

THE (WEB)SITES OF MEMORY:
CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE DIGITAL AGE


Edited by
Donald E. Morse – Zsófia O. Réti – Miklós Takács

LOCI MEMORIAE HUNGARICAE

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Contents

Miklós Takács: Preface	7
1. Theoretical reflections	
Zsófia O. Réti: Memory of Networks, Networks of Memory.....	10
Gábor Palkó: The Phenomenon of “Linked Data” from a Media Archaeological Perspective.....	23
2. Digital Memory in Everyday Life	
Norbert Krek: Lieux de Mémoire and Video Games: Mnemonic Representations of the Second World War in First Person Shooter Games of the Early Twenty-first Century	32
Antti Vallius: Landscapes of Belonging: Visual Memories in the Digital Age	43
László Z. Karvalics: Defining Two Types of Cultural “Micro-heritage”: Objects, Knowledge Dimensions and a Quest for Novel Memory Institutions	58
3. New Media for Old Ideologies	
Tuija Saresma: Circulating the Origin Myth of Western Civilization – The Racial Imagery of the ‘Men of the North’ as an Imaginary Heritage in White Supremacist Blogs	68
Klára Sándor: Versions of Folk History Representing Group Identities: The Battle for the Masternarrative	82
4. Rethinking Hungarian Collective Memory	
Katalin Bódi: Image and Imagination: The Changing Role of Art from the Nineteenth Century to the Present in Hungarian National Memory	92
Zsófia Fellegi: Digital Philology on the Semantic Web: Publishing Hungarian Avant-garde Magazines	105
Norbert Baranyai: Cult, Gossip, Memory—Aspects of Mediating Culture in Krisztián Nyáry’s Portraits of Writers in Facebook Posts	117
Notes on Contributors	127
Index	131

Preface

Miklós Takács

Societies of the digital age are facing a twofold process: on the one hand the spread of digital technology has led to the fading of earlier traditions; on the other hand as a response to this loss, individual and collective remembering has started to play an increasingly important role in the public sphere. Therefore, the idiom “memory boom” seems to be even more accurate now than ever before. The last few decades were witness to the appearance of many new media, some of which may also be used for sharing traditional knowledge. In addition to websites and online databases, the sharing practice of social media may be regarded as its most powerful tool. Meanwhile, the shift from print to digital texts has also affected such repositories of cultural memory as history and literature. For instance, professional historians have to compete with the massive presence of “public history” online, while new literary genres are born, such as the blog or “electronic literature.” Within these new genres, computers are not only considered as necessary tools for writing, but also as its primary context; that is, such pieces would become instantly illegible “off-screen,” in a printed version.

These tendencies have generated new challenges for cultural heritage institutions, primarily for archives, museums and libraries. Already they use much of their capacity to digitize cultural materials and to link together various online archives; with the largest project of this kind probably being *Europeana*. Such institutions must also, however, face the fact that cultural heritage in the digital age is always in motion due to the demands of the nonprofessional audience expecting interactivity and also because of the companies and corporations that regard cultural heritage as a branch of business. And, it is not by chance; since cultural tourism and creative industries rooted in cultural heritage increase their profit year by year.

The digital age raises an additional crucial question: if a medium actually plays such an important role in shaping a social formation or collective memory—as was the case with the birth of modern nation states—then what kind of impact does the Internet have? Is it possible that new, supranational networks will come into existence following the example of the World Wide Web? Also thought-provoking in the European context is the possibility of creating European “lieux de mémoire,” such as the *Europäische Erinnerungsorte* [European Sites of Memory] project attempted to do (den Boer, et al.). Without doubt historically with Christianity there existed such a common basis, as elaborated on by another volume,

Religiöse Erinnerungsorte in Ostmitteleuropa [Religious Sites of Memory in East-Central Europe] (Bahlcke, et al.). However, the accession of the Eastern European countries into the EU has shown that European memory politics is far from being homogeneous. Furthermore, there are very visible ruptures in the field of collective memory between the centre and the periphery (where the latter also includes the Mediterranean countries and Northern Europe). A systematic processing of Europe's largest traumas (the two world wars and the Holocaust) and the resulting reconciliation may point to a solution here. That is to say, monologic memories could become more and more dialogic, integrating each other's points of view into one (Assmann 17–20).

Thus the primary aim of the organizers (the Department of Art and Culture Studies, University of Jyväskylä and the Institute of Hungarian Literary and Cultural Studies, University of Debrecen) of the international workshop entitled *The (Web)Sites of Memory: Cultural Heritage in the Digital Age* (Debrecen, 28–29 May 2015) was to reflect on the processes that were influenced by digital technologies and that altered cultural memories ranging from novel opportunities to transfer cultural heritage through its economic utilization to the problematic notion of “lieux de mémoire.”

This volume incorporates written versions of the workshop lectures as a part of the *Loci Memoriae Hungaricae* series.

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1. Theoretical reflections

Memory of Networks, Networks of Memory¹

Zsófia O. Réti

In January 2017, the German-Israeli artist Shahak Shapira published a controversial project online, entitled #YOLOCAUST—a neologism from the popular hashtag ‘#yolo’ (you only live once) and ‘Holocaust’—which presented digitally manipulated images of selfies taken at the Memorial of Murdered European Jews in Berlin. The artist combined the image of happy people in Instagram-ready selfie poses at the memorial with photographs of dying or dead Jewish people in Auschwitz. The reactions—of course on the internet—were immediate and intense. Condemnation and moral judgment went both ways: not only towards the young people recording their self-images during a holiday, but also towards Shapira, for his “empathy deficit” (cf. Sárjai-Benedek). Shortly after, the artist deleted all the #YOLOCAUST images from his website and placed there instead the written reactions to the project,² such as letters from one of the boys in the pictures and outraged or supportive comments.

This recent and openly disputed series of event—a work of art in itself, as a cooperation between Shapira and the proverbial People of the Internet—is a significant example illustrating how the second generation of post-memory can or cannot deal with the past (Hirsch), and what is the stake and value of remembering for both millennials and earlier generations. This incident also highlights: the undeniable fact that the context and conditions of remembering have been fundamentally changed by the internet, and more specifically, by social media roughly in the last decade. To discuss the correspondence between (collective) memory and social media the humanities will need to work extensively with other disciplines, including not only social sciences, and probably computer science but most importantly network science. There are, however, consequences of imagining contemporary online memory communities as networks.

The metaphors we browse and remember by

As it is well known in humanities at least since Paul Ricoeur’s seminal volume *The Rule of Metaphor* (Ricoeur) and Lakoff and Johnson’s much cited *The Metaphors We Live By*, “new metaphors have the power to create new reality.... If a new metaphor enters the conceptual system that we base our actions on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to.” (Lakoff & Johnson). Nietzsche’s

famous remark, unavoidably and very visibly using a metaphor to describe metaphors, also reflects on the power of metaphors: “What then is the truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding.” (Nietzsche 117). Metaphors, both related to the internet and memory, are always already filters of perception; that is, they necessarily have their limitations and to some extent are always political. They have agendas behind them and they shape the way we are able to think about certain things.

We are literally unable to speak about the internet without using metaphors, all its denominations are on the face of it metaphorical, and in this case the use of spatial metaphors is most frequently used to describe it. At the dawn of the internet era in the 1990s, two competing metaphors emerged, which attempted to describe the internet as two, fundamentally different phenomena: the information superhighway and cyberspace. Allegedly invented by, but definitely popularized by Al Gore in the 1990s, the highway metaphor most of all suggested that the internet was a kind of infrastructure—much like a physically existing superhighway, which should be, to some extent regulated and maintained by the government.

Another abundant metaphor that characterized the 1990s was cyberspace. Coined by William Gibson in his short story “Burning Chrome” in 1982 and popularized by his paradigmatic cyberpunk novel *Neuromancer* in 1984, “cyberspace” is defined as “[a] consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators, in every nation.... A graphic representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the non space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data” (*Neuromancer* 67). In Gibson’s works, cyberspace is an actual, existing, physically perceivable entity, but it was easy to use the terms ‘cyberspace’ and ‘internet’ as mutually metaphorical to each other: first, the web as a non-fictional equivalent for cyberspace, then cyberspace as the spatialization of the internet itself.³

As opposed to the notion of the information superhighway, the point of the cyberspace metaphor lies in creating an alternative vision of reality, where anyone can get a second chance imagining and positioning themselves differently. As Josh Dzieza concludes, “cyberspace became the chosen metaphor of the libertarian and countercultural strains of the early internet. As the media began to drum up internet panic, it became a scary place, full of cybercriminals cybersexing, but it was still an alternate dimension of total freedom” (Dzieza).

Metaphors of memory have been subject to extensive interdisciplinary scholarship (see for example Draaisma; Randall). Here, it is sufficient to say that an overwhelming majority of memory metaphors relies on the media humankind invented to defy forgetting. “From Plato’s wax tablet to the computers of our age, memory-related language is shot through with metaphors. Our views of the operation of memory are fuelled by the procedures and techniques we have invented for the preservation and reproduction of

information” (Draaisma 3). Such is the process of writing, photography, the CD-ROM or the computer—and the list is far from complete.

Although these are only a few fragments of internet and memory metaphors, it can be safely claimed that we are dealing with two, very diverse and complex conceptual fields. The intersection of the two piles—metaphors that are used to describe both internet *and* collective memory—might help to understand how collective memories function in the era of Web 2.0.

First, the idea of fluidity, of both the Web and collective memory, often influences the way we are able to think about the two phenomena. More precisely, the internet is quite frequently compared to an ocean, as it appears in expressions such as “surfing” on waves of information, “deep web”, which is often visualized as an iceberg floating in the sea, “torrents” of data or internet “piracy”. All these invoke the images of unconstrained movement and a new frontier—which is very much in contrast with the ‘information superhighway’ metaphor (Bangura 157). In the case of collective memory practices, the metaphor of the ocean also appears as something that evokes the randomness of movement, as it also implies a distinction between depth and surface. Pierre Nora, for instance, describes lieux de mémoire (realms of memory) as “moments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer quite life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded” (Nora 12). Realms of memory are therefore almost accidental residues of deep, living memory—resonating with the distinction between diving or surfing in the “http-ocean.”

Despite the fact that, at first glance, the words ‘web’/‘net’ are not necessarily perceived as metaphors, especially metaphors with a strong reflective power, they are in fact indispensable for imagining the internet. As Britt Peterson points out, “even that technical term ‘network’ is a metaphor, tying the concept to broadcasting, telecommunications, railroads and rivers and streets, the nervous and circulatory systems of the body (...). Although we now rarely call the Internet a ‘network,’ or even the ‘Net,’ these implications have survived.” (Peterson).

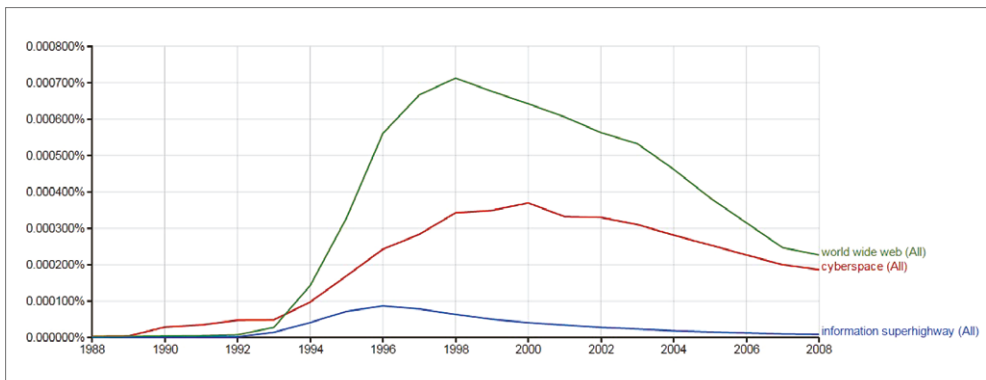


Figure 1. The popularity of the expressions ‘information superhighway’, ‘cyberspace’ and ‘world wide web’ 1990–2008. Source: Google Ngram

Figure 1 displays a Google Ngram, which compares the use of the term ‘information superhighway’ and ‘cyberspace’ to that of the ‘world wide web’ from 1988 to 2008. As the figure makes clear the term ‘world wide web’ is by far the most popular one of the three internet metaphors.

As Ricoeur notes, a ‘dead metaphor’ at its final stage when the meaning-effect merely becomes a shift of meaning that increases polysemy (Ricoeur 115). From the late 2000s to the early 2010s the emergence of social media and Web 2.0 also caused the metaphor of web and net(work) to grow stronger than other structures of talking about the internet, as it coincided with a significant shift from human-machine interactions to human-human communications (via the web). In this sense, the world-wide popularity of social media introduced a whole new era in the history of remembering online, and the ‘net’ or the ‘web’ became key metaphors in conceptualizing change. It can, therefore, be claimed that the denomination ‘World Wide Web’ was and is the most functional metaphor of the internet—in spite of the fact that presently it is certainly a dead one. It is not by chance that Tim Berners-Lee, ‘inventor of the world wide web’—or, at least that of the http protocol—chose to call his invention ‘web’ as opposed to his other two, concurring ideas: ‘the mine of information’ or the slightly different ‘information mine’ (Berners-Lee 23)—both of which would have evoked a hermeneutical structure where it is possible to dig deeper in order to find some kind of absolute truth, while a network that consists of equal nodes enables many competing truths to be articulated and spread. While it was only a fantasy at the heyday of the internet, with Web 2.0, the network structure prevailed and also determined how memories are formed and organized online: collective memories are networked in an online environment.

Memory as network

Hungarian popular culture of the 1980s and its present day memory has proven an exciting period in Hungarian history, politically, culturally, medially alike. Slowly approaching what Jan Assmann calls “the floating gap” (Assmann 54) between communicative and cultural memory, the 1980s is also in a special position because this is the first decade in Hungarian media history where we can talk about the diffusion of visual media and the first time when a considerable volume of various video recordings were made both by professionals and amateurs. While trying to access resources, I found it natural to start on the internet, more precisely, on YouTube, and usually the data I sought was indeed online. Such resources included diverse videos as, for instance, a documentary on the first Hungarian beauty pageant; footage of the reburial of the executed prime minister, Imre Nagy; TV coverage for a football world cup; the first Hungarian rock musical; stand-up comedians; classic 1980s TV-series; music videos; feature films about the Kádár-era made in the 2000s; classic movies made during the state socialist period, and even a documentary on an 80s punk band. All of these displayed on the greatest video sharing site, YouTube. After spending considerable time browsing these videos, also checking other suggested videos, looking at the comments below them, a glimpse of a vivid ‘memory community’ began to assemble in front of my eyes, a community with different rules and characteristics

from its offline counterparts—along with a possible methodological benefit since social media enables a person to delineate memory communities more accurately.

This memory network of YouTube videos about the late Kádár-era has, for example, two main characteristic features. First, an overwhelming majority of these videos are linked to each other by the YouTube suggested videos algorithm, and second, the network structure that is outlined equally includes human and non-human actors. The consequences of these features may be important not only in researching post-socialist remembering in Hungary, but also for studying collective memories online.

The interconnected nature of YouTube videos on similar topics, can be accounted for by the site's related videos recommendation system. When a video is new, YouTube puts together such recommendations based on the metadata the uploader attaches to it: title, description, tags, etc. Then, YouTube uses deep learning to refine its recommendation based on user activity data, using a technique called "association rule mining" or "co-visitation counts" (Davidson, et al. 294); that is, the algorithm counts how frequently a certain video was viewed together with another video. To put it simply, YouTube offers related videos based on what other users (members of a memory community in this case) tend to watch. All this implies that the recommended videos create a visualisable network, which may be understood as a network of memories, where the edges between the specific nodes are generated by user activity.⁴ Such an understanding of networked memories may be able to provide a synchronous glance at collective memories at work—not necessarily opposed to, but rather in addition to the mostly diachronic analyses of memory (such as Nora's *lieux de mémoire*, for instance). These memories are always already contextual and hypertextual in the sense that they are never perceived on their own, but rather as parts of a non-linear, many-centred web of related memories, which are in active dialogue with each other.

Second, the network of memories that is outlined on social media provides a particular constellation. Web 2.0 is a place where the object and subject of remembering things that are recorded/remembered, such as videos and even posts, blogs, events, commemorations in a broader sense, and people who are remembering (the users/viewers/commenters) coexist and cooperate in a way which is not entirely unlike what Bruno Latour described in his seminal Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Latour describes networks in which human and non-human actants are equally powerful parts of the network and may be analysed using the same, non-differentiated language (Latour). The difference between ANT and social media networks of memory is that in the former, each actant has a role that is just as important as any other node in the network, while this is not the case in networked memory communities.

Although humans establish the edges between videos, they and their interactions are unavoidably peripheral to the videos, which are then seen as more central hubs. Still, human agents are positioned within the network, without the chance of having any external, complete, unbiased view of it—similarly to the internet bon-mot from *Metafilter* user 'blue_beetle,' who first suggested that in social media, "if you are not paying for it, you are the product." 'Blue_beetle' was successful in identifying a shift from the "web-as-

content” model, which was characteristic of the Web 1.0, towards the “web-as-network” paradigm of Web 2.0. In this sense collective memory online now appears as a spectacle in which anyone can participate.

A second difference is that videos are not evenly distributed in the network. It is not only their viewing figures, but also their centrality (that is, how important they are in the network) and their valency (how many bonds they have towards other videos) that are different. Most importantly, though, the most central and the most viewed videos do not necessarily coincide with each other, or, for that matter, with the ones that academic memory studies practitioners would somewhat arbitrarily select as the most relevant.

For instance, in the case of videos about/from the Kádár-era, the most viewed ones include *Koppány dala* [The Song of Koppány] from the 1983 rock opera *István, a király* [Stephen, the King] with a stunning view count of above 1,100,000⁵; a film satire about the 1960s, *Csinibaba* [Dollybirds] with more than 700,000 views and *Kopaszkutya* [Bald Dog], yet another satire on the situation of Hungarian blues in the 80s, with a really unexpected popularity of 660,000.⁶ The valency and centrality of these vertices gives a very different picture, where the most central nodes of the sample include the cult movie *Moszkva tér* [Moscow Square] from 2001, *K2*, a 1990 documentary about prostitution and *Szépleányok* [Beautiful Women], a documentary about the first Hungarian beauty pageant.

The network of memories that is assembled online is, of course, to a certain extent, based on the ‘offline’ associative links between certain mediatized memories, but it is also organized by different principles. Even the term “visuality” should be carefully reconsidered. For instance, in contrast with what I previously called the “diffusion of visual media” in connection with Hungary in the 1980s, the networked memories of YouTube juxtapose these visual artefacts in such a natural way that their original contextual differences become invisible. Some of these videos were presented almost secretly to ‘ideologically trustworthy’ people; others were shown in the cinema or were repeated all over again and again on TV. Some were live media events that were only broadcast once but were made available for the future as ‘documents of the age’; other pieces were certainly not intended to be preserved, much like the ‘trash of the past,’ as Aleida Assmann calls such residues (Assmann 1996). Now all of these are presented as interrelated “.flv” files, in the all-embracing, yet immaterial milieu offered by the Web 2.0.

The benefits of such observations for studying collective memory online are twofold. On the one hand, they clearly show that network science may offer new approaches—even new concepts—for this field of study, and, on the other hand, they already provide more clear cut, pragmatic means to identify the objects and media products that are most important for the remembering community at any given time.

Researching networked memories

In order to conceptualize how the idea of networked memories and memories as networks may influence the research of online memories, I suggest the following three main aspects that might be worthy of consideration for future research: functional/storage memory, individual/collective memory, and the question of equal and democratic access.

Functional or storage memory

The distinction between functional and storage memories was introduced by Aleida Assmann, who argues that functional memory is “inhabited,” and directly connects a social group to its past, and is generally a form of memory that is presently in use. As a contrast, storage memory is a reservoir of “uncommitted resources” (*ungebundene Hilfsmittel*), it is the knowledge “that is no longer, not yet, or temporarily not part of the functional framework” (Assmann, *Cultural Memory* 126), but has the subversive potential to later become functional.

YouTube certainly seems to be the *par excellence* archive. For instance, as of February 2017, more than 400 hours of content is uploaded to YouTube every minute (Hamedy), which is an unmanageable stream of data, but the selection and recommendation system that it introduces, and even the networked arrangement of videos also adds a functional element to the archive. As Péter György, as early as 2002, summed up, “the modern age silence of libraries is replaced by the rambling marvel of Babel’s plethora” (György 20). This is due to the process of archiving that has become an inherently social activity in the age of social media, which is in line with Pinchevski’s argument, that “with the advent of electronic audio-visual technologies, and more intensively with the introduction of interactive new media and multimedia, the archive [...], rather than calcifying memory, has become an eminently social practice, a veritable living memory” (Pinchevski 254). A good example that illustrates the dynamic relationship between archival and social memory functions (storage and functional memories) online is mapped out by Anna Menyhért in her paper about processing traumas on Facebook. Examining the activity of two Facebook groups that deal with holocaust memory, she remarks that collecting/saving the posts in which members wrote down their family histories (a particular form of testimonies) was one of the groups’ most important explicit goals almost right from their creation (Menyhért 363)

A reason why the relationship between functional and storage memories might be imagined on very different grounds in networked memory communities is that the centrality and valency of a node will define its position as a part of functional or storage memory. For instance, the plenitude of available data might give the impression that everything that is worthy of remembering is on YouTube. The illusion is also created that everything that is “up there” is inter-connected by the recommended videos. However, when certain videos—even the most valuable ones—are not or not sufficiently connected to the network, they will not be reached by the users, and as a result, they will easily fall out of active, functional memory.

For instance the Kónya-Pető debate, one of the most important public debates and a prominent media event of the early 1990s focusing on providing justice a major issue of the democratic transition, was uploaded on 30 September 2014 by the Independent Forum for Jurists, one of the trigger organizations and key players in the system change. In its first nine months it acquired 61 views, and by August 2017 it only reached about 2000 views.⁷ These low numbers are accounted for in Figure 2, featuring a screenshot from a software designed by Yasiv: a tool suitable for visualizing YouTube suggested videos,

this one centred on the Kónya-Pető debate. As is apparent from the figure, there is only one incoming suggestion for the video—from another file that was also uploaded by the same user, with similar view counts. All this does not imply that the distinction between functional and storage memory is completely eradicated in the Web 2.0 era, but it does support the contention that there are more dynamic interactions between the two, and that many of them can be explained by the networked characteristics of online remembering.

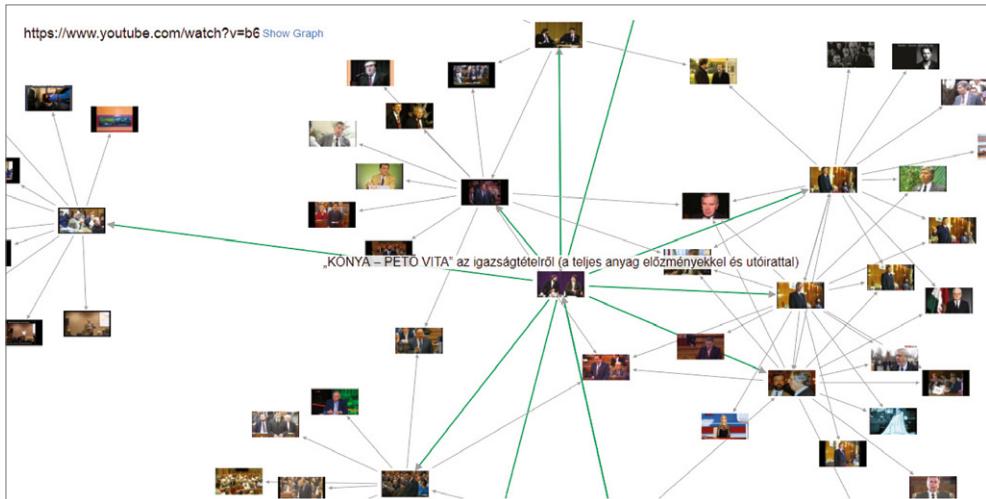


Figure 2. A network of suggested videos, centred on the Kónya-Pető debate. Source: Yasiv.

Individual/collective memories

The relationship between individual and collective memories is frequently understood as a(n implicitly) metaphorical one, where communicative memories can be read using the patterns of individual remembering. Such a figure of speech helps to naturalize a memory community, emphasizing their togetherness. In other words, using individual memory as a metaphor for collective memory is an attempt to provide a sense of immediacy for the concept. In a similar fashion, there are also some metaphors for the internet that have not yet been mentioned and which also capitalize upon the illusion of immediacy. Examples include Walter J. Ong’s concept of “secondary orality” (Ong), or even expressions like *chatrooms*, *Twitter* or even the compound *Facebook*, which evokes both face-to-face contact and the medium of printed texts. Besides, networks, more precisely social networks are also frequently thought of as living organisms; such as thinking of computer *viruses* and a network’s resilience to them.

The metaphorical relationship between individual and collective memories has been heavily challenged in memory studies, as in Wulf Kansteiner’s critique: “Collective memory studies have not yet sufficiently conceptualized collective memories as distinct from individual memory. As a result, the nature and dynamics of collective memories are frequently misrepresented through facile use of psychoanalytical and psychological

methods” (Kansteiner 180). Jan Assmann seeks to avoid the methodological dangers emphasized by Kansteiner, however, by clearly defining the relationship between individual and collective memories. Capitalizing on Maurice Halbwachs’ work, Assmann argues that the social, the collective is a necessary framework that determines the memory of its members. “From the individual’s point of view, memory is a conglomeration that emerges from participation in different group memories. From the perspective of the group, memory is a matter of knowledge that is distributed among and internalized by each member” (Jan Assmann 22). Thus the network of memories as a way of thinking about collective memories is both metaphorical and synecdochical in relation to individual memories. They are, to a certain extent, imagined by the model for individual memory (just like the internet is described as an organism) and they also consist of clusters of individual memories. In this case, it should also be considered that the very act of publishing an individual life story and/or a video online presupposes that it is intended to be shared and made public. Therefore, any private online memory as it becomes archived becomes integrated into collective storage memory, with a potential to move into functional memory once it is connected to the network of other memories, viewed, shared and commented.

Equal access and representation

The third and final aspect of networked memories is the question of equal and democratic access and/or representation in online memory communities. As already resonating in the concept of cyberspace, the internet is, to a certain extent, used to function as the utopia of perfect democracy (Papacharissi), which can be dissected into two elements. First, at least in theory, everything is accessible online, meaning that everyone has an equal chance to access knowledge. Second, closely related to that, the World Wide Web is imagined as the place where everyone has the right to participate in the life of online communities and to make a career of one’s own choice based on expertise instead of privileges.

Starting from the mid-2000s, there were indeed initiatives that acted upon such fantasies of a utopia of all knowledge available online. A good example is Google’s ‘Project Ocean’ in 2004, which sought to make an unprecedented repository of all written knowledge freely available for everyone (and which was quickly forced to make substantial changes due to copyright claims). Another aspect of the same vision occurs in the WikiLeaks project that publishes classified information online (cf. Sifry).⁸

The other side of the democratization of knowledge, however, illuminates that archives (just as storage memories) may never be complete, in spite of the fact that online repositories of information about the past tend to be pictured as such. A good example of this illusion of completeness, which is actually a characteristic of networked memories, is the story of the documentary series *Szabadság tér ’89* [Liberty Square ’89] and *Szabadság tér ’56* [Liberty Square ’56], which were aired in 2015 and 2016, for the 25th anniversary of the system change and the 60th anniversary of the 1956 revolution respectively, with the same producers and experts. Both of the series produced below average viewer numbers on TV, and similarly low figures on YouTube, where each episode was uploaded shortly after it was broadcast. A quick glimpse at the visualization of those videos (see Figure 3)

demonstrates that any, randomly selected episode of either TV-series on YouTube is almost exclusively connected to other episodes of the series. All this may lead to the conclusion that a network of memories has the danger of appearing as a complete whole—as if creating an alternative universe. This becomes especially important when compared with claims from both the contemporary political left and the right that there are parallel memory paradigms in Hungary (see for example Gyáni).

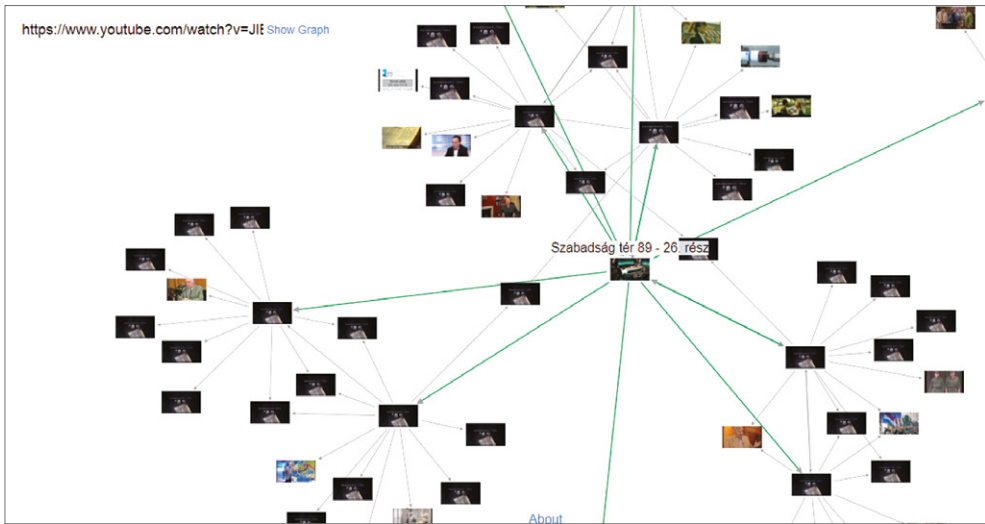


Figure 3. A network of suggested videos, centred on episode 26 of the series Szabadság tér '89.
Source: Yasiv.

What is more, even though much information is online, *navigation* requires skills that are not necessarily available to every participant in the online public sphere. Instead of an English garden, the network of hypertextual memories resembles more the foggy maze of Victorian London (György 9). In addition, and this is the real stake in working with online networks of memory, the selective visibility of online data is dependent on its position in the network and the algorithms of preference that were designed accordingly. Eli Pariser net activist and author argues that these algorithms seek to offer personalized search results for their users, trying to guess what they need, and more importantly, trying to give them search results that they like. In this fashion, the repository of all available knowledge is turned into a safe haven that prevents intelligent debate by making it impossible for opposing views or contradictory memories to emerge (Pariser).

