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PROCEEDING OF
XI. ETHNOLOGY
WITHOUT BORDERS



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Preface for the EWB special issue

This edition of *antro-pólus* exclusively presents studies and articles connected to the presentations of the XI. Ethnology Without Borders (EWB) conference. The last time this conference took place in Budapest was in 2014. It was a great honour for us to host after nearly 10 years this annual assembly of students from the field of anthropology and ethnography again in 2023.

The chosen theme of the XI. Ethnology Without Borders conference 'Borders and Boundaries' allowed the audience and the participants to explore numerous completed and ongoing research projects. Even though the idea of borders is usually connected to separation, segregation, and distance, its meanings can also take other forms. Certainly, the phenomena of borders can be quite conspicuous, acting as separators or bridges between nations, cultures, individuals, and communities. In other cases, borders are less tangible and visible, demarcate theories or methodologies, and fluctuate or dissolve reflecting the fluidity of society and culture. The studies published in this volume revolve around these questions and seek answers within the disciplines of anthropology and ethnography.

One of the most important goals of the Ethnology Without Borders conference is to strengthen existing connections between our universities and departments as well as to establish new ones. First, we express our gratitude to the Visegrad Fund for their support which made this conference possible. The XI. edition was organized by the Cultural Anthropology Department of ELTE in close cooperation with universities of the Visegrad region. We would like to express our gratitude for the cooperation of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, and the Central European University (CEU). The participation of CEU is particularly important as this marked the first occasion, they officially took part in the organization of this conference. It demonstrates that EWB not only has a rich history but is also evolving into a larger and more significant event. We look forward to many more years of fruitful cooperation with the excellent academics of all these institutions. As we know 'the personal is political' so what else could lay the

foundation of future joint projects and research other than our personal connections among individuals working and studying within these institutions.

In conclusion, let this edition of *antro-pólus* serve as an example of cooperation in the Visegrad region. We recommend the articles published here to anyone interested in exploring the topics researched by undergraduate, master's, and PhD students from the Visegrad region in 2023.

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**MEMORY LAYERS AND IDENTITY
REFLECTIONS**

Jérémy Floutier

Imagined Geographies: Borders and National Space in Hungarian and Romanian Textbooks used between 1945 and 1990

University of Szeged, Hungary

Transylvania represents a fairyland in Romanian and Hungarian imaginaries and has been at the core of both national constructions since the 19th century. As such, this territory has embodied the center of an intense national competition between Bucharest and Budapest for control of the region over the last 150 years, with several border changes in the first half of the 20th century (Blomqvist 2006). Throughout this interval, intellectuals, first and foremost historians, have been put at the service of this competition, trying to convince the international audience and legitimize national narratives (Hirschhausen 2021).

Alongside history, a delimited national space turned out to be one of the main pillars of national consciousness, and defining it became a weapon for any existing state or national movement to sustain its claims in order to create or maintain political unity (Smith 1981). In this context, as a very strategic science, physical geography has been mobilized at the service of the political agenda. The significance of this imagined geography rested on a defined framework trying to establish physical realities, which provided a territorial rationality without ambiguity, an undoubtedly much more accommodating situation for every state (Mamadouh, Dijkink 2006).

In Central Europe, this pattern turned out to be scarcely applicable since each national project impinged on another one. The positions taken by Hungarian and Romanian scholarships in relation to the national space showed few common features and rather a deeply rival narration. Indeed, for Hungarians, the Carpathians were traditionally considered as a natural fortress that framed the Hungarian borders since the creation of the Hungarian kingdom in the beginning of the 11th century. For Romanians, they embodied a spine that connected the three main Romanian lands: Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania. In the Romanian case, these borders are formed by the Black Sea, the

Danube, the Tisza, and the Dniester, while the Carpathian Mountains stand at the center like a backbone. It is noteworthy that this Romanian approach contrasts with the Hungarian perspective, as far as the rivers separate and the mountains unify. It is, however, worth noting that this issue is not unique since the same phenomenon can be found with the French-German dissonant perception of the Rhine until 1945, whereas for French geographers it represented a natural border and a tangible cut between the two spaces, whereas for German scholars it was an obvious connecting river of the different German lands (Defrance, Pfeil 2017).

As a matter of fact, since the end of the 19th century and the generalization of school access in Europe, textbooks have played a great role in setting up identifying marks. Throughout this study, the textbook's content is interpreted as the result of three forces affecting it, like a bordering triangle. The first one is the academic world, since its results are, to different extents, always implemented into textbooks despite the need to synthesize in order to make them understandable and usable. It is followed by the pedagogical methods, as content has to be adapted to the cognitive abilities of students and reflect the current didactic approaches. Last but not least is the political will, which has the most significant influence on textbook's content due to its massive effect on youngsters. The direction given to these simplifications is never the result of chance; it expresses the memorial and ideological orientations of a government and always bears the mark of its time. A textbook is then the product of a selection and, therefore, of a construction that results from choices, amplifications, and omissions. As such, the textbook is a "false historical evidence" and the mirror of the official discourse (Choppin 2008).

Before 1945, patriotic education was the textbooks' *raison d'être* in both countries. On one hand, in interwar Hungary revisionism had to be implemented everywhere with the remembrance of the Carpathian basin (*Kárpát-medence*) as the cradle of the Hungarian nation and its only livable national space after the traumatic loss of 2/3 of the formal Hungarian kingdom after the First World War (Bán 2017). On the other hand, in Romania, the emphasis was put on the country's economic rationality as well as the historical and political rights of Romanians, being, according to their narrative, the oldest and most numerous nations in Transylvania. Furthermore, they also depicted Greater Romania (*România Mare*) as a perfect geographical unit, principally bounded by natural borders

(Boia 2001). In this context, the use of symbolic geography was already largely used in Romania and Hungary.

In both countries, the communist parties seized power in the years following World War II, helped, and supported by the Soviet Union. As part of the forced rapprochement in the frame of "fraternity between socialist people", the national question was declared solved, and the border issue was frozen. After 1947–1948, a one-textbook system was the norm in both countries, with strict control over education (Mészáros 1989, Mihalache 2008). The aim of this paper is to examine how the relationship to the borders and national space in Hungary and Romania has changed and how they have been depicted in textbooks published and used between 1945 and 1990, by trying to answer the two following questions: to what extent has this new political context stamped its mark on the traditional perception of national space? Has this topic been uniformly depicted from 1945 to 1990 in the frame of state socialism?

The transition in Hungary (1945-1948)

Among the states controlled by the Soviet army, or liberated according to the rhetoric of the time, Hungary, along with Czechoslovakia, had the greatest political pluralism during the so-called transition period between 1945 and 1948. Free and multiparty elections were organized in November 1945, where the Hungarian Communist Party (*Magyar Kommunista Párt*) obtained only 16.9% of the votes. Nevertheless, with the implementation of the so-called salami's tactic (*szalámi taktika*) and the gradual elimination of political rivals, communists-imposed step by step their hold on the country, which led to the monopolization of power from 1948 on (Bottoni 2017).

Hungarian geography textbooks published between 1945 and 1948 exposed significant differences compared to later works that witnessed the peculiarities of the transition period. Likewise, textbooks published prior to 1945, the Carpathian Basin still embodied the framework of the Hungarian national space in Hungarian scholars' works like Lajos Jócsik, Béla Bulla, or Tibor Mendöl. However, open revisionism disappeared, and the Carpathian Basin became only a part of a macro space called the Danube Basin (Duna-medence) (Hajdú 2013(1)). A note sent by Géza Teleki, Minister of Religion and Education

(*vallás és közoktatásügyi miniszter*), to every school director in the country as soon as April 1945, exemplified this paradigm shift:

"In history textbooks, the sections in which the era following the First World War 1914–1918 is discussed must be removed and kept under lock and key at the school. [...] The textbooks have to be adapted to the fact that, legally, Hungary's borders are determined by the geographical lines that the so-called Treaty of Trianon and the Armistice Agreement with the Allied Powers designated. It should also be stated in textbooks that the internal reconstruction of the country must be undertaken within these limits and not towards the recovery of the lost territories."¹ (Teleki 1945:537).

The same approach can be found in the five textbooks analyzed and published between 1945 and 1948, as revealed by the title of a book written by Gusztáv Kalmár in 1947: "The Geography of the Carpathian Basin and Hungary" (*A kárpáti-medence és Magyarország földrajza*) (Kalmár 1947). It is worth noting that the very same author, a Catholic priest working in a Catholic high school, had already published several geographical books and textbooks before 1945, including one in 1943 with the unambiguous title "Hungarian Geopolitics – A Thousand Years of Struggle in the Carpathian Basin. Why do we have a Right to the Land of our Ancestors?" (*Magyar geopolitika – Ezeréves harc a Kárpát-medencében. Miért van jogunk őseink földjéhez*) (Kalmár 1943). It shows how deeply rooted was the conception according to which the Carpathian Basin forms the natural and legitimate space of the Hungarian nation. It is quite hard to imagine that the author had changed his mind radically within five years and one may assume that it's rather the outcome of the political context. In Gusztáv Kalmár's textbook, as well as in the others published during these three years, the authors emphasized the natural and historical legitimacy of the Carpathian Basin, but it was no longer depicted as the only viable Hungarian living space, and no explicit irredentist elements were implemented.

In the various textbooks, the geological unity as well as the hydrographic unity of the basin were highlighted, since, with the exception of a few minor rivers, all flow into the

¹ "A történeti tankönyvekből el kell távolítani azokat a részeket, amelyekben az 1914-18. évi világháborút követő kort tárgyalják; azokat az eltávolított részeket összegyűjtve, zár alatt az iskolában kell megőrizni. [...] A tankönyvekben alkalmazkodni kell ahhoz a tényhez, hogy jogilag Magyarország határait azok a földrajzi vonalak szabják meg, amelyeket az ún. trianoni szerződés és a szövetséges hatalmakkal kötött fegyverszüneti megállapodás kijelölt. A tankönyvekben is ki kell fejezni, hogy ezeken a határokon belül kell az ország belső újjáépítéséhez fogni, és nem az elveszett területek visszaszerzésére törekedni."

Danube, as argued by Gusztáv Kalmár or the joint authors Ferenc Hajósy and Sándor Láng, who wrote several geography textbooks intended for high schools:

"The unity of the Carpathian basin stands out most brightly in its hydrography: all its rivers flow into the Danube or its tributaries. Such unified territories are always and everywhere very suitable for the formation of a unified state. There was indeed a time when all these lands belonged to Hungary" (Kalmár 1947:26)²

"The Carpathian basin, which covers approximately 300,000 km², is a perfect and great geographical unit. This landscape is structurally uniform because the sunken basins and the old middle units with a nodular structure are surrounded by the juvenile Eurasian chain unit of the Carpathians" (Hajósy, Láng 1947:52)³

The co-writers portrayed the Carpathian Mountains as difficult to cross and a natural obstacle, as a kind of "phantom border" (Hirschhausen 2023). To illustrate their point, the two authors noted that from Transylvania, five main railway lines and numerous secondary routes lead toward the Hungarian Great Plain (*Alföld*), compared to only two main lines and three secondary ones heading toward Wallachia and Moldavia. Nevertheless, it seems possible to hypothesize that they sought to justify the legitimacy of an autonomous, or even independent, Transylvania based on geography. This aspect is repeatedly found in their works, where they describe Transylvania as the "most autonomous region" from a geological perspective. A passage from another manual written by the same authors supports this assumption:

"[...] it must also act as a mediator between the Great Plain and Wallachia. Economically, the Transylvanian territory is more dependent on the Great Plain, even though it is politically part of Romania. Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania are called upon to maintain and develop peaceful relations between the two regions"⁴ (Hajósy, Láng 1947:65)

² "A kárpáti-medence egysége legfényesebben vízrajzában tűnik ki: minden folyója a Dunába vagy annak a mellékfolyóiba ömlik. Az ilyen egységes területek mindig és mindenhol igen alkalmasak egységes állam kialakítására. Valóban volt is idő, amikor az egész Magyarország földje volt"

³ "A kb 300 000 km² kiterjedésű Kárpátmedence tökéletes és nagyszerű földrajzi egység. Egységes ez a táj szerkezetileg, mert a süllyedt medencéket és a rögös szerkezetű régi középegységeket a Kárpátok fiatalkorú eurázsiai láncegysége veszi körül"

⁴ "[...] közvetítő szerepet is kell vállalnia az Alföld és a Havasalföld között. Gazdaságilag ugyanis a politikailag Romániától függő erdélyi terület inkább az Alföldre van ráutalva. A két táj közti békés kapcsolatok kiépítését Erdély magyarságra és románságra hivatott ápolni és fejleszteni"

A few pages further on Hajósy and Láng revealed that "after the political reorganization of the Carpathian Basin in 1920, the centrally located Hungary could not play the role it deserved due to its geographical position"⁵ (Hajósy, Láng 1947:71). One can assume that if irredentism wasn't put into practice, the remembrance and the negative effects of the dismantling of historical Hungary were still used by textbook's authors. These significant divergences from the textbooks of the interwar period as well as those written after 1948 highlight the specificities of the transitional period, providing evidence that the Hungarian Communist Party did not totally rule school affairs between 1945 and the beginning of 1948 (Karlovitz 2017).

In Romania, no new geography textbook had been published between 1945 and 1947, and the previous textbooks were still in use, although the same process of tearing out pages had been implemented (Vasile 2009).

Golden age of internationalism and symbolic geography (1947-1960s)

In both countries, following the establishment of socialism in 1947/1948, forced convergence compelled authors to praise Stalin's nationality policies and to proclaim the minorities and borders' question as solved. Socialism *de facto* ensured equality among workers and put an end to nationalism, a bourgeois and capitalist phenomenon. The reality was, of course, much more complex, and the denial of this issue reached its peak during the 1950s. This situation engendered a reconciliation not on memory but on amnesia among the people of Central and Eastern Europe, as outlined by Cristina Petrescu (Petrescu 2003). In this matter, lengthy descriptions related to the economic and social outcomes achieved in the people's democracies were the most important topics tackled by the textbooks, and national space and borders received only little room. Physical geography was seen only as a tool in the frame of territory planning since nature had to be at the service of communism, as reflected by the teachers' information booklet of geography from 1951: "it will be a first-rate worldview subject, a powerful weapon of socialist education"⁶. Bounding the national space within natural elements undoubtedly swiped away from the agenda.

⁵ "A Kárpátmedencének 1920-ban történt politikai újrendezése után a központi elhelyezkedésű Magyarország nem tölthette be azt a szerepet, amely földrajzi helyzete alapján megillette volna"

⁶ "elsőrendű világnézeti tantárgy lesz, a szocialista nevelés hatalmas fegyvere"

In Hungary, any reference to the Carpathian Basin faded away, as did the need to define Hungarian national space with natural borders, referring, for instance, to the fact that the Great Hungarian Plain (*Alföld*) didn't stand only on the territory of Hungary (Markos, Pécsi, Kéz, Szurovy 1950). The idea according to which landscape gives birth to the state wasn't acceptable anymore, being too close to interwar revisionism (Balogh 2021). For instance, a textbook from 1957 stated that Hungary stood in a basin surrounded by mountains, but the authors didn't mention its name, as the Carpathian Basin had been banned from official discourse (Markos, Pécsi 1957).

However, the Treaty of Trianon, which formalized the dismantlement of historical Hungary in 1920, remained negatively depicted in Hungarian textbooks, being an imperialistic act imposed by the imperialist West. On the other hand, the treaty of Paris signed in February 1947, which restored the Hungarian territory to its Trianon's borders after territorial gains obtained during World War Two, was portrayed as a triumph of justice due to the fact that it had been carried out by the Soviet Union: "As a result of liberating struggle and constant assistance from the Soviet Union, Hungary regained its state independence and sovereignty, which it had been deprived of for centuries" (Lukács 1951:225)⁷. This short digression shows evidence about how ideologized and politicized textbooks were beside manifold contradictions. Another proof of it can be found in a geography textbook from 1957: "Our country belongs to the European countries of a relatively small area. [...] The strength of a country and the prosperity of its people are not determined by the size of the territory or the number of its population" (Markos, Pécsi 1957)⁸. Everything was made in order to avoid any kind of nostalgia toward the former Hungarian lands.

The Carpathian Basin was substituted by the Danube Basin, which carried a more neutral connotation that didn't challenge communist internationalism. Additionally, the river connected several communist countries within the bloc, highlighting cooperation among them and internationalism (Hajdú 2015). The same approach was in use in Romania, as Hungary was defined as a "Danubian" country roughly corresponding to the

⁷ "Magyarország, a Szovjetunió felszabadító harcának és állandó segítségének eredményeként, visszaszerezte állami függetlenségét, szuverenitását, melyet évszázadok óta nélkülözött"

⁸ "Hazánk a viszonylag kis területű európai országok közé tartozik. [...] Egy ország erejét, népének boldogulását nem a terület nagysága és a népesség száma határozza meg"

Middle Danube Plain (*cîmpia Dunării de mijloc*), while in its northern part the country was depicted as being at the fringe of the Carpathians (Vitver 1956).

When it came to describing Hungarian rivers, no mention of hydrographic unity could be seen. Rivers like the Drava, the Danube, or even the Sava weren't represented anymore as natural borders of the Hungarian space. The Tisza River, considered from the 19th century as the "most Hungarian river" (*a legmagyarabb folyó*) due to the fact that it was the only main river that flowed only on the territory of pre-Trianon Hungary, ceased to be presented as such in Hungarian textbooks after 1945. The characteristics of the rivers were described only on their course throughout Hungary, omitting the explanations for previous and farther segments. Furthermore, no mention of the hydrographic unity of the country could be found after 1948, even though the *Alföld* was depicted as a closed basin, and as a consequence, all the rivers from the surrounding mountains moved toward it. However, this statement bore no revisionism since it was only shown as an advantage for agriculture and industry (Markos, Pécsi, Kéz, Szurovy 1950).

The will to depict Transylvania as more easily accessible from the *Alföld* than from Wallachia or Moldova totally disappeared. In this matter, a geography textbook from 1962 portrayed the development of transportation in Romania as follows: "Transport is made somewhat difficult by the fact that the curve of the Carpathians rises almost in the middle of the country. However, this difficulty can be overcome using the mountain passes and gorges that cut through the Carpathians" (Vécsey 1962:59)⁹. The contrast with the explanations provided in 1947 is evident and allows us to grasp the evolution of the relationship with Transylvania, considering the fact that the Carpathian Mountains were crossable.

