1 Introduction

On December 7, 1970, German Chancellor Willy Brandt laid down a wreath at the memorial of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. He stepped back, and fell to his knees in front of the memorial, remaining completely still for half a minute on the wet stone floor. This small and spontaneous, yet powerful gesture was a changing moment in world history, seemingly opening up new possibilities for post-conflict reconciliation. Yet, 35 years later, on 11 July 2015, on the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica mass killing of 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys, when Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić came to pay respect to the Srebrenica survivors, instead of manifesting a moment of catharsis, he was forced to flee the memorial after being stoned by an angry Bosniak mob. They pelted him with stones, shoes and bottles as he arrived at the mass burial held to mark the atrocities. Prime Minister Vučić had been explicitly and heavily pressured by the international community, weeks prior to the event, to publicly apologise for the genocide committed in 1995.[1] But instead of finding the dignity accorded to the 'Brandt moment', a rock was thrown that struck him in the face, breaking his glasses. Why did those two events of public apology have such completely different outcomes? Why did the international community pressure Serbian Prime Minister Vučić into apologising in the name of the Serbian people? Most importantly, how did this gesture affect realities on the ground?

This book is about the rise of a new phenomenon worldwide – termed here *moral remembrance*. Moral remembrance prescribes standards for a 'proper way of remembrance' with which states are expected to comply when dealing with legacies of mass human rights abuses. It refers to a standardised, isomorphic set of norms, and is based on normative worldviews of human rights that promote 'facing the past', 'duty to remember' and 'justice for victims' as its pillars. Moral remembrance points to the current preference, worldwide, for memory standardisation, institutional

[1] See all three Srebrenica Genocide Resolutions adopted on 7 July 2005, 15 January 2009 and 7 July 2015.

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homogenisation and norm imitation. It provides a technocratic-like set of policies and a tool kit of practices that aim to advance a human rights vision of memorialisation processes to promote democratic human rights values across the globe.

This book brings into question one of the most basic, deeply embedded assumptions in human rights and transitional justice: that 'proper' memorialisation is a crucial step in establishing moral responsibility for past atrocities and, consequently, human rights values in conflict and post-conflict settings. This study questions whether such standardisation is useful in achieving 'reconciliation' through close analysis of the actual effects – in real-life settings – of attempts to mandate history in, and after, ethnic conflict; it sees such standardisation as being generally ineffective at best and counterproductive at worst. The book argues that the human rights memorialisation agenda is constructed and adopted as a result of experiences based on historically grounded events that, once transformed into policy-oriented memorialisation efforts, translate into an oppressive force. Along the way, those de-contextualised memorialisation efforts produce a long list of false premises that, for the reasons elaborated in the book, in the long run end up enforcing divisions on the ground.

Standardisation of Memory at the World Polity Level

Since the late eighteenth century, national memory has been largely regarded as an internal matter for nation-states. However, in the course of the past several decades, we have witnessed a growing global trend that promotes the idea that societies, just like individuals, inevitably need to face and deal with their troubled past to prevent a recurrence of violence and to promote democratic and human rights values. This notion argues that memorialisation has become 'a critical element in current struggles for human rights and democracy' (Brett et. al. 2007: 1). The term 'memorialisation' covers a range of initiatives that aim 'to preserve the memory of past abuses for present and future generations, by such means as monuments, museums, commemorative ceremonies, and rituals' (Blustein 2012: 19). Attempts, at the world polity level, to find and implement proper policies and modes of memorialisation for societies involved in massive human rights abuses, starting from World War II onwards, gave birth to myriad approaches and methods that promise to secure a sustainable peace and a gradual transition to democracy. The global memorialisation agenda, promoted through various institutions, polices, discourses and practices, is closely connected with, and gains its

power and legitimacy from, the transnational human rights regime. Approaches such as peacebuilding, transitional justice and conflict transformation, management, resolution and reconciliation are, broadly speaking, offspring of the presumption, advanced by the human rights agenda (or regime), that the implementation of human rights values and norms is a condition for the proper memorialisation of atrocities. They are used and implemented under the assumption that a proper, morally driven memorialisation can transform and direct nationalist realities in conflict and post-conflict societies towards a non-violent course, simultaneously placing them on a safe path to a brighter democratic future. Memorialisation efforts have become core issues in the quest for post-conflict justice, peace and reconciliation, gaining significance and relevance and becoming an inseparable part of any human rights agenda. The overwhelming presence of memorialisation efforts and their ongoing embeddedness into organisations and institutions are phenomena of global proportions. The United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and, in fact, every single non-governmental organisation (NGO) or human rights institution that deals with conflict areas, one way or the other, promotes an agenda grounded in the assumption that a 'proper memorialisation' is essential for 'healing' societies with a difficult past and moving beyond trauma and violence. Universities teach courses and have entire programs dedicated to peacebuilding, conflict resolution/management/transformation and transitional justice, feeding the need for dedicated professions that can fill numerous positions in the NGO sector, human rights institutions, international and domestic criminal tribunals and courts, local and international human rights campaigns, and even state-sponsored memorialisation efforts. All of those trained professionals, as well as enthusiasts and activists, irrespective of the sometimes substantial differences between their approaches and methods, are on the same mission: to direct and advocate for the parties involved to achieve a particular vision of the future by embracing certain ways in which they are supposed to frame, remember and commemorate their troubled past. This desired vision of remembering atrocities in a very particular way – atrocities committed by different parties in wars or under totalitarian regimes – is based on the assumption that a 'proper' framing of remembrance represents an effective means for promoting universalist human rights values in conflict and post-conflict settings (David 2017a). In other words, human rights advocates operate under an unquestionable assumption: that a proper memorialisation of a difficult past is essential for both democracy and human rights.