The utopia of equal access and internet as empowerment was, in fact, supported by the 'rags to riches' stories from the early days of the internet, when the pioneers of the 'dotcom bubble' managed to make fortunes using only their expertise. Another dimension of the idea of internet as empowerment may be seen in the Arab spring of 2011, which signalled a serious landmark in the history of social media, as it enabled fast, bottom-up civic actions to be organized (cf. for instance Eltantawy-Wiest). However, it might

be argued that Web 2.0 does not necessarily erase privilege or create equal access. Not every member of the offline remembering community can or wishes to participate in the networked memories of social media, and access/participation might be influenced by social, regional and other factors, therefore, online memory communities cannot be regarded as representatives of an entire society. Besides, even if members of the memory community do go online, this new network will still be uneven in terms of the extent of participation. While a few people will comment on certain textual/audio-visual memories, and a few more of them might use the ‘like’ buttons to express their opinions, the great majority will remain silent spectators of both online memories and the debate about them.

Perspectives and ‘better readers’

As a conclusion, let me point out an optimistic remark by Yochai Benkler, who argues that the transparency and malleability of a networked structure of information will lead to positive changes in culture. “We are seeing the emergence of a new folk culture [...] where many more of us participate actively in making cultural moves and finding meaning in the world around us. These practices make their practitioners better ‘readers’ of their own culture and more self-reflective and critical of the culture they occupy” (Benkler 15). If we once again look at the #YOLOCAUST project, it seems that the shift to more “self-reflective and critical” readers of their own culture still awaits. Instead, I suggest that the memories of networks require and enable other kinds of expertise than offline memory communities. Opinion leaders and trolls may emerge, where the former shape memories and the latter contest them, trying to map out the boundaries, weaknesses and resilience of the network. Online memory networks have different agendas, structures and mechanisms than offline memory communities, but at the same time they are no less virtual, and they offer an intriguing new field for memory studies research. The next step appears to be serious cooperation between the social sciences and network sciences. Going online and interpreting the changes we see there is not only a responsibility, but also a survival skill for twenty-first century humanities.

Notes

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¹ But the pictures remains freely available at a number of other sites as the project went viral.

² More than a decade later, in 1999 the film *The Matrix* revamped the idea of cyberspace as ‘the matrix’: the visualization of the web. Derivative metaphors of the same concept can still be found in terms like “chat room” or “walled garden”.

³ In 2015, when the first version of this paper was written, the assumption could be made that all the videos related to the Kádár-era could be reached from any given point of the network, simply by using the recommendations. During the last two years, however, many central ‘nodes’ (videos), such as Gábor Zsigmond Papp’s *Magyarország Retro*

[Hungary Retro] and *Budapest Retro* films were removed due to copyright infringement issues, striking a considerable blow to the Kádár-era video network.

⁴ In August 2017.

⁵ In February 2017. The video was removed from YouTube after that. For comparison the “system changing speech” of the present prime minister, Viktor Orbán had almost 200,000 views.

⁷ Dave Eggers’s novel *The Circle* (2013) takes this idea of the complete democratization of knowledge to dystopic extremes. The motto of the 2017 film made of the book was “Knowing is good, knowing everything is better.”

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The Phenomenon of “Linked Data” from a Media Archaeological Perspective

Gábor Palkó

Utilizing a media archaeological perspective, this essay reverses the main question of this volume and, instead of examining the impact of internet on cultural heritage, explores the historical nature of the World Wide Web itself. This topic brings to the fore not only problems of archiving digitally published content, but also changes in theoretically understanding the internet. The paper also draws attention to Niklas Luhmann’s oeuvre, which although ending with his death in 1998s, remains still relevant when discussing even the most up-to-date questions of internet transformations. Such theoretical approaches along with current media archaeological discourses lead to a discussion of more practical issues (such as the problem of “digital objects”). The essay concludes that the dilemmas of philologists and other representatives of memory institutions may best be understood from an historical-theoretical perspective, which upon reflection may help them find practical solutions to future problems.

The term ‘semantic web,’ which brought about countless misunderstandings due to its seemingly obvious linguistic reference, slowly gave way to the notions of ‘linked data’ and ‘linked open data’ in the last decade. This shift may be traced back to both rhetorical and pragmatic reasons, but I will come back to this later. The trend, however we call it, grew into one of the most influential ones in the domain of digital culture.¹ Huge services like *Europeana* did a lot to spread a network model based on metadata standards and common aggregation models, all fostering the use of semantic web technology.

The school or movement named media archaeology, which seeks to give a complex account on the mediation of (both digital and analogue) culture, does not have much to say about the technological and cultural trend I address here. The same holds true for institutional archives: media archaeology tends to focus on marginal and/or popular cultural practices and often neglects official, institutionalized ones (Palkó 75).

The famous volume *Media Archaeology* edited by Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka mentions the term “semantic web” only twice. Parikka refers to it in the context of semantic applications designed to filter unwanted “junk” and he stresses the act of communication between machines (instead of communication between humans and machine):

Interestingly, with filtering programs and semantic web applications that distinguish “dirt” from proper messages the communicative act is happening increasingly only between programs: the mass-mailing systems that distribute spam messages and

the filtering applications that receive and analyse them and potentially forward some of the messages to the user. (Parikka 261)

The fact that Parikka is very much interested in the anomalies and marginal effects of the digital culture in general, may account for this special focus. But if one reckons with the number of triplets (32 billion) counted in the same years when the volume *Media Archaeology* was published,² then the context of spam filtering does not seem to be relevant. (Berners-Lee & O'Hara 1)

The second locus where there is an explicit hint on Web 3.0 (just to mention another synonym of the topic) is an ironic sentence by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, who blames the theory of the semantic web, as a naïve futurology, for its bold predictions concerning digital media: “everyone is now speculating about the Web 3.0, the semantic Web in which information and meaning will finally coincide.” (Chun 185) She quotes a *New York Times* article from 2006 using an enthusiastic tone. To be fair to Chun, one has to admit that her paper was published one year earlier than the famous TED speech in which Tim Berners-Lee proposed and advertised “the next web”—as he calls it (Berners-Lee).

This is a concise formulation of the most popular critical commonplace about the cultural technique I am trying to describe: it is dismissed as the illusion of producing meaning and understanding the world through and by machines. Media archaeology as a method focuses on the dark technological background or hidden base of the media channelling cultural transfer but in the case of the semantic web, it fails to access the “sub-semantic strata” of digital culture. Wolfgang Ernst argues that:

By applying techno-mathematical analysis, media archaeology accesses the sub-semantic strata of culture, being (to quote from a Pink Floyd song) “close to the machine.” In a nonmetaphorical sense, this means dealing with the techno-archaeological artifact—and in a methodological sense, it means performing media archaeology by means of such machines (measuring, calculating). (Ernst 242)

The sub-semantic strata of the semantic web are not semantic—actually, there are no semantic layers in the deep at all, only codes designed to be read by machines. (Ernst has a remark concerning the sound of the archive pointing out the non-semantic nature of programming [Ernst 248]).

So, media archaeology hasn't delivered a proper sub-semantic or sub-medial reading of the Web 3.0 (the notion sub-medial refers to Boris Groys). This is even more interesting since the preface to *Media Archaeology* clearly states that the book and the editors themselves seek to focus their attention on the anomalies and “bad objects” of *digital* culture. Although thorough research should be done here, one thing is clear: there are quite obvious anomalies and also “bad objects” in the world of the semantic web. As media archaeology is a fruitful and productive perspective and research project in reflecting upon digital culture, it could also prove useful in reflecting the processes and the influence of Web 3.0 as a cultural technique as well. All the more so, since most available descriptions of Web 3.0 lack the theoretical background, which would be necessary to treat the anthropological, social and technical aspects of this special knowledge transfer.

Media archaeology is not the only theory which underestimates the semantic web by treating it as a futuristic illusion. Dirk Baecker, one of the most influential followers of Niklas Luhmann (although not the late Luhmann himself who came surprisingly close to post-structuralist theories and who modelled the computer as a self-organizing black box) undervalues the Web 3.0 project in a similar fashion:

The step from the World Wide Web to the Semantic Web may still be pipe dreaming, but it will both fashion itself and be controllable only to the extent that we behave as if what we, in fact, do not master in dealing with spirits, gods and humans, but are all the same used to, were only a qualitative matter. (Baecker 159)

According to Berners-Lee, father of the World Wide Web, this step to the next web has already happened. (A question may arise here: if it has happened, why the imperative edifying rhetoric in the above mentioned popular talk, and even in papers published as late as 2013 arguing that everyone *must* publish data to build the linked data web?) Manuel Castells or at least his methodology was needed to answer the question if Web 3.0 is such a socially penetrating cultural technique, which forms and informs the whole network society (Castells 500). It is even more problematic to answer the question from Hungary, where the influence of Web 3.0 is minimal—and not just in the cultural field. A different problem arises on the global scale of tracing the prevalence of semantic technology, since its visibility changes drastically in different domains of use: whereas it often forms trade secrets in business life, while cultural institutions move fast in the direction of publishing linked *open* data (Ross et al.).

Wendy Hall, David De Roure and Nigel Shadbolt attempt to answer the question of what is the semantic web and why does it present the next step in the evolution of the network medium in the context of twenty-first century scientific research. Their study does not lack critical aspects, which is vital, since most of the literature on Web 3.0 remains on the level of a popularizing guide. This may be attributed to the fact that, on the one hand, the comprehension and use of the technique requires technical IT knowledge, so most theoretically and critically oriented humanists lack the ability to take a closer look into it. On the other hand, at least in the DCH (Digital Cultural Heritage) sector of Europe, the guidelines describing ‘good practices’ of the technology are financed—and through the project machinery and rhetoric also formed—by huge EU project funds.

The Hall et al. study, *The Evolution of the Web and Implications for eResearch* argues that in order to analyse and understand the web, a new discipline of ‘web science’ is needed. Their paper reflects on the fact that in the project and research domain named *eScience* life and environmental studies played a predominant role, so one should use the term *eResearch* instead, which also integrates social sciences. Studying the web in this respect should be as interdisciplinary as the web itself.

The process (or evolution) through which the web of documents develops into the web of linked data is presented in the context of scientific research. It is easy to ground this correlation as the idea of the web itself came from the need for sharing scientific research data. The same kind of need stands in the background of the development and

first use of linked data technology which was to publish data the global use of which could be guaranteed. For example, the data coming from environmental sciences (such as, climate studies and oceanography) being mostly numerical, are independent of cultural and language barriers and are easily transferable through digital media.

When speaking about the evolution of the web from the interconnected documents to a network of data, it is very hard to resist the temptation to talk about the forerunners of the hyperlink technology from Memex to Xanadu and beyond. For now suffice it-to-say that each model of hyperlinks in the twentieth century before the semantic web was based on, modelled after and meant to preserve human association in contrast to the automatic, real-time re-activation of connections in the twenty-first century. Hall, De Roure and Shadbolt contend that

The original *Scientific American* article on the Semantic Web appeared in 2001 (...). It described the evolution of the Web from one that consisted largely of documents for humans to read to one that included data and information for computers to manipulate. The Semantic Web is a Web of actionable information—information derived from data through a semantic theory for interpreting the symbols.³ The semantic theory provides an account of ‘meaning’ in which the logical connection of terms establishes interoperability between systems. (Hall et al. 994)

Before proceeding to a more concrete way of dealing with the cultural technique treated here let me examine a theoretical model that—at least in my opinion and despite an obvious anachronism—will aid in understanding the novelty of the new world of Web 3.0. As previously argued, media archaeology hasn’t delivered a proper sub-semantic or sub-medial reading of the semantic web. Nor did, of course, Niklas Luhmann, the famous systems theorist who wrote his last texts in the mid-90s, who could not have known about linked data technologies. Still, his views on the computer medium at times seem to be prescient concerning the phenomenon later called linked open data.

In the language of Luhmannian theory, the sub-medial or sub-semantical layer of the computer and computer-network media can be modelled through the difference between form and medium. Luhmann describes this new type of communication with a previously unknown breadth in the gap between form and medium. In the age of electronic media the surface (interface) on which forms appear is the screen, and the depth is a machine or a network of machines that may be manipulated by program commands, queries, and human gestures, but the where and how of the actual processes remain totally unobservable (cf. cloud computing!). The forms that actually appear on the surface depend on a momentary constellation of the hidden, a-topical, dematerialized medium in which these constellations dissolve and stiffen in an endless process (Luhmann 302–15). This is an adequate description of the linked data phenomenon, since the relations produced by automated data linking processes finally determine what will appear on our computer screens. Human interaction obviously has an influence on these processes through bodily gestures, but the processes themselves are unobservable.

There is another point in Luhmann’s argument that may help us understand the novel operations of the computer media. According to the short media archaeological account

(this is, of course, a deliberate anachronism) of the history of communication media described in his famous book *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* [The Society of Society], Luhmann defines oral communication as the temporal and spatial unity of utterance and understanding. Writing and—much more effectively—printing inserts temporal and spatial distance between the gesture of expression and the act of understanding, but the infrastructure of the written culture provided a rather stable frame creating a bridge over this distance.⁴ In Luhmann's view, electronic media widened this gap to a previously unthinkable measure through new data-processing methods. The act of writing, although the horizon of a future reader is vague, is accomplished with an eye on possible readings, which is often reflected in the introduction or by directly addressing a future reader. The unity (or the illusion of the unity) of the communication act from expression to understanding is maintained. Understanding for Luhmann is nothing more than the lack of doubt about the consensus and that consensus was established with the help of social institutions of the reading culture (such as, libraries) and with the art of hermeneutics (developed to bridge the gap between present readers and old texts). But when there is an automated and uncontrollable process inserted between the input and output of data, this unity will no longer be maintained (Luhmann 309) and Luhmann was rather sceptical about the future chances of communication in the age of the computer.

*

To define the semantic web is surely a suicidal venture yet as it is based on a minimalistic syntax, the task may not be quite impossible. Hall et al, for instance, mention all the important elements of the technique itself:

The basic building blocks of the Semantic Web are the Resource Description Framework (RDF), Universal Resource Identifiers (URIs), triplestores and ontologies. The original Web took hypertext and made it work on a global scale; the vision for RDF was to provide a minimalist knowledge representation for the Web. It provides a simple but powerful triple-based representation language for the URIs, which enable the identification of resources because they have a global scope and are interpreted consistently across contexts. Associating a URI with a resource means that anyone can link to it, refer to it or retrieve a representation of it. URIs allow machines to process data directly, enabling the shift from a Web of documents to a Web of data. (Hall et al. 994–5.)

RDF (Resource Description Framework) is a logical construct, which provides “minimalist knowledge representation” in the form of an object-predicate-subject relationship. One of the most common misunderstandings concerning the semantic web is to assume that it is based on and meant to model natural languages or cultural semantics. This is not the case. All three elements of the object-predicate-subject triplet include a permanent link to a stable external (online) source. The RDF does not consist of words, let alone meanings, but only of codes read by (and most often written by) computers.

The “minimalist knowledge representation” Berners-Lee asserts is useful in two ways. First, through data linked to a network of structured external data, homonymy can be filtered out (he gives as an example the word “Copenhagen,” which may refer to a city, a beer or a soccer team. His second example is much more interesting and complicated. Linked data make possible the automatic linking of different statements on the same subject, or the linking the same type of predicate to different subjects. This is the fulfilment of Luhmann’s logic of media evolution since a local piece of data may prove to be relevant in contexts which are totally unpredictable for those who initially provided them.

Berners-Lee, the founder and propagator of linked open data did not stress any “bad objects” or anomalies present in this new technology he (his team) invented but such anomalies should be investigated by media archeology. For example, Universal Resource Identifiers (URI) are datastreams (standardized files), which are labelled by unique, universal and persistent identifiers. But is the content under the permanent address identical? In principle: yes. Practically: it isn’t. The technology of the RDF only prescribes the existence of a content under the URI, it does not check the persistence, validity, or identity of it. The identifiers must be unique and persistent, but not the contents which serve as objects and subjects of the predicates. So it is easy to imagine a triplet that proves to be simply false or meaningless since the contents to which it points have been changed. A philologist might correct a line in an online published poem, a museum curator might replace a photo of an artwork under the same identifier; in each instance, the triplet stays valid but proves to be false. Terms like ‘enduring ephemeral’ or ‘time critical’ media technology, both used by media archaeologists in a different context, might be useful here.

The last anomaly I would like to point out is the problem of the digital object. It is up to the memory institution (called now ‘content provider’) to define how to cut a coherent collection into “meaningful” pieces. Meaningful, but for whom? (Hui) In the world of linked open data, objects appear constantly in unpredictable new contexts and even in new digital environments, so the decisions of defining digital objects on the input side cannot calculate with any coherent output horizons. It is not easy to make these decisions, as a line, a strophe, a poem, a group of poems, a book of poetry or a digitized printed volume can be equally defined as a digital object. And a wrong decision may result in that cultural artefact perishing in the ocean of interconnected data, so it won’t be there on the computer screens anymore—and thus falls out of the cultural transfer of the future.

There are similar dark shades and unreflected drawbacks of the semantic web technology on every level of its use in the realm of digital cultural heritage. To name only one more: Ontologies, which consist of the ordered list of possible predicates, mirror the cultural canon of their strong central source institutions possibly discriminating against minor topics, worldviews, disciplines or languages.

But—to draw a fragile conclusion—the fact that a cultural technology is subjected to a critical, media archaeological investigation does not say anything about its present and future social and cultural permeation; it gives only a theoretical insight into the sub-semantic, hidden layers of the machines that appear ready to define in the next decades how forms of the culture will appear—or disappear.

Notes

¹ Specialists of the National Széchényi Library have just stated that they experiment with and move toward semantic web technology.

² Triplets are the building blocks of the semantic web.

³ The first three sentences of the quote also appear in the abstract of an article by Shadbolt, Berners-Lee and Hall (Shadbolt, et al.)

⁴ Post-structuralist textual theories did their best to undermine these stabilizing actions.

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2. Digital Memory in Everyday Life

Lieux de Mémoire and Video Games: Mnemonic Representations of the Second World War in First Person Shooter Games of the Early Twenty-first Century

Norbert Krek

Objective and methodology

Research into contemporary digital culture, especially in the context of memory studies, tends to discuss the influence of digitalization on cultural heritage institutions, which, since the appearance of the internet and as a consequence of the continuous technological development are constantly evolving. They primarily look at the extent their role changed in storing, maintaining and shaping memory with the placement of these institutions into cyberspace. However, digital culture is greatly affected by a medium that has been striving for recognition from the mainstream cultural mediums for years, with increasing intensity and artistic ambition: the video game. One of the most apparent signs of this process is the emergence of the topic in cultural studies at the beginning of the two thousands, within which it exists today as an autonomous subfield called game studies. In this essay I examine the phenomena of digital culture that are linked to video games by discussing and elaborating on a concrete hypothesis and presenting arguments for and against it. This hypothesis goes like this: in the last twenty years (starting from the beginning of the twenty-first century) first person shooter (FPS) video games depicting the Second World War as a lieu de mémoire became increasingly complex from a memorial point of view. If this statement indeed attests to an existing tendency, then, I believe, we can draw conclusions regarding the broader video game culture as well. However, before we discuss this hypothesis, I would like to give a very short and far from comprehensive overview of the history of game studies to position this research. Furthermore, I will outline the medium's relationship and possible links first in connection with memory studies, then specifically with the concept of lieux de mémoire.

As I have already pointed out, the cultural analysis of video games is nothing new. 2001 declared as the starting point by Espen Aarseth (Aarseth, "Computer") bears significance in science policy even to this day, but in the past seventeen years researchers realized that earlier predominantly psychological, sociological approaches—even though it was a rather popular preconception, and among those who are not that familiar with the medium still is, that video games are inevitably violent and lack any kind of high cultural intellect—are not necessarily wrong, on the contrary, rather high quality studies were published

about the games of the eighties and nineties (Consalvo). However, it is indisputable that establishing game studies as an autonomous field of academic study was important. The fundamental principle of game studies—built upon the premise of ludology, which was created in opposition with the narratological perspective of the nineties and early 2000s—is that games are artistic products that are worthy of academic study in themselves, and not only because of their narrative elements. The “ludology vs. narratology” debate was a defining opposition at the birth of this academic field: this was the period when the language of the field was created, basic terms like interaction, simulation, or gameplay were defined. This debate then led in the second half of the two thousands to the emergence of proceduralism, advocated by Ian Bogost. This approach argues that video games are not cybernetic systems that are created by the player’s interaction with the game, but instead they are immensely complicated abstract rule systems, created mechanically in programming languages that contain procedural rhetorical factors in their structure and rules, which determine the player’s acting abilities in the possibility-space of the game (Jenkins). Furthermore, these rhetorical factors persuade the player through the selected game mechanical components about certain moral-political content. This ludologic paradigm started by Bogost quickly became popular, which is evident from the fact that an increasing number of professional designers and developers started to write theoretical papers. It is, of course, inevitable that critics supporting other paradigms emerge, the first of them was Miguel Sicart, one of the next generation researchers centered on the journal *Game Studies*. In his article, “Against Proceduralism,” he points out aptly the main flaws and excessive formalism of procedural rhetoric. Although Sicart acknowledges Bogost’s inventive and refreshing influence (“*Persuasive Games* is a landmark in game studies” – Sicart), he makes the following observations:

But what is the message that proceduralism communicates? Why is procedural rhetoric a better way of understanding the seriousness of games? In essence, procedural rhetoric argues that it is in the formal properties of the rules where meaning of a game can be found. And what players do is actively complete the meaning suggested and guided by the rules. For proceduralists, which are after all a class of formalists, the game is the rules, both in terms of its ontological definition (the what in what is a game), and in its function as an object that creates meaning in the context in which specific users use it. (Sicart)

Sicart criticizes mainstream proceduralism for the almost complete disregard of player activity and interaction as well as for putting the theoretical focus on the rules, only regarding the player as a catalyzer, who launches the process of meaning-creation embedded into the design. He suggests a less logocentric (though not rejecting it) and a more mythic, community creating, polemized model of gameplay and experience instead of the concept of meaning creation: “The missing part in proceduralism is that player who plays for the myth, and not for reason; for other players, and not for the game; for the game, but not for the message.” He continues: “Play is not only a performance. Play does not only include the logics of the game—it also includes the values of the player. Her politics.

Her body. Her social being. Play is a part of her expression, guided through rules, but still free, productive, creative” (Sicart).

Parallel to these tendencies, the traditional aspects of cultural studies started to appear and gain momentum in the early twenty-tens. The journal *Game Studies* (the founder of the discipline), for example, published several thematic issues that specifically dealt with topics like gender studies, the feminist critique, or the applicability of the results of trauma research in video games. Memory studies a similar academic field within cultural studies also bears accentuated significance in the methodology of this study, and its application in research into game studies is not without precedent.

Game studies and memory studies

As I have suggested earlier, memory studies, which has been a significant field in cultural studies for decades, and the medium of video games share a history and the reason for that can be approached from several angles. Public opinion about the medium has always been defined by its representation of violence, and also by the mere presence of violence in video games. In the seventies and eighties the academic approach was dominated by psychological and sociological analyses, which sought to prove the harmful effects of violence in video games on society and on the individual, on children in particular. The stereotype that video games are inherently violent was further deepened by the spike in technological development in the nineties—entailing enhancements in graphics and design—and also the release of titles like *Doom* and *Quake*. Yet, if one takes a look at the relationship between games in general and war, one might conclude—even as a laic, but academic studies also confirm it—that historical connection between these two phenomena is a millennia old at the very least (Pötzsch & Hammond, “Approaching”). This study focuses on the memorial structure of Second World War video games, but with regards to *Quake* and *Doom* it can be said that the representation of war does not always coincide with historical topics. War as a universal artistic topic cannot be exclusively linked to a single historical or fictional context, so memorial structures can only be examined in war games that are set in some kind of historical context.

Pötzsch and Hammond in their 2016 study dealing with war games, summarize those academic approaches that have been lately employed in the examination of video games depicting war (“Approaching”). On the one hand, there is the classic descriptive approach that primarily “addresses the way games represent war, and emphasizes the often close connection between the game industries, technological developments, and military interests” (“Approaching”). On the other hand, the critical approach is represented as well: “scholars have criticized the failures, both at the level of rules and narrative” (“Approaching”). I incorporate the results of both approaches and take into account notions like selective realism or historical resonance, putting all this in the center of Pierre Nora’s concept of lieux de mémoire.

In his introductory study *Between Memory and History* Nora argues that due to the effects of the intellectual tendencies for subjectivization at the turn of the century, memory has been irreversibly interiorized, therefore, the performative rites of collective memory

have completely broken down: the contradiction between the insurmountable distance of the past and the will to overcome this distance gave birth to the concept of lieux de mémoire, which works as a last resort of collective memory (Nora). Lieux de mémoire are threefold according to Nora: symbolic, material and functional at the same time, but to a different extent. As a result, they do not necessarily occupy a real place in space, but they necessarily have a carrier. Even though Nora developed the notion specifically in the context of French history, the conditions and—as Zsolt K. Horváth also points out—the theoretical framework for this concept in the eighties might have worked as the last resort of memory, but in the nineties, memorial culture broke into popular culture as well, which led to the complete transformation of the concept by festivals (gastronomic festivals, renaissance fairs, etc.), yet the notion of lieux de mémoire still managed to take root and spread in European academia (K. Horváth).

Video games, however, are specific in that they are not exclusively representative mediums. The lieux de mémoire evoked by the game is not only visualized, but it is put in a constructed, simulated environment (through levels and maps), and is given a narrative with the help of missions, design and cinematics. In addition, the appreciation of video games as works of art is very different from any other media. With the help of some kind of interface, the player turns into an active participant from a passive spectator, and he/she is the one who pulls the trigger of the gun with the help of a mouse or a controller. As a result, he/she is able to relive, in a simulated environment, certain chapters of this bundle of lieux de mémoire that is the Second World War. In order to be able to examine this aspect of memory, we must select from a huge collection, the video games of the twenty-first century. And to do that, criteria must be established, which will be the following: it is evident from the hypothesis that we must only consider FPS games dealing with the Second World War but even this category is still too broad. A further criterion should be the common platform, which is PC, and hence we can rule out platform-specific games that were not released on PC (for example, *Call of Duty 3*). However, we still have to deal with lesser known titles like *Brothers in Arms*, the *Wolfenstein*-series or *Red Orchestra*, for example, thus the next criterion must be that our research has to be based on the AAA (a “blockbuster” high quality) games. Because of the number of FPS video games representing the Second World War is still too broad one final criterion must be established: the current investigation will not involve any kind of expansions, add-ons or downloadable contents (dlc-s). Therefore, the subjects of my analysis are the following games: *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault*, *Call of Duty 2* and *Call of Duty: World at War* (Henceforth I will be using the following abbreviations: MoH:AA, CoD2, CoD:WaW).

The Second World War and video games

The Second World War functions as an immensely complex framework structure that has been shaped by events, persons, emblematic items, weapons, uniforms, academic historiography, and collective, as well as individual memory. This is the reason why we may talk about the Second World War as a bundle of lieux de mémoire and not a single lieu de mémoire. It combines and includes all those lieux de mémoire, the perception and content

of which have been constantly changing since the war (for example, Normandy landings, the battle of Stalingrad, or Adolf Hitler himself). Its working as a node, however, makes it difficult to make a game true to the memory of the Second World War, provided it is presented in the form of a five-six, but at most a ten-hour long single player campaign, as the developers of AAA category games do. Taking a look at another prominent genre of Second World War games might shed some light on the issue, presented by the nodal nature of the lieux de mémoire. In the *Hearts of Iron* series from Paradox Interactive—which develops grand strategy games—an issue closely tied to the problematic representation of the Second World War appears. Namely, the strong contradiction between the game’s effort to give the illusion of reliving history and the inevitably alternative history that the player ends up experiencing. Gameplay elements like national focus trees, decisions and events give a narrative frame to the game.¹ In order to achieve that illusion, however, the history played out in the game is inherently alternative, thus, the framing—by trying to maintain the illusion that a player may change history—creates a serious contradiction, which is inherent in the genre. If players could not create and execute their own strategy and if they could not pick freely from the gameplay elements offered by the focus tree, *Hearts of Iron* would be nothing more than mere educational software. Abandoning the Second World War narrative context, on the other hand, would result in losing the well-known markers and design of the game, which in turn would leave a bare gameplay framework behind. Before starting the campaign, the player may choose from certain starting dates and the countries that existed at the given date. Then he/she gains control over the country’s management and may try to defeat the other countries through creating and executing battle plans on the map, or he/she may try to prevent the war from breaking out at all. So, the issue raised by *Hearts of Iron* is that the Second World War as a node is difficult to represent and creates several anomalies, since numerous concrete lieux de mémoire have to be showcased, while the meaning attributed to these sites will also vary by remembering community.

The narrative structure, which appears in the single player campaign of FPS games dealing with Second World War, mostly attempts to resolve this issue by two methods. The narrative in these games usually focuses on one or more fictitious hero(s), which puts the player in a micro-historical perspective. However, the country and the theater of war varies. The game may deploy one or more protagonist(s) in order to represent as many lieux de mémoire as possible. If there is only one, the protagonist fights in several theaters of war (usually a soldier from one of the Anglo-Saxon countries and the narrative typically follows the battles on the western front from D-day through the liberation of France to the final defeat of Germany—such a game is, for example, MoH:AA). The second method to resolve this issue is to feature several protagonists, belonging to different nations. Usually this means the inclusion of another faction that also fought against the Nazis, the Soviets, presenting more theaters of war and more perspectives. It is evident from the 5–6 hours long gameplay that a polished, detailed method of representation from a memorial point of view is impossible in this structural framework. As a result, the representation of lieux de mémoire remains rather sketchy, its only role for the most

part is to remind the player that the military action he/she is taking part in is connected to the Second World War. In order to achieve that, the missions have to be centered on events that are recognizable in the collective memory of as many communities as possible. Adam Chapman calls this phenomenon historical resonance:

[I]n historical videogames resonance between the game and the local context might be established on the basis of the player's specifically historical understanding, gleaned from their lived cultural experience, including their engagement with historiography in different forms (e.g., books, documentaries, films). Thus, what I term historical resonance, is the establishment of a link between a game's historical representation and the larger historical discourse, as the player understands it (...). In a seeming effort to appeal to audiences, mainstream games often deal in well-known histories (e.g. D-Day), probably in order to produce this historical resonance with the local context of their players (Chapman 36).

In what follows, I am going to discuss the representation of a *lieux de mémoire* that functions as an historical resonance in the selected games of the early two thousands. Then, I examine the changes in FPS war games released in the late two thousands, putting special emphasis on whether there are signs of a more complex representation from a memorial point of view.

Normandy as a *lieu de mémoire*

Pim den Boer, in his essay on the comparison of European *lieux de mémoire*, states, that they can be categorized according to three conceptions: Christianity, democracy and civilization. D-Day as a *lieu de mémoire* falls into the latter two categories in the Euro-Atlantic collective memory, since this crucial event that turned the tide of war (similarly to the Battle of Stalingrad) made possible the continuation of western civilization and the preservation of its democratic values. Its role as an historical resonance in the video game comes exactly from its crucial importance in the war (den Boer).

