

# „History and Popular Memory: The Power of Story in Moments of Crisis“

## Gastvortrag

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17. Juni 2014, 16:00 Uhr

When people experience a traumatic event, such as war or the threat of annihilation, they often turn to history for stories that promise a positive outcome to their suffering.

During World War II, the French thus took comfort in the story of Joan of Arc and her heroic efforts to rid France of foreign occupation.

This interplay between story and history tends to be worldwide in reach, manifesting itself in countries of radically different cultural, religious, and social character.

From among the many possible examples, the presentation focuses on Serbia, Israel, the Soviet Union, China, Great Britain, and France, all of which experienced severe crises in the twentieth century and, in response, appropriated age-old historical narratives that resonated with what was happening in the present to serve a unifying, restorative purpose.

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