

Seconda parte:
LA STORIA NEL WEB
in Europa 2016

Second part:
HISTORY ON THE WEB
in Europe 2016

Europe Direct Emilia-Romagna
Assemblea Legislativa – Regione Emilia-Romagna
Viale Aldo Moro, 50 – 40127 Bologna
europedirect@regione.emilia-romagna.it
www.assemblea.emr.it/europedirect

EUROPA E MEDIA

La Storia in televisione e
sul web

Questa pubblicazione raccoglie i risultati della prima indagine dell'Osservatorio di **E-Story** (www.e-story.eu) che vuole dare ad insegnanti e ricercatori alcune utili indicazioni sui maggiori trend di rappresentazione della storia attraverso i linguaggi dei media, e in particolare monitorare come cambiano le rappresentazioni nei programmi televisivi e sul web.

Ciascun partner del **Progetto E-story** sta mappando a livello locale come i *network* televisivi rappresentano la storia nei propri palinsesti e come circolano sul web le visioni della storia. Questo è il primo *report* di ricerca, relativo al 2016. **E-story** è un **Progetto Erasmus plus KA2**, coordinato dall'**Istituto Per la Storia e le Memorie del '900 Parri Emilia-Romagna**.

EUROPE AND MEDIA

History on television and
the web

This publication collects the results of the first survey of the **E-Story** Observatory (www.e-story.eu) that wants to give teachers and researchers some useful information on the major trends in the representation of history through media, and in particular monitor how television representations and the web change.

Each **E-story Project** Partner is mapping locally how television networks represent the story in their programs and how the visions of history circulate on the web. This is the first research report on 2016. **E-story** is an **Erasmus plus KA2 project** coordinated by the **Institute for History and Memories of the '900 Parri Emilia-Romagna**.

THE AUTHORS

Italy

- ▶ *Luisa Cigognetti* - Istituto Parri, Bologna; E- Story Project Manager
- ▶ *Pierre Sorlin* - University of Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle; Istituto Parri, Bologna
- ▶ *Giulia Dodi* - University of Unimore, Modena-Reggio Emilia

Slovenia

- ▶ *Darko Strain, Sabina Autor, Tina Seserko* - Pedagogski Institut (ERI), Ljubljana

Spain

- ▶ *Julio Montero, Maria Antonia Paz, Juan Martin Quevedo* - Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR), Logrono

Great Britain

- ▶ *Erin Bell, Florian Gleisner* - University of Lincoln, Lincoln

Hungary

- ▶ *Laszlo Strausz, Balazs Varga, Teréz Vincze* - Kosztolanyi Dezso Kavehaz Kulturális Alapítvány, Budapest

Poland

- ▶ *Urszula Jarecka* - Instytut Filozofii i Sociologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warsaw

The Netherlands

- ▶ *Steven Stegers, Laura Steenbrink* - Euroclio, The Hague

E-STORY TEAM

Istituto per la storia e le memorie del 900 PARRI Emilia-Romagna, who has been working for years on the issues of the relationships between History, Media and the Web and the implications that it may produce both in terms of historical research and training/dissemination. Parri is the E-story Project coordinator (Italy);

Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR) is an online University with more than 20.000 students in Official Degrees and Masters, half of them in Communication studies (Spain);

University of Lincoln, who has a diverse and interdisciplinary research portfolio and structures, such as the Lincoln School of Film and Media (Great Britain);

Instytut Filozofii Sociologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, one of the Research Centres of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It's primary objective is to carry out researches in Philosophy, Sociology and communication fields (Poland);

Pedagoshii Institut (ERI) is the central institution in Slovenia for research in all sectors of education and related areas, established in 1965 by the government of the Republic of Slovenia (Slovenia);

Euroclio is a teachers association that advocates a teaching of History, heritage, and citizenship subjects that fosters key and transversal competences as basic requirements for young people (The Netherlands);

Kosztolanyi Dezso Kavehaz Kulturális Alapítvány is a not profit public benefit cultural foundation working on film, media and history studies, publishing a review called Metropolis. (Hungary);

Ervet is the Development Agency of Regione Emilia Romagna (Italy).



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LA STORIA NEL WEB:
Primo aggiornamento
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HISTORY ON THE WEB:
First update
Summer-autumn 2016

Pierre Sorlin
Luisa Cigognetti

Nel 2012, quando abbiamo iniziato il nostro studio sulla circolazione di luoghi comuni e rappresentazioni più o meno accurate della Storia sul Web, in particolare blog e *social network*, Facebook e altri forum avevano raggiunto il loro massimo splendore, spinti dall'enorme entusiasmo per mezzi di comunicazione che consentivano a tutti di esprimere opinioni e mostrare una (presunta) conoscenza del passato. Certo, si susseguivano le dichiarazioni più assurde, ma c'era posto anche per dibattiti interessanti. La caduta del muro di Berlino, la fine della Guerra Fredda, la rapida e apparentemente semplice costruzione dell'Unione europea avevano reso possibile una discussione pacifica su eventi recenti come le Guerre Mondiali, le origini del Comunismo e la fine dei conflitti intraeuropei. Dopo il 2012, si comprese presto che, lungi

In 2012, when we began our study about the circulation of common places and more or less accurate representations of History in the web, notably in blogs and social networks, Facebook and other forums were in their heyday, there was an enormous enthusiasm for a medium that allowed anybody to express opinions and display a (supposed) awareness of what had happened in the past. There were then absurd statements but there were also interesting debates. The fall of the Berlin wall, the end of the Cold war, the quick, seemingly easy building of an European Union made it possible to peacefully discuss about recent issues like the Wars, the origins of Communism, the end of intra-European conflicts. After 2012, in a very short span of time, it turned out that Europe, far from being the centre of the world, was a small peninsula threatened

dall'essere il centro del mondo, l'Europa era in realtà una piccola penisola minacciata da migrazioni di massa da altri continenti e che le fondamenta dell'Unione erano piuttosto fragili. L'UE fu messa in discussione e, in molti Paesi si scatenò uno scontro che sostituì il dibattito pacato.

Nello stesso periodo, gli scambi su Facebook sembrano essere considerevolmente cambiati (con tutte le riserve del caso, dato che la nostra nuova ricerca si è limitata a sette Paesi europei, invece dei dieci della precedente), con un aumento esponenziale dei messaggi scambiati sul Web, accompagnato però da una diminuzione dei tentativi di difendere opinioni presuntamente circostanziate. I social network offrono a sempre più utenti la possibilità di esprimere un'insoddisfazione profonda, seppure imprecisa, sullo stato attuale delle cose. I dibattiti, tuttavia, sono utili solo se equi e rispettosi delle opinioni altrui, anche se si discostano dalle proprie. Le polemiche iniziate in Olanda in merito al Giorno della Memoria, il 4 maggio 2016,

by mass migrations from other continents and that the Union was a fragile construction. The EU was questioned and, inside most countries, people started also to quarrel instead of trying to debate calmly.

In the same period, exchanges on Facebook seem to have considerably changed (with all reserve since our new research has been limited to seven European Countries instead of ten in the previous study), there are more and more messages exchanged on the web but less attempts at defending a supposedly well founded opinion. The social networks offer many people a chance to express a deep but imprecise dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs. Debates are useful provided they are fair and respect opinions, which don't square with one's views. The polemics that started in the Netherlands concerning the Remembrance Day, the 4th of May 2016, shows how easily people have recourse to insults instead to attempting to argue. Many felt they were personally attacked when a lady, from Surinam origins, wrote

mostrano con quanta facilità si ricorra all'insulto invece di tentare un'argomentazione. Molti si sono sentiti toccati nel vivo quando una donna originaria del Suriname scrisse su Facebook che si sarebbero dovute ricordare tutte le vittime, non solo quelle della Shoah. Forse un'opinione non ben ponderata, ma certo valeva la pena discuterne. La virulenza delle reazioni rivela una profonda incertezza sui principi fondanti di una comunità nazionale, messa a rischio da qualunque mutamento delle sue tradizioni.

Abbiamo suggerito ai partecipanti alla ricerca che un buon modo di trovare rapidamente valutazioni sul passato era osservare le celebrazioni di eventi storici. L'esempio precedente e molti altri casi dimostrano che le persone non sono molto interessate a questo tipo di manifestazioni, spesso considerate mere esternalità artificiali, quindi gli anniversari storici diventano solo un pretesto per polemizzare sul presente. Molto è cambiato dalla ricerca precedente e i parametri adottati nel 2012, allora più che validi, oggi non sono più applicabili.

on Facebook that all victims, and not only those of the Shoah should be commemorate that very day. It may have been ill considered but it was worth a discussion. The violence of the reactions unveils a deep uncertainty regarding the foundations of a national community put at risk by any change of traditions.

We had suggested to those who take part in this investigation that a good way to quickly find assessments about the past was to look at the celebration of historical events. The previous example and many other case prove that people are not much interested in that kind of events, often considered purely artificial public manifestations so that historical anniversaries are only pretexts to polemics about the present. Things have much evolved since our previous research, the parameters we adopted in 2012, and were valid at the time, no longer work nowadays.

We are faced with a mental attitude that seems common to most citizens of the EU, many indulge in often void polemics, with more insults than concrete

Ci troviamo davanti a una *forma mentis* che sembra condivisa dalla maggior parte dei cittadini europei, che si fa coinvolgere volentieri in polemiche sterili, con più insulti che prove concrete e falsi dibattiti, dando l'impressione che blogger o utenti di Facebook desiderino solo manifestare le loro angosce e farle conoscere a un pubblico non meglio identificato.

Dibattito? Sì, ma su cosa?

Nei Paesi dell'Europa Occidentale i blogger hanno ormai abbandonato riferimenti o esempi storici per supportare le loro opinioni, nessun evento sembra più adatto a commentare i problemi che dobbiamo affrontare. Basti pensare alla situazione in Gran Bretagna nel periodo studiato, i mesi precedenti il referendum del giugno 2016 sulla "Brexit". Era impossibile trovare nel passato qualcosa di utile, una posizione chiara a favore o contro il divorzio dall'UE. Oppure quanto a disposizione, come le poche parole di Churchill sull'Europa, poteva essere sfruttato da entrambe le cause.

D'altra parte, nei Paesi dell'Europa

evidence and false debates giving the impression that bloggers or FB surfers debate only to manifest their apprehensions and make it known to an ill-defined audience,

Debate? Yes, but what about?

In West-European countries bloggers have given up using historical references or examples to support their opinions, no gone by events look really suited to comment the problems we have to face. Take the situation of Britain in the period investigated, that is to say in the months previous to the June 2016 Referendum about the "Brexit", it was impossible to find in the past anything convenient to fight for or against a divorce with the EU – or what was available, like Churchill's few words about Europe, could be used in both directions.

On the other hand, in Eastern Countries, the "mythical times", embellished chronicles of glorious periods are evoked in contrast to the dramas of a gloomy present. Poland was great when it was converted to Christianity in the tenth century. Hungary was not turned in on itself when king Saint

orientale si evocano i “tempi mitici”, cronache imbellettate di anni gloriosi, per rimarcare la differenza con i drammi del triste presente. La Polonia era grande quando si convertì al Cristianesimo nel Decimo secolo. L’Ungheria rimase unita quando il re, Santo Stefano, ammonì il figlio, esortandolo ad “aiutare gli stranieri con buona volontà” invece di impedire loro di entrare nel Paese ed eroica nel 1848, quando i ribelli invitarono il popolo a combattere per la libertà (“addio a quei giorni gloriosi”, riporta un blogger).

Eppure, appena i blogger aprono il dibattito sul Ventesimo secolo, lasciando da parte tempi lontani che nulla hanno più a che vedere con l’oggi, la storia si rivela di poca utilità dato che, di solito, gli eventi recenti possono essere interpretati in modo opposto. Dopo che il Partito Comunista arrivò al potere in Polonia, uno sparuto numero di uomini si dette alla clandestinità, opponendosi al governo. Furono combattenti per la libertà o semplici banditi? Sopravvissero grazie al sostegno volontario di parte della

Stephen admonished his son “to help with good will the foreigners” instead of preventing them to enter the country, and it was heroic in 1848 when its uprising invited people to fight for liberty (“good bye to these good old days”, a blogger says).

Yet, as soon as the bloggers, leaving aside far away times that bear no relation with our days, debate about the 20th century history is of little use since, generally, recent events can be interpreted in opposite directions. After the communist party had come to power in Poland a few people going underground, fought against the government. Were they freedom fighters or out-laws? Did they survived clandestinely thanks to a voluntary support from the part of the population, or because they ransacked it? There are clues likely to document both opinions, the debate is necessarily extremely confused, voices emanating equally from the right or the left defending the opposite positions. Disputes turn fruitless if they are centred on happenings that could have occurred but didn’t. Was life better when

popolazione o ai saccheggi? Dati frammentari sembrano documentare entrambe le posizioni e il dibattito è necessariamente assai confuso, con voci che si alzano da destra e sinistra per difendere posizioni contrastanti. Il confronto, però, diventa sterile, quando si concentra su eventi possibili, ma mai accaduti. Si viveva meglio quando nazionalità diverse, con una certa autonomia, erano riunite in una federazione nello Stato comune multi-etnico della Jugoslavia o è preferibile adesso, con una Slovenia indipendente e nell'UE?

Piuttosto spesso i blogger, pur non conoscendo un particolare evento doloroso, ma avendone ascoltato i racconti dai genitori, esprimono pareri con una foga incontenibile, solo per contraddire altri utenti o dimostrare di avere un'opinione, per quanto priva del benché minimo fondamento. La guerra civile spagnola, a ottant'anni dalla sua conclusione e a quaranta dalla morte di Franco, è ancora un evento controverso nel Paese. Nel Ventesimo secolo, il ricordo del conflitto era spesso un'eredità

different nationalities, partially autonomous, were federated in the common multi-ethnic state of Yugoslavia or is it superior now that Slovenia is independent and is a member of the EU?

Quite often young bloggers, who have not known a dreadful period, but have heard the recollections of their parents, refer to that epoch wildly, only to contradict other surfers or prove that they have an opinion, however unfounded it may be. The Spanish civil war, almost eighty years after its end, forty years after Franco's death, is still a contentious event in Spain. Whereas, in the 20th century, the memory of the conflict was often a family inheritance, dependent on the way it had been lived by the domestic group, it has become a personal point of view and a good pretext to affront those who defend an opposite position, people not yet in their forties and looking at the future rather than at the past get involved in controversies about a domestic war of which they have no precise idea. As a comment says: "I wonder how it is possible to kill people of the same nation. However, seeing how we fight each

di famiglia, legato a come era stato vissuto dai suoi componenti, oggi invece è diventato un punto di vista personale come tanti e un ottimo pretesto per scontrarsi con chi sostiene la posizione opposta. Donne e uomini neppure quarantenni che guardano al futuro, piuttosto che al passato, si fanno coinvolgere in accesi dibattiti su una guerra civile della quale non hanno un'idea precisa. Come riportava un commento: "Mi domandavo come fosse possibile uccidere dei connazionali. Vedendo come ci scontriamo sui commenti per un film, non mi sorprende più tanto". Su Facebook, le opinioni sulla Resistenza italiana contro il Nazi-Fascismo durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale dimostrano come, nonostante il tempo trascorso, la lotta clandestina resti un tema controverso, utilizzato di volta in volta da una parte politica o dall'altra come pretesto per supportare o criticare le scelte del governo di turno.

other in our commentaries upon a film, I'm no longer surprised". On Facebook statements regarding the Italian Resistance against the Nazi-Fascists during WW2 show that, despite the lapse of time, the clandestine fight remains a litigious issue used from one or another political side as a pretext to support or criticize the present politics.



1. History on the Web in Slovenia

Web helps us find different things that we are interested in and it helps us to search out necessary information at the time when we need them. We wanted to find out how history and different facts about history are presented on the web and how many themes are appearing about history, how many conversations are about history, and how often are history and historic facts mentioned in different forums, blogs and social networks. In a short report we are giving the account on our checking different internet sites, which are connected to history in some specific way. We mainly did not include professional (scientific) articles as well as different articles, which appear in various newspapers' and magazines' internet sites. We concentrated on some institutes, checked museums' sites and sites of different associations, then we took a look at different forums, blogs and social networks, like Twitter and Facebook. We recorded posts that touched upon history, appearing within the time span (look below). We were then interested to find out how much are people talking about history over different forums, blogs and social networks.

Duration of the examination of internet sites, forums and blogs: 28th July until 5th August 2016

INSTITUTIONAL SITES:

- First we undertook checking of web pages that different institutes have in Slovenia. We checked sites of **Study Centre for National Reconciliation** (Študijski center za narodno spravo) first (<http://www.scnr.si/sl/>).

The Centre's task is to research history of our country with an emphasis on investigations of *fascism*, *Nazism* and *communism*. On their site they try to "bring history near to people" and they aim to look into topics, which marked people in our country back then. Institution claims that it explores topics in the national history that are so far less researched or unexplored. On their web site, they are posting different publications. They write a lot about totalitarianism(s) in Slovenia. On web site they present their contemporary activities like diverse conferences and symposia on history and other events, which are connected to history that the Centre organises. At the time of our little research an article on the prison cells, built after World War 2 on the Beethoven Street in in the very city centre of Ljubljana, was much accentuated. A longer segment on the web page is describing prison cells. The page announces that the prison cells will be a part of the museum of totalitarianism that opens up soon.