The pressure to engage in particular forms of memorialisation after mass human rights abuses started to emerge in the 1980s, by which time a human rights vision of memorialisation as a process of remembering the wrongs of the past and honouring the victims had developed, together with the idea that public and official recognition of crimes is essential for preventing further violence in divided or post-conflict societies. In 2014, the United Nations (UN) adopted *memorialisation standards,* promoting Western memorial models as a template for the representation of past tragedies or mass crimes and, in so doing, requiring states with difficult pasts to adhere to prescribed *standards of memory* (UN General Assembly 2014). According to these standards, memorialisation may include sites such as 'concentration camps, former torture and detention centres, sites of mass killings and graves and emblematic monuments of repressive regimes; symbolic sites such as permanent or ephemeral monuments carrying the names of victims, renamed streets, buildings or infrastructure, virtual memorials on the Internet, and museums of history/memory; and activities such as public apologies, reburials, walking tours, parades and temporary exhibits' (UN General Assembly 2014: 5). These commemorations are mandated based on the assertion that 'ensuring public recognition of past crimes is indispensable to the victims, essential for preventing further violence and necessary for redefining national unity' (UN General Assembly 2014: 5).

Yet, how compelling are these claims? How sound is the causal logic? How valid are the theoretical and factual assumptions on which they are based? Can there be universally correct ways of remembering past atrocities? Most importantly, what are the possible negative side effects of the demands envisioned, regulated and imposed by the human rights regime upon conflict and post-conflict states for them to engage with their contested pasts in a particular manner and to compel standardised memorialisation practices? Can that bring human rights values? This book challenges those assumptions. It shows that the advancement of *moral remembrance* – the standardised set of norms, promoted through human rights infrastructures at the world polity level, in which societies are supposed to deal with the legacies of mass human rights abuses – does not stand up to its expectations. On the contrary, it often destabilises post and in-conflict realities, enforces animosities and strengthens ethnically based nationalism.

Hence, we need to understand how this massive promotion of moral remembrance became a top priority on the human rights agenda. How did we come to see moral remembrance with its unified discourses, with its same language phrases and practices, spreading around the world

(albeit unevenly), even to the most remote conflict areas? The reason for this memorialisation madness, I claim, lays in the fact that systematic, historical–sociological, comparative research has never been carried out that probes the fundamental assumption in which is grounded all the activism, advocating, policy-making and research that claims the inevitable causality between 'proper memorialisation' and human rights and democratic values.

The Intersection between Memory and Human Rights

Despite the fact that memory studies have been one of the most popular areas of research in recent years, memory as a subject of social inquiry had been greatly neglected until relatively recently. There are several reasons for this omission. Not long ago, memory as a subject wasn't perceived as a sociological issue. It had been pushed aside and often treated as a 'soft' issue, something that did not have a significant impact on societal organisations and structure. In 1925, one of Émile Durkheim's students, Maurice Halbwachs (Coser 1992), coined the term 'collective memory', asserting that individuals are incapable of remembering in a coherent manner outside the connections and constraints of their group and, therefore, it is society that determines and fashions their memories. This term only gained momentum in the 1980s. Durkheim himself, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1976 [1915]), addressed memory only briefly in relation to commemorative rituals. Historians, anthropologists and psychologists addressed this subject separately, placing their focus on different aspects of memory. The anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1940) developed the notion of 'structural amnesia' in his famous study of the Nuer. Frederic Bartlett (1932) was amongst the first modern psychologists to attend to the social dimensions of memory, attributing decisive importance to group dynamics in individual remembering. Historians, for their part, have their own long-standing history–memory division, in which memory has often been reduced to a complementary methodological tool, introduced through 'oral histories and severely influenced by the role of historiography and its rise within nation states. John Gillis (1994) rightly pointed out that history had taken celebratory, sacralising functions previously assigned to memory.

Within the discipline of history, the history–memory nexus gained attention due to the 'history of mentalities' that has dominated French historiography since the 1960s. Historians like Philippe Ariès (1974) and Maurice Agulhon (1981) began to study the history of commemorative practices, which they saw as mechanisms of political power, thus shifting

historiographical interest from ideology to imagery and from meaning to manipulation. Later on, historians such as Assmann Aleida, Pierre Nora, David Lowenthal, Patrick Hutton and many others wrote extensively on the rift between history and memory. Barry Schwartz (1996) ascribes this increased interest in the social construction of the past to three historical processes. First, he claims, it has to do with identifying historiography as a source of cultural domination; second, it's due to the postmodernists' attack on linear historicity – thereby linking history with memory and power; and third, it reflects the production of a class-based account of the politics of memory, that highlighted memory contestation and the instrumentalisation of the past.