After 1947 in Romania, like in Hungary, a certain distancing from these essential elements of the nation was noticeable until the national turn at the end of the 1950s. An illustration of the phenomenon lies in the fact that from 1947 on mainly Soviet textbooks translated into Romanian were used, especially those about physical geography, which gives a good glimpse of the so-called antinational course (Vasile 2009). The traditional discourse of Romanian identity was put aside, rather underscoring Slav-Romanian

⁹ "A közlekedést bizonyos mértékig megnehezíti az, hogy a Kárpátok íve csaknem az ország közepén magasodik. A nehézség azonban legyőzhető a Kárpátokat átszelő hágók és szorosok segítségével"

friendship and cooperation throughout history (Pleșa 2006). Therefore, in Romania too, natural geography had a significant importance prior to 1945. For Romanian geographers, their national space was clearly defined by the Dniester in the east, the Black Sea in the south, the Danube in the west, and the Tisza in the north (Boia 2001). It is best illustrated by the plan of the French geographer Emmanuel de Martonne, a specialist of Romania and a vehement defender of the Romanian cause, who wanted to create – and advocated – a round and geographically "perfect" Romania after the Great War (Boulineau 2001). During the interwar period, this symbolic geography was a tool to counter Hungarian, Soviet, and Bulgarian revisionism (Cotoi 2019). After 1947, the Tisza River wasn't depicted anymore as a natural border of Romanian space, and authors weren't reluctant to emphasize the fact that the northern Romanian border with Hungary was almost exclusively artificial.

Concerning the territorial change occurring after the First World War, Romanians traditionally referred to the Assembly of Alba Iulia rather than the Treaty of Trianon, and the very same approach was in use after 1945 (Floutier 2023). Concerning the treaty of Paris signed in 1947, which cancelled the Second Vienna Award, and the annexation of Northern Transylvania by Hungary, the Romanian scholars had the same position as their Hungarian colleagues: emphasize the Soviet constant help to the Romanian nation as depicted in a history textbook first published in 1960:

"Thanks to this, the national unity of our state was restored, a unity that had been destroyed by the odious Vienna Diktat. The reunification of Northern Transylvania with Romania was a moment of great joy for our people and gratitude for the political support provided to Romania by the Soviet Union" (Almaș, Georgescu-Buzău, Petric 1960:372)¹⁰

On one hand, it is possible to observe that even before the rise of national communism, Transylvania held a unique place in the construction of the national discourse as well as the significance of national space even for the communist narrative. On the other hand, emphasizing the recovery of Transylvania with Soviet assistance was mobilized to enhance sympathy towards Moscow while simultaneously diverting attention from the annexation of Bessarabia. It was also asserted that the Soviet Union was Romania's only

¹⁰ "Prin aceasta s-a restabilit unitatea națională a statului nostru, unitate ce fusese știrbită prin odiosul Diktat de la Viena. Reunirea nordului Transilvania cu România a fost un prilej de mare bucurie pentru poporul nostru și de recunoștință pentru sprijinul politic acordat României de Uniunea Sovietică"

supporter, whereas imperialist powers sought to impose harsh and enslaving peace conditions upon it.

From the late 1950s: roaming two different paths

In the wake of 1956's revolution, the Hungarian regime gradually began to soften after the first years of stabilization. This transition led to the so-called "soft dictatorship" (*puha diktatúra*), which characterized Hungary from the second half of the 1960s and necessitated the publication of new textbooks (Rainer 2011). The "goulash communism" (*gulyás kommunizmus*) was best illustrated by János Kádár, first secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt – MSZMP*), and his formula "who is not against us is with us" (*aki nincs ellenünk, az velünk van*), in opposition to the slogan of the 1950s claiming that "who is not with us is against us" (*aki nincs velünk, az ellenünk van*). The relative liberalization of the regime from the beginning of the 1960s also gave more room to the traditional interpretation of the Hungarian space. However, the term "Carpathian Basin" was gradually reused only by scholars, and this shift didn't affect textbooks' content (Hajdú 2013(2)). The Hungarian leader was reluctant to use nationalism and remained somehow faithful to socialist internationalism, fearing to project a nationalistic image to Moscow. The focus remained on cooperation and brotherhood between the socialist people, maintaining a significant distance from the Hungarian minorities; hence, their fate was barely tackled in Hungarian textbooks. Traditional symbols, like the Carpathian basin, were too closed to interwar open revisionism and, as such, were banned from textbooks. An illustration of this phenomenon lies in the choice to represent Hungary mainly on a white background in order to avoid any sensitive issues like the Carpathian basin.

Another example of the sensitivity around the formal Hungarian territories can be found when it comes to the thorny issue of toponyms in Hungarian textbooks. Before 1948, place names were exclusively in Hungarian, and Romania's major cities formally belonging to the Kingdom of Hungary were only named in Hungarian. During the 1950's, Romanian terminology predominated, sometimes with the equivalent in Hungarian. In 1962, cities were first given in Hungarian, then in Romanian, while for cities in Wallachia and Moldavia,

Romanian equivalents were used, with Hungarian phonetic transcription provided in brackets. This reflects the special relationship maintained with the region since, for Transylvania, the Hungarian language therefore took precedence.

When it was about depicting Romania, Hungarian authors portrayed the country as being in a favorable geographical situation thanks to its rivers, which gives a good connection to the neighboring countries, being only socialist states. When dealing with the railway system, authors modestly mentioned the fact that the network had its peculiarities due to the "mountains ring" without any precision about the Carpathian Basin or Transylvania's past (Tóth 1973:125).

In Romania, the political context differed quite a lot and took a divergent path. Rejecting destalinization and fiercely opposed to any form of liberalization, the leader of the Romanian Workers' Party (*Partidul Muncitoresc Român*), Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej, operated a gradual shift toward nationalism, understanding the need to show a change of facade in the quest for greater popular support while controlling the country with an iron fist. At the same time, the Soviet Union was more conciliatory and could tolerate, to a certain extent, divergent orientations, which made the political reorientation of Bucharest possible. By then, it had become the "recalcitrant satellite" of the USSR, with a reoccurrence of national values (Gridan 2014). The traditional Russophobia in the country was largely galvanized by the official rhetoric. In this sense, a certain continuity appeared between the Gheorghiu-Dej's Romania and Nicolae Ceaușescu's one, since the latter only followed the path traced by his predecessor before 1965.

In addition, the so-far good relations between the Hungarian and Romanian parties deteriorated, so that tensions around the Hungarian minority increased from the 1970s onward. Due to the traditional antagonism, the ideological break, and the difference in behavior towards Moscow, Budapest and Bucharest represented the two poles among the popular democracies (Bencsik 2017). On one hand, it can be related to the treatment of the Hungarian minority, which was the biggest minority in Romania as well as the biggest cross-border Hungarian minority. On the other hand, the softening of the *MSZMP's* control over society resulted in the resurgence of Hungarian minorities in the public space and, first and foremost, Hungarians from Romania (Földes 2007). This reappearance of the theme confronted Romanian frenzied nationalism. Indeed, parallel to the rise of

nationalism, the Romanian political power developed a very strong dedication to praising national independence from both historical and geographical perspectives and became very sensitive to any kind of interference in internal affairs (Rusu 2015).

In this context, defining the national space had great significance for Bucharest. From the late 1950's on, Romania's national turn gradually changed the perception of the border, and the national territory gained more and more room in the Romanian textbooks (Szakács 2007). In 1958, the relationship with the Hungarian border already differed from previous editions, although the sanctuarization of national territory was much less present than in textbooks written during the following decades. While in 1950 Romanian boundaries were portrayed as mainly artificial, it was by then specified that half of the country's borders was natural, and the other half was artificial. Regarding the Romanian-Hungarian border, it was, for instance, specified that it cut through the Tisza Plain (Tufescu, Giurcăneanu, Banu 1958). By 1964, the discourse had already shifted, as now two-thirds of the borders were formed by rivers or coastline, allowing an emphasis on the prevalence of natural borders since Romania's geographical position had to be described as perfect. The same textbook also attributed a central position to Romania in Europe, at the crossroads of routes leading from south to north and from east to west on the continent. In textbooks from the last two decades, efforts were made to instill love for the homeland and demonstrate how lucky each pupil was to be born as a Romanian citizen.

Back to the perception of the national landscape, as early as 1958, it was stated that the Carpathian arc "forms the skeleton of the country's relief" in a textbook intended for the 11th grade (Tufescu, Giurcăneanu, Banu 1958:7)¹¹. In the very same textbook, Hungary was not even mentioned among the Carpathian countries. As a matter of fact, the peaks of the Carpathian Mountains do indeed bypass Hungary; however, this aspect portrays the difference of approach between Romanians and Hungarians, as in the Hungarian view, the Carpathians represent the national mountains and are inseparable from Hungarian identity.

A turning point occurred with a textbook published in 1978. In this publication, the unitary dimension of Romania's territory and state was emphasized by focusing on the

¹¹ "Formulează scheletul reliefului țării"

three main components of the country: the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube River, and the Black Sea coastline. These three geographical elements were deeply rooted in textbooks, as according to the narrative used at that time, they provided the basis upon which the Romanian people emerged and had remained since antiquity: "It can be said that this complex geographical unity of the Socialist Republic of Romania's territory created favorable conditions for the development of ethnic and linguistic unity as well as the multi-millenary continuity of the Romanian people" (Tufescu, Mierlă, Giurcăneanu 1981:10)¹². The natural setting, forming the foundation of the "Carpatho-Danubian-Pontic space", was used as a justification for the permanence and millennia-long continuity of Romanian settlement across the entire territory of contemporary Romania. Moreover, the significance of the mountain range was also notable due to the fact that it was depicted as the country's main tourist attraction. As depicted in the following textbook, "the geographical specificity of this convergence zone is primarily due to its topography, which resembles a bastion with the Carpathian crown at its center. Around this, the hills, plateaus, and plains of Romania unfold symmetrically" (Cucu, Pleșca, Donisă 1978:3)¹³.

Similarly, to the textbooks published before 1948, hydrography was by then presented as evidence of Romania's geographical unity and rationality. The Carpathian Mountains were portrayed as the cradle of the springs from which all rivers originate, before flowing into the Danube. From this perspective, the Carpathians did not form a fortress providing Hungary with natural borders, but rather a link or a core around which Romania and its rivers were organized (see Appendices Nos. 1, 2 and 3).

Conclusion

This brief study of the perception of borders and national space as represented in geography school textbooks used in Hungary and Romania between 1945 and 1990 has demonstrated that geographical labels are never neutral; they always rely on a certain geopolitical context. Geographical imagination is a language in itself; textbooks' content is a

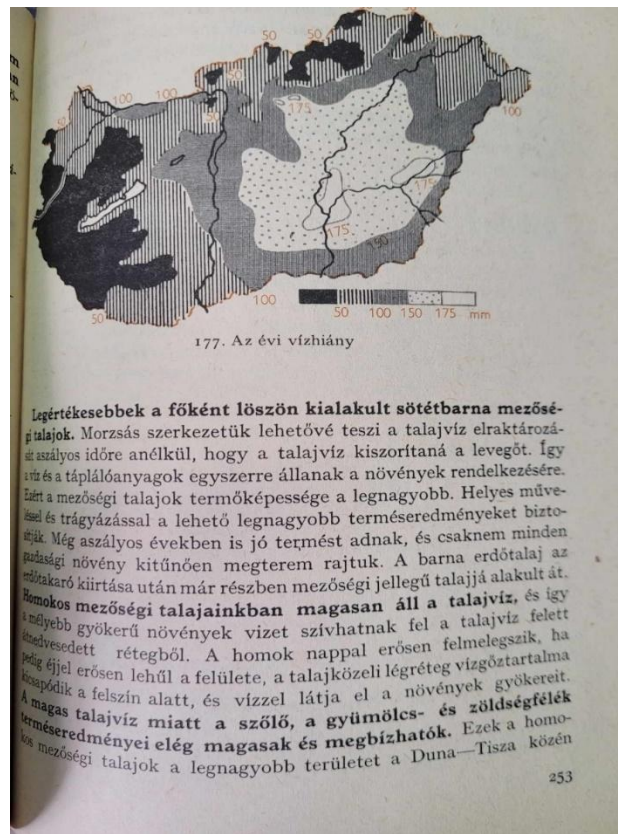
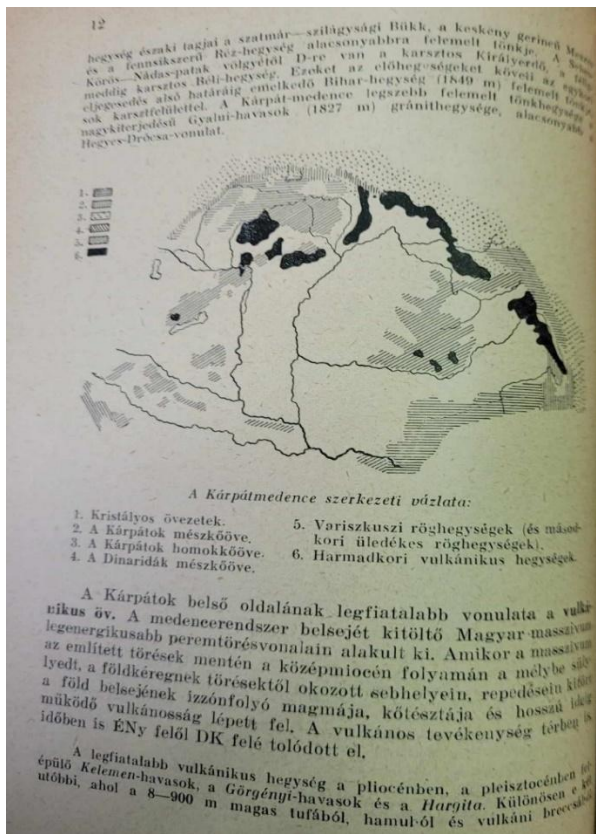
¹² "Se poate spune că această unitate geografică complexă a teritoriului R.S România a creat condiții favorabile dezvoltării unității etnice, lingvistice și continuității multimilenare a poporului român"

¹³ "Specificiul geografic al acestei zone de convergență se datorește în primul rând reliefului, care are înfățișarea unui bastion avînd în centru coroana Carpaților, în jurul cărora se desfășoară simetric dealurile, podișurile și cîmpiile României"

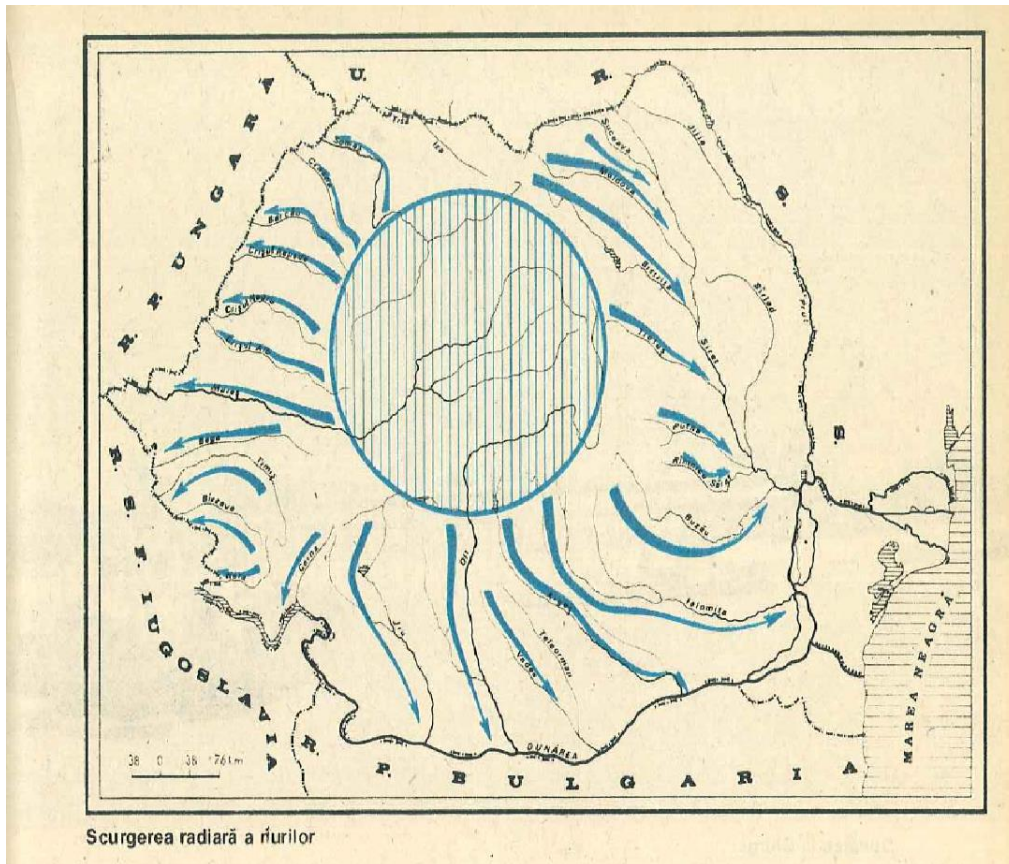
state-driven process and the mirror of official positions. The perception of national space and borders in Romania and Hungary underwent significant changes between 1945 and 1990, proof that this symbolic geography is a construction destined to evolve. In this sense, it offers a summary of the political history of Hungary and Romania, but also of the relationship maintained by the two countries from the end of the Second World War to the regime change. While in Hungary, the transition had its own features inherited from the pre-1945 era, similar tendencies were implemented in Romanian and Hungarian textbooks from 1947/1948 until the end of the 1950s. As a consequence of the political routes taken by Budapest and Bucharest, each case developed and depicted otherwise the national space and borders. This difference of this perception also illustrates the particular role attributed to Transylvania in the two cases studies and the difficulty of reconciling populist socialism, aiming at strengthening the popularity of the Party, with the internationalist fraternity expected by Moscow. Denying or praising the national fact and omitting national antagonism within strong dictatorships partly explain why even today the wounds of the past haven't been healed in Central and Eastern Europe.

Appendix no. 1: (Hajós, Láng, 1947:12)

Appendix no. 2: (Tóth 1971:253)



Appendix no. 3: (Giurcăneanu, Mușat, Ghica 1986:63)



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Between the Borders of Time | Memory of the Soviet Past through the Lens of the Present

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Introduction

The following paper is part of my ongoing master's thesis research on lived experiences and memories of the late period of the Soviet socialist past and its collapse encountered by ordinary working people. The paper aims to contextualize empirical material partly already collected during the fieldwork, focus group and individual narrative interviews, which will be analysed in the following months in the final work. In this paper I will discuss how collective memory is constituted on the example of two organizations focusing on examining Georgia's soviet past and its role as part of the Soviet Union. In the final work I will compare these contested memory narratives to existing predominant themes which emerged during my fieldwork.

Existing research showcases conflicting results regarding the people's attitudes to the past in post-socialist environment. On the one hand we can observe how the "dominant ideas" from the previous era, even if discredited and seemingly rejected, can find support in people. For example, a former Eastern Germany case study shows support of socialism, justified as an "idea that was just poorly implemented" (Straughn 2009). On the other hand, approval of market economy and embracing growing stratification and inequalities is also demonstrated by the article reviewing the Russian post socialist context (Rivkin-Fish 2009). Musavi and Bagirov (2022) are relating existing nostalgia in Azerbaijani context to socio-economic factors and the sentiment is summarized in a research participant's words: "Life was better under the Soviets than it is now." Similar conclusion is drawn by Neringa Klumbytė (2008) in the Lithuanian context, where nostalgia is related to social marginalization and suffering in post-socialist condition and is seen as a response to neoliberal modernity.

