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**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MEMORY  
FOR A SOCIETY?**

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**WHO CREATES HISTORY?**

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**IS RECONCILIATION POSSIBLE?**



"Speaking to One Another – Personal Memories of the Past in Armenia and Turkey", Exhibition view Paris 2012, venue: La Péniche ANAKO

# DON'T JUST TALK – SPEAK TO ONE ANOTHER. DON'T JUST LOOK – SEE.

Ida Ehre (German-Austrian director, actress, and theater manager; 1900–1989)



Exhibition view Nicosia, Cyprus, 2012

Paul Watzlawick, the well-known Austrian communications theorist, sociologist, and philosopher, said that you cannot not communicate, since all communication (not only speech) is behavior, and, as you cannot not behave, you cannot not communicate. In this sense, the conflict between Turkey and Armenia, between the Turkish and the Armenian people has been dominated by behavior for the past 98 years. However, listening to each other, initiating a dialog has, in fact, not happened. Like a mantra, both sides repeat their respective national narratives or remain silent. In this context, the project "Speaking to One Another" (the first phase of which was most fittingly entitled "Learning to Listen") by the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association (dvv international) and its local partners attempted to create spaces for communication and dialog. The four-year project pursued this approach on various different levels, with a multitude of methods and for different target groups.

One of these spaces was the exhibition space: The idea was to use material from a previously published book entitled "Speaking to One Another. Whom to forgive? What to forgive?" for a traveling exhibition. The book is mainly based on interviews with residents of Eastern Anatolia and present-day Armenia. The stories collected in this volume deal with the perspective on the respective other, with the orally transmitted narratives about their coexistence before the genocide of 1915, with present-day Armenia and everyday life in Turkey, with suffering, guilt, and forgiveness. Whereas in an earlier phase of the project a precursor of the subsequent exhibition had traveled to various cities in Armenia and Turkey, the presentation in the context of which this little catalog is published focused on the places of the Armenian and the Turkish diaspora: Tbilisi, Batumi, Nicosia, Berlin, and Paris. Apart from wall panels with images and texts, as well as video displays, the exhibition featured a symbolic round table. At this table, the visitors were asked to take a stand by answering three questions, which were presented on paper fixed to clipboards:

What is the role of memory for a society? Who creates history? Is reconciliation possible?

With threads of different length, the visitors then hung their answers up in the exhibition space for everybody to read. With each place the exhibition was shown at, new answers were added, completing the suspended archive. In Paris, at the end of the tour, several hundreds of answers to the same three questions had been accumulated; answers in ten different languages.

The initial project outline had only included the presentation of the "answer sheet archive" to the visitors of the exhibition—and then it was supposed to disappear into nowhere like the rest of the show. It was only after dismantling the last exhibition in Paris, while packing up and sifting through the remaining material, that we, the exhibition organizers, realized the treasure that lay before us: answers from people from different countries, different cultural and religious backgrounds, of different ages, of different political opinions and with different native languages, answers to the ever-same questions so important for our living together in Europe.

Matthias Klingenberg, June 2013

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# **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MEMORY FOR A SOCIETY?**

## Какую роль играет память для общества?

Память народа — хранить  
в себе то, что произошло  
первая война, которую за всю историю  
своего развития. Именно братская  
война Армян с нами таких  
сражений как 1915 и больше  
не было.



Answer in Russian from a visitor in Georgia

Collective memory includes everything what the nation went through during the history of its development. I wish that our fellow Armenians never had to go through such horrible things as the events of 1915 again.

## What is the role of memory for a society?

Memory is a phenomenon  
that bridges the past  
to the present and then  
to the future. Without  
it, achievements in the past  
cannot be translated into  
the future and coming gene-  
rations will be void of their  
moral obligations & commitments

Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

Memory is a phenomenon that bridges the past to the present and than to the future. Without it, achievements in the past cannot be translated into the future and coming generations will be void of their moral obligations and commitments.

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What is the  
role of memory  
for a society?  
it's the reflection to  
future.

It continuously  
challenges &  
negotiates  
identities

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Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

It reflects the future. It continuously challenges and negotiates identities.

Welche  
Rolle spielt  
Erinnerung  
für eine  
Gesellschaft?

// Biranî bingeha Cîvarkê ne !!? //  
Dapîra min ya Qurbana Komkuji  
bi kurdeke zelal ew Biranî jî  
min re vedigotin, jî ber wê  
min bi kurdi nivîsî.

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Answer in Kurdish from a visitor in Berlin

"Remembering shows a society's past!!?" My grandmother was a beautiful Kurdish woman. She was a victim of the genocide. She used to tell me about the past. That's why I wrote in Kurdish in this book.

Welche  
Rolle spielt  
Erinnerung  
für eine  
Gesellschaft?

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Bîranîn ji bo peşerojê  
ye. Bê bîranîn û "oral history"  
lihev hatinek wê hev,  
parkirin û fêmkirina Êsê  
nabe.  
Bîranîn ji zarok û nifşên  
nû ye. Ji bo Carek dî n  
qir kirin û inkarkirin ne be.

