

To Remember or Dismember? The Jews in Present Lithuanian Memory

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prowadzenie spotkania

Paweł Bukowiec i Beata Kalęba (obydwoje WP UJ)

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People who have lost their sensitivity temporarily or for a long time are no demons. They simply remove from their sensitivity zone certain people or entire groups. This theory sheds much light on the Holocaust and its traumatized, sometimes even twisted memory, which remains a sinister aspect of Lithuanian memory politics. The Jews appear there as unimportant things, inconvenient details, circumstances and academic footnotes pushed by historians. They are hindrances. Because of them, “we” are unable to create our gallery of heroes and our heroic narrative as we would like. All that remains is for us to ask ourselves whether all this supposed patriotic pragmatism is sensible. It is not serving the past and certainly not honoring the memory of the dead, but simply allowing for political mudslinging and sending the “right” message to voters. If so, that means we are choosing an immoral version of patriotism which no longer includes ethics, truth or conscience.

Leonidas Donskis, Ph.D., is a philosopher, political theorist, historian of ideas, social analyst, and political commentator. As a public figure in Lithuania, he acted as a defender of human rights and civil liberties. From 2009 to 2014 he acted as a Lithuanian Member of the European Parliament. He is the Professor of Political Science at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania. His main scholarly interests lie in philosophy of history, philosophy of culture, philosophy of literature, philosophy of the social sciences, civilization theory, political theory, history of ideas, and studies in Central and East European thought. Chosen publications: *Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity* (with Zygmunt Bauman) (2013); *Poszukiwanie optymizmu w epoce pesymizmu. Europa Wschodnia – przeczucia i prognozy* (with Tomas Venclova) (2015).