- We checked web page of the **Institute for modern history** (Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino) (<http://www.inz.si/>) and the site of **Milko Kos Historical Institute** (Zgodovinski inštitut Milka Kosa) (<http://zimk.zrc-sazu.si/>). Institute for modern history deals with research of modern history, the other site presents the research of history since its beginnings to the First World War. On their web sites they post publications, on-going activity and events, that they organise in view of topics that they are looking into.
- Beside institutes also museums and archives are implicated in presentations of history. Their web pages give a range of information about history. Like institutes, archives have web pages, on which we can find different historical data and also information on what archives do and what is their current activity. Beside this, Historical archives offer the possibility to search different material with the help of keywords. We checked also web page of the **National Museum** (Narodni muzej) (<http://www.nms.si/>) in Ljubljana and Ptuj Regional Museum (Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj, Ormož) (<http://pmpo.si/>). On these two pages we found only descriptions of the on-going events and

exhibitions. Both museums describe, what they are interested in and what they recommend to visitors. They describe programs for schools. They also write on exhibitions of the nearby museums and castles. Of course, on the web page there are some historical data from different periods. What we were missing has been a possibility for any visitors' interactive motions as, for instance, expressing opinions on exhibitions or events. Sites are, therefore, only informative. The site of the **Kobarid Museum** (Kobariški muzej) (<http://www.kobariski-muzej.si/>), situated at one of the main World War 1 battle fronts, gives certain data as soon as we click on it. When we open web page, we find Kobarid's historical importance. The most important event is the *battle of Kobarid* in October 1917. The battle of Kobarid was one of the largest clashes in a mountainous country, beside the *11th Battle of the Isonzo*. Beside the museum of Kobarid, there are some other ways to find (arte)facts on the same topic. The **National Museum of Contemporary History** (Muzej novejšje zgodovine Slovenije) (<http://www.muzej-nz.si/sl/>) presents exhibition under the title *We didn't Imagine **such** a War*. Exhibition is dedicated to the presenting and explanation of life and narratives of people during the years between 1914 and 1918.

- Different historical associations exist in Slovenia and they have their presentations on the web. The main association is *Association of historical Societies of Slovenia* (Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije) (<http://zzds.si/>). On the site every event connected to history is announced and more or less impartially commented. The site promotes the historical journal. They publish scientific articles, based on the verified historical methodologies. The aim of the page is to be as informative as possible.

BLOGS AND FORUMS

Central part of our examination of web pages were *blogs and forums*, which are somehow connected to history. We checked different forums on the web, where people are expressing opinions on many

different historical events, controversies, polemics or disagreements. We are summarising very briefly our findings, emphasising just some blogs and forums, where we came across very explicit opinions and conversations about history. It seems that people had been publishing their opinions on history in forums much more in previous years than they do now. There are a lot of net forums of students of history, where students aren't talking about historical events, for example, the First World War or French revolution, etc. They write, above all, about the department of history at the University, debating about how much sense makes a choice of this study; they are talking about difficulties of studying, they exchange information about lectures and literature.

When we're checking forum **Mysterries and the Paranormal** (Misteriji in paranormalno) (<http://www.misteriji.net/forum/>), we came across the topic of Hitler. Subject was opened in 2014, but still very much alive. Participants of forum commented above all on documentary films and different sites of the 2nd World War. Interesting commentary on the Second World War on the forum, was from one participant, who wrote that "winners are always writing history and that good ones always win." Another participant of forum then questions the objectivity of history. This theme is also interesting for other participants, who also question objectivity of history. They discuss about two sides of story in history. They found out, that they had been taught, e. g. in primary school, that Slovenia had acquired back Istria and Primorska after the 2nd World War. They then point out that their Italian equals were taught, that "Tito took their part of Italy" by force. Such debates boils down to type of conclusions that history always has more explanations.

On the forum **Med over Net** (<http://med.over.net/forum/>), dedicated to health topics, participants came across the theme, which is connected to history and it was very important for the country. The newest topics in the year 2016 were connected to Yugoslavia and so called *Yugo-nostalgia*. Some participants on the forum think, that our important history is only history *after* the times of Yugoslavia. Some participants thought that "our present does not differ much from our past in

Yugoslavia. The only difference is that today we are in European Union, but back in our history we were a part of Yugoslavia.” Some participants shared the opinion that it was much better in Yugoslavia than nowadays in the independent Slovenia. They believed that we didn’t live in scarcity and that today is much worse for many people. Many topics on this forum reveal a split between advocates of one political regime and adversaries of the other. Some have favourable opinions about communism, whereas some other participants are describing it critically. The latter ones emphasise different topics that expose different meanings of the notion of communism. Some participants are condemning communism severely and they are blaming communism and the “communist Slovenia” for all the problems, which we are confronted with in our state nowadays. Many participant in the forum suppose that at the moment we are doing badly in our country. They said that before our independence we were in better position. Some more extreme opinions maintain, that a civil war should take place within Slovenia, like in 1990, when we fought for our independence, but “we didn’t purge the society enough of the old influences”. So they think, that today we have many people on executive positions, that aren’t capable of guiding a state correctly.

Without mentioning many particular web forums we should mention that there are many posts that speak about the past and about our ancestors. Stories about people, who were somehow involved in historical events that marked our country, appear very often.

There are many disputes, in which some participants claim that that others don’t know anything about history and that they lack knowledge of literature. For example, the topics on history are appearing also on **Rainbow forum** (Mavrični forum) (<http://www.mavricniforum.net/>), dedicated to LGBT scene. In a debate, that we came across, the majority agreed that the most important event in history of Slovenia was gaining of independence. One from among more important events, according to some participants, was the accession of Slovenia to EU.

As anywhere else, where there is a developed internet, also in Slovenia there are a lot of different blogs, where authors refer to history. Radio and TV of Slovenia have their forums and blogs, where different topics are discussed and a lot of them concern history. Most topics on different blogs are connected with independence of Slovenia. These blogs are also the most read by site visitors. Opposition leader Janez Janša and “his general” Tone Krkovič are mentioned in different blogs as the only ones, who earned something from independences of Slovenia. It is interesting that a blogger estimates that just 25 years passed since gaining of independences and all 25 years certain people wish to change course and meaning of history. He thinks that after 25 years from the inception of Slovenia we shall be able to start to think about the country as a common State (<http://www.had.si/blog/2016/06/20/janez-jansa-intone-krkovic-edina-zasluzna-za-osamosvojitvev-slovenije/>) .

Blog Slovenia, which gives virtual space to personal opinions often opens historical topics, for example on the role of Jews and Hitler. It, not surprisingly, contains some farfetched theories about history (<http://blogslovenija.blogspot.si/2007/12/prostozidarji-je-hitler-vedel.html>). A lot of bloggers are expressing opinions about politics, about causes for the First and the Second World War and imaginable causes for the third such war. One of them, recalling *Pike's letter* to the supposed leader of the Illuminati, Giuseppe Mazzini, “explains” reasons for both the First and Second World War.

The blogger envisions the reasons for the third war too, citing the above mentioned resource that these reasons for World Wars were obvious already in 1871. The World War 2 started, according to this view, because of emphasising diversity between the German nationalists and political Zionists. One blogger writes about “War; sexual violence and rape”, which is one of newer records, where the author describes horrors and brutality for civilians, females and children. The majority of blogs that we checked on **Blog Slovenia** expose different historical events, but very rarely any comments are written, except for some

praises of the effort, made by the authors of some blogs. Of course, in many instances blogs just repeat what is already described in different books and articles.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

At the end of our report, we will try to summarise some takes of different individuals on history on social networks. We checked above all *Facebook* and *Twitter*, and we found out that in Slovenia individuals like to vent their opinions on *Twitter*.

Blog Slovenia that we already wrote about before, also has its Twitter profile. On Twitter individuals can publish their opinions and Blog Slovenia posts them on their Twitter profile (<https://twitter.com/search?q=osamosvojitev&src=typd>). Many opinions on Twitter refer to contemporary affairs related to our history. Some tweets referred to president Putin as, for example: “Three communist presidents and 25 years of just shit.” Many publications are negative or even hateful, above all, about politicians, as, for example: “Why so much words, when we could quote our boss, that independence wasn’t intimate choice #gypsies.”, or: “Those who watch celebrations see, that all politicians in SD (Social Democrats) strive for division of Slovene nation and still today they despise independence.” Of course, some individuals think that gaining of the independence of our country was the largest event in history. They said that “independence is the miracle”. These publications were posted around the days nearing the national celebrations of the *Statehood Day*. Different keywords on Twitter, for example “Hitler”, bring up a lot about the Second World War. Beside publishing different photographs, many publications compare the candidate for the president of the United States Donald Trump to Hitler.

We wrote this short report after the examination of the web. But, naturally, we aren’t able to scoop everything that is written about history. We can indicate that forums are being replaced by the social networks like Twitter and Facebook. We found out, that a lot of people were telling about history on a web, and that many people prevalently discuss about independence of Slovenia.

2. Final remarks

Different, traumatising and utterly opinionated narratives, more often than not supported by some historians, make a task of the educational agents and media to work in an “impartial” manner in their presentations of history very difficult.

In the Slovenian lower and higher secondary school curriculum, as it seems, the authors, who include practicing teachers of history, manage to avoid direct exposure of pupils to the conflicting views in public sphere. Therefore, the presentation of “goals and contents” in the curriculum documents indicates important concepts and phenomena, which should be distinguished and recognised as, for instance, “forms of family in 19th century,” “migrations,” a “role of sciences”, etc. As for more “complex” periods the curriculum is relatively open and encourages a degree of autonomy of teachers, but it sets “Standards of Knowledge” for each of four grades. Among common standards to all four “stages” a skill for “different forms of communication,” which includes modern audio-visual and internet resources, is to be found. In the chapter on “Didactic Recommendations” teachers are encouraged to use different methods and to co-operate with institutions such as museums, libraries, etc. Cross-curricular links are also specified with most of other educational programs, but somewhat more significantly with geography and citizenship education.

Slovenian media - audio-visual media are most influential among them - tend to “take sides” especially concerning different views about the World War 2 and its aftermath. This does not make a task of utilizing current media production for educational purposes by no means easy. Our own following of the Slovenian media, which is presented in this report, in many instances illustrates this point. Since Slovenian public TV is a main organisation that not only broadcast imported programmes, but also manufactures and/or enables a creation of programmes in different applicable genres related to history, our presentation of particular audio-visual programmes relies mostly on its contributions.

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WEB⁽¹⁾

Web pages are increasing more and more every day and internet is becoming one of the major sources of information and communication, used by billion people to search, advertise and share contents about many topics. Internet is a complex area, in which there is a great variety of historical contents and this is highly interesting because there is the opportunity to survey both institutional web sites and popular initiatives. Web is a very useful resource for museum and historical institutes to promote their work, so it's possible to observe what representation they convey and how they portray events. On the other hand, web is a place where people can express themselves openly without any

(1) All materials and data refers to period between March and September 2016.

filter, so it's interesting to see what's their attitude toward history, what is their knowledge and how they express it. Thanks to web search engines searching for historical information has become a simple and common operation that provides thousands of results from all over the world in just a few seconds. First of all it's important to describe different types of historical websites basing on the different contents and interaction with users, site managers and target, among the most commons there are: web sites related to historical institutions, reviews, blogs, didactic portal and digital archive.

Reviews

Historical reviews and magazines on line about contemporary history are great examples of what the dominant topics are and how they are represented to the readers. I will analyze a few examples of online reviews that are well known for the accuracy of their work and completely reliable on sources and information they give and they are significant examples to deliver a complete framework for this research as well.

Young students and new graduated are the most active internet users to display their work and set a network of expertise to discuss and analyze historical issue, that's the case of *Diacronie* (<http://www.studistorici.com>), a quarterly reviews founded by few students in 2009, that publishes both monographic and miscellaneous numbers completely for free. The latest number focused on the relationship between history, historians and territory and the authors were all historian from different countries, because the mission of the reviews is to give an international point of view, with articles written by historians from Europe, North and South America, Asian and Arabian area.

There's no possibility to comment the articles, but periodically they launch "calls for papers" on a specific topic and everyone is allowed to send their contribution, then there's a scientific committee of Italian and European historians that check and evaluate every issue

in order to ensure a scientific and original debate. Besides from the articles the website offers links to archives, libraries, databases and research centers distinguished by categories (i.e. economic history, social history, science history, national history and so on), which are very useful for students, researchers and teachers that can find much information.

Many Italian universities have an online review in which they publish articles, reviews and debate in order to disclose their works, one of the most notable example is *Storicamente* (<http://storicamente.org>), an open access review founded by young researchers of the University of Bologna in 2005. The scientific committee is composed by professors from Italian and European Universities and the review publishes articles, analysis and essays on historical relevant documents, book reviews and didactic materials. The authors are European historians and many articles are available both in Italian and in English but there isn't the possibility to leave comments, it's also possible to send papers that will be evaluated and if they worth it they will be published.



Also, research centers find on line reviews useful to emphasize their projects and team up, an example is *E-Reviews* (<http://e-review.it>), that connects all Historical Institute of EmiliaRomagna region. It publishes

articles about people and facts of the twentieth-century, didactic resources for teachers and students and shares public history projects.

Another example is Novecento.org (<http://www.novecento.org>), a review about teaching history in school that contains dossiers, papers and videos about how to teach history in an interesting and interactive way, in order to stimulate curiosity in the students and manage to give away complex and composite topics in a simple and engaging way. There's also a section called "ipermuseum" that contains some attractive exhibit that can be interesting for the students and the teachers to see and discuss during lessons.



It's run by *Istituto Nazionale per la storia del movimento di liberazione in Italia* so it's very dynamic, with a lot of contents that are periodically updated and it concerns above all Italian contemporary history.

Also, it's easy to find online reviews that combine history and communications (i.e. *Instoria* <http://www.instoria.it/home/index.htm>) about many relevant topics such as environment, art and religion mixing past and present points of view. This kind of reviews are for a generalist audience, not only for experts or students, and try to enlighten the most famous events that the most of the people know, using a simple and catchy point of view.

Institutional websites

Institutions use websites to promote themselves and their activities or to honor some particularly meaningful events, such as the hundredth anniversary of the World War I. That's probably the most important historical anniversary currently celebrated in Italy and Italian government has created a specific website (<http://www.centenario1914-1918.it/it>) in which it is possible to find pictures, videos, time lines and maps related to the World War I. There's a specific bar that allows the search of any events and celebrations concerning this anniversary in Italy, but it's not possible to ask any information or to express any comment.

The Italian War Museum has a website (<http://www.museodellaguerra.it/>) that describes the exhibit, gives information about events and celebrations but there isn't the possibility to interact, leave comments or access to any contents. Also, the Army celebrates the anniversary focusing on the military history and underlining the role that new arms and strategies had during the conflict. There's a particular web sites (<http://www.esercito.difesa.it/storia/grandeguerra>), created specifically for the celebration, in which there are photos and videos about the war, posters and leaflets widespread during the conflict. There are sections about equipment, maps that explain where the war took place, time lines that sum up the main battles and a synthesis of the Italian operations. It's clearly a celebration of the Army and the great effort it had to sustain, without any space for comments.

Generally speaking Italian institutions don't use their websites to interact with the users, sites are just a way to promote institutional works and initiatives without trying to create a section for cultural debate and public discussion. On the other hand thanks to the web many institutions and archives make available to users a huge amount of materials and put detailed descriptions of their documents on line. An example is Istituto Luce (<http://www.archivioluce.com/archivio/>), one of the most important footage archive in Europe, that makes available the majority of its documents through its website where it's possible to see more than 4.000 hours of footage and 400.000 pictures.

RAI, the Italian public television uses its website to make available videos of its more recent shows and on meaningful anniversary (i.e. World War I, massacre of Bologna, the Republic Day) it has created specific documentaries. All these “web doc”, as they are called, contains videos of old Rai TV shows, interviews, statistics, pictures and brief explanations presented in a simple but dynamic way, in which users can analyze aspects they are more interested in and skip what they aren’t concern about, creating their own “plot”. <http://www.cultura.rai.it/webdoc-2giugno/index.html>



Forums and blogs

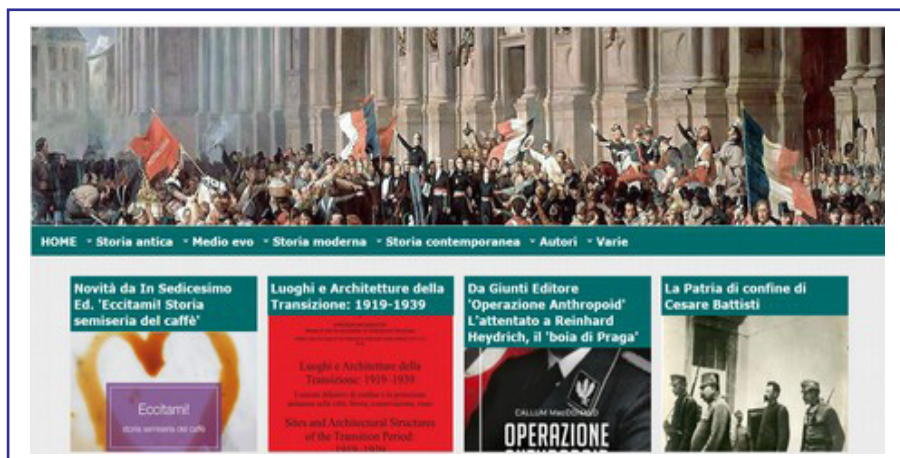
Blogs and forums are very popular on the web and some of them focus specifically on history. Many historical blogs have a didactic purpose, they are sort of archives of articles about specific events and summaries of the main topics and they are pointed towards both teachers and students. According to The Web Index, Italy has the lowest level in training teachers to use ICT to improve educations⁽²⁾, that means that school seldom encourages and provides on line ways to learn, for that reason many students have to find themselves digital materials and blogs seem to be the best source.

(2) <http://thewebindex.org/data/?indicator=S4&country=ECS>

Surfing the net it is possible to find simply blogs, run by teachers or enthusiasts that update them in their spare time with videos, detailed studies and biographies of the most popular historical figures. It's not strange that a blog deal with different periods, sometimes one blog has content about the Romans, Renaissance and twentieth-century, with both national and international history. Theme aspects, content organization and presentations are strictly related to digital knowledge of site managers, sometimes these blogs are catchy and user friendly but it's more common to see basic interfaces and not well-finished presentations.