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Answer in Kurdish from a visitor in Berlin

Remembering is confronting the past. Without remembering and telling (oral history), it won't be possible to make peace and to share and understand the pain. Remembrance means new children, new generations as well. I wish there would be no massacres and denials anymore.

Welche  
Rolle spielt  
Erinnerung  
für eine  
Gesellschaft?

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Eine Wichtigkeit: jeder kann  
sich so mit seinen Vorfahren  
und deren Erfahrungen auseinandersetzen –  
Anschauen, verstehen, sie zu  
verstehen u. vielleicht verstehen,  
etwas zu verändern.  
Vielleicht wird es dadurch, wer es kann,  
wird sehr.

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Answer in German from a visitor in Berlin

An important one: it enables people to deal with their ancestors and their experiences, to try to understand them and perhaps to try to change something. Perhaps it serves to understand who I am, where I stand.

What is the  
role of memory  
for a society?

Sinnstiftung, Identifi-  
kation, Vergemein-  
schaftung, Rechtfertigung,  
Handlungseinschränkung,  
Legitimation, Selbst-  
bewußtsein, Mahnung,  
...

Answer in German from a visitor in Paris

Creation of meaning, identification, communalization, justifica-  
tion, restriction of the capacity to act, legitimation, self-confi-  
dence, reminder...

Welche  
Rolle spielt  
Erinnerung  
für eine  
Gesellschaft?

die Möglichkeit, etwas zu be-  
greifen, zu verstehen und  
Lehren daraus zu ziehen.  
Man könnte alles besser  
machen, von Generation zu  
Generation! Was für eine  
wundervolle Vorstellung!

Answer in German from a visitor in Berlin

The possibility to comprehend something, to understand and  
to learn from it. One could do everything better, generation by  
generation! What a wonderful idea!

What is the  
role of memory  
for a society?

Memory is the base  
of the common identity.  
And the common  
identity is a  
necessity for a  
healthy future

Answer in English from a visitor in Paris

Memory is the base of a common identity. And a common identity is a necessity for a healthy future.

What is the  
role of memory  
for a society?

Memory must be a seed of  
life and not a painful grave.  
How to make life with the me-  
mory of the genocide?  
I don't know. But you have  
no choice. If not,  
Talaat could win. But he can't win!

Answer in English from a visitor in Paris

Memory must be a seed of life and not a painful grave. How to make life with the memory of the genocide? I don't know. But you have no choice. If not, Talaat could win. But he can't win!

What is the  
role of memory  
for a society?

...et quel est le  
Rôle de l'Incon-  
scient collectif face  
au déni ?  
...de crime génocidaire !

Answer in English from a visitor in Paris

...and what is the role of the collective unconscious in the face  
of denial? ...of genocidal crime!

Quel est le rôle  
de la mémoire dans  
une société ?

La mémoire façonne  
l'Histoire de l'Humanité  
et lui permet d'évoluer.  
C'est pourquoi, tenter de  
l'étouffer, c'est vouloir  
régner en tyran, en  
empêchant son peuple de  
penser... c'est rétrograder,  
tricher, voler leur âme.

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

Memory shapes the history of humanity and allows it to grow.  
That's why trying to smother it means tyrannizing, means  
preventing people from thinking. It means regressing, cheating,  
stealing their souls.

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Bir toplum  
için hafızanın  
rolü nedir?

Keşke hepimiz bir  
noktada Alzheimer  
olsak.

Answer in Turkish from a visitor in Nicosia

If only we could all get Alzheimer's at some point.

Какую роль  
играет память  
для общества?

Нет будущего без  
прошлого, но  
нельзя смотреть  
всё время назад!

Answer in Russian from a visitor in Georgia

There is no future without the past, but we shouldn't look back  
all the time!

# როგორია მეხსიერების როლი სამოგადოებაში?

ძალიან დიდი ☺  
ყოველთვის მესიხება, ეხიი მხივ,  
ეფექტად სხვაგვარად ყოველთვის  
გმოცდივას, ხოლო, გოგონა მხივ,  
მანსხივად სხვაგვარად მომავალს,  
ძალიან მისთვის სამსახივ გეგმავ.

Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

Very huge: on the one hand, collective memory is based on collective experience, on the other hand, it defines the future of a society as it is its basis.

Ποιος είναι  
ο ρόλος της  
μνήμης σε μια  
κοινωνία; **ΚΑΝΕΝΑΣ**  
**ΠΛΑΙΣΙΟΝΕΙ &**  
**ΕΠΙΡΕΑΖΕΙ ΤΟ ΠΑΡΩΝ**  
**& ΤΟ ΜΕΛΩΝ.**  
**- ΘΕΤΙΚΑ Η ΑΡΝΗΤΙΚΑ**  
**ΕΞΑΡΤΑΤΑΙ ΑΠΟ**  
**ΤΟΤΕ ΖΩΝΤΕΣ**

Two Answers in Greek from visitors in Nicosia

First answer: None

Second answer: It frames and affects the present and the future.  
– Positively or negatively it depends on the living (those who are alive).