In *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault* the player assumes the role of Lieutenant Mike Powell American soldier, completing the first mission in the North-African Theater and later in Norway as an undercover agent sabotaging a German U-boat. Following that, we take part in Operation Overlord (the Normandy landings) from the perspective of the same character. This mission of the game, from the amphibious landing through securing the beach to clearing out the Nazi bunkers, both narratively and visually evokes the movie *Saving Private Ryan* directed by Steven Spielberg. The gameplay features and elements of the FPS genre underline the same effect on the level of procedural rhetoric and game design: thus, on the level of design and visual rhetoric, the mission may be interpreted, as an homage to one of the most successful war movies of the nineties. However, the complete transposition of the scenes of the Normandy landings from *Saving Private Ryan* into the game is also a significant factor when discussing the portrayal of the landings in other games. As it happens, *Call of Duty 2* employs the same technique. Although there are some slight changes as far as the design is concerned (it does not repeat the sequences

of landing, taking cover, etc.), and the graphic portrayal is more advanced as well, the narrative structure remains the same.

Jonathan Bullinger and Andrew Salvati in their co-written study examine the changes in American collective memory regarding the Second World War and they discuss how the phenomenon called the “brand WW2” came into being. This is the tradition that several elements of these games draw upon, for instance, the prevalence of missions that focus on the Anglo-Saxon perspective (the occasional missions that would represent the Soviet-Russian perspective rather reinforce the stereotypes locked in American collective memory), the mandatory presence of famous American and British weapons (M1 Garand, Thompson), also the treatment of rank differences as a father-son relationship (Bullinger & Salvati). These elements are apparent in the FPS games of the early two thousands, as well as in the film *Saving Private Ryan*, including the last element. The relationship between the characters played by Tom Hanks or Tom Sizemore and the other soldiers can be described as paternal, similarly as in *Call of Duty 2* between the actual POV (Point of View) character and Captain Price or Sergeant Randell.

The strong impact of the American collective memory on the memory structure of games set in the Second World War also offers rather favorable and easily marketable ideas for the gaming industry as a business. A practical example is the evolution of the representation of the Second World War as a lieu de mémoire node into a narrative panel of a good vs. evil binary opposition, in which the United States assumes—as a result of the propaganda of certain power structures, especially during the Cold War—the role of the Savior, who protected the world from the bloodthirsty German and Japanese invaders and preserved the values of western civilization, thus interpreting the war under the veil of morality and influencing its memory. This simplistic division of morality presented a perfect opportunity for the globalizing gaming industry in the early 2000s to offer a perspective, with which an increasing number of potential players can easily identify, thus growing the market and increasing its income. Also, an integral part of this phenomenon in the gaming industry is the appearance of a certain nostalgic feeling in American popular culture about the Second World War, which further promoted the cultural myths about the war at the expense of historical accuracy and authenticity, hence “brand WW2.” As Bullinger and Salvati persuasively argue, it began to function using the same mechanisms as a brand: building upon its own historization, but simplifying and schematizing it in some regards, and also having its own easily recognizable logos and markers. They examine the visualized color scheme as an example of the latter: among cultural products dealing with the Second World War, the dominant color is army green, the traditional color of American infantry uniforms, which is occasionally complemented by sand yellow in the East-African Theater. Additionally, symbols like the M1 Garand rifle or the five pointed white star on American military equipment are also integral to the visual.

The notion of “brand WW2” is closely tied to a theoretical concept, developed specifically for war games, called selective realism (Pötzsch). Holger Pötzsch’s term was the product of the realization that—although due to next generation hardware a giant leap occurred as far as graphics were concerned (by the standards of the mid-late 2000s), which made

possible for developers to come up with visually more hyperrealist concepts of war—their basic narrative tools and game mechanics ruled out the possibility of questioning their own representation of violence and their relationship to war, or the possibility of presenting the player with a morally more complex choice. All of these elements constitute what Pötzsch calls selective realism and the tools that filter the mediation of the war experience. These filters are what provide the war experience represented in the games, *Call of Duty 2* and *Medal of Honor: Allied Assault*. However, committing war crimes like rape, butchering civilians and children is absolutely off limits—the game also prohibits the killing of civilians—in this method of representation, furthermore, armed conflict is limited exclusively to soldiers, and the consequences of war and constant violence is swept under the rug as well: disfigured soldiers are nowhere to be seen, and the player character shows no signs of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The critique of selective realism formulated by Pötzsch, that “the genre plays into discourses that sanitize warfare and present it as a struggle limited to soldiers and armies” (Pötzsch 162), holds true in some respect, when we consider the hyper-realistic method of representation of the seventh and eighth generations of console—since the Second World War represented as a lieu de mémoire node is built upon the panels of American collective memory, and the representation is rather sketchy, but when considering the FPS games of the early two thousands, we have to take into account a few additional points. First, the engines of the fifth and sixth generations of console often struggled to display more than a certain number of dead bodies and the movement animation was far from being as crisp as nowadays. Second, showing violence against civilians and children would have meant a stricter content rating, which would have exponentially narrowed the audience of the game to the dismay of the publishers.

A more complex method of representation—*Call of Duty: World at War*

Although the gameplay and narrative elements described by selective realism and the theory of “brand WW2” are present in *Call of Duty: World at War* (published in 2008), there is a noticeable effort to create a more complex representation of the Second World War through the choosing of the theater of war and the lieu de mémoire. One item that differs from the earlier-discussed two games is that CoD:WaW leaves out the Normandy landings, which, at this point, has become a cliché because of its mandatory inclusion and stereotyped representation in almost every video game that deals with the Second World War. Instead, the game focuses on two fronts and two protagonists: the American campaign, faithful to the above mentioned characteristics, but set in the Pacific front against the Japanese army (*Medal of Honor: Pacific Assault* also earlier choose the Pacific War as its subject) and the Soviet-German front similarly as in CoD2.

As I have mentioned, in CoD:WaW it is not the Normandy landing that is represented as a lieu de mémoire functioning as historical resonance between player and game, but the battle of Stalingrad, which has also been represented before in CoD2. But, the design, the narrative solutions, and the setting are completely different in WaW. The battle of Stalingrad basically replaces the Normandy landings, but functions similarly to it: the

scenes, narrative panels and design solutions of *Saving Private Ryan* are replaced by those of *Enemy at the Gates*. Dimitri Petrenko (in Vasily's place) engages and kills a German sniper in a cat-and-mouse game and gets rid of a high ranking German officer, while following the instructions of Sergeant Reznov, a father figure for Dimitri. It should be emphasized that it is a tendency in the analyzed games to rely on an older technomedium to achieve historical resonance. As we have seen in the case of *Saving Private Ryan* and the Normandy landings, and *Enemy at the Gates* and the battle of Stalingrad, the representation methods of these films leave a lasting mark. There are other similar examples, too: the loading screens between missions, the cut-scenes, the menu and the cinematics preceding it are all either from contemporary black and white documentaries or made to look like those.

The detailed method of representation from a memorial point of view, which I have introduced in the beginning of the study as a preconception regarding WaW, has not turned out to be that impressive. Compared to earlier games, the more hyper-realistic graphics of WaW are much more capable of conveying the war experience, while its representation of violence shows more aptly the brutal nature of war. By showing severed limbs and a greater quantity of blood, the game evokes the archetype of "senseless war" instead of "good war" for its basis, which is also supported by the narrative and visual rhetoric of the game, an especially good example is the death of Sgt. Sullivan at end of the mission *Little Resistance*. It is also true, however, that, from time to time, the game employs narrative and gameplay elements, which would help the creation of another kind of memory structure, the dialogicity of lieux de mémoire (Assmann). For example, the depiction of the German soldiers in a more nuanced way should be noted here, which differs from their archetypal evil representation, although it is only meant to create a more complex opposition to the soviet soldiers as the heroes of the Great Patriotic War. Since the player may kill the unarmed German soldiers and those who are about to surrender during the siege of Berlin, but if he/she does not do it in that narrative sequence, then his/her comrades will, thus the games do not really offer a choice, only a hollow illusion of one. The game misses the opportunity to correct these missteps of the gameplay at the end of *WaW*, because the place of memorial complexity is taken over by kitsch and heroic narrative in the last mission. The player has to raise the soviet flag atop the Reichstag as Private Dimitri Petrenko, but, the protagonist suffers a fatal looking wound in the last seconds, he is saved by Sergeant Reznov, thus however, and manages to accomplish the mission.²

It may be said that certain elements of the narrative and gameplay show some shift towards a more complex memorial representation in the games of the late 2000s, but that they fail to live up to the expectations that I formulated at the beginning of the paper as a hypothesis. The research question, however, is still relevant. In the time of writing this paper, the first AAA rated Second World War FPS game since the end of the two thousands has been released in November 2017 entitled *Call of Duty: World War II*. The next phase of this research will be to analyze the memory structure and lieux de mémoire represented in the newest installation of *Call of Duty*. In the light of the foregoing, we may conclude that this memorial complexification—even if it is a slow process—shows

that video games as a medium have started to move away from the subculture of young men and are beginning to become integrated into mainstream culture.

Notes



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¹ Well-known gameplay elements of any history-related video game made by the Paradox Interactive Developing Studio (for example, Crusader Kings-, Europa Universalis-, Victoria- and Hearts of Iron-series). The national focus tree gameplay mechanic is the only element which is featured in the design of the Hearts of Iron series, and represents the several alternative historical scenario/economic doctrines, the player should consider and later will have to choose from in order to improve his/her country's political, social, economic features. Events and decisions in these games also function as a mechanic which makes historical and alternative scenarios possible.

² It is an interesting addition, however, that in *CoD: Black Ops* (which is set after the events of *WaW*) Reznov reflects on what is missing from this scene in one of his monologues:

Dimitri Petrenko was one of the bravest men I had ever known. He fought by my side from the siege of Stalingrad to the fall of Berlin. The wounds he sustained ensuring our victory should have earned him a hero's welcome to Russia. But Stalin had little need for heroes. Dimitri Petrenko was a hero, he deserved a hero's death. Instead of giving his life for the glory of the Motherland, he died for nothing, like an animal... He should have died in Berlin.

This mission is the video game adaptation of the world famous photo entitled *Raising a Flag over the Reichstag*, which also shows how strong an influence older technomediums have on the representational method of games depicting the Second World War.

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Landscapes of Belonging: Visual Memories in the Digital Age

Antti Vallius

Introduction

The concept of landscape combines nature and culture. Landscape is a human construction, created in social and cultural processes (Cosgrove & Daniels; Cosgrove; Andrews). Landscape imagery organizes the physical, emotional and ideological spaces that people live in, and landscapes are used as resources for taking different positions in individual and national identity projects (Daniels; Cosgrove). The various meanings attached to landscapes are hierarchically organized, continuously negotiated and challenged. In Finland, for example, national identities are traditionally constructed with the aid of strong landscape imagery (Häyrynen). National landscapes are created in continuous processes where certain landscapes are prioritized, and these landscapes then maintain their special status for decades or even centuries.

Visual images are essential elements in the production of landscapes and mental images as well as in the interpretation of their meanings. A shared understanding of the national landscape is often created via images of natural landscapes, such as mountains, forests, or lakes (Lukkarinen & Waenerberg; Häyrynen). However, landscapes are always defined and delimited by humans, and public, national and personal relations to the landscape are mainly constructed through images. Visual images are important tools in identifying, creating and capturing personal place relations and this importance is continually growing in the digital age. The transition from analog film to digital photography together with cell phone cameras and different applications of social media have resulted in an exponential increase in the number of photographs taken. Nicholas Felton in his book, *Photoviz: Visualizing Information Through Photography* (2016), calculated that at the moment we are taking almost 400 billion photos a year, and that approximately 10 percent of all the photographs ever taken have been taken in the last twelve months. Naturally, this number will only increase in the future when there are more and more cameras in our lives and bigger and cheaper photo storage systems in which to store our visual memories.

Pictorial representations of the environment also open up ways for researchers to study people's everyday environments and their ways of belonging in them. This is important especially nowadays, when societies are transforming and diversifying rapidly because

of the cultural and social processes of mobility, migration, and globalization. This new situation also brings new challenges to analyzing our understanding of meaningful places and landscapes. To what places do differently aged people of different genders and different ethnic, cultural and educational backgrounds attach themselves to in an urban environment? Who has the right to feel “at home” in landscapes that include strong mythical and national elements? Whose memories are visible in the landscape imagery? These are a few of the core questions that have been explored in the University of Jyväskylä’s in a research project called *Arts of Belonging* and its successor, *Crossing Borders*, both of which have investigated inter alia the changing gendered, national, and personal landscapes in our contemporary pluralized and multicultural society. Methodologically, besides more traditional methods like close reading, content analysis, rhetorical analysis, discourse analysis, and ethnography, the projects have also used participatory arts-based methods, such as photo-elicitation.

I will focus on material from two cases collected in the *Arts of Belonging* project. The material was compiled using photo-elicitation and it consists of digital photographs, video diaries and interviews. My aim is to study what kind of places the research participants consider important in the environment in which they live, and why. I will also explore how attachments to place and feelings of belonging are contemplated and constructed through pictorial representations of the environment.

Image, environment and belonging

Belonging refers here in particular to a situation in which someone feels at home in a material, virtual, symbolic, or imaginary place. Belonging is simultaneously seen here as an affective experience, a material connection, and a shifting process that must be constantly negotiated (Probyn; hooks; Lähdesmäki et al.).

Pictorial representation of the environment is a part of the process of place attachment (Vallius). Through visual images it is possible to identify, create and capture places that are meaningful and important for the individual’s place relations, but which are easily overlooked in the hectic pace of everyday life. There are at least two main ways to approach relations between images and spatial belonging. The first rests on a discursive point of view, in which images work as instruments that structure our reality, for example, through slowly changing landscape imagery. This imagery often has different national connotations and it arouses strong mental images and certain values that direct the ways we perceive the environment (Tuan, 121–26.; Andrews; Häyrynen; Vallius). From a discursive point of view, the relationship between images and belonging is linked to the politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis; Trudeau 422).

On the other hand, this relationship also works on a personal level, when images contribute to our sense of place. As geographer Yi-Fu Tuan contends, images either enable a sort of returning to place and time that has already gone, or they can bring the past to the present (Tuan, “Sense of Place” 2004). However, it is important to notice that the personal sense of place must also be understood in its wider contexts. As geographer Gillian Rose (*Place* 89) points out, although senses of place may be very personal, they are not

entirely the result of one individual's feelings and understandings, but such feelings and understandings are shaped in large part by the social, cultural and economic circumstances in which people find themselves. Apart from arousing this kind of personal connection to a sense of place, images and photography can also operate as active media in place-making processes by capturing the environment, so to speak, and constructing meanings (Vallius). Therefore, when researching the relations between images and spatial belonging it is important to consider how images and representational media like photography work as tools in performing and narrating belonging.

Previous research on spatial belonging has mainly focused on different kinds of conflicts and other negatively charged situations, where people's sense of belonging was somehow threatened (Yuval-Davis; Stedman; Lähdesmäki et al.). I argue that it is also important to study people's feelings of belonging towards their meaningful places on a wider scale and in safe and familiar everyday surroundings. But, the task is challenging because the important places of everyday environment are highly personal, multidimensional, and so fundamental a part of our lives that we often take them for granted (Relph 55; Karjalainen; Seamon 14).

One way to explore people's meaningful places in their everyday environment and the relationship between image and spatial belonging is to use a method called photo-elicitation. In this study, photo-elicitation is based on photographs taken by the research participants and on interviews conducted about them. The basic aim of the method is to use photos as activators that prompt research participants to explain and elaborate on different meanings, values and emotions that are important in their place relations but difficult to reach and study through plain oral, aural or written data (Rose, *Visual* 304–17; Stedman 113).

In this study, the main assignment for the research participants was to photograph important places in three separate sessions in one year's time. In each session, research participants were given digital cameras and a week in which to photograph their living environment. The restrictions were that the places they photographed had to be located in the city of Jyväskylä and the photographs had to be taken outdoors. This was specified in order to limit the research material to everyday surroundings that were commonly shareable. After every session, research participants had to choose the one place they had photographed that felt most important to them at that precise moment. In addition, the participants were asked to provide a short written or videoed oral description of why they had chosen that place and why they felt the place was important. Each session was also followed by taped interviews in which they discussed the places they had photographed and their importance to them more formally, in order to find out the different sociocultural dimensions related to them.

The research material of this study consists of photographs taken by three separate groups: of 14–15-year-old schoolchildren, of 28–40-year-old immigrants (who were born outside of Finland and had lived in the country for less than ten years), and of 43–74-year-old long-term local residents. There were five to six people in each group, and as much as possible an even distribution of men and women. The total number of

research participants was seventeen. In this article, I concentrate on material produced by two of the research participants in the immigrant group.

Case study: important places in the everyday environment in which one lives

This case study consists of image and interview material produced by two research participants who had moved to Finland and to the city of Jyväskylä. To protect their anonymity, I call them here by the pseudonyms Peter and Katarina. At the beginning of the research, Peter had been living in Jyväskylä for almost eight years and Katarina for two years. They are a married couple and at the time of the research, they had a very young child.

As I mentioned in the previous section, the task of the research participants was to carry out three photography sessions during one year, taking photographs of places they considered important in their everyday environment. After every session, Peter and Katarina were asked to choose the one place that they felt was the most important one at that point, and to give a short written or videoed explanation as to why they felt it important and why they had chosen that particular place.

In the first round of photos, Katarina chose a bench in the cemetery as the most important place for her. She explained:

... I chose this place because for a while I came here very often with my son, because I couldn't put him to bed for his nap during the day, but I had to walk around with him lying in the stroller. During the wintertime I ended up here, in the cemetery, because there's a bench ... and there's a place which is covered and I would sit there for a while like usually only thirty minutes because then he woke up I've never felt as fine in a cemetery as here. It's like a green park. Of course, now it's May so it's green, but during the wintertime, it wasn't green at all. However, I felt it was very friendly and it wasn't all about decaying and the end of things, but I felt very much at home. Like almost as you feel in a park, which is visited by pretty many people



Figure 1. The bench in the cemetery (Katarina, first photo-round).

Apart from the place feeling friendly and like home, it was easy to reach. Katarina was very happy to find it, because it was the only place where she could find a covered bench to sit on in the winter-time within a short walking distance from her apartment. On the other hand, Katarina also admired the site's location, which was between a busy road and a beautiful nature reserve. She liked how the site's location and character as some kind of a border zone stimulated her thoughts. Usually she just went there to sit in peace and used the time to learn some Finnish vocabulary, but very often the scene distracted her from memorizing the words and brought different thoughts and emotions to her mind. Katarina said:

... this location is like on the edge or on the margin of things and I enjoy being there and use the moment to think of other things that usually occupy my mind. This time it is ... my grandmother who died in September ... she didn't want a place for herself in the cemetery ... she didn't even want an urn, but she wanted her remains to be blown away and we were there when her ashes were blown in the air back to nature. In addition, this bench is exactly facing the place where, in this cemetery, people's ashes are blown away. I very often have to think of my grandma as she disappeared back to nature and I have to think of how much I loved her and I also feel her presence, so this is the most symbolic place for me at present in Jyväskylä.

Peter's choice for the first photo-round was a path on the ridge called Harju, which is a very popular public park in the center of the city. The place became important to him mainly because of his son, who was born in Jyväskylä. Peter said:

... Harju is important because ... we visited there together [with his son] day after day, because when I got home after work I took him to sleep on this path in every kind of weather and every day. In addition, I always took a book with me, which was a work of literature, so I just read for my own pleasure and not for work. Novels and such kind of things just for the joy of reading. Moreover, it was also a great relaxation and recharge for me, some kind of peripatetic experience this kind of walking and thinking.... It also reminded me of very pleasant experiences in other places, for example in Kyoto. There is this philosopher's path, which I was thinking of many times, and the changing of the seasons and walking together here with my wife too on the weekends. The three of us walking the same route ... and this somehow became an important place for me.

In Peter's case, the place led him to contemplate his own relations to Finnish nature in general and the value of different landscapes, place relations and memories, and to think about how his Finnish-born child has affected these issues. In the video diary made on the Harju ridge, Peter talked about how he used to feel he had a special relationship to his former hometown, but that changed when he left, when this special relationship began to fade and Peter started to feel somehow placeless. He also noticed that things and other people related to places became more important to him than the places themselves. The



Figure 2. The Harju ridge (Peter, first photo-round)

Internet made this sensation even stronger when he realized that he could contribute to things remotely and work in different places, so it did not matter so much where he was physically. In this way, places came to have secondary importance in his life. However, for him, this kind of placelessness did not mean homelessness. Peter said that he had adapted an idea from the Indian philosopher Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and what she said about being a moving house. With this idea in mind, Peter tried to build a kind of positive nomadic attitude to his life in new surroundings.

At the same time, Peter started to build closer ties to Finnish people and his experiences of Finland. He emphasized that this experience was not particularly connected to certain places, but was more some kind of general idea of Finnish places, where nature is always within reach and silence is valued. This mental construction of Finland, which has grown mainly from a strong national landscape imagery, started to affect Peter through his social relationships with Finns. His friends took him to their favorite places, which became important to him, too, because he knew that these places were important to his Finnish friends. His attachment to certain places was constructed more through the eyes of others than through his own direct relationship to those places. When Peter built his own relationship to the Finnish landscape and nature, at the same time he was building his relationship to the Finnish people who were close to him. Because of that, in his case the process of attachment to places was full of emotions.

As a newcomer, Peter did not have a past in those new places and this is the main reason why he started to add other people's experiences to his own. Without a past, he had a greater need of other people's emotions and enthusiasm. In his video diary, Peter portrayed his current place attachment in his everyday environment as a collage, which was shaped by other people's experiences as well as his own ones, and which took completely new shape when his son was born in Finland, in Jyväskylä. Peter said:

I build my own emotional mental Finland like a collage, where my new experiences are included together with other people's strong experiences connected to their past and to their emotions. Therefore, it was more a kind of social process and socializing collage or something like that. But as my own past started to be created here, it means significant experiences ... but a much more important event has happened, that my son was born in Jyväskylä more than a year ago, and this important event has really defined the place as a place and it really builds up my own connections, I mean in a deep way. Therefore, this collage somehow got a frame. This frame is much bigger than the collage itself, so it will be continuously under creation, maybe for a whole lifetime. As certainly it [Jyväskylä] became and remains important as this is the place where our son was born, and it is a part of his identity, but it means that this collage got kind of a structure or kind of a stronger sense of composition than it had before. In addition, why Harju ridge is important is because it also redefined the places within the collage, this event, and places that I've experienced together with my son. So it was not anymore through my son or through other people, because it was absolutely new for him to visit, for example, this path in the Harju ridge where I'm standing now.



Figure 3. Lingonberry place in the forest of Killeri (Katarina, second photo-round)

In the second photo-round, Katarina chose a place in a forest on the other side of the town, where she picked lingonberries. Katarina said:

I'm now at the place that I picked as the favorite at this time. It's different from the place I chose last time, which was the place [the bench in the cemetery] where I was walking a lot with my son, and where I could sit down and he could sleep. Therefore, I'm mobile now for two reasons: because my son is at daycare, and I've started to drive, which I haven't done for twenty years although I had a driving license. So I enjoy being mobile and that's why I don't really have a new fixed place, but I'm spending my time doing different things. One important thing is to collect

berries in the forest, so I'm looking for good berrying places and I found one here at Killeri. I'm enjoying being here and analyzing the path and analyzing people's ways of collecting berries So this is kind of a symbol for regaining my freedom, because I don't have to carry the baby all the time. I don't have to think about feeding him or consider his nap times and so on. So I'm enjoying this a lot.



Figure 4. Open field and children's playground (Peter, second photo-round).

In the second round, Peter chose an open field and children's playground near their apartment, where he often spent time and played football with his son. Peter said:

I very much like this field, because it's near to our house and this is the place where I usually come out to play football with my son. As you can see, there are lots of bushes around where there are some berries growing and he picks berries here and runs up and down. And there's a playground at the end of this field, so we spend here a lot of good time and this is why I like it and this became important to us.

In the third photo-round both Katarina and Peter selected the backyard of the housing cooperative where their new apartment is situated as the most important place. Katarina said:

My third favorite place in Jyväskylä is actually our new backyard; I mean the backyard of the apartment where we moved in December. It's surprising to me that I chose this place, but actually, during the past few months I haven't explored any new places. I haven't been to or I haven't found myself attached to any other new place or any other of my old places recently. This is because I went to the adult education center and there I spend half of my day while my son is at daycare and then in the afternoon we are together so days are quite active and spring has just started recently so being outside is either local playgrounds or the backyard. But somehow I like the backyard the most because it's also a view that I can enjoy from our balcony and also use it as a lunch place or play place and it's such a wonder to observe Finnish nature in springtime. I really enjoy it so that's the reason why I chose our own backyard.

[Peter:] We've just moved into a new flat not so long ago with a balcony and a nice peaceful backyard. I like that there is stylish garden furniture available for everybody under the flowering trees. It's even possible to have a family meal in the green! While our son's sleeping outdoors, it's also good to read and rest here.



Figure 5. The backyard of the housing cooperative (Katarina, third photo-round).

Already in the first round, when Peter chose Harju ridge as the most important place in the environment in which he lived, he thought that he could be connected to several people and several places at the same time and that the experience of place is always tied to other people and personal connections, not only to the place itself. This kind of variation in important places seems to be true in both cases. Neither Peter nor Katarina stuck to one place, but they changed their important places from one photo-round to another.



Figure 6. The backyard of the housing cooperative (Peter, third photo-round).

When Peter and Katarina chose their important places, their son functioned as a common connection for both of them, and he strongly affected their ways of selecting certain places. Having a child and the activities they had with the child directed both parents to a few new places, places that were unfamiliar to them beforehand but which became familiar and important through their daily routine. The child's growth and development altered the parents' everyday routines, activities, and relationships to places. There were, for example, places where the parents used to take their child for a nap and, a little later, places like the playground where the slightly older child liked playing football with his father. Finally, there was their own backyard, where the whole family used to eat together or spend their free time, each one doing what he or she liked best, playing, reading or just sitting and relaxing. As the place Katarina chose in her second photo-round shows, the start of her son's daycare gave her more freedom from childcare and the possibility of enjoying different spatial experiences and of getting used to new places and interests, like berry-picking.

Apart from new social relations related to being parents and subsequent similar changes, the reasons for replacing one important place with another can be due to a whole range of changes that can happen in the physical environment, in one's place of residence, in one's daily activities and even in different seasons of the year. For example, Katarina said that one reason for not picking the cemetery as the most important place in other photo-rounds was that the city had replaced the old, warm-colored lights in the cemetery with modern ones, whose light was rather cold. In addition to the fact that the family had moved to the other side of town and the cemetery was no longer close to their home and their daily routes, this quite small change in the lighting of the physical place was enough to lessen Katarina's feelings and attachment toward that place. It seems quite natural that given the hectic nature of everyday life, the new home and new routes and neighborhoods became more important than places linked to their former place of residence. Seasonal changes also affect the importance of a place. For example, their backyard became important to Peter and Katarina in the spring-time, when the weather made it possible to spend more time outside. Actually, Katarina called the garden she photographed in the third photo-round a symbol of spring.

Furthermore, Peter and Katarina's attachment to their own living environment seems to include also a deliberate pursuit of multi-placeness. This comes close to Per Gustafson's theory of places as routes, about which he says, "Places may be meaningful as expressions of a person's individual trajectory and identity by representing personal development, personal achievement, and personal choice rather than roots and continuity" (Gustafson 38–39).

Photo-based method and belonging

For people with a safe, predictable everyday life, thinking about places that are important to one and personal feelings of belonging might remain in the background. Often we awake to the importance of certain places only after some irrevocable change occurs in our everyday surroundings (Relph; Karjalainen). In this regard, their task in this research

seemed to start a process that helped the research participants to contemplate, recognize and create important places and their own personal place relations.

In the interview after the first photo-round, Peter talked about how he had delayed doing the task to the very last moment because of the continuous demands of his busy everyday life. Nevertheless, when he stood in the place he had chosen and started to explain the reasons for his choice, the task began to fascinate him and he began to evaluate his place relations and their importance to him again. Katarina's general thoughts about the task were pretty similar. At the beginning of all the photo-rounds she thought that the task was tiring and stressful, but when she got into it, she felt that it was important, because it enabled her to develop deeper place relations toward her new hometown. In the interview connected with the first photo-round, Katarina said, for example, that having to justify her place selection generated a lot of thoughts that made a story. Katarina said:

I had thoughts, thoughts, thoughts coming up, but I didn't know exactly what I would say and finally all the thoughts just gathered and were concentrated in those six minutes. So the feelings and thoughts that I had when I was sitting there regularly, they just made up a story of myself and of Jyväskylä and my grandma who died last autumn and I have recorded it. I think it was good to make up this story.

Taking part in the research and doing its first photo-round made Peter think again about things he had mentioned earlier, about how he started to construct his own mental Finland partly through the experiences of his Finnish friends and other acquaintances. The task made Peter take a trip down memory lane and remember his past, his relations to his former hometown, the move to Finland, the building of connections to Finnish places, and the present day, in which place relations had acquired a new, forward-looking meaning through his Finnish-born child. In this regard, taking part in the research made Peter think about temporal aspects of life and the dimensions of past, present and future.

All these dimensions are intrinsically connected to recent research into spatial belonging (Bennett; Lähdesmäki et al. 236–237). According to Julia Bennett, past experiences of places are echoed in the present through one's material relations with the environment, which may result in an ethical relationship in which a place is passed on to future generations as a gift (Bennett). The question of gifted places as a part of the process of spatial belonging is an interesting one, especially in those cases where a child is born and grows up in a different place from his/her parents. In such cases, do parents pass on to their offspring the places they have learned to value in their new homeland and hometown? Or do they pass on places from their country of origin? Alternatively, do they pass on some kind of mixture, where the important places of their new homeland and hometown have acquired meanings, for example, from different trans-local or transnational memories?

In Peter and Katarina's cases, their child and his well-being acted as the main reason for choosing certain places. Besides these socially related reasons, there were also several other factors that influenced the process. One reason was the easy accessibility of a place, while others related to certain natural values combined with peacefulness, which made possible certain activities, like sitting, walking, reading, thinking, berry-picking or relaxing. All

these activities are linked to the parents' own well-being (cf. Low & Altman 6–7; Riley). Together, all these factors created different associations and transnational memories that Peter and Katarina projected onto their current everyday environment. Through this process, the selected places acquired symbolic meanings that stretched to personal and wider cultural and social levels. Sociologist Richard C. Stedman (2008; 2014) speaks of place-related meanings as symbols on which attachments rest (Stedman; Stedman et al.). According to Stedman, we attach primarily to the symbols that we have attributed to places we have seen as important. At the same time, we strive to maintain the meanings we cherish, which give a feeling of attachment (Stedman et al. 113).