A significant example is *La storia in un click* (*History in a click*, <http://lastoriainunclick.blogspot.it>) which is run by a teacher who puts together papers, maps, movies, time lines and other materials about every historical period in order to help students and teacher in learning and teaching history. The interesting aspect is that this kind of blogs talks about history using cartoons, comics and videos that can be more appealing for students and they help understand that history is not just a boring schoolbook. In this case there is no possibility to leave any comments or to discuss topics with other users.

Another interesting blog is *Tuttostoria* (<http://www.tuttostoria.net/>), that addresses to students and enthusiasts to give them a simple but clear tools to use in order to learn and study more about history. This portal is divided in four sections: Ancient History, Middle Age, Modern History and Contemporary History, each one of them contains focuses on remarkable people and pivotal events and it's possible to find books critiques, useful links and museum descriptions. The blog is run by 4 Italian historians that guarantee scientific accuracy of information, but there's the chance to send articles and collaborate with the editorial staff. There's space to comment each posts but it's surprisingly rare to see any comment, although it is a really user-friendly and active blog.



Social networks

Web is an equal environment in which anyone can express their own opinions without any hierarchy and every user can take part in share and spread information. Social networks have increased more and more this possibility for common people to express opinions and judgments about anything and that is especially important for history. In the past people never had a chance like this to express themselves about cultural, historical and political events of the present and the past.

Facebook

The most significant Facebook pages are the one related to historical institutions, TV channels and historical reviews. An excellent example is the page of the *Istituto Nazionale per la storia del movimento di liberazione in Italia* (National Institute of the Movement for the Italian Liberation) which has almost 2.500 likes and it posts activities of Historical Institutes all over the Italian territory, conferences and exhibits regarding the Italian history of twentiethcentury. However, comments and likes are lows and it's clear the users are above all teachers, enthusiasts and people who are involved in the activities that are advertised, there's far less interest outside this circle.

Nevertheless, official pages of TV channels are really popular, for instance the page of the pay-television channel *History* has more than 39 million of likes, which is an outstanding result, and every post has hundreds of likes and sharing. However, comments aren't so copious and the only posts that generate a debate are the ones regarding Hitler, Nazism, and the Holocaust, in which people comment and share opinions, or most of the times they express their judgment about how some events happened. Rising and developing of Nazi in Germany is the most discussed topic, people share theories on how and why it became so powerful, and sometimes users fight against each other and they even make some connections to the present, but with a very simple and populist approach and without deep historical knowledge.

It's important to say that this pages don't share any original content, they just advertise the documentaries and shows their schedule during the day.

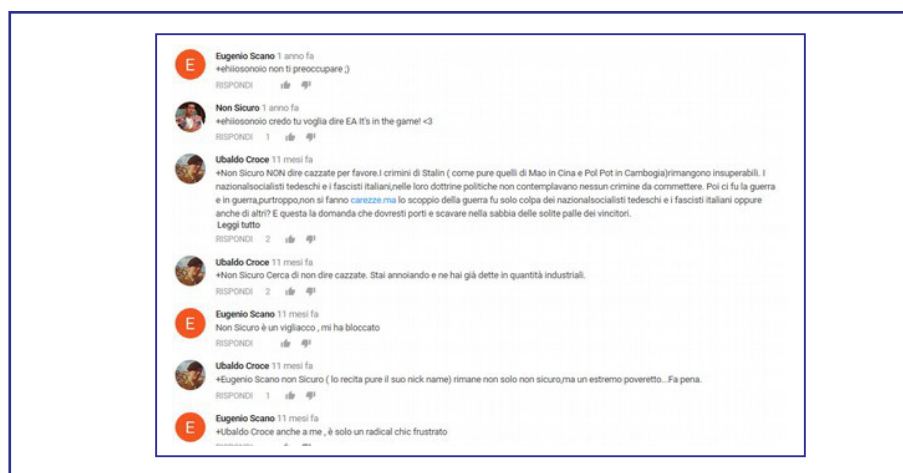
Otherwise, it's possible to find a few pages about historical events entirely created by history enthusiasts with a notable amount of likes and interaction, that the case of *La Guerra Fredda in Italia: storia della prima repubblica 1945-1994* (*Cold War in Italy: history of the Italian First Republic 1945-1994* <https://www.facebook.com/groups/504746816348407>) which counts more than 6000 members and it is run by enthusiasts and experts of that period. The purpose of this kind of pages is to post news items, images and videos related to the topic but comments and discussions aren't always very active.

YouTube

YouTube is an extremely useful instrument to understand what people search and watch the most about history but it's also a labyrinth in which it's hard to understand who are the ones that upload videos and which are their sources, as well as the fact that users that leave comments usually have absurd nicknames.

For example, searching for War World II leads to more than 58.000

results, the most of which are documentaries taken from old TV shows, one of the most popular is called *La Guerra a colori (War by color)* and it's a 70 minutes video that describes the development of the war from 1939. The documentary has a very traditional structure with a voice over that explains the images and provide all the historical information regarding military and social aspects with a didactic approach. It has more than a hundred comments about Germany, the comparison between Hitler and Stalin and the causes of the war but there's a very superficial attitude, everybody says their own opinion without referring to specific data, documents or facts.



Another very popular video is *Mussolini. Soldi, sesso e segreti (Mussolini. Money, sex and secrets)* that is taken from an old Italian TV show that aired on the public television, *La grande Storia (The Great History)* and it has 110.000 views and more than 300 comments. The documentary aimed to show “the secrets” of Fascism and Mussolini’s private life and family, using old repertoire footage and a voice over as a narrator, without any historian interviewed. There is a variety of comments, some make light of Mussolini, others doubt the reliability of the documentary, others criticize Fascism and his representatives but

there is no historical knowledge in these comments, their just opinions that doesn't point out any critical analysis.

Also, videos of theater *pièce* about historical facts are really popular, Marco Paolini is one of the major Italian actors who plays performances based on twentieth-century Italian history (i.e. Vajont, Ustica, Holocaust and Word Wars) and videos of his plays have thousands of views and comments, regarding above all the acting and the set-up.

Conclusion

To sum up web is full of valiant tools to tell and describe history in interesting and engaging ways, allowing to reach a huge and varied audience all over the world. Websites, social networks, blogs and reviews are means to share information and cultivate passion for teachers, students, experts and enthusiasts which can create networks and increase their knowledge.

Although some topics seem to achieve much more success than others, World War I and II, Nazism, Hitler and Mussolini conveys the interest of many users and all materials related to those issues are always among the most clicked and commented. However, many discussions are about politics, sarcasm and populism rather than historical problems and it's not rare they end up with users fighting each other. Also, military history is very popular with many former soldiers and experts that compare pictures, statistics and details about equipment and vehicles, analyzing differences and pointing out evolution in military strategies.

The most updated and dynamic web pages are institutional websites which combine many functions and materials but rather than try to interact with users there are like showcase to advertise projects and events. Although also sites and blogs run by enthusiasts are a major source and are always among the most viewed pages in the search engines, proving history is a topic that draw interest from many internet users.

The history of Spain on YouTube Four Examples

1. Methodology

Four events in recent Spanish history - the Civil War (1936-1939, the Political Reform Law (November 1976), the Constitutional Referendum (December 1978) and “23F” (the attempted coup d’état of 23 February 1981 - were selected to analyse their presence on the *YouTube* platform in June 2016. The analysis was restricted to the first 20 results yielded by each one of the four thematic searches.

We first assessed the set of searches in order to define the common elements of the historical material on *YouTube*.

These in turn were compared with the results of the other national teams involved in the project. Although our analysis was focused on content, production aspects were also considered, since they substantially determine the type of content and therefore affect the content itself; this, at the very least, makes it easier or more difficult to locate. It can also provide important clues about the “audiences” of each product on the website.

The study also analysed the audiences of each product. To this end, we adopted a two-fold approach: the first, an elemental and specific one: the number of views of each product; the second, broader in scope, addresses the comments generated by each one of these documents on the *YouTube* website.

This latter aspect can give us an idea of the interest and influence from each result. The following factors were taken into account for the analysis:

PRINCIPAL FORMAL FEATURES AND CONTENT OF THE VIDEOS ANALYSED

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
News-based programme/newscast (after the event)	8	9.64
News-based programme/newscast (contemporary at the time)	8	9.64
Talk show/debate	1	1.20
Document	37	44.58
Game show	0	0.00
Fiction	2	2.41
Others	22	26.51
Is there a narrator?	60	72.29
If yes, is he/she visible on screen?	9	10.84
If yes, does the narrator provide context or explanations?	38	45.78
Shot in studio?	29	34.94
Shot with an audience?	1	1.20
Shot on location?	48	57.83
Uses archive footage?	51	61.45
Uses reconstructions or dramatizations?	3	3.61
Uses computer graphics, maps and other aesthetic elements?	25	30.12
Is it a private media production?	24	28.92
Is it an institutional production?	17	20.48
Is it produced by an educational or a research institution?	9	10.84
Is it produced by another type of organisation?	18	21.69
Political	76	91.57

Social	21	25.30
Cultural	1	1.20
Is it biographical?	2	2.41
Is it centred on a famous person?	13	15.66
Is it centred on an event?	48	57.83
Real	53	63.86
Fictional	2	2.41
Stereotypes	0	0.00
Does it offer information on the causes?	46	55.42
Does it offer information on the consequences?	42	50.60
Is it a result of research?	32	38.55
Certainty	39	46.99
Uncertain	4	4.82

The percentages amount to 100 when added to their theoretical opposite. In other words, the fact that the videos that are based on a famous person are 15.6% means that those which do not meet this condition/criterion/feature comprise the remaining part of 100; not that they are completed with those that are based on biographies (2.4%) and those focused on events (57.8%).

2. Overall results

The first aspect to consider is the format in which the documents are presented. There is a high prevalence of realistic genres: some three thirds (63.8%) of the sample comprise documentaries (44.6%) or specifically news-based television productions (19.2%), either contemporary with the events or subsequent to them. There is very little at the other end: fictional documents account for 2.4%, and talk shows or debates 1.2%. This shows that most users looking for historical subjects on *YouTube* search for realism; they seek information. In other words, users search for what is usually considered as “real”, “true”. Fictional narratives (those that are not clearly realistic) generate little interest when searching for a historical topic.

Table 1 Number and Percentage of documents analysed by format		
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
News-based programme/newscast (after the event)	8	9.64
News-based programme/newscast (contemporary at the time)	8	9.64
Talkshaw/Debate	1	1.20
Documentary	37	44.58
Game show	0	0.00
Fiction	2	2.41
Others	22	26.51
Source: own preparation		

Most the products within the realistic genre not only have a standard format; they are also general-knowledge pieces that are easy to digest. *YouTube* contains many products originally produced for broadcast on TV, including clips from documentaries, and even news stories from news-based programmes.

The website also hosts simple audio-visual materials (similar to a video-recorded class) that feature a teacher using explanatory posters and/or visuals to explain the basic ideas. The preference for realistic documents implies that little material is produced expressly for *YouTube*. There is an abundance of recycled audio-visual material already broadcast, mostly on TV. Clips from documentaries make up the vast majority of material. In most cases (72.2%) the products include a narrator giving background information about the footage (45.7%). They are partly filmed on location (57.8%), have computer graphics or explanatory maps (30.1%) and incorporate archive footage (61.4%). These videos differ little to news-based TV programmes and documentaries, since this is precisely what they are: recycled TV news-based programmes or documentaries, or a combination of footage from the two. Original

independent production is not significant. Thus, 20.4% of these videos account for institutional productions, while specifically cultural output accounts for only 10.8. Productions in the other organisations category (political, social or cultural associations) barely make up 21.6%.

Table 2
The 12 most viewed videos of the sample

SUBJECT	URL	NUMBER VIEWS	DURATION
23F	https://www.You tube .com/watch?v=hVHu3m-4keo	613.103	2:41
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xizC1uX9eOI	603.175	1:51
23F	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pcc0_8i0CYs	352.586	1:41
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.You Tube .com/watch?v=Gw5fmgMNPgy	321.969	44:51
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijL4wY3riN0	307.583	51:17
The Political Reform Law	https://www.youtube.com/lbTcTnxGjVo?ReformLawlist=PL916AF34BE7E1938D	241.407	7:10
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOcRp0e39jQ	216.739	04:08
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPS05DnzF-c	186.925	9:35
23F	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-A61NYHwro	183.588	51:24
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7ge6JE1SnM	176.300	55:32
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjFeAF-UkC4	112.476	106:30
The Spanish Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/v=dYgWSwx961o&list=PLvxFc9UZUY3wDcMRbs_s4wTm8T-qQV_OX	108.886	45:34
<i>Source: own preparation</i>			

Only 2.4% of the historical products on *YouTube* are of a biographical nature (and the few that do address the role of individual players comprise only 15.6%). Most videos focus on historical periods and events (57.8%). It is worth noting that almost a third of the videos studied (32.5%) relate the historical event to the present, and most of them (30.1%) present this association as decisive.

In short, the videos are old, recycled news products - often clips from TV programmes that have already been amortized - centred on events and processes. They are presented as interesting for their relevance to certain aspects of current-day society. Perhaps we could liken them how archaeological remains of mystifying ancient civilizations were arranged in the exhibition halls of the great museums such as the Louvre or the British Museum.

Out of a total of 80 videos, the 12 most viewed products account for 74.7% of the total number of views. This points to the importance of being among the first products brought up in searches. The trend towards an ever decreasing number of documents that are frequently brought up in generic searches for information without any specific interest is underscored by Google's particular classification system, which also is applied to *YouTube*. Furthermore, of the 12 most viewed videos, five (nearly half of the sample) are not even 10 minutes long, and three last less 5 minutes. It is significant that three of the videos of less than 10 minutes in length are about the Spanish Civil War, a subject that is in principle difficult to present in such a short time. We highlight this aspect in order to point out that the characteristics of the medium are important enough to determine the way content is presented: here simplification is essential. As we will see below, this aspect needs to be adjusted, but its importance should be noted.

The document with the most views is a three-minute piece on 23F, the attempted coup of 23 February 1981 (Table 2). It contains the well-known images from TVE that capture the moment the Civil Guardsmen burst into the Congress of Deputies during the vote to

elect a new president of the Spanish government. The third most viewed document, also on the same subject, lasts less than 2 minutes. This is understandable because the footage of the assault on the Congress has been indelibly etched on Spanish collective mind, which explains why *YouTube* brings up these documents. The searches on the website - or, more precisely, the results it brings up in the first place - imply that certain subjects (23F, the Spanish Constitutional Referendum and the Political Reform Law) do not call for a special explanation, at least not a very extensive one. Perhaps there is no debate on the meaning, origin and consequences of these processes because they tend to be presented more as an “event” than a “process”. Hence, only audio-visual documentation of the event is required, not its rational explanation. This may be reminiscent of the first illusion of the historical audio-visual account, which presents the indisputable facts (“what happened”) instead of explaining them.

Although the first and the third documents with the most views are about 23F, the subject of the Spanish Civil War dominates the selection of the 12 most viewed videos. Of the 77 searches undertaken, 51.6% correspond to the Spanish Civil War. As is often the case with *YouTube*, if we consider the 12 most viewed documents, the percentage corresponding to the views on the civil conflict increases to 59.3%.

The fact that the more times a video is viewed, the more comment it generates helps to identify interest in the subject and the audio-visual piece itself. Comments on the Spanish Civil War make up 71.5% of the feedback on the twelve most viewed videos. The highly contentious nature of the comments suggests an acute permanence and timelessness with which Spaniards view the war; at least with users who search *YouTube* for information on the subject. There is no relationship between the duration of a document and the amount of comments (and dispute) it generates. The video that receives the most comments (813) lasts 51 minutes; the second, generating 759 comments, is less than two minutes in length. The feedback appears to be the result of clashes by individual and loosely structured groups

who enjoy verbally offensive conflict, and their comments lack any academic or intellectual level. The vast majority of the comments posted disqualify their opponent and suggest a desire enter into conflict over a view the user does not share. It is a way of continuing the war in the opinions on the war, even though *YouTube* moderators delete the most offensive comments. One of the forum participants partially sums this up thus: “bloody war, I don’t know how people from the same nation can kill each other. But judging by the way people fight in the comments section on this video, I’m not surprised”. The most unusual aspect of the product is that it contains some footage from a pro-Franco documentary screened in the United States during the Spanish Civil War, which has been re-edited with a new montage of the images and a storyline supporting the Republican cause. In other words, it seeks to perpetuate the war by using the same strategies that the Nationalists did at that time: exploit footage of the enemy in order to construct a discourse (with a new montage and audio) against it.

The comments referring to the videos on the other subjects also stand out for their insults, attacks and, in the case of 23F, allusions to the travesty of the Transition to democracy as well as invectives against its protagonists (although we also find praise for the courage shown by the minister of defense and Adolfo Suárez, the President of the government). This is also true of the most viewed video on “the Political Reform Law”. In this case, it is important to highlight that the video features Arias Navarro announcing the death of Franco and reading his historic political testament. Yet a document on the death of Franco may be considered a distant background of the Political Reform Law only in a very broad sense. This is another aspect worth highlighting: the thematic selections of *YouTube* are not always rigorous, at least not as historians would regard rigor.

Therefore, the documents on recent Spanish history that are searched for on *YouTube* can be characterised thus: first, the website classification criteria would often be questioned by historians. The results of searches may be yield surprises. For example a search

for “the Political Reform Law” brings up the footage of Arias Navarro announcing the death of Franco. Second, *YouTube* does not curate content of any sort either. It shows results according to the key words added by the users who upload the material and refines them with an algorithm that directs the searches. Last, the fact that there is no information on the source of the footage (except for the one provided by the “author”) poses an added difficulty. Of course, the source of some content is in no doubt because it is well known. Indeed, perhaps the website’s greatest asset is its wealth of well-known footage, which is extremely useful for students and teachers alike.