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Ποιος είναι  
ο ρόλος της  
μνήμης σε μια  
κοινωνία;

To help us not to  
forget the mistakes of  
the past, and not to  
repeat them

Psalti  
21/5/2012

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Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

To help us not to forget the mistakes of the past, and not to repeat them.

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# WHO CREATES HISTORY?

# Tarihi kim

yaratır?

Yaşanmışlıklar - ama bu resmi  
tarihe geçince sansüre  
uğruyor. O yüzden sözlü  
tarih önemli. Yaşanmışlıkları  
birinci ağızdan anlatıyor.  
İşte tarih bu...

Answer in Turkish from a visitor in Nicosia

Experiences. But these are censored when it comes to official history. That's why oral history matters. It narrates experiences with the words of the persons who made them. That's history...

# Tarihi kim yaratır?

Biz insanlar

Tarihi, insanların süreç içinde  
yapıp-etmeleri - EYLEMLERİ -  
düşünceleri - duyguları ve duyguları  
yaratmakta büyük rol oynar!...

Orhan

Answer in Turkish from a visitor in Berlin

We, the people. Actions, thoughts and feelings of the people in the process play an important role in creating history.

ვინ ქმნის  
ისტორიას?

ის, ვინც დაჯიშა  
5/3 ს ნანახი.

Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

Those who have seen it with their own eyes.

Who creates  
history?

US PEOPLE.  
The GOOD  
The BAD  
+ The UGLY.

Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

Us people. The Good. The Bad. The Ugly.

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Who creates  
history?

historie  
tworzy my my<sup>o</sup>

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Answer in Polish from a visitor in Nicosia

We are creating history.

Qui crée l'histoire ?



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Answer from a visitor in Paris

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Who creates  
history?

UNFORTUNATELY,  
THOSE WHO  
HOLD THE POWER.

CPG

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Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

Unfortunately, those who hold the power.

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Who creates history?

ما  
نسنا  
امشان  
من  
تو  
او

همه با هم

پاریس  
۲۵ نوامبر ۲۰۱۲

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Answer in Persian from a visitor in Paris

I, you, he/she, we, you, they... Anytime. Paris, 28 November 2012

Who creates history?

Shido Knopp,  
leider!

Answer in German from a visitor in Paris

Guido Knopp, unfortunately!

Wer schreibt  
Geschichte?

Wir alle schreiben Geschichte,  
indem wir Stellung nehmen,  
Zivilcourage zeigen, indem wir  
bewusst Dinge tun oder  
Dinge nicht tun

Answer in German from a visitor in Berlin

We all write history when we take a stand, demonstrate civic  
courage by deliberately taking action or choosing to be inactive.

Qui crée l'histoire ?

Ce sont les  
témoins qui  
créent  
l'histoire !

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

Witnesses are those who create history!

Who creates  
history?

HISTORY IS NOT WRITTEN  
BY THE VANQUISHED  
OR THE DAMNED.

"LEAVING BEIRUT"  
ROGER WATERS

Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

"History is not written by the vanquished or the damned." Leaving  
Beirut, Roger Waters

24/11/12  
 Ո՞վ է ստեղծում  
պատմությունը:



Answer in Armenian from a visitor in Paris

Great grandfather – grandfather – children (the young generation)

Кто создает  
 историю?

Историю впервые  
 создал Ероdotос!

от кешалинской  
 школы!

*[Signature]*

1.12.2011

*[Signature]*

Answer in Russian from a visitor in Georgia

History was first created by Herodot!  
 From Keshalinsk school

## Qui crée l'histoire ?

Malheureusement et souvent, l'histoire se crée par la violence, les guerres et les batailles de pouvoir !

Marx disait, en grand utopiste, que l'HISTOIRE s'arrêtera lorsqu'il n'y aura plus de guerre, ni toute autre violence, lorsque les Hommes seront égaux partout, qu'il y aura une réelle démocratie et que le monde sera pacifique !

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

Unfortunately, history is often created by violence, wars, and battles for power. As a great utopian, Marx said that history will stop when there is no war anymore or any other form of violence, when men are equal in all respects, when there is real democracy and when the world is peaceful!

Ո՞վ է ստեղծում  
պատմությունը:



Answer from a visitor in Paris

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# **IS RECONCILIATION POSSIBLE?**

Արդեօք հաշտեցումը  
հնարավոր է:

[illegible]

Answer in Armenian from a visitor in Paris

I heartily wish the hatred between two nations would disappear. Let's not search for an enemy, because we won't find one, it's nameless; we will only find political powers. The new generation is not in charge; let's not create an enemy from the new generation. If we consider ourselves meritorious human beings,

we should consider Turks meritorious human beings too, and only then, there will be peace.

[illegible]

| 45

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Είναι εφικτή  
η συμφιλίωση;

ΝΑΙ! ΣΤΑ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΟ  
μιας συντονισμένης προσπάθειας  
που να αφορά πολιτική ηγεσία - ακα-  
δημαϊκή κοινότητα και κοινωνία  
των πολιτών.