It was actually one of the greatest sociologists of the twentieth century, Theodor Adorno, who paved the way for an uncritical adoption of the assumption that societies need to honour the memory of those who died, since a 'duty to remember' is an insurance policy against the repetition of massive human rights abuses (David 2017a). Adorno (1986 [1959]), in his famous article 'What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?', elaborated in length about how post-conflict societies need to readdress their difficult past, arguing that a culture of forgetting threatens democracy because real democracy requires a self-critical working through of the past. Adorno's approach was backed up both by the famous and publicly well-mediated historian debate (*Historikerstreit*) which took place in media outlets in West Germany (focusing on a process of returning remembrance into public awareness) and by the discussions of human rights activists in Latin America that explored how to deal with former right-wing regimes. Adorno, however, wrote his article not as a sociologist but as an engaged intellectual and philosopher, aiming to promote a desired vision of social reality, which was also strongly influenced by a wave of growing popularity for psychoanalysis.

It is important to stress that the social approach to memory developed in parallel to the development of the human rights memorialisation agenda and became deeply influenced by, and embedded in, the same agenda, becoming overwhelmingly burdened by the normative approach and enthusiastic support for human rights. The vast majority of researchers within the field of memory studies are conducting their research not from a standpoint of critical thinking, wherein they try to untangle often-hidden relationships between power, societal structures and agency, but rather as devoted activists who tend to promote a certain desired (in this case, human rights) vision of social reality. Indeed, it is a great challenge in the field of memory studies to resist sliding down the slippery slope of 'the world as it should be', with all its normative baggage (even when morally speaking, this seems the right thing to do), instead of critically

engaging with 'the world as it is', without any attempt to fit the research to a certain political agenda.[2]

On the one hand, the intersection between memory and human rights is often perceived as detached from any historical roots and widely seen as apolitical, morally superior (Talal 2000) and even 'natural, self-evident, and essential' (Elliott 2014: 408). It takes for granted notions that, in fact, have very particular historical and political roots, such as the alleged imperative to 'face the past', assuming a very particular framing of the past based on purified categories of victims, perpetrators and bystanders. This omnipresent approach suggests that society as a whole, like individuals, needs to face its troubled past and remember it in a particular way. However, to start with, viewed through sociological instead of ideological lenses, individuals and societies are nothing alike. 'Facing the past', though perhaps useful to individuals, is hardly applicable for entire communities or societies. The reasons for that distinction are numerous, as Brandon Hamber and Richard Wilson (2002: 35) have shown. They convincingly demonstrated that nations are not like individuals in that they do not have collective psyches, that nation-building discourses on reconciliation often neglect individual needs, and that individual and collective processes of healing work on different timelines. What we today perceive as a 'logical' and 'natural' way to deal with past atrocities is actually historically rooted and contextualised in the post–World War II experience, better known as the 'German model' (Gabowitsch 2017). This model, through the institutionalisation of discourses, practices and policies, became a backbone agenda for the human rights regime. Historically bounded ideas, borrowed from psychological (psychoanalytical, in particular) and intellectual discourses, were uncritically translated into the human rights activist sphere, which gradually gained organisational power. In the process of ascribing morality to memorialisation practices and processes, what was lost was their deeply historical, cultural and societal context. Moreover, the three main guiding principles of moral remembrance – 'facing the past', 'duty to remember' and the 'justice for victims' approach – all have their own historical roots that need to be properly understood, conceptualised and contextualised (David 2017a).

On the other hand, human rights promoters are interested not only in justice and punishment, but, more importantly, in the transformation of values. This transformation is based on human rights moral views, as

[2] That is not to say that social sciences are ideology-free, or even that such a state is entirely possible to achieve, but that the conclusion we reach must be grounded in a theoretical and methodological framework instead of an ideological one.

sketched in the UN Charter (1945) and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948), wherein human rights are a peculiar sort of rights with special moral weight. Despite the fact that different people hold different concepts of human rights (Dembour 2010), these rights are generally understood as universal and moral principles or norms, embedded in the idea that certain rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status, and they should be protected as legal rights in municipal and international law. Though rights are individual, they can only be appreciated in a collective setting where those rights are recognised communally. Thus, the argument is not (only) about individuals who are obliged to face and remember their misconducts, but about entire communities and societies. Cementing human rights values in remembering past human rights abuses turns memorialisation into a pivotal process in achieving a human rights vision of the world.

