



Memorials for victims of terrorism and their possible value for P/CVE – Different approaches within the EU

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Paper scope and background factors

Throughout the EU, for over a century, Member States (MSs) have suffered from different forms of war, atrocities and terrorism and have developed different approaches in the way of managing the memory of such conflicts.

The focus of this paper is on the ways in which memorials for victims of terrorism (VoT) have been used in the context of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), outlining the most common approaches in different MSs and giving recommendations directed at first-line practitioners working in areas that could encompass memorials in their work (e.g. educators, local authorities, community workers, exit workers, probation workers, social workers) and policymakers at local, national and European levels looking to learn more from ongoing experiences amongst EU MSs and abroad, and to reflect on their own plans and frameworks.

Both the definition of “victim” and the definition of “terrorism” are discussed both academically and politically; P/CVE policies and strategies have different approaches in different MSs, as well as different historical backgrounds and political contexts and violence heritages, so this paper includes final notes and a bibliography for those readers interested in more in-depth knowledge on the many aspects around the topic.

While past memorials, such as those for victims of the Holocaust or Shoah, are often understood as and used for educational experiences beyond the mere remembrance of victims, the ways in which such memorials can be used to support P/CVE more directly have not been given much attention so far. Therefore, this paper will give an overview of a comparatively underappreciated aspect of P/CVE, as well as collect and describe inspiring approaches and lessons learnt to show how, in the future, memorials can be used to improve the ways in which societies handle the collective trauma of terrorism. In the following analysis, this paper considers the most recent monuments for VoT as the last area in the field of conflict memorialisation and uses the theoretical outputs that the memory studies, a broad range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, have created in their analyses of historical cases of museums and monuments throughout Europe.

Building memorials for victims of terrorism: What, when, by whom, for whom

When we talk about memorials, in truth, we are considering a wide range of productions whose characteristics it is useful to dwell on. Memorials can be an event or a space, memorials can be a hard or a virtual/digital object (or both), memorials can be public or private spaces, memorials can be temporary or enduring events, memorials can be a corpus of literacy (as written testimonies) but also a living corpus of people (as oral testimonies). Usually, we consider a memorial a museum, a monument, a plaque, a “stumbling stone”, but all that happens around these objects, and their target audiences, is part of the memorials, such as: commemorations, speeches, testimonies, readings, arts performances, debates, and didactic and P/CVE activities.

Memorials may have at least three purposes: they serve as spaces for the victims, their families and the affected communities to mourn; they serve as spaces addressed to a broader audience, like students and youth, to raise awareness of a historical event; and, as the third function, they can serve to prevent violent extremism when they take on the role of dialogue spaces aiming to disrupt polarisation. The process of building memorials for VoT in Europe has a wide range of experiences that depend on an equally wide range of factors influencing the decision-making process. Trying to list the main ones provides a framework for then assessing the role that these memorials have or may play in prevention of violent extremism.

But what are the crucial factors that we should consider when designing and building memorials and practices around them? In this paper’s view, they are: time, ownership, narrative for remembrance and the primary role of the European level.

Time

The memory of conflicts or violence is a matter of time. Both at individual and collective level, conflicts create traumas that need to be overcome. This issue is not just a matter of psycho-traumatology, post-traumatic or resilience policies addressing political violence, it is also a problem of historical analysis and political opportunity. The historian Enzo Traverso (2001) has observed how in front of Kolyma, Auschwitz and Hiroshima, the most serious analyses of the episodes were started belatedly: long after the facts. As traumatic historical facts need time to be well understood by scholars, memory policies are also equally difficult to find in the temporal proximity of the facts, for instance, both in the case of the Shoah and 20th century terrorism.

The recent comparative analysis by Agata Serranò describes the status of VoT as “invisible” for a long time: The victims of terrorism in Spain, the United Kingdom and Italy until the last decades of the 20th century remained in a state of “invisibility”. Only at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the new one, thanks to the impulse of the victims themselves, both civil society and the legislator began to correct their approach towards the victims of terrorism (1).

Furthermore, the policy-decision process needs time for assessment of the “good moment” to consider when the conflict ended and to start building its memorials. Unlike wars, terrorism has no “classical” peace treaty: ending terrorism is often a matter of political opportunity that involves conciliations and/or reconciliation processes that may take a long time. Furthermore, it may also happen that a terrorist attack takes place after the official peace process, as occurred in Northern Ireland in the Omagh bombing on 15 August 1998, just 13 weeks after the Good Friday Agreement. This detail will feed controversy in the following decade also regarding the memorials between relatives of the victims and the Sinn Fein-dominated city council (2). On the other hand, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks we can see both temporary memorials throughout the EU where citizens created places where flowers, candles, messages and so on were placed and enduring events or spaces that VoT associations built for memorialisation of the tragic facts that occurred.

Ownership

The memory of conflicts is a matter of ownership. Several actors claim the role of witness or memory keeper. The ownership of the memory of politically motivated violence is of course a sensitive topic because all the actors involved in the conflict develop narratives and memorials to push their own point of view: what is at stake is the identity of the groups. In cases of terrorism, usually the “owners” are, on one hand, the victims’ groups and, on the other, the state, but there may even be other actors like the former terrorists or the victims of state terrorism or the civilian casualties of any antiterrorism action carried out by military or paramilitary bodies. As highlighted by Javier Argomaniz and Orla Lynch in relation to the cases of Northern Ireland and Spain:

A public presence for victims can potentially act as an instrument to promote a shared memory and interpretation of the past that can highlight the costs of the violence and its societal impact. This has been the case recently in Northern Ireland, where the issue of victims’ remains has dominated political discourse and media coverage in the region (McDonald, 2014). These outcomes are far from preordained, however, as existing conflict narratives of blame and the entrenched positions of various factions in divided societies can dominate efforts at peace and truth. In Northern Ireland the possibility of memorialisation as a tool for fostering re-conciliation and a shared history has been and continues to be limited: efforts have been one-dimensional and, as such, failed to cross the community divide (Dawson, 2011). Also ... political divisions in the Basque Country between various political parties have long marred commemorative events. Such legacies of violence still permeate society and divergences in attribution of blame exist. This means that victims, as the public face of the point of ideological divergence, suffer the consequences of being politicised. For some, they also represent

(1) Serranò, *Las víctimas del terrorismo: de la invisibilidad a los derechos*. [English translation of the book presentation in Italian]

(2) See: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/6999827.stm

a barrier to 'moving on' and also access to some idea of a shared Truth, a common interpretation of the past violence that is agreed by all members of society (Hamber, 2003; Breen-Smyth, 2007) ⁽³⁾.

We can find some paradigmatic examples of an opposite approach in building memorials in the cases of Italy and France. In Italy, 40 years ago, after the bombing attack at the railway station of Bologna, the association gathering the family members of the victims soon became an active actor for promoting memorials and celebrations. The sociologist Anna Lisa Tota describes that association as "memory entrepreneurs" with the support of the local city administration, but without that of the Italian state, because a long-lasting controversy affects the association of Bologna and the government focuses on the misdirection by state bodies in the course of criminal proceedings that do not allow to reach the truth of the facts ⁽⁴⁾.

In France, one of the very first memorials for VoT was, as well, an initiative of an association: that of the families of the victims of the DC-10 UTA (Flight 772) bombing in 1989. However, today, the French government is the main actor promoting the project of a museum and memorial "to pay national tribute to all victims of terrorism in the same way as to other victims of conflicts" ⁽⁵⁾. In memorialisation, therefore, we find either a bottom-up process starting from VoT associations or a top-down one starting from the MS, but it is relevant to consider also the local authorities' role. For example, in the United Kingdom (UK), besides the previous Omagh case, while London is now building a second memorial for the 7/7 terrorist attack, in 2016 the "Manchester City Council expressly refused to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the enormous IRA bomb, which destroyed the city centre" ⁽⁶⁾. In Italy, unlike Bologna, for 20 years the administrations of the city of Turin have not responded to the request for a monument from the largest Italian association of VoT (AIVITER) based in that city. So even absence of memorials has a value: "an absence of memory, in fact, is often an act dense with political significance even more than its presence", wrote Anna Lisa Tota ⁽⁷⁾.

Narratives for remembrance

The issue of ownership implies that around the memorials different languages and media are crossed and that all together they contribute to define a narrative for remembrance. Memory studies, a broad range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, have conceptualised three basic modes of remembering conflicts:

An antagonistic mode of remembering recognizes conflict as a means to eliminate the enemy-other, with the purpose of reaching a conflict-free society – typically imagined in the image of a fictionalized past of ethnic purity. It applies the moral categories of 'good' and 'evil' to the agents involved in the narrative, and as identities are morally essentialized, it cannot reflect upon its own constitutive role in the construction of identity. The cosmopolitan mode of remembering builds on an understanding of the world as one big and potentially harmonious entity, united by a common culture based on the recognition of human rights. The moral categories of 'good' and 'evil' are applied to abstract systems such as democracy and dictatorship, and the cosmopolitan mode is highly self-reflexive, in so far as it considers all identities to be constructed and is able to reflect on the perspectives of both the Self and the Other as victims. Finally, an agonistic mode of remembering recognizes conflict as an ontological and fundamental characteristic of human society, but it tries to deconstruct the moral pitting of the other as an enemy on moral grounds through social and political contextualization of the historical conflict. An agonistic mode of remembering is also highly conscious of its own responsibility as a social discourse in the construction not only of the identity of the 'we' position, but also of that of the 'adversary' ⁽⁸⁾.

The Horizon 2020 research project Unsettling Remembering and Social Cohesion in Transnational Europe ⁽⁹⁾ (UNREST) has tested and applied an "agonistic mode" of remembering relating to mass grave exhumations in Spain, Poland and Bosnia, analysing the potential advantages of promoting agonistic

⁽³⁾ Argomaniz & Lynch (Eds), *International Perspectives on Terrorist Victimisation. An Interdisciplinary Approach*, pp. 8-9.

⁽⁴⁾ Tota, *La città ferita*.

⁽⁵⁾ See: <https://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/273955-le-musee-memorial-des-societes-face-au-terrorisme>

⁽⁶⁾ Heath-Kelly, *Why refusing to build memorials for terror attacks is a bold political statement*.

⁽⁷⁾ Tota, *La città ferita*, p. 84.

⁽⁸⁾ Cento Bull & Hansen, *Agonistic Memory and the UNREST Project*, pp. 1-2.

⁽⁹⁾ See the UNREST project, Horizon 2020, funded 2016-2019: <http://www.unrest.eu/>

representations of past conflicts in museums through the adoption of “radical multiperspectivism”, as opposed to the “consensual multiperspectivism” informing most contemporary exhibitions and displays. In light of the findings from this project, Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen argue that a radical multiperspectivism approach, which foregrounds socio-political passions by drawing on both artistic interventions and contrasting narratives, helps “visitors understand the historical conditions, social grievances and political passions that made ordinary people turn into perpetrators, bystanders or collaborators” and “can deepen visitors’ understanding of violent conflicts and help counter the growing shift towards antagonistic memory, by turning enemies into adversaries”⁽¹⁰⁾. It is the same aim highlighted in the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) ex post paper ‘The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence’. Although European countries that have faced violence or terrorist attacks have very different political and historical backgrounds, the various conflicts leave a long-term legacy that sometimes leads to a polarisation of memories: “Polarisation of society is probably the first consequence of prolonged violence between two or more dominant communities and manifests itself in two main social trends: the ‘them & us’ thinking and, even worse, the ‘them & us’ sense of belonging”⁽¹¹⁾. The response of the memorials is therefore a challenge that, beyond the promoting actor, requires narrative modes that avoid or counter the increment of polarisation.