η

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Answer in Greek from a visitor in Nicosia

Yes! Within the scope of an organized effort that concerns political leadership, academic and civil society.

Uzlaşmak  
mümkün  
müdür?

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Kurtlar olmasa  
koyunlar çok iyi  
ulaşır aralarında.

İnsaları insanlık dışı  
yapan küresel  
emperyalizmin  
kendisidir.

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Answer in Turkish from a visitor in Berlin

If there were no wolves, the sheep would be getting along very well. It is global imperialism itself that makes humans inhumane.

## Is reconciliation possible?

*Nachdem die Quelle des Konflikts erkannt u. ernannt wurde.*

*Dann erst kann an eine Annäherung in kleinen Schritten gedacht werden.*

Answer in German from a visitor in Berlin

When the source of conflict has been identified and named. Only then, reconciliation in small steps can be considered.

## Ist Versöhnung möglich?

*Versöhnungsprozesse, lehrt uns die Fachwelt, müssen bei der Wahrheit ansetzen.*

Answer in German from a visitor in Berlin

According to experts, processes of reconciliation have to start with the truth.

Is reconciliation  
possible?

**IF THERE IS NO  
REDEMPTION -  
THEN WE ARE  
DOOMED**

**DT.**

Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

If there is no redemption—then we are doomed.

~~19/May/12.~~

Is reconciliation  
possible?

Everything is  
possible. People's  
power is unique  
but the people  
LOST MOMENTUM  
& DIRECTION..... michael

Answer in English from a visitor in Nicosia

Everything is possible. People's power is unique, but the people  
lost momentum and direction...

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Is reconciliation  
possible?

Yes!

Oldukna inammok isleto.

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Answer in English and Turkish from a visitor in Nicosia

Yes! I want to believe that it is.

შესაძლებელია  
შერიგება?

შეიშვენიერებოდა, რომ  
შერიგება.

„ძეცვეთ, ხოშ  
ძოგეცვოთ!“

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Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

"Forgive and you will be forgiven!"

# შესაძლებელია შერიგება?

გაჩნია ახოტყემა და სიფუთია,  
ხო აქმა უნდა უნდა შევძლო დაგმოვა  
თუმცა ასათქმა ახ უნდა დავწყო  
შენი პრინციპები.

Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

That depends on the situation and the problems. Of course, we must be able to give ground, but we should not forget our principles.

# შესაძლებელია შერიგება?

კაცობრიობის შექმნის დღიდან ადამიანი  
ბრძოლობს, ერთერთი ბრძოლის მიზეზია არსებობა  
ანუ ბრძოლა არსებობისთვის. ქვის ხანიდან მოყო-  
ლებული როდესაც ადამიანმა მოიპოვა საკვები და  
გვერდში სხვა მშვირბა შენიშნა შეესადა ნაერბი,  
გთავაზა ქვა თავში და წაარტვა. ამის შემდეგ ყველას  
გაჩნია თავდაცვის ინსტიქტი რომელიც ქმნის  
„ცივილიზაციას“ წარმეურის მუხუც და მოხმარებას  
დაუიქრება უნდა თორემ სხვასაც შეეძლო იგივეს გაკე-  
თება რაჟ თუთონ და რაღათქმაუნდა შერიგებას  
მოთხოვს აუცილებლობა მაგრამ სანამ ისტორია  
არსებობს ორ მეომარ მხარეს ყოველთვის ეყოლება  
თავის მომხრეები და დღემდეც გაქცეო სახეზეა.  
Никогда к лицу лица не подходит, большое  
бадётся на расстояние. Есенин.  
ზოზა

Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

Since the beginning of human history, people have been fighting for survival. Everyone has an instinct of self-protection that creates "civilization". One has to preserve and handle what has been taken from others in a reasonable way, otherwise someone else can do the same to you. Reconciliation is necessary, of

course, but there will always be supporters of the two fighting parties. When face to face we cannot see the face. Large things can only be seen at a distance. Esenin

# შესაძლებელია შერიგება?

შვილები მშობლებს სჯიან  
მასში თუ სხვებში. მომავალი  
ნათელი და გულმოდგინე  
დაიწყება ახალი საზოგადოება.  
შვილები, მომავალი უნდა იყოს  
მშვენიერი.

Answer in Georgian from a visitor in Georgia

Children should not be responsible for the behavior of their parents. The future should be bright and civilized. Reconciliation is a precondition for future relationships.

# La réconciliation est-elle possible ?

Non, car au fait on garde toujours un peu de  
haine au fond de nous.

Vincent

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

No, because we always keep a bit of hate inside us.

## La réconciliation est-elle possible ?

Reconciliation ?

Mais quelle réconciliation ?

Je ne sais pas la définition exacte  
de ce mot. ce que je sais c'est  
que les deux parties reconnaissent  
leurs fautes, etc....

Eh tout cas, regardes bien,  
et vous verrez que cette  
~~sorte de~~ réconciliation  
est contre-nature pour tous,  
aussi bien pour les Arméniens que  
pour les Turcs. Les peuples

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

Reconciliation?

