces of civil society and sources of informal education: (a) history (oral and official), (b) the media (journalistic- and citizen-led media), (c) arts and culture, (d) politics (formal and informal politics).

The **specific objectives** of the project are:
 (1) to develop a *conceptual and methodological framework* for the multidisciplinary and cross-country comparative research of how collective memory of troubled pasts informs current conflicts in relation to the European integration and the many faces of the crises (economic crisis, refugee crisis, political crisis);

(2) to *produce a typology of conflict discourses in four discursive fields* of paramount importance for collective memory and identity formation (history, the media, arts and culture, and politics) in eight countries, in a cross-country comparative fashion, taking into consideration how the current crisis in its multiple forms mediates these narratives;

(3) to explore the *reception of the troubled-past conflicts* by members of the public and key civil society actors (e.g. citizens' associations, NGOs, activists, artists, political actors) and investigate the ways in which they reproduce, negotiate, (re)appropriate or subvert these discourses that appear in established media, through artistic representations and in political discourses;

(4) to understand the *impact of conflict discourses* on political actors' and citizens' attitudes toward the European integration through eight national surveys (public opinion analyses);

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[9] This description of research parameters appears in the First Policy Brief. However, we are adding it here, as well, because this Second Policy Brief is a stand-alone document.

(5) to *equip policy-makers* in eight countries and at the EU level with *policy recommendations* for facilitating processes of cultural dialogue and mutual understanding of the past;

(6) to *furnish civil society actors* (e.g. educators, artists, researchers, journalists, individual citizens, cultural institutions) *and the cultural tourism industry* in eight countries with four concrete tools and mechanisms for acting upon troubled pasts: a multi-modular online platform for deconstructing the conflict narratives; a series of digital mini-games for renegotiating the troubled pasts; a treasure-hunt game to discover the troubled pasts; and workshops for cultural tourism professionals on how to deal with the troubled pasts;

(7) to *disseminate the produced scientific knowledge, tools and strategies* to stakeholders and society at large at the national, EU and international levels.

To reach these objectives, RePAST adopts an innovative **multidisciplinary and mixed-method approach**, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods and drawing on concepts and techniques from sociology, history, communication/media studies, cultural studies, political science, computer science and law. Various research methods, data sources and techniques have been employed, including: analysis of primary and secondary data; interviews; focus groups; statistical analysis (for analysing surveys); news texts analysis (discourse analysis); data mining and computational analysis.

5 PROJECT IDENTITY

PROJECT NAME	Revisiting the Past, Anticipating the Future: Strengthening European Integration through the Analysis of Conflict Discourses (RePAST)
COORDINATOR	Dr Dimitra L. Milioni, Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus, Dimitra.Milioni@cut.ac.cy
CONSORTIUM	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, AuTH Thessaloniki, Greece Clio Muse IKE – CLIO Athens, Greece Cyprus University of Technology – CUT Limassol, Cyprus Lancaster University – LAC Lancaster, United Kingdom Ludwig Maximilian Universität München – LMU Munich, Germany Serious Games Interactive Ltd. – SGI Köbenhaven, Denmark Universidad Autonoma de Madrid – UAM

Madrid, Spain

University College Dublin – IE
Dublin, Ireland

University of Agder – UA
Kristiansand, Norway

University of Ljubljana – UL
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Vesalius College – VeCo
Brussels, Belgium

Widok Foundation for Visual Culture – Widok
Warszaw, Poland

FUNDING SCHEME	Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020); Societal Challenge 6 – Europe in a changing world: inclusive, innovative and reflective societies; call H2020-SC6-CULT-COOP-2016-2017, topic "Understanding Europe – Promoting the European Public and Cultural Space"
DURATION	May 2018 – October 2021 (42 months)
BUDGET	EU contribution: 2 497 359,66 €
WEBSITE	www.repast.eu
FOR MORE INFORMATION	Contact Dimitra L. Milioni (Dimitra.Milioni@cut.ac.cy)

FURTHER READING

Antoniou, G., Dinas, E., Kosmidis, S. 2020. Collective Victimhood and Social Prejudice: A Post-Holocaust Theory of Anti-Semitism. *Political Psychology* 41(5): 861-886. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12654

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Kočan, F. 2019. Collective Memory and an Interpretative Approach: The Struggle over Kosovo's Independence as an Ideational Background for Contemporary Serbia's Foreign Policy Choices. *Politička misao* 56 (3-4): 200-217. https://doi.org/10.20901/pm.56.3-4.09

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ANNEX: REFLECTIONS OF EXPERTS ON THE FUTURE POSSIBLE RESEARCH ON TROUBLED PAST

In this Annex, we list the reflections provided by experts which *have not appeared* in the main text of this policy brief and, thus, have not been discussed above in detail, but might be considered in the preparation phase of future research calls on troubled past (See Section 1 – Introduction for details).

- Examine an agency of buildings which remains connected with a troubled past: mainly widespread in the EU cities that link back to contested or painful events or contentious stories and yet are part of people's daily life. Here, it is important to examine: what kind of memories and feelings do they mobilize? Do they prevent forgetting but also reconciliation because of the emotions and memories they mobilize?

- To investigate "demographies and topographies" of memories, or how the same memories differ across a country or Europe. For example, how is World War II remembered across Europe today? Across Germany?

- Inclusion of artists in the projects: it is important to consider art and literature as potent mediums of memory transmission.

- Future research should be focused on identity transmission mechanisms: for example, why today someone identifies as an Irish just like someone else in 1789? What has enabled the transmission and continuity of this form of identity, while other identifiers have not been as salient over time?

- Explore more deeply into "transnational justice": paying more attention to the legal measures taken in each country (truth commissions, compensation policies, amnesties, purges etc.) and their implications for the reconstruction of the past and society in general.

- For the EU it should be important to assess how and to what extent the past is truly important for its future. So, future projects should be focused on this question. Such projects should have a strong analytical theoretical contribution/hypothesis and build a strong empirical roadmap on a methodology on how to evaluate and make sense of that relevance. It needs to be more abstract in a way.

- Future projects and research should be focused on a bottom-up perspective: conflicts (especially in the Balkans) are predominantly overrepresented with research and documents from a top-down approach, which leaves very little space for a decision-making at the grassroots level.

- European research projects should work as a driver of the process of integration: Rather than looking to identify barriers to integration, European research projects could work as processes of integration by structuring future calls in ways that encourage and support transnational collaboration on case studies even if, or perhaps especially because these concerns study the history, culture, and politics of other nations.

- Use social networks to a greater extent: it can be used to ask a question or carry out small surveys to encourage the participation of society while obtaining information about their knowledge. Digital platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn should be used.

- Greater focus on structural issues. Can diverse or conflict-prone states in Europe and elsewhere be made peaceful with various forms of accommodation such as power-sharing and decentralization? Are more structural remedies such as secession and partition still necessary?

- Research must provide space for innovations and experimentations and, above all, shall not fear failure.

- In the future, it will be interesting to look at the troubles that the pandemic has created in small and larger museums in Europe. It might be important to highlight more case studies and to analyze the new assets that some of these institutions have adopted as a consequence of such a situation. Strategies should be adopted to interact with an even more diverse public. Future calls should be focused on the importance of communication and the community's role in cultural heritage conservation.

- Greater focus is needed on group-relevant aspects of perceptions about the troubled past in a comparative perspective.