



# UNREST

Grant Agreement No. 693523

Stakeholder Newsletter

December 2018 – March 2019



Horizon 2020  
European Union Funding  
for Research & Innovation

## UNREST Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Transnational Europe

Title of this document:  
**Stakeholder Newsletter**  
**December 2018 – March 2019**

<b>Due Date:</b>	Month 36 (March 2019)
<b>Related WP:</b>	WP5 - Communication and training impact Sub - WP5.1: Knowledge Exchange and Dissemination of Project Findings
<b>Leading Project Partner(s)</b>	UBAT
<b>Contributing Partner(s)</b>	RUB
<b>Leading Author(s)</b>	Nina Parish, Ayshka Sené
<b>Contributing Author(s)</b>	Stefan Berger, Nina Weeke
<b>Dissemination Level</b>	PU: Public

**Abstract:** Description of work for Sub - WP5.1

Identify and engage stakeholders through a series of activities designed to maximise the impact of the project and its responsiveness to the needs of potential end users.

<b>Name of Research Project</b>	UNREST (GA - No.: 693523)
<b>Responsible Unit/ Project officer:</b>	REA/B/03 Cristina Marcuzzo
<b>Call:</b>	H2020-REFLECTIVE-2014-2015
<b>Topic:</b>	REFLECTIVE-5-2015 - The cultural heritage of war in contemporary Europe
<b>Type of Action:</b>	RIA
<b>Starting date:</b>	01/04/2016
<b>Duration:</b>	36 months



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## **Key Topics of the Stakeholder Newsletter December 2018 – March 2019**

In the final year of the project, UNREST researchers are focusing increasingly on the operationalisation and dissemination of our theoretical model and our research findings.

### **Workpackage 2: Theory and Methodology**

UNREST relies heavily on Chantal Mouffe's interpretation of agonism because she fully recognizes that collective identities are constituted through the political relations between an 'us' and a constitutive outside in the form of an 'other', and are therefore always inscribed in potentially antagonistic relations. To prevent antagonism leading to the destruction of either liberalism or democracy, she advocates agonism, whereby the conflicting visions and ideas that of necessity characterise political struggles do not engender antagonistic relations between enemies to be destroyed but are played out between 'adversaries', who accept each other's right to express and defend their ideas.

Our comparative case studies, on mass grave exhumations and war museums, presented us with theoretical challenges, which in turn led to some novel reflections on both agonism and agonistic memory. Some of these elaborations were presented at the final Conference of the UNREST project, held at the British School at Rome in February 2019. Further reflections, particularly on the relationship between agonism and cosmopolitanism, can be found on the website of the UNREST project which is currently hosting a debate. Two papers, one by Nathan Sznajder and another by Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen, have started off the discussion. See <http://www.unrest.eu/conference/> and feel free to contribute.

### **Workpackage 3: Mass Graves and Exhumations**

WP3 examined heritage and memory practices and narratives in recent exhumations of mass graves of civilians killed during WWII and two 20th Century intra-state conflicts, both before and after WWII. For WWII (1939-1945), the case study was Poland; for the intra-state conflicts, Spain (1936-1939), and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995). The comparative framework was designed to understand how these excavations elicit different memorial frames in different social, political, cultural and historical circumstances. Throughout the research, the three memory modes defined



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in UNREST (antagonism, cosmopolitanism and agonism) were tested as they emerged from such excavations. In Spain the dominant mode was cosmopolitan, yet on the ground the three modes appeared intertwined on many occasions. In Poland, the contemporary political post-Soviet context promotes a largely antagonistic reading of the past, yet in public discourse it comes disguised in cosmopolitan and Human Rights memorial frames. In Bosnia, the antagonistic and the cosmopolitan modes tend to operate in parallel, with interconnections but also substantial autonomy. The first one predominates in the complex postwar local politics, and the second one responds to the logic of the operation in the region of transnational institutions such as the ICTY.



Caption: Spontaneous shrine in memory of Witold Pilecki at the exhumation site at Powązki Military Cemetery in Warsaw. May 26, 2017.

Photo: Marije Hristova



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Caption: Members of the Micomicón theater company (UNREST partner) discuss details of the exhumation of the Guadalajara cemetery in Spain with members of the technical team. September 11, 2017. Photo: Paco Ferrándiz.

## Workpackage 4: War Museums

Within the UNREST Project WP4 analyzed the memorial regimes of museums related to the history of WWI and WWII in Europe. Drawing on Chantal Mouffe's thinking we distinguish three memorial regimes: antagonistic, cosmopolitan, and agonistic. WP4's key objectives were to test the extent to which the shift towards cosmopolitan memory, noticed already in the beginning of the millennium by Natan Sznajder and Daniel Levy, applied also to European war museums. Further we wanted to assess the possible inclusion of agonistic representations and practices.

