FROM PROPOSAL TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A look at where AHDA alumni are today, and the work they are doing in the field.
A Platform for Media Cooperation

Harout Ekmanian was working at The Civilitas Foundation of Armenia when he developed his project idea during the AHDA program. Later he joined Human Rights Watch as a Middle East and North Africa Associate. His project remains a personal initiative, but not one currently affiliated with either his former or current institution. The aim of Harout’s project is to foster a mutual exchange of information and perspective between media workers, journalists and editors in Armenia and Turkey. The idea is to create an online platform that connects journalists both countries based on the “ask a colleague” principle, where verified journalists from each country can register and have the chance to ask questions and express their views regarding current or past issues to a pool of journalists from both countries. The primary purpose is not initiating debate about given issues, but to provide an opportunity for journalists from both countries to seek ‘local’ views, sources and background information to enrich the mutual media coverage of two neighboring countries in online and print press discussions.

Academics and experts in the fields such as Armenian Studies, Kurdish Studies, Turkish studies, Ottoman studies and Genocide studies from any country can also register for access to the platform as respondents to media queries, without having the opportunity to generate information/view a request or question themselves. The simple reason for this limitation is that the priority of the site is to serve journalists’ cooperation in order to have a deeper mutual understanding about each country’s issues through press. Participation is on a voluntary basis and free of charge.

Due to media crackdown and repressions against journalists recently in Turkey, this project has been interrupted temporarily.

Other projects that Harout is working on include a research project on the interconnectedness between minority rights and constitutional rights on one hand, and war crimes prosecution and accountability, as well as transitional justice on the other. The case studies for this research are several minority communities in south west Asia—spanning from the Levant to Anatolia and the South Caucasus. A part of this research was presented under the title “The Right to Narrative: The case of the Armenian Community of Aleppo” at the “Critical Approaches to Armenian Identity” conference in Istanbul by the Hrant Dink Foundation in October 2016.

AHDA Project in Progress
BOSNIA

Nataša Govedarica
Four Faces of Omarska
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Memory Mapping in Prijedor

During her AHDA fellowship, Nataša Govedarica focused on dealing with the past processes in her native Bosnia and Herzegovina. Once an ethnically mixed town that was exemplary in its friendly neighborly relations, the town of Prijedor nowadays is infamous for the place it holds in the world’s topography of mass atrocities. In 1992, during the early months of the Bosnian war, more than 3,000 citizens of this municipality and region of northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina, predominantly Bosniaks, were killed or disappeared. After the Srebrenica genocide, Prijedor is the second largest massacre and was among the main reasons for the ICTY establishment. Due to systematic violence, the case is sometimes called the 'Prijedor genocide'. The Prijedor genocide with its unthinkable methods of segregation, torture, and systematic rape and killings, has its specific local dynamics of victims-perpetrators-bystanders that are described in oral histories of survivors and witnesses. Perspectives of perpetrators have also been known to a certain extent, as they were expressed in trials at the ICTY, but the majority of the population, that is the community of bystanders, has mostly stayed silent about their action—or inaction—during this period of terrible violence.

Thus the project’s point of departure was a desire to address this lacuna. The project sought to collect 30-35 new oral histories and bring a diversity of local positions and perspective, commemorative practices and post war dynamics to light through this small scale oral history project. Additional work would include an exploration of existing materials and a digital mapping of potential participants for the project.

The project is currently in progress, and Nataša is collaborating with the Four Faces of Omarska working group, which is a group of artists and theoreticians who have been investigating the political, economic and cultural implications of the complex transition that followed the devastating wars in the post- Yugoslav countries. (Omarska, a mine and concentration camp from 90-ies is a case study, hence the name.) Through this partnership, a collection of in-depth interviews, oral history is to be published in early 2017. It will provide personal insight into a reality where, even today, 20 years after the end of the Bosnian War, Prijedor’s municipal (Serb) government refuses to memorialize the suffering of non-Serb citizens of Prijedor, while at the same time building memorials to Serb combatants who died in the conflict. It will also bring to light the perspectives of local activists, who keep organizing public commemorative gatherings and activities calling on the Prijedor administration to uphold victims’ universally recognized right to the truth, including the basic right to grieve and honor their dead.

AHDA Project in progress
Memory Sketch of Kraing Ta Chan

The overall goal of the Memory Sketch of Kraing Ta Chan project is to reconstruct the memory of Kraing Ta Chan, a former security center, through arts and dialogues for healing of victim survivors and non-recurrence of mass atrocity in Cambodia. It was designed to be a participatory workshop in which younger and older generations could interact with one another and speak about the violent past. The project also sought to preserve Khmer Rouge crime sites and establish community memory and remembrance activities through consultation workshops, art works and exhibitions. In these ways, the project aimed to reconnect younger generations with the memory of an earlier generation, and to share experiences of victim-survivors in order to acknowledge their suffering and to recognize the harm caused by the Khmer Rouge cadres at Kraing Ta Chan security center. To do this, the project engaged the participation of university students, memorial committees, victims, and survivors, as well as NGOs who were involved in the memorialization processes.