I would like to look at this problem through my own case study. I am interested in examining the interrelation of memory of socialist past to the present-day positionality of “ordinary people” in Georgia. Specifically, the generation born in 1960s and 70s,¹ in Soviet Georgia who came of age in the 80s and 90s and most vividly have experienced the collapse and its consequences. By “average” or “ordinary” is meant, similarly employed by Musavi and Bagirov, people who do not have a clear political ideological stance, are not actively involved in politics, and have not benefited from any special privileges either during soviet or post-soviet times. The main questions addressed are:

- what did the experience of everyday life under socialism mean for them?
- is there any presence of nostalgia?
- what are their experiences and predominant themes while discussing the so called “transition” period?

Through examining these questions, I want to create a nuanced picture of the contested nature of recent soviet past and post-soviet present.

In this paper I focus on mobilization of memory and different representations of the past on the example of two Georgian organizations: Soviet Past Research Laboratory and Reimagining Soviet Georgia, arguing that the history of Georgia within the Soviet Union shouldn't be reduced only to several chosen aspects, be it negative, or positive, but must be perceived in all its complexity. Only the proper analysis of all the lived experiences, positive points of reference, and traumas alike can construct a plastic picture of the nuances which the life in soviet Georgia consisted of. As within any other social establishment, also here we can find praises and complaints, reflecting the varied lives, the personal experiences, and future expectations of the inhabitants. Illustrated cases in the paper show how memory of the soviet past is reinterpreted according to the actors' present-day considerations and ideological preferences. It is argued that despite claiming wish or claimed practice of nuanced engagement with the past, only one angle is examined and promoted, which usually is constructed in a reaction to perceived existing threats.

The presented paper is organized as follows: in the first chapter collective memory is discussed as a concept and it is placed in post-socialist context. The second chapter

¹ Alexei Yurchak refers to it as “last soviet generation” (Yurchak 2006), however the dating of it is shifted bit earlier, it starts with people born from 1950s and ends with early 1970s.

reviews memory politics and the question of nationalism by briefly introducing its development in Georgia to suggest a frame of reference for the empirical part. The third chapter consists of analysis of two organizations: Soviet Past Research Laboratory and Reimagining Soviet Georgia. First subchapter deals with it on a structural level, while the rest discursively.

Collective Memory in Post-socialism

As we are examining collective memory in post-socialist context, first we need to explore these two categories. Some authors advocate for the restricted use of the concept of post socialism, when the past is directly referenced, however only as an analytical category, as past's influence is unavoidable on present or future (Kaneff 2022:210). In addition, some local scholars contest it because of its hegemonic character, as it was created by western anthropologists to analyse post-communist Europe (Cervinkova 2012:159), and for more inclusive use try to connect to the postcolonial studies. The concept of post-socialism was offered as an anthropological critique of "transition" approach after dissolution of the Soviet Union, propagated by political scientists and economists, which had ideological implications, was overlooking local socio-cultural determinations, and was denoting to linear developmental path of these societies (Gallinat 2022). Existing ethnic conflicts and wars pushed focus from market and democratization to nation-building and populism. Another criticism was primacy of abstract theory building without reference to in-depth culturally specific empirical research, this endeavour seemed like a "theory-building in an empirical wasteland" (Kopeček and Wciślik 2015:6). The reality on the field was different, the processes were much more "chaotic" and "multi-directional" (Gallinat 2022:105) and supplanting western models without considering local idiosyncrasies and continuities had social consequences. The concept of post-socialism is still epistemically useful. We can witness its use in everyday discourse in these societies, its effect on social relations, as well as we can trace socialist past's material presence.

Maurice Halbwachs (1992) considered the "father of modern collective memory studies," develops a presentists approach towards the past, meaning people reconstruct the past in relation to present considerations. Briefly, by collective memory is meant how

various groups selectively recollect the past. Similarly, Assmann states about memory: “The past is not simply ‘received’ by the present. The present is ‘haunted’ by the past and the past is modelled, invented, reinvented, and reconstructed by the present” (As quoted in Wertsch 2009:88). And unlike history which has a claim to be objective and seeing a complex picture, this process of selective recollection is even encouraged in what Wertsch calls “collective remembering” (Ibid.).

The theory of collective memory was the Halbwachs’ main contribution to explain what “binds people together in periods of calm, when routine behaviour is the order of the day” (Coser 1992:25). Collective memory serves as a binding element for groups between what Durkheim was calling periods of “collective effervescence.” However, Halbwachs’ presentists approach is criticized on the grounds that it lacks historical continuity and like Durkheim who was searching for this continuity through different collective events, Schwartz also maintains importance of cumulative aspects along with presentist while discussing collective memory (Ibid. 26). In the paper I am not going to focus on the historical continuity, nor the presentist approach which maintains the solid influence of specific historical periods on selectivity of memory of a group as conceptualized by Halbwachs. My interest is rather intricacies identified within the specific post-socialist period, contested narratives, and struggles for constructing and reinterpreting the past which are ignored in above mentioned explanatory frames.

Memory Politics and Nationalism

Controversies over memory are characteristic across countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. We could witness what can be called a “memory boom” and rapid and dynamic changes in collective memory, new interpretations of the past propagated by different actors, transformations of public spaces and new significant dates in the calendar (Głowacka-Grajper 2018:7). This is natural, as big transformations are accompanied by seeking new forms of cultural memory. Małgorzata Głowacka-Grajper (2018) identifies three main points of contestation on matters of past and collective memory in the context of Eastern European countries. First is related to searching for a new identity with references to the nation's past, mostly expressed in narratives of martyrdom and

“victimhood nationalism,” second, the openness towards and examining of events and memories not accessible during previous regimes, and third, in general interpretation of narratives of immediate past. She highlights the need for prioritizing elements in collective memory which are also important for the West such as reunification or fighting against totalitarianism, to somehow attain an equal place along with the West. This approach discounts the local grievances and traumas, which should be the main points of analysis, without which any positive development would be unlikely.

In general, between liberal and ex-communist or conservative circles there is agreement on the explanation of emergence of the right wing in post socialist context: it is connected to “perennial cultural conservatism” of the countries which could not be altered under communist rule. Meanwhile „alternative left” (to differentiate it from successors of the old regime) explains this as a response to a neoliberal restructuring and transition consensus (Kopeček and Wciślik 2015:28–29). However, these two cannot be analysed in isolation. Without existing continuities and points of reference, the new national mythologies would not have such a strong emotional appeal, as well as disillusionment, economic destitution, power asymmetries and disappointment were necessary condition for them to flourish. Cultural, national, and historic repertoire establishes some limits to what kind of new narratives can be introduced into the discourse.

Nationalism by large was not seen as a very influential force before 20th century for Georgia, it was rather elite driven, and socialism was perceived as a way to reach “better life” (Jones 2013:220). Nationalism gained traction during Soviet times. National question was always actual in multi-ethnic Soviet Union. Already during Joseph Stalin, it was framed as “nationalistic in form, socialist in content” (Maisuradze 2022:6). In similar vein, Andrei Zhdanov, the so called “propagandist-in-chief” of Soviet Union and Georgiy Dimitrov, the General Secretary of Bulgarian Communist Party and Communist International, both supporters of Stalin, also did not envision any contradiction between nationalism, emotional attachment to homeland and proletarian internationalism and they promoted concept of “healthy nationalism” (Berekashvili 2021:76). Nation-building and constructing

nationalistic new mythologies were active from the 1920-30s.² According to Maisuradze (2022:7), soviet monuments slowly turned to being a formality, a background, so we may also say the Stalinist thesis turned upside down, and became instead - socialist in form, nationalist in content. It was the Stalin's figure, only memory place, where "soviet and Georgian-national merged with each other" (Ibid.) and became revered in the country.

The first large-scale demonstration in Georgia took place exactly on these grounds in March 1956 after Nikita Khrushchev's so-called secret speech, officially titled as "On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences," directed against Stalin, at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Especially Anastas Mikoyan's speech, who was an Armenian Communist revolutionary, and Soviet statesman, upset national sentiments (Saralidze 2012). There is also an argument made that de-Stalinization policy invoked fears of a status shift of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) among Georgian elites who possibly indirectly allowed the demonstration to happen (Blauvelt 2009). According to some eyewitnesses it was already during this time when demands for independence were also vocalized for the first time (Sartania 2019:6). Generations of Georgians educated in their native language and national history were consolidating the feeling of national unity. "Patriotic pride" was at play with political protest (Suny 1988:303). There were dozens of victims at the demonstration and an informal agreement was set up according to which Georgia was given more freedom from the centre in their internal affairs. This further reinforced consolidation of local elite and cultivating national feelings (Ibid., 315). Next large-scale demonstration was also motivated by national feelings. In 1978 in the framework of changing the Soviet Union Constitution, which implied better convergence of soviet republics, they declared Russian as an official language and removed the article which was giving Georgian a state language status. The demonstration ended with victory and further instilled an experience of unity (Ibid., 7). Next mass-scale nationwide anti-Soviet protests were emerging in 1988-89.³

² You can read about these developments with specific examples in historical context in Georgia in Giorgi Maisuradze's article titled Politics of Memory in Independent Georgia (2022). English version available here: <https://ge.boell.org/en/2023/04/24/politics-memory-independent-georgia>

³ Pages 6-7 for review of events during this period
https://ge.boell.org/sites/default/files/kate_sartania_revisions_1.pdf

This is also the time when the three-colour first Republic flag is appearing increasingly, which was later adopted as the official flag of independent Georgia. The legacy of the short-lived first republic is intensively referenced back by new nationalist leaders. In 1991, 26 May was also instituted as the Independence Day, in the strategy of “layering,” meaning connecting commemoration of different events (Bernhard and Kubik 2014). This is the date when the first republic declared independence in 1918. What is noteworthy here is usually socialist orientation of the first republic, which established the first social-democratic state, is often ignored in some nationalist narratives and red army invasion is seen in terms of Russia’s occupation of independent Georgia. Conversely, in opposing narratives, the role of Georgian Bolsheviks in this process, and in general the wider power struggle between Georgian Bolsheviks and Mensheviks (this was the faction who came to power in Georgia) is underlined.

All current problems are usually traced back to the Soviet Union and since 2003 “anti-communism” is institutionalized, along with deregulation and privatization policies. This is how Al Jazeera correspondent from Georgia summarizes in her documentary⁴: “After almost 30 years of independence, the USSR is still with us, and I believe we cannot have a future before we have dealt with this past” (Varshalomidze 2018). “Never Back to USSR” stencils in the streets are common and picture frames on Facebook, social media platform, which is widely used in Georgia, is very popular in this segment of population. Transition to democracy which is usually equated with capitalism, “desovetization” or “decommunization” and as a counterweight, the westernization of the country is seen as the driving forces of the development and prospective prosperous future. Seeing everything in this prism according to Sopo Japaridze one of the founders of Reimagining Soviet Georgia project breeds self-hatred: “Georgians hate themselves so much, they think they are backwards, uncivilized, lazy, something wrong with them, unable to be progressive, civilized and blame it on Soviet Union. They could have been European, like

⁴ The short documentary titled The Soviet Scar: Legacy of USSR Architecture in Georgia can be viewed here: <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/al-jazeera-correspondent/2018/11/10/the-soviet-scar-legacy-of-ussr-architecture-in-georgia> The statements of one of the participants of documentary, photographer Yuri Mechitov, dismissing the role of soviet troops in killing people during 9 April demonstration of 1989, caused outcry. About the rally you can read in detail here: https://ge.boell.org/sites/default/files/kate_sartania_revisions_1.pdf

Germany or something, and the Soviet Union held them back, being part of this loser project.”



Figure 2 Logo of Reimagining Soviet Georgia



Figure 1 Logo of Soviet Past Research Laboratory

Sovlab and Reimagining Soviet Georgia

If you look at the logos shown on Figure 1 and 2, you will see the two different versions as to how past of Soviet Georgia can be interpreted. First in black and white and red colours denoting to the repressive nature of the soviet state and the second in colourful details, reimagined in more nuances, with colours and apparent prosperity.

Reimagining Soviet Georgia often presents this dichotomy, the gap between how the Soviet Union is presented in dominant, mainstream anti-Soviet narratives and how individuals, “normal people,” are remembering their everyday life. Brian, the host of the podcast from Reimagining Soviet Georgia talks about his experience on this regard:

What I have come across, in Georgia you have all these people with very robust and colourful, dense, and detailed stories about their lives, but then in the political abstract all it is (...) reduced down to singular events, tragedies or kind of grey mosaic of nothingness, there is no life. (...) There is no way to connect that real lived experience to politics, or a political conception of the meaning of the USSR across the post-Soviet space. (...) (We should) start to unpack and undo some of that anti-Communist hysteria which, I think, clouds people's intellectual-rational ability to inquire.

According to them, memory politics is weaponized “against nuanced engagement with the Soviet Past.” They also often mention the rise of fascism and its glorification, with examples

from Georgia or Ukraine, connecting it to this stigmatization of the Soviet Union and along with it the idea of socialism. Sopo, one of the founders, mentions: *“Lot of Georgians who lived in Europe during WW2, they fought on fascist side, they had nazi units. So, now the understanding is, if the Soviet Union is bad and if the Soviet Union won the WW2, then it must mean that the fascists were good, including all the Georgians that were fighting with the fascists. (...) People who fought with fascists now are national heroes.”*

Sopo also mentioned SovLab and sees their narrow focus as problematic: *“It’s a propaganda institute (...) They also are given money because they study anti-Soviet things. If you only research what was bad, or you should show your donors that the Soviet Union was bad, that is the only thing you will find.”*

Soviet Past Research Laboratory (SovLab) was formed in 2010 by a group of people concerned with examining recent past of Georgian history as part of Soviet Union and is funded by several institutions from Germany such as Heinrich Böll Stiftung (Germany), Goethe Institute (Germany), or other European or American donors, such as Opens Society Foundation or The National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Below are some of the objectives outlined by the organization:

- a) Rethinking of the recent history in terms of increasing society’s responsibility towards the victims of totalitarian regimes.
- b) Putting ahead the role of individuals in historic processes and keeping individual experience in society’s common memory.
- c) Involving the society in studying of recent history to increase its self-awareness of civil society.
- d) Developing the culture of remembrance and making connection of this memory with actual places. (SovLab n.d.)

So, it is visible that this is more like a public education project, than simply historians studying a particular period. It serves to increase awareness of people regarding the repressive nature of the Soviet Union. The creation of the organization was inspired by the conference held in 2009 “Terror Topography – Rethinking Soviet Georgian History (Stalinism, Totalitarianism, Repressions)” organized by Institute of International Cooperation of German Public Universities Association (DVV International) and Heinrich Boell Stiftung. The participants of the conference decided to establish the research organization which would attempt to analyse the totalitarian legacy of the Soviet Union in Georgia (SovLab n.d.).

In a way this is part of the trend in Georgia, when main weigh of the research comes on the non-governmental sector, which is also outside of academia. Civil society organizations, mostly supported by donors from the west, became the main area of employment for educated young people. Here the problem is usually short-term orientation of the projects, which hinders the continuity of research. The research component is virtually absent from academic institutions, and people in academic positions are also usually engaged in other work outside of academia, so it is not their primary focus. Davit Khvadagiani, historian from SovLab I talked to, mentions their precarious financial situation too, as they operate with limited funds and resources. He expressed discontent that they are virtually alone in this process when according to him there should be systemic approach as there is so much to study starting from empire times, first republic and soviet period, every decade or event separately. They cannot afford to have more than 4-5 permanent researchers and even that can be an issue in the beginning of every year, as they are dependent on temporary grants.

I had an opportunity to familiarize myself with the internal workings of the organization while doing the research internship with them. Some of the historians, even if with narrow orientation on certain topics, do labour-intensive research in the archives of Georgia, or collecting oral histories from the victims of repressions or their descendants.⁵ Some of the topics the researchers from SovLab's team study are the period of the first social democratic republic of Georgia (whose democratically elected government was ousted out by Bolsheviks in 1921), WW2 memory, Christian Orthodox church history, etc. Davit, historian from SovLab, in an interview with me mentioned his wish for the occupation museum exposition to be expanded and become more professional, elaborate and encompassing. He was mentioning many sites of memory, which need maintenance and would be useful to be included in this wider network, which would become an important location for studying history. According to him this would not be possible until there is political will and responsibility of the educational system to do it. Some project they have already realized are constructing online public archive where people can share

⁵ Collected histories can be viewed publicly on https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLesoEbIG9S_I0iQxnRt2RqY24PYwmQZaK

documentary materials or personal histories,⁶ and so called “topography of terror” which traces locations of Stalin repressions (Kaiser 2022:203).

Pushing for accessibility and ease of use of fonds of the state historic archives are high on their agenda. Other than obvious reasons of transparency and help to quality research, history in soviet times is seen as “an ideological weapon devoid of any real facts; truth was full of falsifications, misinterpretations, communist postulates and clichés” (Vatcharadze n.d.). Therefore, disclosing formerly secret documents is seen as the only way to find out the truth about the regime (Ibid.). The remnants of Georgian territorial organ of the Committee for the State Security (KGB) archive, whose approx. 80 % was destroyed in fire during Tbilisi civil war, and a repository of the archive of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Georgian SSR, both are under Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs jurisdiction. Davit relates this lack of transparency and difficulty of accessibility to inertia of secrecy of security services and current system’s positive orientation towards Russia, and unwillingness to study the soviet crimes in a comprehensive way, as these archives are “guides to anatomy of totalitarian system.”

Reimagining Soviet Georgia is a relatively marginal project, which became public in 2021 with their podcast of the same name. Their brief self-description states: “We are a multigenerational, multilingual, Tbilisi based collective. Our goal is to re-examine and rearticulate the history of Soviet Georgia.”⁷ In outlining their motivations in the first introduction episode,⁸ the founders’ main impetus to start the project was to “*Challenge the monopoly over the USSR’s history and telling its story, real people’s lived experiences and create the people’s history of Soviet Union, (this) can help open up the space, much needed space, to reassess the dominant, misleading ideas about the soviet past.*” They also brush off the importance of studying primarily terror and repressions:

What are we actually criticizing when we talk of the criticism of the Soviet Union? You can’t just say totalitarianism, authoritarianism, gulags, and that’s it. That’s like telling a story that’s less than 1% of what really happened. Even how that is told is incorrect often. (...) Often using sci-fi novels, dystopian novels, that’s where the criticism of Soviet Union

⁶ <https://archive.ge/en/about>

⁷ <https://www.instagram.com/reimaginingsovietgeorgia/?hl=en>

⁸ <https://podtail.com/en/podcast/reimagining-soviet-georgia/episode-0-introduction-to-reimagining-soviet-georg/>

actually is, this imagined 1984, or other dystopias (...), when we criticize capitalism, we never make it caricature like this, we do not do in a cartoonish way, but very systematic way.