For our analysis we have chosen the following museums:

- The Kobarid Museum/Slovenia
- The Historial of the Great War in Péronne/France
- Oskar Schindler's Factory in Kraków/Poland (2010)
- the German-Russian Museum Berlin-Karlshorst/Germany
- the Military History Museum in Dresden/Germany

Our research resulted in a number of articles published in peer reviewed journals and edited volumes. Some of the papers refer directly to the overall theoretical framework, others touch upon related issues, such as multilingualism in historical exhibitions or the use of museums as a tool of cultural diplomacy. A brief summary of our findings has been published



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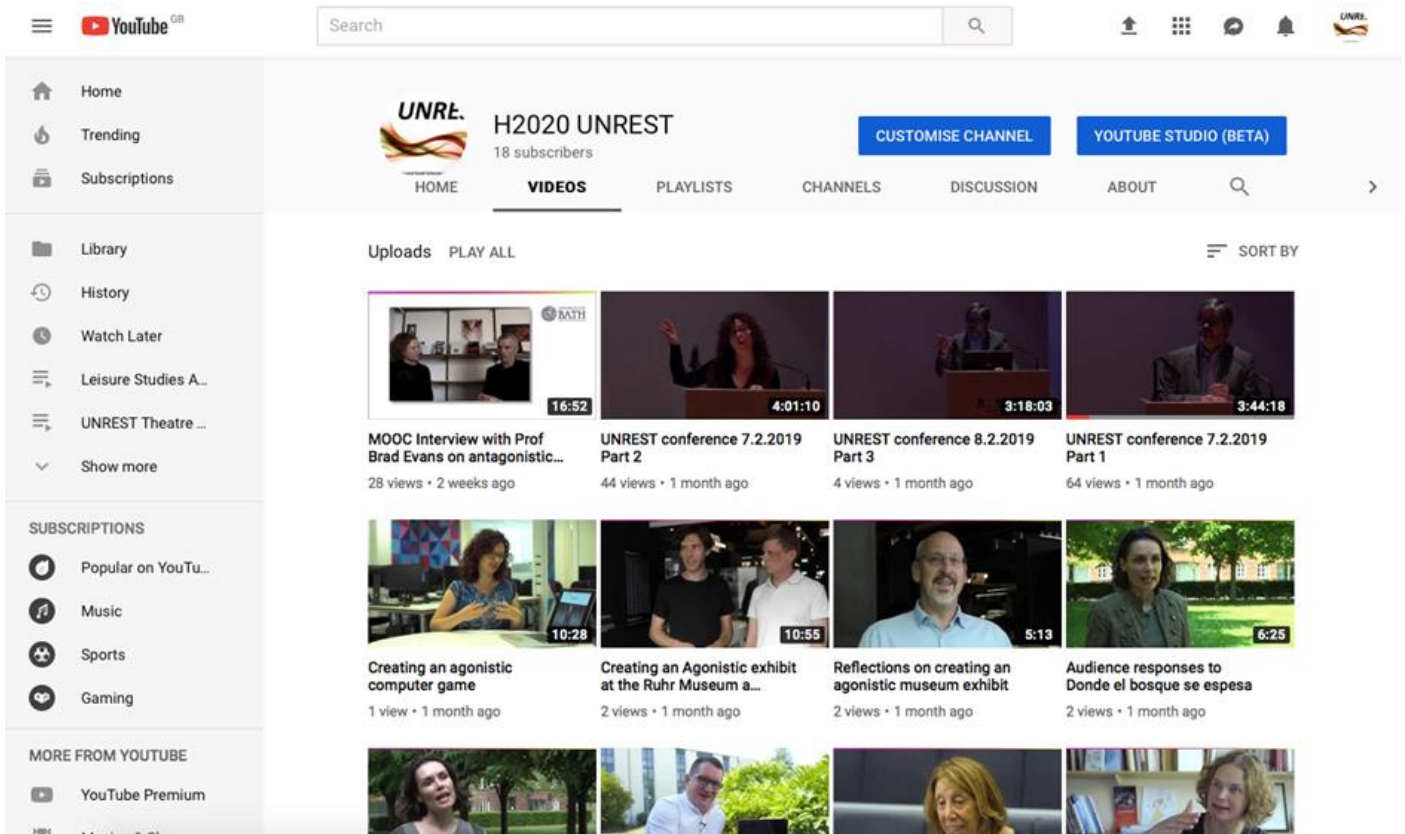
in: Berger S., Cento Bull A., Cercel C., Parish N., Quinkenstein M. A., Rowley E., Wóycicka Z. 'War Museums and Agonistic Memory. A Report' *Museum Worlds*, vol. 6, Issue 1, July 2018: 112-124  
<https://doi.org/10.3167/armw.2018.060109>

## Workpackage 5: Communication and Training Impact

WP5 was tasked with devising and producing a MOOC online training module on modes of remembering war and conflict and their practical applications. The four-week module, 'How We Remember War and Violence: Theory and Practice', was made accessible to the public on three separate occasions, in October and November 2018 and in March 2019. Altogether, it was subscribed by over 1500 people from almost 100 countries, many of them heritage or post-conflict practitioners as well as students of museology, memory and conflict. The module generated numerous comments, varying from positive to enthusiastic, from participants, many of them keen to apply agonistic memory theory to their field of work. The content from the training module is accessible on YouTube, the TES teaching resources website and on the University of Bath Research Data Archive.