Through a variety of activities such as the Training University Students on Dealing with the Past, exposure visits, the creation of a booklet called “Memory Sketch of Kraing Ta Chan”, and the creation of a Bill Board of Memory, this project was implemented. It sought to engage young people, particularly those of university age, in the memorialization process. The reason for this focus was two-fold: first, university students have little exposure to or understanding of the history of the Kraing Ta Chan site, which, through field research and dialogues, this project provides; secondly, transforming the events of tragedy that occurred at the site during the Khmer Rouge era into an opportunity for students, members of the community and others to learn about this place, creates an opportunity to teach about the past, and to promote lessons in conflict transformation and democracy promotion as well.

This AHDA project was funded by International Coalition of Site of Conscience.

AHDA Project Completed
Refugee Convoys in the Nineties

Darija Maric's project examines the plight of refugees, both Croatian and Serbian, who at different points in the Balkan Wars of the 1990s were forced to abandon their homes. The project, entitled *Refugee Convoys in the Nineties*, is based on video material collected through Documenta's *Personal memories on War and Detention* project, which consists of a collection of almost 500 video recorded memories from all over the Croatia. Darja's project included the creation of a temporary traveling multimedia exhibition that would present the experience of both ethnic groups, Serbs and Croats, who faced similar destinies during the war, but stood on opposing sides of the conflict.

The exhibition will consist of video-recorded personal memories, photos, objects that belonged to refugees during the nineties, letters and other kind of documents. The aim of the exhibition is to increase empathy and deepen understanding of suffering and the losses experienced by victims during the war in Croatia, despite their ethnic background. With this exhibition Darija's intention is to challenge visitors to think about concepts such as tolerance, mutual respect, human rights and democracy.

The main aim of the project is to contribute to the development of individual and social process of dealing with the past in order to build a sustainable peace in Croatia and the region. Through this project, Documenta wanted to contribute to the process of dealing with the past within local communities – Zagreb, Knin, Ilok, Pakrac. Concepts of a multi-perspective approach and the development of critical thinking, essential for analyzing historical events, will be promoted further, after the completion of the project and after the exhibition is realized in each town.

Željka Jelavić, senior curator at Ethnographic Museum Zagreb, has created a second project, *Refugee Convoys in the Nineties*, composed of video interviews with refugees, photos, objects that belonged to refugees, letters and other kind of documents. Other materials for the exhibit, including documentation that draws on personal memories have also been prepared, and liaisons with numerous local museums have been developed: the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb, The Ilok Municipal Museum, and The Pakrac Municipal Museum are interested in cooperating with the project. More generally, Documenta's activities in the cultural field have intensified, as it expects art and culture will be important mediums in the future for efforts to promote process of dealing with the past.

AHDA Project in Progress
Shared Narratives Project

The goal of this project is to contribute to the non-recurrence of violence in the Balkans by bridging the gaps in different and often conflicting narratives among young people that perpetuate the conflicts along ethnic lines. Stage 1 of the project, documentation about the conflict, has been completed. This involved compiling documentation and making it available in a user-friendly format to project participants. The documentation includes, among other things, materials from the ICTY and local courts; media/press material and peace agreements; laws and political decisions; minutes of government and military meetings; statements of victims and witnesses. Stage 2 of the project is an initial seminar and training for 120 high school and university students from 5 different countries, who will bring their national history textbooks with them. Students will present and discuss the materials they have been taught, and explore, compare and critically analyze the different narratives presented. Following this initial training, participants will be divided into groups, with each group working on a shared narrative. Sub-groups will also participate in study tours of places where crimes were committed, where they will speak with victims and witnesses, ICTY and local investigators, prosecutors and activists and local youth. Finally, after all the groups have finished their group work and the narratives are developed, they will be prepared for publication. During this stage, the publication will be translated into all official regional languages and into English. After the publication is printed and published online, it will be promoted in capital cities of the former-Yugoslav countries and in several towns that were heavily destroyed during the war.

AHDA Project in Progress; phase one complete

Civilian Victims Museum

The Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Croatia is currently making a memory museum in partnership with the municipal government in Petrinja (a town 50 km southeast of the Croatian capital), a town heavily damaged during the 1990s war in the former Yugoslavia. The museum will be aimed at preserving the memory of civilian victims regardless of their ethnic identity. A building has been identified as the future home for the museum, and this project is in its introductory stages of development.

AHDA Project in Progress
The divisions within the city of Nicosia in Cyprus are largely defined by ethno-religious identity. The buffer zone divides the old city in half, separating the northern part from the southern. While beginning as a mapping project, Daphne has decided to include a series of games and interactive platforms that seek to address the divisions of the city by creating an imaginary Nicosia that is free of these divisions. The online games are geared towards children, and seek to create a Nicosia without the borders of its real identity, and instead create an image that encourages children to think about the city in a unified way. The games familiarize children with sites on both sides of the city, and encourages them to think about the multi-ethnic history of the place.

