



Historical
memory as
a medium
for collective
self-delusion



Genealogy of Amnesia Rethinking the Past for a new Future of Conviviality

FWF-PEEK project 2018–2020

Fall Newsletter 2018

“Genealogy of Amnesia: Rethinking the Past for a New Future of Conviviality” is the title of an interdisciplinary, arts and theory based research project. It is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) through its Programme for Arts-based Research (PEEK). The project is led by Marina Gržinić and developed at the Studio of Conceptual Art (Post-Conceptual Art Practices), Institute for Fine Arts, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Launched in February 2018, the three year project concentrates on amnesia and politics of silence and oblivion that have shaped the constitution of identities and communities in Europe and the globalized world. We address colonialism (Belgium), anti-Semitism (Austria), and turbo-nationalism (“Serb Republic”), all of which are central but not the sole factors for the construction of the past and the present in these territories.

This newsletter provides you with a general introduction to the project, announces the upcoming symposium in Vienna (November 8-10), includes a review of events and activities in 2018 and a preview of the years 2019 and 2020.

[Find out more on our website →](#)

About the project

The aim of “Genealogy of Amnesia: Rethinking the Past for a New Future of Conviviality” is to establish a genealogically constructed map of techniques and procedures of oblivion,

Belgium, Austria and former Yugoslavia

With a team of international researchers, artists and activists our project addresses colonialism (Belgium), anti-Semitism (Austria), and turbo-nationalism (“Serb

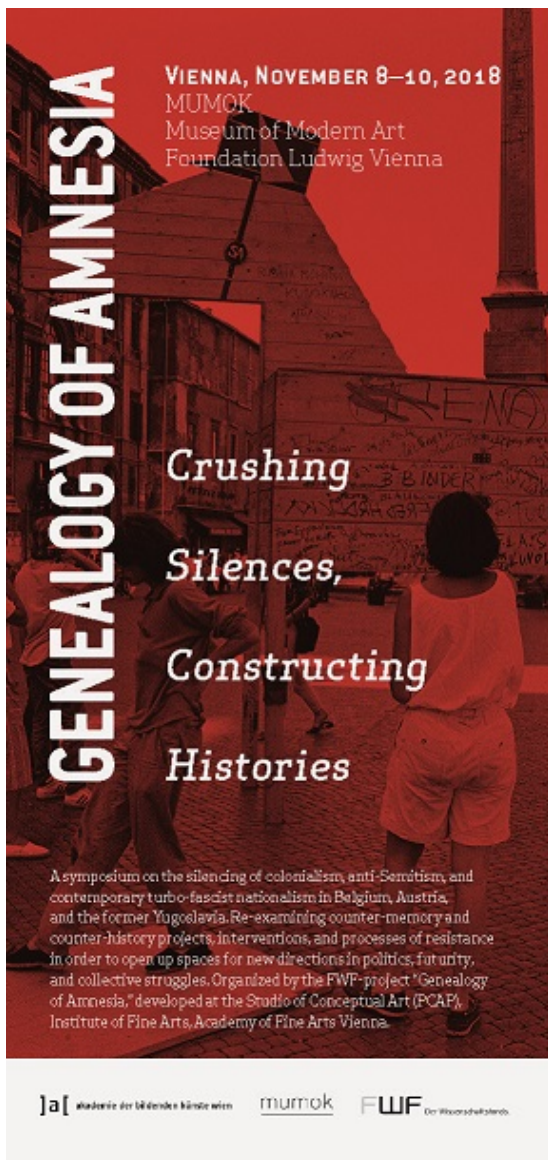
silence, and amnesia in regards to the genocidal pasts of Belgium, Austria and former Yugoslavia, in order to develop emancipatory strategies for rethinking a convivial future in Europe and globally.

Our method and format of interdisciplinary, arts-based research is conceptually and politically connected to the topic of the epistemology of history. Through theoretical research and artistic practices, a realm for the production of knowledge of history is created. In this regard, it is of the utmost importance to understand how processes of empowerment and strategies are built against the politics of forgetting while addressing, initiating, and facilitating artistic practices and theoretical research.

[Find out more →](#)

Republic”), all of which are central but not the sole factors for the construction of the past and the present in these territories. The expansive approach of this research project — covering three seemingly disparate and chronologically distant events — by no means implies a homogenization of the experiences of the dispossessed, the discriminated, and the murdered people and communities. What connects these three historical situations are not only crimes that occurred in a span of a hundred years, but the fact that in all three cases — despite the available evidence of documents, testimonies, and analyses — nation-states, collectives, and identities continue to be built on practices of silence, oblivion, and amnesia.