But which reconciliation? I don't know the exact definition of this word. What I do know is that both parties recognize their faults, etc...

In any case, look carefully and you will see that this reconciliation is against nature for everyone, for both the Armenians

and the Turks. People need peace, but, above all, they aspire to justice and fairness. And this reconciliation does not seem to correspond with justice to me. It is a pity.

## La réconciliation est-elle possible ?

Si Nous Restons Conditionner à Croire  
que Nous Sommes né, Vivons et Mourrons  
Chacun dans des "Civilisations";  
Non la Réconciliation n'est pas  
possible.

Mais, si Nous ~~sont~~ Confirmons l'Égalité  
de Chaque Être, et Allons au-delà de  
Cela; Que de l'Échec né toujours une  
Meilleure Relation, une Meilleure Création,  
Oui, mais Nous évoquerons même pas  
le terme de "Réconciliation", mais  
plutôt de "Besoin".

S. T.

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

If we remain conditioned to believe that we are born, that we live and that we all will die in "civilizations"—no, reconciliation is not possible.

But if we acknowledge the equality of every human being and go beyond it (and) that from failure a better relationship is borne, a

better creation, [then], yes; but we would not even evoke the term "reconciliation" but rather the term "need".

## La réconciliation est-elle possible ?

On ne peut pas faire  
l'économie de la reconnaissance  
du génocide des Arméniens  
par la Turquie -

On ne peut pas faire l'économie  
des réparations dues au peuple  
arménien -

Alors oui... la réconciliation

L.D.

15.11.2012

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

We cannot do without the recognition of the Armenian genocide  
by Turkey.

We cannot do without the reparation due to the Armenian people.

So, yes... reconciliation.

## La réconciliation est-elle possible ?

NON

Oui, si les descendants  
des bourreaux d'hier  
acceptent d'évaluer  
en lâchant leur stupide  
obstination... car la  
Mémoire, elle, sera tjrs là  
pour leur "rafraîchir" leurs  
mensonges... ~~HONNETETE~~ est  
le seul moteur....

Answers in French from visitors in Paris

NO. Yes, if the descendants of yesterday's executioners agree to  
move on by letting their stupid obstinacy go... Because memory  
will always be present to "refresh" their lies... Honesty is the only  
driving force.

Is reconciliation possible?

ichallah mais ça  
va être compliqué

Laine

Answer in French from a visitor in Paris

Inshallah, but it will be complicated.

Ist Versöhnung  
möglich?

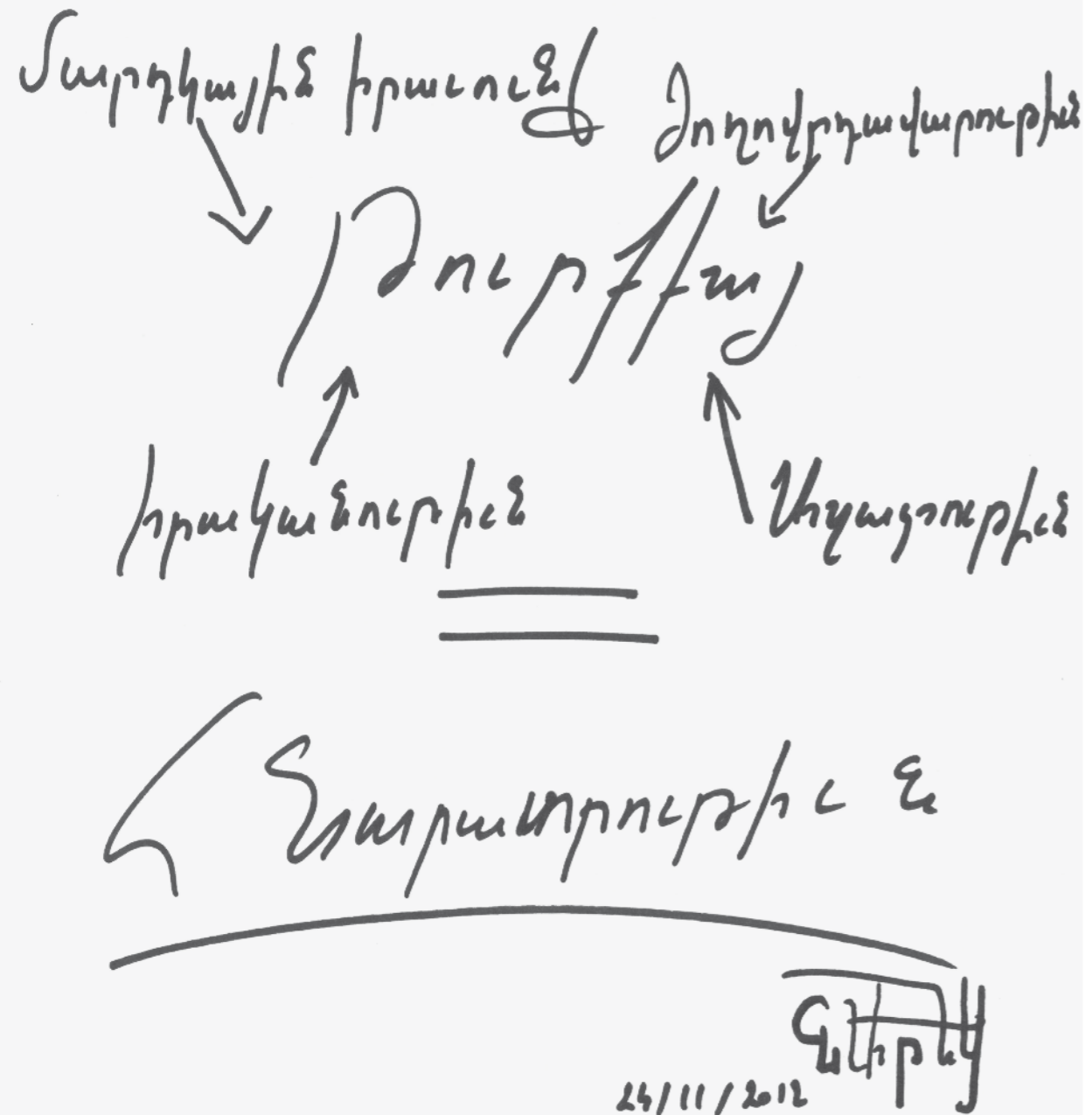
ինչ երկխոսություն է նախ քան  
զենք թռագը, եթե գերմաներեն  
իր քույրը հեռախոսը չի ընկալում,  
95 տարեկան առեկտ առաջ պետք է  
ընկեր ընդունել զննարարությունը:  
Քանի որ պետք է պատահե՞լ, որ  
Թուրքիան զարգանա, Բաղդադը և  
Երևանը իր պայմաններին:  
Եթե գերմաներեն պատրաստ է  
դրան հասնելու ինչ պետք է պատահե՞լ  
թուրքերից: Ես իմ Գերմանիան իմ  
տան աշխարհից հեռացրի, յեղոյ  
նաև աշխարհից չեմ հեռացրի:

Answer in Armenian from a visitor in Berlin

What kind of dialog do you mean. If Germany, with all its possibilities, still hasn't recognized the Armenian Genocide after more than 95 years. How many centuries should we wait for Turkey to develop, to become more civilized and to accept its own history. If Germany isn't ready to recognize it, what should we expect

from the Turks. First of all, Germany should recognize it, and only then initiate any kind of reconciliation.

# Արդեօք հաշտեցումը հնարաւոր է:



Answer in Armenian from a visitor in Paris

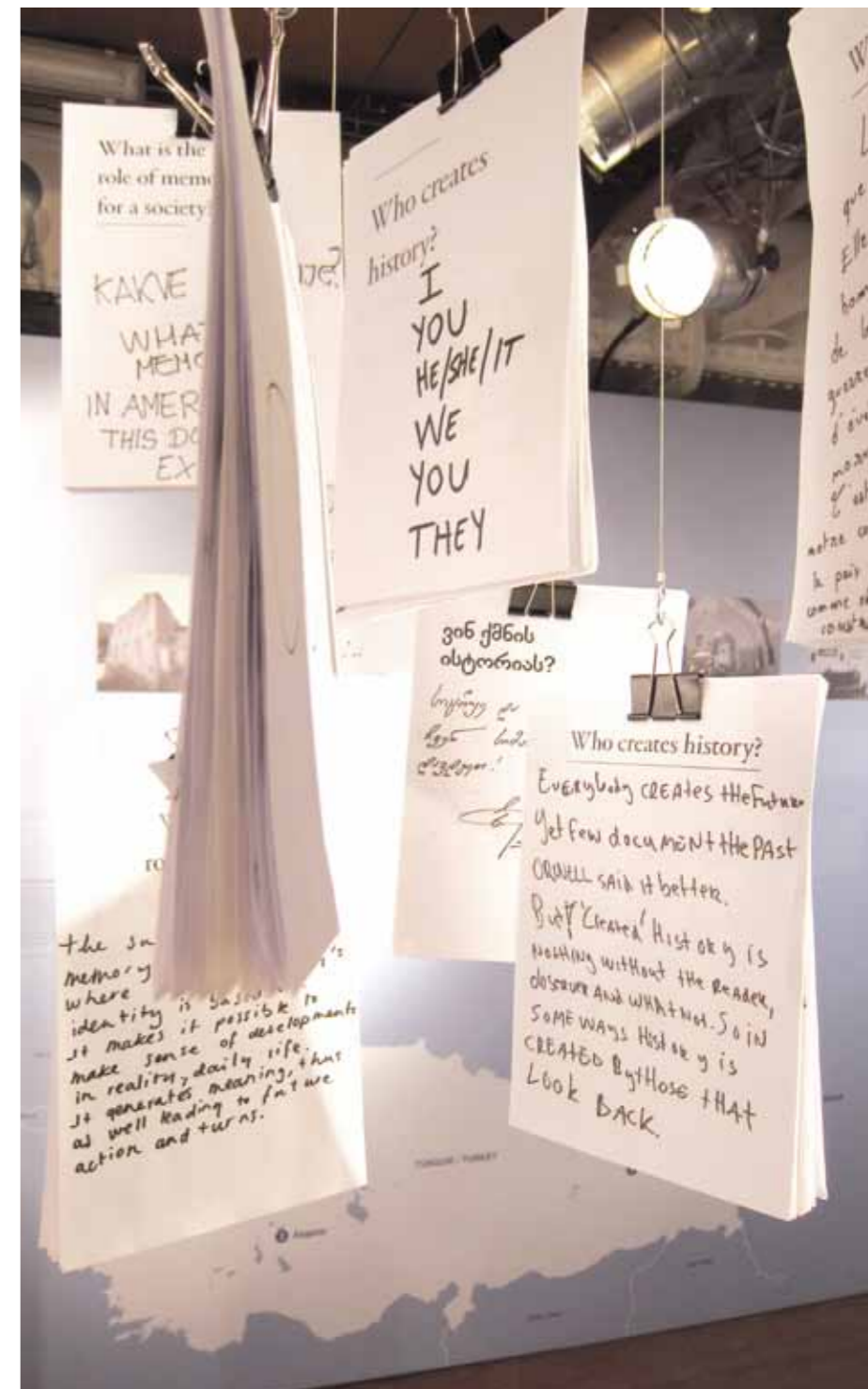
Human Rights    Democracy  
                     Turkey  
 Reality        Freedom  
 =  
 POSSIBILITY