The comments, which lack any academic or intellectual interest, are often rude, manifest a bias rooted in current-day politics and constitute another side to fanatical political debate. In fact, historical footage is often used to draw parallels with current events. In fact the comments in the forums on the different subjects are so similar that were they to be exchanged between the different subjects, they would not significantly affect the content they were posted about.

The last question we ask in this section is: is this website worth recommending to students as a source of information adapted to specific cases, or is it useful as a simple and free repository?

3. The Spanish Civil War on YouTube

In keeping with the website’s general search trends, the first 9 results account for 87.5% of the first 19 search results on “the Spanish Civil War”. Most of the results correspond to documentaries, although there are six exceptions, which are insignificant in the number of views and comments they prompt. These we address at the end of this section. The most viewed documentaries are professional productions by documentary film producers (Granada Televisión, Istituto Luce, Premium Cine, Canal Historia, etc.), history information magazines (*La Aventura de la Historia*), or specific websites (www.batallasdeguerra).

com). Other videos, as already mentioned, contain rehashed footage adapted to fit a narrative contrary to the documentary from which the material was taken. There are also products that feature edited archive footage that is narrated with “cards” - similar to the intertitles in silent films - because they are not voiced over, and maps (in the case of *La guerra civil española, el resumen*, at www.batallasdelaguerra.com). Typically, however, the documentaries are professional productions, sometimes, of a high standard. The result is normal.

In part, this is expected given the solemn nature of the subject matter. To this day, the Spanish Civil War remains an extremely important in Spain (even though among the 19 most viewed videos there is one fictional production that verges on hilarity). If the search for information on the war shows an interest in it, the comments clearly indicate (even if they lack intellectual tone and are mostly offensive) that it is still very relevant to the Spanish public. The search for “reliable” documents points to the relevance and seriousness of the war. What’s more, the most viewed video has the added novelty of colour footage, perhaps to entice an audience that has already seen most of the audio-visual documentation on the conflict in black and white. In fact, any expectation of new footage will be dashed, since the images do not appear to be new. Perhaps the original footage was shot in colour and transferred to black and white in the documentaries and newsreels that made them famous. Perhaps this is just a “promotional” ploy to obtain a better ranking on the website.

An examination of material on the specific subjects shows a clear correlation between videos that offer a general overview of the conflict and those that address a particular aspect of it. In fact, only one of videos that surpasses 100,000 views (216,000) focuses on a specific aspect of the war: *Cómo empezó la guerra civil española* [How the Spanish Civil War began], which we discuss below. The rest of the products in the group, on “specialised” aspects of the Spanish Civil War, deal with the incidents at Badajoz (26,990 views and 10 comments), the resistance of Alcázar de Toledo (removed due to a

copyright infringement claim, with 7,189 views and 7 comments), or the arms used in the conflict (also removed, with just over 8,000 views and 7 comments). As we can see, this group has fewer views and their sum contributes little in general terms. Most of the videos, therefore, address the war as a whole, even if only one episode from a general series, or focus on the military campaigns of the war.

Of the six exceptions mentioned above, the video with the most views (216,000 and 250 commentaries), titled *Cómo empezó la Guerra Civil española* [How the Spanish Civil War began] (practicopedia.com), is a simple product. Lasting little more than 4 minutes, it recounts the war with a clear and concise voiced-over narration, while a hand moves icons representing parties, ideologies and institutions back and forth. Most of the comments generated by this video - whether in agreement with the central argument or not - encourage its makers to continue the production of simple products that explain the conflict to ordinary people. Naturally, there is some of the usual condemnation, albeit to a lesser extent, although without shaping the general tone of the feedback. The comments on the aforementioned *La Guerra Civil española, el resumen* [The Spanish Civil War, the synopsis] also praise the attempt to address the topic clearly and dispassionately. What's more, despite the inevitable ideological bickering and ensuing reciprocal defamatory remarks, the debate is largely polite.

The third exception features the leader of the Podemos party, Pablo Iglesias - apparently in a radio broadcast, because he seen is wearing headphones, but it could also be a lecture - giving a short explanation of the Spanish Civil War based on the films made about it. The piece concludes with some brief statements from three leaders of the same party urging people to vote on May 25 and to join what at the time was a radical movement. This product clearly demonstrates the influence that the Spanish Civil War continues to have on every-day Spanish politics and how it is used in election campaigns; in this case, to encourage people to vote. It is particularly striking that the civil war is used by an anti-system party made up of young people who, like

their parents, had no direct experience of the conflict. In other words, to achieve political renewal the Spanish left continues to feed on a reinterpretation of the conflict and thereby perpetuate it. It is also interesting to note that Iglesias' talk does not focus on the war itself, but rather its interpretation and devaluation by both the institutional political left and filmmakers. The clip, lasting little more than five minutes, has been watched 29,800 times and generated 198 comments, which, as one might expect, either attack or praise the talk, with no academic interest.

The fourth piece that does not fall within the documentary genre is a simple production by Elena de la Gala and Esperanza Romero (*La Guerra Civil en diez minutos. La historia la haces tú*) [The Civil War in ten minutes. You make the history]. In it, a narrator uses a whiteboard showing the outline of a map of Spain, on which she uses coloured markers and photographs to give a basic but clear and concise account of the war. The data, gathered shortly after the video was uploaded to *YouTube*, showed it had already been watched 3,000 times. By the cut-off date of the present study (11 September 2016) this figure had soared to 160,000 views. *YouTube* subsequently deleted the comments on this video. The fifth and only fictional production among the group of the 19 most viewed videos on *YouTube* (*Guerra Civil española. El desarrollo*) [The Spanish Civil War - The Development], lasts little under 15 minutes. This piece combines the laidback tone of its humorous amateur filmmaking team with a small amount of archive footage. The number of views and comments - as well as its treatment - suggests a quasi-university assignment. The last video (*El armamento de la Guerra Civil*) [Civil War Weaponry] that is not classified as a documentary has since been taken down and replaced with the following statement: "*YouTube* User Account has been terminated because we received multiple third-party claims of copyright infringement regarding material the user posted."

In short, the material available on *YouTube* shows that the Spanish Civil War continues to be the subject of a contention among Spaniards. This,

in turn, sparks interest and rekindles the importance of the war. “The war” is a key issue for today’s Spaniards. The Historical Memory Law (December 2007) has certainly contributed to the intensification of the debate around the Spanish Civil War, which has never been intellectually resolved, although unresolved conflicts are nothing new, as can be seen in other countries such as the United States and its civil war, or France and collaborationism. The war’s ideological positions have likewise been deeply rooted in academia for decades. It is surprising, however, that these ideological positions can come to the fore in an election campaign and that they are mainly manifested through the habitual derogatory comments between the two opposing sides. It is remarkable that the age of the regular users of the website suggests that neither they nor their parents lived through the war. Moreover, the generational ideological changes have left children, parents and grandparents in different ideological camps: ideology is not inherited; it is chosen.

Thus, there is an interest for information on the conflict, albeit information of a general nature more than specific aspects of it. Searchers have no problem accepting material made decades ago and they place greater value on efforts to give clear explanations that are free of ideology, which generates less acrimony in the debates. As far as formats are concerned, documentary searches rank highest - significantly higher than other formats. The other formats comprise a diversity of teaching presentations whose producers have made a deliberate effort to distant their output from audio-visual contents; this is a new approach that began in 2010. These new producers also have access to archive footage of the conflict (although there may be difficulties to use the material available from the NODO on the TVE website), but they seem to prefer to give priority to an explanation based on elements with no ideological import (icons, handmade labels, simplified maps, etc.) and to avoid the use of well-known footage that is inevitably shot through with ideological meaning.

4. The Political Reform Law

The Political Reform Law was the first step towards the end of the Franco regime. It was the last of the fundamental laws of the old regime that would herald free elections. It was on this foundation that a parliament was formed which would lead to the passing of the 1978 constitution. Though the law was of key importance in the process known as the Transition to democracy, its importance is not reflected in the number of results of material about it on *YouTube*. In fact, there is little available subject matter on the passing of the law itself. The most viewed material is the announcement - via TVE - of the death of Franco and his historical political testimony, which has been viewed 241,000 times and contains 363 comments, most of them from young and old nostalgic supporters of the old regime. The second most viewed video has been watched 39.000 times, which is significantly less. Rather than specifically cover the Political Reform Law, the clip comes from a documentary on Spain's first democratic elections, in which the Political Reform Law is mentioned in passing, as the event that paved the way for the elections.

This material is mainly characterised for the numerous episodes (or clips) from documentaries on the Transition (five in total, two from Artehistoria and three from the award-winning TVE production *La Transición* by Victoria Prego). In short, this material contains isolated references within a broader and more comprehensive account of the Transition. This also occurs with other documents: a piece from the NODO announcing the adoption of the law, a clip from a speech by Adolfo Suárez explaining the steps that the first government of the democracy will take (a reference to the law that made this possible), a fragment of an interview with a politician of the time (talking along the same lines), etc.

The second characteristic is that other circumstantial references occur in clips from new reports on the death of President Adolfo Suárez, who steered the law through the Francoist parliament. Again, the law

is mentioned in passing as part of more wideranging account. The explanation is also very brief. The same happens with three more documents from various regional, national and international TV channels. Thirdly, the documents that address the law thematically, in both title and content, comprise three educational products. The one that is probably of the highest quality was made by a secondary and higher education teacher (Alfredo García) whose treatment of the subject matter is both clear and instructive. Made in March 2012, the video has obtained fewer than 10,000 views. The second was made by an online university (UDIMA), while the last one is by a group of students from the Complutense University. This aspect is worthy of note, as it clearly sets the limits of interest: it is interesting for students only because it is part of a study programme, which included making an audio-visual production to upload to YouTube. In no case it is considered a subject of a broader interest.

Possibly, the fact that the topic features neither stirring nor thrilling footage contributes to this situation. The event is summed up with simple images: the façade of the parliament, shots of the procurators, the voices of three or four parliamentarians in order to give an idea of the differing positions, a shot of Suárez sitting on the government bench, a final applause, and the parliamentarians leaving the chamber. This austerity reflects the difficulty of the moment: the applause could not be turned into a “no” to Francoism and there was no room for outward displays of joy: the procurators had, as it was stated in the media, committed political suicide: the Francoists were closing the chapter on Francoism. The result is a simple audio-visual narrative, which even in the political arena demanded a new act: a public referendum, which took place weeks later.

5. The constitutional referendum of December 1978

If the Political Reform Law brought about the demise of the Francoist period, its approval by the people in the constitutional referendum began a new one: the return to a constitutional regime of liberties. The

referendum was included in this study because it is a milestone in the construction of modern-day Spain. It is an entirely different matter that searches for this topic bring up strictly historical documents.

The first large group of documents that make up the vast majority of views explain the Spanish Constitution of 1978 to applicants aspiring to join the Spanish civil service (all candidate selection examinations - regardless of service and/or activity contain questions on this fundamental law). In fact, out of the 292,835 total views, 65.7% fall within this group, which contains all manner of documents. Most of them are simple recorded lessons (some with students and others show only a teacher), although some are even more basic, consisting of power point presentations, or simply texts read by a narrator off screen. In short, they are documents of a largely instructional purpose. The comments are usually limited to doubts, or teachers correcting a student's mistakes on dates or information. Only in a few cases do we find references to the fact that the King cannot be tried, which is considered a sign of inequality.

Another group of documents (approximately 1.000 views), also instructional material, is aimed at young schoolchildren. This material is not very creative, featuring some schemes and short phrases that are perhaps too technical for an audience of between 4 and 7 years. These videos are usually made by schoolteachers, and those with a more professional sheen are usually low-budget productions.

The last group of documentation is made up of documentaries and news stories that fall into two blocks. The first consists of news reports/programmes, either commemorative productions made by television networks (such as Canal Sur's "Los reporteros", marking the 30th anniversary of the constitution), or they were made at the time the events took place (1978). They constitute a highly repetitive model: elections to choose the members of parliament, who would draft the constitution; statements by political leaders, the vote, a meeting of those elected and the formation of the committee, elections for the commission that that would draft the project, the vote, the referendum and the official

signing ceremony by the King. Some pieces also touch on aspects referring to terrorism, the Toledo pacts, or the conformation process of the *Generalitat de Catalunya* and its statute of autonomy. Some of the oldest pieces that have been uploaded and watched as sources are news reports, although they look like historical material. These come from the NODO and TVE and were broadcast at the time to announce the event. In spite of the wealth of well-known audio-visual material and the documentary series on the Transition (as a whole or as specific episodes of others series that are chronologically more extensive) there is only one documentary among the most viewed documents which is quite simple and very similar to the products already mentioned.

The conclusion of this first analysis of *YouTube* results on the term “Spanish Constitution of 1978” suggests that it has been left out of history. It is featured as something current and ongoing, an event that has yet to be analysed. The majority of references are centred on its study as a current event, but there are few references to the historical process that brought it about. It is covered in commemorative products and in the documentary, but very generically. The archive footage from the newscasts of the time does not shake off the aura of timelessness, despite its being paradoxically “old”.

6. The attempted coup d’etat of 23 February 1981

The first and third searches that bring up the most results on the subjects under study correspond to the attempted coup d’etat of 23 February 1981 (23F). The attempted coup is best defined by the footage showing a colonel of the civil wielding a pistol bursting into the Congress of Deputies; the suspension of the session by force and the reduction, also by force, of both the minister of defence (an officer of the highest rank) and the president of the government; and the announcement of the arrival of a military officer who would explain the situation. In fact, the officer in question never arrived and political order had been re-established by the next morning. No-one was killed or wounded. All of this was broadcast

live across the country via the cameras of TVE, which were covering the session. Never had Spanish television caught so much history live on camera. This explains the numerous of views for this footage.

This simple narrative of images suggests, in action and intrigue terms, far higher levels of interest than those of the other subjects (except, of course, the Spanish Civil War). Add to this the air of suspense of the conspiracy theories surrounding the event (there is a relatively important bibliography that “exposes” the “truth” behind the attempted coup). Thus, it comes as no surprise that more than a few comments in the forums address the various theories (most of them mere allusions in five or six lines, at most) and there are fewer disparaging and defamatory comments (although they are not entirely absent). In any case, the dramatic tone (exposition, climax, denouement) of the account facilitates the definition of the protagonists: Tejero (protagonist or antagonist according to one’s political stance), Suárez and Gutiérrez Mellado (minister of defence who physically confronts the Civil Guardsmen and whom Tejero unsuccessfully tries to wrestle to the ground (an act that any film director would present as an anticipation of the final defeat of the attempted coup) as brave and worthy secondary players, and - of course - the king and his final decisive intervention. Solid characters, a well-defined plot... that years later TVE took advantage of in its mini-series on the event, in almost identical terms, adding to it the definitive “baddie”, dramatically burdened with the role of “traitor” to the King (and to Spain, of course), leaving everyone else beyond suspicion.

The most viewed pieces are realistic in tone: clips from newscasts from various commemorations and some documentaries. The most viewed documentaries (*Golpe de estado en España. Madrid 1981* (23F) [The coup d’etat in Spain. Madrid 1981 (23F) by Jesús Palacio for Canal Historia) and *Golpe de estado en España de 1981* [The coup d’etat in Spain of 1981] (MICAAL-TV) last 51 minutes and one hour respectively. In addition, both serve as examples of two approaches. Both present the event as a mystery to be solved. They are not strictly historical, but

historical intrigue, which is common of today's productions about the past, because there seems to be more interest in what is overlooked, in suspicions more or less grounded on peripheral aspects, than on the dissemination of what is effectively clear (usually the fundamental and key points). The first documentary, broadcast on the 25th anniversary of the event, opens with the familiar: "we don't really know everything that happened". This is obvious: there is no event of which we really know everything (thank goodness!). This allows us to reflect on the already familiar footage and key moments of the events, as well as the interviews with "experts" (journalists who have written sensationalist books on the event and lawyers of the incriminated parties) that address marginal issues as if they were key to something that has yet to be disclosed. In fact, the documentary concludes: "The truth is difficult to identify". The second part of an exposé cites kilometres of recorded tapes (which we later find out are audio tapes and not images) that were gathered, stored and then made to disappear in 1983 (during the socialist government's mandate, naturally). Notwithstanding, the documentary filmmakers managed to gain access to some of the recordings containing conversations between one of the lawyers defending the coup's instigators (Juan García Carrés) and Coronel Tejero during the occupation of the Congress. The tapes suggest that either Carrés was poorly informed from the outside, or was simply fooling Tejero by boosting his morale in order to ensure he maintained his position. In truth, it was much ado about nothing. These two productions are the most viewed documentaries, with some 183,000 and 72,000 views respectively).

But the most viewed documents are not documentaries; they are two informational pieces made not long after the event. The first notches up more views (613,000) than all the others on the same theme combined. In just over 2 minutes and 40 seconds, an off-screen voice (the one from the original broadcast on the event made by Cadena SER radio) is heard over the TVE footage that narrates the events. The second most viewed document (more than 352.000 times) is also informative and

commemorative, which -in addition - is included in a series covering TVE's key moments over its first 50 years: a commemoration about a commemoration. In one minute and four seconds the images and text review the essential elements: the disruption, the king's intervention and the surrender. One way of underscoring the protagonism of the media (not least TVE).

Another group of documents viewed also recount the event. The most interesting and most viewed in this group (72,000 views) is a production titled *Qué saben los adolescentes del golpe de estado del 23 f.* [What do adolescents know about coup d'état of 23 F]. Broadcast on 23 February 2016 - 35 years after the event - it was made by the producers of the satirical news programme *El intermedio*. The production interviews teenagers on the street about their knowledge of the event, only to discover that most of them know little about it. In fact, they not only lacked knowledge of 23F but also most of recent and not-so-recent Spanish history. The comments focus more on low level of Spanish students' education than on the actual event itself, making it less relevant in this case.