The primary role of Europe

The last factor to highlight is the European role in supporting VoT memorialisation. If usually it is the states that “administer” memories of conflicts, around contemporary terrorism we can see how European bodies have played an important role in supporting VoT, confirming a trend highlighted by academic studies⁽¹²⁾.

After the 2004 bombing attack in Madrid, the European Parliament decided to adopt the 11th of March as European Day of Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism, while — at that time — none of the MSs had a similar day at national level. In 2007, under the Criminal Justice Programme, the Commission ensured the continuity of such financial assistance but also foresaw further action. With a view to further ensuring appropriate protection and aid for VoT, the creation of a Network of Associations of Victims of Terrorism (NAVt) was envisaged⁽¹³⁾. The European Charter of Rights for Victims of Terrorism, approved in 2009 by the NAVt, pointed out how memory and memorialisation of the facts of terrorism are a common aim and a cross-cutting theme of all associations, through a chapter dedicated to the:

Right to remembrance

1. In order to prevent these violations of rights from happening again, victims and society have the right to the truth being known and not forgotten.
2. Member States shall adopt all measures aiming at preserving the memory of the victims and shall prevent any action, of any kind, that threatens it or constitutes an offence or contempt towards them.
3. Member States shall develop programmes on education for freedom, democracy and peace, encouraging the direct testimony of victims at the compulsory education centres.
4. Victims of terrorism have the right to any justification of terrorism to be rejected and Member States shall ensure this right and pursue any violation thereof⁽¹⁴⁾.

Furthermore, it is still the Commission’s Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs that provides a role for VoT in P/CVE policies and practices with a specific working group within RAN, established in 2011⁽¹⁵⁾. Finally, it is worth mentioning both the European Directive 2012/29 on victims of crime and Directive

⁽¹⁰⁾ Cento Bull & Hansen, *Agonistic Memory and the UNREST Project*, p. 4, p. 1.

⁽¹¹⁾ Lozano Alía, *The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence*, p. 2.

⁽¹²⁾ “(W)hile the state still matters and continues to exercise a primary role in policy-making, its attempts to ‘administer’ memory take place in a context in which memory is also conditioned by ‘the flow of mediated narratives within and across state borders’ (De Cesari and Rigney 2014, p. 14), as well as by interventions from civil society actors at the local, national and transnational level.” (Bull & Clarke, 2018, p. 246)

⁽¹³⁾ See: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/financing/tenders/documents/2008/065625/annex_1_en.pdf

⁽¹⁴⁾ See: <https://ayuda11m.org/otras-publicaciones/carta-europea-de-derechos-de-las-victimas-del-terrorismo/>

⁽¹⁵⁾ See: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/topics-and-working-groups/victims-terrorism-working_en

2017/541 whose aims are to take into account, in the best possible way, the specific needs of VoT. The above European policies are probably the signal that what are usually considered national issues, terrorism and conflict memorialisation, may find some positive response and an accelerating function addressing VoT needs at an over-national level, such as the European authorities that benefit from a level of independence and freedom of action from the other previously viewed factors: time, ownership and narrative modes.

VoT memorials: state of the art

“Hard memorials”

Nowadays we can find several memorials in the shapes of monuments, plaques, trees or “stumbling stones”, exhibitions all around those European countries that have been affected by terrorist attacks. Most of them have a commemorative aim: they are therefore used on the anniversaries of the attacks in public celebration and remembrance days where most participants are authorities and family members of victims or survivors. On some of these remembrance occasions we can find the participation of school groups that have been prepared by their teachers with a previous, more or less in-depth, educational pathway focused on the legacies of inner/national terrorism in history courses and, in a few cases, focused on activities of prevention of violent extremism.

Museums and houses of memory

The last frontier in terms of memorials is that of museums or memorial centres or houses erected during the last two decades. They are buildings hosting archives, libraries, photo exhibitions, videos, documents and rooms for public events. The most famous museum dedicated to VoT is the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, a non-profit organisation that oversees operations for the 9/11 Memorial and 9/11 Memorial Museum, located on 8 of the 16 acres of the World Trade Center ⁽¹⁶⁾. In Europe, the first memorial centre with a museum dedicated to VoT is the Spanish Victims of Terrorism Memorial Centre (FCMVT) ⁽¹⁷⁾, which is a state public sector foundation, affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior. Its aim is to:

- Preserve and disseminate the democratic and ethical values embodied by the victims of terrorism.
- Build the collective memory of the victims.
- Raise awareness among the population as a whole for the defence of freedom and human rights and against terrorism ⁽¹⁸⁾.

In Italy, we find two Houses of Memory (*Casa della Memoria*) in Brescia and Milan. They are the results of agreement between local authorities and VoT associations in 2000 and 2015.

Both in the Spanish and Italian cases, the Museum and the Houses have the following aims:

- Awareness-raising on terrorist historical facts, and educational and pedagogical activities.
- Exhibition activities, through a permanent exhibition and temporary exhibitions.
- Research activities.
- Archive, library, publications and public events activities.

⁽¹⁶⁾ See: www.911memorial.org

⁽¹⁷⁾ See: www.memorialvt.com/en/

⁽¹⁸⁾ See: <http://www.memorialvt.com/en/home-presentation/>

Amongst the FCMVT didactic material there are: teaching units on Terrorism in Spain aimed at the Geography and History course of the fourth year of Obligatory Secondary Education, and an interview with Eduardo Uriarte Romero — a testimony of the contribution of the Victims of Terrorism Memorial Centre to the “Exit Hate” campaign of RAN, launched in September 2016.