Reflecting transnational memories onto important places emerged especially in the interviews after the third photo-round, in which Peter and Katarina had photographed their backyard, which carried certain garden-like connotations. They both felt that the place was important because it offered a quiet and intimate place for the whole family to spend their free time together in the spring-time. However, from their explanations as to why they had chosen those places, connections could be found that could be traced back especially to their transnational childhood memories. Peter connected the place to his homeland and his grandparents' summer-house with its large garden, in which he spent a lot of time when he was a young boy. Katarina also connected the place to her childhood memories of her parents' house and its big garden, where her family used to spend time together. This can be connected to well-documented earlier research in which childhood memories are seen as playing an important role in individuals' place attachment processes (Cooper Marcus, *Environmental*; Chawla; Lewicka). Clare Cooper Marcus, for example, writes, "We hold onto childhood memories of certain places as a kind of psychic anchor, reminding us of where we came from, of what we once were, or of how the environment nurtured us when family dynamics were strained" (*Environmental* 89). Therefore, this kind of psychological bond can lead people to attach to places that remind them of the places they found important in their childhood. The fact that people tend to perceive places as important because of natural elements in them linked to peacefulness and quietness, which comes out in both of the case studies in this research, is also linked to childhood memories. It has been found that when indoor environments are adult domains with rules, orders and neatness, children easily seek the outdoors, which allows them freedom and the chance to explore their environment (Cooper Marcus, *Remembrance* 36; Chawla 76). This common feeling of freedom connected to nature and "the opportunity to be quiet and subdued or physically vigorous away from a parent's presence is often remembered as a generous privilege" (Chawla 77).

The interviews revealed that selecting and photographing the places was comparable to marking and declaring those places to be important, and photographing the places made the places themselves begin to mean more to both of the participants. Nevertheless, Katarina said that the place she marked also started to feel a bit less romantic than it was before. Peter, on the other hand, said that when he walked near these places afterwards, it was more likely that he looked about him and kept an eye on how they had developed and looked now.

When I asked Peter and Katarina if they felt they had gained anything by participating in the research, they were both very positive. Katarina said:

On the one hand I usually felt that I have to take a photo and think about the place again, and I went no, this is so artificial. That now I have to choose one, there's a deadline, and again I forgot it and let's do it in a hurry.... On the other hand, when I did it I always felt happy that it also contributes to liking Jyväskylä more than I actually realize or do. So, maybe it will help me to like the place more than I do like it, because I don't really like it. Therefore, if your task is to find favorite places, you will find a favorite place. You will identify it and interpret it but if you don't get this task, maybe you won't realize that there is a possibility of finding favorite places and then you stay without any favorite places.... I think that this project does contribute positively to being here.

Peter saw participating in the research as useful especially from the point of view of his personal feelings of belonging:

Of course it [participation in the research] was useful for me, because it raised my own place-belonging awareness in a way. It led me to think about those questions that are important to me. As I explained before, I tried to locate myself on this new map, which is still a new map after these many years, but this project has made me think more consciously about these relations and has helped me to build up belonging in a way. So it was interesting that when I had to think about it, it contributed also to the establishment of the belonging, maybe it was not strong enough before....

Conclusions

The study found that people can use a photo-based method to identify important places and to think about their own place attachments and personal questions of spatial belonging. However, research data shows that there is no guarantee that the places selected as important by the research participants already had the relevant meanings; they might have been constructed for the task. Nevertheless, from the interview material it is clear that the research task clarified the meanings projected onto the places selected. Photographing places and having to explain their importance gave the research participants a clear awareness of their place relations and helped them to reflect on and understand the meanings attached to them in greater depth.

The research method gave the research participants the opportunity to find important places in their everyday environment and to consider their attachments and spatial belonging. The research inspired them to observe their own habitats, the places they considered important, and the changes that happened there. The study also led participants to think about themselves and to make themselves visible in their own living environment. In this sense, the photo-elicitation did not offer only the identification of places but also the creation of places and at the same time the creation of a sense of belonging. For the researcher, it again showed how multifaceted people's attachment to place could be and how strongly the importance of places is linked to different socio-cultural dimensions. For

example, this case clearly illustrated how a young child and the research participant's own transnational childhood memories affected their spatial experiences and their selection of important places.

Participatory methods such as photo-elicitation with digital cameras and videos make it easier to carry out studies to analyze spatial belonging more comprehensively. This kind of analysis is particularly important now, when digitalization and social media are affecting our lives more and more and our ways of perceiving and creating our place relations are becoming increasingly dependent on pictorial representations.

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Defining Two Types of Cultural “Micro-heritage”: Objects, Knowledge Dimensions and a Quest for Novel Memory Institutions

László Z. Karvalics

Documentary [artefactual] heritage reflects the diversity of languages, peoples and cultures. It is the mirror of the world and its memory. But this memory is fragile. Every day, irreplaceable parts of this memory disappear for ever.

(UNESCO Memory of the World Programme)

Personal/family documents, photos, warrants, tickets, credentials, (identity/organization) cards, private contracts, postcards – examples from the universe of the so-called “Shoebox memory” objects.

Rocking horses, toothpick holders, scissors, mangles, old flat irons, slips, headgears, stoves, napkins, canisters, placards, bills, enamelled tables – examples of extraordinary/amazing private collections.

Archives, museums and libraries are accidentally guarding, storing and exhibiting pieces from these two kind of cultural memory “domains,” but do not focus systematically and institutionally on collecting and preserving these objects and/or related information/knowledge—even though they are greatly endangered cultural assets. Despite their common nature, there remains a lot of differences between these two clusters of memory objects in terms of the digitization challenge, institutional support, infrastructure needs and community involvement. They require a dissimilar approach and practices, driving us towards defining a third and a fourth type of cultural memory institution.

Let me begin by briefly tearing across a bunch of fresh news, leading us closer and closer to a conceptual innovation: the “cultural micro-heritage.”

Six “messages” from an almost invisible continent of cultural heritage

1. The hoard of the Tsui family

An 80-year-old Chinese farmer shocked the archaeologists by showing them two rare, four meters long, very similar 540- and 472-year-old silk rolls, containing family-related statutes, issued by the emperors of the Ming-dynasty (1368–1644). His forefathers

were state officials, and they received these promotion-like, laudatory-commendatory documents. The rolls became family treasure, and the keeper was always the first-born boy of the next generation. The old man is about to deliver the relics to his descendants, inspiring them by the achievements of long-ago representatives of their lineage (which is a quite a different motivation to safeguard and preserve old documents from that of the noble families who sought to enlarge their legal archives).

2. Surviving images of an unknown Hungarian family

In January 2016, an envelope was found lying on the ground of Badcove Road in Cromer, Sydney, with the date of November 8, 1972 on it (Swain). Its overawed finder saw a number of 40-year-old black and white family photos of a young couple, their wedding and children. Some of them were taken in Budapest in the mid-sixties, and the text, “memories of love” was also written in Hungarian on the back, along with the name, Ms. Nemeth as was also on the envelope. The journalist who posted the story now attempts to get the Hungarian online community to help identify the late Hungarian family, its members and their Australian acquaintanceship.

3. Seven large trunks

Outstanding publicist and Minister of Commerce, Sándor Hegedüs (1847–1906) used seven large trunks when travelling the World. After his death, his daughter, Rózsi (1881–1947) started to collect every document related to her father, and within decades she filled up the trunks. In the difficult years of the Second World War she closed the trunks, which were then put into a cellar in the Buda house of Rózsi’s grandchild’—and remained untouched during the next 60 years, until renovation works of the cellar began. Then family members opened the trunks, called in a few historian friends to review, treat, and publish the most interesting pieces of the collection. They composed a 645#page-book with a voluminous document section (see figure 4), reviving the importance of the late Hegedüs in Hungarian intellectual life, sharing lots of details about his life, based on the content of these numerous, enlarged “shoeboxes” (Katona & Szász).

4. A crown jewel of computer history

In April, 2017, a California widow threw away an intact Apple 1 desktop at the Clean Bay Area recycling centre, which she found in the process of clearing out her garage. It was only weeks after that when the staff recognized that the unknown woman had junked one of the world’s most famous computers, cca. \$200,000 worth, one of around 200 built by Apple founders Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ron Wayne. They sold the rarity to a collector, and then tried to find the late owner to share the prize with her.

5. “Schlüsselgerät 41”

Two German treasure hunters, using a metal detector, found a rare coding machine in the Bavarian forest, near Aying, buried deep (40 cm) under ground in May 2017.

The Nazis made only 500 such machines from this successor of Enigma. The finders immediately delivered the machine to the Deutsche Museum, Munich, and, even more impressive is that the Museum had just received an *almost complete coding machine collection only a few months before from a private collector* but that collection did not contain this version of Schlüsselgerät 41!

6. The Arcanum Databases

One of the largest, reputable corporate champions of market-led digitization of cultural heritage objects in Hungary, Arcanum, began a project to provide a complete, accessible, and searchable database of local newspapers' full content. They started the voluminous digitization process in the biggest libraries a few years ago, and then had to realize that there were many missing copies in the public collections. When Arcanum opened channels to *private collectors* then these collectors offered their copies that almost completed the entire run for digitization.

Nature of the challenge

These six examples clearly illustrate the state of the art and the common features of two special divisions/classes of cultural heritage objects and most of all, the fact that they are extremely endangered. For it is also an everyday experience that the pace of wrecking is accelerating. There are few or no targeted, special efforts, and one must also keep in mind the unlikely and unexpectedness of those rare rescue moments. For example, where no direct family relations exist yet the exposure to market evaluation is sufficiently high, marketability becomes the only forceful factor generating individual responsibility. Also, there is a lack of intergenerational and community awareness, cultural/political agency and intentionally operated platforms for organized, *en masse* safekeeping. Absent as well is a lack of ambition in existing memory institutions (libraries, museums, archives) to expand their official and standardized mission to include these two categories. They suffer from their own sustainability difficulties which run parallel to the permanent loss of specialized knowledge about the saved items and their background domains. The only countercurrent force has been some earlier civic activity to save every piece of great value of this branch of documentary and artefactual heritage.

Raising awareness

Nowadays the situation is much better. The British Library, for example, has started its *Endangered Archives Programme* (EAP) and in its manifest takes cognizance of the danger in a clear, unequivocal way:

If heritage collections are frequently at risk even when housed in recognised archives, how much more endangered are private collections? They may belong to private societies no longer able to maintain their facilities; or represent the life's work of one collector after whose death no further family interest is shown; or be the papers of an outstanding literary, cultural or historical figure which suffer neglect after his or her demise. (EAP)

There are several other forward-looking representatives of memory institutions, who realized this gap in time. Such libraries and museums began special projects to raise attention and support civic efforts (like the awareness raising campaign and digitization support of *African American Family Histories* in the Library of Congress) and started to involve civil society volunteers in research and safekeeping activity.

When the international conference of *ICARUS* (International Centre for Archival Research) examined and reviewed the archival landscape of the twenty-first century in April 2015, the participants highlighted the importance of bridging the professional archival area with their user community. The European Union's *Civic Epistemologies* project is about the participation of citizens in the research of cultural heritage and humanities, sharing the values of open data, open source, and open innovation. The main missions of civic partners are the discovery of hidden heritage objects, and multichannel support in dissemination of preserved, but unknown collections.

Another European project (*ENArC—European Network on Archival Cooperation*) explored the possibilities in the crowdsourcing and harvesting of private archival material and its implication for perceiving and experiencing history. They identified the main benefits of public-private partnerships on the field of digital genealogical research and cadastral maps, popularizing user-side platforms, like *Monasterium* or *Matricula*. The Hungarian National Széchenyi Library is preparing a project to involve volunteers in the data processing phase of the digitized *Death Report Collection*, including more than 500,000 items.

The perceptible steps ahead are all about including civic partners in processing and metadata-generating in existing collections and not about creating new ones or saving endangered collections. An exception is the *Endangered Archives Programme*, which targets not only the official/institutional side, but private archives too. It is, therefore, important to realize that autonomous civic efforts may be sometimes stronger and more effective than public-private partnerships. Three examples of these civic efforts include a Hungarian blogger dealing with old photographs (Fénytképező), who runs a charity project for old, homeless, poor people in reconstructing and digitizing their surviving family pictures which are their last memories. A second example is Tom Tryniski, a retired American engineer, who bought a microfilm-scanner few years ago, and started to digitize old local newspapers in his home. So far, he is approaching 30 million newspaper pages, which quantity is four times larger than the Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* collection, while the number of his visitors is more than double compared to the twin database managed by the Library of Congress. And last is the Open Society Archive (OSA) and its volunteers, who collected every data available about the buildings of the Second World War Budapest Ghetto (Starry Houses Project).

Transformations from private collections to private museums

Nowadays, we find best practices only in the transformation from private collections to private museums (as legal entities, regulated by cultural laws). There would have been no Medical Museum in Larnaca, Cyprus, if Marios Kyriazis, a descendant of four

generations of doctors and pharmacists in Larnaca had not founded it. Set in a traditional restored and listed town mansion, Kyriazis has donated items including medical instruments and books inherited from his grandfather Neoclis Kyriazis (1878–1956) and from his great grandfather Antonios Tsepis (1843–1905) both of whom practiced in Larnaca. The story of the Pierides Archaeological Collection is very similar. According to their brochure, this private collection, founded by Demetrios Pierides in 1839, was protected and systematically enriched by five consecutive generations of the family. In 1974, the Pierides family decided to give access to the public to visit their residence and archaeological collection, which consists of about 2,500 Cypriot antiquities. Since then, it has operated as a Private Archaeological Museum, supported by the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation.

In Central Europe, private museums are extremely popular. There are several pharmacies in their original buildings with old furniture and facilities, which could successfully transform themselves from living drugstores to musealised cultural heritage objects without any support from memory institutions (Nékám; Szarvasházi). Currently, Hungary has four lamp museums in Zsámbék, Szentendre, Kőszeg and Fertőszéplak (Railway Lightmuseum); they are all private collections. A book series, *Magánmúzeumok a Kárpát-medencében* [Private Museums in the Carpathian Basin] was launched in 2008, presenting Aunt Ida's private museum in Torockó, Fehér County, Romania (Benedek & Kürtössi). In this lovely small museum there are only family matters (tools, clothes, small everyday objects), inherited from family members or made by the owner. It is intriguing that there is such a private museum in Torockó besides the “official” folklore museum.

Private museums present private collections to the public and organize special exhibitions. The Berzsenyi Library in Szombathely issued a call for private collectors to sort out the most interesting items from their collections and share them with the public. They then opened an extraordinary exhibition with samples from 34 individual private collections, from uniform-buttons to tile-whistles. A Szekszárd branch of a local history association (Tájak-Korok-Múzeumok [Landscapes-Ages-Museums]) organizes regular visits to regional private collections, from cast-iron stoves to embroideries.

The micro-community dimension: round of the duties of great urgency

Yet, private museums are not only about micro-communities, the local/family cultural ecosystems as memory borders (Örsi). There is another micro-community dimension: involving people with similar interests from any corner of the Earth: collectors, researchers, representatives of related professions, tourists, culture consumers, young people—all may discover unknown provinces of challenging fields.

In the age of personalized services, Expedia, the travel management company provides a tool for its clients, which combines possible visiting targets with the closest available hotels. Figure 1 shows that the Guinness Recorder Lamp Museum in Zsámbék, close to Budapest has become a consideration for those planning a visit which illustrates how a “micro-heritage” might transform into a reasonable marketing object.

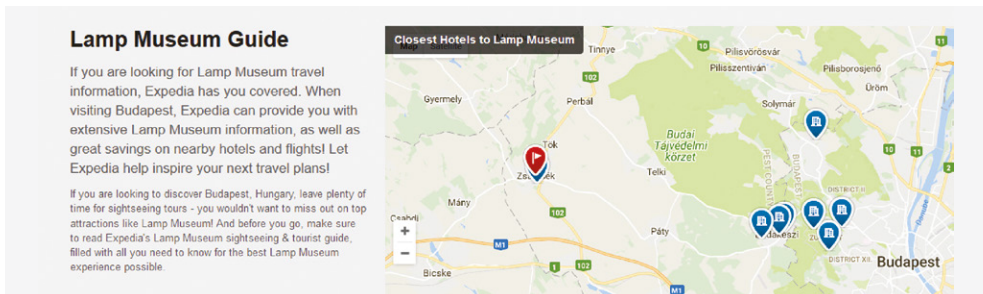


Figure 1. Screenshot of Expedia's guide to the Lamp Museum taken by László Z. Karvalics
<https://www.expedia.com/Lamp-Museum-Budapest.d6311303.Vacation-Attraction>.
 12 January 2018.

Yet, the pressure of market value represents a real danger for cultural micro-heritage. “*Heritage capitalism*” (Di Lenardo & Kaplan), which has started to “monetize” the family/ancestry/genealogy/DNA heritage, currently focuses on photography collections. The story of the Bettmann Archive illustrates the threat. Otto Bettmann, a German immigrant could successfully build a private photo and film collection between 1936 and 1981 in the United States. In 1981, the whole archive was sold to the Kraus Thomson Organization. In 1995 the Archive was bought by Corbis, the digital stock photography company of Bill Gates. They acquired other collections and made extraordinary digitization and storage development—up to 2016, when they sold the whole company to the Visual China Group, which immediately started to trade with this treasure, together with the Getty Images.

But the epistemic value is more important than the market value. Cultural micro-heritage is not only about local memories and ad hoc interest communities. In the crossroads of local, family, regional, national, cultural, professional, material, documentary and other heritages, *every single object has a universal information value*. If an object has even one or more metadata, which represents relation channels with other objects, we get into an endless, undivided space of affordances. And we need to identify the most urgent tasks:

- In the domain of the “shoebox-memory”: these include exploration, registration, physical security, digitization, restoration, collection building, metadata generating along with institutional background, cooperation agreements, awareness raising, privacy issues
- In the field of *personal collections*: discovery and documentation of existing databases, frameworks to establish new ones, network-like exhibition spaces, online representation, methodological and logistical support, legal background necessary to own the collections after the collector’s death.

To be able to take steps ahead, it is time to define and name a fourth (“FamDocArchive”) and a fifth (“Collectorium”) type of cultural memory institution and to start the discussion about their institutional/participative nature, financial and physical space needs, stakeholders involved and disciplinary buoyancies.

Fortepan, a Hungarian non-profit digital photo collection is a good example of imagining, building and enlarging a collection. The two founders decided to share their special collection with the public in 2010, creating a platform to receive other donations. Now, the open collection of Fortepan has almost a hundred thousand photos, and they have volunteers, who try to save and obtain photographic materials in flea markets and from junkyards. The collection is open for family materials, and, hopefully, will be able to maintain its non-profit nature.

We need to create a dedicated, fresh narrative about these issues as soon as possible. Local/practical efforts may not be enough to generate an effective umbrella framework behind the recognition of the importance of cultural “micro-heritage,” but they could be substantial supporters of nation-wide initiatives and the champions of narrative-making could be members of the academic community, without reference to any position in their disciplinary entanglement.

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3. New Media for Old Ideologies

Circulating the Origin Myth of Western Civilization: The Racial Imagery of the 'Men of the North' as an Imaginary Heritage in White Supremacist Blogs

Tuija Saresma

Introduction

The ever-hardening ethno-nationalist atmosphere in Europe is tied in with the triumph of populism and the success of right-wing populist parties in, for example Hungary, France, the Nordic countries and the Netherlands (Wodak; Pazzanese). It is also a response to the 2015 arrival in Europe of a vast number of people fleeing from war in, for example, Syria and Iraq and seeking asylum. This situation, labelled by some as the “refugee crisis,” is in turn reflected in the right-wing and extreme right populist rhetoric that permeates public discussion from national debate in the print media and on public broadcasting channels to international xenophobic internet forums and blogs (Ruotsalainen & Saresma, *Monikulttuurisuuskeskustelu*; Saresma, *Väkivaltafantasiat*). It is also reflected in the ongoing mobilization either for or against asylum seekers and their human rights (Saresma, *Close*). In both national and internet discussions this mobilization manifested as demonstrations, some humanitarian voices and moderate reservations can be heard to accepting “too many” immigrants, as well as aggressive xenophobia, fascist or neo-Nazi ideologies and blatant racism (ibid).

Along with the more familiar forms of racism that draw on assumptions of biological differences and hierarchies between people based on their skin colour or genetic heritage, a newer, subtle discourse of cultural racism focuses on the alleged differences and hierarchies between various cultures (Gullestad). It juxtaposes especially Western civilization, based on Christian values, and the Orientalist image of Muslims as Others (Mahmood). This rhetoric, although it emphasizes what are seen as cultural differences, is inextricably intertwined with the longer established racist discourse that promotes the idea of racial hierarchy and white supremacy (Daniels).

An essential part of this racist ideology is the need to validate the alleged position of the white race at the top of the ethnic power hierarchy by appealing to some kind of ancient legacy as its entitlement. An example of this entitlement is the myth of a pure white nation and a white legacy, which is extensively invoked and cherished. One of the ingredients of this racialized imaginary heritage is the legend of the Vikings. Vikings are often made out to be an exceptional people, perhaps the original Europeans. This myth of a white origin presents Northerners as “an extraordinary people who set out from

their European homelands for unknown places beyond the horizon, including North America, 1000 years ago,” as expressed in a travelling exhibition, “Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga” organized by the National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C., in 1999. Interestingly, too, it presents them as the forefathers of Western civilization, even though another common storyline emphasizes the Vikings’ warlike nature (Craughwell).

Due to its popularity, it is perhaps no wonder that several white supremacist blogs also draw on this myth of the Vikings as superior ancient conquerors. It is circulated widely in the blogosphere, which is currently an influential site for constructing collective, more or less imaginary memories of an allegedly coherent past (Saresma, *Fictitious*). Memories of an imagined white community of Nordic people are constructed in the blogosphere and this narrative performs a certain racial imagery in order to regenerate a desired racial order. For example, distributing the racialized origin stories of “The Man of the North” constructs a collective memory of a white Nordic nation, and this nostalgic construction functions by repetition of the origin story.

Concepts and contexts

“Memory,” as used in this essay will refer to a performative process, open to differing interpretations, while “heritage” will refer to a strategic concept that can be used to achieve political aims. François Hartog and Jacques Revel suggest that “not only powers or authorities and institutions but also individuals are constantly tempted to mobilize the cognitive, argumentative, and symbolic resources of the past” (1). Certain people or groups use the (imaginary) North as a focal site of memory and the bravery of ancient white Northern men as a treasured heritage as a way to stir people up against the racialized Other.

At the backbone of my analysis, lies the concept of racial order, which refers to an imaginary, wished-for order of people based on something called race; it is an implicit, yet commonly shared understanding of ethnic or racial relations (cf. Saresma, *Fictitious* 151). This idealized racial imagery is understood by white supremacists as the “natural” racial order, which has been ruined by multiculturalism; thus these (false) memories of a glorious white past are circulated in melancholic yearnings for something that they claim is lost.¹ Phenomena such as Nazism and the Ku Klux Klan are manifestations of this repressive ideology, which has been banned and severely sanctioned but has nevertheless not disappeared; on the contrary, contemporary society is witnessing its resurgence. Timothy W. Luke suggests that “ideologies of white separatism and supremacy crystallized out of the despoliation of deindustrialization, globalization, and marginalization” (277), and economic insecurity has led to both the rise of populism and the mobilization of white supremacists in contemporary societies.

Racial imagery, Richard Dyer argues, is central to the organization of the modern world, yet, he continues, the racial imagery of white people is seldom seriously scrutinized. Instead, race is too often “something only applied to non-white peoples” while “white people are not racially seen and named” (1). This, of course, leads to a situation where “they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced, we are just people” (1).

Whiteness is not recognized, as “in the West, being white is not an issue for most white people, not a conscious or reflected part of their sense of who they are” (5). Whiteness is a non-identified norm.

In white supremacist mobilization, on the other hand, this normal racial configuration is overturned, and the movement brings whiteness explicitly to the fore. This identity politics of whiteness has masculinist underpinnings, with ungrounded feelings of male superiority and a sense of entitlement. What is of special interest here is the particularity of whiteness in white supremacist ideology. Whiteness is not presented as an invisible racial position (cf. Dyer) or an unmarked category of power and subordination (Choo & Marx Ferree). On the contrary, whiteness is foregrounded and emphasized as the most important difference between people. However, like the familiar racism that does not see whiteness but places it at the top of the hierarchy, white supremacists position white people as being unquestionably in the most powerful position in the racial order. This dominant position of whiteness is exactly the reason why “studying whiteness *qua* whiteness matters” (5), as Richard Dyer puts it.

Racial order is constantly negotiated and contested. Any racial order is, as J. L. Austin and Judith Butler imply, a product of performative repetitions. In my reading of a white nationalist narrative and its circulation in the blogosphere, I pay attention to the use of affective rhetoric in performing (imaginary) sites of memory of the past. I base my analysis on Austin’s ideas on the construction of reality through writing, and Butler’s influential theorizing of performativity and ‘doing’ gender by repetition.

Repetition is a focal part of propaganda. For Norman Davies, propaganda is “the child of conflicting belief, and of people’s determination to spread their own doctrines against all others” (500). His five basic rules of propaganda are simplification; disfiguration; transfusion; unanimity; and orchestration. The last of these refers to repetition, to “endlessly repeating the same messages in different variations and combinations” (Ibid.), and it does not really matter whether the repeated sentences are true or not: if they are circulated efficiently, they will performatively become plausible, whatever their level of factuality.

In our contemporary digitalized culture, we live in constant information overload. Information is never pure: information is communication, but it is also propaganda. Performative depictions of the imaginary North take place on the internet, more specifically in certain interrelated blogs. Studying them reveals the ways in which information, entertainment and propaganda are entangled in this digital environment. Blogs simultaneously function as sites of agency and tools for communicating, influencing and networking. As sites of contemporary digital agency they function not only as spaces for political debate and identity work, but also as sites for promoting ideologically reactionary forces. Often, when researching blogs, the ethos of democratic participation is emphasized (Perlmutter); but the blogosphere also encourages hate speech and may function as a repressive space, as I hope to demonstrate in what follows.

The blogs that I analyse here are characteristically a part of the hatesphere, a concept that Kaarina Nikunen uses when referring to the history of the extreme white spaces of the blogosphere, where sexism and racism intersect in cyberbullying and in the production of

deeply racial politics. This transnational xenophobic internet community is closely linked to the “manosphere”, another transnational network of blogs and other locations in the internet that deal with issues related to men and masculinities, emphasize men’s rights, and are often anti-feminist in their orientation (Saresma, *The Concept*). The ideologies of the white supremacists and men’s rights activists, or the masculinism movement, intertwine, as the latter is renowned for its concern with the lost privilege of white heterosexual men in North American and European societies, trying to convince the public that white Western men are the victims of feminism and multiculturalism (Blais & Dupuis-Déri 22–23). These claims, disseminated widely in the media, are linked to religious, conservative, nationalist, and other such currents (Ibid.).

To sum up my framework, since memories as produced performatively, the production and dissemination of (false) memories becomes especially powerful in the digital age. As Megan Boler contends, “power, discourse, poesis, and propaganda circulate in the blogosphere in relation to the combinatory function and apparatuses of digital distribution” (7). The aim is to produce a certain racial order by the use of racialized imagery of “the Men of the North” as a shared cultural legacy of Western values and of the US white population.

The Origin Myth of the Men of the North

In 1999, the American National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC organized an exhibition to celebrate the millennial of the Vikings. The exhibition is described as follows in the museum website’s promotional material:

The year 2000 marks the 1000-year anniversary of the Vikings’ arrival in North America. According to historic documents and now confirmed by archaeological finds, Vikings such as Leif Eriksson sailed west across the North Atlantic from their homelands in northern Europe, eventually reaching the northeast coast of North America in 1000 A.D. It was at that moment when Europeans and Native North Americans first met.

The National Museum of Natural History will commemorate this historic event with a major traveling exhibition and educational initiative called “Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga.” This interactive exhibit will emphasize the historical link between Europe and North America while exploring how we come to know our past and the relevance the past has for the future. (National Museum of Natural History)

The exhibition is introduced by a seemingly innocent text that presents the visitor with the millennial legacy of American history. Scratching the surface, and marginalizing the very existence of the indigenous peoples of America by emphasizing the arrival of the Northern race on American soil, it presents this heritage as nominally white. It plays down or denigrates the significance of the Native Americans and their culture, as well as the colonial history of the white conquerors from the Vikings and on through the exploratory expeditions of Christopher Columbus, and brings to the fore the link between European

and American civilization—Westerners. What is more, the legend of the white Vikings seems tailor-made to bolster up the idea of racial supremacy and this ideology is plainly manifested in the white supremacist blogosphere.

On 12 July 2006 a blog entry was posted in the *Gates of Vienna* site by the alias “Baron Bodissey” that included the following:

For tens of thousands of years...., Paleolithic hunting tribes lived at the southern edge of the ice fields in Europe and Asia While their cousins in the warmer regions to the south were smelting metal, these hardy tribes were knapping flint. While the southerners were inventing agriculture, slavery, and the ziggurat, the northerners were hunting large game in the chilly grasslands and forests

The available arable or pastoral land was limited So the tough and pugnacious younger sons took to the sea in their longboats, and the age of the Viking raiders began.

Over the next centuries the relentless Vikings raided their way across Europe, from Greenland to Algiers, from Labrador to the Volga.

Despite the conquest and slaughter, and unlike the Arabs (who were dedicated slave-traders), the Vikings did not generally take slaves. The Vikings were dedicated traders, establishing fortified mercantile settlements wherever they went

The landless younger sons of the gentry, the fugitives and criminals, the religious refugees, and the political outcasts who initially came to America were drawn from the most adventurous and entrepreneurial of the Anglo-Saxon and Danish bloodlines. What was originally a racial character had long become a cultural one.

We are the descents of those Paleolithic hunters

We are not so many generations removed from the Men of the North; their spirit can still be revived

The Men of the North faced lethal reality with nothing more than their courage, their wits, and a willingness to co-operate with one another. We will need to do the same again.

Another mastodon is looming in the glacial mist. We can only hope that the art of knapping flint is not completely forgotten.

With this kind of rhetoric, using stylistically rather high-flown words, the writer is trying to whip up Nordic men to fight for the purity of their nation by resisting the influence of the Other (in the blog entry, the Southern Cousin, Arab slave traders, etc.). Contrary to this Other, Vikings are described as pugnacious, brave, adventurous, and entrepreneurial.

I read this blog text as an “origin myth” describing how this new reality came into existence.² This particular origin myth that openly discusses racial and cultural difference and draws on both cultural and biological racism is used to legitimize the alleged superiority of men from the North. The nostalgic story reframes and recycles the ideoscape of the bravery, stamina, and endurance of the Nordic man to justify the criticism expressed against immigration and refugee politics and to fight for a “pure” white nation. It is worth noting, however, that there is also a lot of talk about family relations, genetics and bloodlines (youngest sons, brothers, cousins) which refers, obviously, to biology.