The assumption that transformative acts exist, which human rights advocates believe are accomplished through the processes of 'proper memorialisation', gradually became the force majeure in policing memory around the globe. To understand those macro processes at the world polity level and their impact on different political settings, one must question how social structures, which many regard as natural, are shaped by complex social processes in the long run. This book is precisely about the impact that the accumulative process of worldwide institutionalising of standardised and isomorphic forms of memorialisation, along with its naturalisation (that has been transformed from an isolated, contextually and historically bounded idea into taken-for-granted standardised memorialisation policies and practices), have on the ways in which in-conflict and post-conflict societies comprehend their difficult past.

Moral Remembrance: The Three Processes of Ideologisation

To understand the emergence of moral remembrance and its impact on the ground, I analyse the human rights memorialisation agenda through three separate but interrelated processes, conceptualising it not in a normative fashion, but as an ideological force. Opposite to the lay understanding of human rights, where the agenda is presented as apolitical or above politics, universal and morally superior (often endorsed as such by human rights activists), I analyse and treat human rights as an ideology.

Human rights, just as any other ideology, tend to homogenise and monopolise the vision of the world as it should be. All ideologies, including that of human rights, 'seek to establish their hegemony by presenting themselves as the only right way to look at social reality' (Malešević 1999: 580). The success of human rights as an ideology can be measured exactly by the degree to which certain meanings and practices are almost universally seen as innocent, natural, clear and apparent.

Borrowing from the sociology of ideologies, in particular from the vast literature on nationalism, I follow (1) the institutionalisation of its organisational power that grows through human rights institutions, discourses and practices; (2) the institutionalisation of its dogmatic (ideological) power that relates to the particular content and reasoning that has shaped moral remembrance at the world polity level; and finally, (3) the forging of attachments of solidarity between group members that can push them into a moral action based on the ideological reception. In other words, both organisational and ideological power are necessary but not sufficient preconditions to make human rights an emotionally recruiting ideology. It is vital to understand that the persistence and the success of any ideology lie in its capacity to ideologically and organisationally penetrate people's feelings of attachment and mutual solidarity and link them into a relatively coherent and potentially recruiting ideological meta-narrative (Malešević 2013b). Hence, once the discourses, practices and logic of moral remembrance hit the ground, the question becomes: do people internalise human rights values in the long run?

In this book, I explore the ways in which human rights gained organisational and ideological power over the years, enabling it to promote a particular, historically contextualised, memorialisation agenda across the world in general and in conflict and post-conflict settings in particular. In other words, the focus in this book are questions that, in today's ideological turmoil, bear much political, moral and policy-making weight: Can the promotion of particular memorialisation standardised norms in conflict and post-conflict settings ensure the adoption of human rights? Can it defeat or at least dissolve nationalist-driven conflicts and bring a lasting change?

Based on accounts from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Israel and Palestine, I demonstrate here that the outcome of such external mandating of memorialisation standards has quite disturbing results – it rarely has transformative power on the ground. In fact, very often, the forging of feelings of solidarities in small groups, a key to the ideological implementation of human rights, is harvested back by the nation-state to promote nationalist, ethnically based agendas. The

comparison between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority[3] and Serbia, Croatia and BiH[4] is not random. For Israel and Palestine, the centrality of the Holocaust legacy serves as a diversion from Palestinian suffering, a fundamental issue in their already seven-decades-long conflict. For Serbia, Croatia and BiH, contested memories from different historical layers affect the region in every possible sense, putting it a spark away from yet another conflict. In both settings, attempts to mandate the remembrance of past human rights abuses, through the global human rights infrastructure, actually end up perpetuating their conflicts, rather than promoting human rights.

Major Claims

Let me make clear at the outset that I do not claim that human rights fail to produce significant changes for many around the globe. Nor do I reject human rights as an ideal. On the contrary, it is, by far, the best ideal to strive for. However, human rights also produce undesired outcomes that are too often discredited and overlooked, that stay either completely ignored or are treated as minor setbacks.

I do not seek to undermine the unprecedented achievements of human rights that have made a real difference on the ground – from social equality issues to gender, political and cultural rights. However, I engage here critically in one particular area of human rights – where advocates of human rights attempt to coerce a 'proper' way of remembrance, which has tremendous and far-reaching consequences on the ground. Hence, my focus in this book is not primarily on the fact that human rights are often a tool for powerful states to enforce their political goals (Chomsky 1999; Herman and Peterson 2010; Žižek 2005). Nor does my critique deal, per se, with the 'paradox of empty promises' wherein governments often adopt human rights norms of behaviours as a matter of window dressing, radically decoupling policy from practice and, at times, exacerbating negative human rights practices (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005).

[3] Palestine is certainly not a state in a narrow sense, since it has neither a well-defined territory nor internationally recognised sovereignty. However, since Palestine does have a recognised government, it is still useful to work with the assumption that Palestine is a state, especially since the diplomatic practice seems to be the most important argument for viewing Palestine as a state.

[4] Bosnia is a unique case: there is no single state actor and no single official history accepted in Bosnia, but rather narratives divided across ethnonational lines – Serbian, Croatian and Bosniak.