The situation around the Italian “Houses”, beyond their didactic activity offered to the city’s schools, presents the *Casa della Memoria* of Brescia focused on its main purpose that is the acquisition of documentation on the bombing attack in *Piazza della Loggia* (1974) in a spirit of rigorous historical analysis, in order to achieve the most complete reconstruction of the facts and their interpretation; while the *Casa della Memoria* of Milan has hosted one of the first public presentations of RAN in Italy in January 2016.

Lesson learnt 1

The Spanish and Italian cases are examples of a top-down and bottom-up process in building museums or memory houses for VoT, but their activity presents a marginal attention to the prevention of radicalisation. Both countries have national laws or agreements between the state and associations that give VoT an active role in the schools, but most of these activities have a historical dimension of awareness of the terrorist events that have occurred. Furthermore, in both countries there are several associations, *owners* of memory of victims of different types of terrorism, who find it, for several reasons, difficult to cooperate with each other and in synergy with governments.

The case of Norway

In relation to more recent terrorism, we find rather paradigmatic cases in Norway. In the attacks of 22 July 2011, Breivik first killed 8 people with a bomb in the government quarter of Oslo and then shot to death 69 people (of whom 33 were minors) on the island of Utøya, where a summer camp of the Workers’ Youth League (AUF) was taking place. Four hundred and ninety-five people on the island survived the attack. The discussions on the memorial sites contain a lesson to learn on building memorials for terrorist attacks. Three sorts of memorials have been discussed: a national one, one on the island of Utøya, and small, private ones.

National memorial

A few months after the attacks, the Norwegian government called a competition to design memorial sites. The artistic proposition created polemics and opposition about the process, the placement and the purpose of the memorial site. The discussion brought into daylight a fundamental question: What should be the goal of a national memorial; to invoke trauma or resilience, to honour the victims, to show “national values” or something else? No conclusion or consensus was found by the Norwegian government. The state was even sued for harming the local community and landscape with an “invasive” memorial. In 2017, the plan was abandoned ⁽¹⁹⁾.

In the meantime, on 22 July 2015, four years after the attacks, the local government opened the 22 July Centre, a space that was first supposed to be a temporary information centre but was later granted a permanent status. It is situated in the government quarter of Oslo, in a building that was seriously damaged by the bomb in 2011. (The reparations were only started in 2020.) The centre is a learning space that works with the mediation of memory and knowledge about the terror attacks in Oslo and on Utøya on 22 July 2011. It is currently under the Ministry of Education and Research and hosts now exhibitions, talks and school visits. All across the centre, the damaged structures of the building are visible and have been integrated into the design ⁽²⁰⁾.

The Utøya case

⁽¹⁹⁾ de Roy van Zuidewijn, *Remembering Terrorism: The Case of Norway*.

⁽²⁰⁾ See the website of the 22 July Centre: <https://22juliseret.no/information-in-english/>

While a national memorial caused national-level debates, survivors, families, and leadership of the Labour Party's AUF, the owner of the island of Utøya, place of the annual youth summer camps, had similar discussions on the future of the island: what decisions to make for the future, and how are the different options perceived from different points of view? Should the site be kept or demolished? Should the activities continue? The activities were restarted 4 years after the attack, in 2015, in new buildings, and in the cafeteria, where 69 people lost their lives, a memorial was integrated into the design to represent the victims and the survivors. Another small memorial was built farther away, in a neutral place, where no one was killed, for the families to mourn the victims ⁽²¹⁾.

From Norway, a positive example can be found in the long process of conversation that the AUF held together with the survivors and victims' families and relatives on the memorials on Utøya. Eventually, consensus was found. Memorials were designed in a way that families didn't have the obligation to have their names written there, but they could choose to add it later, a possibility that they used ⁽²²⁾. Furthermore, "Both NGOs and governmental institutions use Utøya as an arena to work on how to improve our emergency preparedness, as well working to prevent radicalization", as Jørgen Watne Frydnes, the managing director of Utøya memorial, said in Paris on the occasion of the 16th European Remembrance Day in 2020.

Lesson learnt 2

The lesson learnt is that sensitive topics require tailored answers and participation of the different interest groups: survivors, families and also locals, who will live and see the built memorials on a daily basis. Also, in national-level processes there is a need to find ways to acknowledge and respect different views. The key is to consider the decision-making process as a memorial in itself. Utøya taught that support from different audiences is a key for balance between grief, remembrance and resilience.

The example of Norway shows that remembering and commemorating terrorist attacks is a sensitive and political issue. Memorials need to resonate with widely different audiences: the survivors and relatives of the victims, the wider population, and those "confronted" with the memorial sites in their daily lives. The Norwegian discussions around the memorials also illustrate the tension between showing and marking the trauma and resilience: to mark the physical place or to restore it? What gives credit to and what discredits the attack? No unambiguous ways to address the questions exist. Contestation has remained also in Norway, where one small memorial was defaced with a swastika in 2019, and where many of the young survivors have been threatened by right-wing extremists and some have ceased their political activities, feeling that police protection was lacking.

"Living memorials"

Since 2011, the role of VoT in P/CVE is usually established in the pedagogical dimension of testimony. Living memorials have been used for educational purposes, and awareness-raising can be seen as primary prevention. On the occasion of the 7th European Remembrance Day for VoT on 11 March 2011 in Brussels, it was argued how the testimony of those who have suffered tragic events resides in "making memory to seek a shared truth through dialogue" ⁽²³⁾. So, VoT associations involved in RAN activities have developed several P/CVE activities using the "live memorial": the voice or the testimony of victims and survivors. In the RAN Collection of inspiring practices ⁽²⁴⁾ there are several projects that use these live memorials promoted both by the European VoT associations and by civil society organisations, on primary and secondary prevention of radicalisation and mainly in the educational and counter-narrative fields.