[Find out more →](#)



November 8-10, Vienna Symposium Genealogy of Amnesia – Crushing Silences, Constructing Histories

MUMOK Museum of Modern Art
Foundation Ludwig Vienna
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna,
Cinema (basement) and Lounge (5th
floor), barrier-free access

Symposium on the silencing of colonialism, anti-Semitism, and contemporary turbo-fascist nationalism in Belgium, Austria, and former Yugoslavia. Re-examining counter-memory and counter-history projects, interventions, and processes of resistance in order to open up spaces for new directions in politics, futurity, and collective struggles.

With Ruth Beckermann, Neijra Nuna Čengić, Collectif Mémoire Coloniale et Lutte contre les Discriminations, Marina Gržinić, Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur, Sophie Lillie, Michael Loebenstein, Pedro Monaville, Markus Rheindorf, Birgit Sauer, Max Silverman, Shirley Anne Tate, Šefik Tatlić, Sophie Uitz, Gloria Wekker, and Ruth Wodak.

[Detailed program →](#)

2018 Review – Events and Activities

Workshops and Lectures

Two workshops in Brussels and Belgrade and a lecture series at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna were held during the summer term of 2018. Following an arts and theory research approach, these events were dedicated to our project's first year's research theme, "memory and history."

May 3, 2018 Brussels Workshop: "The Power of

Decolonialization, Art and Interventionsst”

Public workshop night with artists and activists Monique Mbeka Phoba, Laura Nsengiyumva and Womba Konga aka Pitcho at LeSpace (Brussels), presenting different interventions and practices regarding the process of decolonialization in Belgium.

[Read more →](#)

May 18, 2018 Belgrade Workshop: Post-war Nationalism, Memory and History

Workshop with Ana Isaković, Nebojša Milikić and Aleksandra Sekulić, at the Center for Cultural Decontamination (Belgrade). This workshop was envisioned as a conversation that leads toward consultation and education, uniting a selected group of theorists, researchers and activists. Issues elaborated on were the construction of national identity in Serbia and “Republika Srpska” in the post-socialist era.

[Read more →](#)



April-June, 2018 Vienna Lectures: An introduction to the “Genealogy of Amnesia”

A series of three lectures by Marina Grzinic and Sophie Uitz is held during the summer term 2018 at the Post-Conceptual Art Practices study programme (Vienna Academy of Fine Arts). Each of the lecture includes a screening of documentary film and introduces one of the three research territories of the “Genealogy of Amnesia” to the students.

[Read more →](#)

Interviews in Belgium, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

In order to create different narrative methodologies, to build a link with the present and to raise awareness of subdued narratives, an important element of our research project is the development and presentation of an alternative archive. The archive “Countering the Genealogy of Amnesia” will be continually updated on our website as our research unfolds. The archive is a collection of digital and digitized materials that address the subjects and objects, the territories and events of oblivion and amnesia. The documentations, interviews, texts, videos, visuals, and other archival materials are either original works of affiliated artists or materials recorded and collected during the project’s research phase, will be edited along visually distinctive and discursive lines and formats, interlinked, and contextualized.

[Visit the Archive \(work in progress\) →](#)

2019 Preview: Book publication

Rethinking the Past for a New Future of Conviviality: Opposing Colonialism, Anti-Semitism, Turbo-Nationalism (2019,

day nation-states are built on practices of oblivion regarding their past. This volume expresses at the beginning of the 21st century the obvious demand for critically questioning our inherited knowledge and to rethink the past for a new future of conviviality.

Cambridge Scholars Publishing), edited by Marina Gržinić and Sophie Uitz.

This volume highlights reflections on racism and nationalism, empowerment and futurity. It focuses on collective amnesia in regards to traumatic events of the European past and the ways memory and history are presented for the future. The essays cover and oppose the seemingly disparate genocides under Belgian colonialism, Austrian anti-Semitism and turbo-nationalism in “Republika Srpska” (Bosnia and Herzegovina). What connects these historical situations is the fact that, despite available documents, to this very

2020 Preview: Exhibition

International group show “The Archive of Amnesia,” in Austria

Archive of Amnesia will host an international group of artists, exhibiting multiple formats across a variety of media. The intention is to perform a visual-epistemic delinking from amnesia in order to expose the pluriversality of thought, communities, histories, narratives, epistemologies and alliances in relation to memory and history.

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