

## Collective Memories and Society Integration Issues in Context of Inter-generation Dialogue

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**Introduction.** The paper presented during the conference deals with the issue of society integration politics in Latvia, analyzing the question of collective memories becoming a tool of communication between generations on vital themes of Latvian memory politics, such as the issue of 1940 Soviet occupation, the so-called “Soviet times” (1945–1991) and the current activities of various political actors concerning minority rights in Latvia.

**Aim.** The major aim of the paper presented is to reflect critically on the possibility of closing the gap between various ethnic groups using the methodology of collective memory as part of inter-ethnic dialogue between youth groups of various ethnic origins.

**Material and methods.** The paper reflects critically on the content of political discourse on integration politics in Latvian media, especially in cyber space. The paper is based on long-lasting media discourse analysis in Latvia, concerning integration politics and interethnic dialogue. Materials of Latvian and Russian language internet sites (situated in Latvia) in the period of 2010–2013 will be used as sources for the theses of the presentation.

**Results and conclusion.** The major stumbling block of the integration politics until recently has been unsuccessful politics of the past – various controversies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have not been treated as a broader dialogue concept, but rather misused by antagonistic political powers to create the negative other of the political rivals. The result is two decades of a weak and unsuccessful dialogue on the Latvian past. New technical tools, such as internet websites, chats or other social networks are used to come back to the past of one’s own ethnic memories which in return produce meanings, explain social division and even judicial differences between citizens and non-citizens. Technical tools may vary, but these “memory devices” do not create generation gaps when ethnicity is concerned. On the contrary, collective memory can overcome obstacles created on its way by history as science – instead political and media discourses provide far more appealing versions for believing, not analysing one’s ethnic identity of which past is an integral part.