⁽²¹⁾ de Roy van Zuijdewijn, *Remembering Terrorism: The Case of Norway*.

⁽²²⁾ Ibid.

⁽²³⁾ Guglielminetti, *Le rôle des victimes du terrorisme dans la prévention de la radicalisation qui conduit au terrorisme*.

⁽²⁴⁾ See: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/networks/radicalisation-awareness-network-ran/collection-inspiring-practices_en

Lesson learnt 3

In several speeches on the occasion of RAN meetings and the European Remembrance Day for VoT, the idea of heroicising the role of the victims has been reiterated with the aim to use their stories of resilience in the P/CVE counter-narratives or in educational settings. So, several European projects have produced exhibitions, videos, web-based platforms and virtual memorials to spread their voices or testimonies. These living memorials have multiplied in parallel with *hard* memorials and museums for VoT. The weak point of these expectations towards VoT probably lies in a misunderstanding: it is not possible to counter the terrorist propaganda with a simple narrative opposition mechanism using the civil victim. As has always occurred with violent conflict, you can face opposing heroisms: the policeman or soldier against the terrorist or the enemy soldier, but the civilian victims usually escape heroic rhetoric — their language is intended to give meaning to a grieving, or a trauma, provoked by a political crime for which they do not want revenge, but, if anything, to make it “scandalous”. That is, the scandal of political violence that affects innocent civilians — i.e. the victims.

Programmes for peace, justice and social cohesion through dialogue

The dialogical relationship between memory and truth, that is radical multiperspectivism, is still under scrutiny. In a recent RAN joint meeting of the RVT and EXIT Working Groups and the European Forum for Restorative Justice, there was discussion on the ambivalence between memory and history and the different concepts of truth. “Truth” has the potential to divide society, to increase the polarisation of memories, if the capacity for dialogue and to hear one another is lost. The role of the media in shaping historical consciousness as well as in using the testimonies of VoT and of other actors is a challenge in the process of building and managing memorials of terrorist attacks. Therefore, it is valuable to think of ways to include differing views of the truth — to enhance a common sense of belonging.

Restorative justice as a response to violent extremism has been used and documented in single initiatives around Europe, for example Italy, Basque Country, Northern Ireland and France ⁽²⁵⁾. In Italy, amongst other cases, some meetings between VoT and former terrorists took place in the space of memory: the funerary monument of Aldo Moro, the statesman who on 16 March 1978 was kidnapped by the far-left terrorist group Red Brigades and killed after 55 days of captivity.

The basics of restorative justice are to bring together people affected by a crime and/or conflict, to open a channel of communication, and to conduct dialogue “to identify, understand and possibly transform a conflict and repair the harm” it caused ⁽²⁶⁾. The process includes all counterparts of the conflict, victims, offenders and others who were harmed, for example family members, neighbours and others affected. The core philosophy and practice are about the ownership of the conflict. To conduct a fruitful dialogue, an impartial and trained mediator facilitates the process, during which all people affected are also allowed to rebuild the trust that builds and maintains the community. In restorative justice, it is deemed that the process is about “allowing citizens an opportunity for change and growth by taking responsibility and ownership of their own conflicts and stories” ⁽²⁷⁾.

Restorative justice and dialogical practices as well as P/CVE activity have their focus on: “Dialogical truth: This is the ‘complete truth’, the common narrative which arises when parties affected by the same acts meet to share true facts (history) and subjective experiences (memories) of what happened (e.g. when victims and perpetrators meet)” ⁽²⁸⁾. They are a tool to broaden the perspective of prevention of violent extremism towards the idea of the peace building, as we shall see in the case of The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation.

⁽²⁵⁾ Biffi, The role of restorative justice in preventing and responding to violent extremism.

⁽²⁶⁾ Ibid., p. 2.

⁽²⁷⁾ Biffi, The role of restorative justice in preventing and responding to violent extremism, p. 5.

⁽²⁸⁾ Ibid., p. 5.

Teaching divided histories

One inspiring practice of the radical multiperspectivism approach is the Northern Irish initiative “Teaching Divided Histories”. The project was curriculum-linked and the idea was to use digital tools for the study of conflict in schools. It was led by the Nerve Centre in conjunction with the British Council, the Curriculum Development Unit of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment, and a range of other partners, and the aim was to transfer knowledge and expertise between Northern Ireland and other conflict-affected societies on how the delivery of education and learning can be developed to promote shared societies. Post-primary teachers from across Northern Ireland and border counties were brought together to develop and pilot innovative education programmes using film, digital imagery, animation, comic books and webcasting to enable young people to explore common experiences of conflict and peace building. Teachers and educators were trained in a range of creative and critical skills to use moving image and digital technologies within the classroom to liberate and empower young people to engage practically with issues of conflict and division ⁽²⁹⁾.

The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation’s case

In this frame, in the UK we find one of the most relevant examples of a memorial working in a radical multiperspectivism approach through activities that include dialogue: where survivors are encouraged to meet with formers or representatives of the “other side” with a view to mutual humanisation and breaking the cycle of violence. The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation is an educational peace charity based in Warrington (UK). It was formed in 1995 by Colin and Wendy Parry, following the loss of their 12-year-old son Tim and 3-year-old Johnathan Ball in the 1993 Warrington bomb attacks, which were perpetrated by the Provisional Irish Republican Army.