Bloodlines, genes and gendered racialization

White supremacy as an ideology claims that “our” culture is a product of “our” race, which is superior to that of “others.” It connects with white nationalism, which is ethnocentric and presents itself as a movement for racial self-preservation and draws on a variety of allegedly scientific racial theories, such as Nordicism, Pan-Germanism, and Nazism. Nordicism as an ideology—most popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—supported racial separatism and argued that Nordic people were an endangered racial group. This ideology was prominent in the Nordic countries until the 1960s (Hübinette).

By re-introducing the idea of a Nordic race, the origin story seeks grounds for again appealing to biological justifications for racism, in addition to using cultural racist ideas in imagining and feeling nostalgia towards the ancient, archaic white nation of the Nordic heroes. What made this racialized—and to put it bluntly, racist—argument persuasive and even powerful was that it utilized the popular scientific discourse on genetic mapping.

The racial theories of today are subtler than those of 100 years ago but they do exist: commercialized scientific fields such as population genetics, genetic mapping, and genetic ancestry tests are experiencing a boom. The technologization of biomedicine means that the implementation of genetic engineering or population genetics is no longer just the stuff of science fiction. Along with the digitalization of culture, there is a tendency for the technologization and medicalization of health care. Biomedicine has put within our reach such innovations as genetic mapping and genetic ancestry tests. Venla Oikkonen, who has studied the political effects of this development, argues that mitochondrial analysis as a scientific technology “underlies contemporary techno-scientific phenomena: genetic ancestry tests, ethnic diversity projects, and national genome projects” (747). As one of its manifestations, *Mitochondrial Eve* was discovered in 1987 as the matrilinear ancestor of all modern humans. This ancestor, who lived in Africa a few hundred thousand years ago, brought with her, Oikkonen suggests, a set of cultural emotions including hope, celebration, suspicion and anxiety that shaped the idea of human ancestry and made it more inclusive. As such, it had a certain feminist and multicultural potential. However, it was soon erased in the form of gendered genetic politics: “the introduction of *Y-chromosome Adam* in 1995 marked a shift in the affective negotiations of human ancestry.... a strictly heteronormative and symbolically white dynamic rendered safe the feminist, queer and multicultural potential suggested [by the Mitochondrial Eve]” (Oikkonen 747).

The imagined ancient white community

Another blog entry, also published in the *Gates of Vienna* site, makes it clear that there is a powerful ideology behind circulating this origin myth in the internet. Post dated 9 October 2007 and entitled *The Age of White Masochism*, Baron Bodissey writes:

I used to believe until quite recently that skin colour was irrelevant. I was brought up that way. I still don't think ethnicity or race does or should mean everything. In fact, I would say it is patently uncivilized to claim that it means everything. But I can no longer say with a straight face that it means absolutely nothing, and if it means more than nothing, it needs to be taken into account. Whether we like this or not is immaterial.

The blog post cites many “researches” from various sources and bases its claims for white supremacy on these, arguing for example that

[r]epeated violence committed by non-white immigrants against whites is dismissed because they come from “weak groups.” But whites are a weak group. We are a rapidly shrinking global minority, and Nordic-looking Scandinavians are a minority of a minority.

He goes on:

Native Europeans are being told that we don’t have a history and a culture, and that we thus “gain” a culture when others move to our countries. This is an insult to thousands of years of European history, to the Celtic, Germanic, Slavic and cultures and the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage all Westerners share in.

Using military metaphors, he claims:

I’ve been told by Americans that they have moved beyond race, but judging from examples such as this, it looks more as if they have established a culture of institutionalized white masochism. It’s not that Americans have moved beyond race, it’s just that the whites have unilaterally surrendered.

He concludes his rant with:

I believe whites in the twenty-first century should desire a room of our own where we can prosper, live in a major Western city without having to fear violence because of our race, and without being stripped of our heritage in order to placate people who moved to our countries out of their own free will. We have the right to preserve our heritage and are under no obligation to commit collective suicide or serve as a dumping ground for other countries.

In this blog entry, the writer suggests that Western governments encouraging the influx of non-white immigrants are demonstrating “white masochism” and that white people “have the right to preserve their heritage” (sic!) instead of “committing a collective suicide” as a nation. He argues for the “preservation of the native majority” and demands an extremely restrictive immigration policy and “the rejection of multiculturalism.”

In the comments section, it becomes clear that the readers of this blog identify Baron Bodissey as Fjordman, the ideological master and inspiration behind the Norwegian terrorist and mass murderer of Oslo and Utøya 2011, whose anti-immigration, Islamophobic, and racist ideas the killer also explicitly refers to numerous times in his manifesto. Baron Bodissey, however, apparently prefers to keep his two aliases separate, although he does not deny the connection. In another blog post, entitled *Again, the Men of the North* (4 December 2009) Baron Bodissey writes:

To a commenter who asserted that the downfall of the white race will be required in payment for centuries of sin, Fjordman made this bracing response:

Susan: I'm not sure you are white, but you are definitely a liberal, and a troll.

My ancestors struggled hard to survive in a cold and dark country where my people have lived since the end of the last Ice Age. It's not my fault that Kurds, Arabs and Pakistanis are incapable of creating societies as good as the ones we have made. They have no business being here and we have every right to expel them.

Again, entitlement is constructed on the basis of an ancient heritage. Baron Bodissey then quotes the blog “Men of the North” and links it to the blog post, which goes on to discuss the origins of Western civilization which, for Baron Bodissey, are quite straightforward: “The Men of the North built Western Civilization.” A more eloquent testimony goes as follows:

Those shrewd and hardy tribesmen hunted the mammoth and the auroch in the shadow of the glaciers. Later they eked a living from the stony ground and chill waters of northern Europe. They were a tough, industrious, and crafty bunch, those Men of the North. The descendants of the tribes spread from the British Isles, the Low Countries, Jutland, Sealand, and the Scandinavian mainland across the surface of the globe, conquering, settling, farming, trading, inventing, and building wherever they went. They created what is now known as “the Civilized World.”

The blogger finds the claims irritating and wrong that white people should pay for their sins and their colonial history; these claims are, to him, spurious and have “no basis in law, morality, Christian ethics, or common sense.” He then appeals to “our” shared heritage by demanding, “We would do well to remember that.”

These extracts from various blog posts show quite explicitly how Baron Bodissey/Fjordman links the “glorious heritage of the men of the North” to racist and xenophobic ideas, using affective arguments. Nostalgic appreciation of the hard life that their ancestors had—those members of a pure white nation before the multiculturalism came along that now threatens to ruin it—and of a glorious past are used in legitimizing Islamophobic and (culturally) racist opinions.

Baron Bodissey/Fjordman's views are not exceptional, but they are shared and spread by many in the blogosphere. Similar blogs, discussion forums and groups in the social media, promoting hostility to immigration, Islamophobia and a white supremacist ideology, can be found in abundance; sites such as *The Brussels Journal: The voice of conservatism in Europe* (www.brusselsjournal.com), *Sons of Europa: Dissident views on politics and religion* (sonsofeuropa.com), and *1389 Blog – Counterjihad!* (<http://1389blog.com/>) to name but a few. The blogs share the origin story of Western civilization or of the Man of the North and link it to ideologies hostile to immigration and Islam.

The origin story of white heritage also has fellow narratives. Genetic maps show the distribution of European Y-chromosome DNA and haplogroups of the Y-line. Based

on current genetic population research, it is suggested, for example, that despite earlier claims, Finns are not originally from the same gene pool as Scandinavians but form a very special genetic group. As an example, I will briefly mention a Finnish blog, *Väärinajattelun lempeä syleily* [The Tender Embrace of Wrong/Misthinking] by Susanna Kaukinen, one of the founders of the anti-immigration *Close the Borders* movement (see Saresma, *Close*). The blog post debates the popular misconception that the Finns' genetic ancestry lies in the same progenitors as that of our Scandinavian "brothers." She wants to expose the "propaganda that throws dirt on the proud and brave people of Finland" as false, as the "paternal line" of the Finns is different from the Scandinavian line: it is much older and more homogenous genetically, namely, the Finno-Ugrian line. Thus, this blogger concludes that Finns are an indigenous people who outdate the Scandinavian genetic heritage by tens of thousands of years.

However, even though there is debate on the genetic origin of Finns, the argument is still the same: we are white, we are special, and based on our racial heritage, we are entitled to have the country we live in as our own.³

White supremacist blogs as (web)sites of cultural "memory"

The analysis of the myth of the Nordic people shows how false memories are used to construct a desired imagined past, and how such a fictitious past can be and is continuously created and reinterpreted in the internet in order to the further present goals. Circulating on the internet a purpose-oriented, unfounded collective memory of a white, Nordic origin for Western civilization is intentional. The blogs function as echo chambers (Abbas; Jäntti, et al.), where loud, parochial opinions are reinforced through repetition (Saresma, *Close*; Saresma, *Fictitious*). The false memories of a glorious white past are an attempt to return to a lost paradise, to an imagined racial order that is characterized as the hegemony of white men. This imaginary white birthplace of Western civilization projects a combination of racist and masculinist ideologies (cf. Saresma, *Fictitious*).

Klára Sándor suggests (in this volume) that the notion of a powerful past reinforces nationalism and xenophobia. The same processes are underway in the white supremacist blogosphere. These transnational communities, constructed through blogs and other social media sites and reinforced in various sub-cultures online and offline, are "fantasies, but very effectual ones":

They are by nature not only effective, in terms of spreading fast and establishing themselves as a part of the everyday political configurations, but also highly affective: they offer a number of locations for affective attachments to be born, and circulate these in varying contexts. (Ruotsalainen & Saresma, *Politics*)

In the origin stories presented above, an artificial "us" is constructed and constantly performed discursively as an ideal white (imaginary) community (Anderson). In the narrative, the existence of this imagined community is threatened by the Other, often portrayed as barbarians or savages (Lähdesmäki & Saresma). Separating the white "us" from the racialized "other" is also part of the aim of restoring the desired racial order,

in which white men come first. Constructing a threat and using others as scapegoats is effective in constructing and maintaining an atmosphere of anxiety and dread (cf. Saresma, *Racialized*). This affective attitude, called the politics of fear by Ruth Wodak, is typical of the right-wing populist movement now sweeping Europe. It includes a yearning for an imaginary white nation and exploits nostalgia, fused with an explicit rhetoric of victimhood and betrayal (Kelly 73; Saresma, *Fictitious*).

Also in the origin story, nostalgia and gender melancholy become mobilized to create political and social stability and to invoke reactionary ideologies that refuse to accept social change. The past, imagined and depicted as a time when power hierarchies were exactly as they were meant to be, is, of course, a melancholic fantasy. The utopia that is created in the blogs is literally a place that does not exist—obviously, such a time and place has never existed (Karkulehto). What we see in the blogs is an affective, melancholic white nostalgia, a yearning for an (imaginary) time when the racial order was rigid and stable. White nostalgia is linked to a sense of losing one’s “rightful” place at the top of the social hierarchy. The blogs are characterized by emotion, by nostalgia—the feeling of loss combined with a wistful longing for a better past. Elsewhere, I have called the articulations of this nostalgia “resentment speech” (Saresma, *Miesten*; Saresma, *Fictitious*, 163).

It is worth noticing that although the origin story of the Nordic race dates back to the ancient times of the glory of the Viking conquerors and celebrates the white haplotype, its popularity is not limited only to the Nordic countries, but people who sympathize with this way of seeing things are spread all across Western cultures. The celebration of a past white community and the attempt to establish a new one by eliminating non-whites shows how the imaginary North is constructed as a trans-local, transnational site of (imaginary) memory. It also emphasizes remembering—which may be pseudo-remembering as a political act.

Conclusion

Digitalization has increased the opportunities for racist and white supremacist individuals and groups to meet and form coalitions on the internet. The blogosphere and discussion forums where white nationalism is (collectively) created and recreated are subject to constant change: blogs and other sites are abandoned at the same time as others are being launched. It is impossible to keep up with everything that is happening on the internet. As researchers, however, it is important to study the contemporary mobilization on the net and to be aware of the trends constructing “the heritage of the White Nation” (see, for example, Schröder). Only then is it possible to even try to counteract and prevent these harmful ideologies, based on imagined and even false memories, from spreading even further.

To some people, the amount of white supremacist content in the internet may come as a surprise. An even bigger surprise may be the very existence of the racist white supremacy movement. Neither the Ku Klux Klan nor racism in its essence are outdated: they have not vanished even though recent decades have been characterized by progress and the liberalization of values. However, as Robert Futrell and Pete Simi point out,

The collective surprise at White supremacists' arrival on the national stage [of the United States] reflects a lack of attention to the varied and persistent forms of racial extremism that have long simmered in America . . . Facing a mainstream culture that vilified racial extremism, White supremacists gradually withdrew from most public forms of activism . . . They found sanctuary on the Internet embracing concealment as a savvy survival strategy (76).

The social media indeed function as a space for connecting with similar-minded people and for propagating and reinforcing nationalist ideologies. As we have seen, the means used include repetition, which is a basic and very effective propaganda technique. It is not always as blatant as in the excerpts I have presented. As Futrell and Simi argue,

Some racial extremists also worked to reframe their rhetoric to appeal to mainstream conservative Whites. To neutralize the public stigma associated with White supremacy, they recast racial and anti-Semitic hatred as “White heritage preservation,” “White nationalism,” and, most recently, “the alt-right.” This sanitized “white-collar supremacy,” as religious historian Kelly J. Baker calls it, casts Whites as minority victims facing reverse discrimination (76).

In the extracts above, this can all be seen in the transnational, trans-Atlantic origin stories that celebrate the glorious past of the Vikings. In a broader context, they relate to white supremacy as an ideology and the contemporary alt-right mobilization in the US, sharing their ideal racial order. Following Annie Kelly's description of the alt-right as a “loosely-defined digital subculture” when they should really be called ‘neo-Nazi,’ in these digital spheres,

progressivism and modernity [are interpreted] as an assault on a supposed white past—created through an assemblage of elements from fantasy literature, 1950s advertisements and classical art. These elements conjoin to create a mythic era in which white men and women formed a prosperous, content and, above all, homogenous community. (73)

According to Kelly, “nostalgia for the mythic past or fixed gender dynamics and racial homogeneity is an important underlying tenet of popular social conservatism” (Ibid.). The blogs analysed above fit neatly into this description of the alt-right mobilization, which has its roots in earlier racist imagery of the white nation, as Futrell and Simi point out. Also, it is not too far-fetched to suggest that racism and sexism are often intertwined in the struggle against progress and in support of neo-conservative values, and especially in efforts to restore the (imagined) gender and racial order, with white men at the top (Keskinen; Saresma, *Fictitious*). For this reason there is an on-going ideological struggle on the internet about the “real” origin story, about the “true” heritage—and it is all about race and racialization.

I suggest that constructing false memories and preserving the alleged heritage of a (white) nation by positioning the racialized other as inferior to the white conquerors

might prove dangerous. What is more, the violent imagery of hunters and soldiers might create an atmosphere of aggression. Repeating and circulating such ideas, the imagery performatively strengthens the racialized hierarchy and legitimizes white supremacist ideology. This has had and can have concrete, violent consequences, especially when combined with the ongoing developments in and technologization of genetics.

Notes

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¹ White supremacists, here, refer to supporters of a racist ideology that positions white people as superior to people of other races.

² In many cases, origin myths also justify the established order by presenting it as having been established by sacred forces.

³ It would be interesting to dig into this material more deeply and see for example, if there is any reference there to the “brothers” of the “true” man of the North, that is, to our Hungarian or Baltic “blood relatives.”

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Versions of Folk History Representing Group Identities: The Battle for the Masternarrative

Klára Sándor

An effect of the internet on language use, spoken language and group identities symbolized by different spoken varieties is their gaining back their rights and importance in networked societies. It is also a commonplace that new communication technology accelerates the development of and helps to maintain those groups and small networks, whose members, due to their geographical isolation, might otherwise not form a successful working network.

Also important is another core constituent of group identity, namely the own narratives a group uses to create its self-identity. Folk histories, connected to the identifying narratives of subcultural groups, seem to generate more conflict than the apparent diversification of public language use, since the various narratives in folk histories aspire to step in the place of the canonized, academic (“official”) national history.¹ It also means that most variations of folk history demand the status of the only valid, canonized version of national history. Theoretically this could even lead to the development of a dialogue between the varieties of folk histories, and, eventually, a nationwide consensus. However, this speculation could not work in reality, since the compromise would detract from the importance that the group narratives have in identity formation. Unlike micro-historical elements and memory databases, folk history versions cannot be cumulated, since due to their nature, each version aspires to the role of master narrative, and so exclude and delegitimize other versions of folk history. As an example to support this hypothesis, I will show some subcultural interpretations of the modernized Székely script.

The Székely script

Those who travel around Hungary by car, can see place name boards written with strange, angular, runiform signs in many—actually hundreds of—villages and towns. These texts are in Hungarian, but written not with the Latin alphabet but with the letters of the Székely script.

This script happens to be a hot potato in present political debates in Hungary, as its use may be interpreted as an expression of political identity. A portion of Hungarians glorifies it, and keeps it as a precious ancient heritage, a real “Hungaricum,” that is, a Hungarian speciality. Another portion of Hungarians calls it a “scrawl,” a “backward and ridiculous stupidity” which is first of all a Nazi symbol. Most Hungarians, however, including those who belong to those two groups, do not know much about the Székely

script itself. Members of the positive group believe in myths, tales, and legends, while members of the negative group know practically nothing about the script, or consider it a fake writing system. That little or no knowledge about the Székely script is lucrative for those opposing sides in the Hungarian political arena that identify themselves as Right vs. Left. Often these terms overlap with the terms “national” vs. “cosmopolitan” in the rightish discourse, and “nationalistic/conservative” vs. “European/progressive” in the leftish discourse.

Before analyzing the modern use of the Székely script, however, a brief summary about it might be useful. The Székely script belongs to the Western group of the old Turkic scripts, which were used in Eastern Europe between the sixth and tenth centuries. The Székelys are, according to most historians, an ethnic group of Turkic origin, which conjoined to the Hungarian tribal federation before the end of the ninth century, during the period when the Hungarian tribes were living east of the Carpathian Mountains and north of the Black Sea.²

There are some carved, scratched, and painted inscriptions preserved mostly in the churches of Székelyland, at the Eastern part of Transylvania, which today is in Romania, but was part of the Hungarian Kingdom from the tenth-eleventh century until 1920. The first known inscriptions date back to the late thirteenth century and the latest ones are from the mid-seventeenth century.

The usage of the Székely script outside Székelyland can be traced back to the late fifteenth century. It seems that it had quite a following in the royal court of King Matthias Corvinus (ruled 1458–1490), who was a successful military leader and a renaissance king with a powerful army and offensive political style together with a true respect for ancient times, so he chose Attila the Hun as his prefiguration, and also used the attribute *Attila Secundus*. For him, the Székely alphabet was proof of the Hunnic (and Scythian) origin of Hungarians.

At the end of the sixteenth century, Johannes Telegdi compiled a textbook to teach the alphabet to as wide a circle as possible, but his work has never been printed or widely used. The Székely script has remained a symbol of Hungarian identity for a part of literate society, and has been used to demonstrate sophistication and being well-educated, while by some it was used as a cryptography. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Székely script became a subject of scholarly interest.

The development of the romantic approach towards the Székely script

The turning point in the history of the Székely script was the late nineteenth century, when the division of academic and lay ideas became complete. The folk history of the script connected strongly to romantic historicism, becoming a reminder of the heroic past, a part of the Hunnic heritage of Hungarians, while academic history accepted that Hungarian is related to the Finno-Ugric languages and that no historical, political or ethnic continuation can be proven between the Huns who disappeared from sources soon after Attila's death, and the Hungarians, who appeared in the written sources only centuries later.³

The romantic attitude, however, remained popular, not only in schoolbooks and calendars, but even in the literary works of those writers and poets, who accepted the “Finno-Ugric theory” about the origins of Hungarian language. For example, János Arany and Ferenc Móra, the latter being also a leading archaeologist of his time, who carried out research in the Hunnic cemeteries of the Hungarian Great Plain around the city of Szeged. For them the legend of the Hunnic heritage was a literary source, and a constituent of Hungarian ethnic identity, independent of what they held about the “real” (that is, academic) history of Hungarians.⁴

In the first half of the twentieth century, the romantic historical approach about the Székely script was partly maintained by boy scouts, who used it as a special— “ancient”— form of encryption. After World War II, during the communist regime, any cult of the Székely script ceased, even scholarly research was missing until the mid-1980s. In the 1980s, some enthusiastic laymen revitalized the cult mainly by publishing popularising works, which failed to fulfil academic standards, and followed the romantic approach. However, they were the first ones for a long time to introduce the Székely script to a wider public. The very same small group modernized the Székely alphabet, they added new signs to differentiate short and long vowels as in the historic Székely alphabet the same letters were used for both. They organized study circles in primary schools and summer camps to teach this modernized version of the script, and since the 1990s, there have also been competitions for students, where they had to transliterate between the Latin and Székely script. There were also other opinions about the modernization of the Székely script—how the letters should look and what letters the alphabet should contain. The battle between the supporters of one or the other modernized alphabet peaked in the “UNICODE-battle” in the first half of the 2010s, when two camps were formed and fought against each other publicly in a notably strident voice.⁵

This battle was also marked by differences in political loyalty. Although both groups are connected to political formations with extreme right ideas—one to the World Federation of Hungarians (*Magyarok Világszövetsége*, WFH), the other to the political party Jobbik—they do not share an interest in the political (and business) arena, and the WFH is openly engaged with highly esoteric “historical” views,⁶ which although not unwelcome by Jobbik-voters and by some of the party’s politicians, only a few of these ideas are highlighted by the party. On the other hand, Jobbik has built the cult of the Székely script into its political program in the recent decade. Although the political constituent of the interpretation of the Székely script is fairly new as it has been attached to the script only a few years ago, by now this has become the strongest.

Interpretations of Székely script: the supporters

The group of supporters of the Székely script—those who cultivate it and evaluate it highly—is certainly not homogeneous, although they mostly identify themselves as politically rightist voters.⁷ There are sharp debates among different groups of supporters about several topics. One is the origin of the script: some maintain that it was the very first writing system of humankind, and think that it had already been used forty thousand

years ago within the “Bosnian pyramids” (which are actually natural hills in Bosnia).⁸ Others maintain that the Székely script is the antecedent of all prestigious writing systems in the Middle East, including the Phoenician alphabet and the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Some are happy to acknowledge that the Székely script is somewhat younger and belongs to the Turkic scripts, but call all the Turkic alphabets “Rovash,” that is, Hungarian for “carved.” All of them, however, share the view that the Székely script is a valuable national heritage that all “true Hungarians” should know.

What is the Székely script used for nowadays? Continuing the hobbyist tradition of the 1980s, it is taught to children in study circles, there are summer camps organized to learn and practice it, and the traditional annual competitions have been recently organized on a “nation-wide” level, meaning that they reach beyond the political borders of Hungary to include the Hungarian ethnic minorities in the neighboring countries.⁹

For quite a lot of people the Székely script is a definite tool to perform identity. It is very popular in tattoo salons, you can buy jewellery and clothing with Székely inscriptions; a few people even used it when signing their ID or driver’s licence. As a part of identity performance there were a wide range of books published written with the Székely alphabet: novels, folk and fairy tales, esoteric literature, and even the New Testament.¹⁰

There are hundreds of websites where one can read about this script, almost exclusively lay views approaching the topic more or less esoterically; there are pages that transform the Latin letters to Székely ones,¹¹ one can send Christmas cards with it; it can be practiced with the help of memory and board games, and there is Székely “Scrabble” for experts as well. The popularizing websites, the books and the games are for those whose hobby is to deal with the Székely alphabet, to strengthen their commitment towards it and especially towards the ideology it symbolizes, and, of course, to gain more fans for the script and for the ideology. The function of other kinds of consumers’ goods is very similar, with an even clearer business interest, since they are for everyone, and their use do not require even a knowledge of the Székely alphabet, since they can function as simple fashion objects as well: T-shirts, jewellery, letter shaped soup pasta, etc. The Székely script is indeed a part of the “ancient history business” that sells artefacts reminding their users of the heroic nomadic past of the Hungarians, that is, the era before the settling in the Carpathian Basin in the last decades of the ninth century.¹² The background ideology of this business, the respect for the nomadic past of Hungarians, and the interpretation of it as a Hungarian “Golden Age” is a constituent of the nationalistic public discourse. This ideology, supported by the intentionally manipulated folk history generates more and more demand on the market. On the other hand, the same ideology and the strongly romanticized folk history also generate political votes for those who focus on “Hungarianness” in their rhetoric, such as the governing Fidesz and the extreme right Jobbik.

As for the Székely script, it was Jobbik that realized that putting the cultivation of the Székely script on their political agenda would differentiate them from Fidesz. This might have been needed, since according to political analysts, Fidesz implemented many items from Jobbik’s political program, but Fidesz does not always highlight its nationalistic attitudes or does it in a less transparent way than Jobbik does.¹³

Jobbik was the first and is still the only Hungarian party that has put the cultivation of the Székely script on its agenda. They forced the establishment of place name boards, and Jobbik politicians participated at their inauguration ceremonies. Actually, these boards are widely interpreted as symbols of Jobbik being present in the particular town or village that utilizes such name boards. Jobbik also introduced parliamentary motions to legitimize testimonies written with Székely letters, and to include the Székely script in the official list of Hungaricums.¹⁴ Jobbik strongly supported the newly developed cult of nomadism seen in hobby circles and in a biannual nomadic pride festival called “Kurultáj.”¹⁵ For the romanticized and heroic past ideology the Székely script was also an important piece in the set of “real” or “true” “Hungarianness” together with the map of Great Hungary, the Holy Crown, and the “turul,” a specific type of eagle that used to be the symbolic bird of the first Hungarian royal house, the Árpáds.¹⁶

Interpretations of the Székely script: the rejection of its cult

No doubt, Jobbik tried to tie the Székely script to itself as strongly as possible. It was actually not a hard job, since most Hungarians know practically nothing about the script. When they first see it on place name boards, there is a good chance that they attach it to Jobbik, because they know about the connection between the boards and the party from the newspapers and portals where there were quite a lot of reports about the board setting activity of Jobbik. Consequently, most supporters of the left wing parties see the Székely script as a symbol of Jobbik, and, since many of them label Jobbik a neo-Nazi party, they reject the Székely script as a Nazi symbol.¹⁷

The rejection of the Székely script can also be eased into a major cultural discourse, according to which Hungarians, coming from the East and settling down in the West, had always to choose between Asia and Europe, between two distinct and sharply opposing poles, where Asia represented barbarism, ignorance, and backwardness, and Europe represented civilization, enlightenment, and progress.

There is also a sophisticated way of rejection by claiming that the Székely script is not the heritage of the nomadic past but created by humanist scholars in the sixteenth century. This argument is supposed to be strong as this theory was developed by a respected scholar of old Hungarian literature, and was even published in the new concise history of Hungarian literature (Horváth). Some of those who reject, ridicule, and devalue the Székely script, point to this theory as the scholarly background of their attitudes, or simply do not know about the historical background of the writing system. Both subgroups admit that their overwhelming negative attitude toward the Székely script is triggered by its association with Jobbik, and, as they add fairly often, is purely “emotional.”

Conclusions

Why is public ignorance of the Székely script so lucrative for both political sides? For the right wing parties, it helps to construct a refined nationalistic idea in which the nomadic past is glorious, and legitimizes the demand that Hungary should be bigger, if not geographically, then at least in commanding political respect. The notion of the

powerful past reinforces nationalistic pride and xenophobia which is vital for both Fidesz and Jobbik, as both parties build on these sentiments in their rhetoric. Considering the real history of the Székely script, right wing parties would not be able to insert it into their nationalistic narrative which is construed out of historical myths.

For the left wing parties, a clear visual symbol, such as the Székely script functions as a proof of the permanent threat of “Asia” and what it represents, namely moving away from Europe and European values, and also the threat of Nazism. That is why they accept Jobbik’s attempt to monopolize the Székely script, and that is why they describe users of Székely script as a homogeneous group. Had they considered the real history of the Székely script, they would not be able to identify it as a Jobbik symbol.

To summarize: the less society is familiar with a phenomenon, the more it can be used for sharpening political polarization. None of the groups at the right and left political poles are engaged in learning historical facts about the Székely script, since the knowledge about its cultural background would weaken the strong symbolic association between the script and extreme right groups. It is neglected by both the extremists and those who want to reject them, as they both need easily identifiable symbols to create stereotypes to identify the “us” and “them” groups.

Notes

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¹ The term “folk history” here does not mean people’s history or microhistory but, similarly to the way terms, such as “folk linguistics” or “folk psychology” is used, refers to lay views and ideologies about history.

² On the grouping of Turkic scripts see, for example, Vasil’ev. The huge literature about the origins of the Székelys is summarized by Kordé. On the connections between the theories about the origins of the Székelys and the Székely script see Sándor, *A székely* 172–74.

³ For a comprehensive monograph on the history, monuments, and history of the use of the Székely script, see Sándor, *A székely*.

⁴ On the interrelations between the theories about the origins and relatedness of Hungarian, the Hunnic tradition, and how the latter remained the basis of the Hungarian ethnic identity embedded in literature, art, and public school curricula, even after academic history writing rejected the theory of Hunnic origins, see Sándor, *Nyelvrokonság*.

⁵ On the UNICODE-battle see Sándor, *A Bulldog* and Sándor, *Harc*.

⁶ For example, that the Hungarians are the most ancient people of Europe, of the whole World or even the Universe; that the letterforms of the Székely script contain an ancient sacral message to us; that the Hungarian language has special virtues, and perfectly expresses the “Hungarian soul”; etc.

⁷ Based on the pre-analyses of printed and online discourses within the frame of the research supported by the OTKA Grant K 115748.

⁸ See Bohannon; Harding; Woodard.

⁹ See the page of the competitions, <<http://www.rovasirasforrai.hu/Versenyek.htm>>. (Accessed: 24 Feb. 2018)

¹⁰Many of them can be read online as well, see the search list of the Hungarian Digital Library for the keyword “rovás” (“carved script”).

¹¹Some examples are: <<http://rovasfordito.hu>>, <<http://www.magyarhon.eu/szekely-rovasiras/latinrol/latin.htm>>, <http://www.kromek.hu/rovas/rovasiras_m_r.htm>, etc>, (Accessed: 24 Feb. 2018).

¹²The year when the nomadic Hungarian tribes conquered the Carpathian Basin (known as the Hungarian “land-taking”) is traditionally identified as 895, and according to most historians this is the actual time when the main military forces and the main camp (the ruling centre of the tribal confederation) were settled onto the Great Plain from the previous centre, from the area South East of the Carpathians (today Moldavia in Romania). However, that was a longer process, during which the Hungarian confederation gained control over the Carpathian Basin (first over the Great Plain, then Pannonia, West of the Danube river).