AHDA Project Completed
INDONESIA

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Exhibit on Dutch Colonialism

Sadiah completed an exhibit at Erasmus Huis, the cultural center of the Netherlands Embassy in Indonesia, entitled "Prince Diponegoro in Dutch Perspectives. From 1800 until the present." The exhibition focused on the Javanese Prince Diponegoro, who led the Java War (1825-1830) against the Dutch, and highlighted Diponegoro's meanings and legacies for Dutch colonial and contemporary society in the Netherlands. In line with Sadiah's other projects, the exhibit shows an alternative perspective on a violent episode in history, one which was initially written by the victors (the Dutch), but that deserves a critical re-examination.

AHDA Project in Progress/ one phase completed

1965 Today, Living with the Indonesian massacres

To pursue her work on the 1965-66 mass-violence in Indonesia, Sadiah moved to Jakarta, as Dutch organizations were reluctant to support her project because of its political sensitivity. She continues to work on this topic, focusing on the intergenerational socio-cultural impact of the violence. Sadiah co-edited a special issue of Inside Indonesia which asks: how do these events continue to impact Indonesia today? What does ‘1965’ mean to Indonesians? How do they continue to live with the massacres? Clearly, there are various answers to these questions. The special edition approaches them in three ways. First, it looks at competing narratives in historical culture. Second, it examines institutional legacies and civil society. Official stories have often been challenged within civil society, yet they continue to permeate institutions within Indonesia. Finally, the issue takes a close look at actions for transitional justice now happening around the country and across the world. The special issue appeared online on October 1st, 2015, exactly fifty years after the 1965 ‘Tragedy’ took place. See for the full issue, http://www.insideindonesia.org/1965--today---living---with---the---indonesian---massacres-- 2.

AHDA Project Complete
Raba Gjoshi (project work now being carried out by Teuta Hoxha)
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Oral History on the Deported Diaspora of Kosovo

From early 1988 until June 1999 a series of war crimes were committed by both the Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army. Starting in March 1988, more than 800,000 ethnic Albanians were forcefully deported from their homeland and almost all of the 500,000 to 600,000 individuals who remained in Kosovo were displaced. Forced expulsion was committed by several groups, frequently acting together, including the Yugoslav army, special 5 police, paramilitary forces and armed Serb civilians (Iacopino, V., Frank, M., and Waldman, R.).

Reportedly, up to 65% of people and families were directly expelled from their homes by Serb forces. The Kosovo crisis resulted in the largest population displacement in Europe since World War II. By mid-April 1999, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that almost half a million refugees had crossed the border from Kosovo to Macedonia and Albania.

The aim of this project is to establish a Museum of Deportations to honor the memory of the deportations from Kosovo and the diaspora. To that end, the team has analyzed court judgements and other reports, and are in the process of creating an oral history which includes stories from the diaspora of Kosovo. More research is being conducted to access both Albanian and Serbian news reports on the deportations to see if there was any commonalities in their reporting of this crisis. In addition, the municipality of Prishtina is also considering the establishment the Museum of War, which would build on the concept of the Museum of Deportations.

AHDA Project in Progress

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Deconstructing Reconciliation

This project is working to create historical dialogue in Kosovo and the Western Balkans, employing a multi-faceted approach to 'Deconstructing Reconciliation', including a research project, a workshop, a final report, and a visibility event. The project’s research report is on deconstructing reconciliation resulting from a combination of desk research, qualitative (focus groups, interviews) and quantitative research (public opinion polls). The research project engages participants through focus groups and surveys of civil society actors, media, academics, religious community representatives, high school students, families of missing persons and victims, war veterans, teachers, victims and non-victims (survivors).
The project’s three-day workshop on Deconstructing Reconciliation will bring 50 people together from different ethnic backgrounds to engage in dialogue concerning reconciliation in Kosovo and the Western Balkans. They will represent people from different social groups such as war victims, families of war victims, ex-combatants, clerics, activists, scholars, journalists, government officials and others. The hope is that new ideas will be developed through comparisons of reconciliation in other parts of the world (first session), the review of reconciliation instruments and strategies (second session), and assessment of the institutionalisation of reconciliation (third session).

The workshop will cumulate into a final report, which will combine the pre-workshop research and the workshop results, including different perceptions of reconciliation from workshop participants. This document will be a resource for state and non-state institutions working on conflict transformation in the future. The final visibility event will be a public event (with stakeholders and media present) where the final report will be published and results discussed.

