LOCI MEMORIAE HUNGARICAE I.

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THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUNGARIAN
'LIEUX DE MÉMOIRE' STUDIES /
THEORETISCHE GRUNDLAGEN DER ERFORSCHUNG
UNGARISCHER ERINNERUNGSORTE

Edited by
Pál S. Varga – Karl Katschthaler – Donald E. Morse – Miklós Takács

# Loci Memoriae Hungaricae I.

## The Theoretical Foundations of Hungarian 'lieux de mémoire' Studies / Theoretische Grundlagen der Erforschung ungarischer Erinnerungsorte

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# Introduction

**Pál S. Varga**

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Theoretische Grundlagen der Erforschung ungarischer Erinnerungsorte
II. A magyar emlékezethelyek kutatásának elméleti és módszertani alapjai*

The concept of *lieux de mémoire* has become an internationally accepted academic term, despite Pierre Nora's intentions and the fact that its use has raised many questions and occasioned many debates ever since. The concept of *lieux de mémoire* is a late by-product of the post-war period, an era that decreed that the nearest past was to be forgotten, including its most traumatic period, turning its attention towards the idea of progress and hope for a better future, as a legacy of the Enlightenment. The concept of sites of memory captures the very moment when the euphoria of progress first becomes disturbed by the suppression arising as a side effect of amnesia; and by a confusion in orientation, caused by the longing for the past and the loss of all the meanings attached to it. This is the very reason for the memory boom starting from the end of the 1970s with the theories of Pierre Nora and Jan Assmann, and continuing with the subsequent academic research into remembering. Nora, the creator of the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, had primarily attempted to describe the tragic loss of the glorious national past caused by the earlier epoch, with all the dubious efforts expended to save it, rather than to discuss the traumatic events of the recent past. The subject of *lieux de mémoire* created by Nora was connected with French national awareness based on a strong and unified statehood. Other foreign researchers of *lieux de mémoire* outside France found the concept generalized and doubted its translatability as well.[1]

Nevertheless, "sites of memory" as a concept indicating an epochal threshold, seems to overcome language barriers, surviving the authority of national narratives and proving to be valid both for alternative memories and memory dialogues. A recurring motif in the theoretical studies of the present volume is the assertion that monologic memories ruled by the concept of nation came to their end, as they "were mainly constructed around heroic actions and heroic suffering," as Aleida Assmann maintains. It is time for scholars engaged in research to turn their attention towards the clashes of memory cultures and to the comparative research of national memories directed to common subjects, especially those excluding each other. Such research could prevent collective memory from remaining just a collective self-affirmation, and encourage its becoming a means of collective responsibility and an opportunity for dialogue between nations and groups. Hungary's involvement in the research of *lieux de mémoire* was prompted not only by the desire to

contribute to contemporary European academic discourse, but also by the immediate circumstances that defects in collective memory have had a significant influence on the political split in Hungarian society, hindering the formation of any kind of social consensus. The modern trend of forgetting, typical of the way European societies have related to their past during the three decades after 1945, in Hungary has become the official guideline of the national policy of forgetting. This policy not only became an obstacle to creating an heroic national past but also led to the elimination of all recent traumatic memories from the public sphere. Due to these circumstances, Hungarian society did not, could not believe in the idea of progress, neither was it driven by a desire for forgetting. Remembering and attempts to construct meaning from past events took place in informal sub-cultural groups, without any chance of public confrontation between the isolated group memories and of establishing a common collective meaning. For society as a whole it meant losing the collective past. Even the last two decades following the political turn were not enough to eliminate the political split, or substitute for the lack of collective memory in some way.

Hungary has now joined, after a small delay, the international research into lieux de mémoire. This delay may, however, prove advantageous. International editions published on national sites of memories remind us of the possibilities of using the term detached from its original context, while warning us about both the risks of such decontextualization, and the necessity of implementing new trends as they unfold from mutual dialogue.

### Theoretical Approaches, Discussions

The first volume in this series contains the edited versions of the German and English papers given at the conference, *Loci Memoriae Hungaricae—The Theoretical Foundations of Hungarian 'lieux de mémoire' Studies*, held at the University of Debrecen, between 14 and 16 November 2011. These essays recall the "classic" issues of collective memory and '*lieux de mémoire*' studies to the extent necessary for establishing a starting point as enumerated by Jan Assmann, in "Communicative and Cultural Memory," Following Jan Assmann, Aleida Assmann and Pim den Boer examine some new perspectives: the former focuses on the transformations of European memory culture suggesting the establishment of a dialogic memory structure of the kind that enables the acknowledging of traumatic events of the past by remembering and mutual observations, rather than by forgetting. Without contesting the national perspectives of collective memory, she argues in "The Transformative Power of Memory" that "dialogic memory has a special relevance for Europe; it could produce a new type of nation state that is not exclusively grounded in pride but also accepts its dark legacies." Pim den Boer suggests a comparative perspective for '*lieux de mémoire*' studies and a new, dialogic framework for collective memory research, while, providing incisive examples, even Hungarian ones, to bolster his argument.

The discussion on the relationship between collective memory and the comprehensive study of the past focuses on the question: what effect could theoretical knowledge have on common historical consciousness, which is predetermined by practical interests? Péter György's keynote speech "Memory Fallen Apart: The Case of Two Cemeteries" centers

on the disturbances of Hungarian collective memory, and through employing the concept of heterotopia he transforms the original definition of *lieu de mémoire*. The essays that follow attempt to account for the way in which Hungarian collective memory has fallen apart into memory groups by focusing on recent traumatic events.

### Hungarian Sites of Memory in the Central European Context

This section focuses on national memories and memory politics that came into contact in specific historical circumstances, and open the way to the comparative study of sites of memory. István Bitskey explores the city of Nagyszombat/Tynau/Tranava, also called "Little Rome," a site of memory that may allow cross-national remembering. Márta Fata compares the political instrumentalization of the German Peasant's War and the Hungarian peasants' revolt of 1514 in the context of Marxist politics in the DDR and in the People's Republic of Hungary. The author points to general consequences concerning the limits for the instrumentalisation of history and the prospects of establishing a social consensus about the past.

### The Socio-Psychological Approach

The socio-psychological approach utilized new methods that yield new results in the study of sites of memory, such as the network analysis of the associative structure between significant Hungarian sites of memory in "Structural Characteristics of Sites of National Memory" by Ákos Münnich and István Hidegkuti. Their research provides important data about the current conditions of Hungarian collective memory and the semantic connections between sites of memory. The team led by Judit Kovács presents the results of a research study on the functioning of collective memory, showing that "the practice of communicating collective memories" is "different at the individual and the group level; … groups distinguished between messages for an ingroup (Hungarian) and an outgroup member (foreigner), and in general, give more emphasis on the national symbols and historical-cultural memories."

### Literature, Film and the Sites of Memory

Tamás Bényei opens the discussion on the mediality of sites of memory. Although the essay deals with the ghost story, a literary genre that, as the author suggests, could be interpreted as a site of memory itself, Bényei attempts a philosophical reinterpretation of the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, based upon the narrative structure of such ghost stories. According to his interpretation, *lieu de mémoire* represents the memory crisis, as Nora's concept was built on the collision of remembering and forgetting. Thus a ghost is what remains of the past in consciousness, after all else is forgoted. Bényei concludes that, "ghost narratives might be read as allegories of *lieux de mémoire* and of the modern memory crisis in general."

Through an analysis of Virginia Woolf's last novel, *Between the Acts*, Nóra Séllei explores the modern memory crisis and English national memory in particular, before World War II. Séllei shows that the novel does not construct the image of rural England, the nostalgic

picture of true Englishness. Instead, the novel's central motif, the pageant play performed by villagers and directed by an outsider, presents a peculiar interpretation of various elements from British history and literature. If we accept Jan Assmann's argument that "a connective structure of common knowledge and self-image relies […] on the memories of a jointly inhabited past," then the distorted presentation of traditions may loosen or destabilize the collective memory of a community and the identity of the individuals as well. It does not only function as a repetition of the ritual, "but as an interpretation of the ritual, and thus as a hermeneutic process." The novel can also be linked to Aleida Assmann's concept of new memory politics, since the text reveals the possibility of opening up, reinterpreting, and questioning the sacred and canonized traditions.

Tibor Glant and György Kalmár investigate collective memory through films. The former looks at four Hollywood films from the 1950s about Cardinal Mindszenty's trial, and concludes by suggesting that the interest and, later, the lack of interest in Mindszenty is not related to the presence of Hungary's past in American memory, but to the ways the Cold War atmosphere influenced the US film industry. In an article about *Taxidermia*, a film by György Pálfi, György Kalmár describes specific connections between collective memory and film as a medium pointing out that film as a medium is able "to display characteristically Eastern-European patterns of remembering, story-telling and identity-making."

### A Debate on the Theoretical Foundations of Hungarian '*lieux de mémoire*' Studies

Although the second volume of the series is a separate book, its first chapter is closely linked to the first volume. Similarly to Péter György, Gábor Gyáni calls attention to the lack of common memories in his keynote address. He shows that even the memory of two basic, traumatic events (the Holocaust and the substantial loss of territory and population caused by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920) fails to provide a basis for consensual memory because Trianon is ideologically divisive, while the Holocaust, "a possible topic of national memory" may not fulfill this role, since "no one has ever mentioned that without the consideration of assimilation, the modern history of Hungarian past could not be written."

### History and Memory

László Levente Balogh also deals with the Treaty of Trianon, the most traumatic event in Hungarian collective memory. He suggests that the divergence, a characteristic also mentioned by Gábor Gyáni, relates to the different reputations of the event in collective memory and among academics. Balogh positions Trianon among the constituents of the memory structure which is built up from structures of "heroic actions and heroic suffering." His analysis focuses on the paradigm shift from the heroization of history to the victimization of history—a major change in Hungarian collective memory, from the role of "hero" to that of "victim." Besides demonstrating the turning points in the instrumentalization of Hungarian collective memory, Balogh's essay reveals that this memory structure is biased and rigid.

Vilmos Erős follows Pierre Nora who discussed *Lavisse* as a *lieu de mémoire*: within a wide historiographic context, the Hungarian historian asks "whether the history of history-writing can function as a site of memory," and, if it can, "who or what does this memory belong to?" He contends that there is a dynamic relationship between the different approaches to the past and the history of history-writing, including both the results of and the backgrounds for such writing. Erős concludes that "the history of history-writing is not the private realm of professional history-writing."

In his essay focusing on current issues, András Gerő criticizes the canonization of national memory as reflected in the first section of Hungary's new constitution. Gerő's main issues relate to Christianity, the Holy Crown of Hungary, the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, and the problems occasioned by the decline of state self-government in the 20th century. He also criticizes the government's plans to reconstruct Budapest's Kossuth Square (a significant place in Hungarian collective memory), returning it to its pre-1944 design.

### Sites of Memory and Mediality

Béla Kerékgyártó opens the discussion on the mediality of collective memory. Citing the theoretical works of Aldo Rossi, he looks at the connection between architecture and collective memory, and extends the concept of *lieux de mémoire* as locus on the basis of collective memory's spatiality (Maurice Halbwachs; see also Aleida Assmann's concept of *Erinnerungsraum*). Rossi's model of the city "emphasizes the continuation with the past, as opposed to future oriented modern architecture." In Rossi's view, "there is no tabula rasa" in the city that is continuously (re)built, "the present and the architect build upon layers of the past, among preconditions that exist without being noticed." Rossi, just like memory politics in the post-modern, calls for awareness of the past. The author also stresses this awareness when he observes the strangeness of modern housing estates separated from the architectural memory of the city with their inability to renew themselves.

The other essays in this chapter deal with popular culture and media. Through an analyis of the introduction to *Delta magazin*, a popular educational show of Hungarian "paleotelevision," Ágnes Bujdosó shows that the images and theme, appearing week by week on the screens, were fixed as an emblem of television, a mystic and at the same time a scientific invention in the 1960s and 1970s which still offer an alternative memory of the Kádár-era, contrasting the prevailing patterns of remembering. Tamás Dunai writes about the comics of the Kádár-era, another alternative memory. He begins by contending that the comic is not an actual genre today, but a site of memory that evokes memories of 1970s and 1980s Hungary. István Puskás examines the popular music culture of the same era and assumes that the current relation to this culture has reached a state when the purpose of keeping these memories alive is artificial, when it is the urge for archiving, erecting memorials, or popular culture's inner memory, which is a characteristic of postmodern music that prefers remixes and musical citations. However, as Puskás observes, retro style and nostalgic remakes are more common in Hungary as a means of returning to the musical past.

**Sociocultural Approaches**

The investigations of research groups lead by Gábor Biczó and Győző Pék provide a broader context of 'lieux de mémoire' researches and specific areas of collective memory. The former study, which examines the cohabitation habits of Romanian villages of mixed ethnic and religious origin (Romanian-Hungarian, reformed-orthodox), illustrates how the shaping and maintenance of the rules of coexistence is facilitated by the stories and their networks which are kept in the communicative memory of interdependence in both ethnic and religious groups. The conclusion provides a useful contrast for Péter György's analysis of heterotopias in Hungarian collective memory, as Biczó assumes that the construction of a common narrative network leads to the homotopy of communicative memory in the original heterotypic space of cultural memory.

Győző Pék and his colleagues followed up the development of traumatic memories of the environmental disaster on October 4, 2010 when a dam ruptured at the Ajka red sludge reservoir inundating near-by villages, on the basis of geographical and temporal distance, school education and gender. They describe the process by which a tragic event triggering a high level of social compassion with significant media coverage becomes part of collective memory.

**Results of International Studies of Sites of Memory**

In the first part of this section on international studies, Eszter Pabis takes into consideration the edifications that have been offered by *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, probably the most relevant series that followed the French research. One of the most important accomplishments of the German effort is that besides keeping the national framework, it was able to surpass the perspective of "heroic actions and heroic suffering"; its first priority being the reckoning with the Nazi past. It is a paradox of the German series that the enforcement of the national perspective of remembering is to be considered as a novelty, since the concept of the nation, together with the past, has been subject to suppression by the denial of National Socialism. However, the introduction of the national perspective is surrounded by critical attitudes and a comparative, European context, as well. Yet the intention to reconstruct the relation to the past is incomplete, not because of the introduction of the national perspective, but rather due to the lack of studies on alternative memories of women and immigrants. Eszter Pabis observes a specific contrast between the German and the Swiss volumes: the latter allows insight into the collective memory of a European nation in which narrow identities can prevail hence the variety of languages and cantons. The Swiss volume, in accordance with new trends in memory research, stresses "the pluralisation and plasticization of collective memory, a process that has gained importance recently" and which, according to the author of the book is an "opposite process to modern *nation building*." Thus the Swiss historian attempts to interpret (as Pim den Boer also recommends) Swiss identities in their own "openness and diversity." Obviously, part of this openness is that Switzerland represents its uniqueness in the competence between nations and countries. The deficiencies are obvious, however, if we consider the German volumes which leads Eszter Pabis to note that "[s]ome sites of

memory with important functions in terms of current cultural memory, especially those connected to the dark moments of Swiss history are missing from the collection." What is common: studies concerning the counter-memory of immigrants and of those belonging to social, sexual, or ethnic minorities are missing from both works.

Szilvia Kovács examines the Austrian *Die Verortung von Gedächtnis* arguing that it applies a distinguished version of *lieux de mémoire*; her essay highlights the relief function of sites of memory. An outstanding field of Austrian research remains the examination of constructed space and its functions of preserving and forming memory—the analysis of the Austrian national anthem as a site of memory apparently offers the possibility of comparison with that of Hungary's. One of the editors of the volume, Moritz Csáky played a significant role in the separation of collective memory from the national narrative, as it is indicated in his book, *Das Gedächtnis der Städte*, a work that promises even in its subtitle the introduction of cultural mergers.

The volume edited by Pim den Boer and Willem Frijhoff *Lieux de mémoire et identités nationals* gives an insight into how the concepts explained in the present volume are applied. According to Zsófia Réti, their book "outlines a Dutch national identity that is not exclusively based on individual national symbols, but is mainly determined by the relation with other surrounding nations." Pim den Boer looks at the common European memory; and unlike Nora—who also attempted to define common European sites of memory (the Danube, Versailles, Potsdam, Einstein and Auschwitz, to mention a few)—highlighs the nationally separated perspectives and also their common values, based on the principles of freedom, Christianity and civilization (and the 1956 revolution in Hungary could also be mentioned here). The contrastive method is based on the "narcissism of minor differences," borrowed from Freud; the case studies highlight the features of Dutch identity by their differences from the French, German and English patterns. From the aspect of using the term "site of memory" it is of utmost importance that the Dutch authors found the central element that is provided by the state in the memory of France; whereas in the Netherlands, as the country was originally created as an alliance of city-states, it is the city that plays this key function. This work, as it enables memory research on a level lower than the nation, is linked to the various concepts of the memory of cities (Rossi, Csáky). Yet the deficiencies (already listed above) should also be mentioned in connection with the innovative Dutch volume.

Despite all of their merits, some rather negative consequences can be drawn from the other Dutch volume and the Italian series where even the pertinence of using the concept of lieux de mémoire memory might be doubted. Gábor Pusztai's review of the volume *Het geheugen van de Lage Landen* highlights one of the neuralgic points of 'lieux de mémoire' research: even with the most careful selection it remains incidental what events, objects, persons, etc. appear on the list. In case of the Dutch volume this feature is obvious. The relation of the Netherlands and Flanders appears in the center, the topics are selected and classified in accordance with the aspects of unity and diversity—although even this point of view doesn't prevail consistently. and the positive self-image which dominates the studies, does not leave space for critical self-examination. The triple-volume

Italian series is the most problematic in regard to conceptual consideerations. As Orsolya Száraz demonstrates, the work was published to meet the demands for current issues of Italian national identity, and not for Italian sites of memory. Its editor does not intend to give a description of the actual state of memory, but to create missing memories. The work is undoubtedly spectacular, yet even with its legitimate results it leads to a theoretical and methodological confusion which raises the question: is this really an Italian version of *liex de mémoire?*

The essay by Judit Friedrich explores the special field of conference proceedings. The conference volume, *Confrontations and Interactions* summarises research on literary memory at the Department of English Studies at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. The articles in the volume discuss "what, how and why Hungarian cultural memory forgets or appropriates while creating and re-creating the Hungarian concept of British literature and, at the same time, continuously overwriting its own image of Hungarian culture by the reflections upon British literature."

### Mohács as a Representative *lieu de mémoire*

The edited versions of lectures given at the conference "Methodological Issues of '*lieux de mémoire*' Research—The Example of Mohács" held in Debrecen between 16 and 17 June 2011, form a separate chapter in the second volume. In order to reveal the possibilities of adapting the concept of *lieux de mémoire* to Hungarian studies, the conference was dedicated to the study of Mohács, an influential site of memory in Hungarian history, The main challenge of the conference was to find the paths to collective memory beyond the limits of traditional disciplines.

### Mohács on the Verge of Modern Memory Culture—
### The Testimony of Verbal Media

The first section examines the process of Mohács becoming a site of memory. István Bitskey's essay concerned with the age of collective memory before *lieux de mémoire* shows how the lost battle of Mohács, interpreted as God's punisment, was incorporated into the discourse of Protestant and Catholic religious debates. The pre-modern characteristics of rememberance in this age where the past was considered a repository of moral lessons for the present may seem evident, but the conclusions are also relevant from the aspects of modernity: Mohács became a significant part of collective memory's structure in the crossfire of alternative memories.

In the following three essays the authors show how the modern structure of collective memory developed. With an in-depth analysis of written sources and in a broad context of the public sphere, Attila Debreczeni explores the emergence of the historical narrative in which Mohács marked an epoch. Besides conclusions regarding the process of Mohács becoming a site of memory, Debreczeni's essay reveals the inherent difference between the structure of memory in pre-modern and modern times.

László Orbán, who gained extensive knowledge of Ferenc Kazinczy's ways of constructing a personal past during his editorial works on the critical publications of *Pályám emléke-*

*zete*, focuses on documents—particularly *Történetek' Kalendarioma*—in which Kazinczy collected traces of the historical past. These texts can be interpreted as "collections of memory traces" in which "remembering is not an act of bringing back unaltered images of past events, but the result of a dynamic and productive process with multiple feedback."

Pál S. Varga compares texts from the late 18th century and early 19th century, on the basis of Pierre Nora's criteria for a site of memory. He discusses the pre-modern characteritics of memory structure in these works and focuses on an elegy by Károly Kisfaludy which, with the purpose of acting against oblivion, recalls the battle on the occassion of the centenary (1826). The final section explores the ways in which the modern concept of the site of memory is crystallised in *Mohács*, an essay by Ferenc Kölcsey. Varga argues that Kölcsey's essay, instead of focusing on the memory of the battle, contemplates collective memory and its identity-forming function.

Through the analysis of sermons delivered in commemoration of the battle of Mohács, László Brigovácz also examines the characteristics of a transitory period in which national issues gained importance. At the same time, as Brigovácz shows, the political issues of loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty became more relevant than the religious aspect (which was the primary point of reference in the Reformation Age). Thus religious and political considerations were interlinked with the national issues by means of sermons that warned against leading an immoral life—a medieval tradition revived in the 1820s. These new aspects of the sermons effectively weakened the religious differences that once had been decisive in the memory of Mohács.

### The Testimony of Paintings

Similarly to the discussions on literary texts, Nóra Veszprémi examines the characteristics of a transitory period in the context of a 1787 painting by István Dorffmaister. This work of art is important because it leaves behind the traditions of historical painting with its obvious sacral features, but it does not interpret the battle of Mohács as a national tragedy. Instead, together with another painting depicting the "second battle of Mohács" (the battle of Nagyharsány in 1677, where the Ottomans were defeated), it belongs to a narrative about the triumph of Christendom over pagans. Actually, what makes these two paintings by Dorffmaister part of the transitory period is the way they were interpreted in the 19th century: their replicas spread across the country in the spirit of the cult of the nation, yet, their religious context remained ineluctable. Any time the paintings were brought into contact with the narrative of national memory, they were retrospectively interpreted as the first examples of profane historical paintings that illustrate events in the nation's history.

Katalin Keserü examines a painting by Soma Orlai Petrich, *"The Finding of the Corpse of Louis II, Who Fell in the Battle of Mohács"* (1850–1851), and its reception. As the author points out, contemporary reception attached an allegorical meaning to the picture according to which the painting can be interpeted as the allegory of the death of Sándor Petőfi, the young Hungarian poet who died on the battlefield in 1849. Without doubting the pertinence of the allegorical interpretation, Keserü focuses on the fact that "the

painting's imagery […] stems from the tradititional representations of the descent from the cross and the entombment of Christ." This interpretation was limited in its contemporary reception as the visual perception—rather unusually—became separated from its literary perception. This implies that the subject matter of the nation's death, including the actualized meaning, may only be perceived through the religious iconographic tradition, because, as Keserü explains, "the iconography of religious art became secular due to the rise of historicality in the era's world view." This interpretation leads to an interesting comparison: while in Dorffmaister's works Hungarian history is subordinated to the religious context, in Orlai's painting the Christ-motif serves the sacralization of national myths. As is well-known, the embedding of sacral iconography in the narrative about the nation's death/rise has turned into a commonplace in the history of memory—consider the crucified maps of Greater Hungary (the territory of Hungary before the Treaty of Trianon) on Trianon memorials, also mentioned in the essay by László Levente Balogh. The religious context indicates that national legitimation discourses prefer to rely on the common European memory of Christianity.

### The Memory of Mohács in the Modern Age—
### The Testimony of History Writing, Politics and Literature

History writing, which became professional by the end of the 19th century, has examined the events at Mohács from multiple perspectives which determined to a great extent the way the memory of Mohács evolved over the last 100 years. On the millennial anniversary of the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin, the "Hungarian Lavisse" the book *Magyar Nemzet Története* [*The History of the Hungarian Nation*] was published with a chapter about Mohács written by Vilmos Fraknói. Ákos Szendrei asserts that besides positivism's respect for data, Fraknói also wished to reshape collective memory when he highlighted Mohács as an event of far more importance than any other battle against the Ottomans. Fraknói also mentioned the historical mission of the Hungarian nation and the role of Hungary as the bastion of Christian civilization—all of which fit into the memory-narrative which had stabilized by then (see Attila Debreczeni's essay in the second volume). Fraknói's intention may also be seen in his inserting a picture of the memory pillar erected at Mohács alongside the maps of the battleground.

The debate among Hungarian historians, which started in the 1960s and '70s with the publication of István Nemeskürty's controversial books about Mohács, had a critical impact on the 20th century's development of the battle's memory. Through an evaluation of criticism of Nemeskürty, Vilmos Erős argues that although his main aspiration was to deconstruct the legends around Mohács, it was Nemeskürty himself, who started out from illusions, when he identified the peasantry with "the real nation," put the responsibilities of the lost battle on the ruling class (which Nemeskürty characterized as disloyal to the nation) and created his own narrative with Hungary in the role of victim (see also the process of "victimisation," mentioned in Balogh's essay in connection with Trianon). Here, we can see the problem already discussed in the first volume of this series raised once more but this time as related to Mohács: The relationship between collective

memory before the academic disciplines and the disciplinary position of history-writing. Historians with opposing views stand united against the concepts of "romantic nationalists," whose thoughts about Hungarian independence often embrace the idea of Turanism. These historians include the "Western" group, who praise the Habsburgs' reign and view the era in a wider, European context (a method very similar to that of Gyula Szekfű), and the traditionalist school, whose members also stress the importance of independent, Protestant and Eastern traditions. However, the author points out that even the debate between the professional historians is not free from the desire to find actual meanings.

Róbert Kerepeszki investigates the political instrumentalization of this site of memory. His analysis of Miklós Horthy's (Regent of Hungary) speech (delivered on the 400th anniversary of the battle) starts from the consideration that, as Kuno von Klebelsberg, the Hungarian Minister of Culture at the time put it, "we need Trianon to understand Mohács" (and the historian adds: "to understand Trianon, we need Mohács"). The political lessons of the tragic event encouraged the Regent to initiate a breakout from the country's isolation by initiating a rapprochement with Yugoslavia. In a later recollection, Horthy occounted for his action as it reflects the mutual fate of the two nations, mentioning the defeats at Kosovo Polje (in Hungarian: Rigómező) and at Mohács. Today, however, the historian regards this speech as the political instrumentalization of collective memory, and not as an act of remembering.

Szilvia Kovács deals with the literary aspect of the 400th anniversary. In her essay on Gyula Krúdy's 1926 novel, *Mohács*, she emphasizes the inherent characteristic of fictional texts, that is the ability to provide alternatives to reality. Krúdy's novel considers the possibilities of an alternative memory of Mohács, in various ways. The events of the novel are recorded by a young author, whose point of view is in an ironic relationship with the tragic events. He creates a mythic story about fate in which the death of Louis II is narrated as the final act. The other point of view belongs to the widow Queen, and it is constructed in a way that it resembles the concepts of Gyula Szekfű, as Mária's "attitude towards Mohács is determined by her attachment […] to the Habsburg Empire and Christian Europe." Mohács is a personal tragedy for Mária, but it is not an entire nation's misery, because "the country could still be saved, since Ferdinand is going to be the next king." From the aspect of the site of memory, the most relevant attribute of the novel is—contrary a scientific approach—that by the multiple perspectives and the notion of private life, it offers personal access to the past, which is essential for remembering.

### In the Eyes of Strangers

To contribute further to the understanding of Mohács, four essays adopt a contrastive or contextual perspective, as Pim den Boer called for. Attila Györkös looks at the international aspects of the memory of Mohács; specifically, with "the myth about the betrayal of the West," based on the alleged alliance between Francis I of France and Suleiman. Through a precise analysis of written sources and using the latest results of international studies, Györkös asserts that there are no direct links between the battle of Mohács and the correspondence of Suleiman and the "Most Christian Majesty" of the

time. The author contrasts his views with those of Hungarian secondary school and university history textbooks, which foster the concept of the Franco-Ottoman alliance.

Besides suggesting the contrastive analysis of the memory of neighbouring peoples, Klára Jakó explores the general resonance of the battle of Mohács in Wallachia and Moldavia suggesting that there are few traces of the event in the works of the Romanian chroniclers. In fact, these chronicles did not deal with events outside the above mentioned territories, and their imagery is archaic; that is, their image of the Hungarians is mainly based on the reputation of Transylvanian princes who came into contact with these two principalities. This "gap" is indeed relevant as there have been hardly any common elements in the collective memory of the two nations.

The comparative analysis could not be complete without examining the memory of the triumphant side, yet it is surprising to see that the "triumph" at Mohács is barely mentioned in modern Turkish history-writing. Mihály Dobrovits shows that this has little to do with the concrete event, it is in fact a result of Turkey's ambitions in pursuit of secularism. It must be noted, however, that the notion of hostility vanished completely from Turkish-Hungarian diplomacy by the second half of the 19th century. Moreover, similarities and differences can be significant. The Ottomans saw Hungary as the main barrier to their European expansion, which is why Turkish history-writing still views the victory over the Hungarians as a turning point, after which the Kingdom of Hungary disappeared from the political map and from history. Yet Turkish historians also emphasize the political divisions in Hungary at the time and the lack of support from the West, which corresponds to the Hungarian interpretation of the event. This contrastive study of remembering shows that mutual memories can connect nations even if the incompatible attitudes towards the common past still exist.

Attila Bárány looks at the memory of the battle and the young Hungarian king in Western Europe. The memory of Louis II of Hungary in Brussels traces back to the period when his widow, Mary of Austria, was governor of the Habsburg Netherlands for 25 years. There she grounded the cult of her husband as a Christian martyr. As the author points out, the glass windows of the St. Michael and St. Gudula Cathedral in Brussels are parts of this cultic political program and played an important role in the development of the ideology of the crusades during the 16th century. Thus the cult of Louis II can be interpreted as a spectacular example for the political instrumentalization of remembering: it was part of the offensive that resulted in Austria and the House of Habsburg taking over the role of "the Bastion of Christendom."

### Alternative Images of Mohács

Dávid Csorba discusses the local traditions of Mohács as the manifestation of alternative memory where Louis II of Hungary did not drown in Csele Brook, but was killed by a desperate Hungarian baron, and the assassination was followed by a massacre. The source of the alternative narrative is the memoir of György Szerémi (a contemporary of the king), which was discovered in the middle of the 19th century. This essay focuses on the conflict between memory and history writing—an issue also mentioned in other sections

of the present volumes. According to Csorba, there is a semantic potential in this alternative narrative of the king's death that is missing from the academic perception of Mohács. In mentioning Dorffmaister's and Orlai's paintings (both works examined in the essays by Nóra Veszprémi and Katalin Keserü) and Krúdy's novel about Mohács, he emphasizes the correlation between art and alternative memory—a relationship also demonstrated by Szilvia Kovács.

The achievements described in Tamás Baltavári's essay play a special role in keeping the memory of Mohács alive: he and his team reconstructed the battle in a computer strategy game. The purpose of the reconstruction is not mere illustration, as the simulation was created with several parameters of the battle programmed into the game. Baltavári suggests that this may lead to discoveries that could not be made using traditional methods of military history. The by-product of this reconstruction, a 23-minute-long computer generated film, will probably be heavily criticized by academics and historians (either because the creators of the film and the game aimed at probability and not authenticity, or the reconstruction was inspired by the arguable theories of Géza Perjés and László Papp). But, the possibilities the computer applications offer are innumerous, not to mention the elementary effect that the monumental visual representation of the battle has on the viewer. From this aspect, the project has an extremely important role in keeping the collective memory alive—it may prove that technological development can not only foster forgetting also remembering.

**Conclusion**

This brief introduction obviously cannot describe every argument of all the essays in the present volume, nor the numerous connections that developed between the texts—mostly without any intention to do so on the part of the authors. Yet, these latent paths, formed by mutual references, constitute the originality of this volume. With the concepts, the theoretical and methodological conclusions, and with the connections between the individual studies, *Loci Memoriae Hungaricae* hopes to offer Hungarian and international readers and researchers new perspectives on the common task and the responsibility of collective remembering.

Debrecen, 30 October 2012.

*(Translated by György Marcsek)*

**Notes**

[1] The Latin version of the concept is problematic, also; essays in this volume mention the expression *loci memoriae,* while Pierre Nora's term *lieux de memoire* relates both to spatial and to more abstract relations, which would justify the use of both plurals of "locus." The most accurate title would be *Loci locaque memoriae hungaricae.*

# 1. Theoretical Approaches

# The Transformative Power of Memory

**Aleida Assmann**

The title of my essay is double edged. It aims at the power of memory that transforms people, societies and states, but it also looks at the transformations that memory itself undergoes over the years and under external influences. I will pursue this double activity in different realms and contexts. I will start with a shift of the cultural frameworks that has helped to create a new discourse on memory, then I will look at external and internal factors that change memory and finally inspect more closely the shift from old to new policies of remembering which tap the transformative power of memory in situations of political and social change.

### From the modernist frame to the memory frame

The idea that memory has transformative power is a rather new one and was developed only during the last 30 years or so. This shift in our thinking became manifest in a new term that has surfaced in German discourse in the 1990s and has since become part and parcel of the trite stock of official and public rhetoric, namely: "*Erinnerungskultur*" (memory culture). We have developed the great hope that memory can be conducive to changing human minds, hearts and habits and even whole societies and states in the process of overcoming a traumatic history of violence. Many people assume today that traumatic violence can be overcome by negotiating mutual strategies of memory and visions of the past. All over the world, the transformative power of memory is invoked to diffuse the pernicious fuel of violence. It is implemented after periods of autocratic and genocidal violence (the Holocaust, Latin American dictatorships, South African Apartheid, the Balkan War) as well as in response to the lasting impact of older genocides and crimes against humanity (such as European colonialism and slavery).

But is this assumption at all justified? What has made us so optimistic? What is our hope grounded on, or are we driven by an illusion? Let me start with a scholar who does not share this view. Historian Christian Meier has expressed his dissent in a book that appeared in 2010 in which he argues for forgetting rather than remembering as a transformative power that leads to overcoming a pernicious past and to opening a new page of history (*The Injunction to Forget and the Necessity to Remember*).

Meier argues as a historian, drawing attention to the policy of forgetting as an age-old strategy for containing the explosive force of conflictive memories. His examples are not

only distant in time such as the Greek polis after the Peloponnesian War, or the peace treaty of Münster-Osnabrück 1648 after another civil war which contains the formula: "perpetua oblivio et amnestia."[1] This policy which goes hand in hand with a blanket amnesty in order to end mutual hatred and to achieve a new social integration of formerly opposed parties is not a thing of the past. Even after 1945 it was widely used as a political resource. It is true that the International Court at Nuremberg had, of course, dispensed transitional justice by indicting major Nazi functionaries for the newly defined "crime against humanity." This, however, was an act of purging rather than remembering the past. In postwar Germany, the public sphere and that of official diplomacy remained largely shaped by what was called "a pact of silence."[2] The term comes from Hermann Lübbe who in 1983 made the point that maintaining silence was a necessary pragmatic strategy adopted in postwar Germany (and supported by the allies) to facilitate the economic and political reconstruction of the state and the transformation of society. Forgetting or the pact of silence became also a strategy of European politics during the period of the Cold War in which much had to be forgotten in order to consolidate the new Western military alliance against that of the Communist block (Judt). As an example, let me refer to a speech that Winston Churchill gave in Zürich in 1946 in which he demanded an end to "the process of reckoning," declaring:

> We must all turn our backs upon the horrors of the past. We must look to the future. We cannot afford to drag forward across the years that are to come the hatreds and revenges which have sprung from the injuries of the past. If Europe is to be saved from infinite misery, and indeed from final doom, there must be an act of faith in the European family and an act of oblivion against all the crimes and follies of the past. (200)[3]

Within the cultural framework of the 1940s to 1960s, forgetting was considered as a means to dissolve the divisive negative emotions of the past. As resentment and hatred are supported, continued and refueled through memory, it was assumed that forgetting rather than remembering could help to overcome a violent past and open up a new future.

There are, however, two contrary ways of looking at forgetting: it can be seen as a positive resource for leaving a troubled past behind and creating the potential for a new future or it can be considered as a form of suppression and continuation of violence. Whether it is remembering or forgetting that is credited with a transformative power depends on larger cultural frameworks and values that change over time. Moving from forgetting to remembering implied what I would like to call the shift from a *modernist* to a *moralist* perspective. The modernist spirit of innovation and orientation towards the future is based on a positive notion of temporal ruptures that contain the possibility of leaving the past behind. The moralistic or therapeutic perspective, on the other hand, prescribes a reengagement with a traumatic past in order to work through and overcome it. During the last three decades, the deep trust in the automatic regenerative power of the future has been eroded that had been at the core of the paradigm of modernization

shared by European countries in both East and West. In its stead, a new concern with the abiding impact of violent pasts has entered our thinking, feeling and acting not only in Europe but in many other parts of the world as well. This is what I mean when I speak of a shift of attitude from the "modernist frame" to the "memory frame."

### External and internal factors of change

There are various external and internal factors that can promote the transformative power of memory. Let me start with some external factors. Personal memory remains restricted, constrained and devalued if it is deliberately cut off from historical sources. The closing or opening of *historical archives* is therefore an important transformative factor. If sources are made publicly accessible and are recognized in a public discourse, this can have a profound effect on a national memory. After the end of the Cold War, for instance, the opening of Eastern European archives changed considerably the prevailing national maps of memory. As the scope and complexity of Holocaust memory expanded, it challenged some of the firmly established positive national self-images. New documents about Vichy and the history of anti-Semitism in East Germany put an end to the self-image of France or the GDR as pure resisters; after the scandal around Kurt Waldheim and the book about Jedwabne, Austria and Poland were no longer able to claim an exclusive status of victim, and even the seemingly neutral Switzerland was confronted with its own "sites of memory" in the form of their banks and borders. As new evidence documenting collaboration or indifference towards this crime against humanity ushered in heated debates, the clear and simple structure of dominant national narratives had to become more complex and inclusive. As long as archives remain closed, political power exerts control over memory and the national self-image.

Another external factor is the impact of *media*. Books or films—if they are radical, daring or well timed—can stimulate public debates and change the social climate of discussion. An example of a powerful media intervention into German memory was the American TV series *Holocaust* (1978) which was televised in Germany in 1979. It is now generally agreed that this series managed to do what public Holocaust education had hitherto not been able to do: to tap the emotions of a wide range of the population and to open up the blocked channels of empathy for Jewish victims. While many critics denigrated the quality of the series as a trivial product of American mass culture, historians such as Saul Friedlander and sociologists such as Nathan Sznaider and Daniel Levy have emphasized the transformative power of this tele event.  I once talked to a person who told me that his parents had forbidden him to watch the series, which, of course, made his interest in this topic all the more ardent.

This brings me to a third factor that is of paramount importance for the transformation of memory. With this factor we are moving from external to internal influences. Memory exists not only in the shape of eternal media, archives and monuments, but also as embodied memory that is communicated between three to four *generations* living together and interacting in a synchronic relationship. According to sociologists who have investigated this field, each generation is shaped by its decisive lifetime experiences which

influence its thinking and feeling. Values, affections, loyalties and a specific weight of the past colors their consciousness, their mind set and emotions. This generational memory is not only transmitted from generation to generation but also periodically challenged, questioned and refuted by the younger generations. In this way, generational memories are exposed to continuous conflict and contestation within the society.

The intergenerational dynamics is a central factor in changing the course of memory. A common and even normative pattern in Western cultures is the revolt of sons and daughters against the hegemony of their parents. The young protestors are allowed and expected to deviate from and break with prevailing traditions and values. In Germany, this generational tension, which is built into the dynamics of Western Culture, was reinforced by the 68-generation's desire to break with their parents continuous and silent loyalties with the Nazi period. In their revolt, they enacted a violent cultural break in which they cut themselves off from the contaminated legacy of the past. The sociologist Rainer Mario Lepsius has coined the term "externalization" which can be applied to this desire to break away and start anew. Twenty years later, when the 68ers had themselves become fathers and mothers, they changed this attitude considerably towards what Lepsius would call "internalization." It took the form of reconnecting with the family and working through the national past in a more empathetic and self-critical way, reflecting on their own place in the generational chain.

The generational change can be of great importance for the introduction of a new perspective in national memory. One example is the famous speech of West German president Richard von Weizsäcker in 1985 in which he taught the Germans to think of May 8, 1945 no longer in terms of defeat and occupation but rather in terms of liberation. He gave this speech at a moment when the number was dwindling of those who belonged to the generation that had actually experienced a defeat by being captured and been sent into shorter or longer terms of imprisonment. The younger generations, on the other hand, had grown up in a democracy that had become an integral part of Western Europe in which the spirit of liberation had spilled across national borders.

The crucial importance of generations as carriers of memory can also be seen in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. In Spain there was indeed a "pact of silence," or forgetfulness, which, however, did not come about immediately at the end of the civil war (1936–39), but was postponed for almost four decades until Franco's dictatorship ended with his death in 1975. The pact of silence in 1977 was intended to underpin the transition (*transición*) from autocracy to democracy. This transition has been characterized as "the birth of democracy out of the spirit of dictatorship" (Christian Schüle). All political crimes prior to 1977 were granted an amnesty by the unwritten law of silence. The option of forgetting was in accord at the time with a widespread consensus in society. Nearly 40 years after the end of the civil war, the Spanish were prepared to let the problems of the past be past, so as not to endanger their fragile democracy. It was the second generation after the Civil War that bypassed issues related to guilt or mourning in the interests of consolidating a common future. Starting in the mid 1990s and culminating in the years after the turn of the century, the layers of silence enshrouding

the violent past became increasingly porous; Republican counter-memory began rediscovering the hidden past through an exhumation project, skeleton by skeleton. This new memory impulse originated in the third generation, which went looking for the bodies of their lost grandparents and found them distributed throughout the country. What their parents had chosen not to do—to act on behalf of the first generation of victims—the grandchildren took up as their specific generational project of identifying Franco's victims, working as self-declared advocates of historical memory with the help of archaeologists, anthropologists and geneticists. The pact of silence which the second generation had endorsed enabled a transition to democracy, but it did not dissolve the traumatic legacy of violence. Instead, it consolidated a deep division within society, materially preserved in the earth and in family memories.

In 2007, nearly 70 years after the end of the civil war and three decades after the second generation's pact of silence, another shift in the Spanish policy of forgetting occurred. Prime Minister José Luis Zapatero, himself the grandson of a Republican grandfather who was murdered and whose body disappeared, rescinded the amnesty law after 30 years which amounts to the time span of a generation. He passed the "Law of Historical Remembrance" (*Ley de Memoria Histórica*) in parliament which condemned the fascist dictatorship for the first time, assuring its victims of recognition and restitution. Zapatero not only conceded here to the internal pressure of Republican family memories, he was also responding to changes in the general political climate of remembrance which favored recalling the crimes of states and dictatorships even after such an extended period of time. In a landscape saturated with Franquist symbols, the hidden and hitherto neglected sites where the victims were unceremoniously disposed have become the most significant *lieux de mémoire* for Republicans. The need for recognition which is felt by family members and their descendants encompasses the rehabilitation and propitiation of the dead. Within the time span of communicative memory, it is obviously the task of the third generation to mourn and to bury the dead, performing this last ritual duty of commemoration for their grandparents. The act of recovering and laying to rest the hidden and forgotten dead refers us to an important transformative power or memory that is rooted in the cultural dimension of religion and ritual.

### From monologic to dialogic memory policies

From these personal and private acts of ritual remembrance let me come back to the public and political context and discuss in more detail the paradigmatic shift from *forgetting* to *remembering* in terms of new memory policies that we have seen emerging. Before addressing these new policies, let me first say a few words about the old one, which—alas—is still thriving and continues to be in active use. Edward Said characterized this traditional memory policy succinctly when he wrote: "Memory and its representations touch very significantly upon questions of identity, of nationalism, of power and authority" (176). In this context of power and politics, he added, the past has always been "something to be used, misused and exploited" (179). Such transformation of history into memory is based on two important dimensions: political myths and national *lieux*

*de mémoire*. Said defined myth in this context as the "power of narrative history to mobilize people around a common goal" (184). He argued that in a world of decreasing efficacy of religious, familial, and dynastic bonds … people now look to this refashioned memory, especially in its collective forms, to give themselves a coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world" (179).

*Les lieux de mémoire* are more diverse than political myths; it is their function to provide the nation with a sense of its distinct identity, rooting it in symbolic time and space, emotionally charged common references and shared cultural practices. Pierre Nora's concept is today also undergoing changes that reflect a shift from monologic to more complex memory constructs. Nora's inventory of common historical and cultural references reflected a strong French cult of the national. In the meantime, his concept has been widely imitated but also transformed with each new context in which it was applied. In addition to many national variations,[4] new transnational models are currently being explored and tested, such as Heinz Duchardt's European lieux de mémoire or Robert Traba's and Hans Henning Hahn's impressive collaboration project on German and Polish memory sites. The new projects are often less normative and self-affirming and more self-reflexive and critical, including as they do traumatic and contested sites. Nora's holistic notion of the nation has also been exchanged for a new emphasis on different social milieus and ethnic experiences. This open and inclusive approach is of special significance at a time when nation states are undergoing a structural change and reconfiguring their memories to make room for the experience of migrant minorities. The lasting success of Nora's concept seems to lie in its great flexibility and adaptability. Its updated versions are doing much more justice to the diversity of social and regional groups and counter-memories, pointing even to gaps of oblivion—what is chosen not to be remembered.

As Said emphasized, there is a direct connection between historical memory and nation building. The power of such a memory lies not in an event but in the effective narrative rendering of the event, which aims at creating a distinct profile and positive self-image "as part of trying to gain independence. To become a nation in the formal sense of the word, a people must make itself into something more than a collection of tribes, or political organizations" (184). Said wrote this from the point of view of the Palestinians and their "inability to produce a convincing narrative story with a beginning, middle and end" (185) and who as a consequence, according to him, have remained "scattered and politically ineffective victims of Zionism" (185).

In the old framework, national memories were mainly constructed around heroic actions and heroic suffering. They are highly selective and composed in such a way that they are identity-enhancing and self-celebrating. National memories are self-serving and therein closely aligned with political myths, which Peter Sloterdijk has appropriately termed modes of "self-hypnosis." With respect to traumatic events, these myths provide effective protection shields against those events that a nation prefers to forget. When facing negative events in the past, there are only three dignified roles for the national collective to assume: that of the victor who has overcome the evil, that of the resistor who as heroically fought the evil and that of the victim who has passively suffered the evil.

Everything else lies outside the scope of these memory perspectives and is conveniently forgotten.

The new memory policy with which I am dealing differs from the old one not in abolishing national memory but in rethinking and reconfiguring it along different lines. The new memory policy has undergone a shift from a monologic to a more dialogic structure. It no longer evolves exclusively around a heroic self-image but also acknowledges historical violence, suffering and trauma within a new framework of moral and historical accountability. It was the cumulative process of the returning Holocaust memory in the 1980s that laid the ground for a profound cultural change in sensibility which in many places of the world also triggered new approaches to dealing with other historic traumas. Against this background of a new transnational awareness of the suffering of victims, forgetting was no longer considered as an acceptable policy for overcoming atrocities of the past. Remembering became a universal ethical and political claim when dealing with the dictatorships in South America, the South-African regime of apartheid, colonial history or the crime of slavery. In most of these cases, references and metaphorical allusions were made to the newly established memory icon of the Holocaust. In all of these cases, remembering rather than forgetting is chosen for its transformative power and implemented as a therapeutic tool to cleanse, to purge, to heal, to reconcile in the process of transforming a state or reintegrating a society.

Reconciliation is often proverbially connected to the two verbs forgive and forget. In these new cases, however, this is no longer the case. In the new policy, forgiving is no longer connected to forgetting but to remembering. Remembering here means recognition of the victims' memories. It is more and more agreed that without a clear facing and working through the atrocities of the past from the point of view of those who suffered, the process of social and political transformation cannot begin. This transformative power of memory plays a crucial role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) that were invented in South America when countries such as Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil transitioned from military dictatorships to democracy in the 1980s and 90s. In this process, it was the ethical concept of human rights that supported the demands to investigate a hidden past and restore it to social memory. By enforcing the moral human rights paradigm, new political and extremely influential concepts were coined such as "human rights violations" and "state terrorism." This led to the establishment of investigative commissions, which became the antecedent of later Truth commissions. The aim of TRCs is first and foremost a pragmatic one: they are designed as instruments for "mastering" (rather than memorializing) the past (see Hazan 8).[5] They emphasize the transformative value of truth and stress the importance of acts of remembrance. "'Remember, so as not to repeat' (emerged) as a message and as a cultural imperative" (see "Memories" 5; see also Jelin, *State Repression*). The new human rights framework replaced the older frameworks within which power struggles had been constructed in terms of ideologies, class struggles, national revolutions or other political antagonisms. By resorting to the universal value of bodily integrity and human rights, the new terminology depoliticized the conflict and led to the elaboration of memory policies (Jelin 6).

In the new framework of a human rights agenda and a new memory culture, also other forms of state violence could be addressed such as racial and gender discrimination, repression and the rights of indigenous people. When decades and sometimes centuries after a traumatic past justice in the full sense is no longer possible, memory was discovered as an important symbolic resource to retrospectively acknowledge these crimes against humanity. What the transnational movement of abolition was for the 19th century, the new transnational empathy with victims is for the late 19th and early 20th century. The important change is, however, that now the victims speak for themselves and claim their memories in a globalized public arena. The dissemination of their voices and their public visibility and audibility has created a new 'world ethos' that makes it increasingly difficult for state authorities to continue a repressive policy of forgetting and silence.

In the meantime we have learned that a new beginning can no longer be forged on a *tabula rasa*. The road from authoritarian to civil societies leads through the needle's eye of facing, remembering and coming to terms with a burdened past. This insight pushed the shift from the modernist frame to the memory frame that occurred in the last decades of the 20th century. It was accompanied with a return of the old memory policy, but it also brought with it a shift from monologic to dialogic memory constructs. Dialogic memory transcends the old policy by integrating two or more perspectives on a common legacy of traumatic violence. Two countries engage in a dialogic memory if they face a shared history of mutual violence by mutually acknowledging their own guilt and empathy with the suffering they have inflicted on others.

It is true that what I call "dialogic memory" is not yet backed up by a consolidated consensus but is still most conspicuous in its absence. It has, for instance, become especially manifest in the relations between Russia and Eastern European nations. While Russian memory today centers on the great patriotic war with Stalin celebrated as the national hero, the nations that broke away from Soviet power maintain a strikingly different memory of Stalin that has to do with deportations, forced labor and mass-killings. The triumphalist memory of Russia and the traumatic memory of Eastern European nations clash at the internal borders of Europe and fuel continuous irritations and conflicts. "With respect to its memories," writes Janusz Reiter, former Polish ambassador to Germany: "the European Union remains a split continent. After its extension, the line that separated the EU from other countries now runs right through it." It must be emphasized, however, that the European Union creates a challenge to the solipsistic constructions of national memory and provides an ideal framework for mutual observations, interactions and thus for dialogic remembering. As we all know, the European Union is itself the consequence of a traumatic legacy of an entangled history of unprecedented violence. If it is to develop further from an economic and political network to a community of shared values, the entangled histories will have to be transformed into sharable memories. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Buchenwald, the former prisoner of the concentration camp and late writer Jorge Semprún said: One of the most effective possibilities to forge a common future for the EU is "to share our past, our remembrance, our hitherto divided memories." And he added that the Eastern exten-

sion of the EU can only work "once we will be able to share our memories, including those of the countries of the other Europe, the Europe that was caught up in Soviet totalitarianism."

There are dark incidents that are well known to historians and emphatically commemorated by the traumatized country but utterly forgotten by the nation that was immediately responsible for the suffering. While in the mean time the Germans have learned a lot about the Holocaust, younger generations today know next to nothing about the legacy of the Second World War and the atrocities committed by Germans against, for instance, their Polish and Russian neighbors. The Warsaw uprising, a seminal event commemorated in Poland, is unknown to Germans because it is fully eclipsed by the Warsaw ghetto uprising. Germans have rightly reclaimed the fire bombing of Dresden for their national memory, but they have totally forgotten a key event of Russian memory, namely the Leningrad Blockade (1941-44) by the German Wehrmacht, through which 700,000 Russians were starved to death.[6] This event has never entered German national memory due to a lack of interest, empathy and external pressure.

Within the new memory frame, there are promising beginnings between teachers and historians of neighboring countries working on shared textbooks and mutual perceptions. Dialogic memory has a special relevance for Europe; it could produce a new type of nation state that is not exclusively grounded in pride but also accepts its dark legacies, thus ending a destructive history of violence by including the victims of this violence into one's own memory. Only such an inclusive memory, which is based on the moral standard of accountability and human rights, can credibly back up the protection of human rights in the present and support the values of a civil society in the future.

Dialogic memory, of course, can be extended also to other regions of the world. My last example is the conflict between the Israeli and the Palestinians. National memory does not only crystallize in narratives, but also around places. Sites of antagonistic and violent history are always over-determined and become contested spaces for which new narratives have yet to be created. Said had suggested that the Palestinians fell short in the process of national integration through mythmaking which deprived them of mobilizing symbols and rendered them helpless victims of Zionism. How could memory in this case unfold its transformative power? The Israeli writer Amos Oz has no hope whatsoever in such a power. He once remarked: "If I had a say in the peace talks, no matter where, in Wye, Oslo or where ever, I would instruct the sound technicians to turn off the microphones as soon as one of the negotiating parties starts talking about the past. They are paid for finding solutions for the present and the future" (83). Oz obviously argues from the point of view of the modernist frame which neatly separates the future from the past. In a conversation at Konstanz, Avishai Margalit made a similar point to me on a more pragmatic level. He summed up the problem in the formula: "No introduction of memory before the consolidation of political structures!"[7] Obviously both Oz and Margalit have little regard for the transformative power of memory. There is, however, an Israeli NGO which is built on exactly this hope in the transformative power of memory, called Zachrot, which is the female form of "Zachor," meaning Remember! This imperative is

a central obligation in the Hebrew Bible and the key to Jewish tradition and identity. The female analogy of this emphatic word was created as the name of a group of Israelis who take remembering out of a religious context and place it in a political context. Their goal is to construct a more inclusive memory on the basis of a dialogic remembering that includes alongside the Israeli memory of the Holocaust also the Palestinian memory of the Nakba, a term for the traumatic expulsion from their homes during the War of Independence in 1948. In contrast to Oz and Margalit, the group that calls itself Zachot considers this dialogic and inclusive memory an important basis for citizenship and a common future with Palestinians. This is how they summarize their position on the internet:

> Zochrot works to make the history of the Nakba accessible to the Israeli public so as to engage Jews and Palestinians in an open recounting of our painful common history. We hope that by bringing the Nakba into Hebrew, the language spoken by the Jewish majority in Israel, we can make a qualitative change in the political discourse of this region. Acknowledging the past is the first step in taking responsibility for its consequences. This must include equal rights for all the peoples of this land, including the right of Palestinians to return to their homes.[8]

**Conclusion**

Memories, to sum up, are dynamic and thus transformed over time.  What is being remembered of the past is largely dependent on the cultural frames, moral sensibilities and demands of the present. In retrospect, we can identify a shift from the modernist frame to the memory frame which occurred in the late 20th century.  During the Cold War, the memory of the Second World War was very different from what it is today; the Holocaust has moved from the periphery to the center of West European memory only during the last two decades. Other historic traumas went through shorter or longer periods of latency before they became the object of remembering and commemoration. While the old heroic and monologic memory policy continues to be in use, it is now also challenged in a new transnational if not global arena where it must coexist in a web of mutual reactions, observations, imitations, competitions and other forms of interaction.