WP5 created a free pedagogical package based on work with Micomicón theatre group – 'Where the Forest Thickens: Tools for engaging with memory questions through aesthetic experiences'. The pedagogical package aims to be a useful learning tool for all cultural agents, artists, scholars and students who engage or would like to– with memory questions through aesthetic experience in Europe and beyond. The resource can be downloaded for free from the UNREST website.

WP5 organised a successful conference at the British School in Rome on 7-8 February 2019 with over 60 delegates including UNREST researchers, museum stakeholders, artists, and independent researchers. The entire conference is available to watch online via the UNREST YouTube channel.



Caption: Screenshot of the videos on the UNREST YouTube channel, including the conference at the British School at Rome.

## Workpackage 6: Creation of Cultural Events

### WP6 (play)

Wp6.1 was dedicated to the creation and observation of agonistic memory. This was achieved by the production of the theatre performance *Where the Forest Thickens* and the dissemination and surveying of audiences in Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Poland. The world-premiere of *Where the Forest Thickens* took place in Teatro del Bosque, Móstoles (Madrid) in June 2017. In the depiction of perpetrators, victims and bystanders, *Where the Forest Thickens* comprises traits of the three modes of remembrance as defined by UNREST. Furthermore, by giving the floor to perpetrators, *Where the Forest Thickens* contributed to the debate on how to deal collectively with the memory of mass violence in a given society's public discourse and gave stakeholders the opportunity to contest perpetrators' discourses. The theatre performance provided a safe space, fiction, where conflict and highly emotional engagement can be dealt with in a lighter, less personal way. Regardless of the project's hypothesis about how different stakeholder groups like memory



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activists, cultural heritage professionals and policy makers would identify with a particular mode of remembrance, audiences are unpredictable and each spectator experienced *Where the Forest Thickens* in her own way. Consequently, this research has considered agonistic memory as a process that emerges in the interaction between social actors. However, cultural patterns in each of the three European settings are likely to be observed and perhaps predicted. One of the most important findings of Wp6.1 is that the cultural setting to a large extent determines the mode of remembrance by a given stakeholder, and it does so more than the group she belongs to. Furthermore, looking at individual participant's profiles, we realised the importance of focusing on the study of emotions and our research encouraged and explored these emotional shifts in participants. This methodology helped us to deepen the so-called agonistic emotions by the project's main theoretical references and contribute to the understanding of how aesthetic experiences by social actors can activate new ways of thinking and acting.

## WP6 (exhibition)

WP6 was responsible for the creation of a new war exhibition, which opened at the Ruhr Museum in Essen, Germany, on 11 November 2018 and ran until summer 2019. The museum's Director and curators collaborated with UNREST academics, repeatedly discussing ways of applying agonism to a war exhibition. These exchanges resulted in new challenges for the curators, making them step out of their comfort zone in order to devise novel and unsettling ways of exhibiting war and conflict and engaging with visitors.

UNREST academics found that agonistic memory as a theoretical construct/concept can furnish the necessary instruments in order to conceptualize an exhibition on a historically/politically/socially relevant topic, however they concluded that, in a creative context, theory is useful as an approach, not as a goal in itself. Since exhibitions rely on narratives, conceptualizing exhibitions by resorting to an agonistic approach without a narrative is fundamentally difficult. Agonistic exhibitions have to be polyphonic, i.e. have to open the space for different – conflicting (even ideologically conflicting) – narratives. Agonistic exhibitions should not be neutral and should not even aim towards neutrality, but should rather make evident that their aim is that of presenting and strengthening counter-hegemonic radically democratic positions. The catalogue of the exhibition will be published at the end of March 2019 and is available here: <https://klartext-verlag.de/programm/fachbuch/geschichte/3022/krieg.-macht.-sinn.?c=135>

The exhibition will also be extended until 10 June 2019.

The inclusion of two video games, developed by UNREST researchers, showed that computer games are relevant tools that can be used in order to ask questions, raise problems, delineate (contingent) answers to contemporary problems, and build solidarities. At the same time, the complexity of video game development, in terms of both financial, time and human resources must be considered and could form the core of research projects, rather than one tool amongst others.



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Caption: Audience at the 'Krieg. Macht. Sinn' exhibition opening on 11 November 2018. © David Clarke