When I asked Sopo why they do not focus on critical aspects publicly, her argument was that it all depended on context. *“How can I sit with people, who by law object progressive taxations, hate equality, and still criticize the Soviet Union? (...) Soviet Union has done so much good that it needs defence in these circumstances. If we had better alternatives and socialism everywhere, than defending the Soviet Union would be idiotic. If you have better, why do you defend worse. Whole their politics is built on the Soviet Union and fighting with it. Who is more obsessed with it, me, or them?”*

When we discuss these organizations, we can recognize the synthesis with characteristics of memory warriors and mnemonic prospectives, from Bernhard and Kubik’s (2014) typology of memory actors. According to them mnemonic warriors have a more confrontational approach, the past is not a matter of negotiation, there is one correct vision, no compromise is acceptable, there is clear distinction between them, protectors of the true version, and others, who fabricate it. As for prospectives, they are driven with clear visions for the future, they also consider like warriors that they hold the only true interpretation of the past and present problems, however, they are oriented on future rather than past.

Personal Histories, Personal Standpoints

I talked with Davit, a historian from SovLab and Sopo, an independent trade union leader, who is one of the founders of Reimagining Soviet Georgia project. Davit was born in 1985 and his memory starts from the turbulent changes during the process of collapsing the Soviet Union and Georgia’s struggle for independence. First elections, declaring independence and generally this period is vividly imprinted in his memory: *“I remember, I was at my grandmother and grandfather in a village. Some young men brought three-colour old flag and on the last bus-stop they hung it high on a tree. For people it was so shocking and exciting. There were some really old people who probably remembered the first republic. The flag which was gone for 70 years, and you would be probably jailed if you showed it.”* He

expressed sympathy towards social-democrats and underlined the importance of his family in helping him correctly interpret the events. And all the new information on his country's history was getting embedded in him and was instilling the interest further. According to him the new history school textbooks were also good in quality, and it highly influenced him, he relates this to the political context at that time when Georgia was trying to escape the influence of Russia and get closer to Europe.

Sopo has a radically different experience. She left Georgia to the USA with her mother and spent 22 years there. Mother left to the US with hopes for a better life but got disillusioned by the reality. The West which was fetishized was often seen as a place of freedom and economic abundance. However, first-hand experience turned out to be incompatible with this image. Sopo characterizes her as more liberal, as many of her family members also were, some of them also being dissidents. However, she calls her a "culturally communist," as her value system was incompatible to her new environment. She remembers the discontents of the new environment expressed by mother which influenced her: poverty and greediness, how everything was commodified, overworking, lack of education and access to culture.

This discursive differences are illustrated by Jeffrey Alexander and can be summarized in sort of „binary oppositions.“ Sztompka (2004:172–73) uses this to illustrate the trauma of social change and cultural shock experienced by emerging capitalism.⁹ However, this can be also suitable for changing the social environment altogether. Here I highlight few of those "binary oppositions": collectivism vs. individualism, solidarity (...) vs. competition, egalitarianism vs. meritocracy, security vs. risk, counting on social support vs. self-reliance, blaming failures on a system vs. personal responsibility and self-blame, etc..

It is Sopo's conclusion, that many benefits which her mom and people living in the Soviet Union were having, at that point they were not realizing that it was because of the Soviet Union. Things which should have been accessible for everyone, such as job guarantees and safety, services providing free healthcare, childcare and education, benefits

⁹ However, of course, as he maintains this is only a „simplified first approximation, common to all post-communist societies," and each individual case requires more in-depth approach. Accordingly, some parameters can be challenged.

for leisure time and retirement. She expresses concern that people who are conceptualizing and circulating the mainstream narratives now, have no material understanding of reality, and coming from very idealistic positions, and feel superior, as if others think only about stomach, while not realizing that to be able to get to cherish those ideals for them became only possible with material conditions they had and still are dismissing importance of material bases in general and of Soviet Union:

...people don't need home, don't need food, while they have had soviet education, housing, vacations, that has made them who they are. (...) It's just like we are born, great or bad, if we want to, it's all about willpower, we can achieve anything. (...) Part of me thinks that because they have had most of their lives everything they really didn't have to fight for, they actually don't understand what it's like not to have those things. It is like privilege when you don't realize you have all these things with you. I am starting to call it soviet privilege (laughter), people who had free education, free healthcare, and so on. They take it for granted, because they never had to live without them, figure out how to pay for rent, like I do, etc.

Sopo got closer to leftist circles from an early age, as she was influenced with values of solidarity, helping others, from her family, who she calls “culturally communists.” She started trade union activism in the US and describes herself as Marxist. This is where her criticism is coming from:

Post communist world, (...) materially backwards, deregulation, savage capitalism, that is unseen in any other country, the way it has been formed, also incubating lot this very bad ideas, radical, fundamentalist, free market ideas, attracting lot of right-wing, freedom fighters of free markets. (...) We should realize how to combat it. Mostly they beat up on the Soviet Union as an example to why free markets and unregulated capitalism is good. We have to have the right critiques, understandings, to be able to combat that.

In the introductory episode of the podcast, she summarizes the significance of the project from her ideological position and responsibility she feels for the internationalist and emancipatory ideas she holds important:

The Soviet Union really was a huge endeavour to remake humankind. It cannot and should not be dismissed just like that, being a failed, authoritarian project. We owe ourselves, who are involved in emancipatory politics, much better understanding. And also, this is a way to

think things through, the courses we take and things we fight for. And all those millions of people who worked for this project, who died for it, to respect those comrades, maybe they also had some ideas, we have not thought about. Learn on what terms we judge something, its success and failure.

Georgia as Part of the Soviet Union – Privileged or Oppressed?

Georgia being a privileged republic, which was contributing to the common prosperity of the union is often-mentioned argument by the Reimagining Soviet Georgia, in opposition to the narrative of 70 years of occupation and constant national struggle. There is also an argument advanced by Claire Kaiser (2022), who discusses Georgia as “entitled” nationhood, in the context of Georgian SSR as they were majority with, in practice, more rights and strong local elites who were given relatively more internal freedom. Sopo also mentioned the point of Georgia being privileged in the Soviet Union during our talk: “We were overly represented in every sphere of life, according to education, for example. We were getting 80% from the Soviet Union and putting in only 20. We were always privileged.” What are some of the other parameters used by them to conclude this status of privilege? This is how Brian elaborates on this subject:

Georgians were in some ways privileged republic, there were disproportionate numbers of Georgians in federal positions in Moscow, in all union positions. Georgia started to see not only industrial development, highest number of white-collar workers in the entire USSR, highest savings accounts, also this access to luxury goods with relative ease and cheap than elsewhere in USSR. So, Georgia was developing into this very wealthy republic, who has these car factories, tea plantation, growing mandarins and had bustling sovietised industrial economy, but one of the benefits of that was relative to other republics, was higher standards of living. (...) 70s black market aside, you still had relative level of prosperity in Georgia.¹⁰

There are also different explanations why Soviet history is not studied in a comprehensive way. If Reimagining Soviet Georgia explains this through hesitance of current system to show the example of social system, that can work for people, give welfare, Davit from

¹⁰ <https://revolutionaryleftradio.libsyn.com/soviet-georgia> From 1:04:55 to 1:06:25

SovLab connects it to current government's unwillingness to educate people about occupation, as they are themselves advancing the interests of Russia, and letting them daily occupy the country: *"Erasing and forgetting of this soviet past and occupation is also acceptable for this contemporary system, because its knowledge means you know what is the occupation, how it happens, what are the symptoms."* Here we can see these associations of the Soviet Union to Russia, as occupant and hindering factor for Georgia's sovereignty and independence. This line of reasoning follows usually to all obtained historical information. For example, WW2 by him is also studied from this occupied-occupant perspective, how the majority of people were forcibly mobilized to participate in the war and highlighting the especially high number of victims from Georgia, which is not part of the embedded narrative around the war. We can observe how in both cases recent history is seen from one particular point of view, which does not even acknowledge legitimacy of coexistence of alternative interpretations.

Nostalgia and post-socialism

Strong legacy of nationalism and imbued enthusiasm for independence provided some kind of shield in the turbulent times. However, disillusionment was strong. In the words of Eter, former trade unionist which I talked to in one of my previous research projects, this initial enthusiasm and later disillusionment is described well, that's why I decided to start this section with her words:

I was active since the time when we said that Borjomi¹¹ will save us and we will eat grass, but let the country be independent, live in an independent country, we will suffer and eat grass, after all we still have grass. We really became grass-eating people, when the number of billionaires and millionaires increased not only in the country, but also in the parliament and they rule us. (...) This we did not want or expect everything to go in the hands of a few and make everything expensive. (...) The way the working man is oppressed today, he has never been so oppressed before.

¹¹ Pupilar carbonated mineral water, produced by Georgia. Eter figuratively meant Georgia had prosperity and there were illusions that produce of local economy without attachment to centre would be sufficient.

These are some of the grievances which can be the base to some of the nostalgic feelings which are widely reported from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. First, let's delve deeper into what is understood under nostalgia, particularly in post-socialist context and later see how it is used in the discourse of the organizations we focus on.

What do we mean by nostalgia? It can have multitudes of meanings, it can be understood as “a catch-all notion for an array of memory discourses and practices that sometimes share little commonalities” (quoted in Boele, Noordenbos, and Robbe 2020:3). In the words of Svetlana Boym (2011:456) nostalgia can be a „poetic creation, an individual mechanism of survival, a countercultural practice, a poison, or a cure.” Davis explains initial emergence of nostalgia as disease category¹² and despite this, it's still an existing semantic bond to some sort of homesickness. However, its introduction to popular language made possible full “demedicalization” and even “depsychologization” of the term, and we can easily imagine it with such intimate emotions as love or fear rather than associate it with psychological disorder. According to Davis (2011:448) even if “nostalgic material” is derived from past, it does not explain it, rather “what occasions us to feel nostalgia must also reside in the present.” In the words of Bergson, the past is something that „might act, and will act by inserting itself into a present sensation from which it borrows the vitality“(as quoted in Boym 2011:455).

This is not mere recollection of the past; its appeal is certain qualities there which become significant from our present condition. Davis (2011:449) also states that certain intrusive social changes, does not matter in their consequence, just simply with their effect of uncertainty, might bring about nostalgic feelings which further reinforces a sense of sociohistorical continuity. However, this understanding, and nostalgia's presumed natural existence as a phenomenon, discounts the presence of diverging individuals and groups and motivations for emerging nostalgic feelings, which are important to analyse in post socialist context.

The degree of existence of nostalgia is dependent on these actors' personal experiences and interpretation of the past, and if it is seen by them predominantly in

¹² For detailed review of the development of the term in historical context see Nostalgia and Nation (363-368) from Boyer, Dominic. 2006. “Ostalgie and the Politics of the Future in Eastern Germany.” *Public Culture* 18 (2): 361-82. <https://profiles.rice.edu/sites/g/files/bxs3341/files/inline-files/Ostalgie.pdf>

negative light, the change is welcome and social turbulence would not be the source of nostalgic feelings in large extent, however in case of existing social and cultural grievances or dire material conditions in the present, nostalgia can be seen as a discursive practice originating from this lack and they might pick and choose what they are feeling nostalgic about and criticize the negative sides. So, nostalgia in this case does not mean romanization and univocally positive feelings regarding the past, rather it is a vastly ambiguous phenomenon in post-socialist context. Bulgarian joke cited by Maria Todorova (2010:6) is a good illustration for these ambivalent sentiments:

A popular one is about a woman who sits bolt upright in the middle of the night in panic. She jumps out of the bed and rushes to the bathroom to look in the medicine cabinet. Then, she runs into the kitchen and opens the refrigerator. Finally, she dashes to the window and looks out into the street. Relieved, she returns to the bedroom. Her husband asks her, "What's wrong with you?" "I had a terrible nightmare," she says. "I dreamt we could still afford to buy medicine, that the refrigerator was absolutely full, and that the streets were safe and clean." "How is that a nightmare?" the husband asks. The woman shakes her head, "I thought the communists were back in power."

By some, so called "post-communist" nostalgia is analysed through East-West dichotomy and they consider the term imposed by the west to legitimize East's „backwardness," existing nostalgia seen as a malady different from „normal", „free-world nostalgia" or simply even pure projection (Boyer 2006; Boym 2011; Todorova 2010). What we should mention here is that this is not only an externally imposed approach. Disregard and cynicism towards these sorts of sentiments are common, they are met often with disdain in local public discourse and media in many parts of the region. I also limit myself from using nostalgia as over compassing category to theorize wider processes, as used for example by Svetlana Boym (2011) in her typology of restorative and reflexive nostalgia, the former especially related to nationalism, returning to „original stasis" and latter rather to the contradictions of modernity in general sense. I am interested in post-soviet nostalgia, but neither do I discuss it, as it is extensively done, in Russian context, where it could be sometimes related to „post-empire syndrome." I focus on its particular use in narratives of the organizations I discuss here, and in my later work I intend to connect it to the degree of

its existence in my research participants' discourses, the performing side of it, despite if it is defined or not as nostalgia by them.

Empty shelves or towers of Swiss cheese?

As we discuss nostalgia, there was noteworthy case recently when one researcher from SovLab published a short video¹³ on the official page where she tried to dismantle the idea that things were better as some maintain during the Soviet Union. The speech reads like this:

This nostalgia for the Soviet Union, when they say, we lived so well, it was so green, we had everything, people were not hungry. These kinds of myths are astonishing for me because I remember very well what was in shops. They were absolutely empty, let's say cheese, meat, sour cream, milk, cottage cheese, there was a deficit. Products were arriving in the morning, there were huge lines and at 10, there was nothing left anymore. That's why my mother (...) was waking up at 6 am and she was standing in line for milk, and it was possible it would end before her nose. We did not have much choice at all, oil was only one kind, in the same bottles. Bathrobe, toothpaste, or even toilet paper, you should have found it somehow.

The comment section is full of reactions who are sharing different experiences from the past and comparing them to their current day. Some indicate to outright abundance, like this one comment reads: "There were mountains of Swiss cheese in the store on Rustaveli,¹⁴ bars of chocolate and the usual delicious butter, the best quality sausages, a variety of fish, fresh meat was brought in, everything was cheaper compared to now. As for the clothes, they were locally made and mostly non-synthetic." Many also point out opinion that everything was healthier back in time, so expressing frustration to the unregulated and low-quality products of today, some also point out the importance of informal network, but that everything was still easily obtainable, while others hypothesize that probably the author of the video refers to later periods when things started to go downturn. As for the author, having read the reactions, she disregarded expressed sentiments and made such a conclusion: "Based on the comments, my conclusion is as follows: these people who

¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/reel/3525427224389811>

¹⁴ Main avenue in Tbilisi.

"remember" full shelves, abundance and good life lived better than mere mortals in that "sweet Soviet" at the expense of "levy"¹⁵ income or had a pass in Tseka-teka¹⁶ stores. However, their standard of living was still worse than it is today, as many of the products you can buy today simply did not exist back then. If any of them were thrown into that time now, they would be out of their minds. You may ask, why do they have such an emotional bond with the Soviet Union? I think they felt privileged there because they lived better than mere mortals, and now they have become mere mortals themselves."

Comments made in comparison to current day situations, highlighting such aspects as health, or price and accessibility, says more about the present, rather than about the "myths" from the soviet past. There was a similar case described by Mandy Duijn (2020) where users were using soviet toy as medium, kind of a mnemonic device to express their frustration towards present-day policies, market-based values, and conditions in comparison to the past.

Sztompka (2004:175) identifies four main categories of vulnerabilities brought about by social change in post-socialist context. First is related to newly emerging threats and risks, such as unemployment, inflation, and growing crime rates. Second, and connected to the first, is worsening of life standards. Third, includes emerging new ideas and discussions regarding problems inherited, such as ecology, questions of private property or inefficiency of bureaucracy. And last, the debates regarding "decommunization" and "lustration." From here the first two are usually seen as main sources of discontent from the present day, and which consequently pushes people to recall and be sentimental for better, more secure life from the past.

Sopo mentions that she at first had no particular opinion on the Soviet Union, in any case, nothing positive, she was, for example, thinking people were overworked there. This and some other misconceptions she ascribes to a lack of information and prevalent dominant narratives. According to her, it all started to change during her active work in trade unions and when she was meeting different labourers across Georgia. She brings an example of miners, who now work 12 hours and they remember in Soviet Times it was not

¹⁵ From Russian левый, in this case having slang meaning *unofficial*.

¹⁶ First is abbreviation for ЦК Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Here the phrase is used with meaning of party nomenklatura i.e., soviet elite.

allowed more than 7, along with all the other benefits, advantages compared to others as their work was heavy and safety measures they had, unlike now. Another example is from a tailor: *“she said she had children: one before the collapse of the Soviet Union, one after. There was such a drastic difference. When she gave birth in the Soviet Union, they kept a job for her, all kinds of support, no worries and then she went back. After the collapse, when she gave birth, they sacked her from the job. She had no money, no food, and was nervous about how to find a job.”* Again, focus is on the importance of material conditions and stability for well-being. When these aspects are missing, nostalgia for better times in terms of these aspects seems natural.

Conclusions

Memory, as I was aiming to showcase in this paper, can be a tricky thing, depending on all the small nuances leading to its creation. For some, one occasion can be remembered as a heavy, traumatic event which left a permanent psychological scar on their personal history, while to others it might be a cheerful occasion, which they remember in bright colours. It is probably to no one’s surprise that even such a controversial and often tragic historical event, as the forming, functioning and subsequent decline of the Soviet Union, can be remembered in different settings. The massive, multicultural melting pot of different nations, nationalities, histories, and ideologies, even though at the time presented as a homogenous whole was a fertile ground for millions and millions of personal stories, small microhistories, ranging from tragic, to uplifting. In this papers, as part of my ongoing master’s thesis research, I focused mainly on the memory narratives of two research organizations in Georgia, both of which have taken as their aim to show the pre-dominant reality of existence of this country within the Soviet Union - Sovlab, the more established, long-lasting, western-funded research institution consisting of several historians, whose aim is to document, and shed light on the oppressive nature of the Soviet Union and its totalitarian regime, and Reimagining Soviet Georgia, a more recent podcast, aiming at clarifying the positive aspects of the Soviet Union and its strong social basis. In my research I’ve interviewed one representative from each of the mentioned organizations – Davit, a historian of Sovlab, and Sopo, a trade unionist representing Reimagining Soviet Georgia.

Both of them shared their point of view and research, as well as their personal backstories, which partially reflected their own ideological standpoint. Each chose their own interpretation of the Soviet Union which for them became the most typical, either focusing on the negative, or positive aspects of history. First coming from the importance of Georgia as an independent nation state and relates it to the current geopolitical threats coming from Russian Federation, while second focuses on internationalism, Soviet Union as a once existing model of social welfare, which is stigmatized by dominant neoliberal discourse and relates it to the current issues dispossession of majority of Georgian population and social injustice.

It became clear that the situation regarding representation cannot be reduced to only one side of the discourse. Each of my respondents had their truth in their remembrance, but at the same time presenting only a small fracture of the whole multifaceted problematic of life in the Soviet Union. It would be foolish to think that everything was traumatic and tragic in the same way, as would be to think that everything was just euphoric and enthusiastic. Each side is presenting one of the many aspects that would build a complex picture of what life under the Soviet Union looked like. By interviewing my two respondents, and putting their personal narratives, as well as professional aims into comparison I aimed to show exactly how diverse and often opposing memories can be.