During the last decades, the theory and use of memory have acquired a new meaning when it became obvious that memory can be both a force for refueling hatred and violence and thus maintaining and hardening divisions, as well as a therapy for integration. Depending on the use and quality of memory, the former fronts of violent conflict can be preserved or overcome. Although history has occurred and is irreversible, our knowledge and evaluation of the events can be transformed in hindsight, if we reassess them in the light of retrospective knowledge and values.

Remembering trauma evolves between the extremes of keeping the wound open (or "preservation of the past") and looking for closure (or "mastering the past"). Nor should we forget that *remembering takes place simultaneously on the separate but interrelated levels of individuals, families, society and the state.* Its transformative power works in different ways on the psychological, the moral, the political and—last but not least—the religious level when it comes to the proper burying as a prerequisite for the memory of the dead. It is precisely this cultural and religious duty of laying the dead to rest that is so shockingly disrupted after periods of excessive violence. In the case of millions of Jewish victims, there are no graves because their bodies were gassed, burnt and dissolved into air. This wound cannot therefore be closed. At other places the victims disappeared or were shot and hidden in anonymous mass graves. Some of these, relating to the Spanish civil war, are only now being reopened after 75 years (Ingendaay 40). While politicians and society have still not found a consensus for introducing these victims into a shared or sharable memory, it is up to individual family members to recover their dead and to perform these last acts of reverence.

Let me close with a final question. In an essay with the title, "Nightmares or Daydreams?" Konrad Jarausch looks back at 65 years of European memory. He sees a strong preponderance of negative memories, what he misses are positive values:

> The impressive catalogue of human rights included in the document has therefore derived its significance more from a general realization of past evils that needed to be avoided than from a specific delineation of common values that would bind the community together in the present. This failure is regrettable, because it tends to lock thinking about Europe into a negative mode. Europe has become a kind of insurance policy against the repetition of prior problems rather than a positive goal, based upon a shared vision for the future. (314)

In his assessment of European memories, Jarausch uses two categorical distinctions. The first is the neat divide between past and future that resonates with the modernist frame of thinking. As I tried to show, this simple binary has been replaced in the memory frame by a more complex interaction: in order to move forward, we have to make a detour via the past. The second distinction is the opposition between negative lessons and positive values. As I hope to have shown, this neat distinction does not work in the case of recent European history where the positive values of human rights, recognition of suffering, respect for the other and historical accountability were distilled from negative lessons. Since the Europeans gained these values in the course of their history, remembering this history including its errors, violence and inmeasurable crimes, is their way to adopt and ascertain these values. This new form of remembering deviates strikingly from the old (and I would even say: default) monologic mode that focuses exclusively on national heroism and national suffering by embracing also one's own guilt and the suffering of the others. It is this twist that transforms a negative history into a positive memory built on values that open up a new common future. I would like to claim that the specific

European heritage lies in this civil transformation of its own violent history into transnational orientations and new connecting bonds. I follow Adam Michnik who has succinctly defined this European heritage:

> The European Union emerged out of the negation of totalitarian dictatorships which were full of atrocities and barbarism. The European values are humanism and tolerance, equal dignity for all citizens, freedom of the individual, solidarity with the weak and political pluralism. It is this testimony and value system that Europe can bring to the world. (6)

For my generation the unexpectedly long peaceful phase in Europe comes as an unexpected and—especially from the point of view of Germans—an utterly undeserved gift. I am deeply grateful to the Europeans for transforming the nightmare of their history into a vision which they now have the potential to make real. The history they look back on is a particularly heavy burden and a great challenge to commemoration. This is true, above all, of the trauma of the Holocaust, which has created a national, European and trans-European memory. As appreciation of the value of human dignity was won from the most extreme destruction of that human dignity, the positive significance of this value remains linked to its negative genesis (cf. Hans Joas). The same applies to war and post-war traumas, for the joint remembrance of a violent history is the most effective way of overcoming the conditions that made it possible in the first place. Historical violence has driven the nations of Europe apart, dialogic forms of remembering can—in spite of lingering tensions and invisible barriers—bring them closer together. The shared house of Europe gains in stability in proportion to the commitment that Europeans display in becoming inhabitants of their shared history.

### Notes

All translations are mine.

[1] The peace treaty (Instrumentum Pacis Osnabrugensis of 24th October 1648) contains the following article: "Both sides grant each other a perpetual forgetting and amnesty concerning every aggressive act committed in any place in any way by both parties here aand there since the beginning of the war" (Buschmann 17).

[2] The term was used in 1983 in a retrospective description by Hermann Lübbe ("kollektives Beschweigen." See: A. Assmann 76–78.)

[3] Thanks to Marco Duranti for drawing my attention to this speech.

[4] Just as: Denmark 1991/92; Netherlands 1993; Italy 1987/88; Austria 2000, Germany 2001, and Luxemburg 2007 (Kreis 3).

[5] The edition of May 2007 is dedicated to the problem of re-establishing justice after armed conflicts.

[6] To quote from a recent historical account: The siege of Leningrad was "an integral part of the unprecedented German war of extermination against the civilian population of the Soviet Union… Considering the number of victims and the permanence of the

terror, it was the greatest catastrophe that hit a city during the Second World War. The city was cut off from the outside world for almost 900 days from 7 September to 27 January 1944" (Ganzenmüller 20; see also: Jahn 90).

⁷ Conversation with Avishai Margalit in the Inselhotel, Konstanz in November 2006 where he gave the opening lecture of a conference on "Civil Wars."

⁸ http://www.nakbainhebrew.org/index.php?lang=english (20 March 2007)

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# Communicative and Cultural Memory

**Jan Assmann**

The past exists—if it can be said to exist at all—in a double form: as sedimentation of relics, traces and personal memories on the one hand, and as a social construction on the other. This doubleness applies already to our personal past which is with us in all kinds of internal memory traces and external memory symbols, but also as an image or narrative we construe and carry with us as our autobiographical or episodic memory. As Maurice Halbwachs has shown, even our autobiographical memory is a social construction which we build up in communication with others. Only in its first aspect, as a sedimentation or unstructured archive, it can be said to be strictly personal (Halbwachs). As a social construction or narrative, the past conveys a kind of connective structure or diachronic identity to societies, groups and individuals, both in the social and in the temporal dimension.

Memory is knowledge with an identity-index. This is not to say that this knowledge is all about oneself; on the contrary, it refers to all kinds of things of the outward and the inward worlds, but with a strong link to an idea of "self" that accompanies this knowledge and sets it off against normal, identity-neutral knowledge. In memory theory, this self-reference is called the "autonoetic" function of memory (Markowitsch and Welzer). It is by virtue of this function that memory provides what I would call a "connective structure" both to persons and societies (see Jan Assmann *Early Civilization*). This connective structure seems to be a human specificity based on the exclusively human faculties of symbolization and communication. A human self is a "diachronic identity," built "of the stuff of time" (Luckmann 67-91). Human memory brings about a synthesis of time and identity, both on the collective and on the personal level which may be called a diachronic identity. It is this identity which allows human beings both personally and collectively to orient themselves in time. This applies to the future as well as to the past. Due to our memory, we are able to think in temporal horizons far beyond our birth and our death.

This connection between time, identity and memory can be shown to work on the three levels of the individual, the social and the cultural. As we may distinguish between the *inner* time of our physical self, the *social* time we share with others and the *historical* or *mythical* time, we may distinguish between individual, social and cultural memory. Maurice Halbwachs developed the concept of social or "collective" memory. He was

careful, however, to keep this concept apart from the realm of traditions, transmissions and transferences which we propose to subsume under the term "cultural memory." We preserve Halbwachs' distinction by breaking up his concept of collective memory into "communicative" and "cultural memory," but we insist on treating the cultural sphere, which he excluded, as another form of memory. We are, therefore, not arguing for replacing his idea of "collective memory" with "cultural memory"; rather, we distinguish between both forms as two different modi memorandi, ways of remembering.

We may thus distinguish between embodied and embedded memory. Personal memory is embodied in our brain and neuro-mental system, social memory is embedded in the constellations of social communication but still embodied in the brains of the participants and cultural memory is neatly disembodied, exteriorized, objectified and embedded in cultural institutions such as rituals, feasts, texts, archives, all kinds of symbolic forms that, unlike the sounds of words or the sight of gestures are stable and situation-transcendant, able to be transferred from one situation to another and transmitted from one generation to another. In order to work as a memory, however, its symbolic forms have not only to be preserved but also to be circulated and reembodied in a society. The disembodied status of cultural memory is a reason for its not having been recognized as a form of memory until recently. Memory, the argument runs, requires a mind. Therefore, things like Marcel Proust's famous Madeleine, or monuments, archives, libraries, anniversaries, feasts, icons, symbols, land- and town-scapes cannot have or carry memory, because they lack a mind. This objection, however, rests on a complete misunderstanding. Neither Proust nor Halbwachs nor anyone else who uses the term "collective memory" ever held that collective or cultural memory "exists in something that has no mind." Things do not "have" a memory of their own, but they may remind us, may trigger our memory because they carry our memories which we have invested into them, things such as dishes, feasts, rites, images, texts, landscapes, and so forth. This interaction between a remembering mind and a reminding object is the reason why the realm of things and especially of the things *meant as reminders*, that is, monuments and lieux de mémoire have to be included into our concept of memory. Moreover, groups do not "have" a memory in the way individuals do, but they may "make" themselves a memory by erecting monuments, cherishing their lieux de mémoire and by developing a variety of cultural (mnemo-)techniques supporting memory or promoting forgetting.

This institutional character does not apply to what Halbwachs called collective memory and what we propose to rename communicative memory. Communicative memory is non-institutional; it is not supported by any institutions of learning, transmission and interpretation, it is not cultivated by specialists and is not summoned or celebrated on special occasions; it is not formalized and stabilized by any form of material symbolization but lives in everyday interaction and communication and, for this very reason, has only a limited time depth which normally reaches not farther back than 80 years, the time span of three interacting generations. Change of constellations and of frames brings about forgetting; the durability of memories depends on the durability of social bonds and "frames" (see J. Assmann, "Cultural Memory" and A. Assmann "Memory").

Jan Vansina, an anthropologist who worked with tribal societies in Africa, devoted an important study to the form in which they represent the past (Vansina). He observed a tripartite structure. The recent past which looms large in interactive communication has a limited depth in time, reaching not beyond three generations. Concerning a more remote past, there is either a total gap of information or one or two names are produced with great hesitation. Since this gap shifts with the succession of generations, Vansina calls it the "Floating gap." For the most remote past, however, there is again a profusion of information dealing with traditions about the origin of the world and the early history of the tribe. This information, however, is not committed to everyday communication but intensely formalized and institutionalized. It exists in forms of narratives, songs, dances, rituals, masks and symbols; specialists such as narrators, bards, mask-carvers and others are organized in guilds and have to undergo long periods of initiation, instruction and examination. Moreover, it requires for its actualization certain occasions when the community comes together for some celebration or other. This is what we propose to call "cultural memory."

Vansina's "Floating Gap" higlights the difference between communicative and cultural memory. The communicative memory contains memories that an individual shares with his contemporaries. This is what Halbwachs understood by "collective memory" and what forms the object of Oral History, that branch of historical research that bases itself not on the usual written sources of historiography, but exclusively on memories gained in oral interviews. All studies in Oral History confirm that even in literate societies where the border between communicative and cultural memory is much less pronounced than in purely oral societies, living memory goes no further back than 80 years after which, separated by the floating gap, come, instead of myths of origin, the dates from schoolbooks and monuments.

Cultural memory is based on fixed points in the past. Even here, however, the past is not preserved as such but is galvanized in symbols as they are represented in oral myths or in writings, performed in feasts, and as they continually illuminate a changing present. In the context of cultural memory, the distinction between myth and history vanishes. Not the past as such, as it is investigated and reconstructed by archaeologists and historians, counts for the cultural memory, but only the past as it is *remembered*, that is, the past with an identity-index. Cultural memory reaches back into the past only so far as the past can be reclaimed as "ours." This is why we refer to this form of historical consciousness as "memory" and not just as knowledge about the past. While knowledge has no form and is endlessly progressive, memory involves forgetting. It is only by forgetting what lies outside the horizon of the relevant that it performs an identity-function. Nietzsche circumscribed this function by notions such as "plastic power" and "horizon," obviously intending the same thing for which now the term "identity" has become generally accepted (Nietzsche).

The difference between communicative and cultural memory expresses itself also in the social dimension, in the structure of participation. The participation of a group in communicative memory is diffuse. It has been acquired by the participants along with

language and social competence. There are no specialists of communicative memory. The cultural memory, by contrast, has always its specialists. To these belong shamans, bards, griots as well as priests, teachers, artists, clerks, scholars, mandarins, rabbis, mullas and however these specialized carriers of memory are called.

But even where the sacred tradition is committed to writing, memorisation plays the central role. There is, however, still another sense in which the participation in cultural memory may be structured in a society. This concerns the question of restricted knowledge, of secrecy and esotericism. Every traditional society knows areas of restricted knowledge whose boundaries are not simply defined by the different capacities of human memory and understanding, but also by questions of access and initiation. In Judaism, for example, general participation is required in the Torah which every (male) member of the group is supposed to know by heart. Specialized participation concerns the world of Talmudic and Medieval commentaries, codices and midrash, a vast body of literature that only specialists can master. Secrecy, however, shrouds the esoteric world of Cabbala, to which only select adepts (and after they have reached the age of 40 years) are admitted. The participation structure of cultural memory has an inherent tendency to elitism; it is never strictly egalitarian. Cultivating one's cultural memory means accumulating symbolic capital. Some have to prove their degree of admittance by formal exams (as in traditional China); or by the mastery of linguistic registers (as in England) or of the "*Citatenschatz des deutschen Volkes*" (treasure of German quotations) as in 19th century Germany. Others remain systematically excluded from this "distinguished" knowledge like the women in ancient Greece, traditional China and orthodox Judaism or the lower classes in the heydays of German "*Bildungsbürgertum*."

Transitions and Transformations account for the dynamics of cultural memory. Two typical directions have a structural significance and need to be at least briefly mentioned in this context. One concerns the transition from autobiographical and communicative memory into cultural memory, and the other concerns, within cultural memory, the move from the back stage to down stage, from the periphery into the center, from latency or potentiality to manifestation or actualization and vice-versa. These shifts presuppose structural boundaries which are to be crossed: the boundary between embodied and mediated forms of memory, and the boundary between what Aleida Assmann proposes to call "working" and "storage memories" or "canon" and "archive" (A. Assmann, *Memory*). We are presently living through a period of transition from communicative to cultural memory; the main problem is how to preserve the personal memories of holocaust survivors and other eye witnesses to the catastrophes in the context of World War II and how to transform them into durable forms of cultural memory that may be transmitted to later generations.

The biblical book of Deuteronomy offers a striking parallel to this situation (J. Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, 191-205). The problem then was how to preserve the memory of the generation who has witnessed the events in the context of the exodus from Egypt and the revelation of the Law into the cultural memory of a society that could be handed down to an infinite number of future generations. The aim of this text is to teach both

what to remember and how to remember, that is, both the lesson that must never be forgotten and the mnemotechnique that ensures its continuous transmission. Moses outlines a full-fledged mnemotechnique of individual and collective remembering.

The book of Deuteronomy is the foundational text of a religion based on a covenant between one single god and a chosen people. In this new religion, memory is to play the central role. It deals with a revolutionary change of cultural memory. Normally, cultural memory is not instituted this way but accumulates and changes in the course of centuries. The mnemotechnique of Moses belongs more to political than to cultural memory (for this distinction see A. Assmann, "Memory"). Political memory is highly normative, pre-scribing what must by no means be forgotten in order to form and to belong to a po-litical identity. The case of Deuteronomy closely corresponds to this concept as it follows and elaborates a model that belongs to the political sphere. It is a ritual that Esarhaddon of Assyria had introduced to make a memory for the vassals of his empire. First, they had to travel to Niniveh in order to swear an oath of loyalty to Esarhaddon and his desig-nated successor Assurbanipal. Then, in order not to forget this oath once they have returned to their home cities, they must annually perform a ritual that will refresh their memory. This ritual is dedicated to the goddess Ishtar of Arbela.

> Water from a sarsaru-jar, she (Ishtar of Arbela) let them drink,
> a goblet of 1 Seah (= ca. 6 l.) she filled with water from the sarsaru-jar and presented it to them saying:
> In your hearts you will speak thus: Ishtar, a narrow one is she! (meaning: only a local deity, ignorant of what is going on far off)
> thus: you will return to your cities and will eat bread in your districts, and will forget these contractual stipulations
> Thus: You will drink from this water and again remember and observe these contractual stipulations which I set up concerning Esarhaddon. (J. Assmann, *Ten Studies*, 10)

Out of this and certainly a lot of similar rituals of memory to be periodically repeated, Deuteronomy develops an entire culture of remembrance and a life-form which we have come to understand by the term "religion" and which then became the model for later world-religions, such as Christianity and Islam. This new type of religion comprises much more than just cult, it extends to every aspect of life and especially focuses on justice and morality; it develops not out of pagan cults but out of the political system which it means to supersede as a form of liberation, emancipation and enlightenment. It thus represents a totally new form both of religion and of socio-political organisation, which is primar-ily based on memory.

Again we meet with the connection between memory and society. Memory enables us to live in groups and communities and living in groups and communities enables us to build a memory. This connection between memory and belonging is not only a mat-ter of self-regulating or "auto-poietic" evolution as Halbwachs presented it to be. It is

also a matter of political institution or fabrication. Both remembering and belonging have normative aspects. If you want to belong, you MUST remember: ZAKHOR, remember, is *the* Jewish imperative (Yerushalmi).

Also the Assyrian mnemotechnique was meant as the foundation of a political memory, were memory is an obligation. If you want to belong to the Assyrian empire and be safe from its political violence: remember the loyalty oath you have sworn. If you forget, you will be punished and expelled. But here, the memory is still purely ritual; whereas the Deuteronomic mnemotechnique is primarily based on written and oral language. As a form of memory, ritual is based on repetition. Each performance must follow as closely as possible a fixed model in order to make the actual performance resemble in every respect the previous ones. Thus, the flow of time is brought into a pattern that combines the irreversible and the reversible, the passing time and the returning time. Human life and social institutions are, thus, rescued from just passing away, decaying and vanishing, but are integrated into the natural cycles of regeneration. Repetition is a form of preservation, thus, of memory.

The decisive difference between ritual memory and the Torah, for example, is the fact that the first is known only to specialists who have to learn it by heart, whereas the latter is taught to everybody and every member of the community is expected to know it by heart. If, in civilizations following the ritual model, the cultural memory which is stored in specialized memories is to be made public and to circulate in general communication, it is during some feasts when the larger public is admitted to the public performance of rituals and to listening to the recitation of the sacred texts. This difference in participation is very clearly brought to the fore in a passage from Josephus' pamphlet *Contra Apionem*:

> Can any government be more holy than this? or any Religion better adapted to the nature of the Deity? Where, in any place but in this, are the whole People, by the special diligence of the Priests, to whom the care of public instruction is committed, accurately taught the principles of true piety? So that the body-politic seems, as it were, one great Assembly, constantly kept together, for the celebration of some sacred Mysteries. For those things which the Gentiles keep up for a few days only that is, during those solemnities they call Mysteries and Initiations, we, with vast delight, and a plenitude of knowledge, which admits of no error, fully enjoy, and perpetually contemplate through the whole course of our lives. (193ff)

In spite of their extensive use of memorisation and even writing, the "pagan" religions were still relying on ritual continuity. Rituals and texts are both solutions of the problem how to make the transient permanent and thus to establish continuity. This is also the problem of memory and in this, both may be seen as media of memory. Rituals secure the transient by iteration, texts by duration.

Textual continuity is only achieved when institutions of learning and exegesis arise that keep the ancient texts alive and semantically transparent. Since the texts themselves must not be altered, exegesis and commentary are the only means of innovation and of

preserving the meaning of the texts in a changing world. All of the new religions that emerged since antiquity, most of them monotheistic and most of them in antagonistic opposition to older traditions and other religions which they reject as paganism, develop canons of sacred scripture and commentaries that translate the canonical texts into changing realities and conditions of understanding: Judaism and the Tanakh, Christianity and the Christian Bible, Islam and the Qur'an, Buddhism and the Pali-Canon, Jainism and the Jaina-Canon, Sikh religion and the Adi Granth, Daoism, Confucianism, etc. down to the Mormons and the Book Mormon. This strong alliance between religions of this new type, the so-called "world-religions," and the formation of canons and commentaries illustrates once again the connection between memory and identity. The transition from ritual to textual continuity means a complete reorganisation of cultural memory in the same way as the transition from the ethnically and culturally determined religions of the Ancient world to the new type of transcultural and transnational world religions meant a totally new construction of identity. The canon, in a way, functioned as a new transethnical home-land and as a new trans-cultural formation and education.

Western cultural memory, however, is informed not only by the biblical canon but also by a parallel canon of Greek and Latin literature. It was the great achievement of Irish monks and Byzantine scholars, people working on the periphery of the ancient world, to have copied and thus rescued alongside religious literature a considerable part of pagan literature of Classical antiquity. There is no time to go into any details here, but this second canon should at least be mentioned, since we are dealing with a somewhat parallel project. More or less at the same time as the final redaction of the Biblical canon, the Alexandrinian philologists started to collect and to select the Greek literature by compiling lists of those works and authors that deserved to be edited and commented upon (*hoi prattomenoi*). These are the authors whom Aulus Gellius classified as "classici" employing the denomination of the first class of Roman taxpayers as a metaphor for the most important literary works and authors. Canonisation and classicism are typical phenomena in the organisation of a cultural memory, not only in the West but everywhere where writing plays a fundamental role. In our Western tradition we observe not only several epochs and movements of a return to antiquity, of classicisms such as the Renaissance in Italy, the 17th century in France, the "Augustan Age" in England and the decades around 1790 in Germany, but we also observe the formation of "Golden Ages" to which later epochs have recourse to, such as the Elizabethan Age in England, the epoch of Louis XIV in France, the time of Schiller and Goethe at Weimar or Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven at Vienna (Vosskamp). The latter case is especially revealing since in music there is no possibility of a return to antiquity.

The distinction between the classical and the sacred canon lies in the fact that the sacred canon is closed and can only be amplified or modified by commentaries whereas the classical canon is open because every epoch except antiquity which is fixed may become an object of recourse, recycling and reference for another epoch and the canon of "classics" changes and rearranges itself around a central stock of unquestionable works with every new work which is admitted to the canon. One cannot deny, however, even

to the classical canon a certain religious character. It seems evident that art, philosophy and religion have common roots and these roots lay in nothing other but cultural memory.

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# Lieux de mémoire in a Comparative Perspective

**Pim den Boer**

Pierre Nora started the Lieux de mémoire-project in 1977 by using the old concept of lieux de mémoire with a new meaning and programmatic significance. In antiquity the loci memoriae were necessary mnemotechnics in a society without modern media. For Cicero and Quintillian the loci memoriae were practical mental tools without any ideology. However Nora's lieux de mémoire were extremely ideological, full of nationalism, loaded with value judgments. Most lieux de mémoire were invented or reworked to serve the present and future of the nation-state. Lieux de mémoire were part of the identity-politics of the French nation to imprint the key-notions of national history on the minds of French citizens.

When Pierre Nora wrote the introduction to the first volume, published in 1984, he was convinced that the future of France lay in European integration. According to Nora it was necessary to make an inventory of the French lieux de mémoire before the disappearance of the most evident symbols of our memory: national celebrations and festivities, emblems, monuments, commemorations, but also dictionaries and museums (vii).

The first volume was about the identity politics of the French Republic, the later volumes were less focalized and more heterogeneous. The first volume contained different essays on the symbols and monuments of republican universalism: the national flag, in fact the "tricolour" of the Revolution, the Pantheon celebrating the national heroes of the Revolution, the schoolbooks of the national historical education, the institution of the annual celebration on the Quatorze Juillet, commemorations of Voltaire and Rousseau, the philosophers of the Revolution, the Centenary in 1889 of the French Revolution. In the later volumes the national symbols and monuments lacked a universal republican dimension, but were purely elements of French nationalism.

Compared to national lieux de mémoire projects of other countries it is the republican universalism that makes the difference. It makes also the difference between the identity politics of other political regimes: the two French monarchies and the two French empires of the nineteenth century. The non-republican French political regimes were as authoritarian exclusive and historical orientated as other European monarchies and empires.

**Changing contexts in western and eastern Europe**

While Nora and his collaborators were working on the following three volumes on *La Nation* and the closing three volumes on *Les France* the European context in West and East was completely changing. In 1998, after the victory of Solidarność in Poland, the communist regimes in eastern Europe came to an end, the fall of the Berlin wall on the 9th of November 1989 became the icon of the regime-change. While in eastern Europe hopes for a better future were invested in European unification, in western European countries already a nationalist reaction became visible against further European integration. The magic spell of "Europe 1992," a future Europe without frontiers, proclaimed by Jacques Delors's famous white-book on the European Union, was broken. In the founding member states of the European Community like France and the Netherlands the anti-European voices were loudly raised. In the scholarly communities of western European countries a new interest for national history and culture was put on the research agenda. The projects of national lieux de mémoire became colored by these new interests in the history of the fatherland. In a certain way this renewed interest in national history resembled the nineteenth century identity politics of European countries.

**Vive La Nation**

The teaching of history for the entire population was introduced in European countries during the nineteenth century in the process of nation-building. The political modernization created a national system of education. The education of their children was one of the most important attractions nation-states could offer their citizens. Teaching history for the age group from six to sixteen would become compulsory in every nation-building process. In the new history textbooks the nation-state was raison d'être of the past, present and future. The growth of the nation since the fall of the Roman Empire became the master narrative of history schoolbooks. The concept of the nation, electrified and spread by the revolutionary slogan "Vive La Nation," has been most effective to demolish the power and property of the old order during the revolutionary period. The birth of the nation became projected even further away in the past. The Nation became the dominating concept extrapolated in the past, even in centuries far away, long before the Revolution took place. The past was successfully nationalized.

**The Dutch Revolt as example of the 19th century nationalization of history**

Let me illustrate with an example from my own country in the radical change in historical understanding brought about by the introduction of the national prospective since the nineteenth century. As in other European countries, the Netherlands in the second half of the nineteenth century institutionalized national history education. The Dutch Revolt of the sixteenth century became worshipped as the birth of the Dutch nation. The historical events and protagonists were rediscovered and the national context invented. Even the notion of a "Dutch Revolt" is an anachronism. For the sixteenth century contemporaries it was *civil* war in which religious oppositions played an extremely important role. The best documented contemporary 16th century history did not ment-

ion the Dutch Revolt or National Liberation in its title but Dutch (civil) wars, troubles and civil discords (see Bor). In the nineteenth century all over Europe events that happened long before the nation came into existence were re-interpreted in the national framework. This nationalization of the past was part of an all embracing process of political modernization, nation building and national identity politics.

### Contested lieux de mémoire

Since the end of the twentieth century the lieux de mémoire projects have become politically highly sensitive and contested. In a certain way it was the consequence of the historiographical research of the lieux de mémoire which often resulted in the deconstruction of the nineteenth-century construction of the lieux de mémoire of the new born nation. With the rise of post-colonial studies all kinds of present tensions are intermingled with interpretations of the past. From post-colonial prospective the memory-boom is memory-war. The sites of national memory are not innocent places but sites of memory-wars and battlefields of retro-active justice. The contested lieux de mémoire constitute vindications of past sufferings and historical claims for present compensation. Let me give two examples from French and British colonial history.

For France a recent study by Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch demonstrates that the republican universalism was anything but universal, it was white coloured. After the "fracture sociale" nowadays the "fracture coloniale" arouses sharp antagonism and the slave trade is even compared to the holocaust. Extremely sharp polemics followed the publication of a global history of the slave trade. The author was accused of banalization by comparing the trans-Atlantic slave trade with slave trade in Ancient history, in the Arab world and by mentioning the role of African chiefs in the enslavement of the blacks. The author even called abolitionism a western concept. During the session of the committee on the memorial laws of the French parliament, when Pierre Nora was asked as an expert to answer questions of the members of the committee, on the public tribune a banderol was deployed (Nora 2004).[1]

My second example is the "Indian Mutiny" of 1857 from British colonial history. From the British imperial prospective it was the beginning and the legitimisation of strong British rule over India. From the Indian perspective it is far from a mutiny but the first great and heroic revolt against foreign rule. In India the revolt of 1857 is still an important event, a crucial episode in national history and a lieu de mémoire. But in Great Britain? For how many inhabitants of England today does the mutiny of 1857 still have any relevance? The British empire is gone for ever and so the British imperial prospective has disappeared.

Jay Winter, a great Australian specialist on the memories of the First World War, insists on the "hybrid character of colonial and post-colonial sites of memory." He likes to use the word "palimpsest" as something that is re-used or altered but still bears visible traces of its earlier form. He mentions the necessity "to update the notion of lieux de mémoire, to reflect increasingly the cosmopolitan nature of the world in which we live" (Sengupta 172). That sounds like the music of angels. Human beings frustrated and traumatised,

demand retro-active justice, if not compensation. That is what we experience today in the present political debates.

### Comparing lieux de mémoire

Since the 1990s projects on national lieux de mémoire have been published in Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and other countries. The growing interest in national history led publishers to stimulate this new kind of writing national history. Its success was boosted by nostalgia and a renewed interest in national history among the general public. On a more practical level the organisation of the lieux de mémoire project as a collective work of a series of case studies by different authors fitted very well in modern historical research habits. Another stimulus was the proliferation of the concept of lieux de mémoire. An important factor was the vagueness of the concept, nearly anything could be described as lieu de mémoire. A dazzling variety of historical subjects seems to be covered by the notion "lieu de mémoire."

Even before the publication of the French project was finished  a fascinating new dimension was added to the national enterprises by the introduction of a comparative approach (Nora, *Lieux*, vol. 3). Nora himself was reluctant. He insisted on the "spécificité française." The title of his contribution to the conference on Lieux de mémoire et identités nationales: La France et les Pays Bas in 1992 intended to stimulate comparative history was "La notion de  lieu de mémoire  est-elle exportable?" (see den Boer). Nora's question as such was already answered because the notion was *de facto* exported and used frequently in other countries for comparable projects. Later on Nora described how he lost control over the notion he initially designed—with the mixed feelings of a father who sees his son grow up ("Les Lieux de mémoire ou comment," 400–404).

Perhaps the comparison of a great country as France with a small one as the Netherlands is somewhat disproportionate, but some similarities in the nineteenth-century nation building process are striking. For example, in both countries national festivities were inaugurated at nearly the same time in the 1880s. The French Third Republic adopted Quatorze Juillet (the day of the fall of the Bastille prison, symbol of the repressive Ancien Régime) as the national anniversary. In the Netherlands August 31, the birthday of the future queen Wilhelmina, was instituted as the national holiday. In this context the famous expression "the invention of tradition" is not an entirely appropriate one (see Hobsbawm). In the French case an already existing revolutionary tradition was transformed into a national republican holiday. In the Dutch case the anniversary of the crown princess was promoted as a national feast. In France the intention was to commemorate and propagate republican principles. In the Netherlands the aim was to embrace the monarchy and to forget the republican past. In France the institution of the Quatorze Juillet was considered as a provocation to right wing politicians who still believed in the restoration of crown and altar or a Bonapartist Empire. In the Netherlands the institution of August 31 as the national holiday was intended as a pacification of political tensions existing between Liberals, Catholics and Protestants. The new feast in honor of the lovable young princess, free from the bad reputation of her father (King William III), was acceptable to all par-

ties. A significant difference was that in France the republican government ordered Quatorze Juillet top-down and for all of France, while in the Netherlands the initiative for August 31 came bottom-up from private pressure groups at the local level (Te Velde 105–106).

Recently a fascinating initiative in the comparative history of lieux de mémoire was initiated by a large project of Polish-German sites of memory directed by Robert Traba and Hans Henning Hahn at the Center for Historical Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Berlin. Tannenberg is an example of an incredible entangled history of successive commemorations and monuments. The latest chapter to this history is the multinational proposition to build a world peace monument on this site.[2]

### National lieux de mémoire in comparative perspective

To compare explicitly lieux de mémoire of different nations is one thing, to put the national lieux de mémoire in comparative perspective is quite another. At the start of the Hungarian project which offers such an extraordinary complex variety of lieux de mémoire I hope it is not considered impolite to suggest opening up the Hungarian project to a comparative European perspective. One of the dangers of a national project is to operate from a national tunnel vision as if, for example, the Dutch or Hungarian sites of memory can be properly studied without their European context. Not only Hungarian historiography, but also monuments and commemorations offer comparative perspectives. For example, Antonio Bonfini's chronicle written in Latin according to humanist principles and Ignácz Aurél Fessler's enlightened history written in German along with Mihály Horváth's history written in Hungarian, inspired by Romanticism, are all part of historiographical genres, taking account of the past according to contemporary ideals in European culture.

As for the monuments and commemorations there are, of course considerable differences between the success and failure of nation building among European countries, between the process of political modernisation and the different power constellations. The tragic events of the repression of the 1848 Revolution created an important opportunity for commemoration and national identity politics. The ferocious repression by the Habsburg Empire remains part of a European context and is structurally comparable with the commemoration of the victims of those tragic events. The crushing defeat of the Habsburg Empire at Königgrätz in Bohemia created the conditions as well for German unification and imperial nation building under Prussian hegemony as well as for the amazing successful Hungarian nation building, Magyar national identity politics and commemorative ceremonies.

From that moment on the pantheonizaion of the Kerepesi cemetery began with the reburial of Count Lajos Batthyány in 1870. The creation of a Magyar Pantheon has striking structural similarities with the French example of pantheonization and subsequent similar commemoration processes of national heroes in other countries. Yet the millennium celebrations in 1896 and its astonishing statuemania have hardly any equivalent in Europe. The following complicated history of the rearrangement of Magyar heroes is directly related to the successive regime changes in Hungarian history. Although the

millennium monument reflects unique aspects of Hungarian history, the monumentalization as such is in its structure comparable with the national identity politics of other European nations. Likewise, the history paintings of Munkácsy and others, commemorating the settlement and christianization of the Magyar nation portrayed by legendary heroes, fit into a great European artistic tradition.

In the aftermath of the First World War and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the ephemeral existence of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and the foundation of the USSR added a new 20th century chapter to the universalistic values of the French Revolution. But during the Interbellum and the first years of the Second World War the national Hungarian identity politics and its lieux de mémoire were dominated by counter revolutionary commemoration and monumentalization, without a universal dimension. As in other periods these strong national and often also racial identity politics were also European phenomena. After the disintegration of the old empires and the subsequent creation of a great number of new nation states, European culture was during the Interbellum dominated by nation building and national identity politics like never before.

After the Second World War with the installation of a communist regime the tide turned again. Especially after the repression of the revolution of 1956 the Hungarian government initiated an ambitious pantheonization of the martyrs who died for the progress of mankind. The politburo decided that instead of the inscription "they died for the People" the text on the Pantheon of the working class should be "they lived for Communism and for the People" (Rév 109–114). The rediscovered remains of the Hungarian Jacobins, beheaded in 1795, were reburied in the Working Class Pantheon at the Kerepesi cemetery.

Also transferred were the remains of Leó Frankel, the Hungarian commissioner of labour in the Paris Commune of 1871 and member of the general counsel of the First International who was buried at Père Lachaise. Since the remains of Béla Kun could not be found, his name was inscribed on a pylon. Also those "who fell while fighting the counter revolution" were buried as heroes of the working class. I refrain from comment. I just want to finish by quoting the alleged last words of Madame Roland (1793), guillotined in front of a statue of liberty: "Oh Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name?" Even the most tragic lieux de mémoire in national history offer a comparative perspective.

### Notes

[1] Nora was the publisher of the book of Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau: *Les traites négrières.*

[2] The nations involved were Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Romania, Moldavia and Germany (Keck-Szajbel 11–17).

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# 2. Discussion / Diskussion

# Kollektives Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaften
(Diskussionseröffnung)

**Pál S. Varga**

> „Geschichte und Gedächtnis [bilden] keine Opposition […], sondern [sind] auf komplexe Weise miteinander verschränkt […], Geschichte existiert, wie wir immer deutlicher erkennen, in einem doppelten Modus: es gibt »Geschichte-als-Wissenschaft« und es gibt »Geschichte-als-Gedächtnis.«"
> *(A. Assmann 2000, 204.)*

1. Die Geschichtswissenschaft ist von ihrem Ursprung her dem kollektiven Gedächtnis entgegengesetzt, weil ihr Seinsmodus sich von dem des letzteren sehr deutlich unterscheidet.

a) Die Geschichtswissenschaft – unabhängig von ihrem jeweiligen Gegenstand und den Änderungen ihrer jeweiligen methodologischen Überlegungen – verhält sich als ein erkennendes Subjekt, das „die Vergangenheit selbst" als Gegenstand der Erkenntnis vorstellt, während sich das kollektive Gedächtnis zur Vergangenheit nicht im Modus der Subjekt–Objekt-Relation, sondern des In-Seins verhält („das Gedächtnis ist Leben", Nora 1990, 12). Das Wesen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses liegt in der Funktion, die es in der jeweiligen Gegenwart ausübt, das Wesen der Geschichtswissenschaft aber in der Wahrheit, die von den Interessen der Gegenwart unabhängig sein soll. Der Unterschied ist konstitutiv: die Funktion einer mythischen, entstellten, erfundenen, verfälschten Vergangenheit zeigt sich oft genug eben an Momenten, wo sie von der historisch belegten Vergangenheit abweicht (vgl. J. Assmann 1998, 27).

Das kollektive Gedächtnis gehört keinesfalls auf eine selbstverständliche Weise zum „In-Sein" – jedes Individuum eignet sich die nicht persönliche Vergangenheit durchs Lernen an, sie wird aber zum Element seiner Identität. – „The collective memory […] has to be acquired via learning, but only through internalization and rites of participation does it create the identity of a »we.«" (A. Assmann 2008, 52) Die angeeignete kollektive Vergangenheit wird schließlich zu einem grundlegenden Element der Eigensphäre der Persönlichkeit – beispielsweise können die kollektiven Traumen der Vergangenheit, welche das Individuum persönlich nicht erlebt hat, in ihm dennoch mit der Kraft von erlebten individuellen Traumen weiterwirken (Elias 1990, 27).

b) Die Entgegensetzung von kollektivem Gedächtnis und Geschichte stammt von Maurice Halbwachs (Halbwachs 1967, 66–76). Man kann zwar behaupten, dass Halbwachs mit dieser Entgegensetzung „einen positivistischen Begriff der Geschichte" vertritt (J. Assmann 1992, 43), aber der Unterschied der zwei Seinsmodi im Verhältnis zur Vergangenheit bleibt grundsätzlich unaufhebbar. Die Geschichtswissenschaften sind an

der reflektierten Betrachtung der Geschichte interessiert, und daran ändert nichts, dass auch der Geschichtswissenschaftler in der Geschichte steht, die er betrachtet (siehe 2. a.). „Die Geschichte als Wissenschaft [...] tritt uns entgegen als kritisch-distanzierte Anwendung fester Regeln für die Interpretation und Analyse von Quellen und Überresten aus der Vergangenheit, mit dem Anspruch auf Überprüfbarkeit und objektive Gültigkeit ihrer Ergebnisse. Teilnahme, Emotion und Subjektivität gefährden den wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisprozess und werden, wenn auch nicht immer erfolgreich, zurückgedrängt." (François/Schulze 2002, 14) Das Gedächtnis derselben Vergangenheit ist je nach Erinnerungsgemeinschaften unterschiedlich (siehe Sieger- und Verlierergedächtnis, Opfer- und Tätergedächtnis usw.), während ihre wissenschaftliche Repräsentation – prinzipiell – derselben Art, nämlich „identitätsneutral" sein soll.

c) Die verschiedenen Seinsmodi von Geschichtswissenschaft und kollektivem Gedächtnis zeigt uns gerade die Gedächtnisgeschichte (Mnemohistorie); auch sie ist eine Geschichtswissenschaft, weil sie das kollektive Gedächtnis als Gegenstand erforscht. Indem sie die ereignisgeschichtliche Wahrheit in Klammern setzt, will sie die Ereignisse keinesfalls für ein kollektives Bewusstsein funktionalisieren, im Gegenteil: sie sucht gerade den Mechanismus, durch den das kollektive Bewusstsein Ereignisse funktionalisiert (und solcherweise die Vergangenheit entstellt), als wissenschaftlichen Gegenstand zu begreifen: „Mnemohistory is interested in the constructive as well as the distorting effects of memory; it takes into account the ambivalence of the past both as a conscious choice and as an unconscious burden, tracking the voluntary and involuntary paths of memory." (A. Assmann 2008, 62)

2. Dementsprechend, dass die Arbeit der Geschichtswissenschaft – ihrem Seinsmodus gemäß – auf der Opposition von wahr und falsch, das kollektive Gedächtnis aber auf der Opposition von funktionell relevant und irrelevant beruht (siehe: binäre Kodierung der Funktionssysteme bei Niklas Luhmann), definiert sich die Geschichtswissenschaft selbst als eine neutrale Betrachtung von außen, im Unterschied zum kollektiven Gedächtnis, das zum Alltagsleben und dessen natürlichen Einstellungen gehört.

Die Durchsetzung des konstitutiven Prinzips der Geschichtswissenschaft stößt aber auf Hindernisse, weil

a) es prinzipiell unmöglich ist, dass sich der Historiker bei der Erforschung der Geschichte über seine eigene Gegenwart hinaushebt. Seine Forschung ist unumgänglich durch die Relevanzen der Gegenwart mitbestimmt – obwohl Relevanz ein Aspekt des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, nicht der Geschichtswissenschaft ist;

b) die Geschichtswissenschaft notwendig darauf angewiesen bleibt, ihr Wissen durch narrative Strukturen zu konstituieren (White 1966). Später trennten zwar mehrere Wissenschaftler die Narrativität der Texte der Geschichtsschreibung scharf von der Narrativität fiktionaler Texte, aufgrund des referentiellen Charakters und des auf Dokumentation basierenden Wahrheitsanspruchs der ersteren (Paul Ricoeur, Chris Lorenz), Roland Barthes sprach aber dessen ungeachtet weiter von „referentieller Illusion." Allerdings kann man feststellen, dass die Geschichtswissenschaft heute das Problem ihrer eigenen

Narrativität bedenkt, während das kollektive Gedächtnis die Narrationen unbedacht mit der „Wirklichkeit" identifiziert;

c) auch den Ausgangspunkt der Geschichtswissenschaft in erheblichem Maße solche Erinnerungen bilden, in denen die Relevanzen von Erinnerungsgemeinschaften zur Geltung kommen;

d) – (Konkretisierung des Punktes a) in Bezug auf das Verhältnis von Geschichtswissenschaftler und kollektivem Gedächtnis): auch der Geschichtswissenschaftler ist an einer oder mehreren Erinnerungsgemeinschaften beteiligt und das ist eine Gegebenheit, von der er sich bei aller kritischen Wissenschaftlichkeit nicht ganz befreien kann: auch der historizistische Geschichtswissenschaftler „bewegt sich in einem Raum, den der begriffliche Rahmen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses umgrenzt" (Gyáni 2010b, 76). Was er hervorbringt, ist keine „reine Geschichte", sondern – mehr oder weniger – eine Art „Mythohistorie" (Gyáni 2010a, 23). Diese Tendenz kommt umso stärker zur Geltung, je weniger ein Nachweis möglich ist (z. B. Urgeschichte). Der ursprünglich kritischen Anlage seiner Wissenschaft gemäß ist aber jeder Geschichtswissenschaftler bestrebt, die unwahren/lügnerischen Mythologien seiner Vorgänger zu enthüllen (Nora 1990, 15). So stellt sich die Frage, wo die Grenzen der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Reflexion liegen, ob und wie es solche Grenzen gibt (Unhintergehbarkeit der Kategorien unserer – eigenen – Kultur usw.).

e) Die Geschichtswissenschaft hat auch eigene Traditionen; es bildet sich ein „normalwissenschaftlicher" Diskurs heraus (im Thomas Kuhnschen Sinne) und demgemäß entwirft das Fach Geschichte sein Bild von der Vergangenheit; in Verbindung damit kann man von der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Repräsentation der Vergangenheit als „Gruppengedächtnis" sprechen (Peter Burke).

3. Das kollektive Gedächtnis wird nicht rein durch das eigene Gedächtnis der Gemeinschaft und die Funktion der Erinnerung bestimmt.

a) Das kollektive Gedächtnis beeinflussen die Ergebnisse der Geschichtswissenschaft stark durch den Unterricht und die gesellschaftliche, politische und ideologiebildende Wirkung der Geschichtswissenschaftler. Das kollektive Gedächtnis braucht die Unterstützung der Geschichtswissenschaft auch als Gegengewicht des Vergessens. Diese Funktionen kommen besser zum Tragen, indem die Geschichtswissenschaft von vornherein nicht „rein" ist, weil auch die Geschichtswissenschaftler Mitglieder von Erinnerungsgemeinschaften sind, auf die ihre Arbeit eine Wirkung ausübt (s. 2. d.).

b) Hinsichtlich der Themen des Gedächtnisses lässt sich die Verbindung von kollektivem Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaft als fruchtbare Wechselwirkung charakterisieren; die Geschichtswissenschaftler sind „auf der Suche nach den vergessenen Traditionen" (Patrick Hutton, zitiert nach Gyáni 2010b, 77), das kollektive Gedächtnis erschließt aber für die Geschichtswissenschaft nicht selten Themen, die – gerade weil sie ihm relevant sind – auch für die Geschichtswissenschaft unumgänglich werden. (Das letztere Verhältnis spielt beispielsweise in der Zeit nach den ost-mittel-europäischen Diktaturen eine hervorragende Rolle.)

c) Die Unvergleichbarkeit der Geschichtswissenschaft und des kollektiven Gedächtnisses offenbart sich ursprünglich durch den Unterschied der binären Kodierung (richtig/falsch vs. relevant/irrelevant). Beide Systeme beobachten einander als Umwelt und verarbeiten die von dem anderen ausgehenden Impulse („Irritationen") aufgrund ihrer internen Codes. Die Getrenntheit beider Systeme bleibt trotz einer möglichen strukturellen Koppelung offensichtlich (siehe Luhmann 1984). Die Gegenüberstellung beider Systeme wird ferner durch die Unvereinbarkeit des alltäglichen und des wissenschaftlichen Denkens verstärkt (siehe Schütz 1953). Dessen Folgen sind:

ca) Das Verhältnis von beiden Vergangenheitsrepräsentationen kann nicht konfliktfrei sein. Davon zeugen die wissenschaftsfeindlichen Äußerungen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, die umso lauter sind, je mehr die wissenschaftliche Wahrheit auf die kollektive (z. B. identitätsbildende) Funktion der Vergangenheit störend wirkt, bzw. je schwieriger sich die Ergebnisse der Geschichtswissenschaft nachweisen lassen (z. B. Urgeschichte). Entweder weicht die Geschichtswissenschaft auf den entsprechenden Gebieten dem Druck des kollektiven Gedächtnisses (s. 2. d.) oder sie widersetzt sich ihm, um es zu kompensieren, selbst wenn sie ihre Ergebnisse nicht nachweisen kann. Die „aufklärende" Geschichtswissenschaft stößt fast immer auf die Funktionen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, die nur durch „Entstellung" der Vergangenheit zur Geltung kommen können (s. 1. a., c.); bei solchen Auseinandersetzungen hat die Geschichtswissenschaft nur Chancen, wenn sie die relevanten Funktionen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses berücksichtigt und sich nach ihnen richtet, wobei sie ihre eigene Wahrheit in Funktion setzt.

cb) Wie sehr die Geschichtswissenschaft auch die Relevanzen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses berücksichtigt, bleibt die Frage offen, inwiefern sie ihre eigenen Relevanzen, die historischen Wahrheiten entsprungen sind, in Relevanzen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses zu verwandeln vermag. Zum Beispiel setzt die Dialogisierung des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, wofür die Erinnerungsgeschichte aufgrund ihrer Forschungsergebnisse plädiert, die Einsicht voraus, die zentral-europäischen Nationen haben im 20. Jahrhundert nicht nur die Rolle des Siegers, des Widerstandskämpfers bzw. des Märtyrers, sondern auch die des Täters gespielt; Diese Einsicht wird aber von den erwähnten Nationen derzeit meistens heftig abgelehnt (A. Assmann 2011, 16–24). Die Frage ist, wie diese Nationen daran interessiert werden können, ihre (negative) Täterrolle unter ihre eigenen Relevanzen aufzunehmen. Eine wissenschaftliche Wahrheit oder ein moralisches Sollen kann den Weg zum geschlossenen monologischen Gedächtnis einer Nation nicht bahnen; Der „Dialog unter Schwerhörigen" (d.h. unter monologisch erinnernden Nationen) droht, trotz der Bemühungen der Wissenschaft, weiter zu bestehen.

4. Die Trennung von kollektivem Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaft ist ein Produkt des „Zeitalters der Geschichte"; diese Trennung ist durch folgende Entwicklungen bedingt:

a) die – auf einem konstanten Menschenbild beruhende – Vorstellung der sich wiederholenden Geschichte und damit auch die der Geschichte als Exempelsammlung („Historia est magistra vitae") verschwinden und es erscheint der Begriff der Geschichte als Prozess, der auf einem dynamischen Menschenbild basiert (Koselleck 1979, 38–66);

dementsprechend erforscht die Geschichtswissenschaft die Wandlungen und ihre Untersuchungen basieren auf dem Prinzip der Kausalität;

b) die klassische Episteme löst sich auf und die geschichtliche Bedingtheit der modernen Episteme tritt hervor (Foucault 1971, 269–274). Die entstehende Geschichtswissenschaft entspricht einem Bedürfnis, das dazu führt, dass die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis überhaupt (auch die naturwissenschaftliche, vgl. Darwin) unter geschichtlichen Bedingungen vorgestellt wird. Geschichtswissenschaft ist in diesem Sinne die Metawissenschaft der modernen Episteme.

c) für Friedrich Schiller war die Gegenwartsorientierung der geschichtlichen Erkenntnis und die Auffassung geschichtlicher Erkenntnis als Selbstverständnis noch evident und legitim (*Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?* 1789); Jacob Grimm stellt aber am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts bereits ein Auseinanderdriften von kollektivem Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaft fest (*Gedanken: wie sich die Sagen zur Poesie und Geschichte verhalten,* 1808). Im Historismus des 19. Jahrhunderts erscheint unter den Voraussetzungen der Geschichtswissenschaft der Satz nicht, nach dem sich der Sinn der Vergangenheit unausgesetzt wandelt, weil die Gegenwart jedes Verständnis mitbestimmt. (Leopold von Ranke: der Historiker „will bloß zeigen, wie es eigentlich gewesen"). Mit dem Verschwinden des Interesses (an) der Gegenwart tritt nicht nur der Gesichtspunkt der Funktionalität, sondern auch der der Narrativität der Geschichtsschreibung immer mehr in den Hintergrund – Gesichtspunkte, die W. von Humboldt in seinem Aufsatz *Über die aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers* 1822 noch für grundlegend hält. (Die Anerkennung der von der Gegenwart her bestimmten Funktion und Narrativität der Geschichtsschreibung ermöglichte eine Verselbstständigung nicht nur des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, sondern auch des historischen Romans, s. Bényei 2007, 46. ff.; das Verhältnis von beiden letzteren ist Gegenstand besonderer Untersuchung.)

5. Annäherung von kollektivem Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaft

a) Manchen Auffassungen zufolge erscheint die Geschichtswissenschaft immer mehr als eine Art des kollektiven Gedächtnisses. Das scheint zwar aufgrund der ursprünglichen Seinsmodi der beiden Vergangenheitsrepräsentationen prinzipiell nicht möglich zu sein, aber gleich nach ihrer Trennung beginnen beide Repräsentationen gleichsam aus dem eigenen Seinsmodus zu rücken und sich der anderen anzunähern. Laut Pierre Nora gibt es das kollektive Gedächtnis im klassischen Sinne in den modernen Gesellschaften nicht mehr; für das Verhältnis von Gedächtnis und Geschichte sei immer mehr kennzeichnend, dass die Geschichte sich das Gedächtnis endgültig einverleibt (Nora 1990, 19) – aber diesen Satz kann man auch umkehren: das Gedächtnis verleibt sich die Geschichte endgültig ein. Auf solche Weise entsteht die Geschichte als Gedächtnis (nicht gleich: Gedächtnisgeschichte!), „die Hervorbringung und Pflege des nationalen Gedächtnisses mit den Mitteln des Geschichtsschreibers" (Gyáni 2010b, 72).

b) Die Grundvoraussetzung dieser Auffassung steht im Gegensatz zur Selbstbestimmung der „Geschichtswissenschaft als Betrachtung von außen". Die Frage stellt sich jetzt auf folgende Weise: Wie lässt sich die Geltung der aktuellen Relevanzen des „In-Seins" mit der Position der Geschichtswissenschaft als Betrachtung von außen in Übereinstimmung

bringen? Man erinnerte mit gutem Recht daran, dass die Geschichte, indem Gedächtnis und Geschichte miteinander verfließen, „sich wieder im Netz des alltäglichen Denkens verfängt", und das dazu führen muss, dass der Historiker „jene kritische Verfahrensweise aufgibt, deren erster Meister Thukydides war". Es geht hier um zwei verschiedene Erfahrungen der Vergangenheit, die Erfahrung des in der Geschichte Agierenden und des Geschichtswissenschaftlers, und diese Duplizität muss dem Unterschied zwischen In-Sein und Reflexion von außen entsprechen (Megill 2007, 18, zitiert nach Gyáni 2010b, 83).

c) Laut Nora hat das Verhältnis von Gedächtnis und Geschichte bereits auch die Phase des Einander-Findens hinter sich gelassen; heute besteht diese Bewusstseinsform des Gedächtnisses nicht mehr, nur das Verlangen nach ihr (Nora 1990, 17). Unsere Zeit ist deshalb nicht mehr die Zeit des Gedächtnisses, sondern der Erinnerung (Kommemoration); das hoffnungslose Verlangen nach Erinnerung bringt die Erinnerungs- und Gedächtnisorte hervor und unterhält sie, die objektivierten Stützen der Erinnerung.

* * *

Der Streit über das Verhältnis von Gedächtnis und Geschichte „wurde noch keinesfalls ausgetragen und wird unaufhörlich fortgesetzt" – schreibt Gábor Gyáni (Gyáni 2010b, 84); nun haben wir den Anlass, diese Diskussion mit weiterzuführen.