*AHDA Project in Progress*
LEBANON

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Fushat Amal - A Space of Hope, a digital memorial project for the missing in Lebanon

Fushat 'Amal, a Space for Hope, is an interactive digital space designed to collect and bring to public attention some of the stories of the thousands of persons who went missing in Lebanon over the past four decades, and whose families continue to struggle to learn about their fate. The digital space is interactive, allowing relatives to create profile pages of their loved ones and add images, videos, and texts that they would like to share, in recognition of these interrupted lives. Behind the abstract number of 17,000 missing, and the framed photographs that have become the hallmark of the families’ public gatherings, there are personal stories to be told and shared. Fushat 'Amal is one space in which the parents, children, and siblings of the missing can share with us these stories; a space where younger generations and those who did not suffer the same fate can learn about who these people are, and reflect on the consequences of their disappearance, the day they left their homes never to return or be heard of again.

At the time of writing, Act for the Disappeared has focused on preparing the ground for the launching of the website where the space will exist. One of the project's goals is to engage the youth on this issue; to that end, ACT conducted presentations of the project in six different universities, enlisting over 30 volunteers who have been trained in interview skills, with a focus on the issue of the missing. Since that time, almost 100 interviews with relatives of missing persons from across Lebanon have been conducted. In parallel, ACT has created a support group of 18 civil society organizations to consult in order to ensure widespread support for the issue. A leaflet about Fushat Amal was developed, and is currently being distributed by the ICRC delegates who are gathering data from relatives in the course of their Ante-Disappearance Data project.

In the upcoming months, ACT will launch Fushat Amal through a communications campaign that will include a press conference, billboard posters, two testimonials to be aired on television; and 10 stories of missing persons to be published in the press.

AHDA Project in Progress

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History Education, Power of Memory, and Historical Commemoration Sites
Nayla Hamadeh, a founding member and currently President of the Lebanese Association for History (LAH), has worked LAH to launch several projects aimed at bridging gaps and making connections in Lebanese society. The first project, "Developing Historical Thinking", is a broad professional development program offered to history teachers across Lebanon. The team of trainers has traveled from extreme North to extreme South over the country to offer workshops on historical understanding to empower teachers to focus on conceptual thinking and develop high-level thinking skills. This project, executed from January to June 2016, is part of a wider commitment by LAH to move the teaching of history in Lebanon away from the one-narrative approach by addressing the curricular deadlock that faces history education in the country. As a result of this deadlock, students still do not study the civil war or any other event that occurred in the last fifty years of Lebanon’s history.

The second project, "The Power of Memory", was conducted in partnership with the Forum for Civil Peace Service Zfd and the History Department at the Universite St. Joseph. This project, launched in September 2016, concerns the facilitation of dialogue between leaders of youth organizations in Lebanese Political Parties. The aim here is to bring these youth together to think about the violent past in order to develop narratives that reflect more acceptance, empathy, and that may have an impact on the public discourse about the past.

The third project that Nayla is involved in is "Sites of Commemoration in Lebanon: Towards a Better Understanding of the Past ". The first phase, launched in December 2016, will work to empowering teachers to establish oral history research projects in their classes. Students will conduct research on sites of commemoration related to the civil war. The aim is to open a conversation about the cultures of commemoration in Lebanon, and to raise awareness and understanding of the different experiences that people lived, their right to commemorate, and how to learn about the past from these sites.

*AHDA Project in Progress/ Other Projects in Progress*
MACEDONIA

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Joint History Textbook Project

The Joint History Project, based in Southern Europe, is in the midst of preparing to launch its new history textbooks for the post-WWII period. This is a continuation of a very long project on history education in the region. Phase 1 was completed in 2007, and then in 2014 the current phase was launched, with the expectation that these new additional textbooks will be completed by the end of this calendar year. The project has a geographical framework, focusing on countries from Slovenia to Cyprus, and from Albania to Turkey. The idea is to compile different kinds of sources related to a variety of historical topics or themes: political events in the region, and sensitive topics (such as the Greek Civil War after WWII, or what happened during the Cold War). There are special chapters devoted to topics such as the history of the former Yugoslavia; a history of socialism in the region; Bulgaria and its history as part of the eastern bloc; as well as on modernization, sport, health, and education. Workbook sources are drawn from multiple perspectives, with historians from all relevant countries participating in creating the textbook. The challenge for the project is the volatile political situation in many participating countries, which makes it unclear if the textbook will be adopted everywhere. In particular, the situation in Greece, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Albania is not promising, with the undermining of university autonomy as governments increasingly insert themselves heavy-handedly in the education sector. In such a turbulent time, history, national history, identity, or identity politics are useful tools for those in power. Nonetheless, the textbook is being published and the hope is that a change in government position will enable it to be used more widely in the region.


AHDA Project Complete
As a journalist, Rana understands the importance of engaging in historical dialogue in order to spread awareness and seek solutions for contemporary issues in Pakistan. The issue that Rana sought to address through his work involves the treatment of religious minorities—for instance, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Bhais, Shias, and in particular the Ahmadi Muslim Community—who comprise five million of Pakistan's total population, and who have been subject to severe persecution by the state and society for decades.