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Cintia Szabó

Between Past and Present | Research on the local and transgenerational Holocaust-memory in Hajdúdorog, a settlement in Eastern Hungary

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Introduction

The aim of this research is to examine and interpret the local and transgenerational Holocaust social memory in a settlement in Eastern Hungary, named Hajdúdorog. The inspiration for my research came from an ongoing research project entitled “*Research on Transgenerational Holocaust-memory in Central Europe*”¹ by Richárd Papp, György Csepeli, Richárd Kiss, and András Surányi, in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia. Within the framework of their research, they attempt to interpret Holocaust social memory through focus group and individual interviews, and they are producing documentary films that they intend to use, among other aims, for educational purposes. Their research has led me to ask the questions of how the Holocaust occurred in my hometown, Hajdúdorog, and how the town preserves the memory of the Jews.

Hajdúdorog has played an important role in the history of the Jews and continues to play even in the present. The significance of the town is demonstrated by the fact that between 1869 and 1941 the Jewish population reached several hundred², and in the years around 1880 a synagogue was built on the corner of Jaczkovics and Dohány Street, and a ritual bath was established next to it³. During these years, community institutions were also established, such as the Chevra Kadisha⁴, Talmud-Torah School, and Charity Association⁵. Due to deportations, Hajdúdorog has no Jewish population today, however, the tomb of Rabbi Samuel Frankel, an internationally renowned Torah scholar of his time

¹ <https://www.tatk.elte.hu/kiemeltprojektek/holokausztemlekezet?m=537>

² Hungarian Central Statistical Office. (1993). The Jewish population by settlement (1840-1941). Budapest.

³ Radics, K. (Ed.). (1997). A Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Forráskiadványai 29. Debrecen: p. 28.

⁴ Burial Association.

⁵ Harsányi, L. (1970). Adalékok a Hajdúvárosok zsidóságának történetéhez. Budapest.

who also was a prominent leader of the town's Jewish community⁶, has become a pilgrimage place for the Jews, who return to visit it every year. They have established and maintained a guesthouse next to the cemetery for this purpose.

In Hajdúdorog today, the memory of the Jews is preserved by the remaining houses and the cemetery, but the unmarked houses and the absence of the memory of the ghetto raise questions. My research aims to explore the spatial representations and meanings constructed in narratives of local Holocaust memory and the former Jewish population, and the meanings of forgetting and the absence of memory. Furthermore, my research also seeks to answer the question: Are there transgenerational differences, continuities of remembering and forgetting? Besides, this research will also examine how the Jews making the pilgrimage are preserving their past, what meaning the town has for them, and how they maintain the memory of the Jews who lived here.

Since there are no Holocaust survivors left in Hajdúdorog, and the number of people who still have memories of those times is decreasing, the living memory of the Jews is changing into a collective cultural memory, a memory that the people of Hajdúdorog could not live through but passed on through generations. To examine how the local memory of the Jewish community and the tragic events in Hajdúdorog has been preserved, and what contemporary meanings the disappearance of the Jews who lived once in the town has, I will apply a cultural anthropological approach. The tragedy of the Holocaust has already been explored in several quantitative studies, but it is important to understand and interpret Holocaust-memory empirically, through personal narratives within a smaller community. As this research is person-centred and based on intensive fieldwork, it allows me to examine both local and empirical depths of memory in Hajdúdorog. Moreover, an important aspect of the research is that it attempts to examine both Jewish and non-Jewish patterns of memory and focuses on the narratives of the present bearers of memory rather than the victims. For data collection, I will use qualitative social science research methods

⁶ Based on an interview with a Jewish pilgrim (2023).

and interpret the data collected within the theoretical framework of Maurice Halbwachs⁷, Jan Assmann⁸, Pierre Nora⁹, Aleida Assmann¹⁰ and other literature¹¹.

Since there are few documents preserving the memory of the Jews in Hajdúdorog and no comprehensive study has been done in this field, this paper aims to fill this gap and commemorate the innocent deported and murdered residents of Hajdúdorog.

First, I will describe the methodology that I used in my research, and then I will present a historical and economic analysis to understand the path to deportation in Hajdúdorog. Afterwards, I will analyse the places related to the Holocaust and the history of the Jews. I will then present an analysis of the interviews with members of the community of the town, divided into three parts: General attitudes and stereotypes about the Jews, Local memory, Culture of Remembrance. Then, I will summarise the three directions and discuss the generational changes in memory and the inherited processes. Since I encountered numerous anti-Semitic narratives during the fieldwork, in the next section I will try to interpret and understand contemporary anti-Semitism. I will then move on to the perspective of the Jewish pilgrims to Hajdúdorog, describing their place of pilgrimage. I will present the narratives of the pilgrims. Finally, I draw conclusions from the research and suggest new possible research directions.

Methodology

As I approach my research questions from a cultural anthropological perspective, my main method is conducting long field research. In contrast to other social sciences, ethnographic fieldwork is particularly important in anthropological research, as the long time spent in the field allows for a deep understanding of a phenomenon under study (Eriksen 2010). Besides fieldwork, I managed a fieldwork diary, conducted archival research, and spatial and symbol analysis. Since I was researching two different communities, the non-Jewish community of Hajdúdorog and the Jewish pilgrim community, I used similar methods to

⁷ Halbwachs, M., & Coser, L. A. (1992). *On collective memory*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

⁸ Assmann, J. (2011). *Cultural memory and early civilization: Writing, remembrance, and political imagination*. Cambridge University Press.

⁹ Nora, P. (1989). *Between memory and history: Les Lieux de Memorie*. *Representations*, 26, 7-24.

¹⁰ Assmann, A. (2016). *Rossz Közérzet az emlékezetkultúrában, Beavatkozás. Múlt és Jövő Könyvek*.

¹¹ More in the reference list.

research them, but different approaches were given more emphasis. According to my sampling criterion, the first community included those who were born and raised in Hajdúdorog or have been living in Hajdúdorog for at least 50 years. In order to examine the transgenerational changes of the Holocaust social memory, I analysed three different generations: 1. +65 years, 2. 35-65 years, 3. 18-35 years.

In the second, pilgrim Jewish community, I included those who identified themselves as Jewish, and those who came from other cities or countries to Hajdúdorog specifically for pilgrimage.

Fieldwork

This paper is based on a six-month-long fieldwork research, but I intend to continue the field research for a minimum of another half year. Participant observation refers to the informal methods that form the basis of fieldwork, and which allow a deeper insight into the sociocultural context of the field. (Eriksen 2010). Conducting participant observation was not entirely possible due to the topic of the research, as this method involves being in the daily life of a community. However, this research is person-centred with greater emphasis on the interview methods. Participant observation could be partially realised when studying the Jewish community that came to the town, but the time spent among them was limited.

As a first step of the fieldwork, to reconstruct and understand the town's local historical and economic context before and after the Second World War, I conducted archival research. Examining documents such as maps, municipal records, and documents that were produced relatively in the past for administrative purposes, allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of a given period (Rodriguez, Baher 2006). In the framework of the archival research, I visited the local library, but I had to realise that there were very few documents remaining in the town. Since the past of Hajdúdorog is closely related to the past of the surrounding commonly named "Hajdú-towns"¹², and several documents were not preserved in Hajdúdorog, thus I also searched for written and historical documents in Hajdúböszörmény's and Hajdúnánás' libraries and archives.

¹² Towns referred to as "Hajdú-towns": Hajdúdorog, Hajdúnánás, Hajdúböszörmény, Hajdúhadház, Hajdúszoboszló and Vámospércs.

Besides, I also visited the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives in Budapest. Additionally, I received documents from other people living in Hajdúdorog who studying the past of Jews. Among the most important archives I found are municipal records, family photos, a photo of the former synagogue, and a list of deportees. After contacting the leaders of the Jewish pilgrims, they helpfully sent me maps from the 1800s, important pictures, and other documents.

The second step of my fieldwork was to contact the people of Hajdúdorog and conduct interviews. In order to find new people and conduct interviews I used different interviewing methods such as the snowball method, semi-structured interviewing, person-on-the-street interviewing, and creating mini focus groups. I also conducted interviews with the Jewish pilgrims, but due to language barriers, I had to apply different methods. I will discuss the interview methods in more detail in a later section.

In places related to the past and present of the Jews, I applied the method of spatial and symbol analysis. This involved visiting and examining community spaces and preserved Jewish houses. In addition, in order to find out about the role of Hajdúdorog in the lives of the Jews who make pilgrimage here, and to visit and understand the significance of the place of pilgrimage, I contacted the leaders of their guesthouse. Contacting the visiting Jews proved to be a difficult task and required a lot of time. In the town, I contacted the local caretaker of the Jewish cemetery, but neither he nor the town's residents could not help me contact them. Finally, I managed to contact them via a Hebrew-language website and arrange a meeting. They welcomed and guided me around their guesthouse, and showed me the places they consider important, such as their newly built mikveh¹³, the Jewish cemetery, and their pilgrimage site, the tomb of their rabbi Frankel Samuel. After discovering that they also make pilgrimages to the surrounding towns, I contacted the local caretakers of the Jewish cemeteries in Hajdúböszörmény and Hajdúnánás, who told me about the pilgrims and showed me the cemeteries. Visiting and analysing the pilgrimage sites of the surrounding towns was important in order to gain a deeper understanding through a comparative analysis of how the Jews preserve the memory of my hometown, and how important Hajdúdorog is in their lives.

¹³ Ritual bath.

From the beginning, I have kept a fieldwork diary of all the time spent in the field, which provides a valuable tool for reflecting on and analysing qualitative data and for gaining a fuller understanding of my research role and my impact on the researched communities.

Interview Methods

In the transgenerational analysis of the resident of Hajdúdorog, I followed a similar methodology as Richárd Papp and his research colleagues, thus I considered the same 6 questions as the basis for my interview questions. By using semi-structured interviews, the interviews were gradually deepened, allowing my interview partners enough space to share information or stories they considered important. I mostly conducted semi-structured interviews, which I recorded or took notes. I made interview transcripts of the recorded interviews to make it easier to analyse them. My research questions had four different directions. In the first part, the questions “Who are the Jews?” and “What were the causes of anti-Semitism?” were used to explore the general attitudes and stereotypes of the inhabitants of Hajdúdorog towards Jews. In the second part, the questions “How did the deportation take place in Hajdúdorog?” and “Are there any traces of Jews who lived in the town?” focused on the spatial representations and symbols of the local memory. In the third part, I asked my interview partners the questions “Have you talked to your family/friends/schoolmates/teachers about what happened during the Holocaust?” “Should we remember what happened in the town and the Holocaust?”. With these questions, I analysed the culture of remembrance. In the fourth part, I asked questions about the Jews visiting the town to find out what their attitudes were towards the Jews who are coming and how they understand and interpret the meanings of their visits. With these interview questions, I intended to explore similar aspects of the Holocaust-memory as Richárd Papp and his fellow researchers. Following their studies¹⁴, I also aimed to discover what motivation might be behind the remembrance and the forgetting and the current significance of the Holocaust in the town and the connection between Holocaust remembrance and contemporary anti-Semitism.

¹⁴ Csepegi, Gy., Papp, R., & Surányi, A. (2023). A hiány jelenvalóléte – A holokauszt intergenerációs helyi emlékezete a ma élő magyarok körében. DOI: 10.56233/SZABADPIAC.2023.1.7

Mainly I used the snowball method to find interview partners. Almost all of those who were willing to be interviewed were able to recommend potential new interview partners, and often they even provided a phone number. When I had the opportunity I tried to create mini focus groups of 2-3 people, therefore they could reflect and react to each other. In most cases, interviews with the members of the older and middle generations took place at their homes. In general, interviews with the respondents of the younger generation took place at an agreed location. After a series of interviews, I noticed that my interview partners had similar opinions and perspectives, thus I thought it would be more effective if I could interview more randomly selected people. That was when I started conducting person-on-the-street interviews. Before the interview, I asked about their age and how long they had been living in Hajdúdorog, therefore I only interviewed people who met my sampling criteria. Person-on-the-street interviewing method proved to be a useful way to talk to more open people with different views. It was especially members of the older generation who were reluctant to talk about the Holocaust and Jews, and it was mainly from them that I received rejection. There have been cases where I have been told *“Go to the library, they surely have books on this topic”* or *“You must have learned, why don’t you read history textbooks?”* (here and from now, the text in italics means that I am quoting directly from my interview partners). In many cases they hesitated *“I cannot help you, I do not have enough memory of them, I was not alive at that time”* but they could be convinced to give an interview after an introductory conversation.

In interviewing the Jews visiting Hajdúdorog, I asked them questions such as “What does Hajdúdorog mean to you personally? What are your experiences during the visit? How do you remember the Holocaust?”. With these questions and more, I was looking for answers to how they preserve the memory of Hajdúdorog and the memory of those who were deported from the town.

In order to meet and interview the visiting Jews, I asked for the help of the people of Hajdúdorog, but even after months, no one could give me any information on how to contact them. Some of them said *“they cannot be contacted”*, *“they won’t talk to me”* and some even warned me to be careful with them. Finally, I was able to contact the leaders of their guesthouse in Hajdúdorog, who were happy to answer my questions. Due to language restrictions and to avoid misunderstandings, I conducted e-mail interviews.

Researcher's position and ethical issues

I carried out my research following the code of ethics defined by the American Anthropological Association (AAA)¹⁵. In my fieldwork, I have ensured the anonymity of my interview partners, even though there was no specific request for it, as I consider that the result of the research will not be affected by the lack of this information about my respondents. During my research, I became aware of stories that were not requested to be withheld, but I only partially disclosed them in order to avoid future potential conflict situations.

A special feature of ethnographic fieldwork is that the researcher is involved in the research on a personal level, not just a professional one. (Eriksen 2010). Defining my research role has been an interesting aspect of my research, as it has often had an impact on my research findings. In researching the memory of the people of Hajdúdorog, I aimed to develop an etic perspective as I was a member of the community I was researching. The etic perspective means that the researcher takes an analytical view of the community and aims to describe and explain phenomena as an outside observer (Eriksen 2010). Being part of the community and knowing some of them made it easier in those cases for me to build trust with my interview partners and those people also were more open to being interviewed. Therefore, in some cases, the interviews were like conversations, however, there were cases where I stayed in the role of a researcher.

Among my respondents were some who openly shared anti-Semitic narratives with me. For these interviews, my role as a researcher was not fulfilled. The motives behind my asked questions were interpreted as my lack of knowledge on the topic. Moreover, because of my young age relative to them, and their view of university education that *"they don't tell me the truth in university, and they also don't want to hear the truth in my research"*, a role was created in which I got into the role of the "clueless" and they were the "knowledgeable". In this role, they thought that since I did not have the *"truth"* they would "enlighten me", share with me, and teach me the *"knowledge that not everyone has found out"*. They also believed that this *"knowledge"* could only be accessed by those who *"already figured out how the world works, can read between the lines, and don't believe everything"*. I

¹⁵ <https://americananthro.org/about/anthropological-ethics/>

have been told that *“they [Jews] make me do this research with ulterior motives”* and that *“they [professors] don’t want to hear the real opinions of the people”*. In one case, my interview partner was convinced that I was being made to do this research by the *“Zionist clandestine power”*. One of my respondents, who told anti-Semitic narratives, contacted me again the next day of the interview and requested me to *“make my answers more appropriate because I am afraid for your future”*.

In examining the Jewish community of pilgrims, I sought to develop an emic perspective, in which I could discover their views. When an anthropologist is researching a community from an emic perspective, it means that they seek to learn about the community from the „native’s point of view”, and thus to learn how the members of the community understand and experience life. (Eriksen 2010:40). In my research role, I could not become a member of the community, I remained an observer as I did not speak their language, the pilgrimage lasted only a few days, and as a woman I was not allowed to participate in their rituals¹⁶ and prayers. However, despite the language barrier and the more private commemoration due to the war situation¹⁷ I was welcomed and trusted. Building shared trust was developed during the email exchange before the pilgrimage. It is interesting to note that the role of the researcher-informant altered, as the past of Hajdúdorog is important to them and they have been researching the history of the Jews in the town for years, they asked for help with their research, and I became to some extent a research partner for them.

My alternating roles as a researcher, friend, clueless, informant, research partner, have had different effects on me and on the research. The fact that I was considered as a research partner by the pilgrim Jews, and we help each other with information to put together the pieces of the Jewish past, established trust between us, and there was no hierarchy in our relation in which I was in a subordinate or superior position to the community I was researching.

On the other hand, I personally felt uncomfortable being forced into the role “clueless” by my interview partners who held anti-Semitic views, but I attempted to keep

¹⁶ „A ritual is a stereotyped sequence of activities ... performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests.” - Turner, V. (1972). Symbols in African Ritual. Science, 179, 1100-1105.

¹⁷ The Israeli – Hamas Conflict, 2023.

my personal beliefs, feelings and thoughts outside the research and approach these people from a cultural relativist perspective. Cultural relativism is both a theoretical premise and a methodological rule, which aims to ensure that the researcher understands the research community as objectively as possible and that they do not compare them to their own moral standards (Eriksen 2010).

Local historical and economic conditions

In order to understand the contemporary memory of the Holocaust, it is important to have knowledge about the local Jewish past, how the deportation occurred, what places played an important role in the history, and which places still preserve traces of the former Jewish community. In addition, the past of the Jews of Hajdúdorog is also important in order to gain a deeper understanding of the Jewish pilgrim community, who return every year and seek to discover their connections to Hajdúdorog.

As a result of Joseph II's reforms and positive policies for the Jews, the number of Jews in Hungary began to grow in the 19th century (Brahman 1997). The Jews who came to the Hajdú-towns were mainly resettled from the nearby Szabolcs county, and their numbers increased. In 1840, there were 40 Jews in Hajdúdorog, which had increased to 357 by 1869, with many of them already renting land. The Jews living here also started on the path of assimilation, they spoke the Hungarian language in their homes, participated in the 1848-49 War of Independence, and made donations. By 1868, a Jewish community religious community had been established, whose president was Lipót Harstein, and a temple had been built (Harsányi 1970). As Jews had no access to land until the middle of the 19th century, they were forced to make a living from trade, industry, and banking, and thus they played an important role in the economic life of the countryside (Deáky et al. 1994). Among the Jews in Hajdúdorog, there was already a pharmacist and were large farmers, but they were mainly present in the trade sector, including spice and grocery merchants, haberdashers, tavern keepers, and bankers (Harsányi 1970).

Around the 1880s, they built a synagogue at 20 Jackovics Mihály Street as their old temple was already small for their numbers. Next to the synagogue, a new building was constructed above the ritual bath, providing guest rooms for travelling poor people. On the

road, Újfehértói Street, a Talmud-Torah school, a kosher slaughterhouse, and a rabbi and cantor's residence were built in one block (Harsányi 1970). In 1850, József Spiró became the rabbi of the town, followed by Frankel Samuel who died in 1882¹⁸. (Halmos 2003).