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# Diskussionsbeitrag[1] bez. des Eröffnungsreferats von Pál S. Varga

**Harald D. Gröller**

Anschließend an den Vortrag „Kollektives Gedächtnis und die historischen Wissenschaften" von Prof. Pál S. Varga möchte ich mich an dieser Stelle vor allem mit einem Aspekt desselben beschäftigen, nämlich mit den selten konfliktfrei ablaufenden Wechselwirkungen zwischen „der" Geschichte und „dem" kollektiven Gedächtnis. Dies tue ich in Verbindung mit dem Thema dieser Tagung, den ungarischen Erinnerungs- und Gedächtnisorten, und anhand der Erörterung einiger konkreter Beispiele, die, um der Intention eines Diskussionsbeitrags gerecht zu werden, zum Teil entsprechend provokant präsentiert werden.

Viele der ungarischen Gedächtnisorte sind – wie jene anderer Nationen auch – traumatisch besetzt und folgen partiell einem Opfermythos, was auch Konsequenzen für das politisch intendierte kollektive Gedächtnis – und lediglich auf dieses beziehen sich in der Folge meine Äußerungen – und die historische Verantwortung nach sich zieht. Dazu passt das Bild, das z.B. die ungarischen Nationalfeiertage zeichnen, bei denen jene, die in das eben angedeutete Schema der Negativbesetzung infolge eines Opferstatus' passen, eine breite Mehrheit aufweisen; nämlich der 15. März in Erinnerung an die gescheiterte Revolution 1848/49 und der 23. Oktober zum Gedenken an den niedergeschlagenen Volksaufstand von 1956. Wenn man noch den jüngsten, gewissermaßen „inoffiziellen Feiertag", den 4. Juni, der 2009 als „Tag der nationalen Zusammengehörigkeit" proklamiert wurde, hinzu nimmt, hat man auch das „Trauma Trianon" in dieser Liste. Einzig der 20. August zu Ehren des ungarischen Nationalheiligen, des Hl. Stephanus, schließt sich dieser Tendenz nicht an und speist sich aus einer positiven Erinnerung, wenn man bei den anderen, den Feiertagen zugrunde liegenden Ereignissen den Aspekt der Überwindung dieser Niederlagen, die ja größtenteils erfolgt ist, außer Acht lässt. Dieses „größtenteils" bezieht sich – wie Sie sich wahrscheinlich schon gedacht haben werden – auf Trianon; ein Pariser Vorort, in dem am 4. Juni 1920 der Friedensvertrag zwischen den Entente-Mächten und Ungarn, der die Situation nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg regeln sollte und der für Ungarn unter anderem große territoriale und personelle Verluste nach sich zog, unterzeichnet wurde. Seither ist „Trianon" ein Schlagwort, welches in der ungarischen Politik – wenn es nicht gerade durch Anweisung von außen gewissermaßen tabuisiert wurde – einen festen Platz hat und mit dem alle vorangegangenen und nachfolgenden Ereignisse gewissermaßen korrelieren. Denn nachdem die Politik der Zwischen-

kriegszeit in Ungarn auch von den Revisionsbemühungen um diesen Vertrag bestimmt worden war, wurde dieses Thema in der Zeit des Kommunismus tabuisiert, sodass eine Auf- und Verarbeitung der Problematik kaum erfolgt ist. Nach der Wende wurden dann – von verschiedenen politischen Seiten – erneut revisionistische Forderungen laut. Verstärkt wurden diese noch durch diverse Aktionen, sei es z.B. in der jüngeren Vergangenheit durch den Besuch des damaligen ungarischen Staatspräsidenten László Sólyom in Komárom 2009, sei es die Debatte um den Wahlstatus der sogenannten Auslandsungarn im Zuge des Referendums im Jahr 2004 etc., und auch die ökonomische Krise, die aus Ungarn, das einst als „lustigste Baracke des Ostblocks" bezeichnet wurde, ein Sorgenkind der EU werden lies, trug wohl ihren Teil mit dazu bei. (vgl. dazu z.B. die jeweiligen Sichtweisen von Mayer – Odehnal 2010, 17–101; Lendvai 2010).

Die partiell populistische Behandlung dieser Trianon-Thematik führte zudem zu einer Instrumentalisierung des kollektiven Gedächtnisses, die auch im Zeichensystem des öffentlichen Raums Spuren hinterlassen hat. Davon zeugen neben diversen „alltäglichen" Devotionalien, wie z.B. Aufklebern und T-Shirts des sogenannten „Brotlaibs"[2], also der Umrisse des „historischen Ungarns"[3], oder dem äußerst problematisch konzipierten Trianon-Museum[4] im Kastell Zichy in Várpalota auch die landesweiten (Wieder-)Errichtungen zahlreicher Trianon-Denkmäler.

Was die Beispiele dieser Trianon-Denkmäler anbelangt so könnte man hier diesbezüglich durchaus die Aussage einer Romanfigur in Hugo Hartungs Roman „Ich denke oft an Piroschka" heranziehen, die in selbem in gebrochenem Deutsch erklärt: „Du bist nicht in Ungarn gewesen, wann Du nicht warst in Debrecen!" (Hartung 1954, 40) Ja, „[…] die gute Stadt Debreczin, der Hauptsitz des echten Ungarnstammes […]" (Jókai 1954, 65)[5], wie es Maurus Jókai einst ausgedrückt hat, der auch meinte, diese sei „[e]ine der merkwürdigsten Städte nicht nur des ungarischen Alföld [d.i. die ungarische Tiefebene, Anm. HDG.], sondern des magyarischen Volksstammes überhaupt […]" (Jókai 1891, 283), bietet in der Tat ein anschauliches Beispiel eines Trianon-Denkmals: Das „Denkmal des ungarischen Schmerzes" („Magyar fájdalom") (vgl. Gröller – Balogh 2011).

Kurz zu dessen Chronologie: Dieses vom englische Presseinhaber Sidney Harold Harmsworth, erster Vicomte von Rothermere (1868–1940) gestiftete und vom französischen Bildhauer Èmile Oskar Guillaume (1867–1942) geschaffene Denkmal wurde am 28. Mai 1933 (dem Gedenktag der Helden des Ersten Weltkrieges) am damaligen Magoss György Platz, dem heutigen Bem Platz in Debrecen eingeweiht. Im Jahr 1945 wurde es angesichts der neuen politischen Situation im örtlichen Déri Museum unter Kohlen versteckt, ehe es nach der Wende wieder unter diesen hervorgeholt, restauriert, gereinigt und im Jahr 2000, am 80. Jahrestag der Unterzeichnung des Friedensvertrages, an seinem ursprünglichen Platz wiedererrichtet wurde. Dort finden seither jeweils am 4. Juni Trianon-Feierlichkeiten unter der Ägide der Fidesz-geführten Stadtregierung statt, somit also auch schon etliche Jahre bevor dieses Datum offiziell zum „Tag der Nationalen Zusammengehörigkeit" erklärt worden war.

Besagtes „Denkmal des ungarischen Schmerzes" symbolisiert resp. personifiziert die nackte, wehrlose und verwundbare Hungaria, der teilweise ihre Gliedmaßen (d.h. im

übertragenen Sinne einzelne Territorien) gewaltsam abgetrennt worden waren. Das Erscheinungsbild der Statue ist zwar sehr aussagekräftig, aber natürlich hinsichtlich der Historie sehr vereinfachend und verzerrend, denn es verweist ausschließlich auf einen Opferdiskurs, in dem die Dichotomie zwischen Opfer und Täter als absolut erscheint, und es wird eine einseitige Opferperspektive repräsentiert, die den historischen Kontext ignoriert oder gar leugnet. So werden weder Vorkommnisse, wie die Rolle des im k.u.k. Verbund befindlichen Königreichs Ungarn im Ersten Weltkrieg, noch die Folgen des Friedensvertrages berücksichtigt. Prof. Varga bezeichnete so etwas in seinem Vortrag als die „Entstellung der Vergangenheit". Folglich ist diese Position dadurch völlig enthistorisiert und entkontextualisiert. Und sie ist zudem imaginiert, da die Opferdiskurse so gut wie nie von den tatsächlichen Opfern geführt werden und diese Position dadurch eine bequeme und widerspruchslose Identifizierungsmöglichkeit bietet, wonach die Klage in eine Anklage verwandelt werden kann. Dies bedeutet zugleich eine Übernahme und Enteignung der Deutungsmacht, die in diesem Fall als moralische Hoheit auftritt, die den Vorteil besitzt, den politischen Diskurs bestimmen und dadurch vorteilhaft erscheinen zu können. Für diese Opferdiskurse ist es besonders charakteristisch, dass sie total asymmetrisch sind und eine kollektive Unschuldsthese vertreten. Wenn jemand in ihrem Namen auftreten kann, erscheinen die von diesem Diskurs Ausgeschlossenen als Schuldige. Wenn politische Gemeinschaften nach dieser Logik in zwei Gruppen aufgeteilt werden, verhindert es die kritische oder selbstkritische Auseinandersetzung mit Vergangenheit und Erinnerung und dadurch auch die Überwindung der Opferthese. Es ist wirklich überraschend, wie nachhaltig diese Einstellungen die politische Mentalität prägen und wie lange sie eine Versöhnung mit der Vergangenheit blockieren können. Im 21. Jahrhundert erscheinen die Botschaften dieses Diskurses zwar immer unzeitgemäßer, es gibt aber immer wieder politische Gruppen und Parteien – nicht nur, aber auch in Ungarn –, die aus diesem Diskurs unmittelbar profitieren können, vermutlich ohne darüber intensiv nachzudenken, inwieweit sie damit ein verantwortungsvolles Verhalten verhindern und der Demokratie schaden. Wie Prof. Varga in seinem Vortrag bereits erwähnt hat, ist es leider einer „wissenschaftliche[n] Wahrheit oder ein[em] moralische[n] Sollen [nicht möglich] […] den Weg zum geschlossenen monologischen Gedächtnis einer Nation [zu] […] bahnen." Ob es aber ein vernünftiger und konstruktiver Weg ist, den derzeit auch die aktuelle ungarische Regierung Viktor Orbán II einschlägt, nämlich historische Symbole zu recyceln, bleibt fraglich. Ja es stimmt geradezu bedenklich, wenn man sieht, wie derzeit im Zusammenhang mit der Ära des seinerzeitigen Reichsverwesers Admiral Miklós Horthy (1868–1957) umgegangen wird: sei es die Debatte um die Umdeutung dieser von 1920 bis 1944 andauernden Ära,[6] oder z.B. die Umgestaltung des Budapester Kossuth-Platzes in einen Zustand von vor 1944, im Zuge derer die Denkmäler von Attila József und Mihály Károlyi entfernt werden sollen und das Kossuth-Denkmal des Jahres 1952 durch jenes von 1927 ersetzt werden soll.[7]

Dass eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der Vergangenheit eine gewisse Zeit benötigt, und dass diese nicht einfacher wird, wenn die Diskussion wie beispielsweise in Ungarn infolge des Internationalismus während der kommunistischen Periode für

Jahrzehnte ausgesetzt wird, ist nachvollziehbar. Ebenso, dass eine neuerliche populistische Vereinnahmung seitens der Politik der sorgfältigen Aufarbeitung nicht gerade förderlich ist. Wie lange so ein Aufarbeitungsprozess dauern kann, ist in Österreich beispielsweise anhand der Debatten um das Dollfuß-Bild im ÖVP-Parlamentsklub oder die Umbenennung des Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Rings ersichtlich.[8] Und es wird wohl auch in Ungarn diesbezüglich noch einen entsprechend langwierigen, und wohl auch emotional und kontrovers geführten Diskussionsbedarf geben.

### Anmerkungen

[1] Im Zuge der Verschriftlichung des am 14. November 2011 beim Round-Table in der deutschsprachigen Sektion des Exzellenz-Clusters „Loci Memoriae Hungaricae" gehaltenen Kommentars wurde dieser um einige Literaturverweise sowie einzelne Punkte desselben auch um einige seither stattgefundenen Entwicklungen ergänzt (Stand: Juni 2012), die aber dementsprechend als Aktualisierung kenntlich gemacht wurden, Anm. HDG.

[2] Ich selbst konnte einmal beobachten, wie im Rahmen einer Spielzeugmesse in einem Debrecener Einkaufszentrum Kinder im Vorschulalter damit beschäftigt waren Holzpuzzles bestehend aus den 64 Komitaten des „historischen Ungarns" zusammenzufügen, was möglicherweise ihre spätere dementsprechende Wahrnehmung beeinflussen könnte.

[3] An dieser Stelle kann auf die Problematik dieses Begriffs leider nicht näher eingegangen werden, Anm. HDG.

[4] o. V. *Trianon Múzeum Várpalota*. Online: http://www.trianonmuzeum.hu/, 13. 11. 2011.

Als ich im Jahr 2010 das Museum besucht habe, war dort gerade eine Ausstellung von Bildern von Turul-Denkmälern auf dem Gebiet des „historischen Ungarns" sowie Kinderzeichnungen zum Thema Trianon zu sehen. In der eigentlichen Dauerausstellung werden ansonsten Devotionalien hauptsächlich im Kontext Trianons, aber z.B. auch bezüglich der Pfeilkreuzer unkritisch zur Schau gestellt, wobei die Problematik u.a. noch dadurch erhöht wird, dass hier Ausprägungen eines politischen Populismus partiell in ein verniedlichendes folkloristisches Erscheinungsbild gebracht werden.

[5] Auf die (teilweise wechselseitige) Beeinflussung des kollektiven Gedächtnisses und der (Stereo-)Typien bzw. Klischees, sowie deren partielle Kongruenz mit einzelnen metaphorischen Gedächtnisorten kann ich hier leider nicht näher eingehen, Anm. HDG.

[6] Infolge dieser Diskussion wurde u.a. der Direktor des Budapester Holocaust-Zentrums für Dokumentation und Erinnerung László Harsányi entlassen. Vgl. o.V. *Budapest: Direktor des Holocaust-Zentrums entlassen*. Online: http://diepresse.com/home/politik/zeitgeschichte/663672/Budapest_Direktor-des-HolocaustZentrums-entlassen?_vl_backlink=/home/politik/zeitgeschichte/index.do, 20. 05. 2011.

[7] Vgl. Profil, 07. 11. 2011, S. 73.

Seit der Konferenz ereigneten sich u.a. noch folgende diesbezügliche Aktivitäten: Im April 2012 wurde in Gyömrő der als Hauptplatz fungierende „Freiheitsplatz" in „Horthy-Platz" umbenannt. Am 5. Mai 2012 veranstaltete die ursprünglich im Jahr 1920 von der

ungarischen Regierung unter der Leitung Horthys gestiftete und 1992 wieder neu zugelassene Ordensvereinigung „Stand der Tapferen" („Vitézi Rend") in Budapest einen Benefizball für die Errichtung eines Horthy-Reiterstandbildes. Ebenfalls im Mai 2012 wurden in Kereki eine Horthy-Statue und im Reformierten Kollegium Debrecen eine restaurierte Gedenktafel für Horthy feierlich eingeweiht. Weiters soll im Juni 2012 eine Horthy-Büste in Csókakő eingeweiht werden.

Hinzu kommt die Glorifizierung z.B. des problematischen Schriftstellers Albert Wass (1908–1998) oder die Schändung einzelner Denkmäler (z.B. in Budapest das „Roma-Holocaust-Denkmal" 2009, die „Schuhe am Donauufer" 2009, das „Raoul-Wallenberg-Denkmal" 2012). Einen Überblick dazu bietet z.B. Pusztaranger [Pseud.]: *Horthy-Kult und Statuenkrieg.* Online: http://pusztaranger.wordpress.com/2012/05/24/horthy-kult-und-krieg-der-statuen, 01. 06. 2012.

[8] Die Umbenennung des „Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Rings" in „Universitäts-Ring" ist erst nach der Konferenz im Jahr 2012 erfolgt, Anm. HDG.

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# Diskussionsbeitrag zum Eröffnungsreferat von Pál S. Varga

**Csaba Kiss Gy.**

Anknüpfend an die Schlussworte des Referats über das hoffnungslose Verlangen nach Erinnerung und die Perspektiven der Gedächtnisorte als objektivierte Stützen der Erinnerung, können wir vielleicht die Frage stellen, ob diese Worte einen pessimistischen oder optimistischen Ausklang haben; anlässlich dieser Gelegenheit ist mir eine gut bekannte Formel des ungarischen Selbstbildes ins Gedächtnis gekommen: die Hoffnung jenseits der Hoffnungslosigkeit.

Meinen kurzen Beitrag möchte ich fast ausschließlich einem Problemkreis widmen, den ich im Forschungsplan der ungarischen loci memoriae für außerordentlich wichtig halte. Es geht um die gemeinsamen und transnationalen Erinnerungsorte. Angenommen die Behauptung von Varga, dass der Geschichtswissenschaftler an einer oder mehreren Erinnerungsgemeinschaften beteiligt sei, stimmt, dann kann er also nicht auf die Höhe eines universalen Standpunktes treten. Da stellt sich nun die Frage, wie wir Ungarn das Gedächtnis des ehemaligen Königreichs von Ungarn erinnern können und dürfen, in Hinblick auf die bekannte Multiethnizität des Landes, wie das in der berühmten und oft zitierten Behauptung von Johann von Csaplovics formuliert wurde: „Ungarn ist Europa im Kleinen" (Csaplovics 1829) Vor kurzem hat der zeitgenössische deutsche Historiker Matthias Weber diese Situation folgendermaßen charakterisiert: „Die Erinnerungslandschaft in Ostmitteleuropa kann man sich als ein Mosaik von Erinnerungsinseln vorstellen, die im Zeitalter des Nationalismus miteinander in Konkurrenz gerieten." (Weber 2011)

Dieses Tatbestandes sollen wir uns bei der Bearbeitung der ungarischen Erinnerungsorte immer bewusst sein. Ostmitteleuropa, Ungarn und seine Nachbarn sind mit einem dichten Netz polyvalenter und gemeinsamer Erinnerungsorte verknüpft. Der Prozess der Konstruktion der modernen Nation und die Ausbildung der nationalen Selbst- und Fremdbilder folgten der Logik der binären Oppositionen, der sogenannten Wir- und Sie-Gruppen, infolgedessen haben manchmal dieselben Erinnerungsorte ganz verschiedene, respektive einen anderen Stellenwert in einer anderen nationalen Imagination.

Im Zusammenhang mit dieser Problematik möchte ich folgende Fragen stellen:

– Können die Nationen nur geschlossen oder auch miteinander erinnern?

– Wäre es nicht möglich einen gemeinsamen Weg zu finden, mindestens im Falle der Nachbarnationen, die ein gemeinsames historisches Erbe haben?

– Und weiter: ist überhaupt ein gemeinsames Erinnern möglich?

Fruchtbare Lehren können wir aus dem vor ein paar Jahren begonnenen deutsch-polnischen Projekt ziehen, in welchem es um binationale Erinnerungsorte geht. (Seit 2008 organisiert das Projekt das Zentrum für Historische Forschung der Polnischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin). Es ist geplant, die Forschungsergebnisse in mehreren Bänden herauszugeben. In unserem Falle ist das Spektrum viel breiter und bunter, die ungarischen Erinnerungsorte haben nämlich viele Berührungspunkte (auch Abgrenzungen und Ungleichheiten) mit den Erinnerungsorten unserer Nachbarvölker. Die Komplexität des Problemfeldes möchte ich mit drei konkreten Beispielen illustrieren. Das erste sei Mohács, das Andenken an die tragische Schlacht des Jahres 1526; dieser Ort nimmt ohne Zweifel einen zentralen Platz in der ungarischen Gedächtniskultur ein. Obwohl diese schwere Niederlage der verbündeten christlichen Armee unter der Führung des ungarischen Königs wichtige Folgen für das ganze Königreich und Mitteleuropa hatte, finden wir das Gedächtnis dieser schicksalsvollen Schlacht bei den Kroaten und Slowaken vorwiegend in den Schulbüchern der Geschichte und nur manchmal am Rande der nationalen Erinnerung. Das zweite Beispiel zeigt eine historische Gestalt aus dem XVI. Jahrhundert: Miklós Zrínyi (Nikola Zrinski in kroatischer Form), Banus von Kroatien, den Verteidiger der südungarischen Festung Sziget gegen das ottomanische Heer, den Held und Märtyrer der Türkenzeit, dem die Nachkommen das epitethon ornans „des ungarischen – und auch – slawischen Leonidas" gegeben haben. Es geht um eine zentrale Figur des ungarischen und des kroatische Gedächtnisses. Es wäre eine falsche Spur seiner ethnischen Herkunft nachzugehen. Der Banus als Bannherr des gemeinsamen Königreiches und Magnat gehörte zum Adel, seine „ungarische" und „kroatische" Zugehörigkeit können wir als komplementär bezeichnen, zwischen beiden Identitätsformen gab es damals keine Spannung. In den beiden Kulturen haben wir es mit einem farbenreichen Zrínyi/Zrinski Kult zu tun, aber diese Kulte sind voneinander fast völlig getrennt. Als drittes Beispiel möchte ich das Revolutionsjahr 1848 erwähnen, das tief in den Erinnerungen Ostmitteleuropas verankert ist. Es war die Erstaufführung des modernen Nationalismus. Man kann den Eindruck haben, als ob die Erinnerungsorte, wie auch die Denkmäler der Protagonisten – Lajos Kossuth, Josip Jelačić, Ľudovit Štúr, Avram Iancu – irgendwie sogar heute den Kampf ihrer Nationen weiterführen würden. Wir dürfen nicht vergessen, dass es hier um die Haupthelden des nationalen Gedächtnisses geht. Dieselben Ereignisse werden in den Nationalkulturen unterschiedlich, oft mit umgekehrten Vorzeichen wahrgenommen. Die einzelnen nationalen Narrationen haben die alten Stereotypen lange am Leben gehalten. Es gibt fast keinen Verkehr zwischen den Erinnerungsorten des Revolutionsjahres 1848 in unserem Europa. Wie könnte man die voneinander abweichenden Erinnerungen miteinander in Beziehung bringen – eine Frage, die wir nur gemeinsam beantworten können, es ist eine Herausforderung für die Geschichtswissenschaftler unserer Region. Es gibt jedoch viele Anknüpfungspunkte in unseren nationalen Kulturen, die meistens aber nicht bewusst gemacht werden. Denken wir z.B. daran, dass in einem so fundamentalen Erinnerungsort wie der Nationalhymne, bei den Ungarn und bei den Rumänen dieselben historischen Persönlichkeiten – die beiden

Hunyadi's – vorkommen. Bei diesem Punkt möchte ich unterstreichen, was Professor Aleida Assmann uns über die Bedeutung der Tendenz – from monolog to dialog memory policies – erklärt hat.

Und zum Schluss noch eine Bemerkung über das Defizit der Erinnerungskultur der zentraleuropäischen Nationen, über die Problematik des Opfer- und Tätergedächtnisses, ob das Überwiegen des Opfergedächtnisses für unsere Nationen charakteristisch ist. Meines Erachtens sollte auch diese Tradition komparativ erforscht werden. Man darf immerhin nicht vergessen, dass im Laufe des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts unsere Völker und Länder öfters zu den Passiven und nicht zu den Gestaltenden der Geschichte gehörten, auf dem großen europäischen Spielfeld eher Nebenrollen spielten, womit ich natürlich nicht die jeweilige Verantwortung der politischen und geistigen Eliten oder der ganzen Gemeinschaft verkleinern will. Was die gemeinsame europäische Erinnerung anbelangt, muss hinzugefügt werden, dass in dieser Hinsicht den Ostmitteleuropäer vom Westeuropäer bis zum heutigen Tage eine gewisse Kluft trennt, wir müssen nämlich nicht nur das Erbe eines, sondern von zwei Totalitarismen aufarbeiten. Diese Tatsache bildet bedauernswerterweise ein Hindernis in der geistigen Integration Europas. Es sei mir erlaubt, als Schlusswort meinen Namensbruder, den serbischen Schriftsteller Danilo Kiš zu zitieren: „Wenn jemand dir nur über Auschwitz redet und Kolyma nicht erwähnt, gib ihm ein Ohrfeige und geh weiter." (Kiš 1987)

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# Gedächtnis und Geschichte. Kommentare zur Diskussionseröffnung von Pál S. Varga

**Ferenc Velkey**

Im Schluss seiner Diskussionseröffnung bemerkte Pál Varga in Anlehnung an Gábor Gyáni über den Streit über das Verhältnis von Gedächtnis und Geschichte Folgendes: „[er] wurde noch keinesfalls ausgetragen und wird unaufhörlich fortgesetzt." (Gyáni 2010, 84.) Dadurch richtet er die Aufmerksamkeit der Diskussionsteilnehmer darauf, dass sie sich einer Diskussion anschließen können (und vielleicht auch sollten), die sich schon seit mehreren Jahrzehnten mit dem Verhältnis des kollektiven Gedächtnisses und der Geschichtsschreibung befasst. Nun haben wir hier den Anlass, diese Diskussion weiterzuführen.

Mir gefällt diese Weise des Appells besonders, denn sie erlaubt, verlangt sogar, dass man keine vollständige und endgültige Antwort auf die Frage formulieren sollte, sondern zunächst die Dilemmas. Wir sind also Teilnehmer eines philosophischen Vorganges, der hier und jetzt für uns fruchtbar gemacht werden sollte. Von diesem Ausgangspunkt aus strebe ich nicht danach, Pro- und Kontra-Argumente anzuführen (das kann Gegenstand eines Workshops sein), sondern vielmehr mit den Gedanken von Pál Varga einen Dialog zu führen. Diese Vorgehensweise ist schon deshalb naheliegend, weil diese Diskussion so diffus, so konturlos ist, dass wir meines Erachtens gut beraten sind, wenn wir unsere Untersuchung an einem konkreten Gegenstand durchführen. Ich hatte die Absicht, die von ihm zitierten Werke wieder zu lesen, damit wir sehen können, welche unterschiedlichen Schlussfolgerungen von der gleichen Basis ausgehend gezogen werden können.

Den gemeinsame Ausgangspunkt kann die Einführung des Buches „Erinnerungsräume" von Aleida Assmann bilden. Sie stellt darin Folgendes fest: „Das Interesse am Gedächtnis geht dabei deutlich über die üblichen Konjunkturphasen wissenschaftlicher Mode-Themen hinaus. […] Schon diese Vielheit der Zugänge macht deutlich, dass das Gedächtnis ein Phänomen ist, auf das keine Disziplin ihr Monopol anmelden kann." Gedächtnis ist also ein komplexes Phänomen, einerseits ist es „transdisziplinär", so dass „es von keiner Profession aus abschließend und gültig zu bestimmen ist"; andererseits „zeigt [es] sich auch innerhalb der einzelnen Disziplinen als widersprüchlich und kontrovers." Sie fasst zusammen: „Diese Widersprüchlichkeit ist aber selbst ein irreduzibler Teil des Problems." (A. Assmann 2006, 16.)

Pál Varga erfasst das Wesen der Beziehung zwischen der kollektiven Erinnerung und der Geschichtswissenschaft in ihrer Widersinnigkeit selbst. Er legt den Akzent seiner

Analyse auf das verschiedene Wesen der zwei Phänomene und stellt das eine in seinem Verhältnis zur Vergangenheit in die Position des „In-Seins") und das andere in die der „äußeren Reflexivität". Dies ist die grundlegende These der Diskussionseröffnung, die der Verfasser mehrmals durch funktionale, wiederholende Zitate bestätigte. Er relativierte seine Bemerkungen mit den restriktiven, aber adversativen sprachlichen Wendungen („keinesfalls […] schließlich, *Man kann zwar behaupten […], aber« obwohl, aber, nichtsdestoweniger.*")

Das erste Dilemma betrifft die Grundthese. Kann der glasklare Begriff, mit dem Pál Varga hier Wesen und Rolle der Geschichtswissenschaft definiert, wirklich angemessen sein, wenn die Praxis der Geschichtswissenschaft damit nicht vollständig übereinstimmt? Anders formuliert: Sind die theoretischen Bestimmungen oder programmatischen Deklarationen (wenn sie von den Helden der frühen Geschichtswissenschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts stammen) im Zusammenhang mit der Geschichtswissenschaft zutreffend? Wir können hier auf Gábor Gyáni und seinen umfassenden Überblick hinweisen, in dem er behauptet, dass die „nationale Bestimmtheit" des historischen Blickwinkels auf die Geschichtsschreibung des 19. (und in manchen Fällen des 20.) Jahrhunderts eine direkte identitätsbestimmende Wirkung ausübte. Die Geschichtsschreibung spielte als Wissenschaft der Identitätskonstruktion der Nation eine prinzipielle Rolle in der Formierung der kollektiven Erinnerung.[1] Man kann das als Widerspruch der Geschichtswissenschaft mit ihren „eigenen konstitutiven Prinzipien" werten, und logisch betrachtet ist es das auch, aber man kann die Geschichtswissenschaft hauptsächlich nur in dieser Existenzform wahrnehmen.

Die Diskussionseröffnung von Pál Varga fügt sich aus meiner Sicht in die breite Tradition ein, die das eigenartige Wesen der Geschichtswissenschaft aus „der Sicht der Erinnerung" interpretiert. Ich parallelisiere hier seine Beweisführung mit der Forschung von Jan Assman. Vor allem deswegen, weil Assmann sich mit dem Verhältnis von „Gedächtnis und Geschichtswissenschaft" beschäftigte, als er eine „gedächtnisorientierte" Annäherungsmethode gestaltete. Das heißt, er grenzte die Formen der Erinnerung von der „Geschichte" der Geschichtswissenschaft ab. Eine funktionale Redesituation dieser Art schematisiert „die andere Seite" jeder Zeit. Jan Assmann verfuhr gleichermaßen, als er seine Positionen in kurzen Texteinheiten von einander abtrennte, jedoch auf die Simplifikationen von Maurice Halbwachs aufmerksam machte. (J. Assmann 2002, 44)

Jan Assmann postuliert während der Reinterpretation der Begriffe und Beziehungen von „Mythos und Geschichte", dass „die Erinnerung […] ein Akt der Semiotisierung" sei und daraus folge: „Man muß sich nur darüber klarwerden, daß Erinnerung nichts mit Geschichtswissenschaft zu tun hat. Von einem Professor der Geschichtswissenschaft erwartet man nicht, daß er »die Erinnerung füllt, die Begriffe prägt und die Vergangenheit deutet«." Er erfasst die Aufgabe der Geschichtswissenschaft in ihrer normativen Eigenart, und hier steht nicht zufällig eine Redewendung, die eine Restriktion, aber auch einen Gegensatz enthält: „Das ändert aber nichts an der Tatsache, daß dieser Prozeß ständig stattfindet. Damit wird nicht die Aufgabe des Historikers, sondern eine Funktion des sozialen Gedächtnisses umschrieben." (J. Assmann 2002, 77)

Die Argumentationsweise, die den Ort „der Erinnerung" in der Welt der Repräsentation der Vergangenheit bestimmt, ist darauf gerichtet, dass man den Historiker von seiner „normativen Aufgabe" aus aufzufassen hat. Aber er vergisst dabei nicht, dass die Rolle des Historikers in der Praxis viel komplizierter ist.

Für mich ist der Schlüsselbegriff in der Anmerkung zu finden. Jan Assmann zitiert zweitens die Analyse von Peter Burke. Er äußert sich beide mal mit Umsicht im Zusammenhang des Dilemmas. In diesem Fall bemerkte er nur zur Ergänzung, „in der neueren Geschichtstheorie […] die Geschichte (im Sinne der Historiographie) wird im Grunde nur noch als eine besondere Art von Gruppengedächtnis behandelt." (J. Assmann 2002, 77) In dem ersten Beispiel liest man zunächst einen Einklang: „Daher würde man die Geschichtsschreibung vielmehr als eine besondere Art des sozialen Gedächtnisses einstufen, wie dies Peter Burke, »Geschichte als soziales Gedächtnis« […] vorgeschlagen hat." Aber er fügt in Klammern einen verunsichernden Gestus zu seiner Zustimmung hinzu: „Damit geht aber eine wichtige Kategorie verloren: die der Identitätsneutralität wissenschaftlicher Geschichtsschreibung." Schließlich aber ist die Position von Jan Assmann eindeutig: „Jedenfalls wird niemand von einem Fach wie Ägyptologie »Orientierungswissen« erwarten." (J. Assmann 2002, 43, 77)

Die feine und geistreiche, ebenmäßige Orientierung, die in dem Buch von Jan Assmann zu lesen ist, bemüßigt den Historiker, der sich mit der Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts beschäftigt und der sonst in seinen strengen Textanalysen und fachwissenschaftlichen Arbeiten tätig ist, zu einer fortwährenden Neuüberlegung seines Rollenbewusstseins. Die „nationale Gemeinschaft" formuliert immer wieder einen Aufruf oder Zwang oder Marktanspruch in die Richtung eines Historikers, der im Zusammenhang seiner akademischen Tätigkeit eine Schlüsselperiode der ungarischen Geschichte, die Vormärzzeit, untersucht. Deshalb ist es wichtig, dass er die Erinnerung der Gemeinschaft beglaubige, bestätige, aufrecht halte. Es ist möglich, dass es hier um einen mitteleuropäischen Anachronismus geht, der sich noch zum Anfang des 21. Jahrhunderts fortsetzt, aber es ist ein wahres, reales Phänomen! Die Behauptung im Zusammenhang mit irgendeiner Periode des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts ist immer noch gültig: Die ungarischen Fachhistoriker nehmen an dem gesellschaftlichen Diskurs über die Vergangenheit in verschiedenen Medien mit einem „Orientierungswissen" teil. Die Frage ist auch umgekehrt offensichtlich: kann man die Phänomene des „kollektiven Gedächtnisses" des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts mit dem „In-Sein" beschreiben?

Mit der These muss man nicht unbedingt einverstanden sein, aber man kann hier den Standpunkt von Peter Burke kurz anführen. Er bestimmt die besondere Aufgabe des Historikers als die eines „Remembrancers" (es ist kein Zufall, dass unter diesem Begriff einst „der Steuereinnehmer" verstanden wurde), der die Aufgabe habe die Menschen zu ermahnen, dass sie nicht vergessen wollten. Er möchte also dem Historiker eine „mahnende" Funktion zuschreiben. (Burke 2001, 18)

In Bezug auf die Grundthese von Pál Varga kann ich sagen, dass ich mit den Einzelheiten seiner Analyse, besonders mit denen, die in Satzgefügen formuliert worden waren,

fast vollständig einverstanden bin. Ich habe Bedenken nur in Bezug auf die „große Erzählung“. Denn Pál Varga formulierte die meisten Fragen im Zusammenhang mit den Problemen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts (des Zeitalters der Entstehung der Geschichtswissenschaft als Fachwissenschaft). „Trennung“ und „Annäherung“ des kollektiven Gedächtnisses und der Geschichtswissenschaft erfolgten (als zwei einander entgegengesetzte Vorgänge) erst zu diesem Zeitpunkt, oder genauer, dieser Zeitpunkt lässt sich als Ursprung der alternativen Deutungen ansehen. Die Diskussion erfolgt auf der Ebene der Nuancen, daher ist es gar nicht sicher, dass es praktisch wäre, sich mit der Grundbestimmung „die Geschichtswissenschaft als Betrachtung von außen“ darin zurechtzufinden. Die Schwierigkeit wird dadurch erhöht, dass wir, wenn wir die Werke aller oben erwähnten Autoren lesen, erfahren, dass sich die Auffassung von dem Verhältnis zwischen Gedächtnis und Geschichte bzw. Geschichtswissenschaft im Rahmen eines einzelnen Werkes oder der „Geschichtlichkeit“ der Konzeption bewegt. Meistens so, dass die verschiedenen Elemente der Beziehung und des zeitlichen Verhältnisses in verschiedenen Perspektiven auftauchen. (Man denke an die Grundfrage Noras: „Gedächtnis nach der Geschichte“, oder „und … zwischen“, oder umgekehrt?[2]) Im Falle solcher Metabegriffe (wie „Gedächtnis“ und „Geschichte“) und besonders dann, wenn die Diskussion in dem freien Raum der Kulturwissenschaft läuft, können wir sehen – die Worte Aleida Assmanns zitierend –, dass „diese Widersprüchlichkeit […] aber selbst ein irreduzibler Teil des Problems“ (A. Assmann 2006, 16) ist.

Als Historiker beobachte ich die theoretische Diskussion um die Zusammengehörigkeit oder Abgrenzung des kollektiven Gedächtnisses und der Geschichtswissenschaft mit großem Interesse. Der „Erinnerungsdiskurs“ beeinflusste als eine bedeutsame Richtung der kulturwissenschaftlichen Wende die Selbstdefinition der Historikerkollektive in einem beträchtlichen Maße und in Zusammenwirkung mit dem „Linguistic turn“ bestimmt er den theoretischen Rahmen, die Prämissen, die relevanten Themen und die Sprechweise des Historikers. Das „In-Sein“ in diesem Vorgang ist nicht verunsichernd, sondern inspirierend, und die Frage, die Pál Varga in seiner Analyse formuliert hatte, ist für mich die wichtigste, nämlich, „wo die Grenzen der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Reflexion liegen, ob und wie es solche Grenzen gibt.“

### Anmerkungen
[1] Vgl. Gyáni 2010, 70–74.
[2] Es wäre aufschlussreich, wenn man die Redewendungen der Einleitung von Pierre Nora („Zwischen Gedächtnis und Geschiche“) mit dem Nachwort der ungarischen Übersetzung von Zsolt K. Horváth („Gedächtnis nach der Geschichte“; früher: „Auf den Spuren des verlorenen Gedächtnisses“) vergliche. Dazu siehe Nora 2010, 13–33 und 379–407. (Beide sind auch als Zeitschriftenartikel erreichbar: Aetas, 1993/1, 132–157.)

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# Memory Fallen Apart:
# The Case of Two Cemeteries

**Péter György**

> "Such an escape from reality is also, of course,
> an escape from responsibility."
> *(Hannah Arendt, "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule")*

Probably the most well-known, overused and cultic poem of Hungarian literature remains Sándor Petőfi's "The National Song." Among its most quoted lines are these, translated by George Szirtes:

> And wheresoever we may perish
> Grandchildren those graves shall cherish
> Singing our praises in their prayers
> To thank us that our names are theirs.  (128)

Only two days before the break-out of the 1848 Revolution, Petőfi reckoned the worst case scenario, the failure of the revolution to come. He did not, however, take into account the possibility that the national memory about to be born would collapse in a century's time for various partially interconnected reasons, turning his prophecy into a hopeless utopian vision. So far so good, inasmuch as the history of memory of the 1848 Revolution is concerned. The Revolution has been widely discussed, its episodes and heroes appreciated, while in general it appears to be taken for granted. That is to say, Petőfi's normative prediction has proven true: people living today, our generations, are the ones who, at our ancestors' graves, do what the poet expected us to do. To be sure, this is the last event in modern Hungarian history (of memory) where the use and meaning of the first person plural occur without provoking debates and causing traumas. Thus it is an important commonplace, which, of course, is also highly vulnerable.

What I want to show is that none of these statements hold true for memories concerning Hungarian history of the 20th century, the Second World War, or the Revolution of 1956. Should one decide to fulfill Petőfi's hopes and expectations by commemorating an event that is crucial from the point of view of current Hungarian constitutionalism, they will be in trouble. The problem involves not only an apparently technical, but also a substantial issue: that is, paying their tribute people will have to go not just to one, but to at least two cemeteries in the same city, in the framework of the same ritual practice of memory. They will also witness, or become inolved in, really violent disputes when asking to whom the first and third person plural in Petőfi's verses relate. For example,

which names of the victims of the 1956 Revolution are sainted and which are cursed, and who are we, the grandchildren, who gather to mourn for them? The relationship of the two cemeteries, or, at least, their sections containing the earthly remains of the victims or heroes of the 1956 Revolution, are characterized by rivalry and conflict.

I have selected two cemeteries in order to show through their example how the total blunder of 20th century Hungarian politics of memory is represented, how the lack of any consensual narrative to stand for the minimum identity of a democratic polity becomes manifest. Apart from a few days (October 1956) and some distinguished months (the summer of 1989 and spring of 1990), any consensual first person plural, that is, all-inclusive, political community with respect to Hungarian history throughout the 20th century has been and is still unkown. There is no political doctrine available to create the appearance of consensus. This issue not only concerns cultural memory but also the institutions of democratic politics.

The intricate relationship of the monuments and plots in these two cemeteries, located at a considerable distance from one another on the Pest side of the city, reveals what I call the collapse of minimum consensual memory, together with its implications. The first cemetery, the Fiumei Road National Graveyard, more or less corresponds (in the local context) to the practice of a National Pantheon, that is, it is consistent with Count István Széchenyi's proclamation in his 1843 manifesto entitled *Üdvlelde* [Repository of Salvation] of creating a National Pantheon as an institution dedicated to national commemoration (Üdvlelde).[1] In other words, the mausolea of the great political dead personifying modern Hungarian history are found in this cemetery: no wonder that József Antall, the first freely elected Hungarian prime minister after the regime change of 1990, also chose to rest here—the design of his honorary monument is a different issue.

Analytically speaking, I consider the following political-archeological fields as separable units, providing the context that documents and substantiates my argument—which, at this point, is really only an hypothesis. After the siege of the city in 1945, a plot was created near the main entrance of the cemetery for the casualties of the Soviet Army who perished in Budapest; a well-kept part that can still be seen basically unchanged. Soviet soldiers who died in 1956 were also buried here. From the point of view of the military-political doctrines of the former Soviet Union, judgment on the two events did not differ radically. After 1989, however, all of this looks otherwise from a Hungarian perspective.[2]

Next to the Soviet military plot of 1945/1956 another plot was set up for soldiers serving in the Hungarian army or the State Defense Authority who died in the 1956 Revolution. The public memory of these people has been changing with shifting dominant political doctrines. The soldiers were considered heroes until 1989, after which they became invisible and forgotten spectres. In any case, the two adjacent plots have since been rendered to private use: that is, the families keep the memory of the deceased, beyond which they are excluded from any kind of public memory discourse.

The situation is much more complicated with plot No. 21. This plot was opened in 1956/57 for the civilian casualties of the Revolution. Obviously, in retrospect it is impos-

sible to fully reconstruct whether fatalities occurring in public locations in the months between October and December of 1956 were participants or mere witnesses of the events, potentially accidental and passive victims. The existence of these tombs throughout the decades of the Kádár regime was defined strictly in terms of private mourning: in other words, they were invisible for the history of political memory. This is all the more so since in 1959 the Pantheon of the Workers' Movement was placed, clearly not by accident, next to plot No. 21; the inscription on the pantheon that reads *They lived for Communism and for the people* appears quite disquieting today. The condition or moral geography of this monument is an excellent illustration of what we understand by "heterotopia." After 1989, it was obvious that this part of the cemetery could not be abolished, even though the legislation proscribing the use of authoritarian symbols in post-1989 Hungary actually applies this prohibitive policy to Nazism and Communism. To be sure, this approach is untenable in reality, and so the idea of exhuming graves in this part of the cemetery has never surfaced in public discourse. It is also noteworthy that, after 1989, many of the Communists buried here were later reburied by their relatives, as in the case of László Rajk, minister of interior, then of external affairs, executed in 1949, or with Attila József, who was reburied four times after his death—whose story would be worth discussing in a separate study.

The current state of affairs represents with inexorable accuracy the confused and unsettled relationship of the Republic with the Kádár period, which can probably be best reflected in such cemeteries. Normative rhetoric has nothing to do with the practice of public memory.

At the far end of the public cemetery of Rákoskeresztúr, plots No. 298 and 301 were constantly used by the political police and the justice system from 1945 to the 1960s; thus, these plots became the resting place of many Arrow Cross Party members, guards, mass murderers and definite war criminals, as well. At the same time—considering especially the quality of jurisdiction of the Popular Courts and the legislation during the Rákosi regime—it takes hard and painful work to distinguish between war criminals, common criminals, and the political victims of Communist dictatorship. The reason why these people could end up next to one another back then is that after death their memory remained outside the frames of public mourning and has never been included. This marginalized space intended to be forgotten later became a ghostly, and then a scandalous, place. Following official logic, all the people executed after 1956 were buried in plot No. 301. Thus, in the conviction that the remotest plots of the most distant cemetery in town could never enter a cultural-political context in which such people would officially be remembered, Imre Nagy and his comrades were interred here along with Mihály Francia Kiss, who was executed for participating in the pogroms of 1919. Thus remembrances of the traumas of 20th century Hungarian history were literally placed next to, or on top of one another, at the outskirts of a suburban cemetery, where 1945 and 1956 have become tragically inseparable.

What happened later was bound to happen. In 1989 the reburial of the victims of the 1956 revolution was considered the symbolic abolition of the Kádár regime, and thus

the starting point of a passage into a new historical period, by the Committee for Historical Justice. In this context, the two plots in the Public Cemetery immediately acquired central importance in political public relations. In the spring of 1989 there was not really time for, or political interest in, exploring the history of the plots, which would have made it practically impossible to transform their locations into sacred places. Therefore, without any political archeology, they were immediately appropriated for political purposes. Plot No. 301 was turned into a sacred place of the Revolution of 1956, while, in the meantime, right-wing organizations, acting on behalf of representatives of the victims of Communism, that is, of persons convicted in various periods of State Socialism, proceeded to open up and pantheonize plot No. 298. From the very first moment, the afterlife of the two plots became a "contact zone"—to use Marie Luise Pratt's and James Clifford's term (Pratt 6, Clifford, "Museums")—of the politics of the representation of powerful elites, and there has not been, as there could not have been, any agreement or reconciliation between them in the past twenty years. As a consequence, the opportunity for reaching consensus about the two plots (in the manner of Petőfi's vision) has been lost.

Nobody knows who is who, who should honor whose grave, whose name is to be praised, and whose forgotten. While Hungarian right-wing organizations of meager cultural capital in 1989 were not invested with an appropriate culture of conduct, nor were the norms practiced by the post-Communist elite, occupying a central position at the time, any better in terms of tolerance. The monument erected in the new plot, empty until 1989, No. 300—a masterpiece by György Jovánovics that has uncanny resemblance to the Heroic Monument inaugurated by Horthy in 1933—has become a dead and lonely place more than anything else. Not to mention that, even with the greatest goodwill, it is incomprehensible why certain people were buried here in recent decades; now the plot makes the impression of a Hungarian Arlington Cemetery or a gothic story. In other words, the worst has happened. The national memorial place, turned into a site of despite and scandal, is used twice a year, on 23 October and 4 November, and on these two days the state festivals appear suitable for nothing else but the representation of hatred between the government in power and its opposition. Such commemoration causes enormous damage every year, probably making the other kind of practice—of the other 363 days—that of oblivion, preferable.

Taking all this into account, the ruling government in 1999 created an alternative memorial spot to plot No. 301, in plot No. 21, another sacred place. From then on private mourning became public, as an awfully small-sized and unambitious monument appeared behind the Pantheon of the Workers' Movement, and obsequies of fifty-sixers, who survived both the Revolution and the subsequent retribution, were held here. The Fiumei Road cemetery is much closer to the city, not to mention that plot No. 21 is located in the National Graveyard as opposed to a public cemetery.

The outcome has a consequence. The cause becomes the effect. It is all so cryptic. I cannot really decide whether merely the political states of the country are being represented here, or these states are being continually recreated by the failure of memory. As

is the case with any heterotopia, this is a terrain of the arcane, of meanings broken loose; not a French garden, but an abandoned English park still trying to look orderly.

Finally, let's have a look at what it all comes down to: the hopelessness of meaninglessness. The monument to Hungarians who died in the Second World War was inaugurated on Fiumei Road in 2006: this is a medium-sized pyramid half-buried in the ground. The geometric structure is empty enough not to hurt anybody's feelings and, by the same token, nobody can identify with it. Who is this monument dedicated to? Civilians? Soldiers? The monument is just as abstract and mysterious as it is politically unintelligible. Meanwhile, it all does make sense: it is a monument to the total blunder of memory, to words never uttered, to uninitiated and unconducted debates, to unerected monuments. A monument in a silenced and forgotten military cemetery, just like the one dedicated to Hungarian soldiers who died in the Second World War and who, for that matter, still do not have a monument because, to this day, the Republic has been unable to come to terms regarding the public discourse on the war in which we were Hitler's henchmen and, at the same time, our own victims, never having discussed our own inalienable responsibility. However, if the irrevocable responsibility and guilt of the political elite of the Horthy period were to be pronounced, at last it could be asserted aloud that most of the soldiers fighting in the Hungarian Second Army were victims, while the war criminals were those people that gave them the orders. The reason why this monument stands here is that there is still no public space in Budapest with a Holocaust monument that would clearly show that the victims of the genocide were Hungarian citizens and that we miss those half a million Hungarians, who were incidentally also people with Jewish ancestry. As long as this is not made explicit, historical memory remains offensive and hurtful for survivors and their descendants, rather than a repository of shared democratic feelings.

And yet, from a Hungarian point of view, there is no separate Jewish memory: the representation of the Holocaust is not the business of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Páva Street alone but, strictly speaking, also that of mainstream politics. Yet, so far, none of the Hungarian governments in power since 1989 has asserted, clearly and unambiguously, that the irreparable sin committed against Hungarian Jews is the great tragedy of 20th century Hungarian history. The reason why this anonymous monument stands here is that Hanna Szenes, having emigrated from Hungary to Palestine and later parachuted in as an English partisan during Arrow Cross rule, was executed in the fall of 1944 and her body was extradited to Israel by the Communists in 1950, where it reposes in the military cemetery of Mount Herzl. The reason why this monument rests here so unintelligibly is that the memory of Sára Salkaházi, the beatified nun who saved Jews and was executed by Arrow Cross gangs, is more readily rendered into oblivion than cultivated by the Hungarian Catholic Church that has failed to clarify that modern Hungarian Catholicism is to be defined in opposition to Nazism.

To be sure, these two young women, executed by the same Hungarian Nazis, died for the same cause. What their lives and deaths tell us is that Jews and Hungarians are the same, that they are members of the same society. As long as we are unable to talk about

what our predecessors did to the Jews as a story of our own, as long as all our cemeteries are able to provide is a sinister memorial tour into the forms and norms of oblivion, suppression and horror, Petőfi's lines will echo in a hopeless and empty void. Fear of reality is really fear of responsibility, as Hannah Arendt put it when speaking about Germans. That is as far as we could go by 2011.

### Notes

[1] This example, and, partially, the argument, was obviously based on Walhalla in Bavaria, designed by Leo von Klenze and completed in 1842.

[2] At the same time, the question of the military plot raises the issue of the fate, or lack, of a military cemetery in Budapest. It is worth knowing that there used to be a military graveyard with more than 18,000 graves in the New Public Cemetery from 1933 to the 1950s/1960s, where those who died in the First World War were buried. This graveyard, inaugurated by Admiral Horthy, included a monument with a surprisingly modern design, to which I must return later on, in relation to the 1956 monument.

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# *Response to Péter György, "Memory Fallen Apart: the Case of Two Cemeteries"*

**Aleida Assmann**

I want to condense into six points what I have learned from Péter György's admirable essay.

1. Instead of continuing a debate about the perennial question whether there is or is not such a thing as a collective memory one should henceforth rather ask questions such as the following:
   – who is being remembered?
   – how exclusive or inclusive is the "we" that remembers?
   – who is the memory addressed to?
   – by whom is the memory appeal accepted or not accepted?
   – which emotions, attitudes, responsibilities does the memory support and stimulate?

2. The construction of a national "we" was the invention of the 19th century. In this form (let's call it the Walhalla model) it was heroic and mobilizing, proclaiming sacred secular values such as freedom, independence and emancipation. After the traumatic events and experiences of the 20th century and the devastating wreckage left by evil and destructive ideologies, this national we is cracked in the center. These cracks now prevent the formation of a shared memory and continue to split the society.

3. A typical sign of a fragmented national memory is the divide into a public and a private memory. What is not addressed in public is told and communicated on a private (often family) level, turning it into a counter memory. Leaving central issues of national memory to private attention is a strategy of depoliticizing and devaluing these memories which become excluded from the public / official frame. The effect is: public inattention complemented by private attention and vice versa.

   For example: In Spain, 75 years after the end of the civil war; Republican memory forced its way back from private to public memory with the help of media attention. In Germany, the memory of flight and expulsion also moved from a family memory to a public memory after 2000. There are at least three different stages in the recognition of a memory which can move from private to public to official. In Spain and Germany, it is not yet clear whether the controversial memory will make it into an official memory supported by political funding, institutionalization and commemoration or whether it will fall back to the level of private memory.

4. Within the frame work of Cultural and Memory Studies a solid consensus has been established according to which a homogeneous memory is something to be feared and prevented by all means whereas a heterogeneous memory is praised and prescribed as wholly beneficial. After having read György's paper, I am no longer so sure about this state of affairs and would like to rephrase the simplistic dichotomy, replacing it by three forms of heterogeneous memory:

   a. heterotopia (or happy pluralism)—there are different collective memories existing side by side, dedicated to different events / persons and maintained by different commemorative communities.

   b. division—the same historical events are remembered by two or more groups who interpret them differently and cannot arrive at a common perspective. This form of fragmented memory is divisive and splits the society at its core.

   c. chaos and meaninglessness—giving up the attempt to configure, coordinate memories into a converging pattern due to the inability of the society to decide about the moral significance of historical events, to assume responsibility for and to confront evil episodes in its past. The general effect is an impasse in the historical consciousness of the society, combined with a feeling of numbness, futility and indifference.

5. In order to overcome this situation (4c), the traumatic events of the past have to be retold in such a way that perpetrators and victims can be identified and clearly distinguished. This explicit form of confronting historical events and taking responsibility is an important transitory step in the process of reassessing an evil past. It can neither be hushed up nor skipped without risking massive ensuing damage for the social historical consciousness. In spite of Hungary's important and justified cult of cultural diversity, it turns out that the national 'we' cannot do without a general consensus about such episodes of its nation's history. By giving a shape to these untold stories of atrocity, suffering and courage (referring, for instance, to the two women who are named in Péter György's paper) a common frame may be constructed that provides room for many heterogeneous memories and tragic crossovers in the course of 20th century Hungarian history.

6. Collective memory is not a phantom of theorists but the result of two urgent questions that a society has to ask itself: whom do we need to remember? and: whom do we want to remember? It is also dependent on two other questions: who are we and which memory do we want to pass on to posterity? In this case, the Europeanization of memory can fruitfully go hand-in-hand with national issues.

I will close with two Hungarians writers who have said what I wanted to say in a much more poignant way. The first is Péter Esterházy who argues that in order to overcome heroic national myths and competitive victimhood, we need "a common European knowledge about ourselves as both perpetrators and victims" (16). The other is György Konrád who has described the principle of dialogic remembering in Europe as follows: "It is beneficent for us to exchange our memories and to learn what others think of our stories…

The entire history of Europe has become common property, freely accessible to anyone without the constraints of national narratives or other forms of bias."

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# Remembering from Outside: A Response to Péter György

**Tamás Bényei**

"In his day," he said, "students were grounded in spelling and had learned poetry and the Bible by heart. An odd phrase, 'by heart,' he would add, as though poems were stored in the bloodstream."

*(A. S. Byatt 26)*

The fact that Péter György's essay opens with a reference to *National Song* is highly relevant to its main theme in a number of ways; the desultory remarks that follow will try to unfold some aspects of this relevance. One could start by noting a minor inaccuracy in George Szirtes's otherwise heroic translation of Petőfi's poem.[1] The two lines "Hol sírjaink domborulnak, / unokáink leborulnak" are rendered " And wheresoever we may perish / Grandchildren those graves shall cherish," suggesting that the graves and memorials will be erected in the place where death has taken the revolutionary heroes, whereas the original ("Where or graves rise") clearly talks about the sites assigned to their memory, no matter whether they coincide with the places of their death or not. The speaker of Petőfi's poem is concerned only with the cultural signs, memorials of death, as if foreseeing the end of the poet's own story: the exact site of his death remains notoriously unknown, although he is believed to have been killed in the battle of Segesvár.