To sum up: there is more distance in people's political and ideological implication in the topics of recent history (the Political Reform Law, the Spanish Constitutional Referendum and 23 F, with some nuances in this last case) than in the Spanish Civil War. The comments in forums on the war abound with bellicose confrontation (at a dialectical level, naturally), radical stances and irrational attitudes (in the sense of little or no ability to reason). It is not a question of ideological inheritance: this traceability was lost in three generations. Rather, they are still at war. Some because although they feel they won it, they now see that the "enemy" is prevailing. And those who see themselves as descendants of the losing side want to win a definitive victory. The end of the consensus value on which the transition was built has probably led those who question the current system to seek (and to find) in the war a symbol to clutch at to provide a justification for ideological differences.

United Kingdom history websites

Our focus, in order to draw parallels to TV programming in the same period, was:

- Coverage of VE Day
- Coverage of Europe Day
- Coverage of Shakespeare's death-day

We mainly considered the coverage of a 4-week period 23/5/16-20/6/16 although we only considered a week on Shakespeare as there is too much material to analyse globally (as the anniversary is being commemorated all year in 2016, across the globe). We considered Facebook, Twitter and blogs, in the main.

We followed the Dutch team's guidelines, and therefore identified what hashtags have been used, e.g. #VEDay and #VEDay2016, #Shakespeare400 and #EuropeDay to see Twitter discussion, in addition to identifying relevant blogs by using <https://www.google.com/alerts> to enter a search word, after which we began to receive daily emails about Europe Day, VE Day and Shakespeare 400. However, in both cases, because of the global use of the English language, even beyond Anglophone nations, the material we analyse here comes both from the UK and other Anglophone nations such as the USA, but also, for example, European nations which use English as a shared second language. Interestingly, for both Shakespeare's anniversary and VE Day, it was not possible to continue the capture of material until the commemoration had ended as both are running for much longer periods; Shakespeare400 for a whole year, and VE Day commemoration seems virtually continuous with no particular 'high point', a source of discontent amongst some online commentators who would have liked to have seen

more commemoration in 2016, possibly reflecting on the large amount of commemoration on the 70th anniversary in 2015 (see below).

Twitter

#VEDay2016

Samples of VE Day related online commemoration are given below: there were only 4 tweets (in the whole of Twitter) using the tag #VEDay2016 at the time of analysis, several weeks after VE Day. This may reflect the ongoing nature of VE Day commemoration both in and out of 'season', making a new, annual hashtag less useful for online commemoration. Given the politically fraught environment in the UK in May/June 2016, around the time of the referendum, it is not surprising that VE Day, and UK veterans, became a focus for those representing both sides of the debate, and reiterated online interest in international conflict in earlier decades. Three of the four tweets were identifiably by UK authors and are as follows (images included):



1. BritishWoman -@LorraChaplin May 10

"@hopeful_sam: They had no idea about the future but were free to find out.. #VEDay2016"
@georgetsk @LordAshcrof
0 retweets 2 likes



2. Simon Jackson @hopeful_sam May 8

Our gratitude to all the Warriors, whatever colour or creed, that suffered to overcome the Nazis #VEDay2016
1 retweet, 1 like



3. Sonya TheAntoineFan @sonya1963 May 8 Glasgow, Scotland

It's VE Day, a time to remember the fallen heroes. I vow to thee my country by @JonAntoine <http://youtu.be/rZJoDvgzIUU> #VEDay2016
9 retweets 18 likes

#VEDay

Analysis of #VEDay (via <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23veday&src=typd>) revealed responses from a range of nations, in English, which of course will have been accessible to viewers in the UK. The nations represented were predominantly the UK, USA and Canada as well as some European nations such as Poland. Unsurprisingly, much of the UK material used VE Day to reflect on Britain's position in the EU. For example, there was some comment on the lack of public acknowledgement of VE Day in the UK in 2016, for example by the UKIP (UK Independence Party, anti-EU) follower 'skutterdan' on 6 June, which is unsurprising given UKIP's focus on ideas of patriotism, and its apparent loss in the UK, during the months preceding the referendum. Other commentators, though, included images of commemoration from 2016 in Arras (e.g. 'paxcyclist' 26 May). Returning to the use of VE Day to comment on contemporary politics, some (including US) commentators used the hashtag to comment more directly: Harriett Baldwin to discuss the WW2 veterans who wished the UK to remain in the EU, and Donna McGuinness to note that whilst Donald Trump remained a candidate in the US presidential elections, 'our future is in the hands of the enemy'. Institutions such as the UK-based non-profit education organisation The Churchill Centre offered material ('10 facts about VE Day') and other educational institutions in both the UK and elsewhere offered resources (e.g. ehistory.osu.edu/topics/wwii, a US university website). Other British charities used commemoration of VE Day to raise awareness of appeals for funding: the Royal Voluntary Service advertised its kickstarter appeal to raise money in order to digitise the diaries of female volunteers during WW2.

#EuropeDay

Analysis of #EuropeDay (via www.twitter.com/hashtag/europeday) again revealed responses from a range of nations both within and outside the EU. There was, however, very little British use of the hashtag representing, perhaps, an ongoing failure of many UK institutions to engage officially with commemoration of the EU. The bodies using it were mainly Anglophone and included the 'EU in Canada', other EU groups, and in one instance an Irish commentator discussing the burning of the EU flag in Ireland. The only UK sources located were: the 'UK in Moldovia' (the UK embassy, tweeting that their football team had come 3rd in the embassy competition); 'The Fogey's' [sic], an anti-EU membership group who uploaded a picture of Queen Elizabeth II as a pro-Brexit monarch (<https://twitter.com/TheFogeys>); and some Welsh material from the European Commission in Wales on 17 May. The latter is hardly surprising given the large amount of funding received by Wales and yet the lack of Welsh support for staying in the EU.

#Shakespeare400

Analysis of #shakespeare400 (via www.twitter.com/hashtag/shakespeare400) revealed mainly Anglophone responses with a great deal of coverage of US and UK performances, as well as some discussion of Shakespeare's first folio having been bought at auction by the State Library of New South Wales. Unlike #EuropeDay or #VEDay, #Shakespeare400 was little used for wider political commentary or indeed to encourage a sense of national identity; rather, the vast number of tweets encouraged a sense of the universality of Shakespeare's work, discussed further below.

Facebook

Following the Dutch team's guidelines, the same three hashtags were searched for. The results were broadly similar as for Twitter.

Europe Day

Six weeks' worth of material relating to Europe Day was considered, dating from Europe Day for the following 6 weeks. The English-language setting was used but even so, most of the material was not UK-generated, which may reflect the greater British interest in the referendum at the time, although also a long-running lack of official British recognition of the commemoration. English-language material included coverage of 'Irexit' (the call for a referendum in Republic of Ireland), and other non-UK, EU-based groups such as the European Commission, the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament; the European Greens; and the 'EU in the US'. One example of a UK-based use of the hashtag was the *Telegraph* newspaper's article on places to see in Europe 'before you die'. The middle-class readership of broadsheet newspapers such as the *Telegraph* were perhaps more likely to vote for remain in the referendum, and may have been more likely to have seen the benefits of the EU in terms of their own capacity to visit or even live elsewhere in the continent. The *Telegraph* article was, though, a rare exception: the lack of coverage of Europe Day otherwise speaks volumes about the perceived lack of interest in positive depictions of the EU/Europe, in the UK.

Shakespeare400

Like Europe Day, material for #Shakespeare400 was checked from 23 April (the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death) for the following 6 weeks (via <https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/shakespeare400>). However, coverage in this instance was mainly UK-based, in the form of advertising or comments on productions of Shakespeare. However, some non-UK advertising of productions was also located, as well as commemoration by other, international groups such as CNN, NASA and the European Commission.

VE Day

The large volume of material for #VEDay (via <https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/veday>) meant that only the period immediately surrounding

the date was considered: 8 May-10 May. The coverage was mainly Anglophone, with a great deal of US material, and some UK based, all of which would be accessible and understandable to a UK audience. The material offered was wide-ranging, including primary sources such as photographs and historical film footage: the SFGate (news website) uploaded 1945 footage of celebrations in San Francisco artists mocking Hitler in 1945 whilst Colorado Technical University uploaded Churchill's victory speech. However, C21st responses to commemoration were also included, with reports on, for example, the lack of recognition of USSR deaths during WW2. US-based Facebook sites included advertisements by militaria websites; accounts of the deaths of veterans such as the oldest US veteran who died aged 110 on news websites; and commemoration by the US Department of Defense. The most popular UK material was via the BBC1 Facebook site; the *Hello!* Magazine site (specifically, their coverage of the Queen meeting veterans on 10 May); the Science Museum (London) on 'Churchill's scientists' exhibition; the British Film Institute (BFI) archive footage of Gateshead on VE Day; and the British Museum's post about a commemorative medal dated c.1945. Although there was some use by US and UK groups of footage of C21st commemoration, in 2016 original footage was more often used, possibly because there was less commemoration locally in 2016 compared to the 70th anniversary in 2015.

Google Alerts

Following the guidance of the Dutch group, we also signed up for Google Alerts relating to the 3 key commemorative events.

Europe Day

Google Alerts relating to Europe Day were UK-based or Anglophone EU-based, including the UK wing of the Reuters news agency.

The latter intriguingly commented on 4 June on Brexit as 'bringing out UK's 'World War 2 fixation'(see <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain->

eu-worldwartwo-idUKKCN0YP1XO), and noted UKIP's use of the music from the WW2 film *The Great Escape* in their campaigning, as well as the former UK Prime Minister David Cameron's counter-argument that Winston Churchill had sought post-war union in Europe. Other news providers were more critical of Cameron; the right-wing *Sun* newspaper (see e.g. www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/politics/6904893/Who-do-you-think-you-are-kidding-Mr-Cameron.html) positioned Cameron as at best a farcical leader, who was failing the UK, and likened him in some respects to Adolf Hitler (the article's title '*Who do you think you are kidding Mr Cameron?*' draws on the WW2 patriotic song '*Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler?*' and therefore suggests parallels between the two).

Other Europe Day material appearing in the news included, on 23 May, Mona Siddiqui writing in the *Scotsman* newspaper website on support for staying in Europe: www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/mona-siddiqui-support-for-staying-in-eu-growing-by-the-day-14135098 - the account included references to recent history as part of her argument for remaining, for example '*The European Arrest Warrant brings terrorists and other criminals back to face justice across EU boundaries - including one of the 21/7 bombing gang in London in 2005, who had fled to Italy.*'

That Scotland broadly voted to remain in the EU and is currently undertaking discussions with the EU to this effect suggests that her sentiments found support in the Scottish nation. Intriguingly, one of the few accounts online which identified the overall paucity of coverage of Europe Day was offered on 25 May by the iNews website (<https://inews.co.uk/opinion/remembershuman-day-brexit-debate-take-note-french-lawyer-helped-found-europe/>) which made reference to a 'referendum campaign peppered with attempts by both sides to hitch history to their cause' and went on to suggest:

'But as the leave and remain camps exchange salvoes citing Churchill and parallels with Hitler, it might be well to revisit the words of a woman in this battle fought over male-dominated decades.

‘As Simone Veil, a survivor of Auschwitz and the first female president of the European Parliament, put it: “Europe’s destiny and the future of the free world are entirely in our hands.”

VE Day

News located via Google Alerts in relation to VE Day was predominantly UK-based, and often regional. For example, on 31 May the *Larne Times*, a Northern Irish newspaper, offered a retrospective on the 1995, 50th anniversary, commemorations of VE Day <http://www.larnetimes.co.uk/news/your-community/nostalgia/looking-back-larne-marks-50-yearssince-ve-day-1-7402052>, which itself reveals a desire to focus on international commemoration rather than the much more painful and traumatic recent history of Northern Ireland. In a similar manner, on 2 June the *Wiltshire Times* newspaper online offered an account of a 94-year-old local man who had received the Legion D’Honneur more than 70 years after returning home on VE Day: www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/14530137.D_Day_Veteran_receives_Legion_D__39_Honneur/ whilst on 6 June the *Grimsby Telegraph* newspaper online offered a history of Hope Street in the town, including a photograph of its VE day celebrations in 1945: www.grimsbytelegraph.co.uk/knowthrow-party-Hope-Street/story-29362895-detail/story.html

Shakespeare Anniversary

Analysis of coverage of ‘Shakespeare 400’ via Google Alerts was limited to 1 week, the 23-29 May. This began a month after the anniversary date of 23 April, but there was still a large volume of material to be considered within the anniversary year. The majority was Anglophone but a large proportion was not UK-based although it would be accessible for UK readers and so has been considered here. For example, the *Chicago Sun Times* coverage, on 23 May, of the Chicago city Shakespeare celebration (<http://chicago.suntimes.com/entertainment/shakespeare-history-playslinked-to-evoke-state-of-perpetual-war/>) was available on the same day as the (UK) *Daily Express*’s news article on the BBC’s production of Shakespeare plays (<http://www.express.co.uk/comment/>

columnists/martin-townsend/672676/benedict-cumberbatchhollow-crown-try-shakespeare-again), the (Canadian) *Chronicle Herald's* piece on Rufus Wainwright's (a Canadian singer) album based on Shakespeare's work: (<http://thechronicleherald.ca/artslife/1366504-qa-rufus-wainwright-on-his-love-for-the-bard-andsetting-shakespeare-to-music>), the *Indian Express's* account of an all-female, nude staging of *The Tempest* by a New York theatre group: (<http://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/art-and-culture/allfemale-nude-shakespeare-play-staged-by-nyc-theatre-group-2813512/>) and the *Gibraltar Chronicle's* account of the Young Shakespeare Company's performances in Gibraltar middle schools: (<http://chronicle.gi/2016/05/young-shakespeare-company-in-school-performances/>).

Emphasizing the importance of Shakespeare globally and not merely within the UK, on the same day universities too were active in contributing to the commemoration: *KPBS* (San Diego State University) offered an account of the 'Shakespeare Show' (which was partly organised by BBC America, cinemabased, and was the same as the show broadcast on the BBC on April 23rd): <http://www.kpbs.org/events/2016/may/23/fathom-events-presents-shakespeare-show/?et=63819> whilst the University of Birmingham (UK) website included details of the translation of *Macbeth* from play to novel: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2016/05/From-Chernobyl-and-cholera-toreworking-Shakespeare-Birmingham-scholars-take-to-the-stage-at-Hay.asp>

In the following week, other coverage identified via Google Alerts included accounts of opportunities for young people to engage with Shakespeare, and on the 24 May alone, were as diverse as the *Southland Times* (a regional, New Zealand website) on a local school's Shakespeare performance: www.stuff.co.nz/southland-times/80218511/catlins-area-schoo-rocks-shakespeare as well as the Director (a UK-based business) website account of the Deutsche Bank/Playing Shakespeare cooperation, to bring Shakespeare to young people: www.director.co.uk/playing-shakespearecelebrates-tenth-

[anniversary-18217-2/](#) as well as the Mixital website, which encouraged visitors to remix scenes from Shakespeare, and make memes: www.mixital.co.uk/channel/shake-it-up Given cuts in educational funding in the UK it is hardly surprising that free resources such as this are being advertised during the commemorative period.

On the 26 May, Google Alerts notified us of 2 new items on the British Library website (bl.uk), both relating to Shakespeare; one to London in his lifetime, and one to Shakespeare and madness. The following day, the BL blog added material on Shakespeare's business acumen, specifically 'lessons for business' which could be learned from Shakespeare (<http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/business/2016/05/be-as-business-savvy-as-shakespeare-7lessons-for-business-from-the-bard.html>).

The idea of the usefulness of Shakespeare in the C21st was not limited to this: other news which became available during the week included, on 27 May, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine website's article on the use of Shakespeare to entertain WW1 troops (http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2016/shakespeare_hut.html) and, on the same day, the *Los Angeles Times* article on the use of Shakespeare to understand the presidential candidate Donald Trump: <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-ca-cm-0529-shakespeare-trump-20160518snap-htmlstory.html>, whilst two days later, the *News Guardian*, a website for the north-east of England, reported on a local language school's recording of *Macbeth* for the benefit of Chinese students considering a trip to the UK to learn English. Overall, even UK-based websites were keen to emphasize the universality of Shakespeare and, perhaps, of the UK in a difficult period economically and politically, and used the internet to share this self-representation, both of Shakespeare and the UK, with the wider world.

We have chosen to analyze the social media representation of the two national holidays that were also the topic of our TV-representation reports: 15th of March and 20th of August.

Description and historical importance of 15th of March in Hungary

15th of March is a national holiday in Hungary, the remembrance day of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 and the war of independence that followed it. The date traditionally symbolizes national independence and the fight for freedom. The date and what it symbolizes played an important role in the anti-communist movements of the late 1980-s as well, and become connected to the establishment of the new Republic in 1989. Since 1990 it is a public holiday.

More about the history of the events of 1848-49 in Hungary: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_Revolution_of_1848

Description and historical importance of 20th of August in Hungary

20th of August is the leading national holiday in Hungary, commemorating the foundation of the Hungarian State and King Saint Stephen, the first King of Hungary, the founder of the Kingdom of Hungary. He was born a pagan but was baptized as a Christian. He was the first Christian king of Hungary and brought Christianity to the country. King Saint Stephen (997-1038) fought for the unity and protected the independence of the kingdom against pagan warlords and foreign invading troops. Thus 20th August is both a national and Christian holiday, traditionally symbolizing the 'Thousand Years old

(Christian)' Hungary. In the interwar years the commemoration of 'Saint Stephen's State' was evidently intertwined with the revision of the treaty of Trianon (and the mutilation of historical, Thousand Years old Hungary). During the Socialist decades August 20th became Constitution Day because it was on August 20, 1949 when the Stalinist constitution was declared. The day was ment to be the representative starting point of the new foundational myth and historical narrative of the new, Sovietized Hungary. Besides Constitution Day 20th of August was usually named a 'the day of the new bread'. The importance of 20th of August as the leading Hungarian national holiday was restored after the political changes of 1989. Nowadays August 20th is celebrated with day-long festivities, culminating in evening fireworks throughout the country.