Part of my argument relates to the coercive power of the human rights memorialisation project, which is often perceived as being implemented at the expense of autochthony and which results in a resurgence of nationalist, ethnically narrow sentiments. But this outcome, I show, has more to do with the inability of human rights to push people into internalising human rights values. Hence, this book is less about general attitudes towards the external human rights memorialisation agenda (though those do have an impact on the ground), and more about small face-to-face encounters in which human rights ideology is spread and disseminated in an attempt to determine whether, if and when human rights ideology can push people into moral actions in the long run.

Though the claims I present in this book are unfashionable, I am hardly a lone voice and far from the first to pursue this sort of critique. Others have made the case for the damaging effect of the human rights memorialisation agenda, such as Natan Sznaider, Alejandro Baer and Carol Kidron, to mention a few. All of these scholars have demonstrated the troubling impacts of this agenda on the ground. In this book, I go further and challenge a deeply embedded idea, continuously promoted globally by human rights advocates, that the human rights memorialisation agenda implements human rights norms and values. For the sake of clarity, I lay out my explanation up-front, in the form of six general theses.

Understanding Human Rights As an Ideology

I promote here an idea that, instead of conceptualising human rights in a normative fashion, as a desirable set of values, the adoption of which will inevitably bring a liberal peace, we should conceptualise it as an ideology. The theoretical model on the potency of nationalism developed by Siniša Malešević (2010, 2012a, 2012b, 2013a, 2017) is, I suggest, well equipped to help us understand how and why a particular memorialisation has been mandated in the name of human rights. Understanding human rights in methodological and theoretical terms as an ideology helps us distinguish three crucial processes that determine the successes and failures of the ways in which people on the ground interact, internalise and/or reject human rights values: (1) the institutionalisation of the organisational power of human rights; (2) the institutionalisation of its ideological power; and (3) the creation of micro-solidarity bonds based on human rights values in local communities. In other words, we need to understand the rise of institutions and organisations (organisational power) that promote certain content (ideological power) and to analyse whether organisational and ideological powers are capable of producing

feelings of attachment and solidarity that push people into internalising human rights in the long run.

Understanding human rights as an ideology is beneficial, as it shifts the focus from a normative framing of rights and the desired realities on the ground and opens up a new avenue for evaluating how human rights beliefs and values generate change and affect societal structures that are shaped by historical, political and cultural processes. Understanding the ways in which human rights ideology perpetuates, promotes and diffuses coercive and cumulative organisational and doctrinal power may help us shed new light on whether human rights ideology is capable of producing solidarity at the micro level, to the extent that it mobilises social actors into human rights–based actions. Viewing human rights through the lens of ideology can bring some ground-breaking and fruitful insights, in particular in areas that are under-researched due to the current focus on rights and wrongs. Questions such as whether human rights ideology produces new forms of inequalities, when it perpetuates violence, and which mechanisms are used for sustaining human rights ideology on the ground are just some questions, I suggest, that can benefit tremendously from this approach.

The Emergence of Moral Remembrance at the World Polity Level

To shed light on the impact that standardisation of memory has on conflict and post-conflict settings, it is necessary, I argue, to understand how the human rights promotion of memorialisation processes became institutionalised and consequently a strong and influencing factor in the world polity system, here defined as 'the system of creating value through the collective conferral of authority' (Meyer 1987: 44). Meyer and Rowan (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983), Mayer (1987), Powell and DiMaggio (1991), and others have argued that the social structures of the world polity provide a sociological institutionalist reflection of global relations, which prescribe actions and goals and provide a set of cultural norms or directions. This is important because states tend to conform, adapt to, and comply with the external standards of world-polity isomorphism for the sake of gaining legitimacy in international arenas.

Whereas world polity theory has been heavily criticised for its overtly cultural approach, it treats the human rights memorialisation agenda as a universal and undisputable moral code, one that has obscured and blurred its political and historical contexts, and enabled its standardisation and

gradual adoption worldwide. Human rights have acquired and accumulated organisational and ideological power in the world polity, starting from the end of World War II, but particularly since the 1970s (Moyn 2012). In this context, the human rights promotion of memorialisation processes became a strong and influencing factor of the world polity system, providing a set of cultural norms or directions, labelled here as *moral remembrance*. Three main principles have crystallised over the years and become pillars of the human rights memorialisation agenda: (1) the 'facing the past' principle; (2) the 'duty to remember' principle and (3) the 'justice for victims' principle. These three principles have become so deeply rooted within human rights memorialisation practices and norms that their historical–political context has been whitewashed and misinterpreted as being apolitical, natural and the only proper way to remember the past. Thus, moral remembrance refers to the standardised set of norms, promoted through human rights infrastructures at the world polity, further adopted and filtered through nation-states, in which societies are supposed to deal with the legacies of mass human rights abuses.