The condition of the Ahmadis may be traced through historical decisions made by the state and amendments added to the Constitution that have infringed many of their rights, especially their right to religious freedom. Members of the Ahmadi Community, who claim to be Muslims but are considered apostates by the state, are taking refuge in different countries and opting to leave Pakistan in order to practice their religion freely. Since 1973 the Pakistani government constitutionally declared them non-Muslim despite their strong claim of being Muslim. Hundreds of Ahmadi men, women and children have lost their lives at the hands of public and state persecution. The Pakistani media, which is dominated by mainstream prejudices, does not give proper coverage to the atrocities committed against the Ahmadis. Therefore, as a journalist, Rana believes it is incredibly important to address these issues publicly so that proper redress and action may be taken to alleviate the discrimination they currently face and to address the injustices they have experienced.

As a fellow of the Alliance for Historical Dialogue and Accountability fellowship program, Rana developed a project to end religious fanaticism against the Ahmadiya Muslim Community. Since this topic is met with great sensitivity in Pakistan, where fanaticism and religious intolerance are increasingly unbridled, he is taking steps to implement this project through conferences and lectures at educational institutions. In this regard, Rana will also deliver a lecture at the University of the Punjab’s Institute of Communication Studies. Most importantly, Rana also plans to write a book on the topic. Since returning from Columbia, he has written 109 stories out of which 104 are on issues of religious minorities including Ahmadis, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus.

AHDA Project in Progress
In the aftermath of the Second World War, Poland was “moved” westwards c.a. 200 000 km. Several millions of people, including Germans and Poles, had to resettle to the new territories of their respective states. For a half century, the historical narratives of these events were built separately on both sides of Iron Curtain. As such, Jolanta Steciuk's project, “Borders of Memory”, aimed to explore what transfers of populations and shifting borders after WWII meant to young Polish students, in an attempt to create a shared narrative between young Poles and Germans.

The project examined how past migrations in the region shaped collective and individual memory. At a later stage, given the refugee crisis in Europe, the project was expanded to contribute to people's readiness to welcome refugees. Societies build their present on their past experiences; therefore, the “Borders of Memory” platform covers not only past events and past migrations, but raises awareness of present refugee experiences in Europe, promotes positive images of refugees (for example, the refugee Olympic team), and promotes engagement in offering assistance to refugees.

“Borders of Memory” identified that there are significant differences between central and regional narratives, approaches to historical heritage, and awareness of the past events and their meaning in the regions of Poland. Additionally, the project revealed that there seems to be a growing need and interest in exploring historical events through the lens of family stories. Finally, the project demonstrates that memory work was and is important, but that it has to be “translated” to respond to current human rights challenges.

The project continues through the “Borders of Memory” Facebook page. Steciuk and her colleagues focus on past events (postwar border changes in Poland and the region, forced migrations during WWII and in the aftermath of the war) and how they shape collective memory in Poland and influence interpretations of current events in the region. Steciuk also published a chapter on pedagogical methods in a handbook, “Histoire croisée as a perspective for non-formal education” (chapter title “Borders Change, Memory Stays”, p. 30-40, in English). This educational method is being used in projects of the Krzyzowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe, an institution that serves as an international youth exchange center.

In addition, the Young Journalists’ Association “Polis” is actively working on a variety of projects, creating in 2016 a project to support a school community (50 km from Warsaw) that hosts refugee children from Ukraine, Chechnya and Kirgizstan. The project consists of workshops and school community integrational events. Second, “Polis” has also been working on an interfaith “Night of Temples” project where residents from Warsaw and Poznan will have a chance to visit several temples including a synagogue, a mosque, and churches of Christian denominations. Finally, “Polis” continues to be actively involved in the No hate speech campaign by working with a partner organization in the Ukraine to create a “No Hate Speech Movement”.

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AHDA Project Completed/ Other Projects Ongoing

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One Past, Many Histories

As an AHDA fellow, Pawel Nowacki developed a project that explored how European countries use 20th century history as a policy making tool during identity and financial crises. Nowacki is particularly interested in enabling younger generations to understand the ways in which collective memory is used to explain historical trauma, and the impact that these explanations have on contemporary society. This project was born out of earlier work Nowacki did at the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS), including a project called Sound in the Silence (soundinthesilence.enrs.eu), which he worked on in Borne Sulinowo, Poland and Gdansk, Poland, focusing on dictatorial regimes, wars, and resistance to oppression.

AHDA Project Completed
The Unidentified

Petar Subotin has developed a documentary film as his AHDA project. “The Unidentified” reveals the names of those responsible for some of the most brutal attacks of the Kosovo war, from those who ordered attacks on villages in the area around the town of Pec during the 1999 war to those who were involved in the removal of victims’ bodies to mass graves at the Batajnica police center near Belgrade in Serbia. Many of these perpetrators live comfortable, open lives, and the film seeks to hold them accountable for their pasts. What is interesting about the film is that both perpetrators and victims are interviewed, and their accounts corroborate one another. Also interesting are the implications of the perpetrator testimony, and questions of national identity and patriotism are posed in all their complexity. As well as the nightmarish memories of the victims and perpetrators, the film, which is based on a two-year investigation, reveals the names of The Unidentified—the officials who gave the orders. “The Unidentified” is produced in English, Serbian and Albanian.

