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ZACHODNIEJ I POŁUDNIOWEJ  
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WYDZIAŁ POLONISTYKI  
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On the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Slavic Studies at Warsaw University,

the Institute of Western and Southern Slavic Studies, University of Warsaw  
the Faculty of Polish Studies at University of Warsaw  
and the German Historical Institute in Warsaw

represented by the Honorary Committee composed of prof. dr hab. Joanna Goszczyńska, prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Greń, prof. Miloš Řezník, dr hab. Grażyna Szwat-Gyłybowa, prof. IS PAN, and dr hab. Krzysztof Wrocławski, prof. em.

are pleased to invite you to the international conference entitled

## Memory in Southern and Western Slavic cultures

and dedicated to the problem of memory studies in Western and Southern Slavic countries. The conference is part of the celebrations of the centenary of Slavic studies at the University of Warsaw and the bicentenary of the University of Warsaw.

A hundred years ago Slavic studies were understood much more broadly than they are today. The discipline was not limited to the areas of philology or cultural studies but, by its nature, was an interdisciplinary branch of humanities. The heterogeneous Slavic culture is so complex that it requires researchers to cross the boundaries of their disciplines. In our repeated attempts to characterize Slavic culture, we must, therefore, combine the tools used in anthropology, history, sociology, literary studies, linguistics, and philosophy. Therefore, the conference is meant to be interdisciplinary.

In recent decades, memory has become one of the central problems in humanities, mainly through the work of such scholars as Jan and Aleida Assmann, Pierre Nora, Paul Connerton, and Paul

Ricoeur. The intense interest in Maurice Halbwachs' *La Mémoire collective*, dedicated to the social frameworks of collective memory, has played a significant role as well.

To celebrate the anniversary in a form of a commemorating ceremony, we propose a look at the problem of memory studies in Slavic countries. As Paul Ricoeur writes, in ancient Greece there were two words for the verb "to recollect": *mnēmē* and *anamnēsis*. The former was used for something that appeared in our memory passively, to the extent that the experience was characterized as a sensation, *pathos*. *Mnēmē*, therefore, poses the question of "what?" is remembered and is concerned with the content of our memory. While in the case of *anamnēsis*, a memory is understood as an object of active exploration by an individual. This raises the question of "who?" remembers. In recent philosophical tradition, the problem has been defined by Henri Bergson, who claimed that memory is a form of intentional effort. As a result, the question "how?" we remember comes into focus.

Therefore, we want the conference to be an opportunity to show how the different perspectives of contemporary research in Slavic studies seek answers to the questions of who remembers, what is remembered, and how things are remembered in Slavic cultures.

It should be noted that memory studies in Slavic countries face a twofold problem of reception. Firstly, there is the lack of reception of the original concepts developed in the Slavic countries. Secondly, there are delays in assimilation of theories developed by Western humanities scholars. Another difficulty lies in an internal barrier between different western and southern Slavic countries when it comes to acknowledging and applying the newest research theories. We would like the conference to be an opportunity to think about the limitations and difficulties faced by researchers studying memory in the Slavic region.

The participation in the conference as key speakers already confirmed prof. Miroslav Hroch (Prague), prof. Ivan Čolović (Belgrade) and prof. Marie-Janine Calic (Munich).

**Date:** November 27 – 28, 2015

**Place:** Old University Library, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

**Suggested topics:**

**Slavic memory and remembrance:**

- What is remembered in the Slavic countries: Slavic subjects of memory
- Who remembers in the Slavic countries: Individuals, groups, students, and historiographers versus participants of historical process
- How things are remembered in the Slavic countries: the culture of memory in the Slavic countries; the process of restoration of memory; memory in motion: remembering and cultural processes; changing existing memory; creating memory: invented traditions; memory and language; the language of memory

**Memory studies in Slavic countries:**

- Research ideas in the Slavic countries: original thought or passive reception?
- Communication barriers between researchers dealing with memory in the Slavic countries and in the West: causes, consequences, and possible solutions?
- Causes of the popularity of certain concepts in Slavic memory studies: reception and new ideas
- Researchers from Slavic countries in the field of memory studies: reception of their ideas at home and abroad
- Is there a memory studies paradigm in the Slavic countries?

– The most popular concepts in western and southern Slavic memory studies: comparing the cases of individual countries, in which case studies they are used and why.

**Form of the conference:** as our aim is a lively and interesting discussion on proposed topics, chosen speakers will be asked to send in their speeches before the conference, so that the other panel members can read them and prepare for the discussion. The conference will be held in the form of panel discussions, without the traditional presentation of papers. In addition, we encourage you to submit posters for the posters block. The poster speech should last no longer than 3 minutes.

**Conference languages:** English and Polish

Selected papers will be published in a monograph. We reserve the right to select supplied applications. Please send abstracts (no longer than 300 words) in English or in English and Polish to the address: [konferencja.slawistyka@gmail.com](mailto:konferencja.slawistyka@gmail.com). The deadline is August 30, 2015.

There is no conference fee.