¹³See, for example, the detailed analyses of Policy Solutions at <http://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzesek/Policy%20Solutions_Mi%20maradt%20a%20Jobbiknak.pdf>.

¹⁴As defined in Law 2012/XXX, a “Hungaricum” is a valuable natural environment, or product that is acknowledged to be characteristic of the Hungarian culture, is specific and special, and is worth protecting, and is dedicated to be a “Hungaricum” by the “Hungaricum Committee.”

¹⁵Mongolian “Kurultai” (“Kuriltai,” “Khuraltai”) and Turkic “Kurultay” originally meant the “general assembly of the tribes.” The word is still used in Mongolian and Turkic languages as a synonym for “assembly, gathering, convention, congress, parliament.” The Hungarian “Kurultáj” festival is organized “to strengthen the Ural–Altaic self-awareness,” with the participation of Inner Asian delegates of speakers of different Turkic languages, and is announced as the “tribal assembly of the Hun–Turkic nations, celebration of the preservation of the ancient traditions,” see <<http://kurultaj.hu/english>>.

¹⁶“Greater Hungary” refers to the territory of Hungary before the Treaty of Trianon (1920) by which somewhat more than two-thirds of Hungarian territory and more than half of the Hungarian population were allocated to the neighboring countries. The “Holy Crown” was the coronation crown of the Hungarian Kingdom, that, according to the “Holy Crown Theory” was (and, according to its followers, still is) the symbol of the Hungarian state that included the king, the aristocracy, and also the territory of the Kingdom. The “Holy Crown Theory” was developed in the Middle Ages and functioned as the foundation of the traditional (not written) constitution of the Hungarian state. “Turul” is a Turkic loanword in Hungarian, which designated a kind of predatory bird, according to a widely held view a falcon, but most probably a kind of eagle (Fodor).

¹⁷This and the following considerations of the subchapter come from ongoing research supported by the OTKA Grant K 115748. Since the time of the conference (2015) there was a major shift in the political orientation of Jobbik as the party tried to navigate itself towards the middle of the political scene. As a consequence the strong support for the Székely script’s cult disappeared from their political agenda.

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4. Rethinking Hungarian Collective Memory

Image and Imagination: The Changing Role of Art from the Nineteenth Century to the Present in Hungarian National Memory

Katalin Bódi

Founding intentions

Upon entering the *Art and Nation: Image and Self-Image* temporary exhibition held between 5 November 2010 and 3 April 2011 in the Hungarian National Gallery, the visitor was greeted by the statue of the *Young Shepherdess* by István Ferenczy and a bust of the poet Mihály Csokonai Vitéz by the same artist. This moment brought together the artistic ideals of Ferenc Kazinczy (1759–1831), who, in the early nineteenth century, saw the possibility of creating a national canon not merely by “imitating the Greeks” (Winckelmann 33) but by founding an academic canon. By following the classic ideals of beauty and adapting contemporary Western European artistic practices, Kazinczy deemed it possible to express the greatness of Hungarian national art and its equal status to Western European art. Kazinczy, who had been tirelessly working in the interest of Hungarian literature, the renewal of language and tastes, and for Hungarian cultural life in general, regarded fine arts as on the same level as poetic practices in the *Árkádia* trial commencing in 1806. The poet advocated the classical aesthetic ideal articulated in his plan for the gravestone of the poet Mihály Csokonai Vitéz as a general artistic practice, which was mostly received with aversion in Debrecen, the hometown of the dead poet, since there was a disinclination to join the national and the classic traditions of Greek and Roman antiquity. Kazinczy also focused on contemporary Western European artistic practices in his writings about and in his collection of fine art: from a creative perspective, he concentrated on the artistic academic canon, while from the perspective of the viewer, he emphasized the outstanding importance of public art galleries and relevant practices of connoisseurship.

István Ferenczy, the Rome-educated Hungarian sculptor created *Young Shepherdess* as a student of Bertel Thorvaldsen and an admirer of Canova. The statue embodies the well-known paradox of Winckelmann’s thesis of imitation: “The only way for us to become great, or even inimitable if possible, is to imitate the Greeks” (Winckelmann 33). Besides the *Young Shepherdess* following Greek ideals of beauty, the Csokonai figure clad in Hungarian clothing and wearing a laurel wreath emphasizes the gesture of establishing Hungarian national poetry. The *Young Shepherdess*, also known as *The Origin of Fine Arts*, was sent home from Rome in 1822—the symbolic nature of the gesture is obvious and

entirely fits Kazinczy's contemporary ideas about the status of fine arts in Hungary and its related responsibilities. The statue was presented to the Hungarian public in the foyer of Buda Castle in the same year. The variants of the name *Young Shepherdess*, that is, the name used by Kazinczy and the name originally given by Ferenczy—*Graphidion* and *The Origin of Fine Arts*—can metaphorically condense Kazinczy's tastes and beliefs regarding the theory of art, and, furthermore, show the greatness of national fine arts with this establishing gesture. With the name *Graphidion*, that is, "drawing girl," Kazinczy refers to the well-known story from *Natural History* by Pliny the Elder. In Chapter XXXV he tells the story of a potter of Sicyon on Corinth, named Butades, whose daughter traces the outlines of her beloved's shadow on a wall: from modernity onwards this anecdote has become a favoured image of the origins of drawing and painting. While Kazinczy and Ferenczy construe the meaning of the statue from the perspective of classic tradition, the title *Young Shepherdess* later blends folk and national tradition, that is, the meaning and significance of the statue are created in different epistemes.

Time and circumstance, however, quickly surpassed the founding intents of Kazinczy and Ferenczy, and their initiatives can be regarded, at most, as a symbolic origin point. The history of Hungarian fine arts was shaped rather differently from the 1820s onwards, in the so-called reform era, then during and after the revolution and War of Independence in 1848–49, that is, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ferenczy may have moved back home from Rome, but he had to bitterly resign himself to the fact that without customers, patrons and high quality marble, he could hardly maintain his workshop in Hungary. He died in poverty in 1856, in his hometown Rimavská Sobota (today in Slovakia). In his last will he requested his statue of the death of Eurydice to be placed upon his casket. His grotesque union with the statue is highly allegoric: after a series of disappointments and failing to deliver an order exceedingly important to the cause of the Hungarian nation in the reform era, Ferenczy closed up his workshop in Buda and retired to the solitude of his hometown. At that time, in 1847, the marble statue of the reclining female figure had been finished and closely resonated with the *Young Shepherdess* symbolically pinpointing the start of his career: with its name variant *The Origin of Fine Arts*, the statue finished in his Rome workshop promised to bring about the birth of Hungarian national art a quarter of a century earlier, while Eurydice sinking back after being bitten by a snake expresses the certainty of death. On the pedestal are chiselled the names of those counties that, at the diet of 1844, voted against the memorial of King Mathias planned by Ferenczy. In 1902 the Hungarian Academy of Sciences initiated the exhumation of Ferenczy: his symbolic role in the history of fine arts was, therefore, only acknowledged posthumously. As for Kazinczy's initiative, it was only after his death in 1831 that institutions independent of the imperial centre of Vienna were established in Pest and which went on to become the pillars of a functioning art life. An exhibition intended to showcase a cross-section of contemporary art life was undertaken by the Art Society of Pest (established in 1839), the new building of the National Museum opened in 1846 and started functioning as a public gallery, and, in the same year, Jakab Marastoni, an Italian-born Hungarian

painter established the First Hungarian Academy of Painting. These founding events, however, were more symbolic and promising than actually fruitful, since the events of the revolution and War of Independence in 1848–49 had a profound effect on the formation of the national painterly canon until the end of the century.

To discuss the history of Hungarian painting as a history of national painting, we need to differentiate between national painting and painting in Hungary: by the end of the eighteenth century we can, at most, talk about painting in Hungary; and we also need to clarify the meaning of “national” in this context. At the end of the eighteenth century mostly the typical categories of late Baroque painting prevailed in Hungary, the painting of churches, frescos in ecclesiastical institutions and aristocratic castles, as well as portrait and still life painting often tried to conform to contemporary European practices (Jernyei Kiss 26–27.). It is beyond dispute, however, that the painters carrying out commissions at the time may not have been the greatest masters, but rather were the most reliable craftsmen of the era, who applied genre-specific and thematic sets learnt from academic practice. There are several reasons why it is hard to give an account of the history of painting in Hungary at the time, such as the education of painters remained centred in Vienna, the high cost of buying art, and the lack of collector-connoisseur practices—all contributed extensively. However, the portraits painted by Ádám Mányoki (1673–1757) or the still lives painted by Jakab Bogdány (1660–1724) are excellent examples showing that Hungarian painters could live up to the same standards as their contemporaries in Western Europe even before the nineteenth century. Still, it remains undeniable that to achieve this level, both painters needed a lengthy period working and studying abroad. What is more, Mányoki’s well-known portrait of Francis II Rákóczi, fits the narrative of national painting perfectly: the War of Independence led by the Transylvanian nobleman aimed to end Habsburg rule over Hungary (1703–11) and became an important precursor to the revolution and War of Independence in 1848–1849. The interpretation strategy concentrating on evolution—also present in literary theory—sadly prevails in the assessment of the period influenced by Baroque art, and, as such, the painting of the time necessarily becomes a precursor, a lower stage of development, which will only reach a “national fulfilment” in the second half of the nineteenth century (Szinyei Merse 104–5). It would be more to the point, however, to say that at the time many Hungarian painters were already learning their craft in France, the Netherlands or Germany, and, thanks to them, Hungarian painting would eventually “catch up,” so to say, with contemporary Western European trends.

As these examples show, there are Hungarian paintings worthy of our attention originating from the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, a time period belittled in the narrative focusing on evolution; and these works illustrate not backwardness but rather the fact that an art history guided by principles of evolution is only a construction. The examination of portrait painting, for example, can bring us closer to an understanding of the social representation of the individual not only from the perspectives of cultural history or historical anthropology, but also of literary history, since the portrait was popular both as a genre of belles-lettres and of the press. The

practice of painting portraits of aristocrats and then displaying them in public places, and the distribution of portraits as etchings are examples of the process of creating a national pantheon.

Two lesser-known paintings illustrate the neglect of turn of the nineteenth century in the history of painting in Hungary and reveal the potential for further research. First is an oil painting by Johann Michael Millitz from the 1770s, titled *An Aristocratic Couple as Adam and Eve* (Boda, et al. 187). The 900×685 mm canvas shows a strange scene as the subjects of the painting are seen as Adam and Eve under the tree in the Garden of Eden, before the Fall. The allegoric or mythological portrait is not uncommon in modern painting where clients frequently don costumes of mythological figures when posing for the painter to emphasize their virtue and greatness. It is considerably rarer, however, to choose a figure from Christian imagery. Moreover, the pair Adam and Eve before the Fall was used by Renaissance painters for anatomical studies of the male and female form. The contrast of powdered wigs and naked bodies in Millitz's painting blends together different painterly genres. Millitz studied at the academy in Vienna, in the centre of the Empire, later worked in Bratislava as a portrait painter and carried out several commissions for the Hungarian nobility. But, nothing is known about the identity of the noble couple posing as Adam and Eve. The other painting is a canvas by János Rombauer from 1803, depicting the English garden from the Csáky family estate in Hotkóc on 6 x 4, that is, 24 square-shaped pictures: the entire painting is merely 540 x 810 mm. We find landscapes, buildings and conversation pieces among the series of miniatures, there are, however, no details to be found about the commissioning of the painting. The extent to which these paintings feature in the standard evolutionary history of Hungarian painting is doubtful. It is certain, however, that we can gain access to the lifestyle of Hungarian aristocrats living in the Hapsburg Empire via the portraits painted by Millitz, while the series of miniatures by Rombauer provides a unique pictorial documentation of the English garden in Hotkóc. Besides assisting the study of English gardens in Hungary and their aesthetic values, they also open possibilities for further research into the philosophical-anthropological and literary study of the relationship of humans and nature.

Apart from the problems of establishing a terminology, researchers have to face uncommon difficulties since the digitalization of the (Hungarian? national?) paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is proceeding rather slowly, there is no aggregator site that would take it upon itself to provide an exhaustive collection. The digital collection of the Hungarian National Gallery is insignificant, Google Art Project features just a minimal amount of material, so it is typically only exhibition catalogues and albums compiled along thematic and historical lines which provide some sort of polarized view of the era. The project launched by Fine Arts in Hungary (<http://www.hung-art.hu/>) is remarkable, however, as their mission statement outlined in the introduction claims:

By viewing the pictures, browsing through the biographies and comments on the artworks, you can have an outline of all trends, from the fragments of Romanesque

wall paintings and architectural sculpture, followed by Gothic and Renaissance miniatures, winged altarpieces and carvings, then the works of baroque, classicist and romanticist periods, up to the modern era which started at the end of the nineteenth century and culminated in the abundance of great artists and artworks in the first half of the twentieth century. Guided tours are introduced to explain the historical and stylistic relationships existing between artists and artworks. (Hungart.hu)

The intention of aiming for completeness, however, is preceded by an odd excuse about the ups and downs of Hungarian history, its previous subjugated position in the Hapsburg Empire, its often changing borders, artists born in Hungary, and about Hungary's obscurity on the international art scene: the project, of course, is attempting to change the last aspect. This line of thought includes the previously mentioned paradox: how can something bear a national character if it closely follows European tendencies, where does this originality come from and how can it be formalized if the most significant artists were typically educated at painting academies abroad, taught by foreign masters?

Within the often changing borders of Hungary during its history, fine arts developed in strong interaction with European art, and although they always reflected European tendencies, they retained a strong character of their own. All artists, irrespective of origin, who worked in the country, contributed to their formation. In addition, Hungarian artists who spent a significant part of their career away from the country but retained contacts with Hungarian art and artists, also participated in the development of fine arts in Hungary. In spite of the abundance of invaluable artworks, Hungarian fine arts are somewhat underrated outside the country. It is, therefore, our objective to present a full range of painting and sculpture in Hungary to a world-wide general public by introducing artists and their most important artworks. (Hungart.hu)

KOGART (Kovács Gábor Művészeti Alapítvány [Gábor Kovács Art Foundation], <http://www.kogart.hu/gyujtemenyek/1314>) can also boast a considerable digital collection. Its significance, among other factors, lies in the fact that it records images existing outside the collections of official, national cultural institutions—such as the National Museum and National Gallery—that is, the corpus which has been left out of the national canon finalized by the end of the nineteenth century.

The (Second) Birth of National Painting

The notion of national painting took on a new meaning after the revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849, since it became entwined with the process of national and collective memory. From the 1850s onwards we witness the emphatic presence of national topics in Hungarian paintings, which focus on great events of Hungarian history, tragedies altering the course of that history and on significant historical figures. In this thematic unity the moral contexts (the potential loss of national independence, the moral values of national identity) often precede aesthetic considerations, artistic

values occasionally become subordinated to identification with ideology. From contemporary modern perspectives it may seem that from this decade the national art of painting fulfilled itself in the representation of the duality of national memory and national identity. This peak-feature is strengthened by the national romantic-historicizing direction of contemporary European painting. The career of Soma Orlai Petrics is almost grotesquely entwined with the teleological reading of the history of Hungarian national painting: in the 1840s he painted several portraits of the poet Sándor Petőfi, who went on to become a symbolic figure and martyr of the revolution and War of Independence; then in 1846 Petrics started to study at Jakab Marastoni's Academy, continuing his education in Vienna. He returned from Vienna in June 1848, participated in the War of Independence as a Hungarian soldier and recorded his experiences in a series of lithographs. From 1850, he continued his painterly career in Munich—after the failure of the War of Independence. As a peculiar gesture of resistance against Vienna, Munich became the centre for the education of Hungarian painters. Earlier Petrics typically engaged in portrait painting only, but from the early 1850s onwards he took a spectacular turn towards historic tableaus. His close friendship with writer and politician József Eötvös and painter Mór Than must also have contributed to the change in this themes. In 1851 he finished the painting titled *The Finding of the Corpse of Louis II*, which the Art Society unveiled the same year. The significance of the painting lies not only in the fact that the defeat of the War of Independence was depicted by evoking an earlier historical event, but also in the fact that the lost battle of Mohács (1526) had become indelibly imprinted on national memory, and thus both events were glorified as national tragedies. Apart from the moral reading, assessing the aesthetic aspects is also essential—which curiously lead back to the moral reading: the iconography of the painting recognizably evokes the theme of lamentation over the dead Christ. The tender embrace of the dead body, the kissing of the feet, and the raising of the crown on the right side of the painting all bring the promise of resurrection into play. Bertalan Székely's 1860 canvas of the same title follows the same iconography. Here, however, the almost luminous whiteness of the king's body and the emphatic presence of the shroud do not carry hope of resurrection. Viktor Madarász also uses the motif of lamentation in his painting depicting Ladislaus Hunyadi on his bier (1861), where the effect of the painting is ensured by the gothic death cult of romanticism and the interplay of light and shadows as well. A similar iconographic play can be introduced into the interpretation of Bertalan Székely's *The Women of Eger* (1867), where the antonymic qualities of light and shadow, man and woman, Christian and Muslim, up and down are easy to read in the dynamic composition. However, the representational tradition of Mary's ascension may also be involved in the interpretation: the notions of Mary's own country and the bastion of Christianity can rightfully enter the interpretative process. It is difficult to decide, however, whether Eugène Delacroix's enormous canvas, *Liberty Leading the People*—inspired by the revolution of July 1830—contributed to the concept of the painting, apart from the religious context. We can ascertain, however, that the viewer can connect the iconography of piety and the political allegory taking advantage of it.

The Women of Eger creates a peculiar chronometeorological event by evoking in 1867 the victorious battle of Eger when Turkish forces were defeated 300 years earlier, the glorious notion of the War of Independence twenty years before, and the events in Paris that took place four decades earlier. National, historical, moral and biblical layers are linked together in this peculiar ideological mixture, and let us not forget that the iconographic elements come chiefly from classical academic painting. We should also add, however, that this layered structure does not work every time by allowing moralism and aesthetical achievement to arrange themselves into the right hierarchical structure. Viktor Madarász's *The Death of Petőfi (My Homeland, 1875)*, for example, is positively kitschy, and the primary reason for that is that the painting aims to didactically and directly convey easily accessible meanings. The death of the poet, who went missing in the battle of Segesvár, is symbolically linked to the defeat of the War of Independence, but the scene depicted in the painting renders the metaphor of "the poet of the revolution" as mere laughing stock as Petőfi writes the word "Hazám" [my homeland] on a rock with his own blood. The popularity of the painting, however, is highlighted by the fact that several (rather weak) copies are known to exist.

Landscape painting was regarded as inferior in the seventeenth century, and while in the eighteenth century it garnered more respect due to the cult of the English garden, it reached its real, ultimately moral greatness in Hungarian painting with the metonymic representation of national identity. Károly Lotz's paintings of the "puszta" (*Horses in the Thunderstorm, 1862*) and depictions of outlaws (*Outlaw on Horseback, 1850s*) formulate the notion of freedom in Hungarian national identity tied to the Great Hungarian Plain and Sándor Petőfi's topographical poetry. We can find more specific examples of the link between national painting and literature: consider, for instance, the illustrations made by Orlai Petrics for Petőfi's *Istók, the Fool*, or Mihály Zichy's graphic art to accompany Imre Madách's dramatic poem *The Tragedy of Man* and the ballads of János Arany.

The Hungarian art of painting turned into obviously national painting in the second half of the nineteenth century, in which process thematic and moral considerations were regarded higher than aesthetic ones. The study of the development of the art of painting, with special attention to iconographic topics, may prove to be of major importance in studying the patterns of cultural memory. While the art of painting was, above all, an indicator of culture and a prioritized area in the process of becoming a modern nation in the early nineteenth century, in the second half of the century it became a medium of recording national identity. The definition of memory used in ballads and historical novels also appears in national-historicizing paintings, namely that it is a metonymical process that makes it possible to remember the recent past, the glory of the revolution and the tragedy of the loss of the War of Independence by way of the more distant past. Ferenc Kazinczy's endeavours in the early nineteenth century showed attempts to find origins, to strengthen academic practices and to highlight neo-classicist aesthetics made it possible for him to catch up to the culture of Western Europe. After the revolution and War of Independence, we witness a similar search for origins, but the focus this time is clearly on the problem of national identity, along with the fact that

Hungarian painting practices become emphatically connected to the genres of academic painting and the academic training of artists. By the end of the century, after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, the national romantic, historicizing art of painting slowly began to hollow out, but, due to moral considerations, criticism of the national canon seems to be forbidden even today. That is why such attempts which cannot be interpreted from this point of view but are remarkably innovative and present unique perspectives may go unnoticed. Such an artist was László Paál, who died tragically at the age of 33. He was a close friend of Mihály Munkácsy, but the oeuvres of the two painters could not be any different. While Paál broke with the hollowed out landscape depictions of academic practice and joined the Barbizon school in France in 1872 (see, for instance, his painting *In the Forest of Fontainebleau*), Munkácsy became a prolific celebrity figure as he returned to academic-historicizing painting at the end of the nineteenth century, which genre, at this point, was primarily a commercial product.

Losses and gains

The *Affinities and Transformations* exhibition of the Hungarian National Museum (from March to July 2013) displayed a selection of nineteenth-century Hungarian paintings which have been preserved in public collections. The exhibition, on the one hand, introduced a wide selection of the applied genres (portraits, conversation pieces) of Biedermeier painting, and, on the other hand, displayed a number of paintings previously unknown to the public and entirely alien to the canon of Hungarian national painting, such as the urban character of big cities and the rise of the middle class, individual tragedies, low quality paintings of otherwise famous painters and so forth. The curatorial concept of the exhibition was originally to bank on the element of surprise by the mere fact that works which are parts of private collections or are otherwise inaccessible are on display in the exhibition area. Ultimately it is self-evident that the majority of these works are thematically but often also aesthetically different from the canonical pieces included in national art historical narratives, which constitute the foundation of cultural memory. Those few pictures which depict scenes of battle, the typical Hungarian landscape (“puszta”) or the signifiers of national memory seem almost alien among the strange portraits, conversation pieces and mythological scenes. This contrast, however, makes the developmental history of Hungarian painting in the eighteenth and nineteenth century even more fascinating, and, at the same time, more understandable. It is not necessarily fortunate, however, to attach an unreasonable significance to the notions of alternative history and evolution—also mentioned several times on the information cards of the exhibition and in connection with the exhibition—and to use them in the interest of ideology. It seems as if the exhibition by overly emphasizing the activities of art collectors struggled to justify the values of Hungarian painting by showing the phases of lagging behind, developing and eventually catching up. The pictures are arranged chronologically under such titles as *The Fulfilment of Our National Painting* or *Between Budapest and Munich*, that is, despite all its innovation, the exhibition retells the already well-known narrative of Hungarian national painting.

Yet, most paintings from private collections do form a part of an alternative history, that of applied painting, in which the demands of customers, general taste and market expectations prevail more radically than in the painterly practices following academic traditions. One term to describe the exhibition of the Hungarian National Museum could be “oddity,” while the visitor might experience not only admiration but also embarrassment or even awkwardness. (Can we call the Biedermeier conversation piece *Greeting Grandmother* by postimpressionist star painter József Rippl-Rónai a terrible piece of kitsch, almost grotesquely so, or can we deem a *Milton* sketch by Mihály Munkácsy better than his enormous historicizing canvases?)

The two main attributes of the exhibition—the private collection as an institution and chronology as an organizing principle—often led to a clash of meanings, themes and styles in an unexpected way, causing not joy over multiplicity but confusion over eclecticism, a conflict of professionalism and amateurism, highlighting the limits of academic painting. For example, László Paál’s Barbizon landscapes and Bertalan Székely’s full-length portrait of his sister—evoking the Pre-Raphaelites—were created around the same time; placing them in the same exhibition space creates a real but undeniably exciting collision. We can find several similar examples, and yet the exhibition notes reflect on none. (The cherry on top of this organisational scheme is that the paintings *Triumphant Neptune*—with a golden background—and *Amor and Psyche* by Károly Lotz are placed between the previously mentioned paintings, when, by the end of the nineteenth century, these topics as painterly subjects would have been clamouring for an explanation.)

The last room displays painting created between 1850 and 1900, and here we can finally construe that alternative history: private instead of public, the ugly besides the beautiful, honest instead of official, the shameful, the dirty, the unspeakable next to the glorious and clean, and all this is very clearly recorded by the paintings. While the name of the room (*Between Budapest and Munich*) and the exhibition notes emphasize the Hungarian connection of the fine arts academy in the Bavarian capital and the effects of its teachers (such as Sándor Wágner and Gyula Benczúr) and trends (landscape painting, historical painting), the canvases hanging on the walls of the corridor showcase that very alternative history that the basic concept of the exhibition cannot carry out in its entirety. Due to the nature of the space, the pictures can interact with each other, since on the relatively narrow corridor it is not only the paintings nearby but also the paintings opposite that can provide a context for each other.

The leading painting in the room, a Biedermeier portrait of a girl with carnation by György Vastagh, which is also included in the marketing materials of the exhibition (it is featured on the banner hanging on the facade of the museum, opposite a portrait of the young poet Dániel Berzsenyi with a jaunty moustache), the series of conversation pieces and portraits arranged along the long corridor suggest not so much charm as rather grave stories. There are two paintings with a very strong atmosphere near the portrait of the girl with carnation which express the crisis of Hungarian painting and its possible solution at the end of the nineteenth century. One of them is *Twilight* (Ödön Tull, 1897),

which was certainly inspired by the techniques and artistic efficiency of photography, in which the meanings of urban space are examined by figures turning their backs on the viewer and by the strange atmosphere created by draping the technical environment in artificial light and natural darkness. The other is the painting featured on the cover of the exhibition catalogue, *In a Venice Museum*, done by Döme Skuteczky around 1890, which is a diminutive mirror of the visitor wandering around the paintings and of the space welcoming the visitor: the conversation piece of the paintings and visitors in the world of the painting becomes an opportunity to view ourselves and the structure of the aesthetic experience and culture. However, apart from these two paintings, the rest on this corridor is almost without exception intimate conversation pieces or portraits, which almost force the telling of a story, the expanding of possible narratives, which can distance themselves from the well-known (painterly and cultural) contexts and can, as such, confuse the visitor.

In the painting *Divorce* (1892) by Károly Ferenczy the woman sinking onto the uncovered table, her face hidden and her arm hanging down express primarily not an emotional (romantic) conflict but an existential tragedy, in which the man, holding a bag and about to depart looks—a bit like the viewer of the painting—puzzled, since there was just one position more hopeless than that of women in the nineteenth century: that of divorced women. The church tower visible through the window just adds to the tragedy of the scene. Next to the Ferenczy painting, István Csók's sizeable canvas, *At the Servants' Registry* (1892) rhymes with this social context, where the maps covering the wall in the background address the mystically complex and unknowable nature of urban space, while at the same time recalling the typical motif of seventeenth-century Dutch painting. Girls and women of various ages and expressing feelings of expectation, hope, sadness, indifference and happiness in the foreground are subjugated to the abstract image of the city. Adding to the story of man and woman, woven by the visitor, the other neighbour of the Ferenczy painting is *Courtship* (title variant: *Couple with Tennis Rackets*, around 1895), an oil painting by János Vaszary, featuring a thin girl in a pink dress and a young man in white, wearing a sailor's hat and turning towards the girl. Due to the context, the virginity of the girl suddenly becomes a commodity: the not particularly beautiful lady hides her blush with a book and downcast eyes from the youth openly staring at her, with that gesture she becomes included in the social conventions, in the cultural performances required to enter the appropriate layer of the social structure (wife, mother, or in less fortunate cases servant or divorced woman). Another instance of this grotesque seduction is the painting of a coxcomb on the same wall, *The Irresistible* (1896) by Tihamér Margitay, in which the female figure and the small girls cuddling up to her are positively ugly, so the pouty young man with a jaunty moustache, who must have been considered attractive at the time, is emphasized. Vaszary's *Courtship* and Margitay's *Irresistible* are also grotesquely complemented by *So the Marching Order Has Come* (János Vaszary, 1894), hanging to the other side of the latter picture. The painting can be shocking because it records imagery of the Hungarian village, the plank fences, adobe houses, thatched roofs, with the men—still wearing linen trousers and shirts—

marching and looking back in the background. The foreground, however, is occupied by a girl hiding her face in her hands, her almost monochromatic blue and red dress and the sharp parting of her hair smoothly sticking to her head create an almost surrealistic effect.

On the opposite wall of the corridor another painting adds to the alternative story of man and woman is the conversation piece *Happy Family* from the 1880s by Sándor Bihari: in the foreground of the meagre interior husband and wife, father and mother are sitting by the table covered with a white cloth, the woman is feeding the baby held on her lap, and with the emphatic presence of blue and white colors, evoking the iconography of Madonna representations. The man is resting his right hand on the table and smoking his pipe, while his gaze is lost in the distance, and the bowl of soup, bread and knife among the two (three) of them are no longer signifiers of Christian iconography but of poverty and bleakness depicted in the silence. It seems particularly effective to place *Scene from a Tavern* (title variant: *Toast*, 1888) by Simon Hollósy next to the family conversation piece: in a corner of the interior the musicians are drinking wine and resting their instruments on the ground, while to the left, on the other end of the bench, near the barred corner of the tavern a young woman sits sprawled out, with her dazed smile turned towards the men. Hollósy's tavern scene recalls the Degasesque existential allegory of unhappiness or dependence, rather than the rowdy joy of Hungarian prowess.

The signifying power of the gazes is shockingly effective in the paintings mentioned so far: looking at another person or gazing into nothingness, which is an indicator of something that cannot be expressed, painted or verbalized, is very unsettling in the painting hanging next to the tavern scene, in *Falling Leaves* (title variant: *The Lieutenant*, 1895, Fülöp László). The portrait depicts József Répássy, the artillery lieutenant of the War of Independence as an old man with a white beard, in uniform, and places the soldier in an autumnal park, where he, holding his walking stick or cane, gazes into nothingness as an expression of lost illusions and, at the same time, reflects on the genre of historical painting which dominated the previous decades of the century. Fülöp László has another, odd painting on the same wall, near the exit, a sister portrait depicting Elizabeth and Stefanie (1896), which is dominated by the same luminous pink seen on the girl's dress in János Vaszary's *Courtship* on the opposite wall. What is more, the portraits of the two little girls can become parts of a particularly beautiful, subsequently created thematic group in the exhibition, which abounds in portraits of children, and especially portraits of siblings. It is particularly important for the history of the child as such: these paintings document not only contemporary childrenswear, but can also contribute to the history of toys and, last but not least, they can testify to the changing position of the child in society and its revaluation. In Fülöp László's sibling portrait the girls are depicted—instead of in the English garden popular in contemporary representations—in an interior, sitting on a sofa. The wall is decorated with floral motifs, to the side there is a tea set, which may even be a toy set since it fits in with the children's dimensions. The pink clothes, however, radically contrast with the black tights and little feet clad in black patent-leather shoes, which are resting on the

wolf skin under the sofa, while one of the girls rests her foot on the top of the wolf's head frozen into a howl. A blooming rose evokes the color of the girls' dresses by the wolf's mouth, while a doll dressed in light blue clothes lying on the wolf skin by the sofa, raises its arms to its head. The symbols—with which contemporary viewers may have been familiar from still lifes depicting hunted game or floral compositions—crammed into the children's portrait here and now (there and then) have a rather strange effect as the considerably large painting (1400 x 1100 mm), distancing itself from depicting reality, opens up to archaic fairy tale dimensions.