Moral Remembrance Clashes with the State-Sponsored Memorialisation Agenda

Moral remembrance, as an agenda promoted (unevenly) through centres of power at the world polity level, often enters national arenas through peace agreements – either through the front door (as in the case of the Dayton Agreement in the Western Balkans, where all parties had to commit to facing their mass human rights abuses) or through the back door (as in the case of the Oslo Accords in Israel and Palestine, where the human rights memorialisation agenda was introduced via a peacebuilding framework). In reality, this means that the human rights memorialisation agenda (1) has often been regarded as coercive and oppressive and (2) has clashed with various sectorial political agendas as well as with official historical narratives and the ways in which people in local communities narrated their past. Whereas the process of standardising moral remembrance and its adoption at the world polity level de-contextualised, de-historicised and de-politicised the core content of the human rights memorialisation ideas, pushing this agenda through peace agreements further deformed and mutated its idealistic premises. States, pressured in various ways, guided by the agendas of their political elites, further distorted and instrumentalised the human rights memorialisation agenda to fit their own, often narrow nationalist needs.

Moral Remembrance Strengthens the Categories of Nation and Ethnicity

At the macro-state level, the human rights memorialisation agenda is particularly subject to clashes between the believed truth of the past, which is sponsored by the state, and the truth mandated in the name of human rights. To be clear, the human rights memorialisation agenda always lands onto particular historical settings. Hence, the way in which it will be accepted, rejected (fully or partially) or modified is inevitably a subject of an already deeply developed and deep-rooted relationship with certain segments of national past and current political needs. Human rights, with the centre of their power being in the world polity, are always unavoidably filtered through the needs of a state. This means that some states will pretend to comply with world polity norms while, in reality, they welcome some rights but reject others, perceiving the latter as damaging to their own interests.

Further, the human rights memorialisation agenda – which frames personal and collective experience through the prism of 'duty to remember', 'facing the past' and a 'victim-centred agenda' – assumes a particular moral order in which there is no dispute regarding what is morally right or wrong. This assumption effectively enforces the idea that human rights norms must trump cultural norms and heritage. Hence, the human rights memorialisation agenda is always understood (at least partially) as oppressive and coercive, a threat to a seemingly homogenous body of the nation. If Serbs, or Germans, or Hutu are asked to comply with the norm set in moral remembrance by publicly apologising, this, in fact, homogenises people with different political views and from different classes and backgrounds into one categorical order through which the category of belonging to a certain nation (or ethnic or religious group) gains additional value. Thus, contrary to a desired, mandating memory in the name of human rights, it re-establishes boundaries, not dissolves them.

Moral Remembrance Produces New Social Inequalities

At the mezzo-state level, individuals and groups who suffered the consequences of the wars may find themselves trapped between, on the one hand, the advocates and NGOs that promote human rights notions of morality and, on the other hand, the state political elite. Victim groups oscillate between the slow and controversial processes of limited justice and widespread denial by the other side of the conflict. In their constant pursuit of justice, victim groups are crucified between two opposing poles.

At one end of the spectrum, such groups make efforts to have their suffering (fully or partially) recognised by human rights promoters, both locally and globally. Human rights promoters target victim groups by offering them not only much needed (financial or psychological) support that is denied by the state (for all sorts of reasons), but also a framework through which the victims can frame their sufferings and their memories and consequently their rights. This recognition plays an important role in their individual and communal recovery. However, it often lacks any institutional long-term support.

At the other end of the spectrum, the problem is that victim groups' inclusion and recognition into infrastructures of their own nation-states is not guaranteed and comes with a great cost. In practice, this means that, for both human rights groups and political elites, the suffering party can gain status only through the position of victims, which needs to be constantly reaffirmed. It is precisely here, in the day-to-day politics of victimhood, that new social inequalities are produced. The process of reaffirming victim status has two direct implications. First, the need for the ideal-type victim means that victim groups inevitably (and often very consciously) engage in homogenising their group members. One side effect of such a homogenisation process is attempts to sanction any complexities or messiness that might jeopardise their victim position in the power struggle between two opposing camps – that of the human rights and nationalist-centred ideologies. Second, and even more importantly, the homogenising and pushing of the victim group into this framework of 'ideal victim' means that other victim groups become understood as rivals and opponents in the struggle for scarce resources. In reality, this means that both the nationalist and human rights–centred ideological outlooks are often used to form new class divisions, based on differential access to state power and bureaucratic apparatus as well as to external funding.

Moral Remembrance Does Not Make People More Appreciative of Human Rights Values

Finally, at the micro-state level, based on prolonged human rights–sponsored 'facing the past' dialogue encounters in Israel and Palestine, and in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, we have little evidence to suggest that people become more appreciative of human rights values, and even less evidence that they become willing to carry out any moral action that transcends their narrow interests. While we see a significant short-term impact, in the long run the perceptions of their national histories become more significant; hence those feelings are destined

either to be hijacked by the state or to crumble and fall apart. This happens for two main reasons. First, human rights are not capable of competing with nation-state memorialisation infrastructures (such as state-sponsored commemorations, monuments, national calendars, history textbooks or national museums) and their impact is limited in terms of their power to transform nationally bounded sentiments into global and universal human rights values. Second, human rights in general, and the human rights memorialisation agenda in particular, do not offer any real alternative to a narrow and limited nationalist, religious or ethnically marked collectiveness. This is because the experience of attachment and solidarity in small group encounters is not instinctive, but rather a function of the interpretation of symbols, situational context and history. Hence, instead of harvesting strong emotions and a sense of loyalty from people in local communities that might become an ideological cement of human rights norms and values, the framework produced through moral remembrance is likely either to disappear or to be harnessed by the state, potentially destabilising and adding fuel to the very same nationalist fires that it is supposed to extinguish.