The Foundation presents itself as a “living memorial” and delivers a unique “Peace Programme” made up of numerous projects:

“The Foundation’s very first programme was the ‘Tim Parry Scholarship’ ... New projects were developed and in 2001, the Foundation undertook a study looking at the specific needs of GB based victims of the Northern Ireland conflict. From this report, work began to provide support and assistance to those victims. Terrorist attacks, such as ‘9/11’ and ‘7/7’, which came after the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland, led to the Foundation developing new programmes, working not only with young people but also adults and communities across Britain, in building peace and conflict resolution skills. Our work is made up of projects that evolve to keep pace with contemporary challenges. We focus on young people, offering leadership development, and work with those who are at risk from violence and extremism. We work with women’s groups to build their skills, recognising their unique abilities to influence their families and their communities. We help British and British-based citizens who are victims or survivors of terrorism in this country or overseas.” ⁽³⁰⁾

This UK Foundation — that has played a relevant role in the EU’s RAN, since 2011, through its representatives in various working groups — manages a wide range of programmes both for supporting VoT ⁽³¹⁾ and P/CVE ⁽³²⁾ that has no equal in Europe. It is a live memorial whose P/CVE work on primary and secondary levels of prevention in different settings and with different audiences always uses dialogue as its main pillar.

Lesson learnt 4

The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation should become a case study to deeply analyse for the purpose of this paper. At first approximation, comparing this experience with those of the European MSs,

⁽²⁹⁾ See more at: <https://www.nervecentre.org/teachingdividedhistories> and https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/teaching_divided_histories_-_international_conflict.pdf

⁽³⁰⁾ See more at: <https://www.peace-foundation.org.uk/>

⁽³¹⁾ See: <https://www.peace-foundation.org.uk/our-policies/>

⁽³²⁾ See: <https://www.peace-foundation.org.uk/our-work/>

including projects for future museums and memorials, such as those of the French government, the following strengths are highlighted:

- a strong political independence, typical of the UK charities' legal institution;
- a strong team-building capacity that allows to work both on VoT support and P/CVE at a professional level in collaboration with both governmental and academic bodies;
- a strong focus on peace means facing conflict from a peacebuilding perspective that includes, from the very beginning, all the actors involved and both the radicalisation and resilience processes;
- the self-definition of "living memorial" for a big building is an apparent paradox that underlines how the role of memory can be alive more in the psycho-social work done inside its venues than in the ceremonial, commemorative dimension of any "hard memorial";
- the last two points carry to a perspective where terrorism survivors, former fighters and groups at risk of violent radicalisation are the living actors to work with to stop the circle of violence.

So, the philosophy behind this foundation probably tells us that the dead (victims) cannot speak or testify, but the service that can be rendered to them, rather than ritual celebration, is the concrete social work to prevent further conflicts and to heal the wounds of those who have suffered them.

Conclusions

The frame seen around VoT memorials, both *hard* and living, suggests that both the MSs and local authorities, as well as the VoT associations, are sufficiently suitable to manage P/CVE activity mainly at the primary level of prevention, while at a second level there are few single initiatives of radical multiperspectivism, restorative justice and dialogue as a means to build peace, social cohesion and common ground. There is a potential that may be increased with the suggested recommendations in the next chapter.

Summarising and using the three concepts coming from the memory studies, we can describe three stages in narratives for remembrance coming from VoT and their associations:

1. Without the public recognition of the status of VoT, they stay in a status of invisibility, still dehumanised and doubly victimised, and their grieving narrative follows the "antagonistic mode", developing counter-memory and building their own memorials.
2. After their public recognition, they develop communication in the consensual multiperspectivism of the "cosmopolitan mode": VoT and states agree to use a narrative on the common values and culture based on human rights and rule of law, as occurs on the occasion of the European Day of Remembrance, in the most public ceremonies to commemorate VoT in MSs and in educational and P/CVE activities at the primary level of prevention. In this important step, VoT regain their integrity as previously dehumanised subjects.
3. However, to engage VoT in P/CVE activity involving at-risk groups of young people or radicalised people, at a secondary and tertiary level of prevention, requires a further step in communication towards a deeper pedagogical role. It requests the VoT to have courage of dialogue with formers or representatives of the other side(s) to reach radical multiperspectivism that is an "agonistic mode" of remembering with the mutual humanisation of all the actors involved in the conflict.

Beyond the memorial objects, what is relevant — under the P/CVE point of view — is the approach of the living memorials, the modes of narratives for remembrance: those speeches, testimonies, readings, arts performances, debates and educational activities all around the *hard*, small or big, or virtual, memorials.

Beyond the positive results achieved by P/CVE involving the living memorials of VoT, most of these activities appear to be devoid of continuity and poor in terms of strategy in the medium and long term and in terms of qualitative and quantitative assessment. The reason lies in the fact that, on one side, P/CVE cannot be amongst the main activities of a VoT association because they have firstly to answer the primary needs of the victims; and, on the other, we have to consider the already-mentioned issues of time required to

overcome trauma, the conflict around memory ownership, and again the (long) time needed to achieve conditions of safety and security for all actors involved to start the most fruitful discussion in the radical multiperspectivism or in the restorative justice perspective. Gaining the latter level of narrative of remembrance, furthermore, requires several prerequisites, mainly: positive political and social circumstances and enough organisational capacity (and funds) for involving stakeholders and skilled practitioners, as we will see in the next chapter.

Recommendations

The European experiences of using memorials in the field of P/CVE are almost all directed towards living memorials, in both the shape of direct (live) or indirect testimony (exhibitions, books and videos) and the shape of memory spaces where didactic and dialogue activities take place. The RAN Collection of inspiring practices can provide several examples. However, they still disclose a lack of or poor integration into national P/CVE strategies. Furthermore, the different historical and political backgrounds in each MS, as well as their different P/CVE policies, including the educational and memorialisation ones, make these experiences difficult to transfer. So, the following recommendations are cross-cutting and focused on approaches, basic principles and challenges.