Around 1875, modern forms of anti-Semitism had already reached our country, and in 1882 a Jew was accused of blood libel in Tiszaeszlár, a town near Hajdúdorog. By 1890, the Jewish population in Hajdúdorog had increased by 105% in 10 years, presumably because the town remained peaceful and safe for the Jews, therefore they moved here from the surrounding areas (Harsányi 1970). In everyday life, they became more and more integrated with the other residents of the town, they also attended the funeral of Kossuth Lajos in Budapest, helped their fellow Christians in the struggle to establish the Greek catholic Bishopric of Hajdúdorog, and among them was the first martyr of the town, Igánc Gál. There was already a Jewish doctor in the town, Mór Rittersporn, who graduated as a doctor in Vienna and from 1854 to 1901 was the town's prominent and respected chief physician. His son Dr. Miklós Rittersporn, followed in his footsteps and had four daughters with his wife Malvin Wohl (Harsányi 1970). According to some of my interview partners, mainly from the older generation, the residents, including the Christian ones, lived in peace with the Jews in the town. Many of them recalled with warm hearts that they could buy on credit from the Jewish merchants, emphasising that they were not afraid that the residents would not give them their money.

However, alongside the peaceful coexistence, there was also the memory of when Jewish children did not go to school on Sabbath, their schoolmates broke the windows of the synagogue with stones. One person remembered that his grandmother told him that her schoolmates stuffed bacon in the mouth of her Jewish schoolmate and put coins in their hands. My interview partner considered these acts as "*childish anti-Semitism*", suggesting that these actions were more like a childish prank.

The Nazi invasion of Hungary took place on 19 March 1944, with one of the main aims being to resolve the "Jewish question". This was the time when Obersturmbandführer¹⁹ Eichmann Adolf and his commandos arrived in Hungary to organise the deportation of the Hungarian Jews (Deáky et al. 1994). From 5 April onwards,

¹⁸ According to Jews on pilgrimage to Hajdúdorog.

¹⁹ Military rank.

Jews had to mark themselves with a yellow star, which later prepared and facilitated their deportation, as they were easily identifiable (Brahman 1997). In Hajdúdorog, the Jews were ghettoised in May 1944, in a small area in and around the synagogue. After a few days, Jews were brought from Hajdúszovát²⁰ and Józsa. The leader of the Jewish community was Dr. László Hercz, the president of the Jewish Council, but after a short time, he was sent to labour service together with 50 other men. Unmarried and childless mothers between the ages of 18 and 30 worked in the field on the outskirts of the town, without payment. There was no violence against the Jews by the local authorities, and there were no food shortages, thus life in the ghetto was bearable. The gendarmes from other places were brutal with the Jews, subjecting everyone, including women and young girls, to humiliating body searches and examining every suitcase while telling the Jews “Why do you need this? You will be smelling the violets from the bottom soon enough”. The Jews were transported to Debrecen on 17 June (Harsányi 1970).

Of the 360 people deported, only 60 returned. After the war, the religious community was unable to be revived (Harsányi 1970). According to a local municipal record, anti-Semitism and blood libels continued to prevail in the town. The record preserves that the Hajdúdorog municipality discusses a rumour circulating in the town that “Jews are catching children, killing them, and stuffing sausages from them”, but they are afraid to announce that this is a fake rumour.²¹

The last rabbi of Hajdúdorog was Abraham Citron. In 1957, only 3 Jews were living in the town (Harsányi 1997). In the summer of 1957, Samuel Reichmann sold the synagogue, which by then was used for storing products²², and the population scattered the pieces of the building. This meant the end of the religious community in Hajdúdorog²³.

Memory places – Places of memory

Maurice Halbwachs (1992) distinguished between individual and collective memory and understood memory as a process of reconstructing the past, rather than reliving it. He also

²⁰ Today known as Hajdúszoboszló.

²¹ Municipal Record, Hajdúdorog Committee Meeting, May 20, 1946.

²² According to the memory of one of my interview partners.

²³ According to an archival document on the History of the Tempe of Hajdúdorog. Author and date unknown.

differentiated between history and memory and did not consider history as memory. He interpreted memory not as the result of brain functions but as a socially determined process. According to him, even individual memories are created through social interactions, and thus the ability to remember is a collective creation (Halbwachs & Coser, 1992). He argued that “Collective frameworks are, to the contrary, precisely the instruments used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society” (Halbwachs & Coser, 1992:40). This means that memory requires “collective frameworks” through which the past can be reconstructed, and that the loss of this framework causes forgetting (Halbwachs & Coser 1992). Jan Assmann also argued on the theory of Halbwachs that collective memory needs a spatial and temporal binding, a time to which memory can be linked: “Memory needs places and tends toward spatialization. (...) Group and place take on a symbolic sense of community that the group also adheres to, when it is separated from its own space, by symbolically reproducing the holy sites” (Assmann J. 2011:25).

Pierre Nora argued that history “belongs to everyone and to no one” and “its claim to universal authority”, and “memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects...” (Nora 1989:9). Pierre Nora introduced the concept of “lieux de mémoire”²⁴ to social sciences. He stated that “These lieux de memoire are fundamentally remains, the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness that has barely survived in a historical age that calls out for memory because it has abandoned it (..) Lieux de memoire are simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration. Indeed, they are lieux in three senses of the word material, symbolic, and functional” (Nora 1989:12, 1998:18-19). I consider the places associated with the Jewish community and the history of the Jews in Hajdúdorog as “lieux de memoire” and I analyse them from the perspective of Pierre Nora’s theory, but first I will present how the places are remembered by the members of the three generations.

Members of the older generation were able to determine exactly where the former synagogue and the ghetto were, they could locate Jewish houses, both existing and no

²⁴ Due to the complex meaning of this expression, the original term will be used in this essay.

longer existing ones, and they know that there is a Jewish cemetery in the town. My interview partners from the middle generation could also name the cemetery, several could name the synagogue, and some Jewish houses that no longer exist, in addition to Jewish houses that still exist. Members of the younger generation could recall significantly fewer Jewish-related places. In this group, they could only name the cemetery and only one person could remember the former synagogue. As we can observe, generations have been able to mark spaces in relation to Jews to varying degrees. The reasons for this can be better understood by analysing these sites.

Absence

In this section I would like to analyse a place that no longer exists in its material reality, but as “lieux de memoire” carries on the memory of the past. This place is the synagogue, which I mentioned earlier that was built in the late 1880s and was demolished in 1957²⁵ (Harsányi 1970). As members of the older generation were alive in 1957, according to them, they were children when the synagogue was demolished, therefore the individual and collective memory described by Halbwachs are combined in their remembrance.

The synagogue’s role in Judaism is significant, as it became a place of gathering and a symbol of the community (Fernando 1990). In Hajdúdorog, the synagogue was in a central position, and it was the most representative of the Jewish presence in the town, thus it was a symbol of the whole Jewish community. With the demolition of the synagogue, the Jews disappeared from the town, thus the Jewish community was also symbolically destroyed. The pieces of the synagogue, according to my respondents, were scattered by the population, and a private house stands on the same site now. Decades later, one of my interview partners found the synagogue’s Tablets of the Law by accident at a family home that was being used as a sidewalk. The Tablet of the Law was taken to the local museum, however, it was later moved to Israel. While the original Tablet of the Law was able to be found in the museum, the Jewish pilgrims, according to one of my respondents, used to visit it, but now that only the copy is in the museum, they no longer visit it. For the pilgrim Jews, the surviving original Tablet of the Law also functioned as a “lieux de memoire” as the only

²⁵ According to an archival document on the history of the Tempe of Hajdúdorog. Author and date unknown.

remaining part of the synagogue symbolised for them the whole former synagogue, the former Jewish community, and the past of the Jews. However, the copy Tablet of the Law is no longer a “lieux de memoire” for them as it is no longer linked to time or space or the former community. For the people of Hajdúdorog, however, it continues to function as a “lieux de memoire”, as it is located in the local museum and given symbolic meaning again within the framework of the exhibition about the town’s past.

The location of the synagogue and the ghetto is unmarked. Members of the older generation have individual memories, which means they have experiences, thus communicative memory of the synagogue. According to Jan Assmann, “The communicative memory comprises memories related to the recent past. These are what the individual shares with his contemporaries. A typical instance would be generational memory that accrues within the group, originating and disappearing with time or, to be more precise, with its carriers. Once those who embodied it have died, it gives way to a new memory” (Assmann, J. 2011:36). For the older generation, even though the site remains unmarked, and the synagogue no longer exists, for them, the place of the family home remains a “lieux de memoire” because they can link the memory of the synagogue and ghetto with the site. Even among the members of the middle generation, some have a memory of the synagogue, which they heard about mainly from the older generation. The young generation has almost no memory of the synagogue, as they have not heard or learned about the former synagogue, and as the site is also unmarked, they no longer have “collective social frameworks” to reconstruct the past.

Analysis of local memory spaces and symbols

In this section, I would like to present two of the existing local memory places. The first of these is the house of the previously mentioned Dr. Miklós Rittersporn and his wife, where they lived together with their four daughters. Their house is located opposite the place of the former synagogue, on the other side of the street. This house was also part of the ghetto during the Holocaust. Dr. Miklós Rittersporn and his Wife Malvin Wohl and 2 of their 4 daughters were deported to Auschwitz, where the parents lost their lives, but fortunately,

their 4 daughters survived and escaped to the United States of America.²⁶ After the Holocaust, the house was taken over by the municipality, and over the years it was used as an office, dormitory, storehouse, and then, in the framework of the celebration of the 1000th anniversary of Christianity, it was opened as a Museum of Local History in August 2000.²⁷

From the outside, there is no indication that the house was once part of the ghetto or that its owners lost their lives during the Holocaust. Inside the museum is a memorial plaque, a photo of the Rittersporn family, and a copy of the Tablets of the Law. The exhibitions present the past of Hajdúdorog, archaeological finds, and ethnographic objects. There is also a high emphasis on the history of the town's Greek Catholic roots and a monument commemorating Jesus on the cross. It is important to note here that the vast majority of the population of Hajdúdorog today is Greek Catholic, and Christianity plays an essential role in the identity of the town. The museum's opening ceremony can be interpreted as Arnold van Gennep's rite of passage concept, as the house, previously Jewish-owned and bearing Holocaust memories, is transformed, on a Christian celebration, into a new role in society, serving new purposes. In this "rite of passage", the Jewish house is reintegrated into society in a role that can be associated with positive events in the people's minds (Gennep et al. 1960). The museum, while still representing the memory of the Jews, and the exhibition serves to preserve the Jewish history of the past, their memory has become marginalised.

The majority of the older generation referred to the house as a former Jewish house and ghetto, which means that for them the house is still a "lieux de memoire" linked to the memory of the Jews, as the house is still associated with Jews through the physical space that remained, and the symbolic meaning attached to it. For the older people, therefore the house has not been given a new identity and significance. Members of the middle generation were still aware that the house was Jewish-owned. For the young generation, even though the house remained physically preserved, it no longer carried the memory of the Jews and was defined in its new role as a museum.

²⁶ According to one of my interview partners.

²⁷ <http://hdmuvhaz.hu/helytorteneti-gyujtemeny/>

The other existing house that also has complex memory layers is the house in Újfehértó Street, which functions as a private house. It is on the same block with another family house which is proven to have been bought from a Jewish owner. The house has the unique feature that it was referred to as a Jewish house by many of the older generation and also by many of the middle generation, but some of my interview partners said that it was certainly never Jewish-owned. Those who said it was a Jewish house were convinced, and often used the argument that *“it must be a Jewish house because it typically looks like one”*. In the end, I have not been able to prove either side’s claim with an official source, and pilgrim Jews have been also trying to find the answer for years, even to this day, therefore I was unable to discover whether it is the house or the building which might existed earlier that made the place a “lieux de memoire” for the older and middle generations. No one of the younger generation has named this building in connection with the memory of the Jews, but during the interviews, they also could not name any other Jewish houses.

As we have seen, many aspects can influence the way places are remembered. Based on the experience of the generational interviews, members of the older generation were able to list places associated with Jews, even those that no longer exist or are unmarked, but members of the middle generation had more limited knowledge of them, and members of the younger generation mainly could only name the cemetery. The way the memory of places has changed over the generations has been influenced by multiple factors. The lack of marking of places, the lack of knowledge, and the meaning change of places all may have contributed to that members of the younger generation no longer have a collective social memory of places related to Jews. Since the cemetery has a specific role, I will discuss it in a later section.

General attitudes and stereotypes about Jews

In this section, I present and analyse how the members of the three different generations answered the questions “Who are the Jews?” and “What were the causes of anti-Semitism?”. With these questions, I intended to examine how my respondents define the Jews, and what their general attitudes and stereotypes towards Jews are.

Among the older generation, there were many who defined Jews as *“those who were born Jewish”* and *“those who are Jewish by descent”*, thus they viewed Jews as an ethnic group. Others, however, categorised them as a *“religious community*. Someone thought that *“a Jew is someone who identifies themselves as a Jew”*, implying that it is one’s personal internal choice. However, there were definitions that included stereotyped views, such as Jews are *“merchants”*, *“clever people”*, those *“who wear hats and don’t work”*, *“they are smart people who achieve everything”*. The reasons for the persecution of the Jews described by several people as *“political motivations”*, several also mentioned *“Hitler”* and that *“it was a bad decision by the leader of the time”*. According to another narrator, *“Jews were persecuted because of their wealth”*. There was also a narrative that included Jewish stereotypes that *“Jews were successful in everything and that made people envious”*. Someone said that Jews were persecuted because *“people thought that Jews did not work”*, and she reflected on this stereotype, saying that *“people thought that Jews did not work because they were merchants, and Hungary was an agricultural country, not an industrial, so they thought that Jews just came and go and they did not think of merchanting as a work”*.

Members of the middle generation also mentioned categories such as religious or ethnic groups. Stereotyped responses such as Jews are *“those who have ringlets”* also emerged. The lack of knowledge of the Jewish religion is indicated by the way someone defined the Jews as *“Jesus’ chosen ones”*. However, anti-Semitic views also emerged in this age group. More people used negative, inappropriate words to describe them. They defined Jews as *“stateless people”* *“those who recognise no one but themselves as superior”*, *“they are the cause of all trouble”* *“they are (vulgarity) immigrant people who are always looking for a new homeland”*, *“the Jews are (vulgarity) flowers.”* There were stereotypes that they persecuted because of *“their money, because they were clever, they were smart, they were good merchants”* and therefore *“people envied them”*. The *“Nazis”* and *“Hitler”* has been cited by several respondents as the causes of Jewish persecution. Anti-Semitic narratives also appeared in these responses. Some narratives stated that the reasons for anti-Semitism were that *“the Jews are in powerful positions, they steal the world’s money”*. One of my speakers questioned the accuracy of the Holocaust events: *“A theatre was put on, the big dogs escaped, the little ones were deported, the big ones got a free ticket to America”*.

Some of the younger generation described Jews as a “*religious community belonging to a distinct ethnic group*”, but some just considered them an “*ethnic group*”. One person mentioned that he first encountered the word “*Jew*” from a friend who shamed him for not buying him a drink in the pub. For the causes of anti-Semitism, one person said that “*they didn’t want this kind of mindset to spread*”, but there were also views with stereotypes that “*they were feared, they had too much influence because of their wealth, and (vulgarity) people were afraid of them*”. One claimed religious differences as a reason, but she highlighted that she believes that “*people are much more accepting now*”.

The answers to these two questions show that all three age groups had difficulty in defining Jews, and all three groups had stereotypes about Jews as “*wealthy*” and “*people were afraid of them*”. It is important to note that these stereotypes did not include anti-Semitism, and they were said with rather a positive connotation. It is particularly important to note that, however, anti-Semitic views were only found in the narratives of members of the middle generation.

Local memory

In this section, I analyse their answers to the question “How did the deportation take place in Hajdúdorog?”. This question attempted to examine their knowledge about the deportation.

Members of the older generation generally had a lot of accurate information about the deportation process. They were aware of the events regarding the Jews, such as the wearing of the yellow star, ghettoization, and transportation by cattle wagon. One person recalled the conditions in the ghetto as “*they were like homeless people, they looked like them*”. Moreover, she reflected not only on the situation at that time but also on her personal experience and feelings during the Holocaust: “*I don’t know, I was a kid, we were just terrified. (...) The gendarmerie, that’s what it was then, and then you had to do what they were ordered to do. The gendarmerie enforced their will, as required by the law of the time. It was prescribed that Jews were to be gathered up, and we didn’t know then that they were to be taken to Auschwitz and strangled in gas chambers*”. Someone recalled how their father was asked by a Jewish person to look after his jewellery, but he did not dare because of his

children. With regard to the period after deportation, many pointed out that the population removed furniture and valuables from Jewish houses: *"The population went after [the deportation], and they scattered what they [Jews] had left", "the good houses have been cleared out by the leaders, the smaller ones by the resident"*. Another of my respondents told me that his father had been asked to help bring furniture from a Jewish house because he was the only one who had a horse, but he had refused because he did not want people to think that he was taking the furniture for himself.

The middle generation's memory of deportation varies. One person could recall that there was a ghetto in Hajdúdorog, and he heard from his mother that his grandmother cried when she said goodbye to the Jews at the station. Some of them remembered the deportation process approximately accurately. Many people did not know that there had been a ghetto in Hajdúdorog, they thought that Hajdúdorog was too small a town to have one. One of my interview partners emphasised that he has no individual memories about the Holocaust and questioned the reliability of history: *"I was not alive that time, and history is written by the regime of the time, so I don't believe in it"*. In another narrative, my respondent blamed the Jews for what happened to them: *"They were bad people, they must have done something bad, they deserved it, that's why they were taken away"*. Another respondent answered this question by asking me *"Who knows what was here 60 years ago?"* suggesting that we cannot know for sure what happened.

Most of the young generation did not know anything about how the deportation happened in the town, one of them imagining it as *"I guess they were tricked into going to a good place, a good place to work, there's a train station so I guess they took them by train, and they arrived where the others did"*. Although they were not familiar with the local events, they had a general knowledge of the events of the Holocaust.

Based on the answers given in this section, it is shown that members of the older generation have the most memories, and then gradually their knowledge of the Holocaust decreases. Members of the older generations often mention how afraid they were and that they still do not understand why the Holocaust could have happened.

Culture of remembrance

In this section, I examine the culture of remembrance by asking the following two questions: “Have you talked to your family/friends/schoolmates/teachers about what happened during the Holocaust?” “Should we remember what happened in the town and the Holocaust?”.

The older generation is characterised by that they did not talk about the Holocaust and did not learn about it in school. One of my interview partners highlighted the fear that surrounded talking about the Holocaust and the lack of education on this topic: *“There was no talk of the Holocaust in the family, all we knew was that they were wagoned in and taken away. They were never taught in school, never, they were even afraid to say the word “Jews”, that they had a bad end. It was no subject matter”*. Another person also referred to the fear of talking about this topic: *“There was no talk, people were afraid to talk about it, they were threatened, they were afraid of being taken away, they were afraid of reprisals. There was no interest in the family to talk about it”*. In general, members of the older generation felt that the events of the Holocaust should be remembered, because *“of course, it should be remembered, so that it is an example for everyone not to make such bad decisions”*. Some respondents also said that *“we should remember how many people died”* and again recalled that *“they were loved, they were good people”*. Someone concluded that *“it could have happened to me”*.