Of course, tombs or graves are typically located elsewhere than the actual site of death, memorialising the cultural act of assigning a symbolic site to each dead person rather than the actual passing away of an individual. In this process, a specific location (a small plot of land) is allotted, in most cases depending not on the identity of the deceased but on the semiotic logic of the cemetery: the dead person is interred in the next available plot. This recalls a scene in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in which an old sailor living in the seaside town of Whitby talks about the tombstones in the churchyard. He remarks that, in half of the cases, there is in fact no body under the graves (which are therefore cenotaphs rather than graves proper), and even when there is somebody lying there the inscription is a pack of lies. When the old man asks Mina Murray what tombstones are for, she replies: "To please their relatives, I suppose" (85). Although this is probably true in the case of all memorials, *Dracula* is relevant here not only because of this minor episode, but mainly as a text that, in its own way, is concerned with the subject of György's essay: the gothic plots and the hideous spectres that are spawned by the politics of collective remembering.

I want to get back to the issue of cemeteries by following a circuitous path, returning first to the relevance of *National Song* to the rituals of commemoration. György's point about the revolution and War of Independence of 1848–49 being the last consensual

moment or site of national historical memory is reinforced by the fact that, apart from the national anthem and its companion piece *Szózat*, *National Song* is perhaps the most typical representative of the kind of poem that we call *memoriter*, a text practically all Hungarian schoolchildren will have learnt, memorised *by heart*, even—as I can testify—in the unpatriotic Kádár regime. *National Song* is remembered in the mode of memorialising, triggering off the sheer mechanism of recital rather than evoking a set of images. The poem, practically devoid of constative statements, is a perfect machinery for remembering: its content, which is imperative and performative anyway, is immediately transferred onto and displaced by the act of its repetition that is, by implication, also the repetition of the poem's original recital on the steps of the National Museum in 1848. *National Song* is clearly an important *lieu de mémoire* in Hungarian collective recall, but one that is exhausted in the repetition and passing on of the sheer imperative to remember and recite; thus, what is remembered—as in a proper *lieu de mémoire*—is the injunction to remember, and the object of recall is endlessly deferred. This is how the poem—or rather, its recital—has become part of the liturgy of official commemorative rituals, preserving and perpetuating the essentially performative nature of the text.

*National Song*, then, is a poem that Hungarians will remember in the sense of knowing the entirety or at least scraps of its text *by heart*. The Hungarian expression for "by heart," however (*kívülről*—literally "from outside"), is closer in its implications to the English expression "by rote' and the German" "*auswendig*," and indicates the mechanical and external nature of such remembering. The text is hollowed out semantically, to become either an exercise is mnemotechnics or a ritual of repetition. This is the process that is highlighted by Transylvanian poet László Király's text *Tábla* ("Plaque"). This pattern poem is, in fact, a list of the hallowed names of the thirteen martyr heroes of Arad, executed by the Austrians in 1849, with all the letters capitalised, no spaces within and between names, and the list (with a few laconic data about the date and mode of their execution) taking up the shape of a square: all the letters have equal value, which also means that the poem dramatises the way in which the names have lost their contours, reduced into a mere mechanical list that has to be remembered, erasing all difference and thus the individuality of the victims. On the other hand, the fact that the list is offered as a *poem*, a special kind of text, the kind of text that people sometimes memorise and recite, reverses the effacement of meaning and restitutes the list—not as a list containing the names of individualised martyr heroes, but as an imaginative text that deserves to be remembered *for its own sake*. This, however, is still not the end. In the poem, the names and the added data are enumerated in such an order that the rhythm of the successive names fits that of the well-known Kossuth song (Király 72).[2] In this way the list, which is a stumbling block for so many Hungarian schoolchildren precisely because lists lack rhyme or reason, is also offered as a profanised exercise in mnemotechnics, something that is held together merely by the rhythm and melody of the popular song: an empty ritual of commemoration, a mnemotechnical *tour de force* (this is how I was able to put the names to memory, and this is how I am able to recall them to this day). Thus, the practice that György refers to as the imperative "to keep saying the names of our ances-

tors" is revealed as precisely that: an empty command to remember, a compulsive repetition voided of the very object of remembering.

The case of *National Song* is a minor but suggestive example of what can be called the problem of remembering "from outside"; perhaps the specific political causes of the crisis engaged with in György's exemplary analysis of the spatial politics of Budapest cemeteries are closely related to the broader (both theoretical and historical) problem of remembering 'from outside'.

György talks about the "collapse of any minimum consensual memory," and discusses the mnemic confusion that reigns in Budapest's cemeteries as a symptom of this predicament. Cemetery "plot" is an appropriate word in this context in its very ambiguity (more suitable than "parcel"), for it indicates that sites of memory are always (em)plotted, bundles of time-consciousness congealed and mapped onto physical and symbolic spaces. Thus, when we lament that, with regard to twentieth-century Hungarian history, there is no "consensual first person plural," and deplore the consequent lack of consensual sites (that is, commonplaces) of remembering or mourning, we are also lamenting the absence of a consensual plot(line) of this history (György himself mentions the "lack of any consensual narrative to stand for a minimum identity of a democratic polity"). Because Hungarian history of the past 150 years is being endlessly reconfigured into plots that cancel each other out rather than complementing one another, the cemetery plots that ought to be the sites of collective rituals of remembering have become heterotopias in the radical (and non-Foucauldian) sense of sites with meanings that themselves cancel each other out. The resulting narratives have gothic plots, replete with exhumations and reburials of the body of the past, with "spectral" revenants and undead creatures that return to haunt the living. The gothicity of Hungarian memory politics breeds other kinds of ghosts as well: when the automatisms and rituals of commemoration keep replaying themselves without any subjectivity that would assert them (rituals like commemorating communist heroes, reciting *National Song* to prove that one remembers the text, or singing the national anthem before every first division football game), the participants themselves are spectralised. As the sociologist Avery F. Gordon claims, rituals performed by an individual or a community in an automatic fashion, without the felt approval of the subject, render the subject who performs such actions spectral (19, 55–56, 197–98), insofar as the subjects perform actions that are not their own, and these empty rituals also remind the subject that it is in fact sustained, held together by similar mechanisms. If, as Jan Assmann suggests, the dominance of representational memory over repetition entails the advent of hermeneutics that takes the place of liturgy (17–18), such hollowed-out practices indicate the return of liturgy and the waning of hermeneutics and representation.

Trying to trace the causes of the collapse and pervasive gothicisation of collective memory, one could do worse than to recall Assmann's distinction between social and cultural memory. Assmann suggests that the former refers to the largely oral practices of bequeathing knowledge about the past extending back to three generations, while the latter refers to collective memories of the more distant, more or less homogeneous past

in which the relative remoteness of individual events is no longer crucial (48–53). What is significant in Assmann's account for my purposes is his borrowing of the ethnographic concept of the floating gap, a grey zone situated between and separating these two temporalities of memory: the gap seems to be necessary as a sanitary buffer zone, allowing time for recent events to sediment and acquire a quasi-mythical, consensual form. The mutually exclusive mappings of the cemetery spaces analysed in György's essay can be seen as symptomatic of the lack of this sanitary floating gap in recent Hungarian politics of memory. From this perspective, the Hungarian history of the last century is full of attempts to do away with the floating gap and what it stands for, acts of a rapid, obviously premature monumentalisation (or its obverse: demonisation and obliteration) of the events and protagonists of the all too recent past, a proliferation of rituals and technologies of commemoration including the compulsive renaming of streets, erecting monuments, introducing and abolishing bank holidays and other acts of glorification, pantheonisation and demonisation. Such gestures render the processes of communicative memory extremely difficult, not least because they appropriate (in order to monumentalise or demonise) the memory of individuals even before the personal, private process of mourning could run its course; thus, the intimate process of mourning for a parent or ancestor is often traversed, pre-empted by the—officially declared—status of the mourned person in collective memory.

In a train of thought that complements that of Assmann, Pierre Nora sets up a—questionable—dichotomy between an idealised and now demised memory proper, "entwined with the intimacy of collective memory" (8) (characterised by heritage and intimacy) and history, which he sees as an alienated surrogate of absent memory. The dichotomy is not unlike the Hegelian contrast between *Erinnerung* and *Gedächtnis*, where *Gedächtnis* is devalued as an external, prosthetic, material system of archiving and spacing (de Man 91-104); thus, Nora's distinction brings us back to the problem of remembering from outside, an externality that—as Paul de Man asserts—is always already inside, an inalienable part of the natural process of remembering. One problem behind the confused temporal and spatial plots in Budapest cemeteries is perhaps precisely that everything becomes history before it could have solidified as memory: György remarks that, as far as the remembrance of the recent historical past is concerned, memory is "immediately appropriated for political purposes." Thus, what is posited as external (politics, history) hijacks, appropriates the alleged immediacy and intimacy of memory, blasting it open and incapacitating it both as a work of mourning and as a process of acquiring identity.[3]

The link between the confused private and public uses of cemetery spaces and the issue of remembering from outside is brought out in the most obvious manner by military cemeteries, which represent a singular idea of parcelling out the dead (after all, no other occupation is distinguished by comparable strategies): they contain the bodies of those who died wearing uniforms, drastically removing their obsequies from the context of the family (from the family plot). This practice introduces another meaning of "outside," recalling what Georges Bataille calls heterogeneity: those aspects of cultural existence (all kinds of unproductive expenditure, including sacrifice and war) that subvert the

rational, closed economy of our world (116–36). Military cemeteries symbolically define their deceased inhabitants as heterogeneous, removed from social space (the physical distance between the actual site of death and the symbolic site of the cultural ritual is reduced to the minimum). Ultimately, one is reminded of the Biblical archetype of the burial place for the heterogeneous: the potter's field, the piece of land that is bought for the tainted money returned by Judas to the high priests. As the polluted money clearly cannot go into the treasury, it is used for the purchase of the potter's field—an infertile plot that is used by potters hunting for clay—"to bury strangers in" (Matthew 27:7). If a "stranger" is defined as the figure of the absolutely alien and heterogeneous, the gothicity of the public cemeteries in Budapest can also be seen as the result of the fact that, owing to the radical and repeated rewritings of recent history, many of the plots have at one time or another been potter's fields, spaces of the non-symbolic, the alien, the heterogeneous, and these moments or periods of being outside the realm of the recallable past have left their spectralising traces on these sites.

These threads are conveniently brought together in György's remarks on the monument to the victims of World War II in the Fiume Road cemetery in Budapest. The monument, as the website of the Nemzeti Emlékhely és Kegyeleti Bizottság (ca. National Committee of Memorials and Obsequies) assures us, was erected "on the basis of the broadest possible social consensus," in tribute to all those who died in the war, presumably including soldiers and civilians, transported Jews and those who denounced them, the inmates and guards of labor camps, bombed-out civilians and Arrow Cross soldiers—as if the mere fact of death were sufficient to abolish all other differences in an all-encompassing gesture of forgiveness. The inauguration date is also telling in that it was chosen in a desperate attempt to avoid causing offence to anyone: the memorial was inaugurated on 2 September 2006, the anniversary of Japanese capitulation—a date that is empty of specifically Hungarian connotations.

The idea of "the broadest possible consensus" might at first sight recall Péter György's longing for a consensual "we," a common place that could be occupied or even inhabited by all members of the community, a place that could accommodate different or even rivalling narratives. The Fiume Road memorial, however, seems to aspire to achieve much more than this: a consensus that subsumes all possible perspectives and narratives of the past. By displaying it, the memorial itself aims performatively to bring about this absolute consensus that, however, is so broad that the site which represents and gives location to it becomes abstract, almost impossible to *use*. Thus, it is rather difficult to imagine how the site will gather around itself those layers of use and affect that are necessary for any site to become an actual place of remembering. In order to work as a site of remembering, a site must accumulate private, anamorphic dimensions.

The forbidding memorial in the Fiume Road cemetery is a genuine *lieu de mémoire*, a site of dysfunctional memory, of the lack of lived collective rituals of remembering World War II: the site of an absent memory. The remembering—or rather, commemoration—that takes place is doomed to remain external, starting from outside and stuck outside

forever, repeating the same gestures of remembering something that is the emptiness concealed inside.

The memorial itself (unlike, for instance, Jovánovics's 1956 memorial) forbids entry— exactly like the Egyptian pyramids that it evokes, an architectural mode that is totally alien to Hungary. The very alienness of the structure serves as an index of its abstraction (not an abstraction like that of many recent conceptual Holocaust memorials but one that is a direct translation of an emptiness). Just as the abstraction of the memorial might be interpreted as a half-conscious acknowledgement of its inner hollowness, its half-buried state can be seen as a self-reflexive allegorical gesture indicating its futility as a memorial site, (pre)figuring the site's fate of remaining unused, its surface unmarked by the traces of the innumerable private (or at least individual) rituals of remembering.

The very futility of the memorial suggests that collective rituals are performatively efficient only if they can be seen and experienced as the aggregate of the individual acts of remembering that compose and accompany them. A memorial "works" if it is marked by visitors (in this sense, even sacrilegeous graffitti might be seen as a sign of its power, its life). The pristine, unblemished white surface of the nothing that is enclosed or en-crypted in the inaccessible interior of the monument is a memorial to the blandness and blankness of total consensus (not unlike the bland benignity of memorials to world peace or international goodwill), suggesting that the "we" that is spacious enough to accom-modate all conflicting memories and narratives might be too abstract to enable actual mourning: in the presence of such monuments, the process of identification that seems to be necessary for effective mourning and remembering is extremely difficult to perform, and rememberers are forced to remain outside. A grief that is commodious enough to include all kinds of grief courts the danger of becoming nobody's grief.

One can imagine this memorial as a living site only if it will become a site for those casualties and victims of the war who are left out of all other acts of commemoration. Thus, what was intended as an all-inclusive memorial site might perhaps become a place of radical heterogeneity, a genuine potter's field, a function to which it seems to be des-tined by its conception and architectural design alike.

### Notes

[1] The other minor inaccuracy in the translation is the playing down of the gesture of sacralisation. In the Hungarian original ("áldó imádság mellett / mondják el szent ne-veinket"), the names to be repeated in the prayer are hallowed or sacred. There is no space to elaborate on the significance of this issue to György's essay, although the symbolic geography and semiotics of cemeteries is clearly predicated on acts of sacralisation and setting apart. Pierre Nora insists that memory as such "installs remembrance within the sacred," that is, that genuine memory will by definition sacralise the act of (collective) remembering (9). In "Of Other Spaces," Michel Foucault remarks that space, unlike time, has not been entirely desacralised in modernity, and that our ideas of space are still governed by oppositions (private/public, family space/social space) that are in turn "nur-tured by the hidden presence of the sacred" (23).

[2] The poem is part of a longer cycle called *A nyugalom érkezése* ("The Advent of Tranquillity").

[3] One could add, in a Paul de Manian manner, and also evoking the most radical insight of Maurice Halbwachs, that protocols of mourning are always necessarily cultural, that is, they invariably contain an element of externality, and therefore the entire dichotomy is subject to deconstruction. Thus, the memory of the dead is replaced and displaced by competing official rituals and practices of commemoration. What one cannot remember one commemorates or memorises in the sense of *Gedächtnis*.

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# 3. Ungarische Erinnerungsorte im zentraleuropäischen Kontext

# Ein religiöser Erinnerungsort in Mitteleuropa: Tyrnau (Nagyszombat, Trnava), das „Klein-Rom" (Eine Fallstudie)*

**István Bitskey**

Die Osmanen besiegten 1526 die Ungarn bei Mohács und führten bis zur Besetzung der Hauptstadt des Königreiches Ungarn, Ofen (Buda), im Jahre 1541 mehrmals Feldzüge gegen Wien und ungarische Städte durch, so dass der unweit von Ofen liegende Sitz des Graner Erzbischofs durch die Osmanen bedroht war. 1532 flüchteten der Erzbischof und das Domkapitel nach Tyrnau, das jenseits der Donau nahe an der Grenze zu Österreich lag. Als 1543 auch Gran (Esztergom) gefallen war, wurde der Sitz der Graner Erzbischöfe in Tyrnau eingerichtet. Von hier aus wurden das Graner Erzbistum und die ungarische katholische Kirche von 1541 bis 1820 geleitet und zur Zeit der sich verbreitenden Reformation im 16. Jahrhundert neu organisiert. Unter Erzbischof Péter Pázmány wurde die Stadt zum Zentrum der katholischen Erneuerung und der Barockkultur und damit auch zu einem symbolischen Ort der reorganisierten katholischen Kirche im *Regnum Hungariae*, d. h. in dem Königreich Ungarn. Die von Pázmány im Jahre 1635 errichtete Tyrnauer Jesuitenuniversität war die erste Hochschule im Karpatenbecken, die ohne Unterbrechung bis auf den heutigen Tag tätig ist. Das historische Stadtzentrum zeichnet sich unter anderem durch eine größere Anzahl an Kirchen aus, darunter eine der größten Kirchen Mitteleuropas, die Kathedrale St. Johannes Baptist. Die Stadt wird daher auch „Klein-Rom" (*parva Roma*) oder heutzutage auch „Slowakisches Rom" genannt.

Die Bedeutung der Stadt Tyrnau als religiöser Erinnerungsort befindet sich einerseits auf geographischer Ebene, andrerseits verkörpert die Stadt auch die Idee der geistigen Leistung, der geistigen Kraft des Katholizismus im Karpatenraum. Das Zusammenwirken der Universitättradition und der römisch-katholischen Erneuerungsidee macht die Besonderheit dieses Erinnerungsortes aus. Der Papstbesuch im Jahre 2003 betonte und verstärkte die Bedeutung des Ortes im religiösen geistigen Leben der Region und des Landes.

Im Nachfolgenden suchen wir die Antwort auf die Frage: Welche historische Komponenten organisierten den Charakter dieses Erinnerungsortes? Wie kann man eine Stadt als Erinnerungsort, d. h. als Symbol einer religiösen Identitätsform betrachten? Wie lebt Tyrnau heute in dem kollektiven Gedächtnis der Region?

Unsere Abhandlung schließt an die Feststellung von Moritz Csáky an, die erklärt: „Gedächtnis und Raum stehen ohne Zweifel in einer engen, wechselseitigen Beziehung

zueinander […]Erinnerungen werden also durch die Wahrnehmung von Orten aktualisiert, in denen das Gedächtnis ruht" (Csáky 2001, 257). Unserer Meinung nach handelt es sich eben darum auch im Falle Tyrnau.

## Tyrnau als neuer Sitz der Graner Erzbischöfe

Miklós Oláh, einer der gebildetsten Humanisten seiner Zeit, besetzte im Jahre 1553 in der St. Nikolaus-Kirche von Tyrnau den erzbischöflichen Stuhl.[1] Während seiner Amtszeit begann der Ausbau Tyrnaus zum Zentrum der ungarischen katholischen Kirchenregierung, auch die Bauarbeiten an einem erzbischöflichen Palast wurden zu jener Zeit in Angriff genommen. Oláh holte die Jesuiten in die Stadt und übertrug ihnen 1561 die Leitung der Stadtschule. Die Jesuiten führten dort ein Fünf-Klassen-Gymnasium ein und modernisierten den Unterricht im Sinne der *studia humanitatis* (Békefi 1897; Péteri 1963). 1566 gründeten sie auch ein Priesterseminar. Obwohl die Jesuiten wegen Meinungsverschiedenheiten mit der Stadtführung, die ihre Privilegien durch die aktive Gesellschaft Jesu in Gefahr sah, die Stadt verlassen mussten, behielt die katholische Schule weiterhin ihr hohes Niveau. Dies war deshalb besonders beachtlich, weil sich die Mehrheit der aus Ungarn, Deutschen und Slowaken bestehenden Landesbevölkerung entweder der calvinischen oder der lutherischen Reformation anschloss, aber die Stadtschule war auch für sie wichtig (Jankovič 1991).

Ab 1560 rief Miklós Oláh in Tyrnau jedes Jahr eine Diözesansynode zusammen, auf der er versuchte, die Anordnungen des Konzils von Trient durchzusetzen. Seine Bemühungen waren aber mit Schwierigkeiten verbunden, da die meisten Pfarrer der Diözese ungebildet waren und zur Zeit der schnellen Verbreitung der Reformation die stetige Gefahr bestand, dass diese von ihrer konfessionellen Zugehörigkeit abweichen würden (Beke 1993; J. Ujváry 1994; Fazekas 2003). Mittels der Synoden konnte aber die katholische Kirchenorganisation und damit die Möglichkeit der späteren Reorganisation erhalten werden.

Nach dem Tod des Erzbischofs Oláh fuhren die katholischen Kirchenoberhäupter mit der Reorganisation des Katholizismus fort und ergriffen wichtige Maßnahmen, um dem sich immer mehr verbreitenden Protestantismus Einhalt zu gebieten. Erste Erfolge konnte der Erzbischof Ferenc Forgách vorweisen, der sich auf den jungen und außerordentlich begabten Jesuiten Péter Pázmány stützte. Im Auftrag von Forgách nahm Pázmány in zahlreichen ungarischsprachigen Streitschriften den Kampf mit den protestantischen Lehren auf. Nach seinen polemischen Werken gab er 1613 eine monumentale apologetische Synthese unter dem Titel „Isteni igazságra vezérlő Kalauz" [Wegweiser zur göttlichen Wahrheit] heraus. In Tyrnau und in dem nahe liegenden Pressburg, seit der osmanischen Eroberung Ofens Sitz des ungarischen Landtages und der Landesverwaltung, zeigten seine Predigten eine außerordentliche Wirkung, indem er zahlreiche politisch bedeutsame Adelsfamilien wieder zum Katholizismus zurückführen konnte (Bitskey 1986; Ders.. 1988; Ders. 2010; Szántó 1987; Maczák 2005; Adriányi 1998; über die literarische Tätigkeit von Pázmány vgl. Hargittay 2001). Als Forgáchs Nachfolger auf dem Primasstuhl wurde er eine führende Persönlichkeit des Katholizismus in Ungarn, die ihren Erzbischofssitz Tyrnau zum geistigen Zentrum und zum repräsentativen Mittelpunkt des Ka-

tholizismus ausbauen ließ (Hargittay 2006). 1615 kehrten die Jesuiten in die Stadt zurück, denen Pázmány die Ausbildung der neuen katholischen Elite des Landes anvertraute.

### Zentrum des ungarischen Katholizismus von 1615–1777

Nach dem Umzug des Domkapitels von Gran nach Tyrnau wurde die mittelalterliche gotische St. Nikolaus-Kirche zum Bischofdom erhoben. In dieser Kirche hielten die führenden Persönlichkeiten des Katholizismus, unter anderen die bekannten Glaubensstreiter Miklós Telegdi und András Monoszlóy, der Bibelübersetzer György Káldi und auch Péter Pázmány, ihre Predigten. Pázmány ließ die Kirche restaurieren und mit neuen Altären, Seitenkapellen, einer neuen Kanzel und einem Fußboden aus Marmor versehen (Szörényi 2005, 55–57). Neben der Domkirche hatten auch die seit dem Mittelalter in der Stadt angesiedelten Orden der Franziskaner, Dominikaner und der Barmherzigen Brüder ihre eigenen Kirchen, Ordenshäuser und Institutionen. Aus den erzbischöflichen Einkünften subventionierte Pázmány auch ihre Tätigkeiten, aber vor allem die der Jesuiten, denen er bei der Rekatholisierung der ungarischen politischen Elite und der Adelsfamilien des Landes eine ausschlaggebende Rolle zuwies.

Auf Ersuchen der Jesuiten und des Erzbischofs wurde mit finanzieller Unterstützung des Palatins Graf Miklós Esterházy, selbst ein Zögling der Jesuiten und einer der reichsten Aristokraten des Landes, die Kirche der Jesuiten erbaut. Im Sinne des jesuitischen Programms *Omnes ad maiorem Dei gloriam* wurde die Kirche im neuen Baustil des Barocks nach den Vorbildern in Rom und Wien zwischen 1629 und 1637 errichtet. Die Pläne der ersten Barockkirche im Karpatenbecken wurden von den italienischen Architekten Pietro und Antonio Spazzo entworfen. Die Kirche, die nach St. Johannes dem Täufer benannt wurde, konnte nach den aufwendigen Innenarbeiten erst 1700 mit der finanziellen Hilfe von Fürst Pál Esterházy fertiggestellt werden und diente später zugleich als Universitätskirche (Dubnický 1948).

Konnte Pázmány mit Hilfe der Jesuiten die Wirkung und Tätigkeit der Protestanten in Tyrnau und in der Diözese zurückdrängen, so versuchte er auch mit anderen Mitteln die Position der katholischen Kirche zu stärken (Őry 1973; Bitskey 2002; Šimončič 2003). Zu diesem Zweck organisierte er in Tyrnau regelmäßig Diözesansynoden, führte wieder die Kirchenvisitationen ein, ließ die Liturgie vereinheitlichen und die Gottesdienste festlicher gestalten. Er konnte auch die abhanden gekommenen, entwendeten oder verpfändeten Besitztümer des Erzbistums zurückerlangen und erhielt eine regelmäßige Unterstützung durch die *Sacra Congregazione de Propaganda Fide* in Rom und eine Jahresrente (*annua pensio*) vom spanischen König mit dem Ziel, die Erneuerung des Katholizismus in Ungarn zu fördern. Durch diese Tätigkeit und Förderung konnte Pázmány binnen eines Jahrzehnts das erzbischöfliche Einkommen, das zur Priesterausbildung und zum Ausbau Tyrnaus zum Zentrum des Katholizismus im Ungarn des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts verwendet wurde, auf das Dreifache erhöhen.

Zur barocken Repräsentation gehörten auch pompöse Pontifikalfeiern, bei denen Theaterstücke durch Schüler und Studenten der Stadt unter Leitung der Jesuiten aufgeführt wurden. Im Rahmen von Fronleichnamsprozessionen, Bischofsweihen oder aber

zu Schuljahresabschlussfeiern kam es oft zu derartigen Aufführungen, die zugleich der Erbauung der Jugend und der Stadtbevölkerung dienten (Kilián 2006). In den Stücken wurden Taten jesuitischer Heiliger wie Ignatius von Loyola, Franz Xaveri oder der Könige von Ungarn wie Matthias Hunyadi (Corvinus) dargestellt, wodurch die Studenten von Tyrnau landesweit bekannt und sogar zu Gastspielen nach Wien eingeladen wurden. Pázmány erkannte die außergewöhnliche Bedeutung der Erziehung sowohl der Jugend als auch der Priester für die Verstärkung der Position der Katholiken. Er hat das alte Ordenshaus der Tyrnauer Dominikaner den Jesuiten übergeben, die dort ein Gymnasium und später auch ein Seminar für weltliche Priester eröffneten. Außerdem ließ der Erzbischof ein Adelskonvikt und ein Konvikt für nichtadelige Jugendliche errichten und er gründete das Kollegium *Bursa Sancti Adalberti* zur Erziehung der weltlichen Intelligenz. Nach dem Tyrnauer Muster bildeten sich auch andere jesuitische Kollegien im Land, vor allem in Pressburg und in Raab (Győr). Wegen der kriegerischen Verhältnisse gründete Pázmány 1623 in dem sicheren Wien das nach ihm benannte Priesterseminar *Pazmaneum*, das bis zum heutigen Tag besteht (Fazekas 2002; Marsina 2006; die jüngste Universitätsgeschichte: Šimončič–Hološová 2010). Die begabtesten Studenten von Tyrnau konnten ihr Theologiestudium mit Pázmánys finanzieller Unterstützung in Wien, dann im *Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum* in Rom fortsetzen (Bitskey 1996). Tyrnau nahm somit im mitteleuropäischen katholischen geistigen Leben eine dominante Stellung ein. Aus den von Pázmány unterstützten Schulen kamen im 17. Jahrhundert die Erzbischöfe und Bischöfe des ungarischen Klerus, die dann den Erzbischofssitz auch mit weiteren repräsentativen Bauten schmückten. Erzbischof György Lippai errichtete 1649 das Generalseminar *Convictus Rubrorum* für die aus dem ganzen Karpatenraum stammenden Theologen. Der nächste Kirchenfürst, György Szelepcsényi, ließ das Seminar *Convictus Marianum* erbauen. Für Studenten aus Adelsfamilien ließ Königin Maria Theresia ein palaisartiges Konvikt errichten (Granasztói 2004).

Die bedeutendste Bildungseinrichtung Tyrnaus mit einer hohen Ausstrahlungskraft war allerdings die 1635 durch Pázmány gegründete Universität, deren Leitung der Erzbischof den Jesuiten übergab (Sinkovics 2003). Die Bildungsanstalt war zunächst eine Zwei-Fakultäten-Universität. Die juristische und die medizinische Fakultät wurden 1667 beziehungsweise 1769 eröffnet. Die Methodik und das Lehrmaterial des Unterrichts wurden von der *Ratio Studiorum* vorgegeben, wodurch sich die Universität von Tyrnau in das weltweite Bildungsnetz der Gesellschaft Jesu einfügen konnte. Die Zahl der Studenten wuchs in acht Jahren auf 200 und bis zum Jahre 1777 erwarben 4.315 Personen in Tyrnau einen akademischen Grad. Diese Institution verfügte nicht nur über einen regionalen, sondern auch über einen landesweiten Einfluss. In der Geschichte der Universitätsgründungen im Karpatenraum entstand hier erstmals eine kontinuierlich funktionierende Universität, die ihre Tätigkeit mit der Zeit erweitern konnte und die auch, nachdem der Jesuitenorden im Jahre 1773 aufgelöst worden war, Bestand hatte. Sie wurde von Maria Theresia nach Ofen und von Joseph II. nach Pest verlegt. Nach mehreren Umgestaltungen erhielt sie 1950 den Namen Loránd Eötvös Universität und gilt bis heute als die größte Universität Ungarns.

Doch waren es nicht allein die neu errichteten Seminare und die Universität, die das Stadtbild und die Bedeutung Tyrnaus als katholisches Zentrum prägten: So wurden im Jahre 1635 in der Klarissenkirche die Reliquien unter anderem der Kaschauer Märtyrer untergebracht. Die drei Priester waren noch während des Bethlen-Aufstandes im Jahre 1619 gemartert worden, nachdem sie es abgelehnt hatten, zum kalvinischen Glauben zu konvertieren. Alle drei wurden vom Papst Johannes Paul II. bei seinem Besuch in Tyrnau 1995 heilig gesprochen. Auch mehrere imposante Statuengruppen wurden in der Stadt aufgestellt, so beispielsweise die Dreifaltigkeitsstatue (1695) auf dem Hauptplatz und die Statuengruppe des Heiligen Joseph (1731), die als Dank für das Ende der Pestepidemie errichtet wurde. All das führte dazu, dass die Stadt bereits von den Zeitgenossen den Namen „Klein-Rom" erhielt (Marton 1903; Angyal 1976, Šimončič 1980).

Tyrnau spielte schon im 16. Jahrhundert eine Schlüsselrolle auch im katholischen Verlagswesen. Während es im Königreich Ungarn und im Fürstentum Siebenbürgen mehrere protestantische Druckereien gab, hatten die Katholiken in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen eine einzige katholische Druckerei in Tyrnau. Der erzbischöfliche Vikar Miklós Telegdi erwarb die verkaufte Druckereiausrüstung der Wiener Jesuiten und richtete in seinem eigenen Haus eine Druckerei mit finanzieller Unterstützung Kaiser Rudolfs II. und des Domkapitels ein. Mit der Leitung der Druckerei wurde der vielseitig begabte Priester Lukács Pécsi betraut, der Dichter, Kalenderschreiber und Korrektor in einer Person war. In der Tyrnauer Druckerei wurde neben wichtigen religiösen Schriften, Predigten, polemischen Schriften, Kalendern und religiösen Gedichten, die den grundlegenden Ansprüchen der katholischen Frömmigkeit dienten, unter anderem 1584 die komplette Gesetzessammlung Ungarns, „Corpus juris Hungarici", herausgegeben (V. Ecsedy 1995; Käfer 1977; Haiman–Muszka–Borsa 1997). Die Druckerei des Domkapitels arbeitete nur bis zum Jahre 1609, als Erzbischof Forgách eine neue katholische Druckerwerkstatt in Pressburg aufbaute. Der Universitätsunterricht machte jedoch 1648 die Gründung einer neuen Druckerei erforderlich. Von da an wurde Tyrnau bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts zur Hochburg des katholischen Verlagswesens. Hier druckte man die Prüfungsthesen der Universitätsdisputationen, die damals mit sehr dekorativen Kupferstichen erschienen, repräsentative Monographien, 1664 etwa über die ungarische barocke Gartenkunst von János Lippai, Predigten der Barockzeit wie die von András Illyés oder zwischen 1689 und 1702 die mehrbändige Enzyklopädie des Präfekten der Druckerei Márton Szentiványi unter dem Titel „Curiosiora et selectiora variarum scientiarum miscellanea". Der Höhepunkt des Buchdrucks in Tyrnau war mit mehr als 4.000 Büchern zwischen 1711 und 1777 erreicht. Die Mehrheit der Ausgaben erschien in lateinischer Sprache, aber auch ungarisch- und slowakischsprachige Bücher wurden hier gedruckt. Die schwunghafte Entwicklung wurde schließlich wegen der Auflösung der Gesellschaft Jesu unterbrochen und da die Druckerei in die Hände des Staates kam, wurde sie zusammen mit der Universität nach Ofen verlegt.

### Tyrnau in der religiös-kulturellen Erinnerung

Tyrnau war fast drei Jahrhunderte lang Zentrum des ungarischen Katholizismus und ein wichtiges regionales Zentrum der mitteleuropäischen barocken Bildung. Von hier aus

wurden lebhafte Kontakte mit Rom und Wien gepflegt, wodurch Tyrnau eine wichtige Rolle nicht nur in der Ausgestaltung der katholischen Ideenwelt, sondern zugleich in der Vermittlung der zeitgenössischen wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse einnahm. Der Tyrnauer Buchverlag vermittelte den Gedanken des *Regnum Marianum*, propagierte den Kultus der ungarischen Heiligen, fügte die Angelegenheiten der Religion und des nationalen Schicksals zusammen, wodurch sich Tyrnau sowohl geographisch als auch symbolisch zur Gedenkstätte des Katholizismus im Karpaten-Becken entwickeln konnte. Die Stadt war mit ihren reich ausgestatteten Kirchen auch Ziel der Pilger. In der St. Nikolaus-Kirche wurde auch den Gräbern von fünf Erzbischöfen (Miklós Oláh, Antal Verancsics, János Kutassy, Ferenc Forgách und Imre Lósy) Ehre erwiesen (Szörényi 2005, 56).

1977 wurde in der Stadt von Papst Paul VI. der Sitz der ersten selbstständigen slowakischen Kirchenprovinz errichtet und die Kathedrale des heiligen Johannes des Täufers zur Metropolitenkirche erhoben. Die Kathedrale mit dem daneben stehenden alten Universitätsgebäude bildet den topographischen und baulichen Mittelpunkt des Erinnerungsortes.

Das Attribut „Klein-Rom" war schon im 18. Jahrhundert gut bekannt, wie ein Studentenlied von 1777 zeigt (Vilikovský 1935). Dieser von einem unbekannten Autor stammende Text entstand beim Abschied der Studenten von der Stadt, wo Tyrnau als ein Rivale der „ewigen Stadt Rom" erwähnt wird:

> Ergo vale, parva Roma, magnae Romae aemula,
> derelinquo cuncta bona, tecta tua superba,
> Rex iam iubet ire Budam, terra mari urbem notam.
> 　　　　Eris posthac, nisi fallor, oppidorum famula.

Dieser Text dient seit 1985 als eine inoffizielle Hymne der Eötvös-Loránd-Universität in Budapest, bei festlichen Gelegenheiten wird sie gesungen, so lebt die Erinnerung der ehemaligen katholischen Hochschulstadt „Klein-Rom" in der Gegenwart weiter.

Tyrnau behielt seine herausragende Position in der Religions- und Kulturgeschichte auch nach dem Umzug der Universität nach Ofen und nach der Umsiedlung des erzbischöflichen Sitzes nach Gran. 1792 gründeten die slowakischen katholischen Geistlichen Anton Bernolák und Juraj Fándly den slowakischen Kulturverein *Slovenské učené tovaryšstvo* in Tyrnau. Die Stadt wurde seit der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts zum Zentrum der slowakischen sprachlichen und kulturellen Erneuerung. Der Verein gab Bücher, darunter religiösen Inhalts, in der erstmals 1787 durch Bernolák kodifizierten slowakischen Sprache heraus, die auf dem lokalen Dialekt aus der Gegend von Tyrnau beruhte. Nach dem ersten Weltkrieg wurde die Stadt der Tschechoslowakei angeschlossen und danach wurde der Begriff „slowakisches Rom" in dem regionalen öffentlichen Leben verwendet (Kohútová 2007). Die Wandlung des Attributs des Stadtnamens hängt mit den ethnischen und politischen Änderungen zusammen. Dahinter steht die Bestrebung der slowakischen Kulturpolitik, die die lokalen Traditionen, das ganze örtliche Kulturgut einseitig an die slowakische ethnische Gruppe binden möchte, um die nationale Identität zu festigen.

Die Päpste verfolgten das Schicksal der Stadt auch jüngstens mit großer Aufmerksamkeit. Die Reliquien der drei Kaschauer Märtyrer, die sich seit dem 17. Jahrhundert in der Tyrnauer Trinitarierkirche befinden, bekamen in der modernen Erinnerung eine erneuerte Bedeutung (Käfer 1995). Papst Johannes Paul II. sprach die Märtyrer bei seinem Besuch in der Slowakei am 2. Juli 1995 heilig. Der Papstbesuch hatte lebhafte Resonanz sowohl in der slowakischen als auch in der ungarischen Presse und die Unterbringung der Reliquien in Tyrnau verstärkte den religiösen und geistigen Charakter der Stadt weiter. Zum Andenken des neueren Papstbesuches in Tyrnau 2003 wurde die Statue Johannes Pauls II. vor der Kathedrale enthüllt. In der modernen ungarischen Literatur lebt die Erinnerung des Zentrums der katholischen Erneuerung weiter. Zoltán Sumonyi schrieb 1979 das Drama „Pázmány", in dem er die Tätigkeit des Erzbischofs in Tyrnau bearbeitete (Fernseh-Adaptation 1987) und der Dramaturg György Kopányi arbeitete 1980 das gleiche Thema in einem Hörspiel auf.



*Tyrnau, Universitätskirche, Hauptaltar*

Die religiösen und akademischen Traditionen verbanden sich in Tyrnau ganz eng, diese Verknüpfung bedeutet die Besonderheit dieses Erinnerungsortes. Diese Doppelheit spiegelt sich in der heutigen Erinnerung wieder. Heute betrachten sich drei Institutionen (Eötvös-Lorand-Universität in Budapest, Pázmány-Péter-Katholische-Universität in Piliscsaba und selbstverständlich die wiedergegründete Institution in Tyrnau) als Erbfolger der Geistigkeit der ehemaligen Universität. Das heutige Stadtbild in Tyrnau bewahrt die Traditionen, die weiterleben im heutigen kollektiven Gedächtnis sowohl in Ungarn als auch in ihrer neuen Heimat, in der Slowakei.



*Ansicht von Tyrnau im 17. Jahrhundert*

### Anmerkungen

[1] Die wichtigsten kirchengeschichtlichen Quellen zum Thema: Kazy, Franciscus. *Historia Universitatis Tyrnaviensis Societatis Jesu.* Tyrnaviae, 1737; Péterffy, Carolus. *Sacra Concilia Ecclesiae Romano-Catholicae in Regno Hungariae.* Posonii, 1742; Zelliger, Aloysius. *Pantheon Tyrnaviense.* Tyrnaviae, 1931; Lukács, Ladislaus. *Monumenta antiquae Hungariae.* Bd. 1. Roma, 1969; Granasztói, György. „Nagyszombat egyházi topográfiája (1579–1711).” Draskóczy, I. (Hg.) *Emlékkönyv Székely György 75. születésnapjára.* [Festschrift zum 75. Geburtstag von György Székely.] Budapest, 1989, 140–157; Zsoldos, Attila. *Matricula Universitatis Tyrnaviensis 1635–1701.* Budapest, 1990; Beke, Margit. (Hg.) *Pázmány Péter egyházlátogatási jegyzökönyvei (1616–1637).* [Kirchenvisitationsprotokolle Péter Pázmánys (1616–1637).] Budapest, 1994; Farkas, Gábor. (Hg.) *Magyarországi jezsuita könyvtárak 1711-ig: Nagyszombat 1632–1690* [Jesuitenbibliotheken in Ungarn bis 1711. Tyrnau 1632–1690.] Bd. 1–2, Szeged, 1997; Bognár, K., Kiss, József Mihály und Varga, J. *A Nagyszombati Egyetem fokozatot szerzett hallgatói 1635–1777.*

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# Erinnerungsort Bauernkrieg? Müntzer und Dózsa in der Geschichtspolitik der DDR und der Volksrepublik Ungarn im Vergleich

**Márta Fata**

György Dózsa und Thomas Müntzer, Leitfiguren des ungarischen beziehungsweise des deutschen Bauernkrieges, sind heute in der historischen Erinnerung fest verankert. Das ist auch ein Ergebnis der marxistischen Geschichtspolitik, der nach der Machtübernahme der Kommunisten sowohl in Ungarn als auch in der DDR die Aufgabe zugewiesen wurde, eine von der Bevölkerungsmehrheit nicht gewünschte Sowjetisierung der Gesellschaft nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges zu legitimieren und für eine Identifizierung der Gesellschaft mit dem neuen System zu sorgen.[1] In beiden Ländern sollte nach 1945 an die so genannten progressiven und humanistischen historischen Traditionen angeknüpft werden. Dazu zählte man den Bauernkrieg im 16. Jahrhundert als Ansatz zur revolutionären Traditionslinie in der jeweiligen Nationalgeschichte. Betrachtet man Formen der Präsentation und Instrumentalisierung der beiden Bauernführer, fallen zahlreiche Gemeinsamkeiten auf: So wurden zur Erinnerung an Dózsa und Müntzer Denkmäler errichtet, LPGs, Arbeiterbrigaden, Schulen, Sportvereine und andere Einrichtungen sowie Straßen nach ihnen benannt.[2] Die Porträts der beiden – obwohl es weder von Dózsa noch von Müntzer zeitgenössische Bildnisse gibt –, schmückten häufig verwendete Banknoten: nach 1947 die Zwanzig-Forint-Scheine beziehungsweise nach 1971 die Fünf-DDR-Mark-Scheine, was die Kommunisten als besonders wirksames Propagandamittel erachteten.

War also György Dózsa der ungarische Thomas Müntzer? Ein Vergleich lässt sowohl die spezifisch nationalen als auch die generellen Entwicklungen besser hervortreten. Die Ausgangspositionen für einen Vergleich sind allerdings denkbar schlecht. Denn während in Deutschland bereits zahlreiche Abhandlungen über die Instrumentalisierung Müntzers und des deutschen Bauernkrieges in der DDR entstanden waren und mit dem populärwissenschaftlichen Film des ZDF „Thomas Müntzer und der Krieg der Bauern" im Herbst 2010 auch eine Neubestimmung Müntzers in der diesmal vereinten deutschen Erinnerungskultur vorliegt, gibt es in Ungarn zum von Dózsa und dem ungarischen Bauernkrieg gezeichneten sozialistischen Geschichtsbild keine einzige Untersuchung. Dies fordert dazu heraus, den Stellenwert der beiden historischen Figuren in der jeweiligen Geschichtspolitik zu ermitteln, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf dem wenig bekannten Dózsa-Kult liegen soll; der Müntzer-Kult dient als Folie.

Grundlage des Vergleichs sind zwei Persönlichkeiten an der Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit, deren Namen in der Nachwelt paradigmatisch für den Bauernkrieg stehen – obwohl Dózsa im Königreich Ungarn 1514 und Müntzer im Heiligen Römischen Reich deutscher Nation 1524–1526 nicht die einzigen Bauernführer waren.[3] Dózsa und Müntzer, die sich gegen die bestehende Ordnung auflehnten, hatten nicht nur das gleiche persönliche Schicksal der Hinrichtung geteilt, sondern wurden durch die Nachwelt gleichermaßen negativ bewertet. In Ungarn war Dózsa in der bis ins 19. Jahrhundert dominanten Geschichtsbetrachtung des Adels der Aufrührer, der bäuerliche Kreuzfahrer gegen den Adel führte, die Wehrkraft des Landes beeinträchtigte, mithin die nationale Katastrophe von Mohács 1526 vorbereitete (Bellér 1974; Barta–Fekete Nagy 1973, 294–296). In Deutschland bauten auf die Verteufelung des radikalen Theologen Müntzer durch den Reformator Martin Luther zwei historische Traditionen auf: eine protestantische, die dem Verdikt Luthers über den Schwarmgeist Müntzer folgte, und eine katholische, der zufolge Müntzer eine Ausgeburt des lutherischen Geistes sei (Laube 1995, 69). Eine Gegen-Erinnerung an die beiden Bauernführer wurde weder in der ungarischen noch in der deutschen Volksüberlieferung bewahrt.[4] Doch die kontinuierliche negative Beschäftigung mit Dózsa und Müntzer in der Geschichtsschreibung hat dazu beigetragen, die Erinnerung an sie wach zu halten. Warum aber konnten die Bauernführer einen so prominenten Platz in der historischen Erinnerung der beiden kommunistisch-totalitären Staaten einnehmen? Dazu muss man historische Argumente einholen.

Das negative Bild der Bauernführer änderte sich erst im Vormärz, als sowohl im Königreich Ungarn als auch im Deutschen Bund der Abbau des Feudalsystems, darunter auch die Bauernbefreiung, in den Blickpunkt rückte.[5] Friedrich Engels, einer der Begründer der marxistischen Gesellschaftstheorie, wandte sich nach der gescheiterten bürgerlichen Revolution in Europa in seinem Werk „Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg" von 1850 dem thüringischen Bauernführer zu. Ausgehend von der Monographie „Der grosse deutsche Bauernkrieg" des württembergischen Pfarrers und Paulskirchenabgeordneten Wilhelm Zimmermann, der die Verteufelung Müntzers entschieden ablehnte,[6] hielt Engels den Bauernführer für einen „plebejischen Revolutionär" (Engels 1975, 59). Müntzers besondere Bedeutung bestand nach Engels darin, dass er sich mit seiner Forderung nach Allgemeinbesitz und einem Reich der Freiheit und Brüderlichkeit von der antirömischen und antifeudalen bürgerlichen Oppositionsbewegung Luthers abhob. Da sein Programm der Zeit weit voraus war, musste er vorgeblich unvermeidlich scheitern (Engels 1975, 69). Durch die säkularisierte Bewertung Müntzers machte Engels den Bauernführer zum Vorläufer des Kommunismus und den Bauernkrieg zum ersten deutschen Revolutionsversuch. Eine Ansicht, die von der sozialistischen Bewegung nicht nur in Deutschland, sondern auch in Ungarn rezipiert wurde, umso mehr, weil Engels den ungarischen Bauernkrieg als Teil der europäischen Bauernaufstände thematisiert hatte (Engels 1975, 84–87).

Engels' Versuch, den Bauernkrieg aus Klassengegensätzen zu erklären, wurde von den Nationalgeschichtsschreibungen abgelehnt. Auch in der Nationalkultur fand das Thema

nur in Ungarn zeitweilig Platz. Dies war in Anbetracht der niedergeschlagenen bürgerlichen Revolution und der gescheiterten nationalen Unabhängigkeit 1848/49 sowie des anschließend eingeführten Neoabsolutismus der Habsburger in Ungarn nicht weiter verwunderlich. Dózsa wurde von einem ehemaligen Vertreter der Märzjugend, Mór Jókai, 1856 mit einem romantischen Freiheitsdrama „György Dózsa" und von dem Komponisten der ungarischen Nationalhymne Ferenc Erkel 1867 mit einer gleichnamigen Oper der Elitekultur einverleibt.[7] 1883 erschien schließlich die erste Monographie über Dózsa aus der Feder von Sándor Márki, die 1883 mit einem Preis der Ungarischen Akademie ausgezeichnet wurde (Márki 1883).[8]

Allerdings wurde die historische Erinnerung an den Bauernführer nach dem österreichisch-ungarischen Ausgleich von 1867 aus dem gesamtnationalen Kult hinausgedrängt[9] und Dózsa wurde immer mehr zur Identifikationsfigur der Agrarsozialbewegung.[10] Die Ungarländische Bauernpartei errichtete anlässlich ihres Kongresses in Békéscsaba 1908 die erste Dózsa-Statue und rief Bauern und Landarme zur Teilnahme an der Feier mit der Losung auf: „Es soll jeder kommen, in dessen Adern ein Tropfen von György Dózsás Blut fließt."[11] Ein Denkmal für Müntzer war an keinem öffentlichen Ort in Deutschland erwünscht, bis es 1953 zur Errichtung des Denkmals in Mühlhausen kam, wo es seit 1923 schon eine Müntzer-Straße gab (Vogler 2008, 7).

Die ungarische Räterepublik von 1919 rückte in der Erinnerungskultur die international geehrten Vordenker des Sozialismus und die russischen Revolutionäre in den Vordergrund. Aus der eigenen Nationalgeschichte war es nur einigen wenigen gegönnt, in das Pantheon der Helden aufgenommen zu werden. Dózsa gehörte dazu (Vörös 2004, bes. 85–96). Als Grund dafür nannte 1926 der Kommunist Mátyás Rákosi, dass angeblich die ungarischen Landarmen seit Dózsa ein Gerichtsverfahren gegen die Großgrundbesitzer führten.[12]

In der Weimarer Republik verhalf Müntzer den Kommunisten mit dem Aufruf „Das Gesicht dem Dorfe zu!" zu einer besseren Profilierung, etwa durch die Müntzer-Tage 1925 in Thüringen anlässlich des 400. Jahrestages des Bauernkrieges (Profeld 1989). In Ungarn mussten die Kommunisten ihren Dózsa-Kult bis in die 1950er Jahre mit den so genannten Populisten, meist Schriftsteller bäuerlicher Herkunft, teilen, die 1939 die Nationale Bauernpartei gegründet hatten. In ihren politischen und literarischen Aktivitäten äußerten sich die „Volksschriftsteller" konsequent zu brennenden sozialen Problemen auf dem Land, die sich aus der Gesellschaftsstruktur Ungarns als Land der großen Latifundien und der besitzlosen Landarbeiter ergaben (Borbándi 1976). Wenige Wochen nach Beendigung des Zweiten Weltkrieges organisierte die Nationale Bauernpartei am 13. Mai 1945 die erste Dózsa-Kundgebung in Cegléd, wo Dózsa der Überlieferung zufolge die Bauern zum Aufbegehren gegen die Grundherren aufgerufen hatte, so dass der Kreuzzug gegen die Osmanen in einen antifeudalen Aufstand umschlug. Damit setzte sich die Nationale Bauernpartei als „Dózsas Volk" und späte Vollstreckerin der Ziele des Bauernkrieges in Szene und instrumentalisierte Dózsa als Kronzeugen für die 1945 begonnene Bodenreform.[13] In ähnlich propagandistischem Rahmen verlief die Bodenreform in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone. Im Oktober 1945 fanden beispielsweise in Stolberg

am Harz, dem Geburtsort Müntzers, die Thomas-Müntzer-Tage statt, bei denen einem Bauern von einem Vertreter der KPD „das den Vorfahren geraubte Land" (Wille 1996, 102) symbolisch zurückgegeben wurde.

Die ab 1949 in Ungarn allein regierende kommunistische Partei erhob den Anspruch auf die Deutungshoheit der gesamten Nationalgeschichte und wies der Geschichtspolitik die Aufgabe zu, einen neuen Kanon der Erinnerungskultur aus dem Reservoir historischer Traditionen des Landes zu schaffen. Das erklärte Ziel war die Etablierung eines auf der Revolutionstradition basierenden volksdemokratischen Nationalbewusstseins. Damit begann der Kampf um das kulturelle Gedächtnis der Nation, was man 1954 in einer Sitzung des Budapester Ausschusses der Partei der Ungarischen Arbeiter wie folgt formulierte: „Auf ideologischem Gebiet führen wir Krieg gegen jene historischen Ideen, die nur das Schlechte sehen und den Zusammenhang zwischen dem Dózsa-Bauernkrieg, Rákóczi-Freiheitskrieg, der Räterepublik und unserer Befreiung nicht erkennen."[14] Anders als in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone griffen die ungarischen Kommunisten schon ab 1945 auch auf eine im Nationalbewusstsein seit dem 19. Jahrhundert fest verankerte Freiheitstradition zurück, was sich aus verschiedenen Ursachen ergab: Erstens zog man die Lehre aus der Räterepublik, als die Kommunisten aufgrund internationalistischen Denkens und Handelns von der ganz großen Mehrheit der Gesellschaft abgelehnt wurden. Es kam hinzu, dass 1945 die sowjetische Führung die ungarischen Kommunisten anwies, keine offene Sowjetisierung der Gesellschaft vorzunehmen. Auch musste die Herrschaft der Kommunisten nach 1949 als eine fortschrittliche Stufe nationaler Entwicklung, sprich Befreiung vom halbfeudalen System des alten Ungarn, präsentiert werden. Dafür war es wichtig, dass das neue Regime wegen des allgemein bekannten Wahlbetrugs im Mai 1949 weder eine rechtliche Legitimation besaß noch das versprochene bessere Lebensniveau bieten konnte (vgl. dazu u. a. M. Rainer 1998; Rényi 1992, 35).

Aus der Vergangenheit schien der Dózsa-Stoff zur Legitimation der Herrschaft besonders geeignet, weil er den revolutionären Freiheitsgedanken in Ungarns nationales Selbstbewusstsein als Agrarland einzubetten vermochte (Szabó 1989, 230–233). József Révai, bis 1953 Chefideologe der Kulturpolitik, nahm den Standpunkt ein, dass Dózsas Programm nicht nur antifeudalen, sondern zugleich auch nationalen Charakter aufgewiesen habe, denn „auch die Klassenkämpfe werden für allgemeine, große nationale Ziele mit dem Programm zum Aufbau des Landes geführt" (Révai 1946, 147). Dózsa erschien schon wegen seiner Volksverbundenheit sehr geeignet, denn wie Révai weiter argumentierte: „Rákóczi und Kossuth werden vom ungarischen Volk geehrt, doch Dózsa ist sein eigenes Blut." Dózsa stammte zwar aus einer freien Szekler-Familie in Siebenbürgen und wurde von König Wladislaw II. zum Ritter geschlagen, doch im Rahmen der politischen Weiterbildungskurse in den Betrieben und den LPGs oder bei Schulungen der Jugend- und Erwachsenenorganisationen der Partei wurde ausschließlich auf das plebejische Dózsa-Bild zurückgegriffen.[15] Ihren künstlerischen Niederschlag fand diese Interpretation in dem in Budapest 1961 an einem architektonisch herausragenden Platz unterhalb der Burg aufgestellten Dózsa-Denkmal (Pótó, 2003, 237).

