

## Second International Colloquium

### Duty to Remember: Social and Theoretical Perspectives on Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation in the Americas

This second international colloquium on the duty to remember<sup>1</sup> aims to bring together researchers, members of human rights NGOs, and victim organizations in order to discuss the current state of politics of memory throughout the Americas. This colloquium also seeks to put forth the knowledge of victims and human rights' advocates to the comprehension of the path towards truth, justice, and reconciliation.

This colloquium intends to continue and further the reflection initiated in 2004. The issues related to the truth behind crimes against humanity, the non-repetition of these acts, and the restitution of the victims' dignities remain very sensitive topics. These matters require reflection and demand that we put together the means to engage societies towards the respect of plurality, human rights, and democracy. Therefore, notions of pardon and reconciliation, although challenging, must be included in the process of restoring social cohesion. How can we evaluate the actual state of politics of memory in the Americas?

This first perspective entails classical dimensions of politics of memory. This colloquium also intends to emphasize issues specific to the contemporary context. Throughout the continent events and issues concerned by politics of memory have, with time, become more and more complex. Truth commissions on dictatorial regime crimes have been followed by other commissions examining exactions committed during internal conflicts. These situations were both influenced by the ideological competition between anti-communism and anti-capitalism regimes. Nowadays, crimes committed against Native communities and peoples have become a central issue of truth commissions. In order to understand these issues, we must take colonial history into account. In the same way, crimes against women and sexual violence are progressively becoming a legitimate issue in the quest for truth and the recognition of the victims' dignities. These crimes find themselves at the intersection of ideological competition and colonial history. However, in order to fully assess the matter, patriarchal violence must also be taken into account. Is it possible to establish a link between the visibilisation of these crimes and the theoretical and legal proliferation around the notions of femicide or ethnocide across the continent?

Truth commissions are today facing challenges because of the continuity between the sociopolitical context from which they are born and the situations of violence they are

---

<sup>1</sup> In 2004, the CRIEC organized the first international colloquium in Quebec entitled *The Duty to Remember and the Politics of Forgiveness*. Almost fifteen years later, we think it is both important and necessary to put together a second edition that will take into account the new issues related to politics of memory, as well as continue the work initiated in 2004.

mandated to examine. Politics of justice, reparation and reconciliation, are usually deemed necessary to allow a democratic transition after dictatorial regimes, armed conflicts, or other periods of violence. However, in the actual context, we notice two types of continuities. Firstly, the facts in question are increasingly imputed to democratic regimes (for example Colombia, Mexico and Canada) and there is often no rupture between the regime that establishes the truth policies and the one that committed the crimes. On the other hand, at the time when the truth commissions are instituted or when their recommendations must be applied, the groups to which is recognized the right to truth, justice and reparation, continue to be targets of violence. Therefore, whether it is the truth about the coup in Honduras, or the violence towards Natives and women across the Americas, the crimes in question are not a thing of the past; that is to say, that the policies in question are not truly transition policies. Under such circumstances, what are the implications of the implementation of truth, justice, reparation and reconciliation policies?

The program of the colloquium is organized around five axes.

1. Which measures of truth, justice and reparation to render reconciliation efficient?
2. Truth commissions and Native peoples in the struggle for citizenship and autonomy
3. Sexual violence: from day-to-day experience to situations of conflict
4. Beyond punishment for the executioners: is it possible to judge the motives and the perpetrators of the crimes?
5. Social mobilization and the struggle for memory, truth, justice and reparation

The colloquium will be held at l'Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), April 26, 27 and 28 2018. People interested in participating are required to send a communication proposal, in either English, French or Spanish, **July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017** at the latest with the following information:

- (1) Communication title
- (2) Abstract of a **maximum of 150 words**
- (3) Institutional affiliation and brief description of their work and interests related to the problem statement of the colloquium (maximum of 150 words)
- (4) Indicate the panel in which their communication should be presented

The answer will be communicated on **august 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017**.