In the middle generation, there was a person who referred to the Holocaust as *“taboo”*. Several speakers said that they did not talk about what happened, but one person said that *“of course, people would have talked about it, it’s not a secret, it’s a real thing”*. Someone highlighted that he learned about it at school. When I asked if we should remember, one answered *“We can’t hide it, we have to learn from it’*, but someone answered *“No, because it’s a sad thing, and sad things are enough to be remembered by those who with whom they happened”*. Again, there were anti-Semitic answers to this question. Someone had a feeling of duality and thought: *“I feel sorry for them, but on the other hand I don’t feel sorry for them because they’re (vulgarity), they’re taking over the whole world, any bigger man is a Jew. Where’s the big money? At the Jews!”*. One of my respondents thought that whether we should remember that *“yes, we need to remember, but we need to remember*

again, what the Germans did was not enough at the time, they should have done more effectively because they were multiplying again and robbing the whole world again”.

Unlike the previous two generations, members of the younger generation claimed to have talked about the Holocaust with their friends and partners. One respondent said that she had learned about it at school, but also criticised the education system, saying that *“I think we could go into it a bit more, hear about it in a more interesting way, concrete examples of what happened”*. Another interview partner told me that his friend had visited Auschwitz, and my other respondent had been there personally not so long ago because she was interested. They also said that the Holocaust should be remembered. One of them pointed out that *“Yes, because it caused a lot of traumas among the families in Hajdúdorog”*. There was someone who thought that *“I would put up a memorial with a symbolic meaning, but no one can appreciate anything in Hajdúdorog”*, but he also wondered whether forgetting or remembering would be better: *“Once a wound is healed, it is no good tearing it open”*. One of them clearly stated that it should be remembered because *“innocent people were taken away in a disgusting way.”*

Overall, the older and middle generations have mainly not learned about the Holocaust, they have not talked about it, but the younger generation is more open to the topic. The younger and older generation believe that remembrance is important, while the middle generation shows anti-Semitism again.

Generational changes and inheritance processes of memory

Jan Assmann distinguishes between two types of collective memory, one is the above-mentioned communicative memory, which involves remembering recent events, where contact between members of the group plays an important role, and where members of the group pass on their memories. The other type is cultural memory, by which he meant institutionalised memory, in which, memory *“focuses on fixed points in the past, but again it is unable to preserve the past as it was”* (Assmann, J. 2011:37). This means that in this memory the past becomes *“symbolic figures”* that help to remember, for instance, he also considers myth a symbolic figure. In cultural memory, history also becomes a myth. While

communicative memory is spontaneous, cultural memory has carriers and needs to be controlled. (Assmann, J. 2011).

According to Aleida Assmann (2016), with the deaths of those who lived through the Second World War, their memories turned into cultural memories. However, he believes that cultural memory is not a passive collection of memories, but an “active functional memory”, in which the past can be relived and learned (Assmann, A. 2016:12). However, Aleida Assmann (2016) also states that trauma leaves memory gaps in communication between generations. The author distinguishes four types of forgetting: “1. dialogic forgetting, 2. remembering in order to prevent forgetting, 3. remembering in order to forget, 4. dialogic remembering” (Assmann, A. 2016:237). By dialogic forgetting, he meant the period in which those who experienced violence and suffering forget, in other words, silence the events of the past to begin reintegration. After the Second World War, collective silence was an international practice to create peace in Europe. All responsibility for the crimes committed during the war was placed on the Germans (Tony 1992, as cited in Assmann, A. 2016:241), and in the process of forgetting, not only individual suffering but also the crimes committed were silenced, thus European societies reintegrated by forgetting the Jewish victims. Dialogical forgetting was then replaced by “remembering in order to never forget”. Since dialogic forgetting was not a solution to the trauma, remembering took over after a period of latency. Remember in order to forget refers to a period in which the memory of a traumatic event is maintained in order to move beyond the trauma, and “dialogical remembering” refers to a shared memory between the perpetrating countries (Assmann, A., 2016).

In the previous sections, I examined and analysed the memories of the three generations in Hajdúdorog. In my research, the respondents’ general attitudes and stereotypes towards Jews show similarities with the findings of Richárd Papp and his fellow researchers. Similarly, classic anti-Semitic narratives appeared in the responses, for example that the Jews are “*merchants*”, “*clever people*”, “*wealthy people*”, which were also used unreflectively by those who reject anti-Semitism. There is also a lack of discourse in the transmission of knowledge between generations in Hajdúdorog (Csepeli, Papp, & Surányi 2023). However, among the members of the younger generation, the Holocaust was no longer a taboo topic, they talk more openly about the Holocaust. The older and

younger generations agreed that the Holocaust should be remembered and not forgotten: *“Of course it must be remembered to never happen again, because innocent people have been killed.”*, but the middle generation was critical of the remembrance, with some preferring to forget it, as I quoted earlier: *“No, because it’s a sad thing, and sad things are enough to be remembered by those who with whom they happened”*. It is important to point out that only in narratives of the middle generation appeared anti-Semitic views.

Overall, the patterns of remembrance in Hajdúdorog are also characterized by the lack of discourse, in which the past events are silenced and suppressed (Csepeli, Papp, & Surányi 2023).

Contemporary antisemitism

The hostility towards Jews in Europe can also be traced back to the Middle Ages, in which the teachings of Christianity also played a role. The social situation of Jews improved from the 18th century onwards, but it did not bring a change in people’s attitudes, and later 19th-century liberalism was not enough to prevent the Holocaust in Hungary. The defeat of Nazi Germany in the Second World War and the Soviet occupation brought an end to open anti-Semitism in Hungary, but later reappeared around 1990 (Kovács & Szilágyi 2012).

Contemporary anti-Semitism can be categorised into 3 types. The first form of anti-Semitism is that in which stereotypical images and negative external and internal characteristics long present in society are associated with the Jews. The second form is the denial of the Holocaust, the genocide of the Jews, and the passing of responsibility. The third form includes anti-Israel views, in which the judgement of Israel is generalised to the whole Jewish community (Kovács & Fischer 2020).

All three forms of anti-Semitism can be found among the respondents of Hajdúdorog. The first form of anti-Semitic stereotypes, also appeared in the answers of my interview partners, numerous people from all generations used these terms in the aforementioned way, without reflecting on it (Csepeli, Papp & Surányi 2023), while the members of the middle generation already held genuinely anti-Semitic views. The second form was also present, as several of my speakers from the middle generation questioned the veracity and accuracy of historical events. There were also conspiracy theories about

Israel, that “*when the World Trade Center collapsed, no Jews went to work that day because they got the information from Israel*” and that the “*Russian-Ukraine war is also caused by the Jews*” and that the Jews are “*a criminal organization*”.

Kovács and Szilágyi (2020) identify several reasons and motives for anti-Semitism, such as “education, sense of subjective deprivation, xenophobia in general, political frustration, ideological/political beliefs” (Kovács & Szilágyi, 2020:18). When I asked my speakers with anti-Semitic views about their sources of information, and how they could be sure of the authenticity of this information, they pointed to internet websites, a man with a doctorate but not accepted by academia, and that it was spread by word of mouth. It is important to note that members of the older generation did not hold anti-Semitic views, nor did members of the younger generation, only members of the middle generation. The older generation has positive memories of Jews, and generally, they do not understand why the persecution of Jews happened. However, members of the middle generation who hold anti-Semitic views are absolutely certain that their information is true, and they do not question the reliability of their sources.

Remembrance from Jewish perspective

In this section, I present the analysis of the Jewish community that makes pilgrimages to Hajdúdorog. Jewish pilgrims come to Hajdúdorog all year around, but every autumn hundreds of people from all over the world make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Samuel Frankel. First, I examine the place of pilgrimage, then I present the interviews conducted with the visiting Jews to gain a deeper insight into their perspectives. Finally, I discuss the general attitude of the people of Hajdúdorog towards the Jewish pilgrims.

Place of pilgrimage

The memory of the dead is situated between communicative memory and cultural memory as it “represents a universally human form”, however, it can also be considered as cultural memory, as rites and institutions are formed in the process of commemorating the dead (Assmann, J. 2011:25). Jan Assmann (2011) distinguished between two forms of memory of the dead: “retrospective” and “prospective”. By retrospective, he meant a more natural,

universal form of remembrance, whereby the community maintains the memory of the dead, and by prospective, he meant the “achievement” or “fame” by which the dead became special and unforgettable (Assmann, J. 2011:46). According to K. Schmidt (1985) remembering the dead is “establishing the community”, because when a community remembers its dead, it is affirming the community’s identity, and according to Reinhart Koselleck (1970), remembering the dead provides identity for the survivors (Assmann, J., 2011:47).

According to Jan Assmann, places have an important function in the creation of collective memory (Assmann, J. 2011). For the Jewish pilgrims, this place is mainly the cemetery and the tomb of their respected Rabbi Samuel Frankel. The first documented event about the Jewish cemetery is from 1826 when Jews requested a cemetery plot, not for their property, but for use only, later, on 22 April 1862, they made a request to enlarge the cemetery²⁸. According to Jewish pilgrims, there are currently more than 200 graves in the cemetery.

This cemetery is the resting place of Samuel Frankel, whose tomb has become a place of pilgrimage. The people I interviewed were Jewish pilgrims from Israel. According to Jewish pilgrims, Samuel Frankel was a holy tzaddik rabbi, and *“He was a truly righteous and highly esteemed by many Jews of his generation. In his lifetime, many Jews were saved through his blessings and prayers”*. One of the pilgrims highlighted the importance of the rabbi in the community then, and now: *“He was particularly known for his nobility and purity of character; he never agreed to hear anything derogatory about anyone else. He was renowned as a genius in the Torah, a holy and extraordinary Jew. After his passing, his gravesite became a place of prayer for thousands of Jews from the region and beyond, who would come to pray at the grave and find salvation in whatever they needed”*. According to narratives, pilgrims come from Israel, Germany, America, New Zealand, and other parts of the world. One of my interview partners highlighted the impact of the Holocaust on the pilgrimage site: *“After the Holocaust, his memory was somewhat forgotten, and for many years, his gravesite was abandoned”*. An interview in one of the brochures I received from them also recalled the post-Holocaust era: *“The truth is that my grandfather experienced the*

²⁸According to the archival document of the request.

horrific events of the Holocaust during World War II, and because of this, it was very difficult for him throughout the years to return to his birthplace, Hungary, as it would stir up all the painful memories". From these narratives and descriptions, it is shown that despite the significance of the rabbi's tomb, the trauma of the Holocaust has made it forgotten for years.

The importance of Hajdúdorog is also shown by that 30 years ago, Rabbi Rosenfeld, a descendant of Samuel Frankel, founded a movement of "Darag Hasidism" in the Israeli Bnei Brak. The community's teachings are based on Tzaddik Rabbi Samuel Frankel's book titled "Amri Shefer" and members of the community make a pilgrimage to the rabbi's grave every year on the day of Hilula (end of October, beginning of November)²⁹. According to them *"Those who come to pray at the site testify that they feel they are standing next to the grave of a holy person, and their prayers there ascend directly to heaven"*. They also mentioned that *"There are many stories of people who requested various things at the site and were immediately saved"*. The concrete garage above the rabbi's tomb was rebuilt 10 years ago, and about 5 years ago a guesthouse was purchased which is located next to the cemetery and has been developing ever since. Last year a mikveh (ritual bath) was built in the guesthouse. According to the mayor of the time, the municipality helped in the construction of the Ohel³⁰ over the tzaddik rabbi's grave. What makes the Ohel special is that for the request of the mayor of the time from the architect, the Ohel bears the marks of the former synagogue in its appearance. The two towers and the round window of the Ohel are characteristic features of the former synagogue, thus the Ohel not only fulfils its original function but is also an important symbol and memory carrier for the pilgrim Jews.

Jews on pilgrimage can stay in the guesthouse, and various festive foods are cooked to welcome the Jews who visit. When I asked what the town means to them, one of them said: *"We feel that this city is holy because of the righteous man who lived and is buried here. We feel a personal connection to the righteous man, so we make an effort to come and pray at his grave and prepare food for others who come to pray"*. How special the town and its past are to them is also shown by the fact that they have been researching their past, former Jewish buildings, and Jewish items for years.

²⁹ The day of the anniversary of the death.

³⁰ Name of the building raised above tzaddik's tomb.

As I mentioned, they also visit the town's nearby, Hajdúböszörmény and Hajdúnánás, but in my experience, Hajdúdorog plays a more significant role in their lives. During their visits to Hajdúböszörmény and Hajdúnánás, they spend less time in those towns, and the fact that they opened, and they are constantly developing the guesthouse here is a sign of Hajdúdorog's special role compared to the other towns. This year only 40-50 people arrived in Hajdúdorog because of the current war situation. They showed me the guesthouse, the mikveh, the cemetery, and the grave of Samuel Frankel. There are also well-designed brochures on the pilgrimage of which I have been given some. The memory of Hajdúdorog also is a significant element in these brochures, as they talk about the history of the Jews of Hajdúdorog, include picture of the former synagogue, but also tell about the post-Holocaust period and the recent past and development of the pilgrimage.

From the narratives of the Jewish pilgrims, it can be assumed that their visit to Hajdúdorog is an important commemoration of their respected Rabbi and for their past. They have both communicative and cultural memory, as they hold various commemorative rites, and maintain the memory of the Rabbi through printed brochures.

Local attitudes towards Pilgrimage

The local attitude of the people of Hajdúdorog towards the Jewish pilgrims was diverse. Some people did not even know that Jews used to return to Hajdúdorog. One of my interview partners told me that she knew that pilgrims, *"young boys with hats and sideburns"* used to come back and that she heard from her friend that *"the Jews brought a house, but they are supposedly expanding and that they are buying another house too"*. As a demonstration of the negative attitude towards pilgrims, I have heard several people refer to pilgrims as *"the crows"* and *"the crows are marching"*. Moreover, a respondent said that *"they come with 66 buses"* and that *"there are never any women with them"*, moreover she highlighted that *"they have even made a sauna [I corrected her that it is a ritual bath] yes, ritual bath with lots of (vulgarity)"*.

However, there are also positive attitudes. According to a narrative, in around 2018, when he was working as a postman and delivering a mail to their guesthouse, the pilgrims welcomed him and even offered him food and drink. According to him, there were women,

men, and small children who even tried out his bicycle. He emphasised that he cannot say anything bad about them and that he looks back on that day with pleasure. When I asked him what this pilgrimage could mean for the Jews who come here, he said that he thinks *“this is rather a trip for them”*. Another of my respondents believes that the town is not prepared for the Jewish pilgrims, and recalled a time when Jews who came here wanted to buy souvenirs of the town but could not find any. He also pointed out that there is a group of people who do not look kindly on the pilgrimage.

In the light of the above, the attitude of the people of Hajdúdorog towards the pilgrims varies widely, from positive to anti-Semitic. Overall, the people of Hajdúdorog do not have enough knowledge about why and for what purpose the Jews come here, and what the town means to them.

Conclusion and direction for further research

In this research, I examined the transgenerational and social memory of the Holocaust in an eastern Hungarian settlement, Hajdúdorog. The research was based on six months of intensive fieldwork using qualitative social science methods and I focused on three generations to understand and interpret the depths of the local Holocaust-memory. The records and the archival documents show that the history of the Jews in the town dates back to the 18th century. As the Jewish community grew, so did the Jewish religious community, with the establishment of a synagogue, a cemetery, a school, and other associations. The events of the Second World War also destroyed the coexistence in Hajdúdorog and as a result of the deportations, the Jewish community disappeared from the town. The houses they had left behind were looted by the inhabitants and their synagogue was demolished. Today, only a few remaining houses and the cemetery preserve their memory, however, the memories of these places related to the Jews are still alive in the memories of the elderly. For the middle generation, however, many places have been forgotten, and for the younger generation, the cemetery is the only place that symbolises the Jewish community that once lived in the town, due to the lack of markings and the lack of knowledge passed down. The research shows that generational changes in the local memory of the Holocaust are also determined by the lack of discourse through which

memories could have been transmitted. One of the characteristics of memory research in Hajdúdorog is the presence of anti-Semitic narratives in the responses of members of the middle generation. To gain a more complete picture of the role of Hajdúdorog in the past and present of the Jews, I have also examined the perspective of the Jewish pilgrims arriving in the town. According to them, the town is special to them because of the holy tzaddik who once lived here, and they also continue to try to discover the Jewish past. The people of Hajdúdorog have a varied attitude towards the pilgrims who come here, generally unaware of what the town means to them.

Since the town's past is closely linked to the past of the other nearby Hajdú-towns, it would be worthwhile to examine generational changes in Holocaust memory in the whole region. Moreover, since pilgrimages are also made to neighbouring towns, it would also be interesting to make a more complex comparison of pilgrimage sites.

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SPATIAL PRACTICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Bartłomiej Puch

Pollution from a transrelational ethnography perspective: The case of “Głogów” Copper Smelter in Poland

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We live in times when practically the entire environment around us has been transformed, to a greater or lesser extent, by humans. The landscape we look at is de facto the landscape of the Anthropocene, the epoch of man. We also realized that these are largely the consequences of the industry that had been dynamically developed in previous centuries. We notice that the economy based on the extraction and transformation of the natural environment, which has been carried out for years, has led to the creation of devastated areas, pollution, and disturbances of the ecological balance (Bardi, 2014). The current situation forces us to look for new ways of conducting research and creating new narratives about the world, including those that would take into account the more-than-human perspective (Kowalska, 2022; Tsing 2015). In my text, I would like to share observations from my ethnographic research in the vicinity of the Głogów copper smelter in Poland and the first thoughts resulting from them. I focus on the concept of pollution, problematizing it from the perspective of transrelational ethnography, a theoretical framework proposed by Polish anthropologist Katarzyna Majbroda (2021). According to her project, it would be ethnography focusing on the study of relationships occurring in the field, rejecting dichotomous thinking and including the agency of non-human entities. The inspiration for this approach comes from multi-species ethnography (Kirksey, Helmreich, 2010), new ontologies (Pickering, 2008), and posthumanist philosophy (e.g. Latour, 2005; Haraway 2003; Deleuze, Guattari, 1987).

Terrain

I conduct research in the immediate vicinity of the Głogów Copper Smelter in Lower Silesia in southwestern Poland, approximately 100 km north of Wrocław. The plant belongs to KGHM "Polska Miedź" S.A. which is one of the largest and richest state-owned companies¹. Its history is associated with copper deposits discovered near the town of Rudna in 1957 (Grecki, 1996). Documented by Jan Wyżykowski in 1959, they turned out to be the largest deposits of this raw material in Europe and one of the largest in the world (Choma-Moryl, Moryl 2007).

After World War II, Poland did not have a color-metal industry (Grecki, 1996). The adopted economic policy included major investments in heavy industry. There was no concern about environmental protection or the consequences of industrial impact (Domke, 2018). The narrative of communism was that the earth is subordinate to man. The environment was treated as a resource. The size of copper deposits initiated rapid development in the mining and collector plants. There were four mines and three copper smelters built (Kaczmarek, Rożek, 2007). The smelter near Głogów was built in the 1970s. The decision was made very quickly to build the second one right after the first one. Currently, it is the main processing plant for copper, silver, and other rare metals in Poland.