We have analyzed information available from two social media platforms: Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is the most popular SM platform in Hungary. Actually, there used to exist a Hungarian 'Facebook' (that actually had been invented and started before Facebook: iwiw [International Who Is Who], but because of the overwhelming popularity of Facebook iwiw has closed down operation a few years ago.

Twitter is not very popular in Hungary. According to a Hungarian social media expert⁽¹⁾ Hungary is a one-platform country. Hungarian users seem to prefer only one social media platform at any given time – during the popularity of iwiw, everyone was on iwiw, after 2010 when Facebook started to spread in Hungary, suddenly everyone moved to Facebook and iwiw had to be closed down. There are 5 million Facebook users in Hungary. The popularity of Twitter could not be compared to this. At the moment the only wide spread and popular SM platform in Hungary is Facebook.

By using the search functions and the hashtags of FB and Twitter, we

(1) Csip-csirip: Miért népszerűtlen a Twitter Magyarországon? *Kisalföld*. 09.03.2015. http://www.kisalfold.hu/gyori_hirek/csip-csirip_miert_nepszerutlen_a_twitter_magyarorszagon/2420722/

tried to identify useful search expressions in connection with the two events that could lead to any discussion related to historical topics.

15th of March

The mention of the related historical connections to 15th of March on FB and Twitter was very sporadic. It is not possible to speak about discussions or lines of arguments, what we have found are simply mentions of historical connections, but these mentions had never developed into discussions. These examples are signals of the possible historical topics that common people felt worthy of mentioning in connection to the anniversary. But since we have found only very few examples this material does not provide enough data to make any sort of generalization.

What follows is the collection of these sporadic examples that appeared on Twitter and FB on (and around) the 15th of March.

Users quoted (without further comments) the famous poem of one of the leading figures of the 1848 revolution, Hungarian poet Sándor Petőfi: "Should we be slaves or free people / This is the question: it is time to choose!" This quote can be read in any political situation as a call for change, but since no discussion was developed around it, it was simply a commemoration of the events and heroes of 1848.

Some users mentioned the heritage of 1989 (the unofficial celebrations of the 1848 revolution's anniversary played a very important role in disrupting the socialist system during the final years before 1989). The user posted an archive picture about the then (in 1989) young and liberal leaders of the (now governing right wing) FIDESZ party as entering parliament as the representatives of freedom and liberty. The comment of the picture reads: "Good bye to those good old days."

Another user stated the importance of the non-violent nature of the 1848 revolution: "*Our revolution in Pest on the 15th of March was not a bloodshed, it was a beautiful celebration, the celebration of freedom...*" - which is probably true in connection with the day 15th of March, 1848 itself, but obviously not true in relation to the war that followed it. But for

the commenter the whole 1848-'49 revolution and war of independence is some mythic symbol of freedom and celebration.

One compulsory topic that is connected to the 15th of March celebrations on the nationalist side of the political spectrum is the independence/situation of the Hungarians of Transylvania. Several posts mentioned the slogans of the 1848 revolution in connection to the continuous struggles of Hungarians living in Transylvania, and a need for political independence.

Only a few users mentioned the official speech of PM Viktor Orbán (for details of the speech see our TV-report about the 15th of March). One of the users summarized the speech in English on Twitter:

But on the 15th of March this year the show was stolen by the teacher-led anti-Orban government protest, that was one of the biggest anti-government protests of recent years. The demonstrators were opposing the educational reforms initiated by the government and wanted open discussions about necessary reforms in primary and secondary education. The demonstration had quite strong public support, so this was one of the main topics of SM on the 15th of March.

20th of August

Although the historical aspects of this national holiday could provide an occasion to discuss current affairs (for example migration), the users of SM platforms in Hungary were more interested in the celebratory fireworks than discussing history or politics in connection with the anniversary. Although, a few users were making comparisons between the rule of founder of the Hungarian state, Stephen I (Szent István), and current politics. For example, this user: *"933 years ago, the king of Szent Istvan, had to pick between the East and West. He picked West"*.

The main topic on Hungarian SM platforms during the national holiday was connected to a controversial case of a very prestigious state award that was granted to a far right journalist who has regularly made anti-Semitic, racist and xenophobic statements. Basically this topic

was dominating social media in the days of the national holiday, and references and parallels were made between the manner of speech used by German national socialists in the 1930s and the rhetoric this journalist usually uses.

The migration crisis and the “Blule Billboards War”

Probably one of the most interesting SM phenomenon currently in Hungary is connected to the ongoing “billboards war”. Since it includes historical references, it is worth to mention here.

The “billboards war” started in 2015 when the Orban government launched an advertisement campaign in newspapers and on billboards against migrants/migration, basically sending messages to refugees (labelling them illegal emigrants) in Hungarian (!!!), warning them to respect Hungarian laws while in Hungary and to not steal the jobs of Hungarians etc. (The advertisements and billboards had a certain dark blue graphical template.)

In 2015 The Two-Tailed Dog Party (Hungary’s satire party) raised quite a significant amount of funds in order to start a counter campaign and set up similar blue billboards with different messages. The counter-billboards were reminding the government that its job is to act decent, help the needy, and should not instigate hatred against miserable people.

One of the billboards of the Two-Tailed Dogs was quoting Stephen I, the first king of Hungary, who wrote recommendations to his son about how to govern a country. The document, called “The Admonitions of St. Stephen” and written around 1030 AD, states: *“The country that has only a single language and a single culture (tradition) is weak and frail. Henceforth I command you, my son, to help with good will the foreigners (aliens) living in the country and treasure them in order to make them favour to stay in your country not in another.”*



The billboard of the Two-Tailed Dog Party in 2015 reads: *“The country that has only a single language and a single culture (tradition) is weak and frail”*. - Admonitions of St. Stephen to Prince Imre”

This billboard campaign reminded Hungarians of the historic dimensions of the migration crisis. The saga of the blue billboards restarted this year after the Orban government launched a new anti-migration campaign. This time the government holds a referendum on EU migration quotas on the 2nd of October. The familiar blue billboards have been spread around the country and is designed to make migrants and migration public enemy number one. The Two-Tailed Dog Party has raised, again, significant funds from civilians in order to launch their counter-campaign against the government's fearmongering (more about the campaign in English: <https://euobserver.com/news/134869>).

Social media users also joined the counter campaign by creating their own blue posters and posting them on Facebook. There is a digital template that can be used to create posters similar to the government's with different messages.

The original billboards have the format that starts with a question: “Tudta?” (Did you know?) and then states some (often unconnected) facts in relation to migration that gives the impression that all migrants are dangerous people, and violence in Europe is committed mainly by migrants.

What is interesting here is that there are several posters created and distributed by SM users that refer to historical information.

Here are the examples:



“Did you know?

Christians were pursued by other Christians most of the time during history.”



“Did you know?

The propaganda of the government follows closely the strategy of the Nazis.”



“Did you know?

The historical heritage of Saint Stephen teaches the Hungarian nation its ability to be receptive”. József Antall⁽²⁾ (1993)”

(2) The first democratically elected Hungarian PM after 1989.



Celebrating historical events in the Polish language internet

Let me repeat after the TV report that for analysis 3 particular national holidays were chosen: National Commemoration Day for the Accursed Soldiers Day (March 1st) which is the normal day of work; the national holiday - the Constitution Day (May 3rd), which is officially celebrated and free from work from 1989; and the commemoration day - the end of the WW2 (May 8th), usually it is a regular week day, however this year it was Sunday. The first clue from the TV schedule observation is that in every mentioned case celebration was not limited to one particular day, before the national holiday and later on some positions of programming were subsequently broadcast as new or repeated from the celebration day. The second notion is connected with the origin of celebration - first two of them are relatively new in Polish reality of the 21st century, and the third one - was celebrated since 1945, however on different day of May (9th).

It is worth mentioning that Polish Independence Day is celebrated on November 11th, since transformation era begun. The same happened with the soldiers' day, the Polish Army Day - August 15th, earlier - it was October 12th. Nowadays the victory on the Red Army in 1920 is celebrated, s.c. A Miracle on the Vistula River (Cud nad Wisłą); previously - the anniversary of the battle of Lenino, during which the Polish Army formed in the USSR had its "baptism in fire". The last change is not so popular among soldiers who remember the Polish People's Republic era. They are disappointed because the effort of the Lenino battle now is forgotten, the Army which was formed in the USSR is treated as dependent to the Red Army or at least, to the Polish socialist government.

I. National Commemoration Day for the Accursed Soldiers (*March 1st*)

The Accursed Soldiers controversy in the net

The Accursed Soldiers receive a lot of interest in real life and in the internet, huge number of articles, movies, and comments are devoted to evaluate and honor their fight⁽¹⁾. However, not always the comments are in the “Cześć i chwała bohaterom” style. Some sites and comments deal with the controversies on the deeds of chosen participants of this guerilla movement⁽²⁾.

For example, scientific interpretations, opinions and comments on the military deeds of kpt. Romuald Rajs, “Bury”, one of military leaders of at Podlasie, are deeply diverse. In some reports “Bury” is treated as hero, however, some facts are still not so clear; some historians and Podlasie citizens accuse him of burning two villages, together with innocent citizens⁽³⁾. Polish right⁽⁴⁾ and left⁽⁵⁾ political researchers and politicians quarrel on this topic; the word “crime” is used in this discourse.

The conflict was heated in February 2016, by a planned commemoration of the Accursed Soldiers (including “Bury”) in Hajnówka. The 1st Hajnówka March for the Accursed Soldiers (1 Hajnowski Marsz Żołnierzy Wyklętych), was organized on February 27th by the extreme right organization ONR, a month after the 70th anniversary of the victims of supposed “Bury’s” and his soldiers action⁽⁶⁾. A lot of comments and the internet users actions (like sending the posters, calling on Facebook to sign a protest etc.) were rooted in the collage produced by weekly magazine “Newsweek”,

(1) E.g.: <https://www.facebook.com/wyklete.zyciorysy/?fref=ts> ²

(2) E.g. <https://www.facebook.com/narodowesilyzbrojne/?fref=ts>; and <https://zolnierzeprzekleci.wordpress.com/about/>

(3) http://www.przegladowoslawny.pl/articles.php?id_n=2733&id=2

(4) <http://www.pch24.pl/kapitan-bury--historia-prawdziwa,41394,i.html>

(5) <https://zolnierzeprzekleci.wordpress.com/zaleszany/>

(6) <http://sulima.salon24.pl/636203, czy-ofiary-zolnierzy-wykletych-zostana-kanonizowane>; <http://sphajnowka.home.pl/node/8419>

which suggests that President Andrzej Duda supports the ONR celebration, what occurred a false information⁽⁷⁾. However, just after popularization of the collage in the net people start to produce their own mems, posters and put a lot of comments full of hate toward the Polish President. Few days later, after the clarification of the background of collage, the protest expired, however, nobody said “we’re sorry” for that mystification, and so many harsh words and opinions were said on the basis on the unjust and unproved information and photomontage. In fact, this trolling action was a political game, and name of the Accursed Soldiers was used to discredit the President, to diminish the bravery and sense of anticommunist underground fight, and to intensify the conflict in society (on the base of evaluation of the anticommunist guerilla).

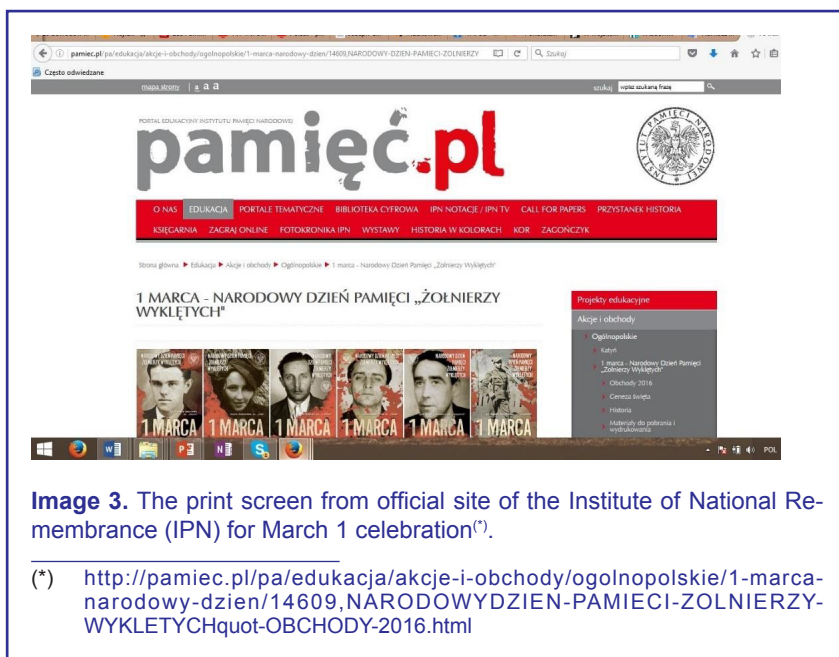


Image 3. The print screen from official site of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) for March 1 celebration^(*).

(*) <http://pamiec.pl/pa/edukacja/akcje-i-obchody/ogolnopolskie/1-marca-narodowy-dzien/14609,NARODOWYDZIEŃ-PAMIECI-ZOLNIERZY-WYKLETYCHquot-OBCHODY-2016.html>

(7) <http://niezalezna.pl/76362-tygodnik-lisa-zapisal-prezydenta-do-onr-na-zmontowanym-zdjeciu>

Simplifying the rhetoric of discussion, one can identify two main groups in opinion about the Accursed Soldiers, admirers and haters. Between these two polarized attitudes manifested in opinions, posted pictures, mems etc., there are small groups: 1) of the “reluctant” to the name of the Accursed Soldiers internet users, 2) those who always try to find all the information, or 3) those who are abstaining from any evaluation, or/ and set the rational tone to the discussion. Of course, the detailed analysis of rhetorical arguments and strategies will show more diverse milieu of this discourse participants.

The official materials recommended to e-workshop development:

- <http://pamiec.pl/pa/biblioteka-cyfrowa/miesiecznik-ipn-pamiec/14654,Pamiecpl-32015.html>
- <http://pamiec.pl/pa/biblioteka-cyfrowa/miesiecznik-ipn-pamiec/15867,Pamiecpl-32016.html>

and some visual materials for discussion and comparison:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=salpkH7aK9U>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yU6j-Mj9M6c&t=94s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxyoOcm9Bw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdOZ50thNNg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ysWOatENMA>

To sum up, the interest on the Accursed Soldiers and their fight is so broad and still very emotional, both - in television programming and in the internet materials and social media discussions - due to the freshness of the commemoration day. Partly it is also rooted in the mystery covered the topic, characters, deeds of the Accursed Soldiers during the last 60 years. The topic was not present in typical history textbooks, neither in the public media discourse.

Up to the 60s. of the 20th century the propaganda system in Polish People's Republic created a vision of criminals who fight against the society, ordinary people, or who were traitors of our country. Work of historians is not completed, research is progress, sometimes scientists are also asked for their opinion, and “honest

doubts” of researchers are also present in the popular discourse. However, the emotional aspects of social memory (admiration, anger, love/hate attitudes etc.) is a dominant feature of nowadays interpretations of the Accursed Soldiers fate.

II. The Constitution of May 3 Day

Let me remind you that this holiday refers to the adoption by the Polish parliament (Sejm) resolution of the first modern constitution in 1791, it is called “Constitution of May 3”.

The importance of reforms introduced by the “Great Sejm”, democratic solutions to some social issues were influential in Europe, despite the fact that it was adopted during the Partitions of Poland era. In the 20th century it had been celebrated since 1919, during the interwar period.

However, after the end of the WW2, during the Polish People’s Republic era the celebration was not continued, instead, the May 1st was celebrated as the workers day. This holiday was introduced in 1990 anew, one year after the beginning of system transformation. May 1st is still celebrated as a public holiday, and actually, now May 2nd is also a sort of national holiday, “Flag day”. The Day of Polish Flag was introduced in 2004. So, in Polish social life the beginning of May is called “majówka”, for some Poles it is free from work (some companies decide to make May 2nd free, and during the whole tirade we can have a spring vacation).

The internet content, and social media reactions to the historical events

This topic, more than 200 year constitution, is not so eagerly discussed as the topic of the Accursed Soldiers or the WW2 issues. A lot of information in media stressed the modern, unique character of this legal act. Polish Constitution of May3, 1791 was presented as the first in Europe such an act. What is important, the nowadays politics interfere with the national pride day. Political controversies on the Constitutional

Tribunal, the conflict between the ruled party and the opposition on the role of the Tribunal in democracy, etc., accusation of violation the law by the Polish government occurred during the preparation to the celebration day, and later as well. One embarrassing mistake committed by Ryszard Petru, a leader of one of the opposition party, Nowoczesna, was a good source of jokes, mems etc. He accused the government of not respecting the Constitution of May 3, “our pride for 200 years”.

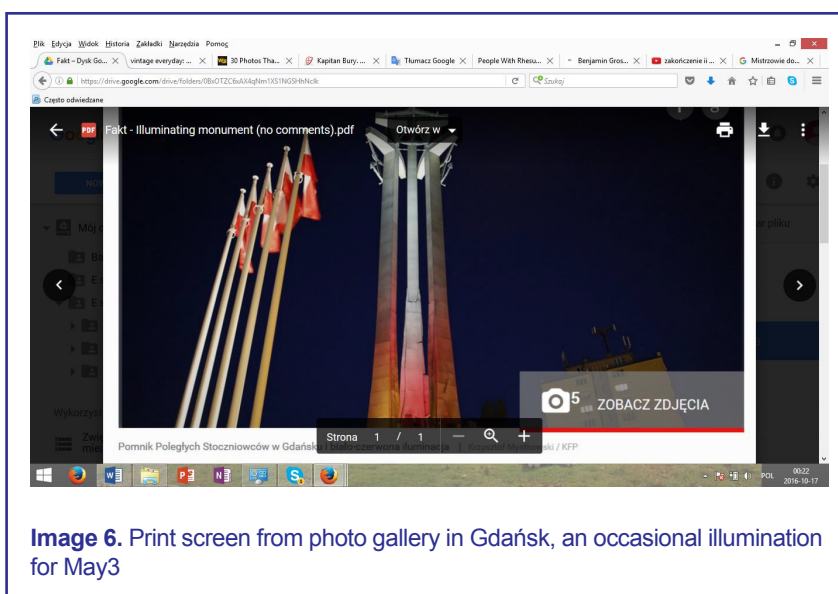


Image 6. Print screen from photo gallery in Gdańsk, an occasional illumination for May3

In the internet materials a lot pictures were put, snapshots and graphic referring to the celebration in the different cities. Comments in such a occasions do not concern history but the city decorations, politicians behavior, etc.

