Call for Papers: Workshop
"Far-right Memory in Digital Age"

Leipzig, 8–10 June 2023
Leipzig University

The workshop "Far-right Memory in Digital Age" addresses the conjunction of far-right and digital media in memory production. For a long time, various disciplines have focused on far-right groups due to their radical ideology, racism, violence, and threat to democracy. Their memory practices, on the other hand, have been largely ignored. This workshop attempts to shed more light on far-right digital memory activism.

For decades, research on collective memory has focused on the tensions between liberal, human-rights memory, and illiberal memory projects, contrasting national amnesia regarding the criminal past with requests to foster a self-critical human-rights memory. The role of far-right actors has remained underresearched. At the same time, there is increasing evidence that the state actors fostering illiberal memory often operate together with far-right communities. The far right promotes violence by celebrating genocide and ethnic cleansing campaigns from the past while turning fascists, war criminals, and terrorists into its heroes. The ideology of the far right, based on radical ethnonationalism, racism, xenophobia, misogyny, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia, is perpetuated and justified through the creation of new memory.

Contrary to disciplines like history, sociology, and political sciences—which have closely focused on the far-right, its history, organization, and ideology—memory studies have long ignored the far right and its memory practices. Far-right memory activism has become even more pertinent with the rise of digital media, which has provided additional opportunities for far-right mobilization and activism. The conjunction of far-right and digital media in memory production poses a whole set of questions about this new kind of memory as well as its characteristics, operation, and effects.

The workshop aims at bringing together scholars from different disciplines addressing the far-right's digital activism, focusing on how these actors (mis)use the past to justify their political activism. We are especially interested in the way the far right is using digital media and their transnational connections, traveling of content, and different local appropriations of master narratives like "White Genocide". We would also like to map new actors in digital media and examine new platforms, from Reddit and Parlor to 4Chan and 8Chan imageboards, to ask if and how new digital media could be considered as sites of memory. Finally, we are interested in the virality of content in the digital environment, focusing on the role of images, laughter, or specific forms like memes and gifs and how they are picked up and disseminated by users who do not

belong to the fringe communities. Some questions that may be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- What are the main characteristics of far-right digital memory? Are we facing the emergence of a new kind of memory or alteration of illiberal memory?

- What is the reach of far-right transnational networks, and how does memory travel through the digital space?

- What are the constitutive elements (e.g. racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, or misogyny) and normative framework of far-right memory?

- What are the central narratives of transnational far-right memory? How do memory actors incorporate local and national memory in creating master narratives like "White Genocide" and "Great Replacement"?

- What theoretical frameworks might explain the rise and political role of new memory?

- What methods could be used to analyze digital memory activism, especially when dealing with clandestine far-right actors?

- Could new digital formats, like memes and gifs, constitute new forms of memory production?

- What is the role of language and visuals in creating such memory and memory practices? How do emotions and humor contribute to the virality of far-right mnemonic content?

The workshop aims to explore the far-right digital memory activism as well as its actors, cultural forms, and digital platforms and to open the space for new theoretical and methodological conceptualizations. We invite scholars at various research phases to apply, whether to present their project proposals and draft papers or to discuss their findings.

To apply, please send a short CV and an abstract (max. 250 words) to ristic@uni-lepizig.de by **3 March 2023**. Accepted applicants will be informed by 15 March 2023. Funding for the travel and accommodation is available.

Organizer:
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3 March	Deadline for applications
15 March	Announcement of accepted papers
15 May	Draft papers (3,000–6,000 words)
8–10 June	Workshop in Leipzig

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