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| **Introducing cosmopolitan memory** | **C:\Users\Nitin Parmar\Desktop\uob-logo-black-transparent.tif** |

**In the second week of this course, Professor Wulf Kansteiner began by introducing the concept of cosmopolitan memory and explaining its characteristics. The remaining video steps this week will look at examples of cosmopolitan memory in museum exhibits and mass grave exhumations. You will have the opportunity to review what you have learnt in a quiz and join the debate, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of this memory model.**

The [philosophy of cosmopolitanism](https://www.britannica.com/topic/cosmopolitanism-philosophy) dates to the Ancient Greeks, but as a political and ideological stance it is closely linked to globalisation which emerged strongly after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. This form of cosmopolitanism is defined as:

*‘A global politics that firstly, projects a sociality of common political engagement among all human beings across the globe, and, secondly, suggests that this sociality should be either ethically or organisationally privileged over other forms of sociality’* ([James](https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/globalization-and-politics/book228474), 2014:x).

Cosmopolitanism is linked to two important phenomena:

1. The **transnational memory of the Holocaust**, which emerged in the 1970s, gained wide public recognition through mass media. For example, the famous television series *Holocaust* in 1978, a four-part TV drama created in the United States was shown world-wide. Memory studies researchers consider this mini-series as a watershed production, which not only significantly increased public awareness, but also deeply influenced (trans)national memorialisation of the Holocaust by focusing on the suffering of its victims.
2. The desire to **come to terms** with the violent past of the twentieth century, influenced by a **human rights** agenda which also emerged in the 1970s, but which then became particularly prominent after the end of the Cold War.

Both phenomena contributed to a specific **attitude towards victimhood** which characterises cosmopolitan memory. Narratives of the past which are influenced by this approach focus strongly on the **suffering of the victim**, whilst **erasing** the traditional image of the **hero**, and the **perpetrator**. Good and evil are considered to be **abstract categories**, with human rights and democracy seen as good, and totalitarianism as evil.

Whereas antagonistic memory promotes the pre-eminence of the nation state, cosmopolitan memory believes that nation states are **interconnected** and stresses that **divisions between nations are being broken down.** This memory mode easily fits with supranational organisations like the **European Union.** It emphasises positive, but abstract, notions of European-ness over nationalist sentiments.

Unlike antagonistic memory, cosmopolitan memory is **reflexive and dialogic**, it promotes an awareness that our memories are constructed. It considers dialogue as a **means of achieving reconciliation**, but it does not incorporate the perspective of the perpetrator. Unlike antagonistic memory, emotions and passions are restricted to **compassion** for the suffering of the victims.