



Cambridge Heritage Research Centre

The Past Can't Heal Us: The Dangers of Mandating Memory in the Name of Human Rights

In this talk Dr Lea David will investigate, from a critical point of view, the relationship between human rights and memory, while bringing into question one of the most basic, deeply embedded presumptions in human rights and transitional justice: that 'proper' memorialization is a crucial step in establishing moral responsibility for past atrocities and, consequently, human rights values in conflict and post-conflict settings. I will address the rise of the human rights memorialization agenda, termed 'Moral Remembrance', and explore what happens in local communities once this agenda becomes implemented on the ground. Based on evidence from the Western Balkans and Israel/Palestine, the main argument I pose is that the human rights memorialization agenda, once transformed into policy-oriented memorialization efforts, creates false premises that, for the reasons elaborated in the lecture, in the long run, do not lead to a better appreciation of human rights but often transform into an oppressive force that only serves to strengthen divisions and leads to new forms of social inequalities .

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Thursday 19 November, 1pm

To receive a link to this event please register at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2393awd>