Die von dem jungen Bildhauer István Kiss bereits 1954 angefertigte dreiteilige Gruppenkomposition verweist auf eine Besonderheit des ungarischen Bauernkrieges. Die aufständischen Bauern und Ackerbürger stammten nämlich aus allen ethnischen Gruppen Ost- und Südungarns, was der Künstler in Nebenfiguren durch ungarische, slowakische und rumänische Bauern darstellte. Mit dem Hinweis auf die ethnische Zugehörigkeit der Bauern konnte nicht nur eine Brücke zu den sozialistischen Nachbarländern geschlagen, sondern auch ein nach 1945 aufzuarbeitendes nationales Problem Ungarns, die Lage der ungarischen Minderheit in den Nachfolgestaaten, im Sinne des sozialistischen Internationalismus thematisiert werden. Der aus Siebenbürgen stammende Dózsa konnte – wenn als Rumäne verklärt – auch in der rumänischen Geschichtsschreibung nach 1945 in die Reihe der Volkshelden aufgenommen werden (Ghermani 1973, 248). Er fungierte als Namenspatron von drei Ortschaften. Neben dem Szeklerland entstand auch im Banat mit dem Zentrum Temesvár/Timişoara, wo Dózsa 1514 hingerichtet wurde, schon seit Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts eine dreisprachige, ungarisch-rumänisch-deutsche Erinnerung an den Bauernführer.[16] Im geteilten Deutschland dagegen wurde die unterschiedliche Erinnerung an Müntzer zum Symbol der unüberbrückbar erscheinenden Einbindung der beiden deutschen Staaten in zwei sich feindlich gegenüberstehende Systeme.

Die von den ungarischen Kommunisten bevorzugte Tradition der Revolution und Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen in der ungarischen Geschichte wurde in der stalinistischen Ära immer mehr auf eine teleologische Deutung reduziert, deren Ausgangspunkt Dózsa war und die über Rákóczi und Kossuth bis zu Rákosi führen sollte. Wie leicht sich eine forcierte Freiheitstradition in einer Diktatur gegen das System selbst wenden konnte, zeigten die Ereignisse von 1956. Nach dem Volksaufstand verkündete die von János Kádár angeführte Ungarische Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei einen Zweifrontenkrieg. Dieser richtete sich einerseits gegen den die Freiheitstradition hervorkehrenden Rákosi-Dogmatismus, andererseits gegen die Reformkommunisten um Imre Nagy sowie die „Volksschriftsteller", die für die nationale Unabhängigkeit auch den Aufstand wagten (Borbándi 1976, 279–304). Einer der „Volksschriftsteller", Gyula Illyés, hatte sich bereits 1954 mit einem gegen die Tyrannei gerichteten Dózsa-Drama zu Wort gemeldet. Das im Nationaltheater im Februar 1956 aufgeführte Drama machte die Auflehnung des Volkes gegen die Unterdrückung zum Thema.[17]

In die Diskussion über die neue Richtlinie der Kulturpolitik innerhalb der Parteiführung, die schließlich auf Stellungnahmen in wissenschaftlichen Fragen in der Zukunft verzichtete, platzte 1960 die vom Direktor des Instituts für Geschichte an der Ungarischen Akademie, Erik Molnár, eingeleitete Historikerdebatte über den Zusammenhang zwischen den Kämpfen um nationale Unabhängigkeit und gesellschaftlichem Fortschritt. Die vielleicht wichtigsten Ergebnisse der thematisch immer mehr ausgeweiteten und bis in die 1970er Jahre geführten Debatten waren, dass sich die ungarische Geschichtswissenschaft gegenüber neuen Forschungsrichtungen und Methoden aus dem Westen öffnete und pluralistisch wurde (Laczkó 2008).

Die Debatten – die gewissermaßen entlang der traditionellen Interpretationsschemen der ungarischen Geschichte zwischen der nationalen Unabhängigkeit von 1848 und dem Ausgleich mit Österreich von 1867 unter marxistischem Mantel geführt wurden – bewirkten außerdem das Überdenken der historischen Entwicklung der ungarischen Nationalidee und -identität. Der Bauernkrieg Dózsas behielt in diesen historischen Debatten eine zentrale Bedeutung. So arbeitete der Mediävist Jenő Szűcs seine Thesen über Wurzeln und Entwicklung des ungarischen Nationalbewusstseins und Nationalismus am Beispiel der Akteure des Bauernkrieges heraus. Er ging davon aus, dass, wenn es 1514 ein die ständischen Grenzen übergreifendes, alle Gesellschaftsschichten integrierendes Bewusstsein und eine emotionale Bindungskraft gegeben habe – wie das bis dahin in der historischen Forschung behauptet wurde –, diese Merkmale nicht auf zeitlos existierende Kategorien von Nation und Vaterlandsliebe, sondern vielmehr auf die Mobilisierungskraft des Christentums zurückzuführen wären (Szűcs 1972 a; deutsche Zusammenfassung vgl. Ders. 1977). Auch für die Formulierung der sozialen Ziele der Aufständischen stand die christliche Kreuzzugsidee mit Hilfe der Franziskaner-Observanten, denen die Werbung für den Kreuzzug übertragen worden war, erfolgreich Pate (Szűcs 1972 b). Szűcs unterschied klar zwischen einem mittelalterlichen Patriotismus und dem modernen Nationalbewusstsein und lehnte die Existenz der Vaterlandsliebe bei den gegen die Osmanen ziehenden Bauern als anachronistisch ab. Der Mediävist wies nicht nur auf die Gefahren falscher Historisierung des Nationalen hin, sondern verneinte auch die Bewertung der Klassenkämpfe als ab ovo progressiv. Szűcs bestritt außerdem den fortschrittlichen Charakter des Bauernkrieges, weil er seiner Ansicht nach weder die Entwicklung der Produktivkräfte und der Produktionsmethoden förderte noch in seiner Zielsetzung und Ideologie neue, revolutionäre Elemente beinhaltete. Damit wurde der Bauernkrieg Dózsas, der bis dahin als revolutionärer Ausgangspunkt der progressiven Geschichtslinie interpretiert worden war, demontiert. Szűcs bezeichnete ihn als Ausgangspunkt einer großen Illusion.

Das wichtigste politische Ergebnis der historischen Debatten war, dass die Ungarische Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei keinen Anspruch mehr auf einen Kanon der Nationalgeschichte erhob (Laczkó 2008; Szűcs 1997). Der Verzicht bedeutete jedoch keineswegs eine Absage an eine gelenkte Kulturpolitik und historische Erinnerung. Der Bauernkrieg Dózsas gehörte nach wie vor zu den progressiven, das heißt ideologisch förderungswürdigen Traditionen, wie dies das Jubiläum von 1972 anlässlich des 500. Geburtstages Dózsas zeigte.[18] Mit den Feierlichkeiten erreichte jedoch der sozialistische Dózsa-Kult seinen Zenit und bald auch sein Ende. Die Elite wie auch die Menschen konnten sich nach 1956 viel konsequenter den legitimatorischen Ritualen des Staates entziehen als in der DDR, weil auch das Regime viel pragmatischer agierte.

In der DDR stellte sich allerdings, anders als in Ungarn, nicht einfach das Problem der Legitimität der Herrschaft der Kommunisten, sondern ebenso die grundlegende Frage nach der Staatlichkeit. Diese war in erster Linie von der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung abhängig. Die DDR war nur als sozialistische Alternative zur Bundesrepublik denkbar. Sie bedurfte eines Gründungsmythos, welcher in der Bevölkerung sein integratives Potential entfalten konnte. Neben dem antifaschistischen Widerstand wurde der Bauernkrieg

zum zweiten politischen Mythos kreiert, was in Europa als Phänomen beispiellos ist (Münkler 1996; Zimmering 2000; Sabrow 2001).

Als Gründungsmythos musste die Erzählung über den Bauernkrieg nicht zwingend das von der Geschichtswissenschaft verfügbar gemachte Wissen beinhalten. Es wurde auch maßgeblich auf die Engels'sche Interpretation des Bauernkrieges als erste deutsche Revolution zurückgegriffen. Die historischen Ereignisse von 1524 bis 1526 wurden dem Zweck entsprechend überstrapaziert, überzeichnet und in der Gestalt Thomas Müntzers als ein „politischer Führer mit plebejischem Instinkt" (Abusch 1946, 21) personalisiert. So konnte nicht nur eine revolutionäre Traditionslinie konstruiert, sondern zugleich die Notwendigkeit der Gründung der DDR und die Legitimität der Kommunisten erklärt werden. Denn wie der SED-Autor Alexander Abusch betonte, wurde das von Müntzer formulierte Ziel des Bauernkrieges, „irdische Gerechtigkeit" für den gemeinen Mann zu erkämpfen, erst im Arbeiter- und Bauernstaat DDR erreicht (Abusch 1975, 17).

Bis zum Mauerbau 1961 konnte der Volksrevolutionär Müntzer zum Vorkämpfer der deutschen Einheit „von unten" stilisiert und dem als „Fürstenknecht" diffamierten Martin Luther gegenübergestellt werden.[19] Nach dem kommunistischen Geschichtsbild hätte Luthers Verrat an den aufständischen Bauern die Niederlage des Bauernkrieges und somit der nationalen Einheit mit verursacht. Doch Müntzer als Ahnherr der DDR erwies sich umgehend als kulturpolitische Stolperfalle (Fleischauer 2010). Denn Bauernkrieg und Reformation wurden als eine Narrationseinheit (Nipperdey 1990, 158) aufgefasst, wie beim sowjetischen Historiker Moisei Mendeljewitsch Smirin, der 1947 in seinem Buch „Die Volksreformation des Thomas Müntzer und der große Bauernkrieg" zwischen einer reaktionären bürgerlich-lutherischen Reformation und einer revolutionären Volksreformation unterschied.[20]

Mit der analytischen Zusammenschau von Bauernkrieg und Reformation, die in der Formel der Frühbürgerlichen Revolution erfasst wurde (Vogler 2001 a), etablierte die DDR-Geschichtswissenschaft in den 1960er Jahren unter der Führung des Historikers Max Steinmetz ein prägnantes Gegenkonzept zur westlichen Geschichtsschreibung (Müller 2004, 167–320). Die Reformation wurde „nicht mehr länger als ein primär theologisch-kirchengeschichtliches Ereignis, sondern als die theoretische Phase einer Revolution zur Überwindung des Feudalismus" (ebd. 327) verstanden. Damit konnte das Konzept der Frühbürgerlichen Revolution die Existenz der DDR legitimieren und der von der SED nach 1961 gewünschten Abgrenzung von der Bundesrepublik gerecht werden. Die marxistische Interpretation, die weiterhin an der negativen Rolle des Reformators Luther festhielt, geriet jedoch unter den Druck der bundesdeutschen und internationalen Bauernkriegsforschung (ebd. 276–282; Wohlfeil 1992).

Nicht zuletzt aus Rücksichtnahme auf die öffentliche Meinung im Westen änderte die SED ihr negatives Luther-Bild. Die Aufwertung des Reformators sollte außenpolitisch zur ersehnten internationalen Anerkennung der DDR beitragen, innenpolitisch ein spezifisches DDR-Nationalbewusstsein fördern, indem man entgegen kam. Schon der 450. Jahrestag der Reformation 1967, vor allem aber die Proklamierung einer DDR-eigenen Nation durch Erich Honecker 1971 leiteten einen grundlegenden Wandel ein. Die von

der SED maßgeblich gesteuerte und kontrollierte Geschichtsschreibung gab in den 1970er Jahren das extrem selektive Geschichtsbild auf und entwickelte ein Konzept für „Erbe und Tradition" (Fleischauer 2010, 217–274). Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wurde weiterhin dem Bauernkrieg und der Reformation gewidmet, denn das Territorium der DDR war kulturell stark durch die Erinnerung an die Wirkstätten sowohl Müntzers als auch Luthers geprägt. Das neue kulturpolitische Konzept bewirkte in der Geschichtswissenschaft eine verstärkte Hinwendung zur Quellenforschung und führte in den 1980er Jahren dazu, dass einerseits Müntzer auch als Theologe wahrgenommen und dass andererseits Luther eine eigenständige historische Wirkung zugestanden wurde (Leppin 2010). Auch das Konzept der Frühbürgerlichen Revolution wurde modifiziert: die Ursachen des Bauernaufstandes fand man nicht mehr in den Entwicklungsproblemen des frühneuzeitlichen Staates, sondern im Antagonismus frühkapitalistischer Produktionsweisen und der spätfeudalen Gesellschaftsordnung. Historiker wie Günter Vogler verringerten die Differenzen und den Abstand zur Geschichtsforschung in der Bundesrepublik. Auch dort begann man sich an Universitäten oder im Verein für Reformationsgeschichte mit Themen und Thesen der DDR-Frühneuzeitforschung auseinander zu setzen, was die sozialhistorische Annäherung an die Reformation und die Relativierung der Fixierung auf Luther förderte (Wohlfeil 1992), denkt man etwa an die Arbeiten von Peter Blickle, Hans-Jürgen Goertz, Bernd Moeller oder Gottfried Seebaß.

Nicht nur Historiker entdeckten verbindende Elemente. Auch in der Erinnerungskultur fanden die beiden deutschen Gesellschaften Anfang der 1980er Jahre zusammen. Zahlreiche Gedenkanlässe wie die unter der Federführung der SED veranstalteten Jubiläen zur Reformationsgeschichte 1967, 1975 und 1983 oder die nationalgeschichtlich inszenierten Gedenkstätten öffneten Schleusen der Erinnerung. Das „Erbe und Tradition"-Programm der SED, das eine gefühlsmäßige Bindung an die DDR bewirken sollte, führte im Gegenteil die Menschen dazu, gesamtdeutsche Gefühle zu empfinden (Fleischauer 2010, 320–323). Symbolisch brachte dies das zwischen 1977 und 1989 erstellte Panorama-Bild des international anerkannten DDR-Künstlers Werner Tübke in Bad Frankenhausen zum Ausdruck. Das Bild entwarf anstelle eines prestigeträchtigen Fanals der DDR-Überlegenheit ein zeitloses Panorama der *conditio humana* (Behrendt 2006, 121).

War nun György Dózsa der ungarische Thomas Müntzer? Die Frage ist mit einem Nein zu beantworten. Denn in der Volksrepublik Ungarn war dem Dózsa-Kult nicht die Rolle zugedacht, eine Nationalidentität, sondern vielmehr eine Identifikation mit dem neuen System zu stiften. Dózsa hatte außerdem im „Gulasch-Kommunismus" der Kádár-Ära in den 1960er Jahren, in der das Arbeiter- und Bauernbündnis vorgeblich besiegelt war, auch die Funktion einer politischen Leitfigur eingebüßt. Politischer Leitstern war nach wie vor der 1848er Revolutionär und Nationaldichter Sándor Petőfi, während als nationale Integrationsfigur der Staatsgründer Stephan I., der Heilige galt. Zu diesem hatte die USAP ein ebenso ambivalentes Verhältnis wie die SED zu Luther, musste ihn aber unter Druck der kollektiven Erinnerung der Mehrheit der Ungarn ebenso akzeptieren wie die SED Luther.

In der DDR wurde die Reformationstradition der sozialistischen Geschichtsschreibung des wilhelminischen Deutschlands nahtlos übernommen. Mit ihr trat an die Stelle des säkularisierten Luther-Kultes des wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs der Müntzer-Mythos. Müntzer konnte zwar zum Nationalhelden der DDR aufsteigen und sich als solcher bis zum Untergang des SED-Staates behaupten, doch seine sinnstiftende Funktion als Ahnherr der DDR wurde infolge der notgedrungenen Bestrebung der SED, Luther für die Traditionspflege zu vereinnahmen, konterkariert. Müntzer und Luther waren im Bauernkrieg Antipoden. Die SED, die von Anfang an auf die Omnipotenz der Reformationsgeschichte als Legitimations- und Identitätsfaktor, wenn auch als eine sozialistische Gegenerzählung, baute, konnte dieses Problem nicht lösen. Eine Hilfestellung konnte das von der Geschichtswissenschaft entwickelte Konzept der Frühbürgerlichen Revolution dazu nicht nachhaltig liefern.

Das Beispiel des ungarischen und des deutschen Bauernkrieges in der ungarischen und der DDR-Geschichtspolitik weist darauf hin, dass die Konstruierung der historischen Erinnerung einer gesellschaftlichen Großgruppe nach Maßgabe der Politik auf Dauer nicht einmal mit Hilfe der Geschichtswissenschaft funktionsfähig ist (Jarausch 2002). Nicht nur deshalb, weil auch die Geschichtswissenschaft selbst aus oft miteinander konkurrierenden Deutungsgemeinschaften besteht, sondern auch deshalb, weil normativverbindliche Erinnerungen nur unter bestimmten Bedingungen zur gleichsam akzeptierten kollektiven Erinnerung werden können. Auch Beispiele aus der Gegenwart, etwa die Debatten um die Holocaust-Erinnerung in Ungarn oder die Vertreibungs-Erinnerung in Deutschland, deuten darauf hin, dass ohne einen Konsens der Mehrheit keine Erinnerungsgemeinschaft zu bilden ist. Eine spannende und nach wie vor offene Frage ist allerdings, wie ein Konsens der Erinnerung(en) tatsächlich ausgehandelt wird. Denn Diskurse über die Vergangenheit sind immer partikular, sie entsprechen den Interessen und Ansichten von gesellschaftlichen Gruppen, die ihre Sichtweisen in Konkurrenz durchsetzen wollen (Marchart 2005, 21–49; Kaschuba 2005, 183–186).

### Anmerkungen

[1] Zur Bedeutung von Geschichtspolitik allgemein vgl. Schmid 2009.

[2] Vgl. u. a. Sänger 2010.

[3] Zur Geschichte des ungarischen Bauernkrieges vgl. Barta–Fekete Nagy 1973; zum deutschen Bauernkrieg vgl. u. a. Blickle 2004.

[4] Es gab in der ungarischen Volkserinnerung latent vorhandene Verweise auf Dózsas Gestalt und den Bauernkrieg, doch sind diese bis zum 19. Jahrhundert ganz verloren gegangen. Vgl. dazu Katona 1973.

[5] Zur Rezeption des Dózsa-Bauernkrieges durch die radikalen und gemäßigten Vertreter der Reformzeit in Ungarn wie z. B. Mihály Táncsics, Sándor Petőfi oder Baron József Eötvös vgl. Kulin 1982. Zur Stellungnahme der Vertreter des deutschen Vormärz zum deutschen Bauernkrieg vgl. Blickle 2008; Müller 2004.

[6] Erstmalig erschien Zimmermanns Arbeit unter dem Titel „Allgemeine Geschichte des großen Bauernkrieges." 3 Bde, Stuttgart 1841–1843. Zur Bewertung vgl. u. a. Gün-

ter Vogler: „Noch gehet sein Geist um in Europas Gauen". Wilhelm Zimmermanns Thomas-Müntzer-Bild und die Rezeptionsgeschichte. In: Müller (Hg.) 2008, 83–132.

[7] Das Dózsa-Drama teilte die öffentliche Meinung, denn während die Logen des Nationaltheaters leer blieben, feierte das Publikum auf der Galerie den Autor. Jókai schrieb in seiner Lebenserinnerung über diese nachrevolutionäre und neoabsolutistische Zeit, dass die Bühne das fehlende ungarische Parlament ersetzte (Jókai 1898). Erkels Dózsa-Oper mit dem Libretto von Ede Szigligeti wiederum hatte nur mäßigen Erfolg.

[8] Die Vorarbeiten des konservativen Historikers und Universitätsprofessors wurden in einer großen Monographie zusammengeführt, die 1913 in Budapest erschien. Vgl. Ders. 1913.

[9] Das von Viktor Madarász 1868 gemalte Gemälde „Dózsás Volk" hatte beim Publikum ein Jahr nach dem österreichisch-ungarischen Ausgleich keinen Erfolg mehr.

[10] Dózsas Erinnerung wurde von Sozialdemokraten, bürgerlich Radikalen und der Bauernbewegung gleichermaßen geteilt, wobei zunächst keine der Richtungen Dózsa monopolisieren konnte. So erschien der Bauernführer sowohl in den Zeitungsartikeln des Sozialdemokraten Sándor Csizmadia als auch in den Gedichten und publizistischen Schriften des Dichters Endre Ady. Vgl. dazu u. a. Klimó 2003, 179.

[11] Zit. nach ebd., 182.

[12] „Az első per Dózsa György óta folyik. Ez a per a dolgozó, elnyomorodó, a magyarságért ezerszer és ezerszer vérzett szegényparasztságnak pere a dologtalan, magát minden teher alól kivonó, félévezred óta a Habsburgokkal cimboráló nagybirtokosok ellen." [Der erste Prozess läuft seit György Dózsa. Dieser Prozess ist der Prozess der werktätigen, sich verkümmernden, für das Ungarntum tausendmal ihr Blut vergossenen armen Bauern gegen die liederlichen, sich von allen Lasten entbindenden und seit einem halben Jahrtausend mit den Habsburgern paktierenden Grundbesitzer]. Zit. nach Győrffy 2012.

[13] Dózsa-ünnepség Cegléden 1945. május 13. Filmhiradó. [ Dózsa-Feierlichkeiten in Cegléd am 13. Mai 1945. Filmbericht] Magyar Nemzeti Filmarchivum. Text der Filmnachricht gedruckt unter http://filmhiradok.nava.hu/watch.php?id=5959, letzter Zugriff 6.1.2012.

[14] MDP Budapesti Pártbizottság ülései [Sitzungen des Budapester Parteiausschusses der Partei der Ungarischen Werktätigen], Országos Levéltár, 1954. december 17, 6.

[15] Vgl. etwa *Az 1514. évi parasztháború (Dózsa György) c. előadáshoz. Vezérfonal falusi és városi előadók számára.* [Richtlinie zum Vortrag über den Bauernkrieg von 1514 (György Dózsa) für Vortragende in Städten und Dörfern] Hg. von Magyar Történelmi Társulat. Budapest 1950.

[16] Dózsa György emlékezete. [György Dózsas Erinnerung.] (Balogh 1981, hier http://mek.niif.hu/03600/03628/html/d.htm, letzter Zugriff 6.1.2012.)

[17] Gyula Illyés: *Dózsa György. Dráma három felvonásban.* [György Dózsa. Drama in drei Akten.] Budapest 1956. Der „Volksschriftsteller" Illyés setzte sich schon in seinem 1931 in der Zeitschrift Nyugat erschienenen Gedicht „Dózsa beszéde a ceglédi piacon" auseinander. Ein anderer „Volksschriftsteller", Géza Féja, verfasste eine „historische Studie" über den Bauernführer (Féja 1939).

[18] Vgl. dazu etwa die Richtlinien des Jubiläumskomitees. „Dózsa György születésének évfordulójára." In: Századok 106 (1972), 531–535. Neben zahlreichen künstlerischen Darstellungen erschien 1973 auch eine neue historische Bearbeitung des Dózsa-Bauern-aufstandes. Die von Antal Fekete Nagy eingeleitete Arbeit wurde nach dessen Tod von Gábor Bartha zu Ende geführt. Die auf Quellenkritik und auf neuen Quellen beruhen-de Arbeit konnte das Bild über Dózsa und den Bauernaufstand bedeutend ergänzen und die Ergebnisse der 1913 von Sándor Márki vorgelegten Monographie wesentlich revidie-ren. Vgl. dazu die Rezension von Vera Bácskai (Bácskai 1975).

[19] Vgl. u. a. Haun 1982; Goertz 1988; Vogler 2001 b; Lehmann 2004.

[20] Deutsche Fassung: Smirin 1952.

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# 4. *The Socio-psychological Approach*

# Structural Characteristics of Sites of National Memory

**Ákos Münnich and István Hidegkuti**

## Introduction

The study of "collective memory" has a long tradition since the work of Maurice Halbwachs (1950). There have been several definitions of "collective memory" proposed, and also several terms have been used for this concept.

The need to distinguish collective and individual memory originates from the notion that there are memories which belong to certain individuals, who keep these memories and also shares them with people around them, but these memories still remain within a limited circle of people. There are memories, on the other hand, which do not belong exclusively to certain individuals or groups of individuals, but which are shared by an entire community or society. Jan Assmann (1995) distinguishes *communicative memory* and *cultural memory*. Memories in a general sense belong more to communicative memory, whereas memories which are possessed and shared by a whole society may be considered part of cultural memory. To emphasize the difference between the two types of memories, Assmann (1995) called cultural memories *figures of memory.* Similarly, Pierre Nora (1996) used the term *sites of memory* (lieux de mémoire) to make a distinction. The term "sites of memory" expresses the important feature of these memories that these are considered to be outside individuals as independent entities. (This is opposed to memories in the traditional sense which can not be interpreted independent of individuals, that is, those memories are inside the individuals.) According to Nora (1985, cited by Wertsch & Roediger, 2008) there is a need for these sites of memories because the memory's milieu does not exist any longer.

The distinction between memories and sites of memories described above is not necessarily mutually exclusive. The two kinds of memories can be considered as not qualitatively different, but collective memories may be thought of as *shared individual memories* (Hirst & Manier, 2008). In the present study there are sites of national memory which belong more to communicative memory, as, for example, Rubik, or Szent-Györgyi, whereas other memories (for example, the 1848–49 War of Independence) are clearly part of cultural memory.

The sites of national memory are very important as the basis of collective identity (Hirst & Manier, 2008). Even if people do not know each other they may feel they belong together once they share important collective memories, that is, sites of national memory, that are relevant for them.

A site of memory can be any entity that plays a symbolic role in a society's life. These can be historic events like an important battle, a song, an object—basically anything. So far sites of national memory were most thoroughly investigated in France (Nora, 1996) and in Germany (Assmann, 1995). In the study of sites of national memory also a psychological approach has emerged in recent years: for example a special issue of the journal *Memory* was dedicated to this topic in 2008, and in Hungary an edited book (Münnich & Hunyady, 2010) dealing with the psychological aspects of sites of memory was published.

### The aim of this study

The primary aim of the present study is to provide an exploratory analysis of the network of the sites of Hungarian national memory. To the authors' knowledge no such study has been implemented either in the case of Hungarian national memories or in the case of the more thoroughly investigated French or German site of national memory. (There have been studies using network analysis, but those were investigating how the information spreads along a network of people.) The authors consider this topic a potentially interesting and informative one which can reveal how the sites of national memory are connected (or not) to one another. Naturally, there are certain connections which are trivial, such as a connection between Kossuth and the 1848–49 War of Independence and battle for freedom, and finding this connection would not enrich our knowledge about the sites of national memory. However, it is expected, that not only such trivial connections may be found, but many not (so) expected ones as well. Beyond the network of connections also valuable information may be obtained by network analysis about the (relative) importance of the sites of national memory.

As for the connections of the sites of memory, it was hypothesized that there may be significant differences in the connectedness of the sites of memory. The authors' hypothesis is that the sites of memory may possess different *levels of connectedness*. The levels of connectedness may be of a quantitative type, but there may also be qualitative differences between the sites of memory as far as the level of their connectedness is concerned.

Another consideration was to evaluate the sites of national memory. Although it is widely agreed that the memories which are termed as "sites of national memory" are important parts of Hungarian history and/or Hungarian culture, it is not necessarily obvious how people evaluate these memories, what is their general attitude toward these events, symbols, places, and so forth. In order to pursue this second aim, the attitudes toward the sites of national memory were investigated using Osgood's semantic differential framework (Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum, 1957). The following gives a very brief overview of the key concepts of network analysis and semantic differential.

### Network analysis

In network analysis the connections between a set of actors (nodes, vertices) are investigated. The network analyses were performed using the Mathematica© software (Wolfram Research, Inc., 2010). Our approach to analyzing the connections between sites of mem-

ories is not one of the most frequently used. As in the second step of our procedure, participants could choose the most characteristic or most relevant sites of national memory only from a limited set of 22 (out of 51), and then they made connections between the chosen sites of national memory. (A more conventional method would have been to use the full set of sites of national memory and ask the respondents to indicate if there is a connection between the pairs of sites of national memory.)

This brief overview of network analysis is based on Scott's (2000) handbook on social network analysis. The basic building blocks in a network are the actors (persons, schools, corporations, countries, etc., depending on the network) which are commonly termed as *nodes* or *vertices*. The connections between the vertices are called *edges*, which can be either directed or undirected. The vertices and the edges make up a *graph*, the representation of the network. An important tool of network analysis is the visualization of the vertices and the connection between these vertices. Moreover, there are several indices and concepts to characterize the network and to describe the connections among the actors. One of the key concepts is *degree*. Degree is defined as the number of connections a certain vertex has in total. When the connections between the vertices are examined in-degree and out-degree are distinguished. In-degree refers to the number of connections (edges) that are directed toward a given node, whereas out-degree refers to the connections that start from a given node. The sum of in-degree and out-degree is the degree of the mode.

In a network, it is of special interest how central certain nodes are. In order to express the centrality of a certain vertex one can simply use the degree of the vertex. The higher the degree of the vertex, the more central it is. There are several other ways to express the central position of a given actor. One of these is closeness-centrality, the average distance of a certain vertex from the other vertices in the network; that is, how easily a certain actor can reach other actors.

In network analysis it is common to analyze smaller sets of nodes, so-called sub-graphs. A special subset of actors is one where the actors make up a sub-graph such that in the sub-graph every actor is connected to every other actor. This kind of sub-graph is considered a complete graph in graph theory and is called a *clique* in network analysis.

### Semantic differential

The semantic differential (Osgood, et al., 1957) is one of the most widely used scales in the measurement of attitudes. The respondent is to state his/her position on a continuum between bipolar adjectives, for example, "good—bad." In factor analysis a large set of bipolar adjective pairs, three factors were found by Osgood and his colleagues that were called evaluation, potency and activity. These three factors were found to be universal across cultures. The three-dimensional space defined by the semantic differential is depicted in Figure 1.
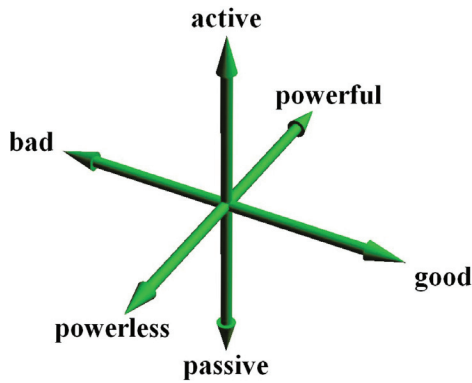
*Figure 1.* The three-dimensional space defined by Osgood's semantic differential.

In order to obtain a reliable measure for the three dimensions three adjective pairs were used for each of the three dimensions, that is, nine adjective pairs were provided to evaluate each memory. The adjective pairs were not the same for all memories, but were the same for each memory type (person, place, symbol, etc.). The adjective pairs for each type of memory are depicted in Appendix C.

**Method**

*Participants*
The sample of the study consisted of a 104 people, the vast majority of them university students. The mean age was 25.24 years (SD = 7.9), with an uneven proportion of the genders: 79 females versus 25 males.

*Stimuli*
The stimuli were 51 sites of national memory, which were selected by the researchers representing different disciplines, and were uploaded to a website dedicated to the investigation of the sites of Hungarian national memory. In the memory database each memory has a name, a shorter, and a longer description, and pictures, where applicable.

The sites of memory come from seven types: symbol (for example *Himnusz,* The national anthem); concept (for example 301-es; Parcel 301—memorial to the martyrs of the 1956 Revolution); event (for example 1848; 1848-49 War of Independence against the Habsburgs); literary work (for example Bánk; *Bánk bán*: play and opera); object (for example Parlam; the building of the Hungarian Parliament); person (for example Kossuth; Lajos Kossuth: the leader of the 1848-49 War of Independence); place (for example Budai Vár; Buda Castle) The sites of memory used in this study are listed in Appendix A.

*Questionnaire*
The questionnaire participants were to fill out consisted of two major parts. The first was an evaluation of the national sites of the memories, while the second was an exploration

of the connections of the memories. The memories were evaluated along the three dimensions of Osgood's (1957) semantic differential, as explained above.

*Procedure*

The volunteers logged into a secure website and filled out the online questionnaire.

As a first step, participants evaluated 22 of the 51 memories. The 22 memories were selected by the authors, and hence—to a certain extent—may be considered arbitrary, but most likely these are among the most important sites of national memory for the Hungarians. The evaluation of these 22 memories occurred one by one, for each memory nine bipolar adjectives (or phrases) appeared, and the participants were to evaluate the given memory along these adjective pairs on an 11 point scale. The list of adjective pairs may be found in Appendix C.

In the second step, participants were to choose memories of the previously evaluated 22, which in their opinion were the most representative or the most closely related to the Hungarians. The number of memories to be chosen was not defined.

In the third step the memories chosen in the second step appeared one by one, and the participants were to choose which of the remaining 50 memories are the most closely related to the memory in question.

As a last (fourth) step participants were asked to evaluate the memories which were chosen in the third step, but were not among the 22 memories evaluated in the first step. (The instructions used in the questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.)

*Results*

The graphical representation of the connections between the 51 sites of national memory appears in Figure 2. Being fairly complex, visualizing the whole network is not very informative, unfortunately. To overcome the problem of complexity, in the following only parts of the whole network will be presented, as well as the numerical results that help interpret the graphs.

In the present study there were 22 x 50 = 1100 different connections possible between the different nodes, of which 621 were present based on the data. (It is important to note here that a connection between any two nodes was considered to be present if at least one of the responders indicated that connection. If we had used a stricter rule (for example, a connection is considered to be present if at least 10 participants indicate that connection, the results would have been different.) This means that 56.45% of all possible relations manifested. When we take into consideration the repetitions of connections (that is, when different participants indicate the same connection), the total number of connections is 3704. This means on average that approximately 6 (5.96) respondents indicated each connection.

When investigating the degree centrality of the nodes, *Himnusz* (the national anthem) turns out to be the most influential. This memory has a total of 66 different connections of which 47 is the out-degree and 19 is the number of incoming connections. That is,

*Figure 2.* The visual representation of the network of the sites of Hungarian national memory

*Himnusz* is related to all the other nodes to some extent, it is chosen (at least by one respondent) 19 cases out of 21 (in-degree) and 47 out of 50 cases (out-degree). When the number of participants indicating a certain connection is taken into account the number of connections toward *Himnusz* equals 193, whereas the number of connection from *Himnusz* equals 442. Hence, *Himnusz* is involved in 17.14% of all connections. The incoming and outgoing connections of *Himnusz* are depicted in Figure 4 and Figure 5, respectively. The degree for each node may be found in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, *Himnusz* has the most connections when (total) degree or in-degree is considered, but there is another important actor, Rubik, which has the most connections towards other sites of national memory, it has connections to all but one of the remaining 50 memories. Rubik may be considered the representative of Hungarian creativity, which is an important characteristic in the Hungarian identity.

*Table 1.* The degree of the sites of Hungarian national memory in ascending order of (total) degree

|          | Degree | Out-degree | In-degree |
|----------|--------|------------|-----------|
| Himnusz  | 66     | 47         | 19        |
| korona   | 58     | 40         | 18        |
| Rubik    | 55     | 49         | 6         |
| Turul    | 51     | 36         | 15        |
| Parlam   | 50     | 34         | 16        |
| Feszty   | 50     | 35         | 15        |
| 1848     | 46     | 32         | 14        |
| Petőfi   | 46     | 33         | 13        |
| 1956     | 45     | 32         | 13        |
| Kossuth  | 43     | 32         | 11        |
| Trian    | 41     | 28         | 13        |
| Mátyás   | 39     | 29         | 10        |
| tokaji   | 39     | 27         | 12        |
| István   | 35     | 25         | 10        |
| Szécheny | 33     | 22         | 11        |
| Rákóczi  | 33     | 21         | 12        |
| Jánosvit | 33     | 23         | 10        |
| Szt-Gyö  | 30     | 26         | 4         |
| Mohács   | 27     | 16         | 11        |
| Tatjár   | 26     | 16         | 10        |
| NemzTri  | 21     | 0          | 21        |
| Alföld   | 19     | 0          | 19        |
| Budaivár | 18     | 0          | 18        |
| 301-es   | 18     | 11         | 7         |
| népvis   | 18     | 0          | 18        |
| népt     | 17     | 0          | 17        |
| Vasfügg  | 15     | 7          | 8         |
| Árpsáv   | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| Aradi 13 | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| harang   | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| Hortob   | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| Bánk     | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| gulyás   | 14     | 0          | 14        |
| Attkard  | 13     | 0          | 13        |
| pálinka  | 13     | 0          | 13        |
| Bocskai  | 13     | 0          | 13        |

|          | Degree | Out-degree | In-degree |
|----------|--------|------------|-----------|
| Tokhegy  | 13     | 0          | 13        |
| Lánchíd  | 12     | 0          | 12        |
| hort_hid | 12     | 0          | 12        |
| Kodály   | 12     | 0          | 12        |
| Akad     | 11     | 0          | 11        |
| Nagytemp | 11     | 0          | 11        |
| tokaj    | 11     | 0          | 11        |
| Mill     | 10     | 0          | 10        |
| paprika  | 10     | 0          | 10        |
| Bartók   | 9      | 0          | 9         |
| vadkan   | 8      | 0          | 8         |
| trilógia | 8      | 0          | 8         |
| vízilabd | 8      | 0          | 8         |
| III/3    | 7      | 0          | 7         |
| pápista  | 5      | 0          | 5         |

*Note:* The sites of memory with non-zero out-degree are the ones that were evaluated in the first step by the respondents.

Among the sites of Hungarian national memory three cliques were found, which are depicted in Figure 3. The largest clique is built up by the following seven sites of national memory: the Parliament building, Széchenyi, *Himnusz,* 1848–49 War of Independence, Kossuth, Petőfi, the Feszty cyclorama. The number of different connections within the clique is 42 (7×6) that accounts for 6.76% (42/621) of the total number of different connections. When all the connections are taken into account in which a member of the largest clique is involved one can see that the members of the largest clique are involved in 47% (292/621) of the connections, that is, these seven memories (out of 51) appear in nearly half of the connections.

A closer look at the sites of memory that make up the largest clique reveals that there is no specific memory type that is involved in this clique, the memories coming from four types: object, person, event and symbol. Of
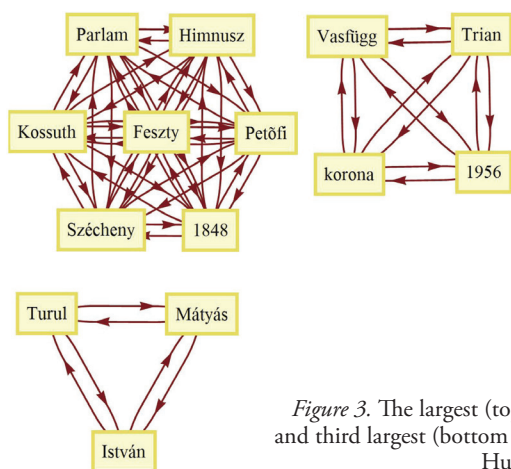


*Figure 3.* The largest (top left corner), second largest (top right corner) and third largest (bottom left corner) cliques in the network of the sites of Hungarian national memory.

these seven memories four (1848–49 War of Independence, Kossuth, Széchenyi, Petőfi) are closely related to the revolution and War of Independence in 1848–49. The remaining three are related to Hungary as a sovereign state. The building of the Hungarian Parliament and *Himnusz* are unquestionably symbols of Hungary, whereas on the Feszty cyclorama the arrival of the Magyars (Hungarians) to the Carpathian basin, that is, the settlement of the Hungarians is depicted. The building of the Hungarian Parliament and *Himnusz*, although not directly related to the 1848–49 War of Independence, but still related in the sense that all are from the same era.

In the second largest clique there are four memories: the Treaty of Trianon, the Holy Crown, the iron curtain (Vasfügg), and the 1956 Revolution. These memories can be considered as having to some extent a negative connotation, in the sense, that these sites of memories represent a certain dividedness, either in a physical (for example, the Treaty of Trianon), or a symbolic sense (for example, the 1956 Revolution). This clique is less influential than the largest one, but still important: the members of this clique are involved in 18% (112/621) of the connections. There are 12 ($4 \times 3$) connections between the members of the clique.

In the third clique two important and salient kings (István and Mátyás) may be found together with the Turul, a falcon-like bird in the origin myth of the Magyars (Hungarians). These three memories are most likely so closely connected because all represent a glorious era in Hungarian history. Members of this clique are involved in 13% (81/621) of all connections, whereas there are six connections within the clique.

All in all, the 14 memories involved in the three major cliques appear in 78% of the connections.

When closeness centrality is investigated, one can find results similar to the ones obtained studying degree centrality. Not surprisingly, *Himnusz* obtained a large value (0.94) also in this respect, showing its prominent position among the sites of Hungarian national memory. (Although Rubik is in the first position (0.98) as far as closeness centrality is concerned, it is not involved in any of the cliques, that suggests a less important role.) It is to be noted, that this kind of redundancy is a consequence of the network analysis applied here; that is, other nodes can be reached only from the limited set of 22, in this way only 22 nodes have out-degree.

Figure 4 illustrates the very wide-spread connections *Himnusz*, the most central of the investigated memories has, since from *Himnusz* almost all the other sites of memory may be reached. In this Figure it can be seen, that *Himnusz* not only has connections with the vast majority of the sites of memory, but also that most of these connections are reported by more than just a few respondents. The same goes for the incoming connections of *Himnusz* (depicted in Figure 5). In Figure 4 another interesting item to be noted is the importance of the flag of Hungary (Nemztri). The importance of this memory is also obvious when the degrees are studied. The flag of Hungary has the highest in-degree value, that is 21, meaning that it has connections with all but one of the sites of memory that were to be evaluated in the first step of the procedure. It indicates that this memory

might not have been handled as it could have been, and in a following study it could be included in the group of the most important memories.
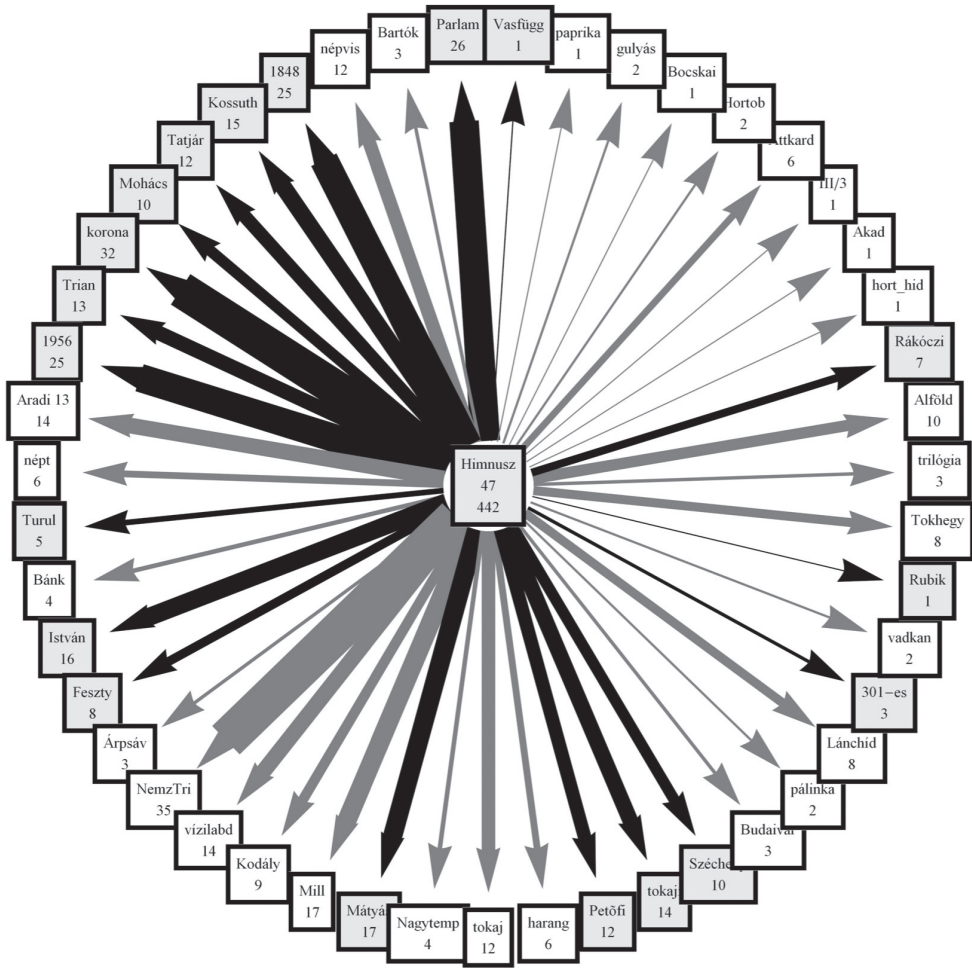


*Figure 4.* The connections from *Himnusz* to sites of national memory.

*Note:* Black arrows and gray boxes indicate the memories which were among the initial set of 22 memories, whereas gray arrows and white boxes indicate the remaining memories. The numbers in the boxes, and the thickness of the arrows show how many respondents indicated the specific connection. (In case of *Himnusz* the first number indicates the number of connected memories, the second the total number of choices.)
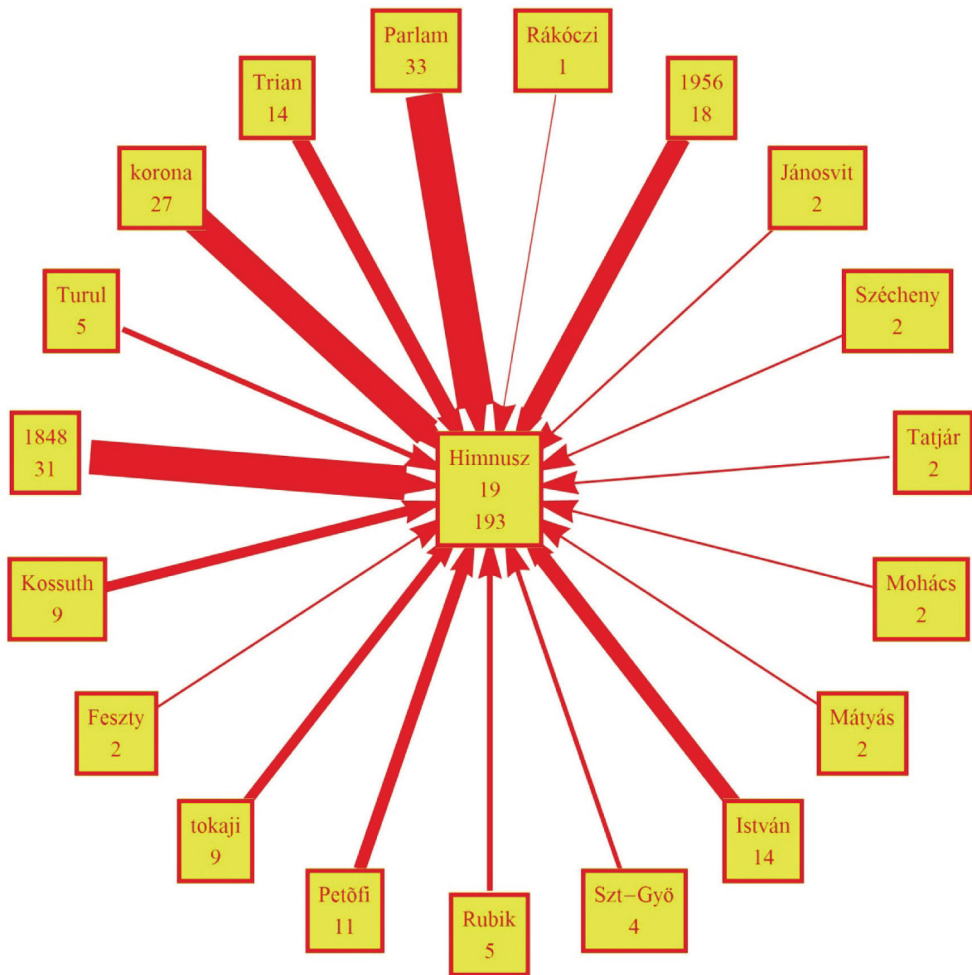
*Figure 5.* The connections to *Himnusz* from sites of national memory.

*Note:* The numbers in the boxes, and the thickness of the arrows show how many respondents indicated the specific connection. (In case of *Himnusz* the first number indicates the number of connected memories, the second the total number of choices.)

In Figure 6 the connections of the important historical event, the battle of Mohács, are depicted. It can be noted here that even though Mohács may be considered one of the most important memories, this importance is less reflected in the connections of memory, having much fewer connections than, for example, *Himnusz* has, and these connections are indicated by fewer respondents on average.
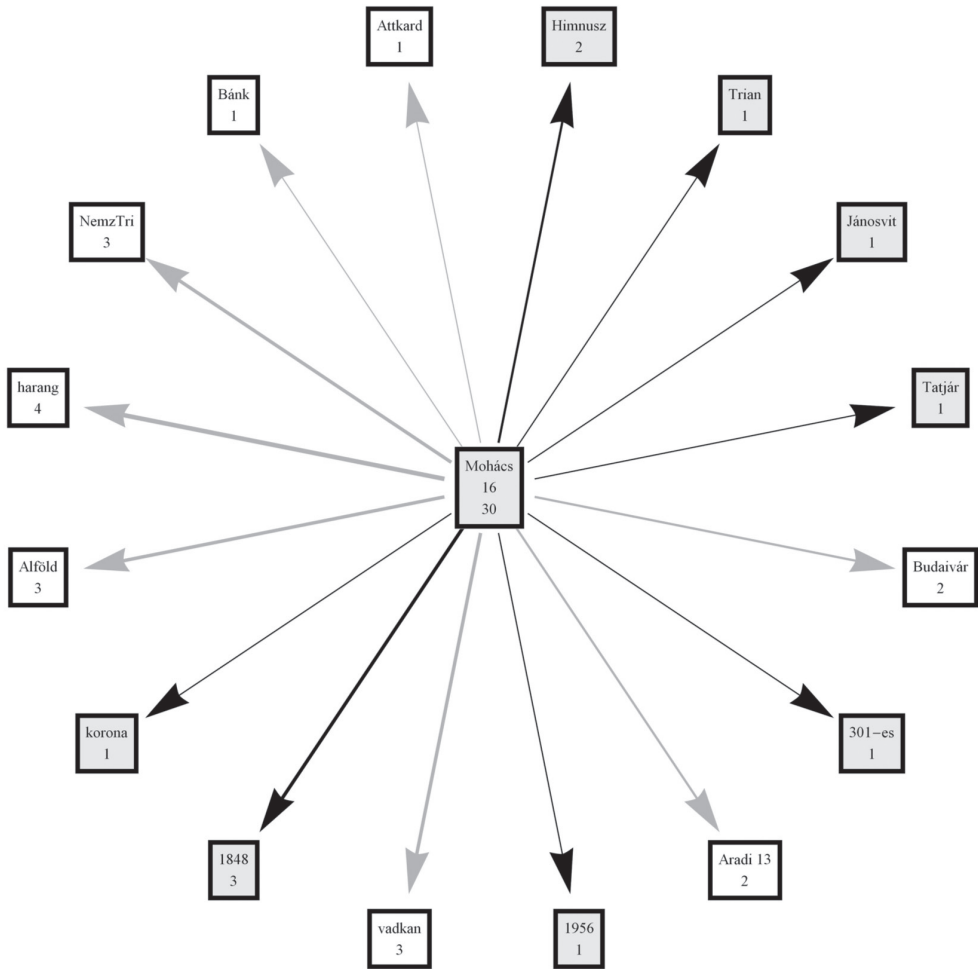
*Figure 6.* The connections from Mohács to sites of national memory.

*Note:* The numbers in the boxes, and the thickness of the arrows show how many respondents indicated the specific connection. (In case of Mohács the first number indicates the number of connected memories, the second the total number of choices.)

As for the evaluations of the sites of memory along Osgood's dimensions, the respondents' ratings show a fairly homogeneous pattern in case of the sites of memory involved in the largest clique, as can be seen on Figure 7. The 1848–49 War of Independence is kind of an outlier in the clique as far as evaluation is concerned, most likely because it was defeated, but it is to be noted that even this site of memory is considered to be more positive than negative. On the other hand, the 1848–49 War of Independence is the most active among the sites of memory in the largest clique. (The detailed ratings on each adjective pair can be found in Table 2.)

**The mean scores of the memories in the largest clique**
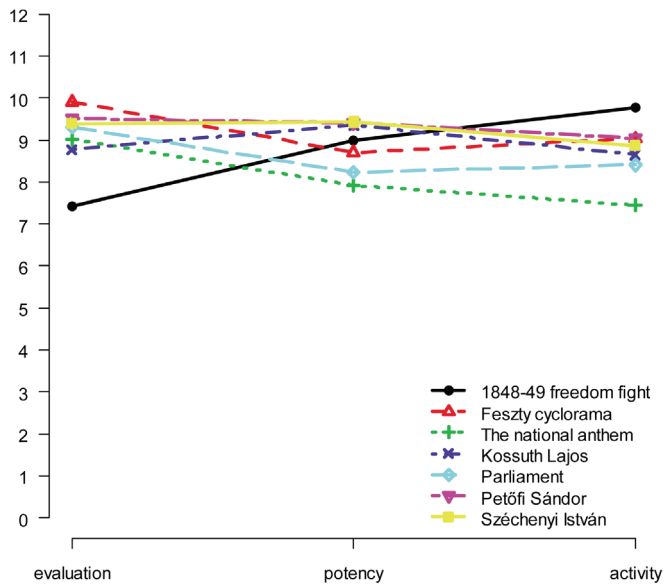


*Figure 7.* The mean scores of the memories in the largest clique on the three dimensions of the semantic differential

*Table 2.* The mean scores of the memories in the largest clique on the bipolar adjective pairs

|  | 1848-49 War of Independence | Feszty cyclorama | Himnusz | Kossuth Lajos | Building of the Parliament | Petőfi Sándor | Széchenyi István |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Good | – | 10.02 | 9.18 | 9.37 | 9.54 | 10.10 | 10.00 |
| pleasant | 6.21 | 9.77 | 8.57 | 8.82 | 8.75 | 9.64 | 9.44 |
| uplifting | 7.31 | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Proud | 8.73 | 9.90 | 9.32 | – | 9.60 | – | – |
| Kind | – | – | – | 8.12 | – | 8.81 | 8.74 |
| Power | 8.72 | 9.32 | 7.52 | 9.48 | 9.45 | 9.02 | 9.40 |
| Deep | 9.08 | 9.17 | 9.64 | – | 7.98 | – | – |
| determined | – | – | – | 9.48 | – | 9.34 | 9.53 |
| masculine | 9.15 | 7.6 | 6.60 | – | 7.29 | – | – |
| Brave | – | – | – | 9.06 | – | 9.85 | 9.36 |
| Fast | – | – | – | 8.34 | – | 8.51 | 8.28 |
| Active | 9.93 | 8.32 | 6.87 | 9.55 | 7.06 | 9.74 | 9.55 |
| complex | 9.42 | 9.33 | 8.18 | – | 9.36 | – | – |
| Hectic | 9.99 | 9.45 | 7.26 | 8.97 | 8.78 | 9.59 | 9.43 |

In the second largest clique the picture is not as clear as in case of the largest clique. Three of the four memories in this clique may be considered as tragic events or symbols for the Hungarians. Of these, the Treaty of Trianon and the Iron Curtain are rated on the evaluation dimension as very negative, as is expected (depicted in Figure 8). The third tragic site of memory, the Revolution of 1956 is more positive than negative along this dimension; its evaluation is rather similar to that of the 1848–49 War of Independence. Just like the 1848-49 War of Independence the Revolution of 1956 is also the most active in its clique. In the second largest clique the Holy Crown is the only clearly positive site of national memory. (The detailed evaluations of the sites of memory in the second largest clique of each adjective pair may be found in Table 3.)