The film also seeks to contemplate the complicated issue of perpetrators as victims, and the culture of victimhood in Serbia. After developing a short version of the material into a film, Petar and his BIRN colleagues developed a longer version in order to use exclusive material and footage. More information about the film can be found here: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/page/balkan-transitional-justice-the-unidentified.

The documentary had successful premieres in Belgrade on 27 April 2015 and in Pristina on 7 May 2015. Since then, the film has been screened at Mezhhyhirya Fest (Kiev, Ukraine), DokuFest (Prizren, Kosovo), the Sarajevo Film Festival (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Docudoc (Maribor, Slovenia), Ciampino Film Festival (Rome, Italy), the International Human Rights Festival (Tirana, Albania), the Human Rights Film Festival (Zagreb and Rijeka, Croatia), the Harriman Institute at Columbia University (New York, USA), the ‘South East European Film Festival’ in Los Angeles (April, 2016) where it won the award for the best short documentary, the ‘Beldocs film festival’ (Belgrade, Serbia), ‘Tirana film festival’ (Tirana, Albania), ‘Mediteran Film Festival’ (Siroki Brijeg, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and at the ‘Budapest International Film Festival’ (Budapest, Hungary).

In addition to these screenings, a number of events at universities and NGOs across the region have shown the documentary alongside discussions on the topic of war crimes for students, journalists and the public. Some of the venues where such events took place include: the Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Pristina, Kosovo, the South East European University in the Macedonian capital Skopje, and at the Sarajevo University's law and political sciences faculties. On the occasion of World Peace Day, the Centre for Civic Education (CCE) and the Coalition for REKOM in Podgorica organized a debate on reconciliation, asking: Can art contribute to the process of reconciliation in the region? The event was opened by the Montenegrin premiere of the film at the human rights film festival “Ubrzaj 2016” in Podgorica and at the Belgrade office of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights as part of the international programme on Justice Without Reconciliation.
The New York Review of Books included the documentary in a list of great films and books dealing with war crimes in the former Yugoslavia, and a DVD copy of the documentary has been filed at the Harvard University Library.

AHDA Project Completed

Sandra Orlovic (project work now being carried out by Jelena Krstic)
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Batajnica Memorial Initiative

The Batajnica Memorial Initiative is a multi-faceted project developed by the Humanitarian Law Center that aims to establish a memorial site in virtual space that provides information on victims based on court documentation and personal testimonies. Additionally, the Initiative launched an online petition for establishing a Memorial Site for the victims of crimes, whose bodies were found in secret mass graves, and produced the documentary called “Depth Two” about a mass grave discovered in Batajnica in 2001, in which the bodies of Kosovo Albanian civilians killed during the war in Kosovo were found. The list of victims, their stories and the petition can be found online here: http://www.batajnicamemorialinitiative.org/en.

“Depth Two” premiered at the 66th International Film Festival in Berlin (Berlinale) in February 2016, and was subsequently shown at festivals in Greece, Germany, Serbia, UK, Romania, Russia, Kosovo, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Brazil, Macedonia, Canada, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Spain. It was also screened in several towns in Serbia and Kosovo. The film won the Award for Best Film Editing at the Beldocs International documentary film festival in Belgrade, the Grand Jury Award at the Open City festival in London, the Critics Award at the Atlántida Film Fest in Spain, the Best Director and Best Screenplay awards at the KineNova Film Festival in Skopje, and the Grand Prix of the festival at the IFF Message to Man in Saint Petersburg, Russia. A short video collage about the film’s screenings can be viewed here: http://www.hlc-rdc.org/?p=32508&lang=de. Columbia was pleased to host a New York screening of the film in January, 2017.

The final phase of the project is currently underway. This phase includes a number of activities: (1) Organizing high-profile public debates targeting students and young historians, human rights activists and artists from Kosovo and Serbia in order to initiate a discussion on the memorialization of the Kosovo war in both societies and possible concepts of the future memorial center ‘Batajnica - Site of Memory and Conscience’. (2) Conducting a public call for proposals for the concept of the future memorial center ‘Batajnica – Site of Memory and Conscience’ and organizing an exhibition of the shortlisted proposals. (3) Preparing and submitting the official request for the establishment of the Batajnica Memorial Centre to the Serbian Parliament and Government, and along with the winning concept, at least 7,000 signatures of support and messages by participants of the New Generation Dialogue Forum and other supporters.