The internet users commented also some facts from private life of the authors of the Constitution of May 3, some secrets are revealed in the shared stories. In some comments the users complain because of too many national holidays and vacations. The discussions do not go into the deep of history, and easy go astray.

The sites and visual materials on the topic with materials recommended to the eworkshop purposes:

- <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl/node/4310>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_EjUJZPd2tk
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGyljgyY5zs>

III. The end of WW2

I'd like to repeat some information from the TV report again. The crucial question here is: When the Second World War ended? The answer is not so obvious, concerning the end of military actions on the whole territories involved in fights. In Poland, during the Polish People's Republic era, the main celebration was on May 9, just like in the USSR. After the collapse of the previous system, V-day is celebrated on May 8. The end of the WW2 means the incorporation of Poland to the communist bloc. The end of war did not mean peace and freedom, some Polish citizens did not accept forced subordination to the USSR, and formed the anticommunist military underground (it was mentioned previously). Military underground was active to 1963, the Soviet soldiers stayed in Poland to 1993. In opinions of some Poles, the end of war is prolonged to the end of communism.

However, some issues concerning these facts are still vivid, such as the monuments of the Soviet soldiers, treated by propaganda of the PPR era as liberators, and after system transformation hidden facts about the USSR invasion in 1939, and the postwar Polish-Soviet relation are revealed. In the media discourse these topics are also discussed.

The end of WW2 in the internet discourse

The material gathered on this topic is huge, however not so diverse, as the interpretation of the Accursed Soldiers achievements. However, it seems that more materials are connected with the beginning of war. Synthesis of the content, official or private is almost impossible in this context.

Some controversies are connected with the commemoration of the Soviet soldiers killed during this war and buried in the separate graveyards in some Polish cities. A new law about the “de-Sovietisation” of the public space had been introduced this year, and on the bases of it, some street names connected with Soviet Union, communism, etc. should be changed, and signs such as a red star or sickle and hammer should be removed. This generates some discussions, and the moral problem of the right to commemorate the dead in the way they wished.

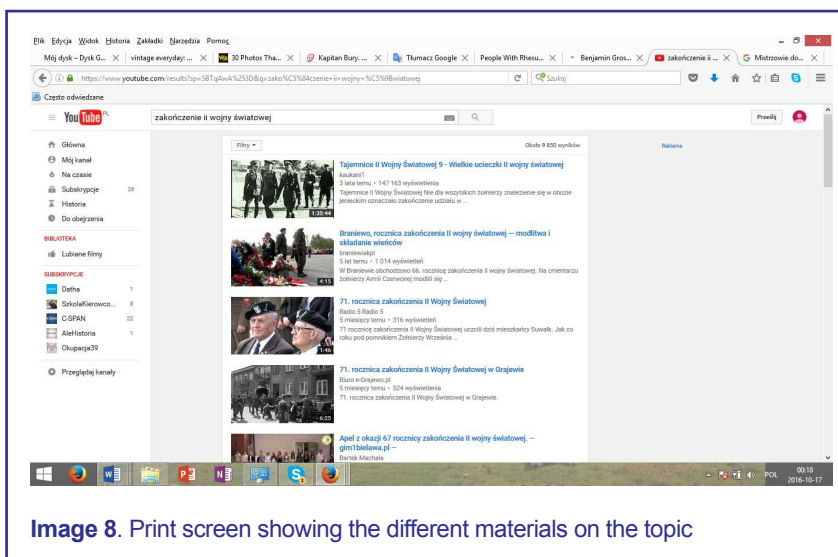


Image 8. Print screen showing the different materials on the topic

On YouTube the spectrum of the movies spread from the official productions of the television stations, Polish and foreign, to the reports from the celebrations at schools (and obviously, the less popular). The latter are not so popular, and not widely commented. To some reports, such as from the official ceremonies with the members of government, possibility of commenting is blocked.

In some comments and discussion under the popular movies on the end of WW2, Polish problems after the war were mentioned. Despite the fact that some of the participant in discussion focus on the technical

problems such as bad spelling of German names, the criticism, sometimes in very rude manner, is often devoted to simplifications made by the producers of the movies, or to the historical decisions made by the military and political leaders.

The sites and videos recommended to the e-workshop purposes connected to the above topic:

- <http://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/zakonczenie-ii-wojny-swiatowej-w-europie>
- <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl/node/10239>
- <http://vod.tvp.pl/19718198/gorzkie-zwyciestwo>
- <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl/node/9310>
- <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl/node/4405>
- <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl/node/9521>

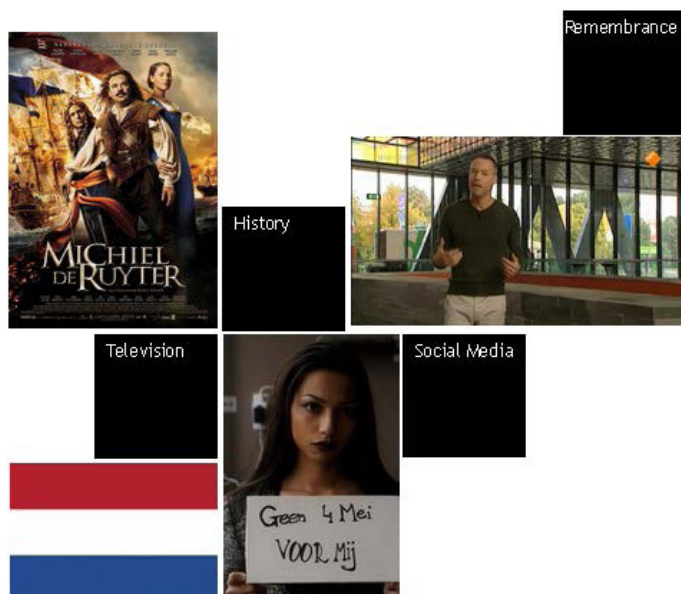
For developing the project, the following sites are recommended:

- <http://www.nac.gov.pl/> <http://repozytorium.fn.org.pl/?q=pl>
- <http://historiaimedia.org/>
- <http://pamiec.pl/pa/biblioteka-cyfrowa/miesiecznik-ipn-pamiec>



THE NETHERLANDS

Laura Steenbrink
Steven Stegers



Social Media coverage of 4 May and 5 May 2016

This part of the analysis focuses on the social media coverage of history related to the 4 and 5 May National Remembrance Days in The Netherlands in 2016⁽¹⁾. The analysis is based on all Twitter and Facebook posts using the hashtags #4mei (4May), #dodenherdenking (Remembrance Day), #geen4meivoormij (No 4 May for Me) and #wel4meivoormij (4 May for Me). These were the hashtags that were trending and related to the National Remembrance Days just before, during, and just after 4 May and 5 May in 2016.

(1) The background to the 4 May and 5 May National Remembrance Days can be found in the previous section.

#Geen4meivoormij: In 2016, the National Remembrance Day of 4 May in the Netherlands became a topic for debate when a Facebook post by Christa Noëlla, a 22-year old woman from the Netherlands, went viral, and triggered many positive and negative reactions.⁽²⁾



In the post (see image 1) you can see her holding a paper with the text “Geen 4 mei voor mij” (No 4 May for me). In her post Christa argued that National Remembrance Day should become more inclusive and remember a wider range of victims, in particular the victims from Dutch slavery through the centuries and argued that she found the commemoration meaningless in the face of the rise of facism and islamophobia. The full texts is included as Annex 1.

In an interview with the *NRC*, Christa Noëlla is quoted explaining her background: *“My father is Suriname-Javanese. My grandparents were shipped to Surinam in 1930 to do the work that was previously done by enslaved people. I have a Dutch mother whose grandparents were in hiding during the Second World War”*.⁽³⁾

- (2) De Volkskrant 2 May 2016, <http://www.volkskrant.nl/media/jonge-activistenboycotten-4-mei-om-hypocrisie~a4293453/> (Accessed 24 June 2016).
- (3) <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/05/03/die-stille-twee-minuten-symboliserenhet-hedendaagse-fascisme-a1403437> (Accessed 27 December 2016).

#wel4meivoormij: The counter reaction that got most attention, was a Facebook post by Brian, a 36-year-old vocalist and songwriter, who introduced the hashtag #wel4meivoormij (4 May for me) (see Image 1). The post by Christa Noëlla, the reaction of Brian and the reactions they got, were picked up by the national news broadcaster, several newspapers.⁽⁴⁾ The debates related to these posts dominated the discussions on social media and online forums in the days leading up to 4 May.⁽⁵⁾

Common reactions: In both camps, the language used by a large portion of the people who reacted was offensive and insensitive. However, there were also more moderate reactions, such as the one by Harriet Duurvoort, a columnist at the newspaper De Volkskrant and very active on Twitter, who asked to stop the campaign on the grounds that Christa Noëlla and the people who started the campaign, had hurt many people, victims or families of victims of the Holocaust “*deep in their soul*”.⁽⁶⁾ Duurvoort emphasized that also she supports more attention to the victims and remembrance of slavery, but that this should not be done in the way of #Geen4meivoormij did.

Those who supported the #geen4meivoormij campaign argued that the organisers of the 4 May National Remembrance Day took a one-sided approach and did not pay enough attention to other victims

(4) Among others:

<http://www.nltimes.nl/2016/05/03/reject-remembrance-day-face-rising-fascismislamophobia-activist/> (NL Times),

<http://www.metronieuws.nl/nieuws/binnenland/2016/05/ophefvanwege-hashtag-geen4meivoormij> (Metronieuws),

<http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/05/03/diestille-twee-minuten-symboliseren-het-hedendaagse-fascisme> (NRC)

and <http://nos.nl/artikel/2103030-vluchtelingen-moeten-weten-wat-we-op-4-mei-herdenken.html> (NOS) (All accessed 24 June 2016).

(5) <http://forum.fok.nl/topic/2299612> (Accessed 27 December 2016).

(6) The Post Online NL,

<http://media.tpo.nl/2016/05/02/harriet-duurvoort-zegt-neengeen4meivoormij/> (Accessed 27 June 2016).

that the victims of the Second World War (from the Netherlands). Especially the relative lack of attention towards the victims of the Dutch colonies and the victims of slavery, were frequently criticised in the pro-camp. Other posts from the pro-camp pointed towards other societal issues, such as the lack to support refugees, the discussion on Black Pete⁽⁷⁾ and islamophobia (see Image 2 and 3).



Image 2

The kind of negative reactions (including many expressions of hate speech) towards Christa Noëlla and supporters of the #geen4meivoormij campaign were used to support the claim that 4 May Remembrance Day was led by people that only care about their own community and have low moral standards. Ironically, several of

these accusationtype of posts were also insensitive and hurtful.

- (7) The debate on Black Peter has been ongoing in the Netherlands for decades, but has been fierce in recent years, following a statement by the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, on the conclusion of its official visit to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 26 June-4 July 2014 (<http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14840&LangID=E>), Accessed 27 December 2016) concluding that the figure of Black Pete is racist. Black Pete is part of the Saint Nicolas traditional celebration, in which children get presents, celebrated by most people in The Netherlands. The issue is that Black Pete traditionally is black-faced, and has other features (such as red lips, golden earrings, clothing and afro hair) that part of the negro stereotype, seen as offensive in most countries, that he used to be a scary figure and now is a silly figure. Critics point out the similarities between Black Pete and these negative stereotypes, the fact that some young children associate Black Pete with black people, and past of the Netherlands in terms of colonies and slavery. Most defenders of the tradition point out that their intentions are not racists and see the critics as a threat to the national heritage and identity. The debate has led to changes over the last few years, but the changes are too fast and too significant for some, and too slow and too insignificant for others.



In an interview by the Robinson Report, that was made after the post went viral, Christa Noëlla summarises her stance by stating that she does not want that history is being viewed *“from one side, that history is being told as a whole. 4 May is Eurocentric, shedding light on the Holocaust, but not on colonial history. We demonstrate to the colonial propaganda of the Golden Carriage.”*⁽⁸⁾ 4 May and the two minutes of silence symbolize the rise of fascism and suppression of the past.”

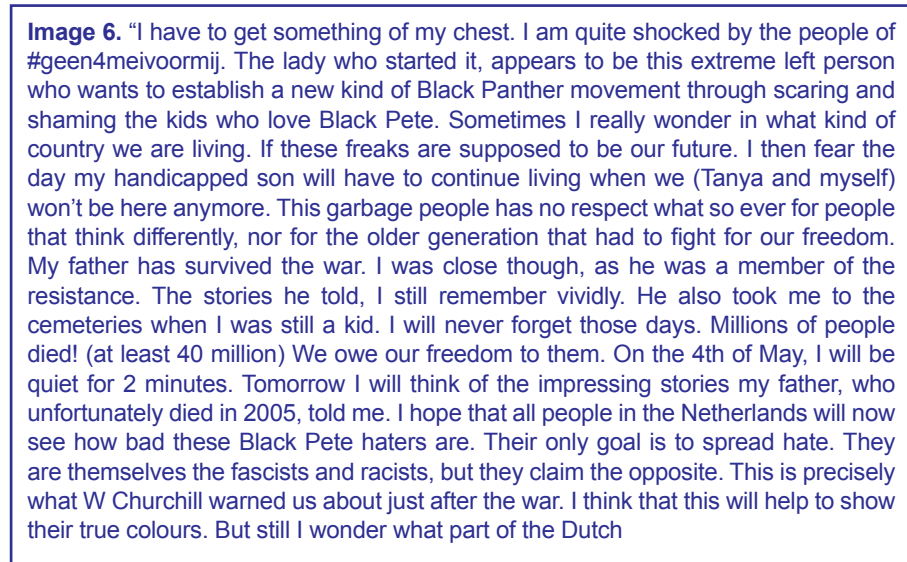
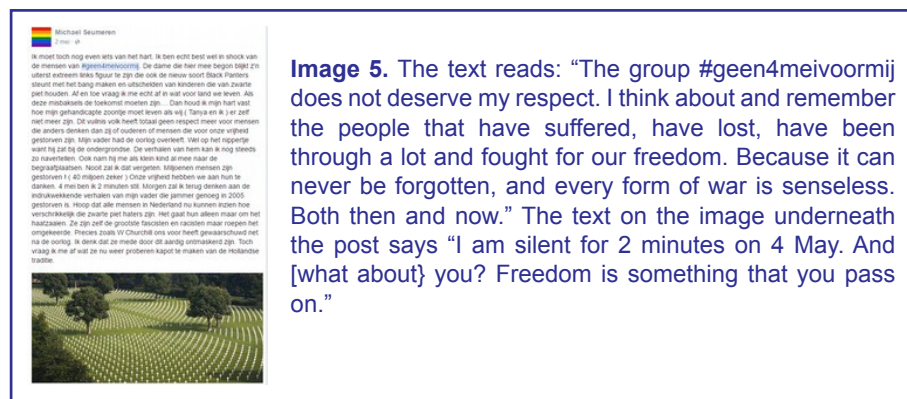
Christa Noëlla received an enormous amount of reactions, including many cases of hate speech (see Image 4), thereby giving reasons for the #geen4meivoormij to say that they were right in their claim that those who celebrate 4 May are insensitive



Image 4. An example of a hate speech comment directed to Christa Noëlla.

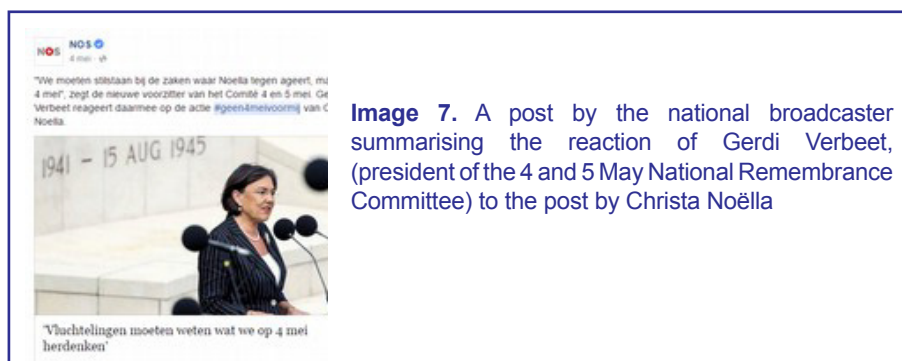
- (8) The golden carriage refers to another controversy about history in the Netherlands. The golden carriage plays a central role during the annual Prinsjesdag ceremony when the King and Queen travel in the carriage as part of a parade from the royal palace in The Hague to the Ridderzaal (next to the parliament) where the King gives his state of the union address. The golden carriage is controversial because of an image on the side portraying enslaved people who are black in an uncritical manner. Critics say that it is inappropriate for an object which such an image to play such a central role during a national ceremony, especially given the colonial past of the Netherlands, and would like to see the golden carriage not being used, or to be put in a museum. Supports of the golden carriage, either say that slavery and the colonial past are part of the history of the Netherlands and that the past should not be white-washed, or say that people should not be so sensitive and that traditions should be respected.

towards others. Several supporters of the #wel4meivoormij campaign pointed out that having one day the remembers the victims of the Second World War, does not mean there is no space to remember other victims, and that remembering other people can be done on other days. Other supporters of the #wel4meivoormij campaign complained about the lack of respect that the #geen4meivoormij campaign had for people that died during the Second World War and people who lost relatives in the war (see Image 5) or took a more defensive stance and

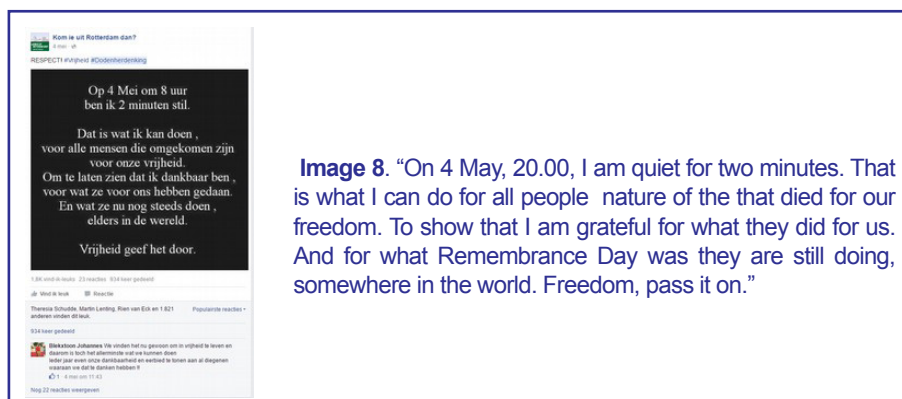


accused the #geen4meivoormij campaign trying to destroy a piece of Dutch tradition (see Image 6).