The last room, which is also the corridor leading out of the exhibition noticeably questions the concept of the exhibition outlined so far, that is, that these unknown pieces of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hungarian painting hiding in private collections tell a unique, alternative history, whose function, after all, is still to validate the greatness and modernity of the canonical, officially known and recognized national art. This questioning, however, is not a loss but rather an opportunity to reconsider already existing art historical narratives and place them in the context of history, ideas, society and, of course, literature. Literature is present in the exhibition through the portraits of the great figures of Hungarian poetry, such as Csokonai and Berzsenyi, but also through the conversation pieces and portraits of this last room thanks to those naturalistic (or naturalistically intended) novels and short stories that use everyday situations, human relations and urban space to create their own unique, modern mythology. They draw us closer to an understanding of modernity, as if making a promise about the possibility of play in the exciting process of contemplation.

In my opinion, processing and understanding the history of the Hungarian art of painting can be possible if we link it to the research concerning the phenomena of cultural memory, and, above all, to a reasonable observational position, where the thematic and moral aspects do not overshadow aesthetic characteristics. The comprehensive digitalization of paintings, for example, can provide a chance to line up other paintings of this period—which are lesser known, due to their lack of visibility—along with the national canon. This unique state of blindness is also connected to the hardly innovative exhibition practices of Hungarian museums, the poor state of digital collections, and the pronounced lack of aesthetic sensitivity in public education and public consciousness. The grotesque sanctity of national paintings must be broken so that we can learn from them: in the active forms of cultural memory questions and games need a place as well, and digital media can provide an ample basis for this endeavour.

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Digital Philology on the Semantic Web: Publishing Hungarian Avant-garde Magazines

Zsófia Fellegi

The research project described in this paper was designed to show the digital philology-related requirements of digital editions, as well as to demonstrate how to build a complex service that not only publishes editions, but also shares the results of multi-perspective research internationally. The research project sponsored by the Kassák Museum (a subsidiary of the Petőfi Literary Museum) is part of its mission to attain recognition among the Avant-garde research centres in Central and Eastern Europe. The museum is dedicated to exhibiting the entire lifework of Lajos Kassák along with its international contexts.

The project relied on the works of Ferenc Csaplár, as well as on the results of the permanent exhibition of the Kassák Museum entitled *Kassák!* (curators: Edit Sasvári and Judit Csatlós) that opened on 19 April 2011, which focuses mainly on Kassák's lifework and his international relations. This perspective enabled the museum to create an exhibition of multiple smaller, lesser-known Avant-garde collections.¹

Beside the exhibition, the research team also sought to collect and publish the magazines edited by Lajos Kassák in an annotated format (*A Tett* [The Action], *Ma* [Today], *2×2*, *Dokumentum* [Document]), while attempting to place them in their literary, historical and artistic context. As a first step, the research team organized conferences and workshops on Kassák-related themes,² during which Avant-garde research closely related to the Kassák topic was introduced. The museum also launched a website, “Online Avant-Garde Database” in January 2015 to provide a platform to connect European Avant-garde researchers. The editors of the website constantly update the list with the newest publications about the Avant-garde, as well as exhibitions, conferences, and research results in Europe. The website is freely accessible to anyone.

The first processed magazine in the research project was *A Tett*, which formed the base of the Museum's exhibition entitled *Jelzés a világra – Háború, avantgárd, Kassák* [Signal to the World—War, Avant-Garde, Kassák]. The magazine itself was published via the DigiPhil scholarly text edition publishing service. Members of the research team, Gábor Dobó and Pál Szeredi Merse organized an international conference sponsored by the Visegrad Fund, *Local Contexts / International Networks—Avant-Garde Magazines in Central Europe (1910–1935)* (Budapest, Kassák Museum, 17–19 September 2015). The

conference focused on Avant-garde magazines of Central and Eastern Europe, which served as important platforms for literary and artistic works of the genre between 1910 and 1935. The conference presentations will be published by the research team under Open Access.

Part of the critical material of the digital edition was already introduced in the exhibition, so I will begin with an overview of the exhibition. Similarly to the case of the digital edition, the research team considered the most recent international trends when preparing the exhibition (for example, periodical studies). *A Tett* the first Avant-garde magazine edited by Lajos Kassák published 17 issues in total between 1915 and 1916. The timing of the exhibition—beside the fact that this is a less-researched magazine of Kassák's—was the 100th anniversary of the magazine. The exhibition showed how the magazine attempted to go counter to the era's pro-war attitude, the “culture of war.” The exhibition had been preceded by thorough research based on the source documents in the museum and their reception in Kassák's era which revealed the Hungarian and international contexts and attempted to place the magazine in its era (Dobó & Sasvári, et al.). When designing the exhibition, the curators did not intend to work out a linear path to walk through, but placed the exhibition in four separate rooms instead. “(...) each one of them is autonomous, and can be understood without the others. Each one of them gives a different perspective of the magazine in focus.” (Kálmán) Visitors could explore the different rooms as they wanted, lines in different colours connected the documents on display. The lines served an aesthetic purpose while indicating connections at the same time. The use of infographics to introduce the critical annotation material of the exhibition is getting more and more widespread in the world of museums. (Dobó & Sasvári) Using them enables the visualization of complicated connection systems, letting visitors explore and contextualize them on their own. (In digital humanities, data visualization and displaying research results belong to the most current practices and problems.)

The curators have not used it [the infographics] to avoid the job of interpretation, but they do wish to leave wide scope for visitors to make their own interpretations. Infographics set up complex connections without summarizing research in advance and packaging it into arbitrary narratives. This, however, is only a veneer of modesty: the exhibition has a definite ambition to convey subtleties and contradictions that confer a special quality to *A Tett* and its age.³

The research team made the temporary exhibition into a virtual exhibition, which serves as the “material to help research and education” of the exhibition. The virtual exhibition preserves and archives the original exhibition, but some contexts are lost while some new information is gained due to the characteristics of digital exhibitions. While the temporary exhibition mainly addressed a Budapest-based audience, the virtual exhibition enables the creators to reach a much broader audience.

The virtual exhibition displays three “walls” representing the rooms of the physical exhibition. Their visualization—unlike in the case of the physical one—is dynamic,

while preserving the design of the physical exhibition. On the first wall as was true of the original exhibition the front page of *A Tett* is placed next to the front pages of other magazines of its era, and by clicking on the front pages, it is possible to access the issue, with an additional possibility to read it. On the second wall, quotations used in the physical exhibition can be seen, such as Kassák's opinion about war and pro-war countries, and others' opinion about Kassák and the Avant-garde. The dynamic feeling of the virtual exhibition appears when certain quotations are selected by clicking with the mouse. They become highlighted along with colored lines that symbolize the connections. Their context also appears on the screen.

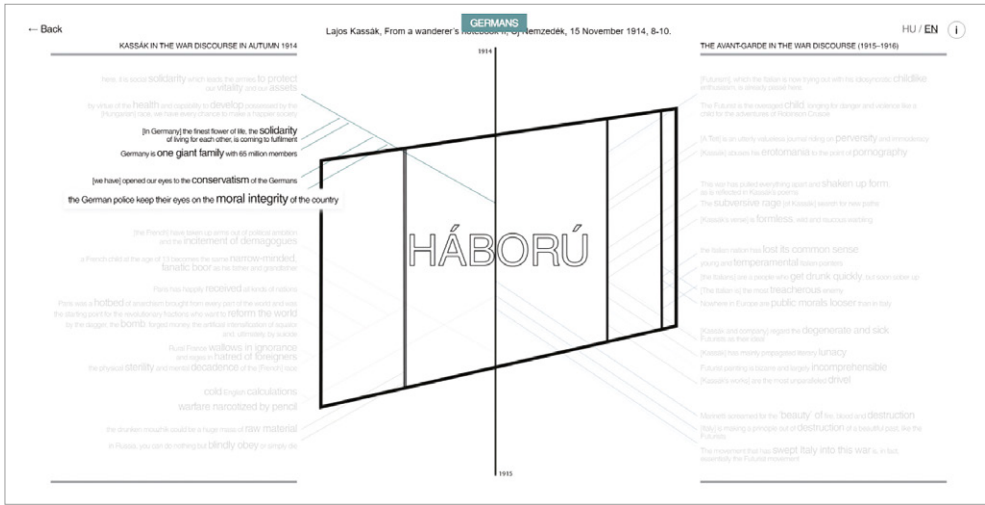


Figure 1. Screenshot of the second “wall” of the virtual exhibition taken by Zsófia Fellegi. www.atett.kassakmuzeum.hu/wall2. 12 January 2018.

The third wall displays the concepts behind the selection of foreign pieces of material art and literature appearing in *A Tett*. On the website, the literature in the original language appears next to the translations published in *A Tett*, while in the case of material art, a photo of the original and the version appearing in the magazine can both be observed. The fourth room of the exhibition, which did not make it into the virtual exhibition, displayed the discussions and controversy surrounding *A Tett*, also documents about the publishing and banning of the magazine.

The DigiPhil project contributed to the creation and publication of the digital edition. It is important to realize that a digital edition does not equal the digital representation of the original edition. Patrick Sahle says the following about digital scholarly text editions:

My working definition is “Edition ist die erschließende Wiedergabe historischer Dokumente” which cannot be translated into English straight. “A scholarly edition is the critical representation of historical documents” would be a fair approximation. That’s a wide definition of what ‘scholarly editing’ is. But what is ‘digital scholarly

editing? Digital scholarly editions are not just scholarly editions in digital media. I distinguish between digital and digitized. A digitized print edition is not a 'digital edition' in the strict sense used here. A digital edition cannot be printed without a loss of information and/or functionality. The digital edition is guided by a different paradigm. If the paradigm of an edition is limited to the two-dimensional space of the 'page' and to typographic means of information representation, then it's not a digital edition.⁴

DigiPhil (Scholarly Text Editions, Bibliographies and Research Database Online) is the co-operative digital philology project of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Petőfi Literary Museum, started in 2012. The DigiPhil project includes publishing markup language transcripts of scholarly text editions and critical editions, as well as writers' bibliographies. In addition to the two kinds of publishing activities, the project also aggregates metadata and develops a semantic annotation tool for digital publications of scholarly text. DigiPhil collaborates with Zentrum für Informationsmodellierung Graz and Digitised Manuscript to Europeana (DM2E). The project aims to comply with the expectations of digital cultural heritage (specified by, for example, *Europeana*). These expectations include platform independency, open-source tools, and following metadata standards, as well as long-term preservation and providing open access to the cultural heritage objects. The texts are published as markup language transcripts in XML format in compliance with the Text Encoding Initiative.

Since the foundation of the Text Encoding Initiative in 1987 it has become the absolute leader when it comes to practices of digital text editions. There is no other as elaborate and as internationally received standard for publishing scholarly text or transcriptions of manuscripts as TEI. The spreading of the TEI recommendation and the XML data format behind it got a great amount of attention in the beginning. The so-called OHCO model—stating that “text can be and must be described as ordered hierarchy of content objects” (Palkó, *Digitális filológia* 196) came in for a lot of criticism.⁵ Since then the biggest philological workshops (for example the Wittgenstein Archive, The Beckett Archive) all create their editions based on the recommendations of TEI.⁶

Beside the Avant-garde magazines, DigiPhil published genetic-synoptic critical editions of the works of Dezső Kosztolányi (*Aranysárkány, Édes Anna, Esti Kornél*). They also publish traditional critical editions, for example the volumes 39 and 42 of the Kálmán Mikszáth critical edition and the fifth volume of Endre Ady critical edition. The project is also involved in publishing the diaries Zsigmond Móricz wrote during World War I, the critical edition of his correspondence, and the digital publication of the critical edition of János Arany's correspondence.

The DigiPhil website contains digital editions based on a complete, printed critical edition, as well as critical editions that were made to be digital by default. In the case of critical editions that were formerly published in a print version, it can happen that the digital content differs from the printed one. An example of such a case is the digital critical edition of *Édes Anna*, where the research team made numerous corrections to

the first, printed edition. In the case of digitally prepared critical editions, on the other hand, DigiPhil works in close collaboration with the research team, they prepare and supervise the creation of the markup language transcript, and DigiPhil supports the research team in complying with international standards.

The critical edition of *A Tett* was made digitally from the beginning, first published on the DigiPhil website. As a first step, the research team made a good quality scan of the magazines, then used an optical character recognition (OCR) software, the Abby Finereader, to turn the scanned pictures into text. This was followed by comparing of the original to the digitalized text and the correction of defects.

Not only did the research team aim to create the digital critical edition, but also to supply the metadata of the magazine to *Europeana*, which is the biggest database containing international cultural objects. International researchers can easily gain access to the metadata of *A Tett* in this way. It became one of the main focuses during the digitization process to create the appropriate metadata structure in compliance with the requirements of *Europeana*. The research team together with DigiPhil created a data table, in which they defined the meaning of certain rows and columns in advance taking into consideration the needs of researchers, the search and display options, and the TEI markup standard used by DigiPhil at the same time. Preparing the digital edition according to the TEI recommendations enabled the research team to easily connect this project to other Avant-garde magazine editions. The Yellow Nineties⁷ and the Blue Mountain⁸ are big projects publishing Avant-garde magazines using TEI.

The digital edition on the online platform follows the logical structure of the printed magazine. On the website, we can use a simple tile-like interface dividing the magazine in volumes and issues to access the articles.

The markup language transcript, however, abandons this kind of logical structure. TEI XML consists of two parts: the header contains the metadata, while the body contains the transcript of the text. In the case of *A Tett*, a single TEI XML contains the text of only a single article, however, the header contains the metadata of the article, the issue, the volume, and the magazine. This allows every article to exist as a standalone digital object while containing data about its context. Along with the markup language transcript, the facsimiles have also been published, allowing the non-transcribable typographic attributes to be seen.

The fields in the TEI header are based on the spreadsheet filled out by the research team. The spreadsheet contains the most important information for each article, for example the author, translator, title and release date. The spreadsheet was created based on the repository of Ilona Illés while checking and completing the data. In addition to the basic information, the TEI header has also been populated with a content description, the genre, the cited works of art, and in the case of translations the bibliographic data of the original source.

The TEI header, in addition to the bibliographic data of the source document, also contains all information about the digital edition. From all the information, the Persistent Identifier of the digital document (PID) needs to be highlighted. This



Figure 2. Screenshot of the first volume of *A Tett* on the DigiPhil website taken by Zsófia Fellegi. www.digiphil.hu/context:atett-1. 12 January 2018.

identifier is unique and stable, meaning as long as the provider (DigiPhil in this case) commits to it, the digital object will be available via the PID as the URLs are generated from the corresponding PIDs. PIDs guarantee that the digital object can be identified and cited. Not only does the header contain the PID of the given article, but it also contains the PIDs of the preceding and following articles. This method preserves the connection between the articles of the same issue and the original order of the articles. Connecting the identifiers also allows for paging the issues on the website.

The research team beyond aggregating the metadata also performed data enrichment. It is a basic expectation in the world of the semantic web, for example, to connect the personal and geographical names in the text edition to the namespaces published online, also the bibliographic references to published databases of libraries. It is also a part

of the data enrichment process to connect subject-headings and genres to thesauruses and anthologies. In these namespaces, the entities—which are authority records—have persistent identifiers that make them referable. The identifier guarantees the uniqueness of the records, and helps avoiding recurrences in the database.

The personal and geographical names occurring in *A Tett* have been identified by the research team. Practically it must be the work of the research team given that they best know the context and can identify certain persons and locations as accurately as possible. In the case of namespaces, their primary source was the largest namespace of Hungary, the namespace of Petőfi Literary Museum containing 600,000 records. The personal names that could not be found in the Petőfi Literary Museum namespace were searched for in VIAF (Virtual International Authority Files) instead, which is one of the largest and most extensive international namespaces. The geographical names have been identified using GeoNames, while the bibliographic references have been referred to in the database of the National Széchényi Library. The extraction of those IDs proved to be a simple process for the researchers given that the namespaces have an OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) interface, where IDs are also published. The identifiers were added to the TEI header and to the body text as well, enabling the user to access the aforementioned namespaces via a link to reach reliable information on the given person, location, or bibliographic reference.

TEI XMLs do not contain the annotations of the research team. Although the ability to annotate the text is provided by TEI, the research team and DigiPhil decided to develop a new annotation tool based on semantic web technology. This tool ensures that annotations get persistent identifiers as well, which means searching among digital objects and annotations occurring the same way as in the case of the metadata of articles. Searching in metadata has been implemented independently from TEI XMLs by using a technology tightly related to one of the project activities, aggregation.

During the course of aggregation, the aggregator collects the metadata from minor collections, and if needed, it converts them to a standard format and performs data enrichment. The aggregator also publishes the data and makes them searchable, and in addition, it delivers the metadata to major databases. The DigiPhil project is the first aggregator in Hungary collecting digital philological data, delivering to *Europeana*. The fact that the metadata of *A Tett* goes to the system of *Europeana* means that the content becomes available to international researchers as well through international networks.

DigiPhil recognized that despite the fact that TEI is the best choice for encoding text, it carries the disadvantage of not being adequate enough when it comes to metadata. In practice, using the toolset of TEI enables the encoding of any sort of information, which are not in a standard format. This makes searching and aggregating data from multiple sources more difficult. To tackle this problem, DigiPhil joined the Digitised Manuscript to *Europeana* (DM2E) project.⁹ This project aims to find a recommendation and metadata scheme that allows for a proper encoding of manuscripts while complying with the *Europeana* data standard, but complementing it with required elements. The EDM (Europeana Data Model)—for example—does not allow for indicating an author,

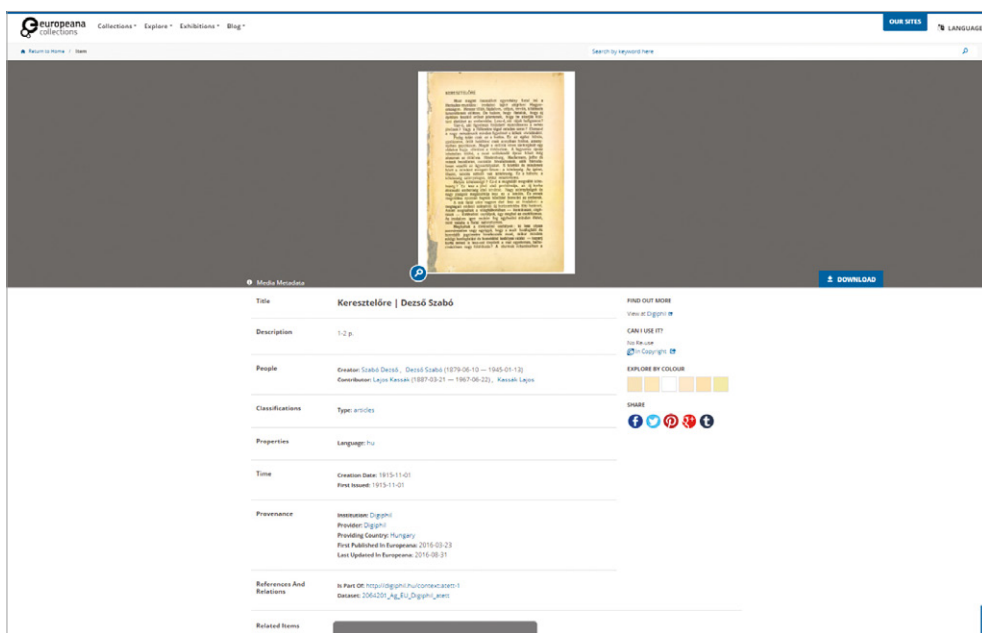


Figure 3. Screenshot of part of the metadata of the first article on the Europeana website taken by Zsófia Fellegi. www.europeana.eu/portal/hu/record/2064201/o_atett_1_tei_1.html. 12 January 2018.

only a creator in general, while the editor can only be indicated as a contributor. There is no option for a more accurate definition. *Europeana* attempted to create a metadata model as generic as possible due to the fact that the European cultural heritage does not only consist of manuscripts, but also metadata of photos, videos, and statues (or their digital surrogates) which is an important requirement. DM2E—similarly to *Europeana*—is based on the technology of the semantic web,¹⁰ meaning the model they defined contains only the metadata without the actual text. The model allows for the production of statements (triples) based on the RDF (Resource Description Framework) language, which can be connected to other databases described in similar formats through simple searches.

The RDFs prepared according to the recommendations of DM2E are able to describe hierarchy, which means that similarly to TEI, DigiPhil created an RDF for each article containing the metadata of the issue, the volume, and the magazine. Compared to this, EDM is not able to handle hierarchy, which not only called for the simplification of the DM2E data model, but DigiPhil also had to ensure that the context of the articles was not getting lost during the course of aggregation. This issue was solved by delivering not only the metadata of each article to Europeana in RDF format, but also creating an RDF for each issue and each volume, containing the articles that are part of that certain issue, and which issues are part of a certain volume. Despite the fact that *Europeana* does not handle complex hierarchy, the “isPartOf” (the entity is part of another entity) and

Title	A Tett; kéthetenként megjelenő lap Lajos Kassák kéthetenként megjelenő lap
Description	Issue 1
People	Creator: Kassák Lajos , Lajos Kassák (1887-03-21 — 1967-06-22)
Classifications	Type: issues (object groupings)
Properties	Language: hu
Time	Creation Date: 1915-11-01 First Issued: 1915-11-01
Provenance	Institution: DigiPhil Provider: DigiPhil Providing Country: Hungary First Published In Europeana: 2016-03-23 Last Updated In Europeana: 2016-08-31
References And Relations	Is Part Of: http://digiphil.hu/context:atett Dataset: 2064201_Ag_EU_DigiPhil_atett Consists Of: http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.1 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.2 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.3 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.4 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.5 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.6 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.7 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.8 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.9 , http://digiphil.hu/o:atett-1.tei.10

Figure 4. Screenshot of part of the metadata of *A Tett* on the Europeana website taken by Zsófia Fellegi. www.europeana.eu/portal/hu/record/2064201/context_atett.html. 12 January 2018.

“hasPart” (the entity has another entity as its part) relations are definable in the basic model. These statements were connected in the *Europeana* database, meaning that the issues are accessible from issues, volumes, and magazines, and vice versa.

The research project, in which the first task was to prepare the digital critical edition of *A Tett* and organize the exhibition, will be continued with the release of other magazines edited by Lajos Kassák. This was the first digital edition in which the cultural practice of the semantic web has been used. Beside the digital humanities perspective, philological, philosophical, literary, and museological perspectives have all been taken into consideration during the research. In the future, the transcription of the magazine *MA* will be performed in line with similar principles on crowdsourcing basis. The project will employ students of Eötvös Loránd University trained by the members of DigiPhil as part of their disciplinary training. The transcription process will be performed under the direction of DigiPhil.

Notes

¹ *Az avantgárd magángyűjteményekben I.—A Kiss Ferenc-gyűjtemény* [Avant-garde in Private Collections I—The Collection of Ferenc Kiss] curators: Judit Csatlós and Edit Sasvári, 26 November 2011–15 January 2012; *Az avantgárd magángyűjteményekben II. A kölcsönös hatások körei. A Ma és a Zenit a zágrábi Marinko Sudac-gyűjteményben* [Avant-garde in Private Collections II. Circles of Interference—The *Ma* and the *Zenit* in the Collection of Marinko Sudac in Zagreb] curators: Marinko Sudac and Edit Sasvári, 28 January–22 April 2012.

² *A magyar avantgárd és a szomszédos országok avantgárd irodalmi és művészeti termése a Kárpát-medencében 1919 és 1929 között. Közös témák, közös kutatási tervek, pályázatok* [Hungarian Avant-garde and the Neighbor Countries' Avant-garde Literary and Art Products in the Carpathian Basin Between 1919 and 1929. Joint Topics, Joint Research Plans, Projects] Budapest, Kassák Museum. 1–2 July 2011; *Kassák & Kassák 2. Conference*: Budapest, Kassák Museum, 9 April 2014.

³ There is more about the exhibition on the website of the virtual exhibition both in Hungarian and in English.

⁴ Patrick Sahle describes the properties of digital scholarly editions more elaborately in *Digital Scholarly Editing: Theories and Practices* (Sahle, “What is a Scholarly Digital Edition?” 19–39.). Gábor Kecskeméti was the first to express similar thoughts in Hungary (Kecskeméti).

⁵ One can read about the critique of the OHCO model in more detail in the work of David Durand, Elli Mylonas, and Allen Renear.

⁶ The activities of DigiPhil and the requirements of the digital cultural heritage are described in more detail in the study by Gábor Palkó, *Mit jelent a digitális filológia a szemantikus web korában? A DigiPhil projektről* [What Does Digital Philology Mean in the Age of the Semantic Web? About the DigiPhil Project] (Palkó, *Mit jelent*).

⁷ Yellow Nineties Online is a project of Ryerson University in which besides *The Yellow Book* they also publish facsimile editions of Avant-garde magazines that are closely related to *The Yellow Book* (for example, *The Pagan Review*). They publish the texts online along with paratexts (for example cover pages, advertisements) in readable and downloadable format. Along with the primary literature, the editors also published the secondary literature. They also wrote critical introductions and published the biography of the contributors to the magazine. The published material is accessible in various formats (PDF, HTML, TEI XML, flip book), and an advanced search tool is also available for metadata-level searches.

⁸ The Blue Mountain project started at Princeton University. Their goal is to publish pieces of material art and literature between 1848 and 1923 including Avant-garde magazines as machine-readable transcriptions. Right now, 36 magazines are accessible on the webpage. They use standard FADGI (Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative: <http://www.digitizationguidelines.gov>) encoding for pictures and bibliographic data while TEI XML transcripts are available for texts. Despite the fact that users can only access texts in JPG format, the project created an advanced whole-text and metadata search service that relies on standard transcripts.

⁹ In the case of *A Tett*, the question emerges as to what extent it can be considered a manuscript. In a traditional sense, it cannot. But, since only printed editions remained of *A Tett* to serve as the base for the critical edition, then it can be considered a manuscript. Even the DM2E project does not exactly define what may be considered as a manuscript. Its toolset is suitable for encoding books, poetry collections, magazines, or even any ephemeral messaging.

¹⁰ For more information about the semantic web, refer to the study of Gábor Palkó “The Phenomenon of “Linked Data” from a Media Archaeological Perspective” in this book as well as the study of Tim Berners-Lee, James Handler, and Ora Lassila, “The Semantic Web” (Berners-Lee et al.).

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Cult, Gossip, Memory— Aspects of Mediating Culture in Krisztián Nyáry's Portraits of Writers in Facebook Posts

Norbert Baranyai

The phenomenon of certain incidents in literary and cultural history becoming common talk in Hungary—though occasionally and only to a certain extent—has been heavily indebted to Krisztián Nyáry's work over the past few years. The success story of the former literary historian is a well-known one: his Facebook posts, initially created only for his friends on a daily basis, presenting episodes from the private (predominantly love) life of writers and poets, soon gained tremendous popularity which only increased after their publication as a book. The author's social media page with more than 40,000 followers, as well as his book, which sold tens of thousands of copies, speak for themselves, also making it clear that we have come across a phenomenon that is built upon unusually successful methods of mediating culture. Thus, in this study—in contrast with the majority of criticism reflecting on Nyáry's volumes (some of the most important are Bíró-Balogh 97–105, Margócsy 20, Kisantal 1247–1252 and Tóth 1211–1222), whose primary focus lies in the literary “value” of the venture and the disputable conclusions of the author—I consider the phenomenon from multiple angles, since its analysis allows us to understand what factors contribute to the widespread popularization of literature and culture. Consequently, I will explore how those short texts dealing with the love life and adventures of authors are defined by memory, which, in turn, is formed by cultic interpretation (with special focus on the Facebook posts). Secondly, the two formats of publishing those texts will be compared, though only tangentially, with the aim of discovering the way the reception of texts change in relation to the different medial contexts. The analysis only targets the portraits of writers, that is, texts published in the two volumes of *Így szerettek ők* [The Way They Loved] (Nyáry, *Így szerettek ők* and Nyáry, *Így szerettek ők 2*). The reason for that, apart from their closer ties to literature, lies in their inclusion of the variants of those posts that laid the foundations of the popularity of the books to come and that of the “Nyáry brand” (which obviously relies on copying the communications and media strategy of the “founding texts”). In the case of the portraits appearing on Facebook, I put special emphasis on the comments following the posts, since they not only allow for the reconstruction of immediate readerly reaction, but they also reflect on how the strategy of the author (which, initially, may have operated spontaneously, gradually became reliant on conscious marketing) and the recipients' reactions affecting each other together created a context, which contributed to the surprisingly fast popularity of Nyáry's stories.

I. Literary gossip in social media

The majority of reviews dealing with Krisztián Nyáry's books—even if, sometimes, only fragmentarily—strive to account for the popularity of his short texts. As the recurring argument goes, the choice of topic is responsible for it, meaning that the interest in the lesser-known, racy events of the authors' love life is related to the readerly demand generated by tabloids. Thus argues István Margócsy concerning the first volume, that the book is “repeating the popular gesture: our authors and their relationships appear as celebrities with an exclusive focus on sexual life, to show that, lo and behold, those free geniuses are just like us” (Margócsy 20). Nyáry's texts promise the recipient that information about the life of writers and poets—mostly unknown for the general public—will be revealed, which previously had been accessible for literary initiates only. The curiosity aroused by this topic, however, would not have been enough in itself for the success (that is why Nyáry, in every interview, emphasises his surprise at the high number of reactions following his first posts). More important than stories promising novelty and building upon exposure is, I believe, the way the digital space offered by Facebook (or rather, the utilization of its inherent communicational possibilities) contributed to quickly gaining popularity. Zoltán Németh, exploring poetic endeavours appearing on Facebook, expresses a by no means inadvertent warning: “While analysing the stratification and the intermingling of the medium of Facebook with the phenomenon of the ‘literary text,’ one must never forget those functions and medial requirements that characterise the technical platform of Facebook, by which it is differentiated from other, rivalling social networking sites” (Németh 35). Several of the reviews covering the Nyáry texts highlight that the author showed great skill, on the one hand, in adjusting to the rhetorical and communicational faculties offered by the site, and, on the other, in utilizing its inherent social connections. Reading the posts in a chronological order revealed that while the first few posts had been shorter, a new rhetorical, structural scheme was promptly created, which “brought about the structure of these short sketches, which, in most cases, is identical” (Reichert 392). Repetition, which gives a sense of familiarity for most readers (I will come back to this later), plays a definitive role in more than the rhetorical structure of these writings. The relatively short (and mostly identical) length of the texts takes on only as much as the narrative capacity of a Facebook post: they are long enough to incorporate a rounded-off story, and short enough not to overburden those browsing the social networking site. Apparently, Nyáry even knows how important it is, when writing a storytelling post, for the first few sentences to be sufficiently captivating, since the platform of Facebook shows only the first few lines of the post to the viewer. Thus, in order for the reader's interest to be retained, Nyáry often uses rhetorical tricks that are characteristic of popular storytelling, such as beginning in the midst of things, foreshadowing, or giving obscure hints later to be made clear. For example, the story depicting the love life of Örkény begins: “István Örkény, aged 28, medical officer of the Hungarian Royal Army decided to kill his 23-year-old wife, alongside with her lover. He ran up to the apartment of György Pálóczi-Horváth, aged 32, where he and Mrs. Örkény—Flóra Gönczi—were located. ‘You're dead!’ he cried ominously. He reached for his holster with a determined gesture,

and pulled out a pack of cheese” (Nyáry, *Így szerettek ök* 2 113). Following such (though only rarely so pointed) opening lines, the author tries to portray a course of life for the enthralled readership in the framework of love affairs and relationships.