The Layout of the Book

Chapter 2 of this book focuses on two main issues. First, I discuss why it is beneficial to understand human rights as an ideology. I explain why ideology in general, and nationalism in particular, can add to our understanding of the impact that human rights have on the ground. I introduce Malešević`s theory on the organisational and ideological power of nationalism and its relationship to the ideological perception and forging of solidarity attachments for people on the ground. This is important because, though the distinction between the promotion of human rights as opposed to the promotion of nationalist-centred memory is allegedly apparent, what is lacking both in the scholarly literature and in practice are theoretical tools to assess their impact in the long run. The lack of a suitable theoretical paradigm reduces our ability to grasp the complex meaning-making processes that are crucial and inseparable from the process of memorialising the past. Second, I show the historical obstacles to conceptualising, in a systematic way, human rights as an ideology, exploring how disciplinary baggage has downgraded our ability to assess human rights and value production across the globe.

In Chapter 3, I trace the rise of moral remembrance. In this chapter, I deal with the gradual emergence of memorialisation standards and policy-oriented attempts to engage transitional societies in developing and adopting specific normative forms of remembrance. This perspective

of globalised and standardised cultures of memory has been heavily embedded and dispersed through an accumulative process of institutionalisation and ideologisation of human rights. Thus, moral concerns are promoted through agendas of 'justice for victims', 'duty to remember' and 'facing the past' that are supposed to prevent a recurrence of violent conflicts, gaining their power and legitimacy from the world polity level. I discuss the transitional justice paradigm that, from the late 1980s, brought to the fore primarily legal mechanisms to deal with past human rights abuses; I then address the reality that, since the year 2000, memorialisation has become seen as central to the processes of democratisation and regional integration. In practice, this shift in perception has brought a tremendous change in the ways of understanding memorialisation processes, moving the paradigm from simply a 'duty to remember' to specific, policy-oriented 'memorialisation standards'.

Implications of moral remembrance are far-reaching. Plenty of memorialisation-policy papers have been issued by a variety of governmental organisations, as well as international and regional NGOs, such as the UN and the US Institute for Peace, Open Society Institute, Impunity Watch, the Van Leer Institute and RECOM, among others. These policy-oriented reports provide memorialisation guidelines and recommendations not only in general but also for particular countries such as Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, South Africa, Guatemala, Cambodia, Kosovo, Burma, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Timor Leste, Egypt, Argentina and Chile. I intersect those with major historical developments that have impacted knowledge production, discourses, practices and policy-making, providing evidence for (1) the institutionalisation of a particular memory agenda; (2) the generative growth of the human rights agenda, through expansion of infrastructures, discourses and practices into a mainstream human rights agenda; and (3) the adoption of the 'facing the past', 'duty to remember' and 'victim-centred' principles.

Whereas in Chapter 3 I deal with the expansion, embeddedness and promotion of the human rights memorialisation agenda globally, in the next two chapters I analyse specific case studies, seeking to disclose the localised versions of moral remembrance. In the Balkan cases, the international community has played a significant role in pressuring Serbia, Croatia and BiH to shape their national histories in accordance with the mandates of a specific human rights regime. In contrast, Israel and Palestine offer different dynamics. In Chapter 4, I show that, whereas the European Balkan states faced financial conditionalities during the various steps of the EU accession process, Israel and Palestine were much less pressured by the international community to exhibit an even nominal acceptance of a cosmopolitan history, through which global

concerns and values become part of local experiences. Having said that, the Oslo Accords, signed in 1993 and in 1995, that projected the independent state of Palestine in 1999, were of great importance for bringing new memorialisation agendas, never discussed per se in any of legal documents but indirectly promoted in multiple ways. Surprisingly, even in 2000, when it became clear that the Oslo Accords had failed, memorialisation practices, promoted by human rights institutions and funds, continued to blossom. Chapter 4 deals with the ways in which the memorialisation agenda was promoted in Israel and Palestine and how specific historical and political conditions affected it.

In Chapter 5, I show how, in the Western Balkans, and more specifically in Serbia, Croatia and BiH, the pressure imposed by the international community (the EU in particular) was a given from the very beginning: following the wars of the 1990s, they all formally committed to the Europeanisation process. Each state's entrance into the EU was supposedly conditioned upon, among other things, facing its criminal past of human rights abuses. The main request posed to Croatia, Serbia and BiH by the EU was cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY). In the cases of Croatia, Serbia and BiH, the post-conflict institutionalisation of human rights, as defined and enforced by EU bodies and institutions, created several mechanisms, different in their purpose and efficiency, to implement and impact memorialisation processes and practices. In Chapter 5, the memorialisation agenda for the Western Balkans is disclosed and analysed.