Recommendations for practitioners

- Working both with single victim or VoT organisations means firstly to help them “regain their independence and place in society, and to counsel them to cope with the tragedy that befell them” ⁽³³⁾. Practitioners should be aware that building VoT memorials has the primary purpose to give them a public recognition of their social role, after a terrorist attack has broken the social contract and the social cohesion of a community.
- Practitioners should also be aware that VoT needs, including their public recognition and their claim for memorialisation, may encounter different responses from local and national public authorities that, in turn, change over time. In building memorials, this has as a result that practitioners may provide their support in a bottom-up or top-down approach, using different narrative modes of remembrance and means of communication. Multidisciplinary-based training for practitioners is a key to face the several aspects involved in communication and memorialisation of VoT.
- Practitioners may find themselves working with single victims or VoT organisations that are interested in playing an active role in education, peacebuilding and P/CVE across several settings and target groups. That means to support the VoT storytelling capacity to “shift from the clinical, health and protected dimensions [to overcome the trauma] to the public, political and pedagogical ones: when storytelling becomes a way to empower citizens by giving them a voice” ⁽³⁴⁾ that can play a role of testimony in the counter-narrative, at the primary level of prevention, or of mentor in “radical dialogue”, at the secondary and tertiary levels of prevention. Practitioners must be aware that this shifting process needs different times and approaches for each person and requires precautions and preconditions to be taken into account to avoid re-traumatisation or any sort of further victimisation.
- The field of restorative justice and different approaches to restoring relationships is extremely relevant in terms of bridging divisions and healing communities after an event or a period of violence. In the restorative justice approach, “the community, the victims and the perpetrators can have a more active and relevant role than the one they usually have alongside a criminal process. A victim-centred approach is always a requirement for the success of these initiatives” ⁽³⁵⁾ and memorials may be used as a proper space, but specific training is recommended for any targets of practitioners involved: from social workers to teachers, and from exit workers to probation officers.

⁽³³⁾ Denoix de Saint Marc et al., Handbook: Voices of victims of terrorism, p. 3.

⁽³⁴⁾ Denoix de Saint Marc et al., Handbook: Voices of victims of terrorism, p. 12.

⁽³⁵⁾ Lozano Alía, The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence, p. 11.

- As stated in the RAN ex post paper of the Bilbao meeting in 2019: “It’s crucial to work on ‘history education’, addressing the real factors conducive to violence and the needs and grievances perceived by all sectors of the society, building up moral barriers to prevent youngsters from the use of violence to gain political objectives in the future” ⁽³⁶⁾ Teachers should be aware that visiting VoT memorials is part of this work, as occurred in some educational activities around the Shoah. Beyond “history education”, media literacy is also relevant to enhance critical thinking of students and youth faced with the fake news and conspiracy theories spread on the internet.

Recommendations for policymakers

- Local authorities are the closest institution to communities affected by terrorism or violent extremism, so they are in charge of resilience policy in supporting both victims and social cohesion and P/CVE, including the remembrance and memorial activities. So, in answering the VoT needs as well as in the construction of memorials, the experiences of many countries suggest an important benefit in social cohesion when local authorities work alongside VoT or their associations, sometimes playing a supplementary role to that of the central state.
- National and local authorities should involve all victims’ groups in the drafting of the compensation and reconciliation schemes, in identifying priorities, needs and possible approaches to meet them, and in engaging them in the political and memorialisation debate ⁽³⁷⁾. Local and national authorities should be aware that absence of memorials is a choice with political value that may increase VoT secondary victimisation since they remain “invisible” and devoid of social recognition. So, to promote social cohesion after a period of violence, at policy level, means: “adopting political measures aimed at bonding the society by including all victims’ needs in their agenda, ensuring the proper restitution schemes, funding and boosting peacebuilding initiatives, and ensuring the memory of the victims” ⁽³⁸⁾.
- In memorialisation policy, national authorities are in charge of managing the choice related to the main aim and narrative mode. As stated in the ex post paper of the Bilbao meeting, “National and local authorities should support and set up the commemoration of anniversaries and remembrance days for victims, highlighting their relevance in bonding the community” ⁽³⁹⁾. In most cases, VoT memorials have a remembrance and commemoration aim using a cosmopolitan mode with the purpose to strengthen national identity and cohesion in a sort of conciliation process between state and VoT. The policies that have to deal with memory spaces and memorials in societies with a traumatic past should be designed so as to permit the interaction of contested perspectives within a negotiated legal and political frame of dissent. Most harmful and polarised cases, such as Northern Ireland’s “Troubles”, highlight how difficult it can be to gain “a shared Truth, a common interpretation of the past violence that is agreed by all members of society” ⁽⁴⁰⁾, in a full reconciliation process.
- As most experiences of MSs with using VoT memorials are focused on commemoration and educational purposes, in a P/CVE policy perspective, the lesson coming from the few single initiatives of radical dialogue or restorative justice or post-conflict museum should encourage MSs towards the creation or the maintenance of living memorials endowed with a strong political independence: where the narrative cosmopolitan mode of remembrance is replaced with an ‘agonistic’ narrative which recognises that the relationship can be conflictual and confrontational ...[;] places of experimentation and confrontation, as agonistic ‘fora’, where pressing societal and political problems can be addressed head-on and where hegemonic discourses can be critically discussed and undermined, solidarities constructed, exclusionary visions tackled etc. ⁽⁴¹⁾. So, maintaining (living) memorials with a strong political independence means to spend the necessary time in designing a well-balanced governance.
- The role played by the European institutions in promoting both the memory of VoT, since 2004, with the related positive spin-offs at national level (through the introduction of a national remembrance day, for

⁽³⁶⁾ Ibid., p. 8.

