

LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO



Consulate General
of the Republic of Poland
in Chicago

JAN KARSKI 2014 CONFERENCE at LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

presented by

The Interdisciplinary Polish Studies Program and The Jan Karski Educational Foundation

The Jan Karski 2014 Conference centers on the legacy of Jan Karski, concentrating on two major themes from his life that touch our world today: **Memory and Responsibility**.

Memory is a potent element of human reality. There is no single memory, neither at the personal, societal, national nor international level. Memories, like policies, are often in conflict with each other.

Every human being and family, every social group and nation, holds dear its own values and memories of the past. For states and political parties those memories become the foundation of policies and ideologies. This can work for the common good, as an instrument of social cohesion and mobilization for action, or as history shows all too often, as a propagandistic strategy, used and misused against the Other, eventually leading to violence.

Jan Karski was a bearer of the memory of what he witnessed and of his failed mission to inform the world about the Holocaust taking place in German occupied Poland, and to persuade the Allies to take action to stop it. Until his last breath he lived in deep despair because he felt responsible. This sense of responsibility is the essence of Jan Karski's legacy and the questions that he has left the world to ponder.

Since World War II, various nations and religious groups have dealt in diverse ways with their memories of those terrible events. While some have tried to avoid such debate all together, Jews and Christians of different denominations, West and East Europeans, have struggled with and drawn diverse conclusions from this event, asking in anguish over and over again:

- Where was/is God in Auschwitz, Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur and other places of genocide? What is the role of faith and religious institutions in light of this?
- Did they/we do enough in the face of such a calamity or did they/we divert our attention elsewhere?
- What was/is the responsibility of a witness?
- What were the political considerations at the time in occupied Europe, in the UK, in the U.S., in China?
- What conclusions should be drawn from the Holocaust and from later instances of state sponsored violence and oppression?
- Does Jan Karski's legacy of openness, tolerance and advocacy for the Other live in the democratic world, particularly Poland, today?
- How do we conduct 'humanitarian intervention' and apply the ICISS norm of 'The Responsibility to Protect' today?

Each new generation needs to provide its own answers.

These are the reasons we propose to focus on the themes of Memory and Responsibility and suggest holding a two-day conference at the Loyola University for this purpose.

PROGRAM – PRELIMINARY DRAFT

DAY 1 – Friday, September 19, 2014

- 09.00 – 09.15 WELCOME SPEECHES by top representatives of the University and Jan Karski Educational Foundation
- 09.15 – 10:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY A VIP Followed by Q&A
- 10:00 – 11.30 PANEL 1: JAN KARSKI AND HIS LEGACY
The man and his unfinished mission
- 11.30 – 12.00 Coffee break
- 12:00 – 13.30 PANEL 2: THE WAR AND POLITICS – THE ALLIES AND THE HOLOCAUST
“We have to win the war first...”
- 13.30 – 14.30 Buffet Lunch
- 14.30 – 16.00 PANEL 3: Responsibility to Protect
- 16.00 – 16.15 Break
- 16.15 – 18.00 PANEL 4: CHRISTIANITY AND THE HOLOCAUST
- PANEL 2A: INTERNATIONAL LAW ON GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING AND SOVEREIGNTY
- PANEL 3A: INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION AND HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS
- PANEL 4A: ROLE OF HISTORY, MEMORY AND FUNDAMENTALIST RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN GENOCIDE, ETHNIC CLEANSING AND OPPRESSION

DAY 2 – Saturday, September 20, 2014

- 09.00 – 10.30 PANEL 5: THE SHADOW OF THE WWII EXPERIENCE – WESTERN EUROPE AND MEMORY
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 – 13.00 PANEL 6: THE SHADOW OF THE EXPERIENCE OF WWII – EAST CENTRAL EUROPE AND MEMORY: ANTI-SEMITISM, WARTIME ATTITUDES, COMPETING MEMORIES, THE COMMUNIST PERIOD AND POST-1989 CHANGES
- 13.00 – 14.00 Buffet Lunch
- 14.00 – 15.30 PANEL 7: HOW WAS AMERICA TOUCHED BY THE HOLOCAUST? CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE HOLOCAUST AND THE JEWS AFTER 1945
- 15.30 – 15.45 Coffee break
- 15.45 – 17.30 PANEL 8: MEMORY AND RESPONSIBILITY HOW TO RE-THINK THE UNTHINKABLE? CHANGING FUNCTIONS OF MEMORY IN PUBLIC LIFE AFTER WWII.
- 20.00 - 22.00 CONCERT OF 1930's and 1940'S MUSIC – SONGS, CABARET, and JAZZ
- PANEL 5A: MEMORY OF OTHER 20TH CENTURY GENOCIDES
- PANEL 6A: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN LITERATURE
- 13.30 -15.30 PANEL 7A: WWII IN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN CINEMATOGRAPHY
- 15.45 – 18.00 PANEL 8A: POPULAR FILMS ABOUT WWII CREATED BY THE POST WAR GENERATIONS

*Panels will be held simultaneously 2/2A and so on



CALL FOR PAPERS

Jan Karski 2014 Conference: **Memory and Responsibility**

Loyola University Chicago

September 19 – 20, 2014

Deadline for paper submissions: **Monday, June 30, 2014**

We invite you to participate as a speaker, a moderator of a panel and/or an organizer of a panel. Each speaker will participate in a panel addressing a topic suggested in our proposed program for the conference. We are also open to proposals given that you will organize the whole panel. Presentations should be limited to 20 minutes and will be followed by a Q&A discussion led by a panel moderator

Please send your proposals with the following information to: xdylag@luc.edu

1. Your full name and title
2. Your contact information: email and phone number
3. Your curriculum with current institutional affiliation
4. Proposed title of your paper
5. Abstract of your paper up to 500 words
6. Theme of a panel that you wish to moderate or organize

For any additional questions please contact Bozena Nowicka McLees
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