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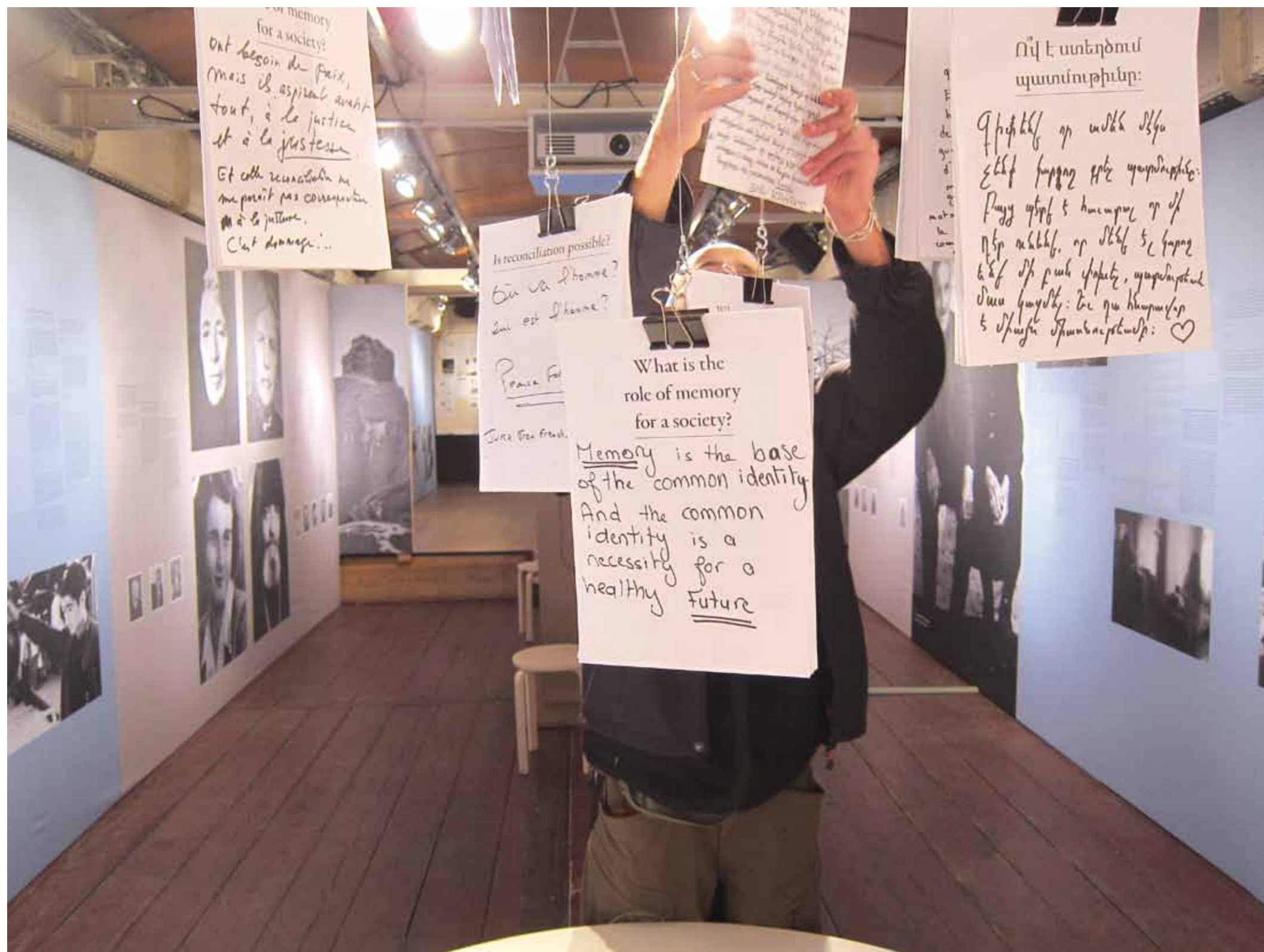
## EXHIBITION VIEWS



