

The book “Past & Power” brings the main debates on memory and its conflicts in today's Europe

On Tuesday 13, at 20 h, the bookstore La Central del Raval (Elisabets, 6, Barcelona) will hold the book presentation of [*Past & Power. Public Policies on Memory. Debates from Global to Local*](#) (Editions of the University of Barcelona. 2016), by Jordi Guixé i Coromines (ed.). There will be the participation of Carme Panchón and Sílvia Marimon. The book gathers contributions by experts from around Europe and South America that touch on how citizens and governments have faced each other in the past, the different nationally and internationally built stories, and the political and social fights involved in all of it.

The publication, edited in English and Spanish, comes from the commitment of the [European Observatory on Memories of the UB Solidarity Foundation](#), to give new debating and analyzing tools, which should be taken into account by the European applications when managing public memory policies. In this book there are several contributions from the international symposium “Memory and Power. A translational perspective”, held in 2014 in Barcelona, apart from a series of articles by distinguished international experts. This publication shows a panoramic view of the problems and conflicts that result from Europe’s past management and which are seen today, from a translational and comparative perspective, regarding Latin American’s situation too.

In the past years there have been several projects and initiatives in Europe and worldwide to recover and analyze the 20th century memory. Public authorities have not successfully solved the management of traumatic memory, from wars, dictatorships and massacres to which the European project had as a counterpoint. Now, the shadow of suspicion surrounds the authorities, which are always tempted of using the past for political reasons. This created the conflict and questioning of big narrations set in common memory, especially with the integration of Eastern countries to the European Union. Each community, collective or nation, has common memories, which not always fit in a general and global account.

The book is organized in three blocks: “Memory beyond borders”; “States and Memories”; and “Memorials and Discussions”. Among the contributions, there are some by Georges Mink, emeritus research director of the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS, France), on the memory conflict between the East and West of Europe and the role of post-communism; others by Ricard Vinyes, historian and current commissioner of Memory Programs in the Barcelona City Council, talking about consequences of memory privatization in Spain; Claudia Wasserman, historian at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, whose stories are about the situation of Latin America; Adrian Kerr, director of the Museum of Free Derry, writing about the history of the fights for civil rights in Northern Ireland; Oksana Chelsysheva, journalist and member of the Finnish-Russian Citizens’ Forum, bringing the case of Latvia and its relationship with Russia; etc.

Jordi Guixé i Coromines, researcher and doctor in Contemporary History (University of Barcelona, and the University of Paris III- Sorbonne Nouvelle) . Guixé is an expert in Francoist repression towards politicians who exiled during the period of the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War and the Cold War, and also in public memory policies. Since 2012, he has directed the European Observatory on Memories (EUROM) of the UB Solidarity Foundation and is professor at the University of Barcelona in the Master’s degree on Urban Design; Art, City, Society. He collaborated in the creation of the Catalonia Democratic Memorial, in which he was in charge of the heritage and project area. He directed and coordinated several international conferences on the uses of the past in Spain and Europe, and collaborates with several research groups such as the French CNRS, the Center for Studies on the Franco and Democratic Eras (CEFID-UAB) or the Research Group on Memory and Society of the University of Barcelona (UB). Apart from having several articles related to memory policies, among his publications there are books such as *La República perseguida. Exilio y repression en la Francia de Franco* (Publicacions Universitat de València, 2011) or, together with Montserrat Iniesta, the edition of *Polítiques públiques de la memòria. I Col·loqui internacional Memorial Democràtic* (Eumo, 2009).

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About the European Observatory on Memories

The European Observatory on Memories –EUROM is a transnational network of institutions and organizations committed to research and promotion of public historical memory policies. Its main objective is to contribute to the reflection surrounding recent history defending memory diversity and plurality. EUROM is driven by the [Solidarity Foundation of the University of Barcelona](#) with the support of the European Commission's program *Europe for Citizens*.

About the University of Barcelona

The UB is the top public university in Catalonia due to its size of student population, 64,000, and its course offerings. The UB is also the principal centre of university research at state level and has become a European benchmark for research activity, both in terms of the number of research programmes it conducts and the excellence these have achieved.

The UB has a prominent position in the most prestigious international rankings: it is the only university in the Spanish State that has managed to get in among the world's top 200 according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) —a classification also known as the Shanghai Ranking. Moreover, the UB is the top Spanish university and one of the best 200 universities in the world according to QS World University Rankings 2014-2015. In addition, it is the only Spanish university which is among the 200 best worldwide universities in 25 out of 30 subject areas, according to the QS World University Rankings 2014 by Subject.

The University of Barcelona is member of the most important international excellence university networks, such as the League of European Research Universities (LERU). It has overseen the creation of two campuses of international excellence, the Barcelona Knowledge Campus (BKC) and the Health University of Barcelona Campus (HUBc). It has assimilated their goals as its own to increase competitiveness; these goals include the attraction of academic and research talent, full internationalisation, the enhancement of teaching quality and scientific quality, and an increase in the transfer of knowledge generated at the university to wider society.

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