The president of the 4 and 5 May National Remembrance Committee, Gerdi Verbeet (who is also a politician of the Labour Party in the Netherlands, the PvdA), reacted to the debate raised by the #geen4meivoormij post by Christa Noëlla as well. Gerdi Verbeet, said that the issues that [Christa] Noëlla raised are legitimate and deserve attention, but that they should be at the centre of the 4 May celebration, arguing that 4 May is Dutch people. Instead Gerdi Verbeet emphasised the need for refugees to know what is being remembered on 4 May (See Image 7).



Posts related to the 4 May National Remembrance Day that were not part of the #geen4meivoormij post by Christa Noëlla were mostly written to encourage others to respect the 2 minutes' silence or explained why someone decided to be silent for 2 minutes (see for example Image 8).



Most posts related to the 5 May National Remembrance Day, in contrast to the posts related to the 4 May National Remembrance Day where not about the actual meaning of the day. Frequently, the nature of the Remembrance Day was implicit when references were made to freedom and its celebration (through posting images, poems or thoughts) but these were done without historical references (See for example Image 10). More frequently, people were using social media to just share what they were doing on this particular day, such as going to one of the many festivals, concerts or just enjoying their public holiday (See for example Image 9).



In contrast to the individuals that were posting about their feelings or activities during the day, institutes were making historical references related to the meaning of 5 May. For example, the Rijksmuseum posted a digital copy of a poster made to celebrate the liberation of the Netherlands on 5 May 1945 (See Image 11).



Image 11. Post by the Rijksmuseum: "Object of the day: festive in the honour of the liberation of the Netherlands on 5 May 1945". The text on the poster reads: "It was Orange up. It stays Orange up. 10 May 1940 - 5 May 1945." Orange refers to the name of the Royal Family of the Netherlands (the house of Orange). Up means that the banner of the house of Orange is above the tri-colour flag of the Netherlands. In order words the message of the poster is that it is good that the royal family is back (in power).

There was no large discussion or an ongoing debate on social media on the 5 May Remembrance Day, which made the posts more positive and less open to debate. There were a few exceptions, like the supporters for the right-wing Party of the Freedom (PVV) that lead to a few critical comments on their post with the national flag (see Image 12), but this was more about nationalism than about history and remembrance.

There were specifically history-related references honouring individuals who fought for the Netherlands during Second World War. Image 13, for example, is honouring a group of paratroopers that jumped into France on D-Day. It was shared 106 times.



Image 12. Post by self-proclaimed PVV supporters (referring to the Party for Freedom Movement of populist politician Geert Wilders) "The Netherlands. Our flag, our country, our freedom."

Overall, there were more posts on social media related to 4 May Remembrance Day than then 5 May Remembrance Day. This is largely due to the debate between the #geen4meivormij and the #wel4meivormij campaigns. Posts that were not related to this debate, the post related to 4 May were more solemn, about silence and about remembering what happened in the past, and most posts about 5 May were positive, focussed on the celebration of freedom, completely in line with the nature of both days.

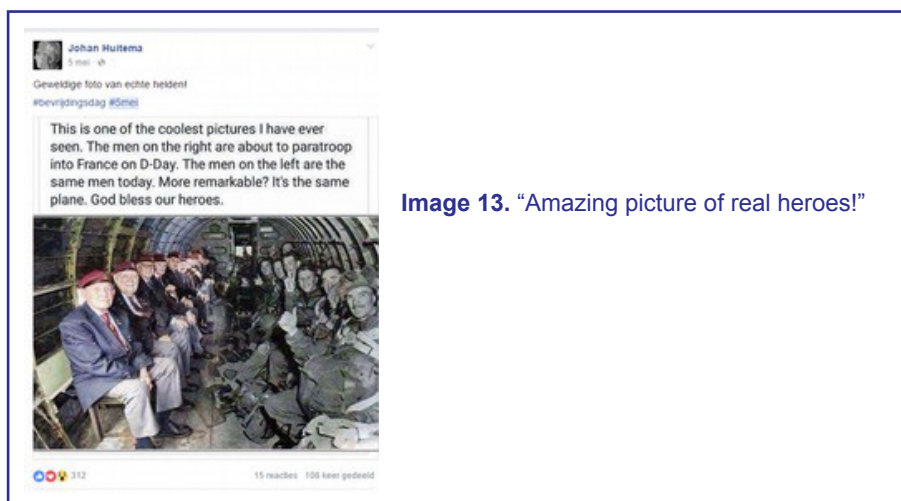


Image 13. "Amazing picture of real heroes!"

Annex 1. Full texts of the #geen4meivoormij and #wel4meivoormij posts.

post by Christa Noëlla

"I always participated out of respect in the 4 May Remembrance Ceremony commemorating the dead. This year I decided not to participate [in this ceremony] any more. I believe that the 4 May Remembrance Ceremony has lost its value because of the hypocrisy of the [Dutch] society. For me, 4 May, has no purpose when we allow the rise of fascism and hatred of Muslims to happen. In addition, I believe that the history of my ancestors, should also be remembered. I don't want to join in a Euro-centric approach to history, where the history of white people is more important than the history of non-white people, which is a history in which the Netherlands had a very important role. I cannot remember the victims of fascism with a straight face, when we allow Nazi's to march in Dutch cities every month, under the banner of freedom of speech. How can we agree amongst ourselves that this terrible past is never allowed to happen, when in the meantime we are bombing Syria? I don't join the 4 May Remembrance Ceremony. I think it is a much more beautiful sign if we provide a better future for the young generation, by fighting fascism in the present and by decolonization. Especially because we should learn from the past and not forget. #geen4meivoormij"⁽⁹⁾

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- (9) Original Text (in Dutch): *"Ik heb altijd uit respect meegedaan aan de Dodenherdenking op 4 mei. Dit jaar heb ik besloten om er niet meer aan mee te doen. Ik vind dat de Dodenherdenking zijn waarde heeft verloren door de hypocrisie van de samenleving. Voor mij heeft 4 mei geen zin wanneer we het opkomende fascisme en moslimhaat in Nederland gewoon zijn gang laten gaan. Daarnaast vind ik dat de geschiedenis van mijn voorouders ook herdacht moet worden. Ik wil niet meedraaien in een eurocentrische samenleving waar witte geschiedenis belangrijker is dan de nietwitte geschiedenis, waar Nederland een zeer belangrijke rol in heeft gespeeld. Ik kan niet met een stalen gezicht de slachtoffers van fascisme herdenken wanneer wij elke maand nazi's laten rond marcheren in de Nederlandse steden onder het mom van vrijheid van meningsuiting. Hoe kunnen wij het ermee eens zijn dat dit vreselijke verleden nooit meer mag gebeuren terwijl wij ondertussen bommen op Syrië gooien? Ik doe niet meer mee aan Dodenherdenking. Ik denk dat het een veel mooier signaal is als wij een betere toekomst kunnen achterlaten voor de jongere generatie door het hedendaags*

post by Brain

DUTCHIES: I have to get something of my chest. Just now I saw a post on Facebook by a young woman who very explicitly is not going to commemorate 4 May. Alongside her post shines a picture with the text "No 4 May for me". She calls the society hypocritical and says she does not want to participate in what she calls a Euro-centric society where white history is more important than not-white history.

As a child, I always used to be the one laying the wreath during the annual national 4 May Remembrance Ceremony. I witnessed how elderly people were crying of sadness, how public speakers were stuttering because of emotions, and how children were hugging each other when they realised that something terrible as this [World War 2 and the Holocaust] had really happened in our country. Those people who lived through the war were left with terrible inner wounds, and I may be bitter, but I find the Facebookpost of this young lady lacking so much respect, that I am disgusted by it. Why would you not honour an important Remembrance Day, solely to make a point about something totally different? And, more importantly, why would you associate yourself with such a statement, when you know it is lacking respect towards the victims, the descendants and Dutch history in general? The way in which she makes her point is unique, but she lacks respect for the dead of the war from the past, and has no respect for the young people who were mown down at the beaches of Normandy in order to liberate us [in the Netherlands]. And all of this, whilst it would be possible for her to make a point without involving the 4 May Remembrance Day. For the moment, enough about this young lady, I will come back to her later.

The original meaning of the 4 May Remembrance Day was only to commemorate the Dutch victims from the Second World War. Since 1961 a broader definition of the Remembrance Day is officially used to remember ALL victims and people who died since the outbreak of

fascisme te bestrijden en door te dekoloniseren. Juist omdat wij moeten leren van het verleden en niet moeten vergeten,".

the Second World War, therefore *also* including people from different races and nationalities. The official statement about the 4 May Remembrance Days is as follows: "During the National Remembrance Ceremony we commemorate everyone - civilians and military - who died or were killed in the Kingdom of the Netherlands or anywhere in the world during war and peace missions since the outbreak of the Second World War".

Therefore, the Netherlands is not self-centred at all, but rather emphatic in the way the 4 May Remembrance Day is held. It even remembers people who died during peace missions, such as Lebanon, Bosnia[-Herzegovina] or Afghanistan. Does Turkey remember all the dead from Afghanistan? Does Morocco, remember the dead from Syria? Does Surinam remember all the dead from Bosnia or Kosovo? One day later, on 5 May, the liberation [of the Netherlands] from the German occupiers is celebrated. A day where in 1945 million people were liberated from repression, hunger and torture. On 15 August, the Indian [Indonesian] community in the Netherlands is celebrating Independence Day because of the Japanese surrender in the Dutch-Indies in 1945. Also, on these days the Netherlands is not self-centred.

Let me return to the young lady from the Facebook post. She says that she is not able to commemorate the victims of Fascism with a straight face when we allow Nazi's to march in Dutch cities every month, under the banner of freedom of speech. She writes: "How can we agree amongst ourselves that this terrible past is never allowed to happen, when in the meantime we are bombing Syria?" We? WE?!

In the meantime, young lady, WE are proving shelter in our tiny country at the moment to more than 42.000 refugees, of which well over 43% comes from Syria, and others from Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea. This number has increased almost five-fold compared to 2014. In the meantime, young lady, I am part of the society that you are all treating the same, whilst you imply that you are against generalisations and discrimination. In the meantime, young lady, I am part of the group of homosexuals that are in THIRTEEN countries in the Middle East

alone, will be punished when they express their feelings. In Iran, Saudi-Arabia and Yemen homosexuals getting the death penalty is in the order of the day, and also on Gaza and Turkish-Cyprus being homosexual is a criminal offense. In the meantime, young lady, my driving instructor is Surinamese, my [music] band member is Belgian, one of my music crew is Jewish and my best female friend is a Muslim. In the meantime, young lady, I am together with million other people in the Netherlands, both autochthonous and allochthonous, doing my very best to make a beautiful future inside our country. That is *also* "US"... Your intentions are probably good, and your attempt noble, but if you don't treat others with respect, don't expect to be respected in return. On 4 May I *will* take part in the Remembrance Ceremony, just because I have respect for others, regardless of their sexual orientation, colour or race. #WEL4MEIVOORMIJ".⁽¹⁰⁾

(10) Translated from: "DUTCHIES: *Mij moet iets van het hart. Zojuist zag ik een post op Facebook van een jonge vrouw die zeer uitdrukkelijk geen 4 Mei gaat herdenken. Bij haar post prijkt een foto met de tekst "Geen 4 Mei Voor Mij". Ze noemt de samenleving hypocriet en geeft aan dat ze niet wil meedraaien in een volgens haar eurocentrische samenleving waar witte geschiedenis belangrijker is dan de niet-witte geschiedenis. Als kind was ik stevast een kranslegger tijdens de jaarlijkse nationale Dodenherdenking. Ik heb daarbij bejaarden zien huilen van verdriet, publieke sprekers horen stotteren van emotie en kinderen zien knuffelen nadat bij hun het besef was binnengedrongen dat zoiets vreselijks dan toch echt gebeurd was in ons land.*

Zij die de oorlog hebben meegemaakt hebben hieraan vreselijke innerlijke wonden overgehouden en misschien ben ik bitter maar de Facebookpost van deze jongedame vind ik dermate respectloos dat ik er van moet walgen. Waarom zou je een belangrijke herdenkingsdag niet eren enkel en alleen om een statement te maken over heel iets anders? En nog belangrijker, waarom zou je zo'n dag met je statement associëren als je weet dat dit heel respectloos is naar slachtoffers, nabestaanden en de Nederlandse geschiedenis in zijn algemeenheid? Uniek dat ze zo haar punt maakt, maar dan heeft ze totaal geen respect voor de oorlogsdoden uit het verleden en geen respect voor de jonge mannen die op de stranden van Normandië zijn neergemaaid om ons te bevrijden.

En dat terwijl ze ook haar punt had kunnen maken zonder daarbij Dodenherdenking te betrekken. Voor nu even genoeg over deze dame. Daar kom ik zo op terug.

De oorspronkelijke opzet van Dodenherdenking ging uitsluitend om de Nederlandse slachtoffers in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Sinds 1961 wordt officieel een ruimere

definitie van Dodenherdenking gehanteerd die ALLE oorlogsslachtoffers of omgekomenen sinds het uitbreken van de Tweede Wereldoorlog omvat, dus óók mensen van andere rassen en nationaliteiten. Het officiële gedenkschrift voor Dodenherdenking op 4 mei luidt: "Tijdens de Nationale Herdenking herdenken wij allen - burgers en militairen - die in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden of waar ook ter wereld zijn omgekomen of vermoord sinds het uitbreken van de Tweede Wereldoorlog, in oorlogssituaties en bij vredesoperaties."

Nederland toont zich dus totaal niet eenkennig maar juist eerder begripvol bij de invulling van Dodenherdenking en herdenkt zelfs mensen die zijn omgekomen bij vredesoperaties zoals in Libanon, Bosnië of Afghanistan. In Turkije, herdenken ze daar alle doden van Afghanistan? In Marokko, herdenken ze daar alle doden van Syrië? In Suriname, herdenken ze daar alle doden van Bosnië / Kosovo? Een dag later, op 5 mei, wordt de bevrijding van de Duitse bezetting gevierd. Een dag waarop in 1945 miljoenen mensen werden bevrijd van onderdrukking, honger en marteling. Op 15 augustus viert de Indische gemeenschap binnen Nederland Bevrijdingsdag vanwege de Japanse capitulatie in Nederlands-Indië in 1945. Ook op deze dag(en) toont Nederland zich dus niet eenkennig. Terug naar de jongedame van de Facebookpost. Ze zegt dat ze niet met een stalen gezicht de slachtoffers van fascisme kan herdenken wanneer wij elke maand nazi's laten rond marcheren in de Nederlandse steden. Ze schrijft: "Hoe kunnen wij het ermee eens zijn dat dit vreselijke verleden nooit meer mag gebeuren terwijl wij ondertussen bommen op Syrië gooien?" Wij? WIJ?! Ondertussen, jongedame, vangen WIJ hier in ons kleine kikkerlandje in opvangcentra door het gehele land momenteel meer dan 42.000 vluchtelingen op, waarvan ruim 43% afkomstig is uit Syrië maar ook mensen uit respectievelijk Irak, Afghanistan en Eritrea. Dit aantal is bijna vervijfvoudigd tegenover de cijfers van 2014. Ondertussen, jongedame, hoor ik bij die maatschappij die over één kam scheert terwijl je zelf impliceert dat je tegen generalisatie en discriminatie bent.

Ondertussen, jongedame, hoor ik bij de doelgroep homoseksuelen die in DERTIEN landen in alleen al het Midden Oosten gestraft wordt bij het uiten van hun gevoelens. In Iran, Saoedi-Arabië en Jemen kunnen homo's aan de orde van de dag zelfs de doodstraf krijgen en ook in Gaza en op Turks Cyprus is homoseksualiteit strafbaar. Ondertussen, jongedame, is mijn rij-instructeur een Surinamer, mijn bandmaatje een Belg, een van mijn geluidsmensen Joods en mijn beste vriendin een moslim.

Ondertussen, jongedame, doe ik elke dag samen met miljoenen andere Nederlanders, zowel autochtoon als allochtoon, enorm mijn best om een mooie toekomst te maken binnen ons land. Ook dát zijn "WIJ"... Je intentie is waarschijnlijk goed en je poging is nobel, maar als je geen respect kunt opbrengen voor een ander, verwacht dan ook geen respect terug. Op 4 Mei neem ik dus wél deel aan Dodenherdenking, gewoon omdat ik dat respect over heb voor een ander, ongeacht seksuele voorkeur, kleur of ras. #WEL4MEIVOORMIJ"



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