*Table 3.* The mean scores of the memories in the second largest clique on the bipolar adjective pairs

|  | Iron curtain | Treaty of Trianon | The Holy Crown | Revolution of 1956 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| good | 1.82 | – | 10.22 | – |
| pleasant | 1.79 | 1.72 | 10.05 | 5.38 |
| uplifting | – | 1.67 | – | 6.28 |
| proud | 3.40 | 2.77 | 10.19 | 7.91 |
| power | 4.85 | 3.01 | 10.12 | 8.59 |
| deep | 6.62 | 7.03 | 9.19 | 9.10 |
| masculine | 7.82 | 7.12 | 8.25 | 8.16 |
| active | 4.47 | 5.12 | 7.07 | 9.13 |
| complex | 6.91 | 8.53 | 8.42 | 9.23 |
| hectic | 6.23 | 7.58 | 7.86 | 9.30 |

The ratings of the sites of memory are the most homogeneoes in the third largest clique (Figure 9). On the evaluation dimension the three sites of memory, István, Mátyás and the Turul obtained basically identical values. The two kings' ratings remain very similar on the potency and activity dimension as well, whereas the Turul obtained somewhat lower scores on these dimensions. (The detailed evaluations of the sites of memory in the third largest clique on each adjective pair may be found in Table 4.)

*Table 4.* The mean scores of the memories in the third largest clique on the bipolar adjective pairs

|  | Turul (bird) | I. Mátyás | I. István |
|---|---|---|---|
| good | 9.00 | 9.86 | 9.77 |
| pleasant | 8.39 | 9.00 | 9.09 |
| proud | 8.64 | – | – |
| kind | – | 7.78 | 7.12 |
| power | 9.45 | 9.65 | 9.85 |

**The mean scores of the memories in the second largest clique**
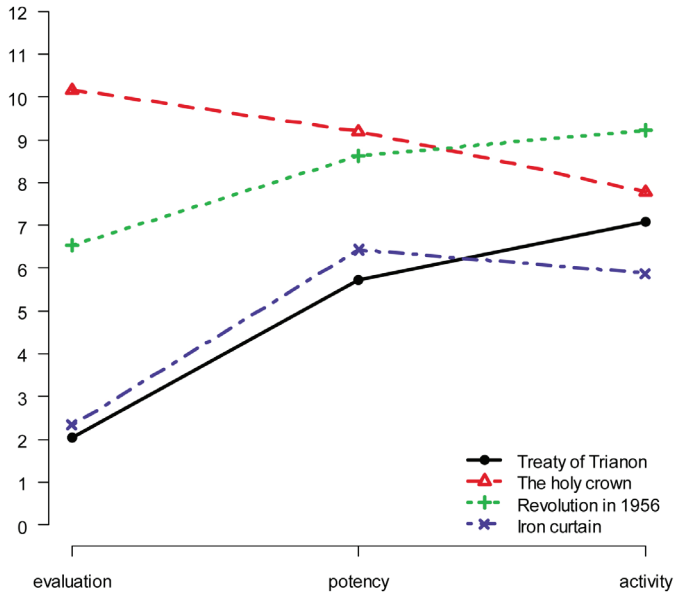


*Figure 8.* The mean scores of the memories in the second largest clique on the three dimensions of the semantic differential

**The mean scores of the memories in the third largest clique**
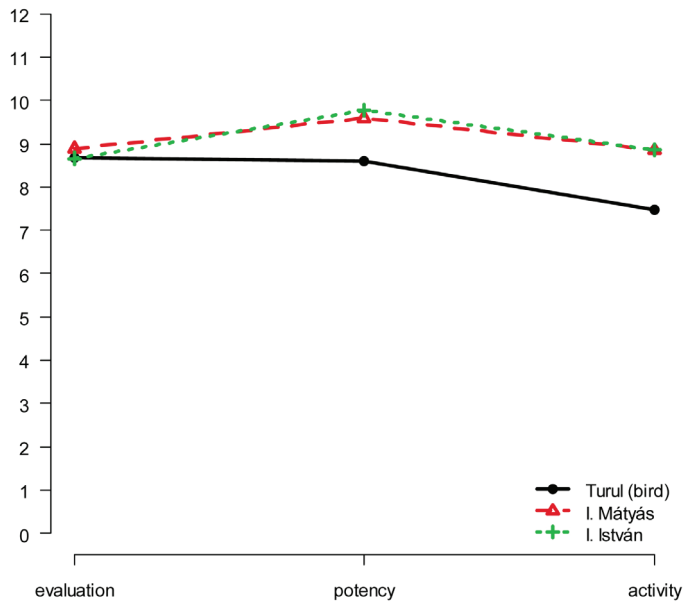


*Figure 9.* The mean scores of the memories in the third largest clique on the three dimensions of the semantic differential

|  | Turul (bird) | I. Mátyás | I. István |
|---|---|---|---|
| deep | 8.11 | – | – |
| determined | – | 9.59 | 9.88 |
| masculine | 8.25 | – | – |
| brave | – | 9.53 | 9.57 |
| fast | – | 8.46 | 8.57 |
| active | 7.98 | 9.13 | 9.68 |
| complex | 6.25 | – | – |
| hectic | 8.21 | 9.24 | 9.13 |

### Discussion

In the present study a number of interesting connections of the sites of Hungarian national memory were found. There are distinguished groups or cliques of sites of memory in which the sites of memory are closely connected to one another. It is a very important finding that the sites of memory in the largest clique are involved in almost half of the connections, hence may be considered as the core sites of Hungarian national memory. The members of this clique are related (at least to some extent) to the 1848–49 War of Independence. There are sites of memory (the building of the Parliament, *Himnusz*, Feszty cyclorama) which are not directly related to that war but are related to the broader era.

Based on the investigation of the connections of the sites of memory *Himnusz* emerged even from this largest clique. The prominent role of *Himnusz* can most likely attributed to its general importance. *Himnusz* is played whenever a community or national celebration is held; it is played before sports events, school happenings, and so forth. Whenever an event takes place which is connected to the Hungarians, *Himnusz* is almost surely to be heard. Hence, this site of memory is very closely connected to the Hungarians, and in this way it is closely connected to any other entity that is connected to the Hungarians. The Hungarian flag may be another such site of memory that plays a similarly important role when there is a national event. Unfortunately, it is not possible to confirm this hypothesis based on the current study as the Hungarian flag was not part of the limited set of sites of memory which has been the starting point of the investigation. However, the fact that it has the highest in-degree of all sites of memory suggests, that it is an important, very well connected site. In a follow-up study it would definitely be worth investigating also the role of the flag of Hungary in more detail. If this speculation is confirmed, it may be suggested that there might be different kinds of sites of memory. The results of this study support the hypothesis that the sites of memory differ with respect to their level of connectedness. The results show that there are quantitative differences as far as this concept is concerned, but the study also suggest that there is a more qualitative kind of difference, which allows distinguishing sites of memory (like *Himnusz*) that are very general, and can be connected to basically any site of memory

that is considered Hungarian; from sites (for example Széchenyi) which are well connected, but their connections are limited to a smaller set of other sites. The former could be termed as a "high influential" site of memory, whereas the latter could be termed as a "low influential" site of memory.

The sites of memory in the largest clique (and in the other two as well) have certain characteristics, which are not true for all the other sites. These sites are very deeply embedded in Hungarian culture, these are events, since they are events and persons which are taught in schools, which are celebrated regularly (for example the first day of the 1848–49 War of Independence is a national holiday), and were even celebrated during the communist era. Other sites of memory, like, for example, the Parliament building is a symbol of Hungary and also of its capital, can definitely be considered as part of the cultural memory as well. On the other hand, there are sites of memory used in the present study which cannot be characterized by any such characteristic. If, for example, Rubik is taken into account, who has a great many connections with other sites of memory, one can see, that although he is well known, and identified as representing the "Hungarian genius," he does not have (at least so far) such fundamental attributes that would make him a "high influential" site of memory. Rubik (and there may be other sites of memory on the list) may be considered probably more part of communicative memory at the moment. There are other such sites of memory in the study, like Szent-Györgyi, the water polo team, and so forth that over time these may become "high influential" sites of memory.

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The sites of memory used in the study

| Code | Type | Description of the site of memory |
|---|---|---|
| 301-es * | concept | Parcel 301 – memorial to the martyrs of the 1956 revolution |
| harang | concept | Noon bell, Hungarians as the defenders of Christianity (against the Ottoman empire) |
| pápista | concept | The Catholic-Calvinist opposition |
| Aradi 13 | concept | The 13 martyrs of Arad: thirteen Hungarian rebel honvéd generals who were executed on October 6, 1849 |
| Mill | concept | The 1000th anniversary of the Settlement of the Hungarians |
| III/3 | concept | III/3 department |
| Trian * | event | Treaty of Trianon |
| 1848 * | event | 1848–49 War of Independence against the Habsburgs |
| Mohács * | event | Battle of Mohács: one of the worst defeats of Hungarian history |
| tatjár * | event | The Mongol invasion of Hungary |
| 1956 * | event | The Revolution of 1956 |
| Jánosvit * | literary work | János vitéz (Sir John): the main character of Petőfi's poem |
| Bánk | literary work | *Bánk bán*: play and opera |
| Parlam * | object | The building of the Hungarian Parliament |
| korona * | object | Holy Crown of Hungary |
| Feszty * | object | Feszty cyclorama: a 50x400 feet painting depicting the arrival of the Hungarians to the Carpathian basin |
| tokaji * | object | Tokaj wine: famous wine from the Tokaj region |
| Rubik * | object | Rubik's cube: a 3D mechanical puzzle |
| Attkard | object | The sword of Attila the Hun |
| nemztri | object | Flag of Hungary: a horizontal tricolour of red, white and green |
| népvis | object | Hungarian folklore costumes |
| paprika | object | Red pepper |
| gulyás | object | Goulash |
| pálinka | object | Pálinka: strong alcoholic beverage |
| trilógia | object | Munkácsy Triptych: three gigantic paintings on Jesus' life |
| Akad | object | Hungarian Academy of Sciences |
| Kossuth * | person | Lajos Kossuth: leader of the 1848–49 War of Independence |
| Petőfi * | person | Sándor Petőfi: one of the most well known Hungarian poets |
| Szt-Györ * | person | Albert Szent-Györgyi: Nobel prize winner |
| István * | person | St. Stephen: king, the founder of the Hungarian State |
| Mátyás * | person | King Matthias: a glorious, and just king (15th century) |
| Széchenyi * | person | István Széchenyi: one of the greatest statesmen in Hungarian history |

| Code | Type | Description of the site of memory |
|---|---|---|
| Rákóczi * | person | Ferenc Rákóczi II.: the leader of the freedom fight named after him |
| vízilabd | person | The Hungarian waterpolo team |
| Kodály | person | Zoltán Kodály: Famous composer |
| Bartók | person | Béla Bartók: Famous composer |
| vadkan | person | Nicolas Zrínyi: statesman killed by a wounded wild boar |
| Bocskai | person | leader of the freedom fight named after him |
| Nagytemp | place | The Reformed Great Church |
| Alföld | place | The Great Plain |
| Tokhegy | place | Tokaj mountain – famous wine region |
| Budaivár | place | Buda Castle |
| Lánchíd | place | Chain bridge: the oldest bridge connecting Buda and Pest |
| hort híd | place | Nine-arched stone bridge of Hortobágy:the longest stone bridge in Central Europe |
| Tokaj | place | Tokaj |
| Hortob | place | Hortobágy: a part of Hungary with characteristic scenery |
| Himnusz * | symbol | The national anthem |
| Turul * | symbol | Turul: a falcon-like bird in the origin myth of the Magyars |
| Vasfügg * | symbol | Iron Curtain |
| népt | symbol | Hungarian folk dance |
| Árpsáv | symbol | Árpád-striped flag |

*Note:* An asterisk next to the code of a site of memory indicates that the site of memory was among the 22 which was evaluated in the first step, and of which the most characteristic ones (for Hungary and the Hungarians) were to be chosen by the respondents.

*Appendix B*

The instructions of the questionnaire

Step 1:

"On the following pages you will find persons, objects, events, places, concepts and symbols representing the Hungarians or related to them.

Please evaluate these events, persons, etc., or the thoughts evoked by these using the bipolar adjective (or phrase) pairs provided.

You may break off the filling out of the questionnaire, and continue at a later time."

Step 2:

"Please indicate which of the following places, objects, events, etc. are for you the most closely related to the Hungarians."

Step 3:

"Please indicate which of the following places, objects, events, etc. are for you the most closely related to the *Turul*." (if, for example, Turul was selected)

Step 4:

The instruction of Step 1 is repeated.

The adjective pairs used to evaluate each of the memory types. The stars indicate that the given adjective pair was used for the evaluation of the given memory type

| | | symbol | concept | event | literary work | object | person | place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **evaluation** | good - bad | * | * | | * | * | * | * |
| | pleasant - unpleasant | * | * | * | | * | * | |
| | uplifting - depressive | | | * | * | | | * |
| | makes me feel proud - makes me feel ashamed | * | * | * | * | * | | * |
| | kind - cruel | | | | | | * | |
| **Potency** | expressing power - expressing weakness | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| | deep - superficial | * | * | * | * | * | | * |
| | determined - undetermined | | | | | | * | |
| | masculine - feminine | * | * | * | * | * | | * |
| | brave - cowardly | | | | | | * | |
| **Activity** | fast - slow | | | | | | * | |
| | active - passive | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| | complex - simple | * | * | * | * | * | | * |
| | hectic - boring | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

# Communicating National Heritage to an Ingroup or to an Outgroup Member as a Group or as an Individual

**Judit Kovács, József Pántya, Dóra Medvés, and Ágnes Bernáth**

## Introduction

Living in the global world provides many opportunities to communicate one's own culture both to foreign listeners and to members of one's own nation. Simply put, people compete for the attention of international tourists, investors, co-workers, and so on, while they also compete for the preferences and choices of representatives of their own cultures. There are committees responsible for developing a positive image of a country that make group decisions on campaigns, and there are individuals who, when in a multicultural context, present their cultural identity to others or recall cultural memories to themselves. Appealing to the national heritage occurs most frequently in the course of communicating for any reason and in any context.

This study examines the differences in communicating the national heritage to an ingroup or to an outgroup member, focusing on the extent of agreement with traditional values and on the function of an individual or a group as the communicator. Participants made a collage out of a set of photos showing significant Hungarian symbols, people, traditions, artefacts, and sites, as if the composition was the cover page of an album about Hungary, whose audience would be either foreigners or Hungarians living abroad for a long time.

We have two goals: first, to demonstrate that the core pattern of ingroup-outgroup effects in social cognition, originally derived from social identity theory (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis), has relevance outside the context of group conflict and verbally formed evaluations. Specifically, we demonstrate that people even in small (but culturally homogenous) groups of three exhibit more commitment to the national heritage than individuals do when they approach an ingroup or an outgroup member. Moreover, groups make more distinction in their way of approaching an ingroup or an outgroup member. Although nowadays the extension of social identity theory beyond group conflicts is not exceptional (compare DiDonato, Ullrich, and Krueger); we have not found any examples of studies of ingroup and outgroup effects outside the context of verbally formed attitudes. Intercultural communication studies also focus primarily on immaterial aspects of interactions, that is, verbal and non-verbal communication and social cognition (perceptions, attitudes, and values) (see Roth).

Our second aim is to point out the influence an individual characteristic has on the way people communicate their national heritage to others (how important, for example, traditional values can be in the hierarchy of personal values). The relationship between collective primacy and ingroup favoritism has been studied (see Chen, Brockner, and Katz; Chen, Brockner, and Chen), and the correlation proved to be positive. Moreover, collectivism and sharing traditional values are also related concepts (Smith and Bond). In our study, the commitment to national heritage is also expected to be in a positive relationship with a commitment to traditions. Finding the expected connection would mean a kind of reinforcement in conceptualizing the commitment to national heritage as a form of ingroup favoritism.

### Intergroup bias in intergroup relationships

"Intergroup bias refers generally to the systematic tendency to evaluate one's own membership group (the in-group) or its members more favorably than a nonmembership group (the out-group) or its members" (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 576). Besides the "mean" evaluation of a target person from a specific group, ingroup and outgroup effects in social cognition also refer to the "range" of evaluations. Members of an outgroup appear to be very similar, but one's own group consists of different individuals. However, in people's perception, the members of an ingroup share common attitudes and values in intergroup relevant questions (Park and Judd). Different theories approach intergroup bias on the basis of differing accents in the composition of social motives (to have positive self-esteem, to have control in terms of instrumental effectiveness and understanding, and to belong to other people). Some of the theories construe the phenomenon directly in the context of intergroup conflicts, such as Terror Management Theory (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski) or Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius and Pratto). Other theories, further from the concept of conflicting interests, rely more on the need for positive self-esteem, like Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner) or Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer, "Social Self"). According to Social Identity Theory, successful intergroup bias creates or protects relatively high ingroup status, thereby providing a positive social identity for ingroup members and satisfying their need for positive self-esteem. According to Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, the bias is motivated by the need to affirm the satisfaction derived from identification with an optimally distinct group and by the need for intergroup differentiation.

Whatever base the research of intergroup bias relies on, in general, it tries to understand intergroup conflicts as they are reflected in mild rather than harsh individual judgments, evaluations, and attitudes. With reference to Brewer's "Ingroup Identification," Miles Hewstone, Mark Rubin, and Hazel Willis write, "most of the relevant research and theoretical developments on intergroup bias have been directed at its relatively mild forms; they provide a better framework for understanding in-group bias and intergroup discrimination of the positive type than out-group hostility" (594).

In our study, we explicitly take responsibility for examining "mild" attitudes and ingroup favoritism instead of outgroup hostility, and we attempt to demonstrate that

intergroup bias is present when people communicate their national (cultural) heritage even in a non-conflict-packed context of intercultural communication.

Although by choosing this "mild" arena we choose to detach our study from the serious subject matter of outgroup hostility, by examining choices made not only by individuals, but also by interactive groups we attempt to grow closer to the natural context of developing intergroup biases.

### Intergroup biases are more likely to flourish in groups

According to one of the main axioms of social psychology, an individual bears socially defined constructs of the world, even if they are alone, which is why data collection on the individual level offers credible observations for intergroup bias. However, from the research stream having its origin in the group-dynamic tradition and in the study of group behavior, it has been observed that people's behavior in groups can be different from their individual behavior. Specifically, the finding that groups are more competitive than individuals (Insko et al.; McCallum et al.) can be highly relevant when we study intergroup biases, as for group members making a group decision correspondence is stronger than in the case of an individual making an individual decision (Wildschut et al.). According to our best knowledge, social cognitions such as cultural attitudes have not been studied in interactive groups from the viewpoint of intergroup biases, whereas the natural context of these attitudes is interactive.

### National identification and commitment to national heritage

National identification and the concept of nationalism are often treated in research as sub-class components of ingroup favoritism (see Silverstein). However, an attachment to the ingroup is not necessarily accompanied with or predictive of antipathy toward an outgroup (Brewer, "Psychology of Prejudice").

In Damian J. Rivers's "Japanese National Identification," for example, Commitment to National Heritage, as a distinguishing psychosocial facet of Japanese national identification, functioned as a significant mediator of both "nationalistic" and "patriotic" attitudes, where nationalistic attitudes served as positive, whilst patriotic attitudes served as negative predictors of internationalism. Rivers took the concept of "commitment to national heritage" from Minoru Karasawa, who defined the construct as representing a distinct component of Japanese national identity, dealing specifically with the symbolization of Japanese nationhood and the historical, traditional, and cultural aspects of the nation ("Patriotism").

In our study, the more commitment to national heritage a person displays the more positive cultural attitudes they have. Basically we will not deal with attitudes towards other cultures, thus intergroup bias is to be approached only unilaterally, from the side of ingroup favoritism.

### Commitment to traditional values

Shalom H. Schwartz defines values as desirable goals that transcend situations: their relative importance guides behavior on a societal and also on an individual level ("Universal Aspects"; "Theory"). In "Universal Aspects," Schwartz lists 10 universal types of values that may be arranged along two bipolar dimensions. One of these is the dimension of "openness to change" versus "conservation."

Individualist versus collectivist cultures tend to emphasize values that fall in the former and the latter end-point of this dimension, respectively (Smith and Bond). One prominent value type from "conservation," which is, therefore, emphasized more by collectivist cultures, is the value type of *tradition*. Traditional values propagate the acceptance and respect of cultural, religious, and/or family customs and traditions and a commitment to them (Schwartz, "Universal Aspects").

As noted earlier, Ya-Ru Chen, Joel Brockner, and Tal Katz demonstrated a cultural difference in ingroup favoritism. According to Chen and her colleagues, this difference is attributable to the psychological dimension of individual-collective primacy, which primacy orientation shows cultural differences, as well, with an emphasis on collective primacy from the part of members of collectivist cultures (Chen, Brockner, and Chen).

Based on this relationship between collective primacy and ingroup favoritism, we expect that, *on an individual level*, commitment to traditions (operationalized by traditional values relatively prevalent in one's value priority) positively influence the commitment to national heritage, which relation can be seized upon in communicating this heritage. Agreeing with the importance of traditional values can similarly matter when nationality is activated similarly to one's masculinity and femininity, which matters when gender membership is activated (Bem).

### Study questions and hypotheses

Our first goal is to demonstrate that the core pattern of ingroup-outgroup effects in social cognition (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis; Park and Judd) has relevance outside the context of group conflict and verbally formed evaluations.

For a less conflict-packed arena we choose the context of cultural communication—communication about the national heritage—for two reasons. First, because it is a very usual and common activity in our multicultural world, and second, because commitment to national heritage serves as a core mediator behind nationalism, patriotism, internationalism, sometimes extended with inconsequent correlatives (Rivers), which feature helps to treat the phenomenon of ingroup favoritism separately from the phenomenon of outgroup hostility (Brewer, "Psychology of Prejudice"). For a non-verbal activity we selected making a composition out of a set of photos representing significant Hungarian symbols, people, traditions, artifacts, and sites, pretending that the composition was to become the cover page of an album about Hungary, intended for either foreigners or for Hungarians who have lived abroad for a long time.

Our second aim is to point to the influence of an individual characteristic (how important traditional values are in the hierarchy of personal values) on the way people

communicate their national heritage to others. Individual differences may make a difference in the importance of group membership in the order of individual priorities.

Based on the literature outlined in the introduction, we formulate the following expectations: as members of a group of co-nationals, people will display more commitment to national heritage and more positive national-cultural attitudes than they will as individuals; moreover, they will distinguish between their cultural communication towards an ingroup and outgroup member more, because the presence of ingroup members makes group membership more accessible. Additionally, we expect that the importance of traditional values in the hierarchy of personal values influences the positivity of cultural attitudes, thereby leading to intergroup bias.

### 3. Method
### Participants and the procedure

Ninety-four participants took part in our study, all of them from the University of Debrecen, enrolled in different psychology courses, from different faculties. They participated as volunteers. Sixty students formed 20 groups (3 persons per group) and the other 34 persons participated as individuals. At the beginning of data collection every participant filled in a value survey (the shortened version of the Portrait Values Questionnaire, PVQ21—Davidov; Schwartz et al.). After completing it participants were informed that they had a new task. We asked them to form groups of 3 based on their randomly assigned alphanumeric codes. We informed them that their group task was to prepare an A/4 sized photomontage from a certain set of photographs which would be used later as the cover page of an album about Hungary, whose reader would be either a compatriot living abroad or a foreign friend who would like to know more about Hungary and the Hungarian people. The whole process lasted approximately 30 minutes.

### Materials
### *The PVQ21 questionnaire*

The PVQ21 questionnaire (Davidov; Schwartz et al.) is an easy-to-fill-in survey, that requests the participant to make decisions on a 6-point scale about the perceived similarity between him/her and a person described (that is, portrayed) in two brief sentences per item. The 21 portraits represent the main features of the ten basic types of values.

### *The set of photos*

The set of photos—which served as the source of images to select from—were made up based on the experience of a preliminary study. Thirty-six persons took part in this preliminary study. Each of them had to imagine that (s)he is a member of an editorial board which edits an album about Hungary illustrated with many pictures. They had to mention 20 topics of the utmost importance to be included in this book. We arranged the participants' answers into categories according to their subject (characters and persons, national symbols, landscapes and natural environment, buildings and other artworks, lifestyle), and we calculated the percentage of the answers from different categories. Next

we translated this proportionality to a limited number of pictures (up to 30). Considering that the number of the pictures in a category can be only a whole number, a group of 28 subjects was developed, and, finally, the number of subjects in the different categories was implemented with topics raised most frequently in the preliminary study. In the case of characters and persons the set of subjects consisted of Sándor Petőfi (a poet from the 19th century), Lajos Kossuth (a statesman from the 19th century), Albert Szent-Györgyi (the scientist who discovered vitamin C), the Hungarian water polo team (who won titles in three consecutive Olympic Games beginning in 2000), and the famous composers Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. (See the *Appendix* for the detailed list of categories and subjects.)

The final step of selecting the set of photos was to search for typical and atypical visualizations of the subjects on the internet. Moreover, two independent persons evaluated the photos in respect of ordinariness. In cases where no answers about a picture consistent with ours emerged, we eliminated the use of that photo.

After this process, a subject was offered four different choices for each topic: a typical and an atypical visualization of a subject both in a small ($5 \times 7$ cm) and in a large size ($7 \times 10$ cm). Our intention in introducing this variety was to increase the interest and excitement in the creative process of composing the montage, while both the size and the typicality of the images had special relevance to our assumptions: a topic can be emphasized more or less with the size of the image, while by choosing an atypical rather than a typical representation one can exclusively address an ingroup member.

### 3.3. The dependent variables

After introducing the three independent variables (the communicator is a group or an individual; the target person is a compatriot or a foreigner; the importance of traditional values in the personal hierarchy of values) we now defined the dependent ones. These indices should serve as measures of commitment to national heritage, or, to put it differently, they should express the extent of positive cultural attitudes.

#### The ratio of pictures falling into different categories

Different categories represent national-cultural meanings with different accents. While a symbol, a historic character, or a special food can be fully appreciated primarily by the ingroup members of the community, a beautiful site or a spectacular building is easily accessible even to a foreigner. Employment of many symbols, historic characters, and life-style messages is the manifestation of strong commitment to national heritage.

#### The ratio of typical choices

Choosing a typical visualization of a topic is a vote for apparent, identifiable appearance of national characteristics.

### The distance of the symbols from the center of the montage

The small distance of a national symbol from the center of the montage also reflects a positive cultural attitude, a strong identification with one's own nation. At this point we devised a ratio where the distance between the center of the symbol-picture and the center of the whole A/4 sheet was divided by the half of the diagonal of the sheet. In cases where various symbol-pictures were employed, the smallest value is accepted. Where no symbol was employed, the value is the maximum of 1.

### Ordinariness

The most widely employed subjects were also explored. The criterion for being classified into this subject category was an appearance in at least half of the cases. The value of ordinariness relates to the number of subjects on a specific page from this category of "widely used subjects." The maximum value is 10, which stands for a participant or for a group who does not refrain from adapting very common solutions to express national identity.

### Number of pictures

Numerosity serves as a proxy for how much one has to say about one's own culture to somebody else. This value is necessarily higher in groups (where individual selections overlap very rarely), but numerosity can be a relevant variable from the other two aspects. To whom do people have more to say: a compatriot or a foreigner? Who has more to say: an individual with basically traditional values or somebody else with less traditional values?

To summarize, a participant who expresses extremely positive national-cultural attitudes and similarly strong commitment to national heritage employs a lot of pictures from categories with high relevance to this aspect (symbol, historic character, lifestyle), chooses typical visualization of the topics, puts the symbol into the center of the page, takes all the frequently used topics into the selection, and employs a lot of pictures. Based on these operationalizations, our hypotheses could be reformulated as

(1) people exert these tendencies more in groups than working individually on their own;

(2) the identity of the target person has greater influence on these tendencies in groups than at the individual level;

(3) people with pronounced traditional values exert these tendencies more than people with less traditional values.

### The results

We performed variance analyses on all the indices of commitment to national heritage where the independent variables were the subject of making the selection (group versus individual) and the target of communication (ingroup versus outgroup member), and the covariant variable was the importance of traditional values in the personal hierarchy of values. In the case of groups, we entered the average of the three people into the analysis.

In respect of the ratio of pictures from different categories we found that in case of individually made pages landscapes appear relatively more frequently ($M$ = 14%, $SD$ = 10%) than in the case of groups' pages ($M$ = 8%, $SD$ = 6%), ($F$ [1, 50] = 5.17, $p$<.05).

Concerning the ratio of typical choices we cannot report any significant difference. In general, participants exerted a strong preference for employing typical visualizations, on average only 20% of the pictures were atypical with a $SD$ value of 10%.

The analysis of the distance of the symbols from the center of the montage resulted in significant differences. We observed that groups ($M$ = .28, $SD$ = .23) put symbols closer to the centre ($F$ [1, 50] = 6.26, $p$<.05) than individuals did ($M$ = .43, $SD$ = .30) and people with more traditional values put them closer ($M$ = .34, $SD$ = .24) ($F$ [1, 50] = 5.16, $p$<.05) than people with less traditional values ($M$ = .41, $SD$ = .31).

Regarding the ordinariness of the montages we observed that from the widely used set of topics more pictures appeared on the groups' pages ($M$ = 7.95, $SD$ = 1.19), ($F$ [1, 50] = 21.98, $p$<.01) than on individual pages ($M$ = 6.11, $SD$ = 1.65), which relationship was qualified by the agreement with traditional values ($F$ [1, 50] = 3.91, $p$<.1) with frequently applied ordinary topics by groups of people with high traditionalism. Moreover, we found an unexpected interaction between the variables of the target person of the communication and traditionalism, however, this relationship did not attain statistical significance ($F$ [1, 50] = 2.54, $p$ = .11). People with more traditional values would show the usual pictures more frequently to a compatriot ($M$ = 6.61, $SD$ = 1.89) than to a foreigner ($M$ = 6.38, $SD$ = 2.14), while people with less traditional values would do it in reverse: they would show the usual pictures more frequently to a foreigner ($M$ = 7.78, $SD$ = 1.31) than to a compatriot ($M$ = 6.31, $SD$ = 1.30), see Figure 1.
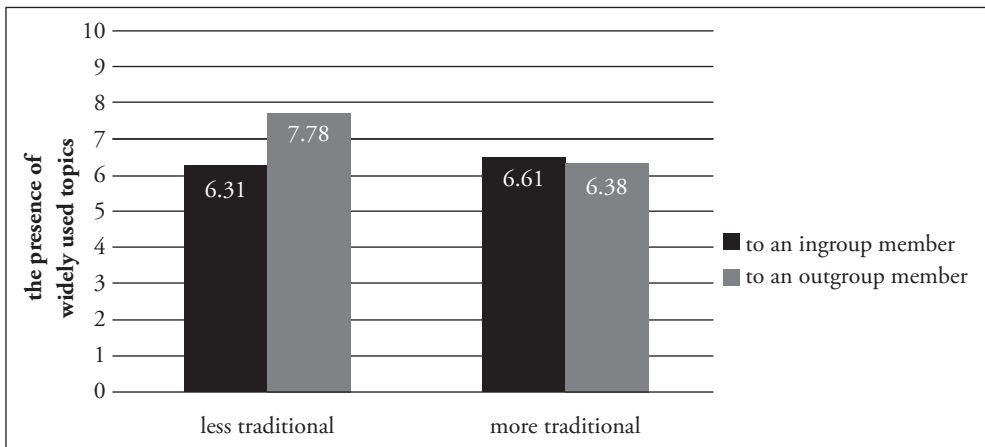


*Figure 1.* The presence of widely used topics in the selection made by people with low and high levels of traditionalism

Regarding the volume of topics chosen for the selection, we obtained the trivial result that groups select more ($M$ = 15.95, $SD$ = 3.31) than individuals do ($M$ = 12.22, $SD$ =

2.92), ($F$[1, 50]=7.68, $p$<.01). The analysis of this numerosity index resulted again in the above mentioned unexpected relationships that highly traditional people are more involved when they approach a compatriot, while less traditional participants appear to have more to say approaching a foreigner. Specifically, highly traditional communicators showed more topics to a Hungarian target person, while less traditional communicators approached a foreigner with more pictures ($F$ [1, 50] = 4.83, $p$<.05), see Figure 2.
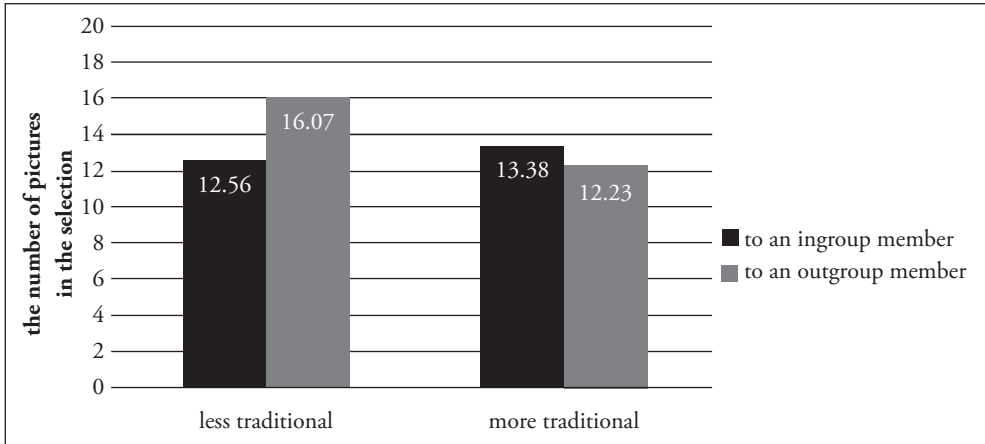


*Figure 2.* The number of pictures in the selection

## 5. Discussion

To sum up, several results support the hypothesis that cultural attitudes are influenced in a positive way by group-work. Increased commitment to national heritage of groups was reflected by the shortened distance of symbols from the center, increased ordinariness, and increased volume of items in the selection. However, the expectation that distinction between communication to an ingroup and outgroup member becomes more definite in groups received no support since groups and individuals were equally insensitive of the identity of the target person. But the assumptions regarding the influence of traditionalism on cultural attitudes was supported, as people with a high level of traditionalism put national symbols into more central positions and focused on common topics to a larger extent, especially when they worked in groups. Concerning the influence of traditionalism we bumped into the observation that people with high (low) level of traditionalism exerted more enthusiasm about communicating culture to an ingroup (outgroup) member.

Classically, in intergroup-bias research ingroup member relevant and outgroup member relevant evaluations and decisions are compared, and "bias" refers to the tendency to judge one's own membership group or its members more favorably than a non-membership group or its members (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis). Classically, individual answers are tested. However, in our research, we made a variation on the paradigm and studied group decisions, too, but concentrated only on ingroup favoritism, specifically on posi-

tive national-cultural attitudes, that is, a commitment to national heritage. Based on the individual-group discontinuity (Insko, et al.) we searched not only for quantitative differences between individuals and groups in their commitment to national heritage, but also for qualitative differences, like the qualifying effect of traditionalism on the centrality of national symbols when groups and individuals were compared.

The lack of support regarding the supposition that in groups people distinguish more between their communication to an ingroup than to an outgroup member requires explanation. Perhaps this difference should be expected to be qualitative rather than quantitative. The literature on intergroup bias in intergroup relationships gives lessons about positive bias toward ingroup members irrespective of the presence of outgroup members (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis). However, we also learned that differences among one's own group members appear smaller in the presence of an outgroup member (Park and Judd). Searching for qualitative differences in the selections intended for ingroup and outgroup members in the function of whether groups or individuals make the selection, we found *only groups* making *some* distinctions. According to the results of Fisher tests, the Hungarian Parliament building was exhibited more to a foreigner (p<.05) and an identical result was arrived at in the case of the picture of a plainsman in traditional costume with a horse (p<.05). The difference between adding folk dance or folk costume to the selection is especially expressive. One cannot find a montage without folk dance or folk costume, but the topic of folk dance finds a place typically in a selection for an ingroup instead of for an outgroup member (p<.05), and the reverse is true for folk costume (p<.10). What can be common to the Parliament, the plainsman in a traditional outfit, and folk costume? All of them are static and spectacular façades without absorbed life experiences. Contrary to that, all Hungarians share vivid and accessible memories about folk dancing from their life experiences. In our interpretation, in spite of the different contexts of the specific phenomena, this dichotomy of static exposition of one's own culture to a foreigner and vivid exposition to a compatriot may correspond to the dichotomy of perceiving ingroup members similarly in the presence of the outgroup members and differently in lack of their presence. In the case of providing potential additional support, this analogy could speak for a credible generalization of intergroup bias-phenomenon beyond the arenas of intergroup conflicts.

The finding that people with high (low) level of traditionalism were more enthusiastic about communicating culture to an ingroup (outgroup) member could be substantiated by the ideas of Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, who points to the different reactions to the influence of globalization: some embrace the spirit of globalization and are enthusiastic about the cultural mix, while others would like to close the doors to foreign influences and preserve the culture. Agreement with traditional values seems to function as an arranging factor behind these attitudes.

The study has several implications for everyday life. One is the unanticipated "risk" of working abroad. The young are ready to accumulate experiences in foreign cultures. Many of them plan to stay only for a limited period of time and than go back to their home culture. But when far from ingroup connections, the commitment behind home-cultur-

al attitudes fades. Individuals without links to their heritage culture and social support from co-nationals are especially exposed to acculturative stress (Berry et al; Cislo, Spence, and Gayman; Vega et al; Ward and Rana-Deuba) and are troubled in their successful cultural adaptation.

A specific characteristic of our study was that cultural attitudes and commitment to national heritage were examined not in verbally expressed opinions and attitudes, but in visual communication. Studying cultural attitudes usually means studying the verbal manifestation of culture (Roth), whereas cultural references nowadays are formulated more and more frequently in terms of visual manifestations. The main result of the study is that manifestations of intergroup bias could be detected in visual communication, which demonstrates that intergroup bias phenomena extend beyond the context of intergroup conflict and verbal communication. Second, we showed that traditionalism influences the way people communicate their national heritage to others. Nonetheless, the relatively low number of observations and homogeneity of the examined population should be taken into account when arriving at these results.

On a general basis we conclude that group level data can be highly informative when intergroup biases are studied, since there is some inconsistency between the levels of functioning and measurements in the practice of research when social (cultural) identity is taken stock of. Although nobody questions that social (cultural) identity is shaped and entertained in a group context, in most cases individual behaviors (or attitudes, opinions) are studied. In our view, our study demonstrates that when people communicate their national heritage, group-level functioning is qualitatively different from individual-level functioning.

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**Appendix: Topics presented on the picture cards, classified by content categories**

Topics presented on the images

*Characters and persons:*
Sándor Petőfi
Lajos Kossuth
Albert Szent-Györgyi
Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály
the Hungarian water-polo team

*National symbols:*
the national flag
cockade
The Royal Crown

*Landscapes and natural environment:*
Lake Balaton
Tokaj-Hegyalja wine region
The Puszta (The Great Hungarian Plain)
Hungarian grey cattle
puli (a small to medium-size breed of Hungarian herding dog)

*Buildings and other artworks:*
Protestant Great Church in Debrecen
*Ecce Homo!* by the Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy
The Hungarian Parliament building
Chain Bridge, Budapest
Feszty Cyclorama—*Arrival of the Hungarians* by the Hungarian painter Árpád
Feszty
Nine-Arch Bridge, Hortobágy
Buda Castle

*Lifestyle:*
Hungarian folk dancers
people wearing Hungarian national costume
Rubik's cube
wines from the Tokaj wine region
pálinka (fruit brandy made in regions of the Carpathian Basin)
Goulash (Hungarian soup of meat and vegetables, seasoned with paprika and other
spices)
a plainsman with a horse in traditional costume
Hungarian red paprika

# 5. Literature, Film and the Sites of Memory

# Ghosts as Sites of Memory

**Bényei Tamás**

> Haunted places are the only ones people can live in.
> (*Michel de Certeau, Practice 108*)

The claim that haunted houses are *lieux de mémoire* is by no means particularly daring or exciting; in Pierre Nora's usage of the term, practically all the cultural products and phenomena of modernity (including natural sites, representations or symbolic practices) might be dignified with this appellation. Thus, it is hardly more radical to claim that ghosts themselves function as sites of memory—just  like ghost stories, which are probably among the most typical and unique *lieux de mémoire* in English cultural memory.

One way to read ghost stories is to address their particular mnemonic function in the context of Victorian culture. This is a perfectly legitimate task that has already been undertaken by several critics (Cf. Vanessa Dickerson and Andrew Smith). On the other hand, ghost stories and their spectral protagonists might also be viewed in a more general, though still largely historical context, a context that has been created by the twentieth-century theoretical interest in memory and the spectacular career of spectrality as a theoretical metaphor. One of the primary cultural functions of this critically neglected, yet still not entirely defunct genre has been to probe the solidity of the rule of reason, to interrogate the edges of this mainstay of modernity and look into our still unresolved relationship with the supernatural. What returns in ghost stories (in the sense of being past but refusing to accept its pastness) is thus not only the revenant itself but also the belief (or the possibility of the belief) in ghosts, a belief that is supposed to be safely surmounted and left behind.[1]

This is a 'meta-level' that is inevitably part of even the humblest and least self-reflexive representatives of the ghost story genre: one of the standard clichés of ghost stories is precisely the staging of scepticism and its defeat by evidence. The overwhelming majority of ghost stories are at least implicitly structured as conversion narratives where the sceptical narrator or human protagonist ends up with his or her belief in the supremacy of reason and science thoroughly shaken, if not shattered. This essay will attempt to provide an outline of some of the theoretical parameters of addressing this ever-present level of cultural reflection. Instead of examining the specific ways in which literary and non-literary haunted houses and ghosts were, indeed, functioning as sites of memory, or simply stating that they might be included in the fuzzy category of sites of memory, it is

my contention that ghost narratives might be read as allegories of *lieux de mémoire* and of the modern memory crisis in general.

To discuss ghost stories in the light of the multitude of late twentieth-century theoretical and critical metaphors of spectrality may be a rewarding excercise, and I am going to do just that in the second half of my essay. It is, nevertheless, equally important to note that the turn of the century and the early twentieth century saw an unparallelled rise of interest in the faculty of memory, and that ghost stories may also be read in the light of these modern speculations on memory and forgetting; as Richard Terdiman and many other commentators have remarked, memory became the focus of philosophical and psychological attention because it was felt to be in crisis—or, rather, the crisis of modernity (or the crisis which is modernity) was increasingly seen as inseparable from the workings of (modern) memory. The new centrality of memory was particularly obvious in phenomenology and psychoanalysis: both of these discourses were beginning to see memory as something that cannot be taken for granted, going about its work of quietly building up the storehouse of images that is our mind. By briefly looking at a few philosophical texts and ghost stories, I shall indicate some of the ways in which phenomenology and psychoanalysis were doing much the same things as ghost stories in terms of their exploration of memory and its discontents. I shall also stress how such a reading has been made possible in the aftermath of poststructuralist (Derridean and Lacanian) rethinkings of spectrality. The "traditonal" ghost, both as a site of memory and as an allegory of sites of memory, appears at the intersection of all these forcefields and discourses.

## I

In Lanoe Falconer's 1891 ghost story, *Cecilia de Noël*, the connection between the (sub)literary genre and new discourses of memory is spelt out in almost uncannily clear terms when the rational and thoroughly agnostic doctor, called down from London to the haunted house, is asked by the narrator whether he believes in ghosts, and gives the following answer: "I do, just as I believe in all symptoms" (201). The insight that is intuited in this retort anticipates not only the terminology but also the core of psychoanalytic inquiries of memory. The quotation also indicates why psychoanalysis is particularly relevant in an attempt to think about the spectral formations of memory. Although the editors of a recent book on the Victorian supernatural stress the idea of the remainder as the root of haunting (Brown, et al 10), I would go further and suggest that the metaphor of the remainder (of the unsettled account) is not sufficient to account for the power of haunting. Jean-Michel Rabaté is practically quoting from Freud's essay *Mourning and Melancholia* when he describes the logic of spectrality: "what returns is, in a classically Freudian fashion, what has not been processed, accommodated, incorporated into the self by mourning: the shadow of the lost object is still being projected onto the subject" (xvi). Yet, even this formulation fails to stress the radicality of the Freudian conception of memory and forgetting and its relevance to spectrality. In psychoanalysis, all forgetting is seen as spectral inasmuch as "forgetting is not something passive, a loss,

but an action directed against the past" (de Certeau, *Heterologies* 3). Thus, it is not enough to say that the ghost represents something that has been left unresolved: it is something that has been missed (like a missed burial or punishment), and haunting is also inconceivable without an element of repression or disavowal. And it is precisely these psychic processes that psychoanalysis has made its business.

The multitude of spectral formations discovered or constructed by psychoanalysis are in fact an integral part of the shift that—as Terry Castle persuasively argues—started already in the eighteenth century: the interiorisation of ghosts. Ghosts, says Castle, were "not exorcised—only internalised and reinterpreted as hallucinatory thoughts. Yet this internalisation of apparitions introduced a latent irrationalism into the realm of mental experience" (161).

Psychoanalysis was perhaps the most important and certainly the culturally most visible representative of the modern interrogation of memory, making it very clear that the work of memory is far from the storage/retrieval model of Aristotle or Locke, and that remembering has its anamorphotic quality, always taking place within a particular affective mindset or *Stimmung* (mourning, nostalgia, melancholia). Pierre Nora, for instance, writes from a thoroughly nostalgic moment, from after a cultural catastrophe that is the loss of of a natural, organic memory (7).

Freud radically questioned both the traditional philosophical conception of memory and the romantic cult of memory, although he also perpetuated Romanticism's obsession with the role of memory in the constitution of subjectivity and in art. This is not the place to discuss in detail the contribution of psychoanalysis to the spectralisation of memory[2]; it is enough to refer to the mechanism of traumatic repetition, to repetition compulsion and the death principle, to *Nachträglichkeit*, and, of course, to symptoms, which are called by Freud mnemic symbols, *Erinnerungssymbole* (*Five Lectures* 39), and which indeed resemble ghosts (or the other way round) in several ways: a symptom is something that returns—unsolicited—from the past which, on the one hand, is not properly past, while, on the other hand, it is irredeemably, irrevocably past (that is why it returns, repeats itself). Symptoms and ghosts are the perfect examples of the Freudian definition of the uncanny, both being something alien and familiar at the same time; the pathogenic material, as Freud wrote, "behaves like a foreign body, and… the treatment, too, works like the removal of a foreign body from the living tissue" (Freud and Breuer 376).[3] Both appear as radical interruptions of the present, as discomfort, pain and suffering, incapacitating the subject from living in the present. A symptom is also like a ghost in that it is a formation that hides as much as it reveals: its very appearance proclaims the existence of a problem, crying out for attention, while it also hides the problematic knot in elaborate ways. Symptoms and ghosts are complex tropological formations in which several things speak in more or less oblique ways, including the pathogenic core memory or fantasy, the mechanisms of repression, and the situation which calls forth, conjures up that which gives itself to our senses.

The spectral undercurrents of the phenomenological discourse on memory are perhaps less immediately obvious, for phenomenology followed romanticism more closely in the

value it accords to the faculty of memory. In phenomenology, memory is no longer seen as the mechanical inscription, storing and retrieval of images, but as crucial in the constitution of identity and in knowledge.[4] If, as Saint Augustine claimed in an *avant la lettre* phenomenological insight, whenever I remember, I also necessarily "recall what I am" (186), as the French and German self-reflexive verbs (*se souvenir*, *sich erinnern*) also indicate, memory is indeed "the gathering of thought" (Heidegger 11), the par excellence phenomenological project of the dialectical interplay of inside and outside, the process of self-constitution through the interiorisation, transformation and sublation of the external by consciousness (Terdiman 60-61). As Terdiman argues, memory "is the name we give to the faculty that sustains continuity in collective and in individual experience" (8).

Nevertheless, both Henri Bergson and Maurice Merleau-Ponty display a marked interest in the disorders and dysfunctionings of memory (Bergson 110–47, Merleau-Ponty 411–30), and memory is conceived by both thinkers not only as the key to self-constitution but also as something that interrupts or harasses both this process of self-constitution and the present/presence of the subject.[5] Memory is not just a gathering of thought, but also a potential unravelling of thinking and subjectivity. As Terdiman observes, memory "constitutes and undoes us simultaneously" (241).

Psychoanalysis especially saw memory from the start as an endless source of psychic disturbances, but Freud's famous claim—also a foundational claim of the modern discourse of memory—according to which "hysterical patients suffer from reminiscences"(*Five Lectures* 39; cf. Freud and Breuer 351-93), is also present in the speculations of Bergson, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. What is more, in phenomenology, it is not only the hysterical or traumatised subject that is haunted, but spectrality seems to be the essence of the temporal existence of the subject. Thus, in Bergson, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty, memory does not even have to be dysfunctional in order to be spectral, or in order to transform the subject into a spectral presence. In *Matter and Memory*, for instance, Bergson distinguishes two kinds of memory: the active, motoric memory of the body that is always directed towards action, towards the present and the future, contrasted to what Bergson calls spontaneous memory, the passive, automatic recording and storing of images. What is interesting for our purposes is that both kinds are described in terms that verge on invoking the spectral. Motoric memory does not place the evoked movement pattern in time but simply repeats it in a mechanical way when given the impetus: "the lesson once learnt bears upon it no mark which betrays its origin and classes it in the past, it is the past of my present, exactly like my habit of walking or of writing; it is lived and acted, rather than represented" (91)[6]. This kind of memory is spectral inasmuch as it "no longer *represents* our past to us, it *acts* it" (93), and thus becomes "impersonal," "foreign to our past life" (95)—like a spectral apparition or a symptom that appears in the present without belonging to it.

Spontaneous image memory, however, is no less spectral in its implications. While active motoric memory, which is now described in more positive terms, is "bent upon action, seated in the present and looking only to the future," "prolongs their useful ef-

fects" into the present moment instead of conserving images (Bergson 93), image memory is spectral inasmuch as the images that are evoked (images not called forth by some intended action) invariably interrupt the arc of action, the business of the present. Image memories are described by Bergson as lurking just beyond the threshold of consciousness, and whenever there is a breach or discontinuity in the stream of consciousness, "immediately these darkened images come forward into the full light," appearing "independently of our will" (97). In Bergson, then, either of the two kinds of memory may appear as potentially spectral in its relation to the other kind.

In Sartre, the spectral attributes of memory are even more obvious, since memory is situated somewhere between the in-itself and the for-itself. In fact, the Sartrean expounding of Facticity amounts to a full-fledged hauntology: *Being and Nothingness* repeatedly resorts to the metaphor of haunting to describe the temporality of the subject. In the section on memory, Sartre's main objective is to understand "how the past can 'be reborn' to haunt us, in short, to exist *for us*. If it is unconscious, as Bergson claims, and if the unconscious is inactive, how can it weave itself into the woof of our present consciousness? Would it have a force of its own? But then isn't this force present since it acts on the present?" (162). In the Sartrean account of existence (and in this he does not differ radically from Heidegger), to be human (that is, for-itself) is to be haunted, in at least two fundamental senses. On the one hand, the for-itself is spectral inasmuch as it, by definition, negates or nihilates its present, unlike the in-itself, which "exhausts itself in being; it has nothing to do with what is not, or with what is no longer" (163).[7]

Thus, only human beings can be said to have a past at all: "only those beings have a past which are such that in their being, their past being is in question, those beings who *have to be* their past" (Sartre 167) Haunting, in one sense, refers to our responsibility for the past, our own past and the past of others inasmuch as they exist for-us: "I am the one by whom my past arrives in this world" (169–70). On the other hand, the haunting nature of the past is precisely its 'pastness', its unchangeable, bulky solidity ("the ever growing totality of the in-itself which we are" [169]), its having slipped over into being, its fearful identity with itself and its massive, ever-increasing inertia: the past is that part of me that has already ossified into in-itself, that is, it is a part of me that is entirely alien. "The past is the in-itself which I am, but I am this in-itself as surpassed" (173). The surpassing or surmounting, however (as in Freud), is never entirely successful, for "the surpassed in-itself lives on and haunts the for-itself as its original contingency" (173). This haunting is what Sartre calls Facticity, claiming that the Past and Facticity are one and the same thing. Thus, the Sartrean concept of Facticity is revealed as a hauntology.[8]

The spectral aspects of Sartrean phenomenology, however, do not end here. For all the dead weight of the past, the subject, though fully responsible for it, is rendered passive vis-á-vis his or her past which is now in-itself, massive and unchangeable, that is, fully past. Perhaps the most powerfully hauntological aspect of Sartre's account of memory and subjectivity manifests itself at the point where he is trying to describe the strange and unaccountable power of the past to affect, influence, command the for-itself, and to account for the concomitant passivity of the subject. The experience of passivity vis-á-vis

the past is so intense that it can only be described as a dispossession; that is why, for Sartre, the relationship with the past cannot be expressed in terms of my possession of it: "I do not have my past: I am it" (168). Yet, it is precisely because the past is this heavy in-itself, irrevocably sunk into being—and here the dialectical process comes full circle—that I am fully responsible for it: "the past which I am, I have to be with no possibility of not being it" (170).

Sartre's spectrality of the past is a very personal one, custom-made for each and every individual. Yet, it is not personal at all in the sense of "personalised," although the recurrent metaphor of haunting in itself implies an obscure animation of the past. What points towards the later Derridean staging of (the metaphor of) the ghost is the ethical stake of Sartre's account: the haunting nature of the past is inseparable from our responsibility for it. It is not impossible that this ethical aspect was among the chief reasons for the recent rise of the theoretical metaphor of the ghost, that is, a semi-personalised allegorical entity instead of the vaguer, more abstract metaphors of spectrality.

This shift from spectrality in general to the metaphor of the ghost very probably would not have occurred without certain historical circumstances—and the historical constellation is also inseparable from the ethical shift in the use of the metaphor. If, as Terdiman says, paraphrasing Walter Benjamin, modern historical memory has been transformed into catastrophe (25), and modern historical experience is epitomised by traumatic experience, that is, by something involving an irrational and unintelligible element, then the haunting nature of the past necessarily assumes an ethical colouring. Emmanuel Levinas describes the self "as the survivor of the death of the other, and in so far as it is a survivor, it continues to be determined by its relationship with the deceased" (qtd in David 116–17). Recent history seems to have made this into a general predicament, and seeing ghosts and engaging with them have also become part of the discourse of trauma narratives and theories, describing the way traumatic non-experiences (both their own and others') return to haunt the survivors.[9] Thus, there is beyond doubt a historical dimension to the unexpected currency of metaphors of spectrality and of ghosts in post-1945 cultural and literary theory.[10] Already in Horkheimer and Adorno, who discuss ghosts in the context of our relationship to the dead and to the past, individual life becomes "a sequence of instantaneous experiences which leave no trace, or rather whose trace is hated as irrational, superfluous" (215–16, 215). Avery Gordon claims that "[h]aunting is a constituent element of modern social life. It is neither premodern superstition nor individual psychosis; it is a generalisable social phenomenon of great importance" (7).