While in Chapters 4 and 5 I place the institutionalisation of the human rights memorialisation agenda into the specific historical, political, cultural and economic contexts of the Western Balkans and Israel and Palestine, in Chapter 6 I try to understand how moral remembrance resonates for the people in local communities. As it is a necessary condition for an ideology to be emotionally recruiting, I turn my attention to micro-group solidarity. I briefly theorise the concept of solidarity as understood so far, placing particular focus on Randall Collins' theory of interaction ritual chains and emotional energy. Central to his 'interaction ritual theory' is the notion that people in face-to-face encounters produce mutual rituals that are sustained through an emotional energy that results in a feeling of membership and in a desire for action that is considered a morally 'proper' path. This is crucial because, in dialogue groups sponsored by the human rights memorialisation agenda of moral remembrance, interaction rituals that produce and sustain emotional energy are based on the contested representations of a shared past.

Drawing on numerous human rights projects and memorialisation initiatives in both the Western Balkans and in Israel/Palestine, I analyse

the myriad of 'facing the past' dialogue groups that bring people together based on either a categorical order (e.g., as victims or perpetrators), their ethnic positionality (e.g., in dialogue groups) or both. 'Facing the past' encounters ritualise historical narratives and generate strong emotions, such as anger, fear, excitement and pain, together with a particular vocabulary of sentiments, which, I show, end up strengthening ethnic homogenisation, essentialisation and group polarisation. I demonstrate that, while being in those face-to-face groups is often described as a 'life-changing' experience – and even produces real feelings of solidarity among the group members – in the long run, this solidarity, which allegedly overcomes narrow ethno-nationalist solidarity bonds, does not translate transnational solidarity into human rights values. In other words, moral remembrance does not offer a real alternative to sustaining those emotions and transforming them into solid, long-lasting human rights values. In fact, I argue that moral remembrance does not offer sufficient infrastructures to compete with the narrow, ethnically based nationalist perceptions of collective memory. Moral remembrance is not capable of sustaining transnational solidarity; instead, doing so requires permanent affirmation and reinforcement among millions of people across the globe. Based on theoretical and empirical evidence, I discuss the impact that human rights memorialisation isomorphism had on nationalist realities on the ground. I elaborate what is lost in translation once a proper way of remembrance, with its particular, historically bounded logic, is introduced and advanced through human rights instruments, showing how and why instead of cementing a human rights vision of the world, it actually ends up reproducing nationalist discourses and practices.

In the concluding Chapter 7, I engage in a more speculative debate, while offering several explanations of moral remembrance's global impact. I broaden the discussion to speculate about the significance and possible dangers of this new global moral remembrance regime. Three questions are being asked that define the impact that moral remembrance has on the ground. The first question deals with the tension between moral remembrance, promoted through the morality of human rights memorialisation and the nation-state–sponsored memorialisation agenda. I discuss differences and similarities in the ways in which human rights and nationalist-centred ideologies understand, conceptualise and advance memorialisation processes and practices. The basic difference between human rights and nationalism is that human rights stand for worldwide inclusion of all people into one moral community, whereas nationalism presumes nationally bounded collectives. Nevertheless, moral remembrance, as a grand global memory regime, is always filtered through the needs of a state, which significantly reduces

and cripples the fundamental ideas and values embedded in the human rights memorialisation agenda.

The second question deals with the under-researched and neglected impact that the human rights memorialisation agenda produces on the ground – namely, the production of new social inequalities. Here, the tension between, on the one hand, moral remembrance as an ideal and the back-stage politics of its organisation, structures and politics, and, on the other hand, the political interests of various groups behind nation-states and nationalism, results in very particular and often tangible trade-offs between groups affected by wars, national political elites and various human rights organisations. Such negotiations, trade-offs, transactions of real or symbolic benefit and the political struggle over scarce resources lead to new social inequalities and the marginalising of those who cannot afford (for various reasons) to participate in those mnemonic battles.

In the third question, I ask whether moral remembrance has the potential to transform individuals in local communities into believers in human rights values and motivate them into moral action based on those values. Moral remembrance, which frames personal and collective experiences through the lenses of 'duty to remember', 'facing the past' and the 'victim-centred' agenda, assumes a particular moral order in which there are no disputes over what is morally right or wrong. This is troubling because every individual and every local community are shaped in profound ways by symbols and by what is perceived to be their shared history. Hence, moral remembrance, as an all-inclusive ideology, is not able to offer a sustainable and emotionally engaging alternative to an exclusive collectiveness understood in terms of ethnicity, nationality, religion or any other reductionist category, in the long run.

Finally, I conclude the book by posing questions about the legitimacy and usefulness of moral remembrance in creating democracies and the implementation of human rights values and norms, arguing that mandating memorialisation standards not only fails to bring stabilisation and peacebuilding, but actually strengthens animosities and nationalist ideologies along ethnic lines.