Visitor in Tbilisi, Georgia, 2011



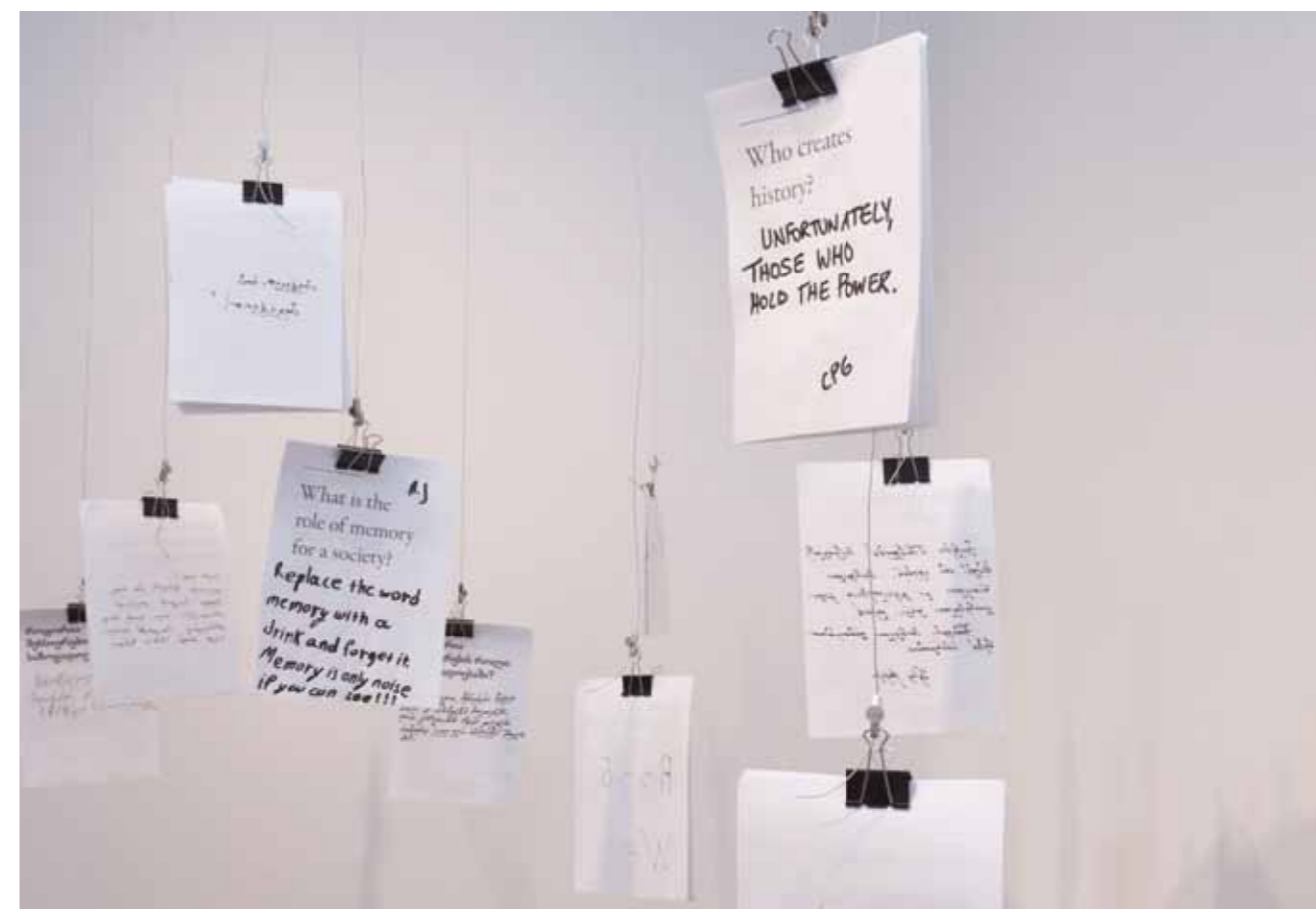
Exhibition view Paris, France, 2012



Exhibition view Paris, France, 2012



Exhibition views Berlin, Germany, 2012





Visitor in Nicosia, Cyprus, 2012

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# IMPRINT

TITLE  
What is the role of memory for a society?  
Who creates history?  
Is reconciliation possible?

EDITORS  
Matthias Klingenberg  
Carmen Beckenbach

TEXTS  
Visitors of the traveling exhibition "Speaking to One Another"  
in Tbilisi, Batumi, Nicosia, Berlin, Paris, 2011–2012

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