⁽³⁷⁾ Lozano Alía, The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence, p. 5.

⁽³⁸⁾ Ibid., p. 12.

⁽³⁹⁾ Ibid., p. 5.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Argomaniz & Lynch (Eds), International Perspectives on Terrorist Victimisation. An Interdisciplinary Approach, pp. 8-9.

⁽⁴¹⁾ UNREST project, European Policy Synthesis, 2020, p. 13: <http://www.unrest.eu/policy-synthesis/>

instance), and the VoT “voice” in the RAN framework, since 2011, suggests that European decision-makers should continue to play a supra-state role that facilitates both VoT social recognition and their active role in P/CVE in an increasingly thankless way with MS policies and strategies. Policymakers at European level should encourage MSs to address the needs of memory and recognition of VoT as soon as possible without any preclusion or discrimination, so allowing them to gain their dignity. A more challenging step for the European bodies should be to ask VoT memorials’ stakeholders (MSs, local authorities, academia and civil society organisations), giving serious consideration to, and incorporating elements of, a non-consensual approach, the “agonistic mode”, on which there is a burgeoning literature, to avoid a polarisation of memories and to allow an enhancement of the most advanced programmes on P/CVE, peacebuilding and restorative justice.

- National and local authorities should institutionally and financially support victim-led initiatives for reconciliation, peacebuilding activities and restorative justice. If any commission or working group is established and led by national or local authorities, victims and victims’ groups should be engaged in the partnership from the beginning and the planning of the activities up to the practical measures ⁽⁴²⁾.

Further reading

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⁽⁴²⁾ Lozano Alía, The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence, p. 5.

Annex:

Definition of terrorism

As far as “terrorism” is concerned, Alex Schmid proposed in 2011 the definition that most meets with academic consensus — that is:

Terrorism refers, on the one hand, to a doctrine about the presumed effectiveness of a special form or tactic of fear-generating, coercive political violence and, on the other hand, to a conspiratorial practice of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent action without legal or moral restraints, targeting mainly civilians and non-combatants, performed for its propagandistic and psychological effects on various audiences and conflict parties ⁽⁴³⁾.

Obviously, this definition is not the only one accepted or used; since an exhaustive examination of the possible meaning of the term goes well beyond the limits and objectives of this document, please refer to this short bibliography:

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Definition of victims of terrorism

The term “victim” is used to refer to a direct or an indirect victim of a violent action, survivors and family members of victims.

The following persons are to be considered as victims of terrorism: (a) individuals who have been killed or suffered serious physical or psychological injury through the commission of an act of terrorism (direct victims); (b) the next-of-kin or dependants of a direct victim (secondary victims); (c) innocent individuals who have been killed or suffered serious injury indirectly attributable to an act of terrorism (indirect victims); and (d) potential future victims of terrorism (para. 10D). (This definition effectively endorses the approach taken in General Assembly, Human Rights Council report 34/30, para. 16) ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

The trauma related to terrorism touches and affects people widely, for instance the rescuers who intervene at the scene of an attack or the family members of the perpetrators. Because of geographical, social and psychological proximity, and transgenerational trauma, we should consider that terrorism touches widely the social tissue of the society: the circles of impact of an attack are always broader than the circle of direct and secondary victims.

“A victim” is also a recognised status, which makes a person eligible for compensation. In addition to being a victim of the perpetrator, and physical violence, the state is also seen as accountable, as it has failed to protect the victims’ right to live. The state is thus held accountable and then recognises (or does not) this status and compensates the harm and suffering caused. Victims’ associations are most often formed, at first, to advocate for this right and the recognition and compensation of the state, which failed to protect them. If we follow the thought pattern, another point of view on the state’s accountability is the failure of the political system: politics failed to deal with the divergences and conflicts in a non-violent way. Use of political, religious or ethnic violence succeeds radicalisation. If “politics” means dealing with issues, divergences and conflicts

⁽⁴³⁾ Schmid, *The Definition of Terrorism*, p. 86.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ See: [https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-14/key-issues/definition-of-victim.html#:~:text=The%20following%20persons%20are%20to,victims\);%20\(c\)%20innocent%20individuals](https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/terrorism/module-14/key-issues/definition-of-victim.html#:~:text=The%20following%20persons%20are%20to,victims);%20(c)%20innocent%20individuals)

in a non-violent way between equally recognised counterparts, politics end where violence starts. Physical violence occurs when we fail to have negotiations and dialogue. Violent radicalisation can be seen as a failure of dialogue, non-violent confrontation, democracy and pluralism and, as a result, victims may find themselves in the third role of scapegoats between terrorists and states (counterterrorism) and having to address their grievance towards both the actors ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

P/CVE: Prevention levels

The term “primary prevention” is used to refer to action targeted at whole population groups or everyone within a broad category, whereas “secondary prevention” is targeted at defined risk groups prone to committing criminal acts. We will also touch upon “tertiary prevention”, which is targeted at radicalised individuals or people having committed acts of violent extremism, motivated by political, ethnic or religious views. RAN describes these three levels as follows:

- Primary prevention is targeted at whole population groups or everyone within a broad category.
- Secondary prevention is targeted at defined risk groups prone to committing criminal acts.
- Tertiary prevention is targeted at problem groups and individuals who demonstrate problematic behaviour ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

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⁽⁴⁵⁾ Guglielminetti, *Le rôle des victimes du terrorisme dans la prévention de la radicalisation qui conduit au terrorisme*; Guglielminetti, *La radicalizzazione pacifica delle vittime del terrorismo*.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Bjørge, *Lessons from crime prevention in preventing violent extremism by police*, p. 2.

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