## II

What is particularly interesting, however, is the return of the ghost itself—rather than of spectrality in general—as a potent metaphor. The ghost looms large as a figure in every sense of the word, having become a symptom of the modern crisis of memory in the full psychoanalytical sense of "symptom." Taking into account the ethical slant that is already detectable in Sartre, and the historical urgency of the figure of the ghost, we may risk the suggestion that, if the chief novelty of poststructuralist accounts of hauntol-

ogy is the advent of the metaphor of the ghost, and, as the authors of the introduction to a recent book on the Victorian supernatural put is, it is "the *metaphorical* supernatural" that "suffuses recent literary and cultural theory" (Brown et al 9, emphasis added), this addition has more far-reaching consequences in the thriving discourse of spectrality in the late twentieth century. This is clear from Derrida's influential theorising of spectrality, of which I only wish to point out those features that connect it to the foregoing. Apart from the thought of Marx, Derrida's conception of spectrality has two major sources. First, it is based on the phenomenological claim that man (*pour-soi, Dasein*) is by definition incapable of full presence. In fact, one could argue that Derrida's originality over, for instance, Merleau-Ponty's discussion of memory and subjectivity lay in the full unfolding of its implied spectral metaphorics, introducing and staging the full-fledged metaphor of the ghost. It is perhaps inevitable that Derrida's other innovation in relation to the phenomenological version of spectrality is the language inflection, more precisely, the problem that is discussed in his famous reading of *Phaedrus* as well as in most of his early work, most fully, perhaps, in *Speech and Phenomena*. This is the problem of *Gedächtnis* vs. *Erinnerung*, of memory as inescapably prosthetic, as a system of inscription and writing in its full deconstructive sense, the depressing idea that memory, instead of ensuring the integrity of the self, works as a constant self-difference. In order to have access to one's store of memory, one has to consult something that is not one's own, an archive, an external, material system of inscription, that is, language.[11] This is an 'applied' version of Derrida's conception of the iterability of the sign, the claim that the sign, being by its nature a repetition already at the time of its first appearance, is never exhausted by its present context, and is full of meanings put therein by previous uses and contexts. Thus, the sign is by definition spectral, repeating the past and making full presence impossible for its user, and language, in turn, is revealed as a haunted house, but a house in which we ourselves are ghosts, and generators of ghosts, as much as haunted subjects: we speak the words of others. Every beginning is haunted, because, as Derrida contends in *Speech and Phenomena*, everything begins in re-presentation (45.n6).[12] In Paul Ricoeur's much more placid formulation, which also indicates the phenomenological roots of Derrida's philosophy of language: "a meditaton on symbols starts from speech that has already taken place, and in which everything has already been said in some fashion; it wishes to be thought with its presuppositions. For it, the first task is not to begin, but, from the midst of speech, to remember; to remember with a view to beginning" (*Symbolism* 348-49).

This is where the psychoanalytical inquiry into memory encounters deconstruction, as was sensed by Eugenio Donato when he stressed the importance of the pervasive Freudian metaphor of archaeology (168–69) [13]: if archaeological excavation is necessary in our dealings with the psyche, this entails the inevitable necessity of hermeneutics. Since the subject's own memories have become inaccessible, and their meanings effaced, they have to be deciphered like surviving inscriptions from ancient cultures: memory as the agent of *self-difference* rather than the means towards self-constitution.

In the context of the present essay, the chief novelty of Derrida is to combine the implied hauntology of phenomenology with deconstruction's language philosophy (although this particular aspect is less dominant in *Spectres of Marx*) and with a Levinasian ethics (Davis 90) of the relationship with the past, which also necessarily entails a hermeneutics of the past.

Thanks to the metaphor of the ghost, dealing with the unprocessed or painful legacy of the past assumes the form of a kind of intersubjectivity, where the supernatural or numinous aura (excess) of the ghost is displaced onto the dynamic of interpersonal relations to indicate an irrational or unintelligible aspect of intersubjectivity (as in Henry James) or the irreducible otherness of the interlocutor (most frequently, the past). Ghosts are like semi-prosopopoeic figures of the haunting past: as Peter Buse says, ghosts do not simply return: they demand something of the "future," (14) thus they command an ethics of the relationship with the past, initiating an impossible intercourse like that implied in Jules Michelet's famous definition of history as a discourse with the dead: as Michel de Certeau put it, Michelet's historiography "aims at calling the dead who still haunt the present, and at offering them scriptural tomb" (*History* 2). Ghosts, however, do not simply want to talk—in fact, they very frequently refuse to engage in conversation with the living: they haunt the living, rendering them dumbfounded and paralysing them, thus, their imperative is more radical than the wish to be given a posthumous voice, to be ventriloquised by posterity. A ghost, in its commanding half-presence, is an obstacle to understanding (to the worlding of the subject that is interrupted by the ghost), but also a medium, a privileged and direct access to the past. In Gordon's words, haunting is "a [direct] knowing of what took place" (8).[14]

If the missed or misunderstood past assumes phenomenal form as a ghost, this is almost like an incomplete or uncompletable act of personification, a prosopopoeia: the past (the missed past) is striving to assume human form, or at least personhood, agency. If the past takes the form of a ghost, it has, if not a face, at least a voice, or the possibility of voice. This approach, however, still emphasises the 'referentiality' of ghosts, the problematic aspect or part of the past that they stand for. If we want to understand the possibility of seeing the ghost not as a site of memory but as an allegory of sites of memory, we have to take our cue from the more radical implications of the theoretical discourses of spectrality. The difference may be illustrated by referring to some ghost stories.

In the late Victorian ghost stories of, say, Charlotte Riddell, one of the most popular practitioners of the genre in that period, the traumatising experience of being haunted is invariably counterbalanced by the reassuring ending: the spectral access to the unintelligible but directly experienced piece of the past and the "normal," more historical access to the past are fused in a totalising vision, and, consequently, the past is laid to rest, "the business of life taken up once more by the survivors" (347).[15] This narrative strategy, however, amounts to an anaesthetising of the haunting itself. In such stories, ghosts are, as it were, referential, and their message about the past is eventually more important than their sheer impossible presence. Seen as formations of history, ghosts represent a past that refuses to be assimilated into the order of knowledge, that refuses to become the object

of knowledge, that insists on being experienced not as "cold knowledge" but as a "transformative recognition" (Gordon 8). In many turn-of-the-century ghost stories, what matters is not the referentiality of the ghost (the past about which it brings messages) but its sheer presence, the haunting itself. In. Gordon's formulation: "the ghost is just the sign, or the empirical evidence if you like, that tells you a haunting is taking place" (8). "Thurnley Abbey," Perceval Landon's brilliant story does not even offer any plausible explanation for the haunting; the focus of the narrative is the traumatic experience of the haunting itself and the act of passing it on transferentially both within the story and also in the act of telling it to the listener. Similarly, Algernon Blackwood's "The Haunted House" describes a night spent in a haunted house without even raising the possibility of putting an end to the haunting. In these stories, what Derrida calls the secret of the ghost is preserved to the end: "[i]ts secret is not unspeakable because it is taboo, but because it cannot (yet) be articulated in the language available to us" (Davis 13).

These stories of pure haunting might be said to dramatise the ethical aspect of haunting: the truthfulness of the ghost—suggests Davis in his account of Derrida's hauntology—is immaterial; what matters is its questionable but insistent presence, appearance itself: that is always 'true' in some sense. "The ghost does not belong to the order of knowledge, therefore it makes no sense to ask whether it is lying or not" (Davis 84). The experience of the encounter is more important than the truth of what the ghost has to say (Derrida *Spectres* 5). The "ghostness" of the past, in this context, is the quasi-"personhood" of the past: as a person, however spectral, that which returns from the past can assume the features of the immeasurably different other, someone who simply cannot be ignored and has to be attended to.

When Derrida says that the ghost is "defying semantics as much as ontology" (*Spectres* 5), he uses "ontology" in a Levinasian sense: the ghost cannot be described, named, classified as something or somebody. It remains pure addressivity, pure "Saying" as opposed to the "Said," an appeal that cannot be dismissed, an imperative of attending to the other (Davis 13). Davis's claim that "Derrida's spectre is a figure of the Levinasian other" (91) may be extended to suggest that, in the context of memory, the ghost represents the past as a Levinasian (or Blanchotian) other rather than as a passive object of knowledge, and the stories without a "solution" allow the ghost to persist outside the order of knowledge and the haunting to preserve its eventness. The ghost "holds open the possibility of an unconditional encounter with otherness, of an undetermined, unanticipated event without which there would be no escape from the endless repetition of the same and no promise of emancipation and justice" (Davis 76).[16]

The quasi-personhood, the prosopopoeic nature of ghosts frequently produces a pervasive uncertainty about the borderline between the dead and the living, or, in slightly different but spectrally relevant terms, the animate and the non-animate. Ghost stories are full of metonymies of the body (mainly body parts and voice) that behave as if they were alive, and all varieties of animated objects, and this process of uncanny animation—echoing the phenomenological account of being haunted as a state of utter and dumbfounded passivity before the power of the past—is frequently complemented by the

concomitant deanimation of the human characters, not only in the obvious sense of dying (the animatedness that refused to pass away with the death of the figure is displaced metonymically onto the physical objects and sites), but also in a de Manian sense: the confrontation with the animated objects entails the deanimation of the haunted figures, a paralysis, a loss of agency,[17] as if there was a rule that allowed only so much animation in the (fictional) world of ghost stories.

This chiasmic transposition of agency and animation, the constant interplay of tropes of animation and deanimation can be seen as an allegory of the disorder of the phenomenologically understood inside-outside dialectic in the making and unmaking of the subject; in this sense, ghosting is the obverse of fetishism, an uncanny disruption or freezing of the dialectical process, usually allegorised in ghost stories through conferring human agency onto physical objects that become animated, like the organ playing in the hall of the haunted mansion in Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Nurse's Tale," the eponymous door in Charlotte Riddell's "The Open Door," the chess set in Richard Marsh's story or the movements and potterings in Master Tim's room in Blackwood's "The Other Wing." Thus, the two master tropes of ghost stories, prosopopoeia (with all its Paul de Manian ballast) and chiasmus are in fact closely interrelated, both of them indicating the fundamental incertitude concerning animation and agency and the dysfunctioning of the dialectical self-constitution of subjectivity.

This, however, is still not the most radical aspect of how ghosts might allegorise interaction with the past. If the effect of the ghost, as Davis suggests, can be defined as "an imposing command that acquires the force of law," and if the haunted subject is "utterly in the grip of a law which is totally unintelligible" to it (90), we might be reminded of Slavoj Žižek's Lacanian speculations about the irrational and unintelligible character of the law, more precisely, of his suggestion that we obey the law not because we rationally see that it is right, but because of an internalised awe of its commanding, irrational core (*Ticklish Subject* 320).

In this sense, the ghost is not an anomaly but the very basis (the spectral excess or remainder) of the law. In *Totem and Taboo*, Freud remarks that the "dead father became stronger than the living one had been" (278). The symbol is perhaps the murder of the thing, as Lacan so famously states, but after this "murder" there is always a remainder. If the symbol (and the symbolic) is predicated on the prevelence of the spirit (*Geist*) over physical reality, the ghost (*Gespenst*) signals the silent insistence, the indelible trace of the murdered physical world that always inhabits the symbolic. In "Thurnley Abbey," for instance, the location and its walled-in nun (the most likely identity of the ghost) are a perfect embodiment of this configuration.[18] The Abbey is a disused, derelict place of religion, of the spirit, and its resident ghost (if it is indeed the ghost of the nun) is stronger now than she was in her life; it is the ghost of a spirituality (the ghost of the spirit) that has become displaced, unhinged, and, for the same reason, it is also the abject, obscene appearance of materiality. The ghost's materiality proves literally indestructible in the startling scene of Colvin's confrontation with it, and the scar left on Colvin's hand is a very material counterpart of the trauma he has suffered. If we see the ghost as abject

matter (the abjected materiality that haunts its alleged spiritual transcendence), the fact that "ghost" and "yeast" have a common root (both coming from a Greek word meaning "ferment," "boil") begins to make sense. Without making too much of this point, one could suggest that the ghost of Thurnley Abbey might represent the abject, pulsating materiality which Lacan calls drive and lamella, the life that is lived in my body but not by me, that always remains outside the symbolic (in fact, the symbolic is the very exclusion of this life).[19]

This line of thought returns us to the crucial difference between the ghosts—and ghost stories—that are referential, referring to something in the past, and the spectral apparitions that mean nothing apart from the silent declaration of their own presence, the ghosts that simply announce that haunting is taking place instead of communicating any particular content, and which cannot be laid to rest by discovering their secret or obeying their command. The ghost of Thurnley Abbey, which belongs to this second category, simply will not disappear, because it is unlike the ghosts in the stories of Charlotte Riddell, where the settling of the account is like the solution of the crime and entails the disappearance of the ghost that is laid to rest once and for all. In Riddell, ghosts are token spectres whose effect is displaced onto a mystery, resembling the ghosts and other undead figures mentioned by Žižek that "signal the unsettled (symbolic) accounts, as such" and "disappear the moment these accounts are settled by way of symbolisation" (*Metastases* 193). In order for such a solution to take place, there has to be a referential aspect to the ghost, a content that reinscribes it into the symbolic order. In "Thurnley Abbey" or Blackwood's "The Empty House," however, the appearance of the ghost is more radical, inasmuch as it "bears witness to the virtual, fictional character of the symbolic order as such, to the fact that this order exists on credit'" (193). Thus, the ghosts in Riddell's stories are like breaches in the symbolic (like a crime) that can be healed, while the spectre in "Thurnley Abbey" announces the breach that is the condition of the symbolic.

> Fiction is a symbolic formation that determines the structure of what we experience as reality, whereas spectres belong to the Real; their appearance is the price we pay for the gap that forever separates reality from the Real, for the fictional character of Reality. In short, there is no spirit (mind, reason, etc.) without spirits (ghosts, revenants, living dead), no pure, rational, self-transparent spirituality without the accompanying strain of an obscene, uncanny, spectral pseudo-materiality. (194)

The ghost, for Žižek, "fills up the hole of the real…; what the spectre conceals is not reality but its 'primordially repressed' the irrepresentable x on whose 'repression' reality is founded," and "this real (the part of reality that remains non-symbolized) returns in the guise of spectral apparitions" (*Spectre* 74).[20] The ghost can be seen as the representative of the real inasmuch as it represents no beyond, no transcendental system or dimension[21]; it is, as Joan Copjec suggests, an internal limit to the symbolic (96), indicating that there is nothing outside it.

In its function vis-a-vis the symbolic, the "traditional" Victorian ghost of Riddell's stories is not unlike Lacan's concept of fantasy, at least as it is interpreted by Žižek: a monstrous and appalling figure that, however, ultimately suggests and embodies meaning (as meaningfulness), the promise that the experience (my experience) is meaningful, only this meaning(fulness), shrouded in mystery, is a terrible secret. Fantasy is the staging of the primordial loss that constitutes desire, the emergence of the Law (*Plague* 32–33). In this sense, the quasi-personhood of the ghost is like the personification of the loss that establishes the subject and its world, placing the structural loss into the past, and therefore as something that can return, haunt the subject, remindig it of its contingency.

Yet, even this secret is less terrible than its lack, the lack which it conceals. The most terrible ghost is the one that has no secret. Žižek suggests that the fantasy object is "merely filling out a lack, a void in the Other: there is nothing 'behind' the fantasy, its function is simply a construction whose function is to hide the void" (*Sublime* 133 and see also 169). The ghost in *Thurnley Abbey* and those several other stories, however, are like hallucinations, marking the sudden irruption of the Real rather than being screen fantasies.

Ghosts with secrets, therefore, can be seen as sites of memory in the full sense that is given to the concept by Nora, as localised and personified condensations that mark absence as the absence or loss *of something*. Ghosts are indeed remainders, in the sense of being the last remainders or traces of meaning. In Anne Michaels's trauma novel *Fugitive Pieces*, the narrator recalls the site of a Greek village the inhabitants of which were exterminated by the nazis. He recalls "a place so empty it was not even haunted" (61). This indicates the fundamental function of haunting as a site of memory: ghosts indicate that there used to be life in the haunted location, that there *is* a secret, a mystery that can be unravelled. "More terrifying than the return of ghosts"—claims Žižek—"may be the prospect that there is nothing to return, no survival, no resurrection, and no commanding voice from beyond the grave" (Qtd in Davis 91).

Ghosts without any message or secret, ghosts that simply proclaim the fact of haunting, may be seen as allegories of this process of creating *lieux de mémoire* to make up for or cover over a lack. One may conclude these speculations with the naive question of what it is that is really frightening about ghosts. Is the most frightening kind the personal ghost, the ghost-for-me, which makes the ghost a kind of existential and ethical task for the haunted person?[22] Such would be the ghosts in Henry James's ghost stories, spectres that are not seen by everybody; in fact, to see a ghost in James is a privilege, and those who miss it are clearly missing something much vaster (most obviously, perhaps, in "The Friends of Friends").[23] Or is the most frightening kind the ghost that simply goes about its business, automatically repeating the same movements over and over again, irrespective of its audience, ignoring the subject (who is not haunted, who is not *even* haunted), like a stage play that keeps mechanically replaying itself no matter what? One senses that the more terrifying ghosts are those with no (personal) message, those that look through us or, even worse, walk through us, passing through the body of the observers in an absolute refusal of any intersubjectivity, denying the very anthropomorphic or

person-like qualities that are conferred upon them by their ghost status. These ghosts have nothing to say. Or they do have *nothing* to say. They are not sites of memory but allegories of sites of memory, exposing *lieux de mémoire* as tropes.

### Notes

[1] Freud makes a fine distinction in a very similar vein (*The Uncanny* 339–76, 362–65).

[2] For excellent and detailed accounts, see David Farrell Krell , 104–62, and Richard Terdiman, 240–342.

[3] For an accessible Freudian account of symptoms, see S. Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, 412–22.

[4] For accounts of the phenomenological approach to memory see especially Edward S. Casey,  Paul Ricoeur, , Barbara de Concini, 42–47, and Krell, 93–104.

[5] After all, Proust's epiphanic Madeleine scene is, in its mechanism, very much like the intrusion or irruption of a traumatic memory that tears the subject out of the present. As Terdiman remarks, Proust and Freud "both represent that the truest of our memories are the ones we cannot recall" (212).

[6] The ghostly or phantasmatic nature of memory is even more emphatic when Bergson describes the effort to recall something learnt by heart: when we recite a text, for instance, we are always aware of the errors we make, "as though from the obscure depths of consciousness we received a sort of warning. Concentrate your mind on that sensation, and you will feel that the complete image is there, but evanescent, a phantasm that disappears just at the moment when motor activity tries to fix its outline" (Bergson  100).

[7] Some of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's claims anticipate Derrida's account of the spectrality of the present: "My hold on the past and the future is precarious, and my possession of my own time is always postponed until a stage when I may fully understand it, yet this stage can never be reached, since it would be one more moment, bounded by the horizon of its future, and requiring in turn further developments in order to be understood" (346.). "I am never quite at one with myself" (347).

[8] Thus, Colin Davis describes only one aspect of Sartrean hauntology when he says that the Sartrean subject "is also haunted in a more literal sense: it is surrounded by the dead, constantly obliged to contend with them, with their past actions, and with their influence on the living present" (43).

[9] Cf. Davis's chapter on the metaphor of the ghost in Holocaust narratives (93–110).

[10] The same process has also been going on in recent postcolonial and postmodern literature where ghosts have made a spectacular comeback, leaving behind the genre of ghost fiction and featuring in dozens of novels, from *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *Beloved* and *Midnight's Children* to Hilary Mantel's *Beyond Black* or Toby Litt's *Ghost Story*.

[11] The classic deconstructive discussion of Hegel's *Erinnerung* and *Gedächtnis* as well of its relevance to the 'invention' of aesthetics is, of course, Paul de Man's "Sign and Symbol in Hegel's Aesthetics" (91–104). See also Krell (205–39).

[12] Edward Said's early poststructuralist book, *Beginnings*, is pecisely about the consequences of this haunting or harassment for literary theory.

[13] Of the many relevant instances of the archaeological metaphor in Freud's oeuvre, see, for instance, *The Etiology of Hysteria* (189), and *Delusions and Dreams*. (33–118). On Freud's use of the arhcaeological metaphor, cf. Sabine Hake, "*Saxa Loquuntur*: Freud's Archaeology of the Text," *boundary* 2, 20:1 (1993): 146–73.

[14] In Gordon's system, which was conceived in the spirit if Horkheimer and Adorno, haunting is a whole structure of feeling (in Raymond Williams's sense), and is primarily a social figure ("the figure of the social" as such inasmuch as it refers to those social and cultural residues that determine our acts withous us being conscious of them. That is why Gordon, is his polemical argument, defines the ghost as "a crucible for political mediation and historical memory" (18). Mediation, in Gordon's usage, refers to "processes that link an institution and an individual, a social structure and a subject, a history and a biography" (19).

[15] For the workings of this mechanism, see, for instance, Charlotte Riddell, "The Uninhabited House," "The Open Door," "The Old House in Vauxhall Walk," all in Riddell. *The Night Shivers*. It has to be said, however, that the trauma of having been haunted leaves its indelible mark on the protagonist in several stories.

[16] For Derrida, says Davis, "the spectre is also a figure of the other, of the strange and the stranger, of that which in me is other than myself and that which outside me is more than I can know" (76).

[17] The importance of agency is noted even in otherwise traditional stories, such as Riddell's "The Open Door": "there seemed no human agency to count for [the door's] persistent opening" (57–58).

[18] Abbeys are recurrent sites of haunting in ghost stories. Due to the memory of the destruction of monasteries and abbeys, the element of—historical, collective—disavowal is present in abbey ruins.

[19] M. R. James's story "The Treasure of Abbot Thomas" dramatises this aspect of the ghost, also evoking the degraded spirituality indicated by the fact that the ghost is associated with an abbot. The obscene stain disfiguring the law is staged in Peter Sellars's production of *Don Giovanni*, in which the statue of the Commendatore, the stone guest is represented as a greenish, putrifying body.

[20] See also *They Know Not* (xvii). One could also recall the Lacanian idea, elaborated by Žižek, of two deaths and the spectral creatures between symbolic and physical death. Cf. Žižek, *Plague* (89).

[21] That is why the supernatural stories of Lovecraft or some of the stories of Arthur Machen cannot be called ghost stories: in them, the supernatural creatures usually intimate the existence of a world beyond our own.

[22] This probably happens anyway: if someone sees a ghost, that ghost necessarily becomes a ghost-for-her, an ethical appeal and imperative that must be attended to. The ghost, in this sense, is precisely that aspect of the world that makes it something-for-me, a personal appeal or imperative.

[23] Henry James's ghosts are like supplements, priduced by the dynamic of an intersubjective situation. Conversely, one could say that the fact that a ghost appears in a situation indicates that it is in fact the very condition of the upsurge of the situation.

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# The Literary Heritage in Virginia Woolf's *Between The Acts:* A Metatext of Cultural Memory

**Nóra Séllei**

*B*etween the Acts is the last novel by Virginia Woolf, who is regarded as the most significant (and for a long time token) female modernist, whose *oeuvre* was mostly considered in the light of modernist innovative techniques, which meant that her modernist trilogy: *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1928) and *The Waves* (1931) took centre stage in the academic discussion of her works. In recent decades, however, we can see a shift in the perspective of how her texts are viewed, and the result is that we can discover an extension of the *ouevre*, the focus gradually moving from the middle (high modernist) period of the 1920s in the direction of the early texts in the second half of the 1910s and the late phase in the 1930s. There is a shift not only in period, but also in terms of what kind of texts are interpreted: one can also notice a move from the novels to other genres (essays, autobiography, diary and letters), and, at the same time, one can observe a widening perspective of how her texts are read. From the original, almost exclusive focus on her technical innovations, there is a growing interest in the thematic concerns of her texts. These scholarly moves re-write the high modernist Woolf whose basic interest for literary scholars was her narrative technique. The emerging new "Woolf" is far removed from the previous image of the disembodied, aetherial being that "she" was often made out to be, and is replaced by a more embodied and political creature, whose interest reaches far beyond the technical aspects of high modernism, and rather asks questions about the relationship between the (gendered) subject and power, subjectivity and cultural discourses, and cultural discursivity in general.

In my reading, *Between the Acts*, Virginia Woolf's swan song is seen as the epitome of this shift in interpreting Woolf inasmuch as the text is deeply implicated in questions pertaining to the function of culture, cultural memory and the traumas that canonical texts veil and hide, creating an apparently seamless texture (textuality) that also feeds into the sense of Englishness, or, to borrow Benedict Anderson's phrase, "nation-ness" (4). While evoking the cultural-literary history of several hundred years, *Between the Acts* reflects upon how this portion of the canon functions in terms of inclusions and exclusions, on how it creates the subjectivity of the reader (or, in this case, the fictitious viewer); this self-reflexive and critical re-reading also asks questions about remembering and re-membering (that is how someone can become a member of a community or nation as a result of remembering and cultural reflection), while, at the same time, addresses the

issue of what is hidden in the gaps of the apparently seamless narratives of the disourse of the nation as embodied in the "sacred" texts of the canonised literary heritage, that is, what is hidden between the acts of legitimised and canonised discourse and modes of remembering. In this way, *Between the Acts* can be read as a metatext of cultural memory inasmuch as it enacts and, by revealing traumatic gaps, problematises and reflects upon the process of remembering as implicated in the process of conferring subjectivity both on individuals and on communities.

The question becomes what are the beasic features of the text, both on the structural and the plot level that provide the basis for this reading. *Between the Acts* follows the one-day plot (and time) structure of some Woolfian texts as established in *Mrs Dalloway* (and in that respect also reflects on Woolf's own literary *oeuvre* and on modernist fiction in general), and uses this one-day framework for presenting a village community preparing for, and participating in, an annual village festivity: a village pageant that presents various scenes from (literary) history, enacted by the villagers. The pageant is set in June 1939, the last summer before World War II, but the text was actually written during the war, which—knowing the Woolfs' special position in the war[1]—is an apparently external, biographical, but meaningful detail, leaking into the interpretation of the text because at an abstract level the text seems to be asking how dominant discourses of culture (like the canonised literary texts) are implicated in the discourses of power that bring about, among others, states and power structures whose implied agenda is homogenisation. Furthermore, what also seems to be at stake in the text is the question of how we remember canonised and canonising texts, and how, we interpret them by remembering them. In this sense, *Between the Acts* enacts the problematisation of hermeneutics. This cultural-political subtext is also supported by the plot element in the text that although this village pageant takes place in June (which is traditionally the month of high society events in England), the actual ritual (or rather what some of the viewers expect and finally miss: the closing Grand Ensemble under the Union Jack, representing the unity of the nation) resembles another annual feast, that of Empire Day, which was held in May in the first half of the century, the tradition just phasing out in the 1940s.

Apart from the one-day frame, the structure of the embedded pageant is also important: it enacts scenes from literary history, going back to the middle ages, focussing on seminal periods like Chaucer's age and those of the three Queens: Queen Elizabeth I, Queen Anne and Queen Victoria, concluding in a scene located in the present. The play is directed by Miss La Trobe, whose name suggests her being an outsider, and thus having a more distanced perspective on this canonised textual body of English culture. She dramatically rewrites the genres of these periods, exposing their undersides and their self-contradictory features, and holds them up to the audience as mirrors, parts of a mirror to look into and perceive themselves from a different angle, to shock them into a realisation of what traumas and hidden subtexts may be veiled by the grand narratives of the nation. The text of the pageant is actually included in the novel (performing sometimes a hilarious parody of various styles), and what makes the internal structure even more complex is that the novel also includes the responses of the various members of the audience to this

weird, sometimes even grotesque pageant, and these comments show us, the novel's readers, the process of how, as a result of the play's interpellational power, the members of the audience partly change, re-configure their own subjectivitiy, or, as an opposite move, utterly resist the provocation into (re-)thinking the process of remembering or re-membering, that is, re-creating their own subjectivity as a member of the community of the nation as brought about by the dominant literary discourses.

This communal—and also political—intention and aspect of the novel is reinforced by several utterances by Woolf in the period. While planning to write *Between the Acts*, Woolf made several comments relevant to this focus on the community. She consciously articulated the shift from the individual to the community, from focusing on epiphanic moments of the individual (as she did in her high modernist texts) to an epiphanic (if not cathartic) moment of the community. She comments in her diary: "'I' rejected, 'we' substituted" (349), which may be understood as the shift from the individual consciousness in her high modernist novels, particularly *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, to what we can see in *Between the Acts*: the characters appearing much more embraced by, and as a part of, the community and created by cultural discourses rather than as separate individuals. This relationship, however, does not mean that the individuals are fully subsumed under the umbrella of the community, quite the contrary: the community, whereas it looks whole and unified, is rather made up of fragments, and is continuously in the making: "'[w]e' … composed of many different things … we all life, all art, all waifs and strays—a rambling capricious but somehow unified whole—the present state of mind?" (*Diary* 349).

In addition to the shift from the individual to the collective, one can discern another, perhaps correlative aspect that is characteristic of the "Woolf" of the late thirties: her conscious political statements and the development of her political thinking in general, which is in sharp contrast to the aetherial introvert she is often made out to be on the basis of her modernist trilogy. Her major essay *Three Guineas* (1938) articulates her response to the growing threat of fascism and how it is tied up with hierarchical social structures in general, and with patriarchy in particular. A shorter essay, "The Leaning Tower" (given as a talk in 1940, and published in the same year; that is, while writing *Between the Acts*) focusses on the political implicatedness of writing, and makes the link between the two inevitable, especially in an age when politics is an all-encompassing presence. As she claims, in the 1930s "[t]he books were written under the influence of change, under the threat of war" ("Tower" 170) so much so that "in 1930 it was impossible … not to be interested in politics" (172), which in turn reflects back upon the mode of the discursive functioning of literature. It is from this perspective that the Woolfian critical investigation of the canonised literary heritage, as carried out by the text of *Between the Acts,* can be analysed: by considering literature as one of the discourses of culture that is not free from politics, not free from vested interests, and particularly not free from the impact of creating a political and politicised community.

Woolf's pageant in *Between the Acts* functions as a dominant discourse of creating a community, and a specific one at that since it can be defined with what Jan Assmann

calls "… a connective structure of common knowledge and self-image, which, on the one hand, relies on a connection of shared rules and values, on the other, on the memories of a jointly inhabited past."[2] As Assmann goes on to argue, "[t]he basic principle of every connective structure is repetition," and is related to celebration made up of recognisable patterns infinitely serialised, bringing about ritual coherence (17).[3] Cultural memory, however, can assume another form as well: representation, or representational memory, which comes about as a result of the interpretation of tradition. As Assmann pointedly claims, "the place of liturgy is taken over by hermeneutics" (17–18).[4] All this is not independent of how societies create their self-images and identity over generations: it is the culture of memory that brings about social identity (18).[5] In this way, cultural memory is always institutionalised and artificial, and creates both collective identity and political imaginary (cf. 24, 25).

As Assmann argues, "[t]he culture of memory relies to a great extent (if not exclusively) on the forms of our relation to the past. Thus, the past emerges"—this is Assmann's thesis—"as a result of our engagement with the past" (31).[6] This engagement manifests itself, among others, in various forms of collective and institutionalised mnemotechniques, such as rites and rituals (52–53). Collective mnemotechnique—or, in Proust's words: remembrance of things past—is not an objective process because "in cultural memory the factual past is transformed into a remembered one, that is, into myth" (52).[7] This transformation is a hermeneutic process; in Assmann's formulation, "only a *meaningful* past will be remembered, and only a *remembered* past will be meaningful. Remembering is an act of semiotisation. This is valid even today, no matter how much the concept of attribution of meaning (and this is what semiotisation means) has been discredited in relation to history" (77).[8] In this way, the historical past can only be considered as the *internalisation* of the historical process, or the process of historisation, the "semiotisation of history," which replaces "the semiotisation of the cosmos" (M. Eliade paraphrased by Assmann).[9] The harmony of the cosmos, in turn, is signified, or rather produced, by the impeccable performance of rituals based on a certain shared knowledge, on a consensus of/in terms, that is, on a terminological coherence. It is via repetition and interpretation that cultural coherence is created. As explained by Assmann, repetition compulsion guarantees a certain "ritual coherence from which societies can free themselves by a transition into textual coherence" (89).[10] Both ritual and textual coherence produce a certain order with the help of hermeneutics which is both normative and formative in terms of national/communal identity, but whereas ritual coherence excludes any variation or deviation from the prescribed process of ceremonial communication, textual coherence is based *not* on the *structural necessity* of repetition, but on *interpretation*, on *innovation*, and, as Assmann claims, "innovation would mean forgetting (98),"[11] and, paradoxically, this innovation is related to the emergence of writing.

At this point, a gap opens in the seamlessness of coherence at two levels. First of all, "there emerged a literature that developed the principles of variety and innovation, and as such served as a means for the systematic evolution of ideas and for the revolution of knowledge" (99).[12] This opening gap creates a position from which to pose questions

concerning communal identity; furthermore, as a second step of moving away from the naturalisation of inherited and cyclically, ritually repeated knowledge, "the explicit and thematisable knowledge will be, *ipso facto*, modifiable and can be exposed to critique" (148).[13] This is a meta-level of cultural reflection, more precisely, the level of self-reflexivity of cultural formations, which, in turn, is the creator of cultural plurality and cultural complexity in the form of acculturation, which also means the transition from one culture to another (148).

It is in this sense that I regard Woolf's *Between the Acts* as a parable or metatext of cultural memory inasmuch as the annually enacted (*repeated*) pageant functions as a connective structure, creating ritual cohesion. In this respect, it might be also crucial that the goal of this year's event is to raise funds for lighting the church steeple: that is, to make this micro-community's ritual and spiritual centre visible all the time and to put it into focus at the metaphorical level. The pageant is supposed to create a sense of homeliness, a comfort zone, a cultural space that can be taken for granted, and as such can be considered as the confirmation and re-inscription of what everyone in the community "knows." This is how the audience prepare for and respond to the play, particularly at the beginning: expecting it to be an enactment of cultural memory as ritual cohesion, in a more or less unchanged form, ranging from the evocation of the Middle Ages (or even of primeval times) to the present. This mediated enactment of cultural memory, however, may also be read as individual memory, presenting and problematising the way how the reading and remembering of cultural scripts create the indivudual's subjectivity. The audience take their seats foreshadowing a play hoping that it will also confirm their national and cultural identity, but what they find does not necessarily meet their expectations. Quite the contrary, in my reading the text may be understood not simply as the repetition, but as an interpretation of the ritual, and thus as a hermeneutic process that destabilises this homeliness, by interrogating the political implications of the dominant cultural and literary heritage, and exposes its hidden agenda and implicatedness in discourses of hierarchical power structures. Literature, thus, emerges in the text not as a separate aesthetic sphere, but as a mode of power, interpellating the subject.

Critics, however, tend to be taken in by the myth of the pleasant countryside (the setting of this novel, and, at the same time, the location of "true" Englishness) and by the original meaning of the pageant, and seem to disregard the fissures in the performance and the ruptures brought about in the audience as subjects (in this case literally interpellated by the play). Patrick Parrinder, in his seminal monograph on *Nation and the Novel* makes the claim that in *Between the Acts* Woolf "makes her peace with historical writing" (309) and affirmatively quotes a critic who thinks the text shows Woolf's "'deep and perhaps helpless love of England'" (310). As Parrinder further argues, "[t]he landscape seen from the aeroplane, the annual pageant (acted by villagers but watched by the local gentry), and the building of the cesspool all point to one thing: the progressive theory of English history" (310).

A similar argument is made by Joshua Esty, in whose view in the form of the revival of the pageant play in the 1930s "'imperialist nostalgia' came home to roost, bringing

with it new ethnographic techniques for generating romances of 'the English people,' of the countryside, of national character." He considers it "[a] neotraditional genre," which in his interpretation "referred almost inevitably to rural and antiquarian ideals of Englishness. At a time when the masses were asserting themselves on both the literary and political stages of Europe, pageantry was refitted to serve as the genre of insular and interclass harmony" (246). He further argues that the function of the pageant play creates, even if unaware, a link to Assmann's point about connective structure inasmuch as its function was "to promote and express just enough collective spirit to bind people together," and in this move a not innegligable element was that "modernist appropriations of pageantry were, in this sense, motivated by a deeply antiquarian impulse to recover the primal outdoor scene of English literature" (247). In this, he sees a general rendency typical of major modernist writers like Eliot, Forster, and Woolf, who,

> [a]s cosmopolitan intellectuals of the 1920s, … remained liable to eschew and even attack the false coherence of English traditions. However, faced with the cultural isolation of the 1930s—a condition precipitated by both continental politics and imperial decline—they began seeking acceptable versions of national art. The pageant-play seemed to offer a kind of spontaneous folk authenticity. (250)

These readings both by Parrinder and Esty turn *Between the Acts* (and the English pageant play as re-used in the 1930s *per se*) into a genre that creates an unconditionally bucolic, idyllic (and as such perhaps never existing) world, and thus evokes the myth of the historical and cultural innocence of rural England, a site of true Englishness as opposed to urban, metropolitan Britishness. In this sense, they locate the text in a discourse that Aleida Assmann defines as both a policy of forgetting and an old memory policy based on pride. In my reading, however, the text rather reveals itself—using Aleida Assmann's term again—as an example of a new memory policy based on responsibility (28), which is possible as a result of opening up and reinterpreting "sacred," or canonised, mythical texts, and exposing their underlying agenda to scrutiny. This is exactly what *Between the Acts* does with its multiple layers of self-reflexivity. The text functions as a Chinese box of reflections: the pageant play itself reflects upon both the literary and historical heritage in general, and the potential meanings of the pageant play in particular by re-writing, re-directing and re-enacting it; the text also reflects upon the tradition of Empire Day and on communal fund-raising events; the audience of the pageant play in the novel reflect upon the play itself and upon their self-positioning that comes about as a result of being interpellated by the text; the preparations for, and the post-performance remarks on, the performance also develop various attitudes in the characters towards the literary and cultural heritage; the interpreters reflect upon the text in its complexity, and, of course, upon each other's readings; and, finally, the third-person narrator of the text keeps making critical and reflexive comments on all this, which creates a distance from the narrated fictional world.

These multiple layers, at the same time, are not in an inevitably harmonious relationship with each other, quite the contrary: the various layers open up gaps and fissures in what is read by Esty and Parrinder as the innocent and neo-traditional seamlessness of the text. This loss of innocence is metaphorised by the first sentences of the text, which, conspicuously, introduce a metaphor that plays upon various layers of the past, and how these layers can be exposed and made visible from certain perspectives:

> It was a summer's night and they were talking, in the big room with the windows open to the garden, about the cesspool. … The old man in the arm-chair—Mr. Oliver, of the Indian Civil Service, retired—said that the site they had chosen for the cesspool was, if he had heard aright, on the Roman road. From an aeroplane, he said, you could still see, plainly marked, the scars made by the Britons; by the Romans; by the Elizabethan manor house; and by the plough, when they ploughed the hill to grow wheat in the Napoleonic wars. (5)

The first sentence starts off with the most harmonious and bucolic image of the gentle society sitting in their country mansion on a summer night, which is almost violently (but at the same time nonchalantly, and thus "naturally") interrupted by the introduction of the topic of the cesspool, the repository of whatever is the abject residue of our "natural" existence and functioning, a metaphor for everything the civilised subjects reject and do not want to incorporate into their subjectivity.

Ironically, however, the repository of the cesspool will be built on a historic site that bears the traces, like a palimpsest, of the *scars* of several historical ages. As a result of the conjunctive enumeration, apparently different periods are brought into and under the same discourse: the Roman period, when Great Britain was subjected to Roman rule, the Elizabethan manor house, which seems to refer to the emerging empire, and thus the greatness of the nation, and to the successful national effort to keep Napoleon away while providing food both for the home country and for those fighting. On a closer scrutiny, however, one can discover a common element in the three examples because all of them are implicated in a visible way in the discourse of empire, of power, of imperial power— and for that reason all of them cause wounds that, even if they heal, leave indelible *scars* behind that seem to be seamlessly covered (up) by the healing power of time and nature, but can certainly be seen from a new perspective, from a distance above that is provided by an airplane. From this perspective, the newly built cesspool can be understood as only making visible what is (has been) hidden by centuries of the greatness of the discourse of imperial power: the rejected abject, the underside of the (British) empire that cannot be distanced and kept away from the bucolic idyll of the countryside. Quite the contrary, it can only be hidden temporarily, but that does not mean that—metaphorically speaking— the scars and the abject are not deeply rooted in the myth of the idyll of the pleasant (and innocent) countryside, the repository of "true Englishness."

This opening can be read as a *mise-en abyme* of the text as it metaphorises what is—in my reading—the basic move of *Between the Acts*: the opening up of the various layers of

(literary) history as canonised (and as such: great) heritage, and showing how it is implicated in the disourses of power, which is not without its abject residue, and to show that this discourse of greatness inevitably bears the signs of trauma—the scars—on itself, and even marks the subjects of (literary) history with these scars on every occasion they encounter their own historical and national past. It is not by chance that old Mr. Oliver Bartholomew, who actually contributed to the making of the empire by working as a civil servant in India, makes this crucial, and uncannily self-reflexive comment: "'Our part … is to be the audience. And a very important part too'" (37). Indeed, the text enacts the process of how the audience as subjects of (literary) history are subjected to, and respond to, the pageant, which brings to the surface the content of the historical "cesspool," and in this sense functions as the Freudian uncanny as the audience will be able to have a glimpse of what "ought to have remained secret and hidden, but has come to light" (Freud 345). Not surprisingly, the audience are sitting uneasily, what is more, enacting the uneasy ambiguity brought about by the fact that individuals have come together in the form of an apparently *ad hoc* community, the audience: "There was nothing for the audience to do. … Their minds and bodies were too close, yet not close enough. We aren't free, each one of them felt separately, to feel or think separately" (41). This audience of random individuals hurled together for the village performance, however, will turn out to be a symbolical community enacting the drama of the construction of subjectivity as a result of cultural discourses: "But none speaks with a single voice. None with a voice free from the old vibrations" (94). The result, both at the level of individual and communal audience and at the level of cultural texts, is "orts, scraps and fragments" (111): the disintegration of wholeness, while, at the same time, the performance and the pageant themselves can be understood as desperate attempts to present the wholeness of the community.

For this reason, it is more than telling that even the performance resists definitions and completeness. Its boundaries are unstable, the audience cannot even identify when it starts, if it has started yet, and whether what they hear is still the prologue or the play itself. To make the uncertainty about what the audience are expected to relate to, and as such the basis of reference, the first character on stage, enacting the allegorical role of "England" in Chaucer's age, comes on the scene as a little girl—and forgets her lines (cf. 48). Apart from being a source of the comic effect of the performance and of the text, this element can be understood as a major disturbance in the plot*line* of the fiction of what is "England," or what can be found in the memory of "England" (and such, in its past): it symbolises the lack of origins in the production of the imagined community of the nation. This scene, thus, is about the disturbances of the mnemotechniques of culture, and raises questions about the very performance which, on the basis of remembering, is supposed to create the continuity of the past and the present.[14]

There are various kinds of ruptures in the communication between the actors and the audience. Apart from "England" forgetting her lines, the voice of the villagers playing the role of the Canterbury pilgrims and the peasants in the fields does not reach the audience; the Prologue is interrupted by several latecomers pulling up their chairs. One of them even asks the question that may be extended to the whole pageant and its viewing:

"What's it all about?" (Woolf 50) because—quite similarly to "England" forgetting her lines due to the unusual situation—the audience are also dislocated from the familiar modes of discourse, and whereas they cannot find their places and themselves in this defamiliarised fictional world, paradoxically, they become more and more involved in it, and are compelled to re-position themselves as a result of this iconoclastic performance.

The periods chosen for the performance are crucial. Out of the three central periods, the Elizabethan age may be understood as the establishing moment of English modernity. Queen Elizabeth also suffers from a memory problem and forgets her lines, too, while the wind, tugging at her head dress, turns her into a grotesque figure whose dress is also pulled every now and then by the "village idiot," a late descendent of the Fool of Shakespearean plays, who is quite threatening in his subversiveness and looming presence all through the play: "Suppose he suddenly did something dreadful" (55). The audience are gradually but more and more visibly losing their ground. They feel they have to rely more and more on the programme—on the prescribed script—for the most basic interpretation of what they are part of, they need concepts to give them unambiguous directions in the chronology, and are making desperate attempts at interpreting the scenes with their own familiar, and as such outworn, terms.

The "old vibrations" permeate not only the text of the pageant but also the audience. The boundaries between the stage and the audience become blurred, what is said on the stage will seep into the minds of the audience, create some associations, then appear on the stage again, or an earlier scene is repeated in a new context in the mind of someone in the audience. This is why the "I" loses track of the lines: not only "England" and Queen Elizabeth, but others as well. The lines, the various scripts contradict each other, and what looks a glorious victory from one perspective is "mad music" (94) from another, so more and more of the audience feel that "… manacled to a rock he was, and forced passively to behold indescribable horror" (38). The supposed Assmannian "connective structure" rather divides than connects, and individuals are compelled to revise their own familial memories, which, at the same time are cultural memories of the Victorian age among others, but the revision of these memories interpellate the subjectivity of the viewers as well: "Why [Mrs Lynn Jones] did not know, yet somehow she felt that a sneer had been aimed at her father; therefore, at herself" (98).

In this general destabilisation it is not surprising to find that several viewers insist more and more desperately on the fragments of cultural texts that seem to provide a relatively safe framework for the "I." The residue of these "old vibrations," also implying forced and imposed order, hark back in this passage, too:

> "Why leave out the British army? What's history without the Army, eh?" he mused. Inclining his head, Mrs. Mayhew protested after all one mustn't ask too much. Besides, very likely, there would be a Grand Ensemble, round the Union Jack, to end with. Meanwhile, there was the view. They looked at the view. (94)

Partly parallel with the Mayhews, partly in opposition with them, Mrs. Lynn Jones and Etty Springett start restructuring their own past, their memory of their past, by creating an alternative history in the form of the typically Woolfian "lives of the obscure." This narrative does not consist in victorious battles but of the most typical paraphernalia of femininity, such as crinolines and the multiple layers of petticoats worn by women in the Victorian era. These pieces of clothing, however, here do not function as parts of fashion, but as first elements in the narrative of the discursive and material history of the female body. The question asked is not how pretty but how "unhygienic" these pieces of clothing were, and as such, talking about clothes also serves as a pretense to disuss the changes in the conditions of the every-day life, including references to the famously big Victorian families (95).

Because of the diverse responses to the performance, the audience get into the state of fragmentation and dispersal more and more emphatically, the text repeating the phrase several times: "Dispersed are we." They feel uneasy either because they cannot identify with how the pageant creates their idetity to such an extent that they totally disregard what is going on (like the Mayhews), or because the pageant appeals to them so much that they want to give individual responses to it by restructuring their subjectivity (like Mrs Jones), or because they struggle to save at least the residue of their identity by keeping away the mass of textual-discursive resonances from themselves (like Giles Oliver). Yet, irrespective of the response strategy the choose, they cannot remove themselves from under the spell of the performance, they are interpellated, and at the same time re-written, by the texts, by the enacted rites of cultural memory, and to some extent they all experience the subversive implications of the performance directed by Miss La Trobe: "The audience seated themselves, hastily, guiltily" (96).

Characteristically of the multiplicity of viewpoints offered by the text, irony does not work from the perspective of the audience, which is indicative of the fact that they no longer share the same epistemological basis with each other, let alone with the (director of the) performance. They just cannot get the point, cannot understand irony, they are not even sure if what they see should be understood ironically. Sighs like this: "How difficult to come to any conclusion!" are becoming more and more numerous, and they start complaining that the pageant does not offer clear moral lessons, and they blame this "failure," as the easiest solution, on the amateurism of the pageant: they "liked to leave a theatre knowing exactly what was meant. Of course this was only a village play" (98).

Total dispersal, however, ensues in the finale, which is very different from how the Mayhews imagine the Grand Ensemble under the Union Jack, full of pathos. Instead of the latter, what they become a part of, and subjected to, is a ten-minute experiment. The stage becomes empty, whereas the audience remain seated: "All their nerves were on edge. They sat exposed. … They were neiher one thing nor the other; neither Victorians nor themselves. They were suspended, without being, in limbo" (106). At this moment there is a radical change in the relation between the viewer and the viewed one, or gazer and the gazed one, making more obvious that even the audience is "directed" by Miss La Trobe via the (re-)construction of their cultural memory, and, as a result, their subjectivity,

by exposing them to the rewriting (and fragmentation) of historical and cultural grand narratives in the weird mirror of the performance, and ominously indicated in the programme as "ourselves" (106).

To make this logic of the performance even more decipherable, in the closing scene what is enacted is the Shakespearean metaphor of the theatre: the mirror held up to nature. Here, however, it is far from being a dignified mirror. Suddenly grotesque creatures with grotesque movements appear on the stage, and they hold up fragments of reflexive surfaces (like tin cans, old jars, cheval glass and mirrors) for the audience to look into, who wish to hide from their own self-image as reflected by these "mirrors," or, in a more abstract sense, by the invoked cultural memory constructing their subjectivity:

> Ourselves? But that's cruel. To snap us as we are, before we've had time to assume … And only, too, in parts … That's what's so distorting and upsetting and utterly unfair. Mopping, mowing, whisking, frisking, the looking glasses darted, flashed, exposed. People in the back rows stood up to see the fun. Down they sat, caught themselves … What an awful show-up! (109)

As a multiple *mise-en-abyme* (a micro-play within the play within the novel), this scene can be understood as the metaphor and metatext of cultural memory, literally enacting the process of the audience as subjects of, and to, the reflection of cultural history as a result of which they are inevitably exposed to the process of constructing their own subjectivity, which is the only logical and consistent conclusion to the play.

Re-visiting and remembering a (series of old) texts as a hermenutic process will necessarily have the impact not only of *remembering* old texts differently (as a result of which they may turn into new texts), but also of *re-membering* ourselves in the (imagined) community. What is more, the very hermeneutic (and not only repetitive) reading of cultural texts as sites of memory can also open up these texts in various directions that not necessarily all of us are willing to face and look into as they are mirrors looking back and reflecting on us, the ones who remember, but as it turns out, in some sense, these texts also remember, create, re-member, and re-create us, no matter how mad the music might be, and even if they bring to the surface what—to refer to Freud—should have remained hidden, perhaps in the cesspool. But, let us not forget: the cesspool only covers the scars and the memories caused by our history.

### Notes

[1] Woolf's husband, Leonard Woolf was a Jew, also known for his socialist ideas; whereas Virginia Woolf was considered a liberal (from a Nazi perspective: "decadent") artist, also known for her lesbianism. The couple actually knew that they were on the black list of Nazi Germany, and consciously prepared for their suicide by asking for poison of Virginia Woolf's psychiatrist brother, Adrian Stephen, in case the Germans invaded Britain (cf. Woolf, *Leave the Letters* 485–87; Woolf, *Diary* 292–93, 297), which finally did not happen, but, unfortunately, Woolf committed suicide by drowning herself in the

Ouse, not far from their Sussex home (Monk House) on 28 March 1941. *Between the Acts* appeared posthumously, the very last proofreading done by Leonard Woolf.

    [2] As to the best of my knowledge the monograph is not available in English, all the subsequent translations from Jan Assmann are mine, and I will provide the German originals in the footnotes, and will give the page numbers in the German edition. "… die *konnektive Struktur* eines gemeinsamen Wissens und Selbstbilds, das sich zum einen auf die Bindung an gemeinsame Regeln und Werte, zum anderen auf die Erinnerung an eine gemeinsam bewohnte Vergengenheit stützt" (16–17).

    [3] "Das Grundprinzip jeder konnektiven Struktur ist die Wiederholung." Further terms: "wiedererkennbaren Mustern," "rituelle Kohärenz."

    [4] "An die Stelle der Liturgie tritt die Hermeneutik."

    [5] "Gesellschaften imaginieren Selbstbilder und kontinuiren über die Generationenfolge hinweg eine Identität, indem sie eine Kultur der Erinnerung ausbilden."

    [6] "Erinnerungskultur beruht weitgehend, wenn auch keineswegs ausschliesslich, auf Formen des Bezugs auf die Vergangenheit. Die Vergangenheit nun, das ist unsere These, entsteht überhaupt erst dadurch, dass man sich auf sie bezieht."

    [7] "…im kulturellen Gedächtnis faktische Geschichte in erinnerte und damit in Mythos transformiert wird."

    [8] "Nur *bedeutsame* Vergangenheit wird erinnert, nur *erinnerte* Vergangenheit wird bedeutsam. Erinnerung ist ein Akt der Semiotisierung. Das gilt auch heute, so sehr der Begriff der 'Sinnstiftung' (und nichts anderes heisst ja Semiotisierung) in Bezug auf Geschichte in Misskredit geraten ist."

    [9] "… an die Stelle einer Semiotisierung des Kosmos tritt die Semiotisierung der Geschichte."

    [10] "Genau dieser [Wiederholungs]zwang ist es, der die *rituelle Kohärenz* garantiert und von dem sich Gesellschaften beim Übergang in *textuelle Kohärenz* freimachen."

    [11] "*Innovation* würde Vergessen bedeuten."

    [12] "… entwickelt sich eine Literatur, die Prinzipien der Variation und Innovation ausbildet und auf diese Weise zum Medium einer systematischen Ideenevolution und Wissensrevolution wird."

    [13] "Das explicit und thematisierbar gewordene Wissen wird *ipso facto* veränderbar, kritisierbar."

    [14] Some critics do not notice the symbolical potential in this scene. David Dowling, for instance, takes the disturbance at face value, attributing it to the fact that the villagers are unskilled performers, whereas the scene can also understood as intentional part of the performance. And whether it is on purpose or by chance, in my reading it is certainly more than a "failure" in the performance.

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# Cardinal Mindszenty and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution on Film in the West, 1950–59

**Tibor Glant**

Twenty-three years after the democratic changes in 1989, the post-World War II communist period in Hungary is still under review. Part of this process involves a gradual understanding of how the West viewed Hungary under communist rule, and in this paper I offer an analysis of four forgotten films made in the United States and England: two each dealing with the trial of Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty (1949) and two with the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence: *Guilty of Treason* (1950), *The Prisoner* (1955), *The Beast of Budapest* (1958), and *The Journey* (1959). The first two are available on DVD, the latter two are sometimes shown on TCM in Europe. It is hardly surprising that the post-1956 communist regime, led by revolutionary-turned-traitor János Kádár, ignored the very existence of these films, but all four movies also seem to be missing from American as well as post-1989 Hungarian collective memory.[1] An overview of the connections between film, history, and memory is followed by an analysis of the four movies, and the paper concludes with a preliminary evaluation of 1956-related Hungarian and American memory politics.