In order to catch the attention of readers, it proves crucial that Facebook, as the primary publishing medium of the texts, is a digital (textual) space in which building and continuously maintaining social connections is considered essential. In this networking structure of relationships, both personal and virtual, it is extremely significant that everybody becomes “equal,” making it possible, “even for well-known individuals (for instance, long-deceased writers), to appear as natural characters in the infinite newsfeed of this social network, in the incessantly rolling flux of private life-events—as if they were our own friends, living their public-virtual lives, like everybody else” (Reichert 391). It comes as no surprise that some—including, most emphatically, István Margócsy and Tamás Bíró-Balogh—connect the work of Nyáry to tabloids exactly because these texts build upon the satisfaction of readerly demands generated by gossip columns when offering the exposure of (hitherto hidden) secrets from the private life of authors well-known from literary history. Sharing such knowledge via Facebook exploits a mechanism of action of how social media operates, whose force for community building is pointed out by Lajos Császi when exploring the mechanisms of media (not restricted to its online version): “Media fulfils the same social role in the modern world that folklore did in the traditional one: it informs, entertains and regulates through gossip, hearsay and rumours, that is, it creates and upholds value systems and communities” (Császi 110). Nyáry’s stories are close to a certain type of gossip called “information-sharing” by Sally Merry, which, in contrast with “judgmental” gossip, does not involve any assessing comment on its subject (Merry 51). For our purposes, however, another one of Merry’s claims proves even more important, which sheds light on the similarities between the effects of gossip and those of mass media: “The recent popularity of mass media ‘gossip’ columns is an attempt to build on this social idiom of intimacy by implying that the general public is sufficiently close to the media personnel and public figures to be privy to information about the private lives of national leaders” (Merry 52). The community building effect of gossip, as emphasized by Merry, is produced even more strongly on the medial platform of Facebook, for it does not only connect us with the target of the gossip but also with those with whom we share the transmitted knowledge and information, and, thanks to it, “gossip is inevitably confined to a group and kept from outsiders” (Merry 52). Reading Nyáry’s Facebook stories, recipients learnt the details of the private life of writers not only as individuals but as a member of a (continuously growing) community, in which the requirements of maintaining that group cohesion were the “communal” reading of every new post and its discussion in the comment section. The ritual quality of this initiation to secret knowledge was even more enhanced by the timing, since Nyáry posted his reports daily, in the early morning, at around the same time; which, through constant repetition, became a sort of an expectation or “addiction” for the curious, or even enthusiastic reader. It is apparent from the reactions of the commenters that, for several of them, reading and discussing the new story became an unmissable element of the morning routine, almost a ritual

feast. As one of them aptly explained why repetition based on predictability—as well as the homely, unchanging character of the circumstances of reception—became a primary condition of success, “‘dosage’ is crucial, too. I’m sure Krisztián’s little sketches fit into everyone’s morning launch, alongside the coffee, just as that hour-long radio programme fits the time spent fiddling around the kitchen. After both, I felt that I did not only have fun, but I was enriched with by no means useless information. I feel that the rituals to which these genres are connected serve as their crucial components.”¹

II. The cultic approach to writer’s portraits

In the introduction to his first book, Nyáry explains the publishing of writers’ love stories had two objectives: “If there is any other goal for this on my part, besides entertainment, it is for us to rediscover the works of the authors who appear in these stories.... And one more thing I wish to accomplish: be curious, be ready to doubt! Some of the biographies of authors we learnt at school had been polished to smoothness by education over decades, sometimes centuries. Thus, our writers and poets appear in our schoolbooks as papier-maché figures, as living statues” (Nyáry, *Így szerettek őket* 8). This means that overwriting certain parts of biographies—which had been mediated by education and granted a well-known, even cultic status—is linked with an intention that presented itself as a common element in the mechanisms of action in both social networking sites and gossip, that is, the ambition to turn late authors, previously perceived distantly, as alien, into familiar individuals of our own. Where the disposition towards writers alienated from their readers is concerned, cults allow for a reverence based on respect, and that is why Nyáry inadvertently endeavours to dismantle this cultic conditioning. However, as Tamás Kisantal points it out, the intention of the author, “alongside with his cult-dismantling attitude, shows obviously apparent signs of cult-building, exactly by portraying these artists as extraordinary” (Kisantal 1250). In this sense, it is not the elimination of cultic reading (as if such an act was even possible) that is underway, but rather the replacement of former cults with newer ones. Concerning the formation of literary cults, the texts of Nyáry and the accompanying readerly reactions are extremely enlightening. They display the dual source of cult formation, pointed out by Lajos Lakner: “Although cults are the inventions of the professionals of literature or education, and it is from these ranks that their organisers and leaders emerge, it is not to be forgotten that without the contribution of naive and cultic readers, [...] these efforts would prove futile” (Lakner 18). When Nyáry posted his stories on Facebook, followers perceived him as the educator of the public, who, correcting or complementing their false or incomplete knowledge, formulates those hidden secrets about the life of the writers. It is particularly interesting that the enthusiastic attitude towards those writers gets “inscribed” on the author as well, and certain commenters use a tone of almost sacred passion.² Such cultic ambition in the portraits of writers and poets is chiefly revealed in the author presenting these stories as truth “exposing” formerly withheld secrets and lies, which—in contrast with the doubtful, critical attitude advocated in the already quoted introduction of his book—expects acceptance without

the least doubt. In the sense of István Margócsy's comment on literary cults, these short texts "are used to explore the central assumption of the cult—that is, *truth*—and also to serve as the basis for the attempt—concerning any given poet—to secure and fasten the *one*, original, 'objective' phenomenon, excluding any other possible interpretational variant." (Margócsy, *A Petőfi-kultusz* 144)

The validity of an unambiguous truth—which serves as the basis for the cultic attitude—appears, however, rather complex, concerning both the authorial strategy and readerly expectations. In the introduction to the book version, Nyáry emphasizes the academically verifiable truth content of the stories (which the list of recommended readings at the end of each volume tries to support), however, at several occasions, he connects them to the genre of folktales (at others, calling them "true tales"). During an interview, he reacted to criticism from the standpoint of scholarly research (that is, that he constructs biographies from complicated problems—which are hard to ascertain—through assumption and simplification) as follows, emphasizing the fictitious quality of the texts shaped by the author's fantasy: "I write down—based on the data—the most probable version, because I do not write with a scholarly goal in mind, neither for the academic sphere" (Urfi). This ambiguity, which situates the texts in a borderline situation between scholarliness declared as the repository for truth (which, of course, is a simplifying conception of the cultic thinking concerning "science," not the self-definition of literary studies) and the fictitious nature of biographies (modelled after literary fiction), also defined the basis of reception (at least, as shown by the Facebook comments). First, the grateful comments addressed to Nyáry often contain the idea that the greatest value of the posts resides in the educational attempt. Secondly, however, most readers seem to believe that the reception of the stories follow the patterns of reading fiction: commenters usually report some emotional response, such as crying, being moved, sad or outraged.³ Furthermore, their expectations are, apparently, defined by a fairytale-style satisfaction of desires surfacing in the commenters generally asking/expecting the author to write about relationships with a happy ending (especially after a tragic, or *tragically depicted*, set of events), and also in them judging the stories and the characters in particular from a moral point of view. Thus, readerly expectations retain a perception characteristic of cultic attitudes, expecting artists to exhibit ethically exemplary behavior and lifestyle whose narration may become a parabolic story. From this perspective, the comment section of the Facebook post with Kassák in focus (who demonstrated a variety of ways of humiliating his wife) is a particularly instructive reading. For some commenters, and only to a certain extent, Kassák's actions make the value of his oeuvre questionable.⁴ Thus, this further complicates the frequently asked question exploring the mechanisms of Nyáry's texts, that is, whether these personal portraits bring new readers to the authors depicted. Even if objections to the authors' lifestyle normally do not turn readers from the oeuvre, the "fairytale" depicting amorous relationships still seem to substitute for the actual reading of the works of the authors for most readers.

III. Memory strategies in writers' biographies

When answering why the portraits of writers published on Facebook were able to generate such high interest at such speed, analysing memory strategies implemented by the texts might provide a crucial perspective. Nyáry's work covers the amorous and marital relationships of nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors, predominantly focusing on the events of the previous century. Considering their temporal distance from the act of remembrance in the present, it can be stated, using Jan Assmann's conceptual categories, that the stories fall into three groups of identical number: some clearly belong in the ranks of either communicative or collective memory, while a third group is characterized by an undecided status balancing in the middle (meaning the stories about the generation of 80-100 years ago, that is, in a broader sense, about the authors who belong to the period of the first generation of *Nyugat*) (Assmann 34–41). However, irrespective of the temporal difference, any finished authorial oeuvre instantaneously begins to be “drawn into” cultural memory (primarily by literary history, education, museology, or even by regional cults). It is no coincidence that Nyáry emphasizes in most of his statements, that by reporting the events withheld by education, he strives to do away with the myths of biographies grown rigid and cultic, that is, basically, he intends to rewrite normative discourses immobilized by cultural memory. From this perspective, his initial publication of his texts on Facebook (harnessing the communicational opportunities of the social networking site) can be considered decisively significant. Through multidirectional communication—that is, through a site, which allows comments, debates and the supplementation of information—Nyáry is sort of trying to reinstate past events from the context of cultural memory into the sphere of communicative memory. The interaction that goes on in the comments, including not only reactions but additions and specifications in which the author himself is involved, demonstrate characteristics of the participation in the communicative memory, as described by Assmann: “The group's participation in communicative memory varies considerably: some people know more than others, and the memories of the old reach further back than those of the young. But even though some individuals are better informed than others, there are no specialists, no experts in this informal tradition, and the relevant knowledge is acquired at the same time as language and other forms of everyday knowledge. Everybody has equal competence” (Assmann 38–39). Nyáry's continuously maintained authorial self-representation, portraying himself in a particular liminal position, is connected to the crossing over of the two kinds of memory. He appears, on the one hand, as linked to the circle of founders and bearers of cultural memory (when, as a literary historian, as an “expert, he knows and speaks the academic lingo”); and on the other hand, he can come across as an outsider stepping out of the scholarly discursive order, who may emphasize an “other” form of communication and say: “I opened a door on the wall of aristocratic scholarliness, allowing more to look inside than before” (Nyáry, *Így szerettek őket* 2 8).

In this game of different memory strategies, the publication in print form should be the final issue to address. As the Facebook comments attest, readers, at a relatively early stage, expressed their idea, their expectation that the stories should be collected and made available as a book. This suggests that publishing on a social networking site seems

slight—from a cultural perspective—even for those who participated in the reception of stories there. According to them, only books can serve as bearers and mediators of real, valuable culture, and while the great number sold might verify this claim, it is no accident that reviews of the books voiced their disappointment, feeling the Facebook versions to be more intriguing, more innovative (Reichert 392; Kisantal 1250). Even though the book tries to preserve, in its own medium, the medial peculiarities of reception on Facebook and in the online space in general,⁵ the lack of that complexity which arises from communication in social media, and the lack of playing with the dual strategies of cultural and communicative memory bring about the loss of what constituted the most exciting part of this experiment, which, presumably, had also established his success.

All things considered, the story of Krisztián Nyáry slowly seems to become as gripping as that of his heroes. His writerly endeavour of the past few years, as well as the brand emerging from it and the cult gradually established around it, proved that by utilizing the medial capacities of the online platform in a talented and conscious fashion, and by offering the public a carefully chosen cultural product, it is possible to address masses, literally; while it is also clear that, for the majority of readers, writerly performance and the authentic mediation of (popular) culture—apparently—are still equalled with books as their bearer.

Notes

¹ A comment on Krisztián Nyáry's Facebook post (the story about Elek Gozdsu) <<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.165101444854.116423.614474854&type=3&l=90027a800c>>. (Accessed: 16 Aug. 2016)

² For example a comment on Krisztián Nyáry's Facebook post (the story about Imre Madách): "Krisztián! Whenever I see your name, I am moved; and what you do, I cannot even put into words! When your book is published, I'll be up in the clouds, and I'd like to be among the first who buy it. You're the embodiment of reason and patience." <<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.165101444854.116423.614474854&type=3&l=90027a800c>>. (Accessed: 16 Aug. 2016)

³ A few examples of the numerous comments: "There was a lump in my throat." (on the story of Árpád Tóth); "[...] is going to look for excuses for Vajda for the rest of her life, just because the poet's words affected her so much and in such manner. Huh, the shivers down my spine!" (on the story about János Vajda); "I sorrowfully thank you." (on the story about Gyula Juhász). Naturally, the reality of the emotions expressed in the comments are hard to guarantee (already because personal comments on the social networking site are always formulated knowing that they mediate a certain image of us to others). Overlooking the problem of trustworthiness, these comments are telling: even if they should only be perceived as commonplaces, it is certain that the reception of culturally educational texts are normally not accompanied by such comments.

⁴ A comment on the story about Lajos Kassák: "I'd rather not share this, if you don't mind. For years, I've been preparing to read *Egy ember élete* [A Man's Life], but I guess

I won't, for a while." Another opinion: "How am I supposed to look at *Ma* [Today] now? I hate it like hell (...). If intellect is not coupled with emotional intelligence, apparently, it is worse than simple primitivism." <<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.165101444854.116423.614474854&type=3&l=90027a800c>>. (Accessed: 16 Aug. 2016)

⁵ The book re-publishes the texts of the posts (supplementing them, in some cases, with details previously provided in the comment section and with quotes from the authors). Principally, it is the structure of the books that tries to imitate the codes of reading that were characteristic of the online version: the texts follow no chronological order (neither the original date of publication, nor the date of stories chosen as subject), they do not form thematically coherent groups, which suggests an arbitrary, accidental logic of arrangement. Moreover, certain authors appear in multiple stories: their love life is built up from a series of fragments from their private life, arching over several chapters. As a consequence, it evokes the hypertextual qualities of the online textual space: first, by allowing the reader—since no teleology is realized, which would require a linear reading—to turn to any of the stories in the book, and secondly, by allowing “link-like” connections between sections through writing authorly biographies into different texts.

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Tuuli, Saresma, Tuija, Hiltunen, Kaisa, Jäntti, Saara, Säaskilahti, Nina, Vallius, Antti, and Ahvenjärvi, Kaisa. *Acta Sociologica* 59 (3), 233–47. doi:10.1177/0001699316633099. She is the principal investigator of a multidisciplinary research project *Arts of Belonging—Affectivity and Materiality of Homing* (Kone foundation, 2015–2018) and *Migrant Tales—Narratives of Belonging and Displacement* (a sub project of the Academy of Finland consortium *Crossing Borders: Artistic Practices in Performing and Narrating Belonging*, 2017–2021). She worked on the Academy of Finland funded research project, *Populism as Movement and Rhetoric* 2014–2016, and is currently taking part in the Mainstreaming Populism consortium (MAPO), also funded by the Academy of Finland. Besides populism, her research interests include affects, gender and other intersecting differences, performativity of writing, hate speech, social media, and mobility and migration. She is the former chair of Kulttuurintutkimuksen seura [the Finnish Association of Cultural Studies] and former editor in chief of the journal *Kulttuurintutkimus*.

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Index

- Aarseth, Espen 32, 41
Ady, Endre 108, 130
Ahvenjärvi, Kaisa 57, 130
Altman, Irwin 54, 56, 57
Amsden, Benoni L. 57
Anderson, Benedict 76, 79
Andrási, Gábor 115
Andrews, Malcolm 43, 44, 56
Annaud, Jean-Jacques 42
Arany, János 84, 98, 108
Assmann, Aleida 8, 15, 16, 21, 40, 41
Assmann, Jan 13, 18, 21, 122, 124
Attila the Hun 83
Austin, J. L. 70
- Baecker, Dirk 25, 29
Bahlcke, Joachim 8
Baker, Kelly J. 78
Bangura, Abdul Karim 12, 21
Baranyai, Norbert 5, 117, 127
Benczúr, Gyula 100
Benedek, Csaba 62, 64
Benedek, Katalin 10, 22
Benkler, Yochai 20, 21
Bennett, Julia 53, 56
Berners-Lee, Tim 13, 24, 25, 28, 29, 115
Bertha, Csilla 128
Berzsenyi, Dániel 100, 103
Bettmann, Otto 63
Bihari, Sándor 102
- Bíró-Balogh, Tamás 117, 119, 124
Blais, Melissa 71, 79
Boda, Zsuzsanna 95, 104
Bódi, Katalin 5, 92, 127
Bogdány, Jakab 94
Bogost, Ian 33, 41
Bohannon, John 87, 89
Boler, Megan 71, 79
Buckley, Thomas M. 57
Bullinger, Jonathan 38, 42
Butler, Judith 70
Bülgözdi, Imola 130
Byrne, Deirdre 81
- Carl, Jenny 129
Castells, Manuel 25, 29
Chapman, Adam 37, 42
Chawla, Louise 54, 56
Choo, Hae Yeon 70, 79
Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong 24, 29
Columbus, Christopher 71
Consalvo, Mia 33, 42
Cooper Marcus, Clare 54, 56
Corvinus, Matthias (King Mathias) 83, 93
Cosgrove, Denis E. 43, 56
Craughwell, Thomas J. 69, 79
Csaplár, Ferenc, 105, 115
Császi, Lajos 119, 124
Csatlós, Judit, 105, 114, 115
Csehly, Zoltán 124

Csokonai Vitéz, Mihály 92, 103
Csók, István 101

Daniels, Jessie 68, 79
Daniels, Stephen 43, 56
Davidson, James 14, 21
Davies, Norman 70, 79
Degas, Edgar 102
Delacroix, Eugène 97
den Boer, Pim 7, 8, 37
Denisoff, Dennis 115
De Roure, David 25, 26
Devereux, Eoin 80
Devine-Wright, Patrick 56, 57
Di Lenardo, Isabella 63, 64
Dobó, Gábor 105, 106, 115
Draaisma, Douwe 11, 12, 21
Driscoll, Matthew James 116
Dröge, Evelyn 115
Duchhardt, Heinz 8
Dupuis-Déri, Francis 71, 79
Durand, David 114, 116
Dyer, Richard 69, 70, 79
Dzieza, Josh 11, 21

Eggers, Dave 21
Eltantawy, Nahed 19, 21
Eötvös, József 97
Ernst, Wolfgang 24, 29
Esterházy, Péter 128

Fellegi, Zsófia 5, 105, 107, 110, 112, 113,
127
Felton, Nicholas 43, 56
Ferenczy, István 92, 93
Ferenczy, Károly 101
Fertőszögi, Péter 104
Fodor, István 88, 89
Futrell, Robert 77–9

Gates, Bill 63
Gibson, William 11, 21

Goldfarb, Charles F. 115
Gonçalves da Silva, Helena 8
Gore, Al 11
Gozsdu, Elek 123
Gönczi, Flóra 118
Groys, Boris 24, 29
Gullestad, Marianne 68, 79
Gustafson, Per 52, 56
Gyáni, Gábor 19, 21
György, Péter 16, 19, 21
Györke, Ágnes 130

Halbwachs, Maurice 18
Hall, Troy E. 57
Hall, Wendy 25–7, 29
Hamedy, Saba 16, 21
Hammond, Philip 34, 42
Handler, James 115
Hanks, Tom 38
Harding, Anthony 87, 89
Harjunen, Hannele 81
Harrigan, Pat 41, 42
Harrison, Gish 42
Hartog, François 69, 80
Haynes, Amanda 80
Häyrynen, Maunu 43, 44, 56
Hegedüs, Rózsa 59
Hegedüs, Sándor 59, 64
Hennicke, Steffen 115
Hervik, Peter 81
Hiltunen, Kaisa 57, 130
Hirsch, Marianne 10, 21
Hitler, Adolf 36
Hockey, Susan 116
Hollósy, Simon 102
hooks, bell 44, 56
Horváth, Iván, 86, 89
Huhtamo, Erkki 23, 29
Hui, Yuk, 28, 29
Hunyadi, Ladislaus 97
Hübinette, Tobias 73, 80

Ide, Nancy 116
 Iwanowa, Julia 115

 Jansen, Robert S. 80
 Jávör, Anna 104
 Jenkins, Henry 33, 42
 Jernyei Kiss, János 94, 104
 Jess, Pat 57
 Jobs, Steve 59
 Johnson, Mark 10, 22
 Jones, Stan 29
 Juhász, Gyula 123
 Jäntti, Saara 57, 76, 80, 129, 130
 Järvinen, Suvi 80, 129

 Kádár, János 13–5, 20, 21
 Kalla, Zsuzsa 124
 Kálmán, C. György 106, 116
 Kansteiner, Wulf 17, 18, 22
 Kaplan, Frédéric 63, 64
 Karjalainen, Pauli T. 45, 52, 56
 Karkulehto, Sanna 77, 81
 Kassák, Lajos 105–7, 113–6, 121, 123
 Katona, Tamás 59, 64
 Katschthaler, Karl 42
 Kaukinen, Susanna 76
 Kazinczy, Ferenc 92, 93, 98, 127
 Kecskeméti, Gábor 114, 116
 Kelly, Annie 77, 78, 80
 Keskinen, Suvi 78, 80
 K. Horváth, Zsolt 35, 42
 Kisantal, Tamás 117, 120, 123, 124
 Klein, Daniel B. 124
 Koltay, Tibor 128
 Kooistra, Lorraine Janzen 115
 Kordé, Zoltán 87, 89
 Kónya, Imre 16, 17
 Kosztolányi, Dezső 108
 Kovala, Urpo 129
 Kreis, Georg 8
 Krek, Norbert 5, 32, 128

 Kruger, Linda E. 57
 Kürtössy, Péter 62, 64
 Kyriazis, Marios 61, 62
 Kyriazis, Neoclis 62

 Lakoff, George 10, 22
 Lakner, Lajos 120, 124
 Large, Duncan 22
 Lassila, Ora 115
 László, Fülöp 102
 Latour, Bruno 14, 22
 Leppänen, Sirpa 80, 129
 Levi, Giovanni 80
 Lewicka, Maria 54, 56
 Lotz, Károly 98, 100
 Low, Setha M. 54, 56, 57
 Luhmann, Niklas 23, 25–9, 128
 Luke, Timothy W. 69, 80
 Lukkarinen, Ville 43, 57
 Lähdesmäki, Tuuli 44, 45, 53, 57, 76, 130

 Madách, Imre 98, 123
 Madarász, Viktor 97, 98
 Mahmood, Mamdani 68, 80
 Mányoki, Ádám 94
 Manzo, Lynne C. 56, 57
 Marastoni, Jakab 93, 97
 Margitay, Tihamér 101
 Margócsy, István 117–9, 121, 124, 125
 Marx Ferree, Myra 70, 79
 Massey, Doreen 57
 Mäntysalo, Raine 56
 Mels, Tom 57
 Menyhért, Anna 16, 22
 Merry, Sally Engle 119, 124
 Meyers, Oren 22
 Mikszáth, Kálmán 108
 Míkula, Maja 81, 129
 Millitz, Johann Michael 95
 Móra, Ferenc 84
 Móricz, Zsigmond 108, 127

Morse, Donald E. 42, 128
 Munkácsy, Mihály 99, 100
 Mylonas, Elli 114, 116

 Nagy, Imre 13
 Neiger, Motti 22
 Nékám, Lajosné 62, 64
 Németh, Zoltán 118, 124
 Nietzsche, Friedrich 10, 11, 22
 Nikunen, Kaarina 70, 80
 Nisbet, Hugh Barr 104
 Nora, Pierre 12, 14, 22, 34, 35
 Nyáry, Krisztián 5, 117–25
 Nyíri, Kristóf 129

 O'Hara, Kieron, 24, 29
 Oikkonen, Venla 73, 80
 Ong, Walter J. 17, 22
 Orbán, Viktor 21
 O. Réti, Zsófia 5, 10, 129
 Orlai Petrics, Soma 97, 98
 Örkény, István 118
 Örsi, Julianna 62, 64

 Paál, László 99, 100
 Palkó, Gábor 5, 23, 29, 108, 114–6, 128
 Pálóczi-Horváth, György 118
 Palonen, Emilia 80, 129
 Papacharissi, Zizi 18, 22
 Papp, Gábor Zsigmond 20
 Parikka, Jussi 23, 24, 29
 Pariser, Eli 19, 22
 Pazzanese, Christina 68, 80
 Pearson, Keith Ansell 22
 Perlmutter, David, 70, 80
 Peterson, Britt 12, 22
 Peti, Lehel 129
 Pető, Iván 16, 17
 Petőfi, Sándor 97, 98, 121, 124, 125
 Petterson, Katarina 81
 Pierazzo, Elena 116
 Pierides, Demetrios 62

 Pinchevski, Amit 16, 22
 Plato 11
 Pliny the Elder 93
 Polgár, Anikó 124
 Poszler, Györgyi 104
 Power, Martin 80
 Pötzsch, Holger 34, 38, 39, 42
 Prescod, Paul 115
 Probyn, Elspeth 44, 57

 Rákóczi, Francis II 94
 Randall, William L. 11, 22
 Reichert, Gábor 118, 119, 123, 125
 Relph, Edward 45, 52, 57
 Renear, Allen 114, 116
 Répássy, József 102
 Revel, Jacques 69, 80
 Ricoeur, Paul 10, 13, 22
 Riley, Robert B. 54, 57
 Rilke, Rainer Maria 130
 Rippl-Rónai, József 100
 Rohdewald, Stefan 8
 Rombauer, János 95
 Rose, Gillian 44, 45, 57
 Ross, Parry 25, 29
 Rossi, Leena-Maija 81
 Ruotsalainen, Maria 68, 76, 80, 129

 Sahle, Patrick 107, 114, 116
 Sakki, Inari 81
 Salvati, Andrew 38, 42
 Sándor, Klára 5, 76, 81, 82, 87, 89, 129
 Sárai Vanda 10, 22
 Saresma, Tuija 5, 57, 68, 69, 71, 76–8, 80,
 81, 129, 130
 Sasvári, Edit 105, 106, 114–6
 Sääskilahti, Nina 57, 130
 Seamon, David 45, 57
 Schmale, Wolfgang 8
 Schröder, Stefan 77, 81
 Shadbolt, Nigel 25, 26, 29
 Shapira, Shahak 10

Sicart, Miguel 33, 34, 42
 Sifry, Micah L. 18, 22
 Simi, Pete 77–9
 Sizemore, Tom 38
 Skuteczky, Döme 101
 Spielberg, Steven 42
 Spiranec, Sonja 128
 Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty 48
 Stalin, Joseph 41
 Stedman, Richard C. 45, 54, 57
 Stevenson, Patrick 129
 Stiefel, Maria C. 57
 Strathausen, Carsten 29
 Sudac, Marinko 114, 116
 S. Varga, Pál 41, 42
 Swain, Sarah 59, 64
 Szarvasházi, Judit 62, 64
 Szász, Zoltán 59, 64
 Szegedy-Maszák, Mihály 89
 Székely, Bertalan 97, 100
 Szendrey, Júlia 125
 Szeredi Merse, Pál 105, 115
 Szinyei Merse, Anna 94, 104
 Szőke, Kata 115

Takács, Miklós 5, 7, 42, 130
 Takáts, József 124
 Tánczos, Vilmos 129
 Tate, Brant 81
 Telegdi, Johannes 83
 Than, Mór 97
 Thorvaldsen, Bertel 92
 Tidball, Keith G. 57
 Tóth, Árpád 123
 Tóth, Orsolya 117, 125
 Trudeau, Daniel 44, 57

Tryniski, Tom 61
 Tsepis, Antonios 62
 Tuan, Yi-Fu 44, 57
 Tull, Ödön 100

Urfi, Péter 121, 125

Vajda, János 123
 Vallius, Antti 5, 43–5, 57, 130
 Varis, Piia 80, 129
 Vasil'ev, Dmitrij D. 87, 89
 Vastagh, György 100
 Vaszary, János 101, 102
 Verő, Mária 104
 Vertelyte, Mante 81
 Vonnegut, Kurt 128

Waenerberg, Annika 43, 57
 Wágner, Sándor 100
 Wardrip-Fruin, Noah 41, 42
 Wayne, Ron 59
 Welle, Anja 29
 Wiest, Julie B. 19
 Winckelmann, Johann Joachim 92, 104
 Wodak, Ruth 68, 77, 81
 Woodard, Colin 87, 89
 Wozniak, Steve 59
 Wulfman, Clifford E. 116
 Wunsch, Thomas 8

Yong, Wern Mei 81
 Yuval-Davis, Nira 44, 45, 57

Zandberg, Eyal 22
 Zichy, Mihály 98
 Z. Karvalics, László 5, 58, 63, 127

LOCI MEMORIAE HUNGARICAE

The *Research Group for the Hungarian Lieux de Mémoire* was founded by the Institute of Hungarian Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen in 2010. Its primary objective is to put Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) into a Hungarian context and hence to reinterpret the way Hungarian cultural memory operates. The research is rooted in Nora's observation that there is no more real milieu of memory (*milieu de mémoire*), only sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*), that is, the cultural memory of modern societies does not immediately remember the past, but only through the mediation of the so-called sites of memory. These sites of memory are not exclusively spatial constructions, but they can be any kind of media that has a function in current cultural memory (such as mythical and historical figures, objects, events, media texts and concepts). Besides, sites of memory are not eternal and stable entities; they are subjects to the alterations of collective memory. It is not only their meaning that can change, but even the site of memory itself can perish, giving its place to a newer one. The research, as it is apparent from the above, is interdisciplinary in nature; the research group aims to publish its results in cooperation with the Debrecen University Press in the present series.

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