AHDA Project in Progress
Mikang Yang
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Joint History Textbook

Mikang Yang's NGO is issuing a joint history textbook with contributors from Japan, Korea and China, a project developed in part from a summer youth camp held annually in one of the three countries, in which kids and teachers participate in joint history classes.

In 2015, Mikang Yang and her organization successfully published the first English language version of A History to Open the Future: Modern East Asian History and Regional Reconciliation. This is the first common history textbook jointly written by scholars and experts from Korea, Japan, and China, and focusing on modern East Asian history and regional reconciliation. After being translated into English, it was published on July 13 by the Asia-Pacific Research Center, University of Hawaii. The newly released English version can be purchased on Amazon.com. The common history textbook has sold around 300,000 copies in the three countries with 100,000 copies sold in Korea. The textbook is used as a supplementary teaching resource in some secondary schools and a reference book in universities. The Korea-based NGO, Asia Peace & History Education Network, has used it as the main textbook at its annual History Study Camp for Korean-Chinese-Japanese Youths. It also appears in a comic book edition as well for primary school students.

AHDA Project Completed
SOUTH AFRICA

Friederike Bubenzer
Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) and the University of Stellenbosch, with funding from the Mellon Foundation
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Trauma, Memory and Representations of the Past

‘Trauma, Memory and Representations of the Past’ is a multi-year collaboration between the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) and Professor Pumla Gobodo Madikizela at the University of Stellenbosch that seeks to gain an understanding of the nature and manifestations of intergenerational and historical trauma in South Africa. It is the first project of its kind and integrates an exciting art component. The first phase of the project, which is now complete, involved collecting oral history life story interviews; in the second phase, the project will conduct focus groups with second generation participants.

For many respondents participating in the first phase, this was the first time they told their life stories, and it is hoped that this will contribute to a sense of acknowledgement of past experiences during apartheid. The life stories will be added to a larger repository, and well known South African artist Sue Williams and award-winning actress and playwright Thembi Mtshali-jones are potential contributors to the artistic representations of these stories at a later stage. This part of the five year- project will be completed in the upcoming months.

Bubenzer is also working on a research project on the interconnectedness of mental health and peace building. This is a collaboration between IJR and the War Trauma Foundation that developed from an international conference and its outcome report. The study suggests that communities are likely to be caught in cycles of pain and conflict if historical and intergenerational trauma is not acknowledged and integrated into long-term post-conflict reconstruction and social transformation efforts (including historical dialogue). This is as relevant in countries like Zimbabwe (e.g. the Gukurahundi massacre of the 80’s which remains unaddressed) and South Sudan (e.g. the 1990 Bor massacre which continues to surface in much of the conflict analysis conducted as part of current political dynamics) as it is in South Africa, the USA, and Australia. The majority of countries that have emerged out of conflict in the last four decades and have not yet resolved historical violations in the immediate post-conflict era have returned to conflict. Sustainably and holistically integrating mental health and psycho-social support into transitional justice, historical dialogue and peace building efforts could potentially undo harmful cycles of repetition.

AHDA Project in Progress
CATALONIA- SPAIN

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Strengthening Democratic Culture and Values in Spain

The project designed by Oriol Lopez Badell during his stay at Columbia as an AHDA fellow has resulted in a number of different activities in 2015 and 2016. November 20th, 2015 marked the 40th anniversary of Franco’s death in Spain. This event sparked a series of activities connected to the memory of the Spanish Civil War and Franco dictatorship including: 1. The Franco 40/40 project, 2. A tribute to Maria Salvo (former political prisoner during Franco dictatorship), 3. The international conference, "Victory over fascism: Barcelona 1936", 4. A short documentary also titled "Victory over fascism: Barcelona 1936", 4. Tours for school groups through memory sites in Barcelona linked to the Spanish Civil War and Francoist dictatorship, in Les Corts and Gracia districts.

AHDA Project Completed; other projects in progress
University Exchanges for Social Cohesion and Transformation?

A University Exchange program has been established with the two camps of the former conflict in Sri Lanka. The students in the exchange program include ex-combatants and other students. The program takes them to former battlegrounds and given them space to reflect on dealing with difficult pasts and mass atrocities. They have the opportunity to meet the victims of the violent conflict, which can lead to transformational changes. These experiences are being documented with the intent to share them more widely in the future.

One such success story from the last exchange highlights the program’s methods. Students from Kelaniya University visited the students from Jaffna University, going to their homes, visiting with families affected by the war, and listening to their stories. Students visited the last battle grounds and saw the remnants of the remaining war equipment. One boy, Sukarnan, is now a student in Jaffna University. He was a former LTTE fighter as a teenager and lost his leg in the Battle of Muhamalai at the age 18. Last June he climbed Adam’s Peak (Sri Pada) on his crutches, and participated in the university exchange program to share his story. One of the other students commented on the experience of the program: “Everybody has a story. If I listen to the other then we can understand the other person’s story.”