### History, memory, and film

Historians are often represented as people living in the past and working in archives with dusty, yellowing documents. Historians, at the same time, view themselves as students of the past and believe that their work has direct relevance for the present. When teaching, historians use films, but they do not necessarily consider movies to be reliable historical sources. It was not until 2006 that Robert Rosenstone put forward a compelling argument for taking film seriously and integrating it into historical research. His main reasoning is that by the end of the 20th century audio-visual media have come to dominate everyday life and people tend to believe what they see, regardless how historically inaccurate it might be (Rosenstone 1–31).[2] According to Leger Grindon, writing a decade before Rosenstone, and doing so with a narrower focus, a "history film" uses the past to comment on the present, and, thus, is a legitimate historical narrative (1–26). What both Grindon and Rosenstone fail to explain, however, is that *any* film, just like any other work of art, can be used as a historical source, *if* we ask the right questions.

Film as a (historical) narrative is fundamentally different from the texts historians use or generate; therefore, it must be treated differently. To fully comprehend film as a historical source we must learn its language and tools. We must also understand, and factor in, its strengths and shortcomings. Film, for example, is quite good at displaying both the dramatic and the spectacle. By showing things we would never see with the naked eye, like extreme close-ups, it conveys emotions and inner conflicts more effectively than the written word could (cf. Ingmar Bergman's tears in *Casablanca*). By using unique camera angles, film can display a spectacle in a way you would rarely see but always remember it (the "human flood" in *The Battleship Potemkin*). On the other hand, film is particularly bad at channeling accurate historical information (cf. the debates over *Amistad*) or in-depth theoretical discussion (cf. the recent movie on 1960s American race relations, *The Help*). Film is a form of audio-visual art, and as such, it revolves around inventing detail, accent, make-up, dialogue, and so on. And sometimes what is not shown, or left unsaid, is more important than what is presented in detail.[3] Film, as art, is open to interpretation, and the same film can be interpreted in diametrically opposite ways, as will be shown in connection with one of the four movies discussed here.

As regards film and memory, it is barely more than stating the obvious that film can be seen as a memory site. This is especially true of the two major types of "history film:" the feature film and the documentary. *Ben Hur* in American film history and the many Soviet World War II movies my generation was forced to watch on communist holidays in Hungary in the 1980s are obvious cases in point for the former. As for the latter, the very term "documentary" suggests historical authenticity, but the "democratization" of (documentary) film making since the late 1990s (cheaper and better quality cameras and easier access to audiences via the Internet) has raised legitimate concerns about the credibility of such works. The term itself has been broadened considerably, and today we consider any "New World Order" or 9/11 conspiracy film a documentary as much as we do a fully documented, fact-based Ken Burns product on PBS.[4] Feature film makers often use documentary footage (for example, newsreels) to authenticate the historical message their scripts intend to convey (Rosenstone 14). This, in turn, points to a key contradiction: if a film maker tries to be "authentic" and employs traditional historical narrative forms (newsreels or original texts on the screen), he/she abandons the tools of film making and moves out of his/her natural environment. Such action is not necessarily counterproductive, but it directly calls attention to the credibility problem that exists in the mind of the author of the film, and thus undermines the very credibility the film maker seeks to establish.

Given the four films under review here, I must point out that any film dealing with contemporary politics may (but not necessarily does) become a memory site, albeit sometimes with a considerable time delay. Péter Bacsó's *A tanú* (The Witness, 1969) is one such example every Hungarian is familiar with.[5] In American film history, in the absence of large-scale government level propaganda and censorship, such delays are less common, but not unprecedented. Most Americans may not be aware of the 1972 film *Winter Soldier* (which, incidentally, enjoys an 8.2 rating on IMDB), but the reenactment

of a highly mediatized recounting of American war crimes in overseas conflicts (Vietnam then, Iraq and Afghanistan in 2008) has returned the original film into public political memory.[6] It is yet to be seen whether the four films on Mindszenty and 1956 discussed here will become part of Hungarian political/cultural/collective memory once their existence becomes common knowledge among Hungarians. If they do, they will offer an interesting case study in memory politics.

When dealing with the preservation of the past (history and memory), Tzvetan Todorov highlights two important aspects of how the West has treated totalitarian crimes against humanity. He claims that 20th century totalitarian regimes were unique inasmuch as they waged war not only on civilian populations but also on memory. In both communist and fascist regimes there is an arduous attempt to eradicate the very memory of human rights abuses by suppressing memory by intimidation, destroying evidence, and generating an alternative narrative (especially through the manipulation of language), which then is enforced as the only, "true" one (113–47). Taking Todorov's ideas a step further, film thus plays the double role of preserving memory and reminding future generations. The fact that some films fill these roles while others do not, clearly points to the significance of memory politics. The Bulgarian philosopher also addresses the widespread claim emanating from former Iron Curtain countries that victims of Nazi crimes receive a lot more filmic attention in the West than victims of communist crimes (118–19). The four movies under review here testify to the fact that films dealing with communist crimes were made; thus the question that remains to be answered is why the shooting of such films was discontinued in the early 1960s.

Todorov claims that in a historical narrative there are four distinct roles: two positive and two negative. The two positive roles are those of the benefactor and the victim, while the two negative roles are those of the malefactor and the beneficiary. He explains that the role of the victim is a most rewarding one, since it guarantees a permanent bargaining position in the name of historical justice. Nobody wants to be a victim in the present, Todorov goes on to argue correctly, but "[v]ictim status [of past crimes] is indeed something to which people aspire" (142–43, the quote is from 143). After the second Soviet invasion (November 4, 1956), those who survived and/or fled Hungary had the advantageous position of being victims of past crimes (in the West since 1956, in Hungary only since 1989), but they also had to fight Kádár's attempts at memory eradication.

In Hungary, memory eradication eventually failed, not least because of the democratic change in 1989: Cardinal Mindszenty and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence are now an integral part of Hungarian collective memory.[7] They are also present in American cultural memory. In an extensive survey of press, literature, history textbooks, diplomatic memoirs, and art, written for the 50th anniversary of the Revolution, I have demonstrated that the memory of 1956 and Mindszenty lives on in the English language culture of the United States (see Glant). Just one example: Mindszenty is a memory site for Americans in at least three different ways: (1) he was a living reminder in the US Legation/Embassy in Budapest for 15 years (1956–71), and a plaque on the outside wall as well as a photo, and a painting inside the building still com-

memorate his stay there; (2) public space is devoted to him, and his statues, in the New World (Mindszenty Square in Los Angeles and Cardinal Mindszenty Plaza in Cleveland as well as statues in New Brunswick, New Jersey and Cleveland); and (3) his trial lives on in two contemporary films, discussed below. The Revolution is clearly part of Hungarian-American collective memory and identity politics, and the Cardinal is one of the iconic figures in these communities. Although the memory of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution is often invoked in American culture, it is still not an integral part of American collective memory. One wonders whether this is a failure of Hungarian-American memory politics or we should attribute it to something else, such as the nature of American culture.

Before turning to the four movies, I must briefly review the politics and economy of film in the context of the 20th century in general and the Cold War in particular. Since the inception of film as art, there have been two distinct trends in its history. Totalitarian film making (the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany), despite its many groundbreaking achievements, was defined, and permanently hampered, by state level censorship and propaganda demands. The western film industry (most notably Hollywood), on the other hand, was driven primarily by business interests, although politics (wartime propaganda) and censorship (the Hays code) also factored in time and again.

Still, in the relatively new field of Cold War film studies there appears to be a tendency to equate political message with propaganda and/or government interference. This is arguably the greatest flaw in Tony Shaw's otherwise exceptional work on the subject: when discussing the two Mindszenty films, for example, he claims that Cold War propaganda played a key part in 1950s American film making, which would be a valid argument only if he did not equate this particular type of (in my opinion, only assumed) propaganda with the all-encompassing state level propaganda of the Soviet Union and its totalitarian leader. Of course, there are quite different definitions of "propaganda," (see Jowett and O'Donnell 1–46) but Shaw uses the very same term to describe two fundamentally different film making approaches, as if they were identical. American film making, with its successes and pitfalls, has always been a business venture as opposed to the centrally controlled film industries of totalitarian regimes, where ideology, rather than profit, is the primary concern. American film making revolves around the vision, expectations, and risk assessment of producers, the people who put up the money for a movie. In a totalitarian regime, a state-sponsored film is an automatic "success" because everybody has to go and see it, while an American film has to score at the box office. Thus, although the four films discussed next carry serious, and often simplified, political messages, they should not be seen as propaganda movies, especially not as counterparts to "similar" Soviet films in the binary opposition of Cold War cultural politics. Soviet and American film making and history are very different, as explained quite clearly by Peter Kenez and Robert Sklar, respectively.

### *Guilty of Treason* (1950)

Scripted by Emmet Lavery and directed by Felix Feist, *Guilty of Treason* echoes the 1950s trope of "red fascism": communist and fascist crimes are equated (see Adler and Paterson). The poster of the film displays a close-up of Charles Bickford's face and Bonita Granville tortured in a crucified position, and promises to tell the "story of the trial behind the trial of Cardinal Mindszenty."[8]

It is a typical B-movie[9] that repeatedly invokes scenes from 1930s and 1940s crime movies. Two such examples are the interrogation of the Cardinal and the cabinet meeting with a Soviet commissar stealing the show. The Cardinal is interrogated while standing in a circle of light in the middle of the shot, while his interrogators fiddle audibly with papers in half darkness at the bottom of the screen: a typical B-movie setup of the hero facing the criminal organization, with black and white, light and shadow providing a clear guideline to what is good and what is bad. The Hungarian cabinet meeting featuring Soviet Commissar Belov is equally stereotypical: Hungarian officials are seated in a circle while the Soviet official paces up and down the room: the static is thus contrasted with the mobile, indicating that the evil turn in the movie comes as a result of outside pressure. The scene is a blatant remake of a meeting between members of a secret criminal organization, something that had to be familiar to the audience from dozens of spy and crime thrillers. The film thus builds upon the classic crime movie traditions of the interwar period, but provides a Cold War context for its message.

In *Guilty of Treason*, everything points to the simplified political message that communism is no better than fascism. The romantic subplot includes a female Hungarian teacher (Stephanie), a veteran of the French underground, and a Soviet secret service official (Aleksandr) torn between love and duty. When he finally settles for duty and condemns her to death, she exclaims, "There is no choice: Heil Hitler, Heil Stalin!" When the narrator of the film, an American journalist, and the teacher visit the Cardinal in his country home and ask him about the possibility of a political compromise between (Catholic) church and (communist) state, the prince primate declares, "What chance is there of agreement between Christ and Antichrist?" The film thus effectively portrays the tragedy that the peoples of the new, East and Central European Soviet colonies faced: "liberation" actually was occupation, and the "brown fascists" were replaced by the "red fascists," with the henchmen of the former now serving the latter. By doing so, the director and screen writer feed directly into 1950s American domestic fears of communism and a possible third world war.

In terms of historical detail, the film is nothing short of a nightmare. Any traditional (pre-Rosenstone) historical approach would write it off as useless and irrelevant as a Cold War source for research. Still, if we view this movie as it is, a work of art and a political snapshot from the 1950s, it tells us quite a lot, albeit not about its subject, but about its authors and target audiences. Mindszenty is grossly misrepresented in the film as a man of the land, who retired to his country farm to cultivate his vinery and drink his own wine. In the scene when the journalist and the teacher visit him, the medium-range camera shot displays a deep well ("gémeskút") from the Great Plains in the background,

which directly contradicts the rolling hillside of the vineyard. The house he lives in is a long, rectangular, reed-covered peasant farm house more typical again of the Great Plains than of the wine regions. The rest of the movie, except for the final scene, takes place in Budapest. Thus, the rural vs. urban dichotomy of pre-World War II Hungarian intellectual politics is emphasized in a stereotypical manner, which indicates that the authors of the film viewed Hungary as a combination of urban Budapest and the "Puszta" of the Great Plains. This tourist-guide, romantic image of Hungary suggests that the makers of the film conceptualized communism in general and Hungary in particular, while the historical framework is confined to the very fact of the Mindszenty trial, which was covered extensively in the American press.[10] *Guilty of Treason* may tell us very little about Hungary or the trial, but it clearly reveals how sympathetic American film makers viewed, and expected their audiences to view, Hungary under communist rule, Soviet officials, and the nature of totalitarian systems.

### *The Prisoner* (1955)

Shot in England but using American funds almost exclusively, Peter Glenville's film is the movie adaptation of Bridget Boland's play of the same title. It stands as an early, and creative, example of what the camera can do with material written for the stage. It is scripted by the original playwright, directed by a stage director, and acted out by stage actors (Shaw *Cold War* 110, "Martyrs" 16–19), and still adds up to being an excellent film. The movie poster promises a lot and suggests even more. It reads, "Two of the finest performances of all time!" And the performances of Alec Guinness as the Cardinal and Jack Hawkins as the Interrogator are indeed excellent. The poster itself suggests a parallel between the communist and fascist regimes by displaying a skinny and bald-headed (probably shaved) Guinness, wearing a jacket reminiscent of clothes worn by Jews in Nazi prison camps, against a red and black (the two colors most commonly associated with evil) background. This is a powerful message as the country in the movie remains unidentified and characters have no real names.

Boland made no secret of the fact that she wrote the play as an allegory for the Mindszenty trial, but since the film claims no historical accuracy (in terms of location, characters, or trial details), it becomes a morality tale. Having been tortured for months both physically and mentally, the Cardinal finally breaks down, confesses to crimes he never committed, and accepts death, thus assuming a Jesus-like role of redemption by death. The context does link the story directly to Mindszenty on at least two accounts: the Cardinal of the film is forced to admit to betraying his co-workers in the underground resistance during a war that had just ended, and he is called, with apparent awe, a "national monument" by the Interrogator. The Jesus-parallel is brought out by the final collapse of the Interrogator (as Pilate), after the Cardinal had walked to his death.

Glenville's movie goes way beyond what one might expect from a 1955 screen adaptation of a play. The camera reveals what we could never see on stage, displaying both the dramatic and the spectacle. The dramatic is brought out in close-ups on the faces of the Interrogator and the Cardinal, and Guinness tells more with his steely, almost hypnotic

gaze than with words. The complete reversal of power positions is demonstrated by two inventive shots, representing the spectacle. The Cardinal's position of a man of immense power is hammered home by an overhead shot of his arrival: he gets to the police head-quarters in his own car driven by his own driver, wearing full official outfit, including an imposing robe. In contrast, in the final scene of the trial the Interrogator, also wearing a robe and shot from above, towers triumphantly over the Cardinal psychologically and physically crushed, lying on the floor of the courtroom. The shot excludes much of the audience, even the court itself, and centers on the two main characters. This is film making at its best.

The movie portrays major human dilemmas and power struggles, offering an in-depth study of the nature of totalitarian (in this case communist) dictatorships. The Marxist-Leninist ideal of the "Socialist Man" (the Interrogator is a willing executioner) confronts the "Individual" (the Cardinal is part of the pre-war elite). The former seems to win by devious methods, but loses out eventually. *The Prisoner* thus pits Western democracy and Christian faith against atheistic communism, and the former triumphs even in defeat. That notwithstanding, the film was actually banned in Ireland for being deemed anti-Catholic, since the message that got through to the authorities was the victory of the Interrogator in the courtroom. In the United States, on the other hand, the film was understood as a morality tale, became a major success, and netted over 100,000 dollars at the box office. The Irish considered it thinly veiled communist propaganda, while Moscow saw it as anti-Soviet, and insisted on it being removed from Cannes and Venice film festivals (Shaw, "Martyrs" 18).[11] In this case, film as art clearly triumphed over politics and ideology.

### *The Beast of Budapest* (1958)

Harmon Jones directed this movie adaptation of a Louis Stevens's story of love, revolution, and tragedy in Budapest. The title is a direct reference to Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's nickname, the "Butcher of Budapest," although he never appears in the film. In fact, no Soviet official ever does: they remain the unseen, unidentifiable evil driving the events. The movie poster depicts two key scenes: the top right corner shows a man in uniform with a whip in hand, standing over a woman on the ground. The bottom of the poster depicts a revolutionary crowd waving the well-known torn flag, the symbol of the Hungarian Revolution. The text is also revealing, "Uncensored! The shocking facts… smuggled out to make a motion picture of shame!" and "The teenage legions of bloody glory!"

John McGreevy's screenplay has an undecipherable attitude towards history. The movie poster promises a story based on footage smuggled out of Hungary, which the film delivers by incorporating newsreel material (creatively replacing cuts between scenes) into the narrative. At the same time, the opening credits include a disclaimer that all events and characters are fictional. *The Beast of Budapest* mixes original footage shot in Budapest during the Revolution, studio reenactments, and classic B-movie tropes including a car chase in the country and a final showdown between good and evil. The villain of the

story, Colonel Otto Zagon, chief of the secret police, is a curious mix of a fat cat crime boss and a mad scientist.

The spectacle is the Revolution itself, including such classic scenes as the crowd gathering at the Bem statue, the siege of the radio station, and the arrival of Soviet tanks. The dramatic revolves around the character of the female protagonist, Marissa Földessy. She is an ardent believer in communism and stands up to her father and lover alike when the Revolution comes. The evil Zagon captures her, however, and uses her as bait to get to her father (a Maléter-like figure), then has her tortured and raped. In 1958 the Hays code was still in effect, so no graphic violence or sexual content was allowed, but the rape scene was directed in a masterfully suggestive manner. Marissa is taken to a half-lit cell, where a sexually driven male guard jumps her, while a female guard watches. The shot fades out with a sinister smile spreading on the female guard's face as the victim screams for help. The shot illustrates the fact that the female body is open prey to communists, as it was after World War II, when the Soviet army committed mass rape in the occupied territories.

*The Beast of Budapest* displays an ambivalent attitude towards historical fact. As has been explained, it uses documentary footage to authenticate, but shows a disclaimer to suggest a fictitious narrative. The details are amusingly incorrect from army uniforms to military decorations, from locations to characters; even the Hungarian national anthem is played at the wrong tempo. The message still comes across. The rape scene symbolizes the violent suppression of the Revolution and the innocence it stands for, and the absence of Soviet faces emphasizes the existence of faceless and timeless (that is, unknown and unknowable) evil. Unlike in the previous two films, there is no reference to "red fascism" or Christian superiority over atheistic communism here. The movie simply and effectively glorifies the young freedom fighters and vilifies communists. Good is clearly separated from evil. The only conversion is that of Marissa, but she pays the steepest price (in Hollywood's own code of honor) a woman can, her chastity is violated. Zagon is pure evil: he looks evil, he betrays his own country and lover, and when she returns the favor, he tries to kill her. He shoots his prisoner at a prisoner exchange scene, and tries to save his own skin by making a run when things go wrong. The male protagonist, Marissa's lover, finally hunts him down and kills him in an extended fight scene in a dark cave in the (nonexistent) mountains outside the city of Győr. At the end of the film the young revolutionaries go back to Budapest to fight, and we never hear from them again. Historically inaccurate as it is, the film echoes the enthusiasm and emotional support many Americans displayed for the revolutionaries. In Eastern Europe, this would be seen as a classic propaganda movie, but nothing in the background history of the film itself indicates interference on the part of the United States government.

### The Journey (1959)
Anatole Litvak's 25th feature film is based on a screenplay by George Tabori, the only Hungarian associated with any of the four films discussed here. The film credits proudly state that it was shot, incidentally in color, on location in Austria. There are two posters

for the film, and they tell somewhat different stories. One depicts the male protagonist, Yul Brynner, in full Soviet uniform with whip in hand, facing the audience and forcefully grabbing the female protagonist, Deborah Kerr, by the waist. Wearing black against a light background, Brynner is the triumphant evil come alive, which is a misrepresentation of the film itself. The other poster is reminiscent of the one made for *The Prisoner*, but carries a very different message. The same red and black background displays headshots of the two main characters: Brynner looks us in the eye defiantly, while Kerr looks shyly away. The round, bald head here represents not the victim but the villain, and, as a result, the color code of red and black acquires a different connotation. Both posters indicate a dominant romantic theme.

Brynner and Kerr were a winning romantic combination dating back to 1956, when *The King and I*, in which they also played the leads, was nominated for nine Oscars, and won five, as well as two Golden Globes. *The Journey* is the only A-movie out of the four films discussed here: it features a big budget, big stars, and a world-class director. Although, as has been pointed out, it boasts of the only recognized Hungarian contributor, it is still the least authentic one. In fact, the film makes no attempt to appear historically authentic: it was shot in color while *Revolt in Hungary* (featuring black and white footage smuggled out of Hungary and narrated by American TV icon Walter Cronkite) had already been shown on American television in 1958 (Glant 2007: 46). Litvak goes so far as to re-shoot a revolutionary scene in color instead of using some of the available raw material from Hungary. Color thus separates fiction from history, story from newsreel. In fact, the never-seen Revolution is the *implied* spectacle behind the dramatic on display.

By consciously separating the familiar, black and white imagery of the Revolution from the story shot in color, Litvak emphasizes the dramatic, in this case the forbidden love affair between a Soviet officer and the wife of an English aristocrat. The faceless and nameless evil of the previous films gains a face and dissolves in the human frailty of the imposing Brynner, who sacrifices his own pride and busts himself wide open to break down Kerr's defenses and earn the first and final kiss. The topic of forbidden love is not new; as has been pointed out, it was on display in *Guilty of Treason*. In the Mindszenty film, it ends in tragedy as the Soviet officer betrays his love and condemns her to die, while in *The Journey* it leads to a cathartic moment: a kiss to remember forever. The scene fits the dominant Hollywood tradition of seeing Russians as overtly romantic (see also *Anna Karenina* from 1935 or *Doctor Zhivago* from 1965).

*The Journey* was reviewed favorably by Bosley Crowther in the *New York Times*: in fact, Crowther hailed it for presenting a Soviet officer as a human being. This is a major turnaround compared to the binary opposition of good vs. evil in the previous three films. History serves only as a backdrop to the dramatic conflict of forbidden love, which, in turn, indicates a possible turn in Hollywood's interpretation of the Soviet crackdown on Hungary as exclusively evil. And therein lies the problem with branding Hollywood movies as propaganda: if the previous three films were indeed Cold War propaganda, what explains such a dramatic turnaround in 1959? The Cold War was still at full flow: besides the Soviet bloodbath in Hungary and the heated debate over the "Hungarian

question" at the UN, the space race (Sputnik crisis) was on as well, and within a year Soviet-American relations would come to a breaking point following the U-2 incident on the eve of the Paris summit between Eisenhower and Khrushchev. Propaganda clearly does not explain Litvak's artistic choice, but then what does? *The Journey* is a case in point where the expected political message (Litvak's personal background and the Revolution both point towards expected sharp criticism of the Soviet Union) is dropped in favor of profit.

### Conclusions

The four films presented here raise a series of important questions. Why did these four movies fail to integrate the Revolution and the Cardinal into American collective memory? Where and how then does their memory live on in American culture? Why were no such films made in the United States after 1959? Why was the religious theme removed from Cold War American film after 1960? Is there a chance that these films will become part of Hungarian collective memory with a time delay? Questions abound, but there are no simple answers, not least because some of the questions need to be reconsidered.

The Cold War took a marked turn following the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. A hotline was set up between Moscow and Washington, and "bridge building" between East and West began. Open criticism for the near destruction of the entire globe was voiced by Stanley Kubrick in *Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964). West German Foreign Minister (then Chancellor) Willy Brandt openly challenged the bipolar vision of the world and his policy of opening towards the Soviet satellites in East and Central Europe was picked up by President Nixon in the form of *détente*. Closer cooperation and effective negotiation closed the door on belligerent Cold War propaganda language for both superpowers. Hollywood, partly slow to respond to the dramatic political repositioning of the former wartime ally, the Soviet Union, as chief enemy between 1945 and 1949, partly defiant because of McCarthyist harassment (cf. the Hollywood Ten), but also more open towards the other side than hardened Cold Warriors, celebrated political change with *The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming* (Norman Jewison, 1966) (Shaw, "*The Russians Are Coming*" 235–50). This was also due to the growing resistance to the war in Vietnam, which caused more damage than good to the fabric of American society. When the Cold War became hot again, in the early 1980s, Hollywood responded with its own blockbuster takes on East-West conflicts with movies like *Red Dawn* (1984), *Rocky IV* (1985), and the *Rambo* franchise (1982-88). During the entire period of the Cold War, American film industry remained a business operation with a keen eye on public interest and political concerns.

The youthful energy and social upheaval of the 1960s in the United States resulted in a turn towards non-Christian religions and even atheism. The 1950s were dominated by Biblical blockbusters like *Ben Hur* (1959) and their B-movie subsidiaries, like the two Mindszenty films. Generational, social, and political changes with the coming of President Kennedy ushered in new and exciting trends in film making. Drugs, hippies, rock music, and anti-war protest mixed with science fiction, apocalyptic nightmares and the return

of graphic violence with the passing of the Hays code. Soviet-Chinese armed conflicts, the Six-Day War, and the Prague Spring (1966–68) could have provided sufficient grounds for stepping up government level Cold War propaganda in the United States, but these events passed almost unnoticed in Hollywood and were dwarfed by domestic concerns over political assassinations, student and urban riots, and the escalation of the Vietnam War. Conflicts behind the Iron Curtain continued to be of secondary importance.

Meanwhile, Hungarian memory politics ran two diametrically opposite courses. Kádár's regime pursued a policy of memory eradication focusing on what they termed a "CIA-induced fascist counter-revolution." Budapest cultivated relations with East Coast Hungarian intellectuals who came to see Hungary by the early 1970s as an acceptable country, the "happiest barracks" behind the Iron Curtain, a country of "liberal" domestic policies. The success of this policy was on display in the mixed coverage of the 30th anniversary of the Revolution in the *New York Times*: critical editorials were balanced by positive reports from Budapest discussing not the uprising but the genesis of the Kádár regime (Glant 2007: 14–15, 120–21). In sharp contrast with the memory eradication policy of communist Hungary, Hungarian-Americans cultivated the memory of the Revolution and used it as political capital to earn recognition and support in their new home. They ritualized the commemoration of the Revolution and turned it into a key element of American political memory: besides some 30 statues and numerous public places devoted to the Revolution and its heroes, Mindszenty and 1956 are part of the preparation of every American diplomat coming to Hungary, presidential proclamations are issued and Congressional resolutions are adopted for the anniversaries, and so on. The sweeping political changes in 1989 and the 50th anniversary in 2006 propelled the memory of the Revolution into the spotlight again in the New World (Glant 2007: 47–86, 189–236).

Even if there is such a thing as an American collective memory in the Halbwachsian sense, which I personally doubt after 20 years of research, expecting an event (however spectacular) that took place six time zones away from Washington to become part of it has been a tall order all the way. Americans stopped making movies about Cardinal Mindszenty and the 1956 Revolution not because they started to question their significance but because such stories do not sell when Hungary is not in the international spotlight. The respect is there beyond doubt: on the 50th anniversary, in 2006, an important documentary (*Freedom's Fury*) and a feature film produced by Andy Vajna (*Children of Glory*) were shown in the Bush White House. Having said that, Hungarians must accept that they are less important for the United States than the United States is for Hungarians. The various Hungarian-American communities continue to sustain the memory of the Cardinal and the Revolution, but excessive expectations aimed at American society will never be met.

At the same time, it is quite disturbing that Hungarians in Hungary are still unaware of how the Revolution and Cardinal Mindszenty are viewed and remembered in the West in general and the United States in particular. The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence is not only a national holiday, it is also arguably the best researched

event in modern Hungarian history. It is entirely a Hungarian responsibility to extend such research to cover memory and memory politics as well. Of the four films discussed here, only the fourth one was ever shown on Hungarian television. If Hungarians wish to insert these movies into their collective memory, they must do so themselves.

### Notes

[1] "Collective memory" is used as defined by Maurice Halbwachs, "cultural memory" as defined by Jan Assmann, and "memory site" as defined by Pierre Nora.

[2] For a preliminary review of the literature see Robert Brent Toplin and Jason Eudy.

[3] This paragraph is based on Rosenstone and Grindon, but the examples are mine. The contrasting of the *dramatic* with the *spectacle* comes from Grindon (6–7); he uses Guy Debord's terminology from *The Society of the Spectacle*. Detroit: Black and Red, 1983; the French original was published in 1967.

[4] "How Real Is the Reality in Documentary Film? Jill Godmilow in Conversation with Ann-Louise Shapiro" in *History and Theory* Vol. 36, No. 4 (December 1997), 80–101. See also: Rosenstone, *History on Film*, 70–88.

[5] The film was originally made in 1969, the year after the Prague Spring, when such satires of communism were unacceptable. The film was shelved indefinitely, and then taken to Cannes in 1981. It was publicly shown only in the second half of the 1980s.

[6] ON IMDB only 472 users voted on the 1972 film as of February 7, 2012. For the 2008 event see: http://ivaw.org/wintersoldier. The 1972 film reappeared on various torrent sites following 2008.

[7] Law XXVIII of 1990 officially designated the event as a national holiday and set its official name as "the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence." It is also included in the preamble of the new Constitution adopted in 2011.

[8] All posters discussed here can be found at: http://www.movi8posterdb.com/ (access date: 2/7/2012). Bickford played Slim in the 1939 movie version of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, and was a well-known actor of his time. Granville began her career as the most famous female child detective, Nancy Drew in 1938–39.

[9] "B-movie" is understood broadly as a low-budget, black and white, popular, four-reel production (ca. 70 minutes), usually shown as the bottom film of a double feature.

[10] The trial was covered in great detail by the American press not least because Cardinal Francis Spellman, the Archbishop of New York, was a close friend of the Hungarian church leader. In the trial Mindszenty collapsed and admitted to his "crimes," while in the movie Bickford delivers a damning criticism of his torturers and calls for world peace.

[11] For additional detail see: Peter Connolly (620).

[12] In the Hungarian version of *Remember Hungary* (2008) I was the first to provide various lists on physical memory sites (updated), literary texts, and doctoral dissertations in the United States. Of the 40 literary accounts originally written in English, only eight are available in Hungarian. This alone indicates the failure of this particular dimension of Hungarian memory politics.

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*The Help*. Dir. Tate Taylor. DreamWorks, 2011.

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# What the Body Remembers.
# The Memories of Eastern-European
# Body Cinema:
# *Pálfi György's* Taxidermia

**György Kalmár**

## *Supplements to an impossible history*

In his seminal book about the German tragic play, Walter Benjamin makes a comment about allegory and history that may serve as a context or starting point of the present investigations about history, remembering, film and traumatic memory:

> Whereas in the symbol destruction is idealized and the transfigured face of nature is fleetingly revealed in the light of redemption, in allegory the observer is confronted with *facies hippocratica* of history as a petrified, primordial landscape. Everything about history that, from the very beginning, has been untimely, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face—or rather in death's head. And … this is the form in which man's subjection to nature is most obvious and it significantly gives rise not only to the enigmatic question of the nature of human existence as such, but also of the biographical historicity of the individual. (166)

Benjamin's argument, the wider context of which I cannot recapitulate here in its complexity, calls attention to different modes of relating to the past. It suggests that the relationship between the past, memories, meaning, remembering and identity can be articulated in many different ways. He defines meaning and human identity within a historical perspective, and suggests that the identity of individuals with different "biographical historicities" may be constructed in radically different ways, relying on different tropes and figurations. His reference to the "*facies hippocratica* of history as a petrified, primordial landscape" and to "death's head" definitely refer to (personal and/or collective) trauma, which, in this argument, seems to be the source of the collapse of idealization and the birth of allegory. At this point Benjamin's line of thought about collective ways of remembering comes close to psychoanalytic theories' conceptualizations of trauma: both seem to suggest that one's relation to the past can never be described as a simple cognitive process, since it involves unconscious elements, traumas, which function as sites of the breakdown of meaning. It is because of trauma that "human existence" becomes "enigmatic," that one may not know, control, totalize or idealize meaning, identity or the past. But trauma is not only a negative effect in the process of identity-making

or remembering: the impossibility of idealization and totalization gives rise to symptomatic semantic processes, that is, peculiar, marginal, irregular, idiosyncratic processes of a supplementary character that create *other* sorts of memories, pasts, meanings and identities in the face of the impossibility of an ideal one.

Thus, Benjamin calls attention to two considerations that serve as starting points of the present analysis. First, that remembering and memory cannot be conceptualized only in the sphere of (conceptual, semantic) meaning: it must involve taking account of the collapses and impossibilities of meaning, of what does not make sense; and second, that the way meaning and non-meaning get organized into (always more-or-less) traumatized identities may be influenced by specific cultural conditions (by the cultural historicity of subjectivity). Benjamin's argument also seems to suggest, for example, that Eastern-Europeans have their own characteristic ways of relating to their pasts: Characteristically, Hungarians may remember differently than, for example, Englishmen. In Eastern Europe, history (understood as an idealized totality of meaning) is impossible for other (and maybe more numerous) reasons than in Western-Europe, and the ways Eastern-European cultures react to this situation (the ways they construct some sort of meaning and identity in the absence of a grand historical narrative) may be also characteristically different.

The idea that history and memory may function in diverse ways in different cultures has a long, interesting history filled with fiery debates. Let me only mention here the case of Oskar Ritter von Halecki, a prominent Polish historian of the interwar period, who was probably the first in the 20th century to unleash a wide-ranging international academic debate with his 1923 paper at the international historical congress at Brussels entitled "The history of Eastern Europe: Its divisions in epochs, its geographical milieu, and its fundamental problems" (later followed by a book *Limits and Divisions of European History*), in which he claimed that the history of Eastern Europe is characteristically different from that of Western Europe (see Troebst 146) . Halecki's ideas proved to be thought-provoking, have often been revisited ever since, and the idea that Eastern Europe has its specific ways of relating to its past has become a recurrent motif of publications on the geographical specifications of memory.[1]

The common motifs of these discussions may often remind one of Benjamin's ideas about the impossibility of idealization and the experience of loss, failure and trauma. Clearly, Eastern Europe has a tragic past, its peoples often found themselves attacked, conquered, exploited or colonized by larger neighbouring countries and rising empires from the Mongols, through the Osman-Turkinsh and the Habsburgs to the Soviets. One of the results of this situation is an incredulity towards grand historical narratives and collective memories imposed upon people by state authorities and institutions. Since these historical narratives were (and are) often the means of ideological oppression, people in the region often have to remember "against the grain." As Meusburger puts it, "underprivileged and suppressed minorities or losers of conflicts try to hold firm against the official political narratives by cultivating their countermemories and advocating reinterpretations of history" (58). This also means that the lack of grand (idealizing and

totalizing) historical narratives is filled by communicative memories based on family anecdotes, local narratives and personal experience. In such conditions the number of uncontested sites of memory is much fewer than in the case of more fortunate geographical areas: typically there are parallel, and often mutually exclusive narratives about sites of memory, historical events and figures. In Hungary, for example, the disruption of hegemonic (ideological) public narratives has become almost something like a national sport. Thus, unambiguous and uncontested narratives of heroism and victory are relatively few.

What interests me here is not so much the general operations of memory in such historical and geopolitical situations, but rather the way this manifests in the peculiar narratives and styles of Eastern European (and especially Hungarian) cinema. One reader of Benjamin, Adam Lowenstein, in his *Shocking Representations: Historical Trauma, National Cinema and the Modern Horror Film* explicitly connects this refusal or impossibility of (an idealized) history and Benjamin's "death's head" with the use of the body in the construction of a traumatized subjectivity in some trends of contemporary filmmaking:

> For Benjamin, the image of the death's head, or the corpse, reveals the sorrow behind a falsely redemptive face of history, just as it reveals the fragments behind a mirage of unified individual identity. Benjamin designates this mode of revelation as allegorical, where "meaning" is glimpsed between the dead corpse and the living body, between individual interiority and historical exteriority. Cronenberg, like Benjamin, conceptualizes "meaning" as a state of transformation, where the body must be defined in terms of the corpse, and private subjectivity in terms of public objecthood. (146)

Film as a medium, as many film-theoreticians have argued, belongs very much to the twentieth century, creating a new age of visuality after the long age of the Gutenberg-galaxy. As such, film is not only the site of meaning and remembering, but also that of identity-making. Human subjects of the twentieth century not only create their identities (consciously or unconsciously) out of movies, not only do they remember films, but they also remember *through* films. Remembering, similarly to identity-making, is always already medialized, that is, performed through an active interaction with media. We tend to remember past times through the film we saw at the time, through the films that influenced us at that time, through the films that became parts of us, and through the films that retrospectively represent (and-recreate) those times. Films, as Laura U. Marks argues, are full of *recollection-objects*, which she defines as an "irreducibly material object that encodes collective memory" (77). Films connect us with the past through the sounds and images they present, through the metonymic relation they have with the objects filmed.

The main assumption of the influential realist film-theoretician, Siegfried Kracauer, in his classic book-length study of German film *From Caligari to Hitler* was that film may serve with an insight into the depth of a given community's fantasies, identity-politics,

fears and desires, into its "national characteristics," "psychological dispositions" and "collective mentality" (6) that no sociological study may reproduce with such accuracy. In other words, the analysis of films of a given community at a given historical time may lead us to an understanding of, for example, standard processes of relating to the past. I fully agree with Kracauer at this point, and it is only his realist perspective that I would replace with a constructivist one: films not only depict, but also actively shape our pasts, memories, strategies of remembering and identity-making. Finally, there is one more reason why films may constitute a useful and rich field of such investigations: following the theoretical conceptualizations of Marks, I will argue that films often function as sites of multisensory memory traces, that is, that they can connect the remembering subject not only with audiovisual traces of the past, but also, for example, tactile memories, thus creating a rich reservoir of sensory elements constitutive of the remembered past that never passed through the bottleneck of official history-writing.

### Taxidermia

At this point I would like to take a closer look at György Pálfi's award-winning Hungarian film, *Taxidermia* (2006), a film very much about memories, identities, history and trauma, in order to track some culturally and historically specific matrices of remembering and identity-making. *Taxidermia* tells the stories of three generations of Hungarian men, of the grandfather Marosgovány, a deprived soldier of the Second World War serving at a deserted outpost (see illustrations 1, 2), of his illegitimate son, Kálmán Balatony, a fast-eating (almost-) champion of socialist Hungary (see illustrations 3, 4), and his (?) son, the taxidermist Lajos(ka) Balatony, living in the consumer culture of contemporary Hungary (see illustrations 5, 6). The three lives serve with three allegories: the lonely soldier's life is dominated by his hunger for sex (re/production), the father's life is all about eating (self-preservation), while the skinny grandson stuffs animals (and sometimes humans) for a living, thus his life is about death and the preservation of memories. As Ádám Farkas also points it out in his review, the three lives create a circle, not only of human reproduction, but also of the traditional family novel that usually starts with a generation of heroes who create and build, a second generation, where the family reaches the peak of its social prestige, and a third one that is about social decline and artistic activity. It can be considered a very Eastern European phenomenon that in this pattern art is connected not only with decline, remembering and death, but also with necrophilia and excrement (the very first shot of Lajoska's story shows a pigeon above his door taking a shit). This threefold story of three unsuccessful, traumatic, yet unusual lives is told retrospectively, by a witness who finds Lajoska's self-stuffed and self-mutilated torso. In other words, story-telling and remembering starts out from a traumatic sight (the sight of "death's head"): that of the last moments of a person who, with the help of sophisticated, self-made machinery, has just removed his internal organs, stuffed himself with straw and finally beheaded himself (see illustration 6). The basis of the production of meaning and remembering is a traumatic sight, a sight pointing at the loss and impossibility of meaning.

The film opens with the following words of the narrator:

> There is something that I must say. Because it is part of the creation of something I have nothing to do with. Nonetheless, without me, no one would know about it, because it wouldn't even exist. No one would know who Lajos Balatony really was, and no one would be interested in where he came from, where he was heading, who his father or grandfather was. Maybe it is only important because it is the end of something. And if something comes to an end, then its beginning will also be important.

This introduction calls attention to the temporality of human existence and the connection between identity, remembering and narratives. It suggests that the way to understand the present is to look at the past. Nevertheless, the spectator may never be sure about the epistemological status of these narratives: they are not true or untrue, they simply tell stories filling the gap in our curiosity, redeeming the breakdown of order created by the traumatic sight.

Significantly, the film's temporal structure is also circular: the narrator's words at the beginning of the film speak from the end of the story (creating a retrospective perspective and making it a film of remembering), and the last scene shows Lajoska's self-stuffed body as an artwork at an exhibition. Here we see the narrator making his already heard opening speech, and in the last shot the camera slowly zooms in to the black hole of Lajoska's dead body's navel, relating the story, once again, to the unfathomable dark well of the past.

So far, *Taxidermia* seems to follow a relatively general and well-known logical and narrative pattern leading from trauma (the corpse) and a lack of knowledge and identity ("who Lajos Balatony really was"), through the move of turning towards the history of the individual for answers (a tradition left behind by humanism), to telling stories about his past. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in *Taxidermia* there are no heroes or unambiguous figures, the representatives of the family are only men (following a conservative compensatory gender-politics that Anikó Imre finds typical of the region), but these men are losers, strange figures with often bizarre bodies, hidden sensitivities and odd personal characteristics.[2] In other words, the film is not located in the world of mainstream (idealizing) narratives, where—as John Wayne once claimed in one of his westerns—"A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do," but (as I will soon discuss) in a kind of no man's land where "no action is possible" (Marks 28). Moreover, the family's genealogical chain is broken at every turn: Kálmán is an illegitimate son of a war officer's wife and the husband's half-wit bat, and Lajoska's biological father is probably Kálmán's best friend and rival sportsman.

The way a patrilinear genealogical narrative (obviously one of the basic narrative types of 'standard' identity-politics) turns into a grotesque story of bastards calls attention to the presence of the carnival-tradition described by Bakhtin, and the particular use of the body (see Lowenstein 146) as a subversive tool in it. According to Imre, "the shift from the abstraction of language to the expressivity of Bakhtin's "lower bodily stratum" has

been a recurrent focus of European art cinemas, especially during times of crisis" (215). The half-witted, sex-obsessed, pig-sty inhabitant grandfather with his cleft lips, the extremely obese, devouring-vomiting father, and the extremely thin, white-skinned, puppet-like taxidermist son are all bizarre and tragic caricatures of "normal" (that is, idealizable) humanity. They all call attention to the false, hypocritical ways of idealizing master-narratives in the context of marginalized people. In the case of these characters the images of the body serve as subversive forces undermining the idealized world of language, their grotesque looks are reminders of that material, bodily leftover, that obscene material supplement that can never be integrated into the sublime orders of history and the Logos. Thus, remembering is based on non-idealizable bodies, uncanny looks, on the repressed underbelly of civilization, and is, by definition, a transgressive act, an assertion of an impossible identity through the display of difference.

What also makes the film worthy of critical attention is the way these stories of the past are constructed. The first important feature is the epistemological hybridity of the film's narratives. Instead of a totalized, homogeneous narrative serving with unambiguous meanings and definitive answers to traumatic questions, *Taxidermia* shows a mixture of sensually overloaded images, surreal settings, and the mixing of personal fantasy, family legends and documentary-style shots. It looks like a family history written as a substitute to official history, a narrative made of local memories, fantasies and legends, a story imitating serious recollections of history, yet stylistically undermining that at every point. As Imre argues, "Pálfi's eclectic, genremixing aesthetic strategy seems to resist the elitist hegemony of ideal meaning" (211). However, and this is crucial in the film's aesthetics and effect, the result is not a loss of meaning, but rather an aesthetic, sensual and semantic richness. The film suggests that behind official history there is a deep and rich reservoir of unreliable, half-fictitious, multisensory memory.

From this point of view, *Taxidermia* has a lot to do with what Marks calls "intercultural cinema." In her vocabulary this refers to relatively contemporary films made in and about intercultural situations by and about people on the margins of official history. These films, like *Taxidermia*, "must first dismantle the official record of their communities, and then search for ways to reconstitute their history, often through fiction, myth, or ritual" (25). In other words, both Marks's films of intercultural cinema and such Eastern-European films as *Taxidermia* share an oppositional relation to official history and hegemonic cultural memory, and seek ways of rewriting it through relying on communicative memory and other, less canonised forms of cultural knowledge. As Marks puts it, "intercultural cinema moves backward and forward in time, inventing histories and memories in order to posit an alternative to the overwhelming erasures, silences, and lies of official histories" (24). The already discussed hybrid aesthetics of *Taxidermia* is motivated by this reliance on 'other' sorts of (non-realist, non-totalizing, non-canonical) narratives of the past: "Intercultural films and videos offer a variety of ways of knowing and representing the world. To do this they must suspend the representational conventions that have held in narrative cinema for decades, especially the ideological presumption that cinema *can* represent reality" (Marks 1). Thus, these films' relation to their

cultural and historical situations and their non-orthodox aesthetic strategies are intimately connected.

The counter-memory-images of *Taxidermia* are often set in liminal spaces. Marosgovány's surreal story is set at the army outpost in the middle of nowhere, almost out of space and time; Kálmán lives in a world made of the slightly overdone, self-referential clichés of communist Hungary, practicing fast eating, a fantasy sport (we first see him in a round-shaped sports arena resembling theatres or bull-fight arenas, at an international eating-competition, something that was never built or organized in Hungary); and Lajos lives in his taxidermist workshop overcrowded with stuffed, dead animals in the glitteringly bleak surroundings of contemporary consumer capitalism.

This liminal, marginal quality of the film's spaces calls attention to the potentially similarly indefinable spaces of Eastern European subjectivity and history. Imre calls attention to the similarities between the post-communist and post-colonial cultural situations:

> Even though Eastern European nations are predominantly white and have not been part of modern colonial empires, the particular and sustained importance of culture to compensate for a missing, more "authentic" ground, the need to reinvent the affective power of nationalism despite changing borders and vulnerability to more powerful nations, makes Eastern European nationalisms comparable to postcolonial nationalisms. Milan Kundera called this condition an "East Central European complex": a psychological condition that results from the absence of geographical and historical permanence within the region, whose borders and very name are permanently uncertain. Kundera claims that East Central Europe is politically in the East, geographically in the middle, and culturally in the West." (Imre 170)

It is precisely this compensatory logic common with post-colonial communities that we can witness in the film's relation to the past. Apparently, both the post-colonial and the Eastern European post-communist situations share a fundamental distrust of official history, and rely on strategies of the counter-memories of smaller communities and on compensations in the fields of art, fantasy and fiction. These supplementary, compensatory strategies of remembering and identification follow a logic very similar to that of the psychoanalytical concept of the symptom as it is theorized by Jacques Lacan in his last seminar *Le sinthome.* The Lacanian subject's "normal" identification is based on two grounds: an *imaginary* identification based on the coherence of the narcissistic, idealized view of the body and fantasies of completeness attached to it, and a *symbolic* one, based on the symbolic roles and narratives offered by language and culture. In case of Eastern European identity-politics this "normal" process of identification faces problems with both imaginary and symbolic identifications: first, there is a general lack in unambiguous heroic figures that could serve as bases for imaginary identifications, and second, there is the above mentioned incredulity towards the ideologically susceptible, idealizing grand

narratives of history, which makes the acceptance of normative social roles problematic. If one adds the heightened presence of historical trauma to this formula, one arrives at an unstable subjectivity that has to find alternative ways for the grounding of one's identity. In Lacan's theory it is precisely this alternative means of keeping the subject together that is called the *sinthome*, something seemingly accidental and odd that reveals the disturbance of the psyche, yet something that stabilizes the subject. In other words, it is precisely the symptom of instability that fulfils a stabilizing function.

It is this context that may reveal the logic motivating the hybrid aesthetics and the function of hybrid narratives in *Taxidermia*. If memory and its narratives serve as symptoms in the Lacanian sense, these memories and narratives must be organised according to a different logic, one that may seem unmotivated or bizarre from the point of view of "normal" identity-politics. The memories thus organized do not have the aim and function of making "normal" subjects at all: normality, order, the hegemonic, together with its ideologies, idealized images and totalizing narratives are outcast, rejected, and abjected in this subversive discourse. The question is, rather, what kinds of meanings, memories and subjectivites may exist on its margins.

### Corporeal memories, sensual images

In *Taxidermia* Pálfi seems to rely on some of the aesthetic strategies he used in *Hukkle* (2002), his first feature film. *Hukkle* is made up of (usually sensuously overloaded) shots of the life of a small Hungarian village where the old village wives murder their husbands. There is no audible dialogue, only the sounds of distant voices, and the amplified sounds of objects and events (of plants growing, a bicycle moving, an old man hiccupping). The shots (many of which are extreme close-ups) only loosely make up an indistinct narrative, and there are many images and shots that cannot be easily connected to the "story" at all. The spectator often needs time to "read" the images referentially: first we only see the shape, the colour, the movements, hear sounds, and it takes time until one may connect these sensuous impressions with referentially understandable concepts. However, the lack in drama, suspense and narrative does not lead to nonsense: *Hukkle* is rich in sensuous impressions. The lack of an overwhelming dramatic structure seems to set the individual images and sounds free to be even richer. As opposed to many examples of intercultural cinema that Marks analyses, the images of both *Hukkle* and *Taxidermia* are not thin at all: surely the images of the little Hungarian village evoke memories in many viewers, be they Hungarian or not. These memories are sensuous in nature, pre-narrative, and pre-conceptual, images and impressions stored deep in the body. According to Marks, "the body is a source not just of individual but of cultural memory" (xiii) and *Hukkle* is precisely the kind of film that may make one understand this statement. These images connect to sensual memories outside the grand narratives of history, potentially shared by a whole community.

*Taxidermia* is motivated by a very similar aesthetics. We often see extreme close-ups that show objects from unknown perspectives, calling attention to their non-referential, sensual qualities. When Marosgovány performs the weekly sanitary procedures of a soldier

(washes himself at a wooden washbasin at a well in the foggy winter morning), we only see the greyness of the morning mist with the hazy image of the human form, then the image of the ice on the water, a beautiful, grey surface. Marosgovány undresses and when he breaks the ice with his fist we see close ups again, of the ice, the icy water and the human hand. All these images call for aesthetic contemplation and (instead of narrative desire or curiosity) evoke sensuous memories from the spectator. Marosgovány washes himself in the fog in winter, we hear his heavy breathing, the splashing of the water, we see parts of the body, and the water steaming from the body in the cold air. It could be anywhere, we cannot see the surroundings, it is almost a surreal place, and the event does not really belong to any linear narrative: what dominates the scene are the sensuous impressions that evoke the similar memory impressions of the spectator's body. There are many images in *Taxidermia* that need time to be read referentially, images with little or no narrative function. Marks argues that "a work of cinema, though it directly engages only two senses, activates a memory that necessarily involves all the senses" (22), and apparently, this multi-sensorial experience is achieved through the memories of the body, the sensual impressions of cold water and winter mornings that we carry unconsciously. Pálfi's films strongly relate to this past outside (conscious, narrative, linear) time to evoke memories outside the dominant narratives of history.

Thus, the space of *Taxidermia* is off the map of ordered, geographical space (similarly to Deleuze's any-spaces-whatever),[3] the time is outside recorded, linear time, and the memories evoked avoid both the idealized images of the Lacanian imaginary and the totalizing narratives of the symbolic. The film builds up meaning, refers to and creates memories, constructs subjectivities, but it accomplishes this solely relying on resources outside dominant discourses. Hybrid narratives and multisensory memory-traces build up the subject of *Taxidermia*, introducing the viewer to a rich realm beneath history, language and ideology, the realm of beings dislocated by the *facies hippocratica* of history.

### Notes
[1] For an influential recent example see: Peter Meusburger et al.

[2] In *Identity Games,* Anikó Imre calls Eastern European masculinities "elusive, almost fictional" (168) and discusses the crises in masculinity and nationalism in Eastern Europe together (167–220).

[3] "The fact is that, in Europe, the post-war period has greatly increased the situations which we no longer know how to react to, in spaces which we no longer knew how to describe. These were 'any-spaces-whatever,' deserted but inhabited, disused warehouses, waste ground, cities in the course of demolition or reconstruction. And in these any-spaces-whatever a new race of characters was stirring, kind of mutant: they saw rather than acted, they were seers" (Deleuze xi).

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*Illustration 1*



*Illustration 2*

*Illustration 3*
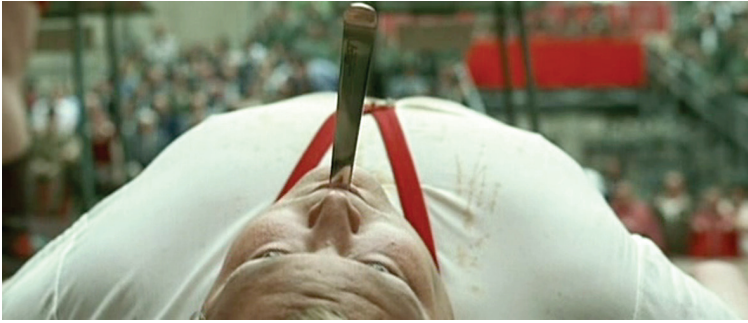


*Illustration 4*
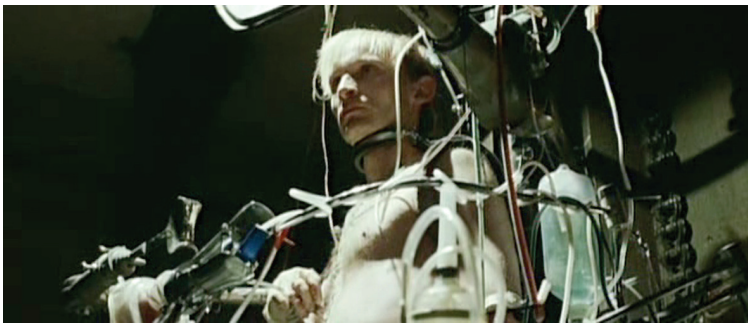


*Illustration 5*
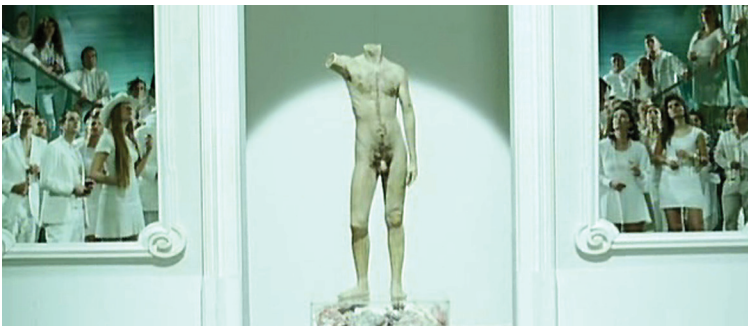


*Illustration 6*

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**Donald E. Morse**, Editor, is University Professor of American, Irish, and English Literature at the University of Debrecen and Professor Emeritus of English and Rhetoric, Oakland University, USA. He has received four Fulbright Senior Fellowships, a Rockefeller Study Fellowship, the Országh Medal, and two Soros Visiting Professorships. Among his numerous publications are *The Novels of Kurt Vonnegut: Imagining Being an Ameri-*

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*Sprache im vormärzlichen Ungarn als Inspiration zur Klärung bestimmter Begriffe des nationalen Gedanken.* In: *Die Nationalitäten und Sprachkonflikte in der Habsburger Monarchie.* Hg.: Richard Reutner. Sprachtheorie und germanistische Linguistik, Supplement 2, Nodus Publikationen, Münster, 2011, 85–125. Within the field of cultural memory studies he analyzes what basic role the Hungarian Reform Era plays in creating his own memorials.

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