AHDA Project Completed
TURKEY

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Database on Enforced Disappearances

Hafiza Merkezi works on dealing with the past, focusing on the Armenian Genocide and the Kurdish/Turkish conflict. In particular, its work on the Kurdish conflict addresses enforced disappearances after the 1980 military coup d’etat by collecting, confirming and publishing data about the forcibly disappeared on a public database accessibly through its website. The aim of the database is to address the need for documentation on enforced disappearances in Turkey in a standardized and publically accessible format. The information in the database is gathered primarily from field interviews conducted with the relatives of those missing, as well as from second hand sources like media reports and legal documents.

AHDA Project in Progress/ One Phase Completed

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Political Apologies Exhibit

This project originally proposed a new exhibition and publication that would focus on eight state crimes in Turkey, all of which need to be acknowledged and reckoned with in order to address ongoing ethno-religious and political conflicts. Crimes such as the 1915 Armenian Genocide, the 1938 Dersim Massacre, the forced disappearances of the 1990s and the 2011 military attack on civilians in Roboski were crimes committed by the state or by state-sanctioned proxies. A discussion regarding possible redress with regard to these acts of violence will transform the rhetoric of protest into more constructive and future-oriented policies that have the potential to impact the general public and policy-makers.

AHDA Project changed/ updated

Asena Gunal is now working on another project on enforced disappearances from a comparative perspective with Hafiza Merkezi. Through Hafiza Merkezi, Asena works on creating a memory tour which aims to map the city through its political past that is inscribed in the urban fabric, and yet often suppressed in public memory. During the AHDA fellowship, Asena worked in collaboration with Nayat Karaköseoglu to map Turkey's political past, research later used for a workshop for practitioners, scholars and students that was coordinated between the AHDA program, the Columbia Global Center in Istanbul, and Hafiza Merkezi.
Nayat Karakoseoglu
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Hrant Dink: Site of Memory

Nayat Karakoseoglu has entered the implementation stage of a project to make the Agos newspaper’s former offices, where Hrant Dink was assassinated, a memory site. In order to approach the project critically, the first step will be to visit sites of conscience and memorials in different parts of the world from South America to South Africa, where the project team will organize dialogue meetings to receive the inputs of different groups; meetings with experts, curators, historians and academics; and workshops at the Hrant Dink Foundation in order to draw attention to the importance of sites of conscience and memorials for the countering of social amnesia. A report covering the observations of the site visits and the importance and impact of such sites will be produced at the end of the project along with a strategy paper which will function as a roadmap to create the Hrant Dink Site of Memory and Conscience. The creation and design of the site began in the autumn of 2016. These preparatory activities have aimed not only to create a roadmap for the Hrant Dink Foundation’s own site, but also to inspire other platforms, NGOs and initiatives to create sites of conscience and memorials in Turkey.

AHDA Project in Progress
Sofia Dyak
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Sites of Memory Project

Sofie Dyak works with the Center for Urban History in Lviv, Ukraine, which has recently completed the selection process for its memory project regarding sites of Jewish history in Lviv. The Center selected three synagogues near the center of town, two of which are completely gone, and one of which is in ruins. A memorial for a nearby concentration camp and cemetery are also being designed. The aim of the project is to create a site of memory and a memorial that reflects a growing awareness of Lviv’s multi-ethnic past by creating public spaces connected to the city’s Jewish history and heritage. A second goal of the project is to create public spaces that improve the quality of life for the city’s citizens and visitors. In other words, Sofia wants to avoid having a static structure or simply a monument to the past. The design for these public spaces was opened up into an international competition, with 70 designs, and an international jury of experts met to determine the winners. All the designs were hung in the Palace of the Arts on public display, an event in and of itself through which Sofia worked to promote dialogue and publicity on the topic. The winners of the competition have been announced, and the next phase will involve editing and building the projects.

AHDA Project in Progress
Oral History and the Civil Rights Movement

Tammi Sharpe has created an oral history project that examines the statements of bystanders or supporters of segregation during the civil rights movement in the 1960s in the United States. Birmingham was a focal point of civil rights activities and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) has an extensive oral history collection of foot soldiers in the movement, but no documentation on resistance to it. This omission represents a significant gap in the public’s understanding of the period, and a challenge to dealing with history of race in the United States in a robust way. Tammi publicized her idea for a project in local newspapers, and interviewees contacted her and asked to be interviewed and to tell their stories. Those oral histories are now part of the BCRI collection. The completion of the oral history component coincided with public events related to the project, in which individuals who Tammi interviewed as well as foot soldiers in the civil rights movement told their stories to a general audience, spurring conversation about the past. The events were recorded and will be aired on NPR and be made available as a podcast. Finally, Tammi is completing a book based on edited summaries of the 21 interviews she conducted; the text also contains historical background on race relations and slavery in the United States and a meditation on atoning for the crimes of slavery and segregation, offering lessons for other countries trying to redress legacies of human rights violations.

AHDA Project Complete/Ongoing approved