It is also important to outline the context of the company managing the smelters - KGHM "Polska Miedź". It is the 6th copper industry in the world and the 1st silver. Additionally, KGHM produces gold, lead, and nickel. The company owns mines in Poland, Germany, the USA, Canada, and Chile². It is an employer of approximately 100,000 people, the main one in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship. By some, it is called the "Lublin Kingdom"³, which refers to the position that a company has in the region. There are lots of connections

¹ Source: <https://gospodarka.dziennik.pl/news/artykuly/570794,boje-o-kghm-tocza-sie-bez-wzgledu-na-to-ktu-rzadzi.html.amp> [access: 18.11.2023]

² Source: <https://kghm.com/pl/o-nas/kghm-na-swiecie> [access: 18.11.2023]

³ Source: <https://gospodarka.dziennik.pl/news/artykuly/570794,boje-o-kghm-tocza-sie-bez-wzgledu-na-to-ktu-rzadzi.html.amp> [access: 18.11.2023]

among different actors and owners of the industry, which makes it difficult to criticize the company.

Pollution

The first signs of the steelworks' negative impact on the vicinity occurred in the 1970s, shortly after its opening. Inhabitants began to notice the smoke emitted by the company, which polluted the air and had a distinctive, characteristic taste. Plants also began to wither as a consequence of acid rains. The intensification of problems began at the beginning of the 1980s. No one denied the negative impact of the smelter. Research showed clearly that industry is responsible for pollution. With the thaw in Poland and greater freedom of the press, articles and reportages about this issue. Inhabitants began to demand compensation and actions to eliminate pollution.

In anthropology, reflection on the sciences can be derived from Mary Douglas's work "Purity and Danger." The author traced the process of cultural determination of cleanliness and dirt. One of the most important findings in the work is the thesis that "there is no absolute dirt. Dirt always exists in the eye of the beholder" (Douglas, 2003). The anthropologist notes that where a category of dirt exists - there is a system and an intersubjective perception of dirt. Impurity is culturally established through the definition of practices and rules. In his book, Douglas notes that our avoidance of dirt is not a result of fear or thoughtlessness; it is a creative activity that seeks to adapt form to function and unify experience. Pollution is a "matter out of place" (Jaffe, 2016). Douglas's thought is developed by Dürr and Jaffe. Defining pollution, they wrote:

Pollution is a socio-material phenomenon reflecting world views, dominant values, lifestyles, aesthetics, science and technology, and much more. Conceptions of pollution and the management of waste always reflect the Zeitgeist – urban pollution is a historical, social, cultural, political, and cognitive experience, each instance of which must be analyzed within its spatial, temporal, and cultural context. (Dürr, Jaffe, 2014)

This is a continuation of Mary Douglas's thoughts. A common feature is focusing on the discursive and practice aspects of culture, the symbolic order, and the meanings that people give to individual elements of the world around us. This classification is dynamic, changes over time, and depends on local cultural and social conditions.

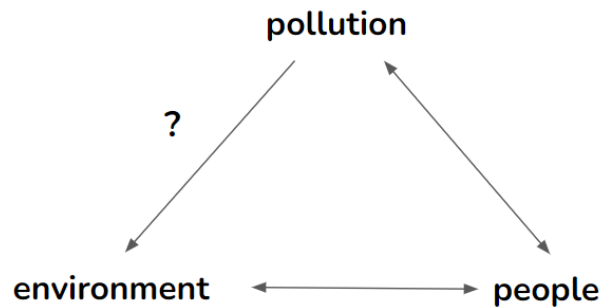
However, when examining industrial pollution, we also deal with the impact of these pollutants on the environment. This makes it mainly an area of research in sciences and technical sciences - ecology, biology, chemistry, and environmental engineering. So, let's look at how these sciences define pollution:

Pollution - undesirable components, e.g. exhaust gases in the air, heavy metals in the soil, etc. in a specific substance of the natural environment; they disturb the biological balance caused by unfavorable changes in the physical and chemical properties of air, water, soil, and living organisms. Pollution is defined as an emission that may be harmful to human health or the environment, cause damage to material property, impair the aesthetic value of the environment, or interfere with other legitimate uses of the environment.⁴

In this definition, we note the emphasis on the role that pollutants play in disturbing the equilibrium of a given (natural) environment. Through research, scientists determine which substances and in what concentrations begin to pose a threat to a given ecosystem. Here we see a valuation of the presence of certain substances. Through research, we have determined that some contaminants have a negative impact on the environment. What is problematic here, however, from our perspective, are the categories of the natural environment and the valuation process, as it is assumed that there is a certain natural state, implicitly the original and good state. This automatically raises the question of what assessment criteria make a given environment natural and that this particular concentration is already a pollutant, but a level below a given standard is no longer a threat. Combining it with the definitions of Dürr and Jaffe, we see that these criteria are dependent on Zeitgeist and cultural conditions. As researchers note, smoke and air diseases may overlap with economic growth and thus be tolerated as inevitable side effects of the resulting development rather than classified and managed as an issue (Jaffe, 2016). For Ulrich Beck (2002), self-determination of permissible data emission standards is tantamount to legalizing poisoning. According to the German sociologist's criteria, to which the standards apply, they are furthermore murky and uncertain. He also notes that some substances are not harmful (according to current knowledge) at the moment, but they could be in the future.

⁴ Source: <https://www.ekologia.pl/wiedza/slowniki/leksykon-ekologii-i-ochrony-srodowiska/zanieczyszczenie> [access: 18.11.2023]

Looking at these definitions, we can see some commonalities between the two approaches to pollution, which we can present as a certain relationship. Trying to generalize this, we see a pollution-environment-people scheme:



So, we have a certain defined environment with people and pollution. People interact with both the environment (by transforming it, dwelling on it) and the pollutants (e.g. by producing them). Pollutants also interact with people (poisoning them) and the environment (polluting it and disturbing the ecological balance). The environment affects the people living in it. However, in the definitions I have quoted, we do not see what impact the environment has on pollution. Does it have any influence, or is it just a passive recipient of it? This observation constitutes my research question in the course of the study. What role do non-humans play in pollution? How important are non-human actors in all of this? It is worth noting here that both natural causes (volcanoes are the best example) and artificial, anthropogenic causes are identified as the source of pollution. Subconsciously, however, we identify pollution with humans, and in the case of the industrial ones, we have no doubt that the main producer is human. We are also the ones who isolate something as pollution and take certain actions to eliminate or reduce it. But are non-humans merely passive actors here? In my research, I see that the answer is not so easy.

Environment

Moving on in our reflections, it is important to stop for a moment and define the categories we will be using. One of these is the concept of environment. I understand it as something created by using it, inspired by Tim Ingold's (2000) thought. Referring to the work of the

psychologist James Gibson (1968), the anthropologist analyses the environment as a world inhabited by humans and non-humans. He emphasizes the process of constant becoming of the environment and things immersed in the circulation of mediums, forces, and substances. The result is a world imbued with life and the transformations that things and materials undergo (Wala, 2016).

For the purposes of this presentation, I separate the worlds of humans and non-humans, but as we are going to see, we are often associated species (Haraway 2003) and in the real world, it is hard to separate us from each other to indicate clear boundaries. We only function by accompanying each other together. The world around us is more of a natureculture (Haraway, 2003) than an Enlightenment model of the world. Our being-in-the-world is often only possible through the presence of other entities that also depend on us.

An additional complication is the status of the extracted raw materials. They are elements of the 'natural' world - they were created as a result of geological processes over millions of years, but man began at some point to extract minerals and process them, thereby incorporating them into the cultural world. We can recall here the considerations of Bruno Latour, who would argue that this shows us that we live in a hybrid world where the natural intersects with the anthropogenic (Latour, 1993). What sense, then, does it make to continue with the division between nature and culture?

Environmental engineering

In the 1970s/80s, the first actions were taken to counteract pollution. The company started to modernise its production and set up filters. One of the actions was also the creation of a so-called protection zone (Przewocka, 2011). In practice, this was a demarcated area around the plant that was subjected to environmental engineering. It was mainly the afforestation of the area. This was intended to create a protective barrier around the smelter and to help with soil remediation. Attention should be paid here to the specific tree species chosen. Few plants can cope with such heavy terrain (Rachwał, Wit-Repka 1988). No tree is immune to pollution. However, some do better and are more resistant. Such trees

include poplars and birches, also known as pioneer trees. They blaze a trail for other species, creating the right conditions for them.

Selected plant species were also planted to help remove contamination from the soil (Przewocka 2011). One such plant was hemp and flax. This was also to help the farmers - they were offered to sell the plants they had grown to nearby plants to compensate for the losses resulting from the ban on growing other plants. Unfortunately, usually, they did not want to accept the plants, claiming that they were of poor quality.

During the period of highest pollution, a ban was imposed on the cultivation of certain plant species - cereals, legumes, and root crops. A study showed that these plants absorbed heavy metals to the greatest extent. For a hitherto largely agricultural region, this was a blow to the back. People were losing not only their plots of land but also their source of income. Pollution was therefore not only a health hazard but also an imbalance in the social network.



Afforested area in former Biechów village, photo: Bartłomiej Puch

The 'fourth nature' (Jakubowski, 2020) is also worth mentioning here. If we look at the history of the area around the smelter, we see a lot of human activity, but some of the land

was left alone after people were evicted from it. This caused the area to be taken over by nature, creating a new ecosystem in its own right. Walking in these places, we can encounter fragments of walls, and roads, which are traces of the former human presence. However, they are slowly being covered up by vegetation, mosses and lichens in a way uncontrolled by human.

I found this aspect of the landscape of ghost villages (Majbroda, 2022) particularly interesting. Not only does the situation show us the agency of non-human entities, but it also raises questions about the notion of time. In the example of changes in the landscape discussed above, we see two temporalities - the human and the more-than-human. Changes can occur quickly or more slowly. We may or may not notice them within a generation of people. Most often, these rapid changes are artificial, the result of human transformation of the land. However, an ecosystem can form on its own, one would like to say 'naturally'. However, this requires more time. Nature transforms the land much more slowly, however, adapting the changes to the current needs of the ecosystem. This example invites us to change our perspective on time. Giving up the perspective of quick profits familiar to us from the current neoliberal capitalist system and moving closer to the deep-time perspective proposed by Richard Irvin (2014). Planned measures to minimise the impact of pollutants or to remove them from the environment should take a long-term view. Copper mining and processing activities have left (and continue to leave) traces that will be visible long after the industry has ceased operations (Bardi, 2014). An example is the heavy metals accumulated in the soil, which will take hundreds of years to remove. This makes the industry affect not only the history of the inhabitants but also the geological history of the region. When planning 'remediation' activities, we need to be aware of the future and how the effects of our actions now will affect the lives of future generations of human and non-human beings. We need to stop focusing on short-term profit.



Contemporary landscape of former Biechów village, photo: Bartłomiej Puch

Biomonitoring

Another aspect of cooperation between humans and non-humans is biomonitoring, an activity to assess the state of the environment. For a long time, the non-human world has been used to study pollution levels in the environment. Examples include so-called bioindicators, which are species that live only under certain conditions (Popielarska, 2008). Changes in the environment cause them to disappear, thus indicating the following changes. In the course of my research, I came across a study by a team of scientists from Poland who decided to use spider webs to study pollution levels around a copper smelter in Legnica (Trzyna, Rybak, Bartz, Górka, 2022). Their experiment was to see if this could be a reliable method. The results confirm its usefulness. The spider webs collect airborne dust, which was later tested in the laboratory. The results indicated an increased presence of dangerous substances in the surroundings of the smelter, which could translate into an increased incidence of cancer in the nearby population. The positive results of the

experiment also prove that such interspecies cooperation is possible. Moreover, this method of research is also cheaper and easier to conduct.

It is also worth mentioning here that, in the accounts of the inhabitants of the area I studied, it was the non-human world that raised the earliest alarm about the presence of pollution. Residents recalled withered plants, burnt trees and sickly animals. *There was smoke in the air and a sweet smell that stung the eyes*⁵. Seeing the effects on plants and animals, people began to watch themselves and their children more carefully, worrying about their health and lives. One of my interlocutors recalled the sight after killing hens - their insides were contaminated. On another occasion, I heard a story about the disappearance of worms by a river, which my interviewee used as fishing bait. These non-human signals alerted residents to the fact that something was wrong. Being mostly farmers and thus relying heavily on observations of nature and the weather, the residents formed their knowledge of the state of the environment in this way.

Pollution mobility

The last topic I want to mention is the mobility of pollution. Pollutants are produced in a copper smelter during the ore processing process. They are emitted into the environment. Non-human factors play a large role in their spread. One of the primary ones is wind. In the region, there are mostly western winds. Shortly after the smelter was put into operation, it was the people on the opposite side of the river who were most affected. It was there that the wind carried the poisonous fumes. The smoke also mixed with the clouds to create acid rain. This shows us the influence of natural conditions on the spread of pollution.

Tim Ingold (2005) would claim that this is because pollution is pollution-in-environment. These are substances in the medium, which is air. When we discuss contamination, it is important to remember that. This makes it possible for dust to move to other places using the properties of the medium. Local weather plays an important role in pollution mobility, and each region has its own specifics.

Another example is the agency of plants and animals in the movement of pollutants. A landfill site has been created next to the smelter, which is now also connected to the city's

⁵ Field note from interviews with residents.

landfill. The landfills are located in the former village of Biechow. Trees have been planted around them. During my walks, I observed how rubbish was blown away by the wind and stopped on the trees and bushes. What's more, the rubbish was also scattered by animals, including birds, which searched among the waste for food as well as nesting materials. This aspect of rubbish and animals is dealt with in anthropology by, among others, Doherty (2019). Contamination exists in the world, which we share with other species. Animals can use things that we treat as dirty/rubbish, as useful objects. They don't have a culture, with rules, that define dirt and cleanliness, and their practice. They are driven by the opportunities, or maybe better: affordances (Gibson, 1986), offered by the environment in which they find themselves. This makes it imperative that when we think about waste disposal, we should take into account the presence of non-human entities, as they too can affect the environment.

Summary: ecological definition of pollution?

My observations lead me to attempt a new definition of pollution that takes into account the influence of the non-human world. I propose to broaden the field of research, to green it. This is necessary because, as I have pointed out, we are not the only users of the environment. In times of climate crisis, it is also necessary to think not only about the future of the human species but also of other non-human beings. A new definition of pollution would be inspired by Ingold's (2000; 2005) environmental theory, Haraway's (2003) associated species, Irvine's (2014) long time perspective, Gell's (2012) relational concept of agency, or finally Tsing's (2015) more-than-human anthropology. Living in the Anthropocene era forces us to ecologise the humanities. Redefining the terms, we use and broadening our field of research. In the face of the ongoing climate crisis, we cannot continue to separate the human world from the natural world.

My text is intended to show that the subject of pollution shows us that we need to study it not only as a relationship between man and nature. I believe that we should look beyond that. Transrelational ethnography, as proposed by the Polish anthropologist Katarzyna Majbroda (2021) is one such invitation. Both humans and non-humans create one and the same environment, transforming it through habitation. Our cooperation has an

impact on the level of pollution and its spread. Changing the previous perspective on the topic of pollution makes it possible to see hitherto overlooked threads - including potential fields of cooperation that can help save polluted ecosystems. Thinking holistically about pollution in this way can help to better combat it and take care of the common environment.

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Expressing the City Today | The Use of Youth Culture in Event-Led Urban Regeneration

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Introduction

Events-themed regeneration projects are at the core of the grant-based economy, and many small enterprises in a town in Emilia Romagna region, Italy, function within this system, fueling the popularity of grant-subsidized activities and using public funding to support their daily operations. Smaller provincial cities rarely win competitions to host mega-events which would mobilize larger capital and marketing campaigns, but smaller events are often used for urban redevelopment and branding. The cooperative model of urban development has been largely promoted in the European Union through large funding schemes. On a local level, a network of various actors with interests in a given space works in “synergy” to spend grants on issues such as the requalification of urban spaces, the contrast of gentrification, and the implementation of mechanisms that prevent property speculation or contrast urban poverty. The network of multiple entities collaborating on targeted actions should allow one to exercise better control over how funding is used, but this method also triggers a fragmentation of goals and responsibilities, which often leads to complete projects that lack tangible effects on the territory.

The town featured in this study has entered EU funding schemes relatively recently, but it has used the cooperative model of economy in many fields, including health and welfare provision, and private cooperative entities have also been subcontractors of public services. Today, the combination of new and well-established cooperatives, non-profit organizations, and volunteering organizations creates a complex net of organizations working in the social and cultural sector. Organizations must navigate a complex web of alliances to secure financial support from the municipality or from the region, to gain access to the empty spaces in the city, or to have temporary use of public spaces. Single

organizations or groups of organizations often develop a sphere of influence in parts of the city, acting as semi-formal gatekeepers.

In what follows, I describe how one small-scale event came to be in this municipality, in the Emilia-Romagna region of Northern Italy. Particularly, I consider the cultural and social significance of the event itself, its effect on participants, and how it was used by local stakeholders within the frame of grants-based “eventification” (Jakob, 2013). In the event analyzed, we can see two forces at play: a youth center association which places youth socialization at its core interests, and a non-profit organization involved in urban redevelopment projects. The collaboration between different organizations active in the local territory is based on a negotiation of goals, methods, and practices done at multiple levels of hierarchy, which leads, I claim, to achieving the set goals only superficially. People who are supposed to benefit from the program launched are the last ones to be called upon, and their needs and desires are not addressed.

An afternoon of street art in the public space

Sangue Misto's SxM (1994), according to many hip-hop enthusiasts, was the first hip-hop album in Italian history. Today, it echoes throughout the entire Magnani area, a former industrial site a few hundred meters away from the town's train station. The source of the music is a JBL Bluetooth speaker on the west side of the area, where the remains of the Magnani factory were turned into a green open space used by residents to walk dogs and let young children play. A dozen people, benefiting from the clear weather of a spring Saturday afternoon, are gathered around a large wood panel painted dark green. It is a group from Cag, one of the two youth centers in town. Susan's attempts to keep her phone connected to the Bluetooth speaker to play her and Mattia's favorite pop songs using my Wi-Fi hotspot are proving unsuccessful. Noah and Franco arrive with all the painting equipment and immediately take control of the speaker while mocking Mattia and Susan over their choice of music and their ignorance of the iconic hip-hop band. They are carrying several boxes of spray cans arranged by color, paint, water buckets, brushes and brush extensions, gloves, gas masks, tape, and all sorts of other instruments, which indicate this is not their first afternoon of open-air painting, the *graffitata*, as they call it. The rest of the

group is much less prepared. Our clothes are clear from any drop of paint or handy-work residuals, and our ability to hold and use spray cans is questionable at best. FRANCO, the artist, is supposed to guide the group in painting a panel on the topic of environmental sustainability and, in so doing, contribute to raising awareness of the EU's 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals.

The educators at Cag planned this simple and sincere afternoon weeks in advance. Regulars at Cag took part in some of the preparatory activities for the main painting event, preparing the panel by painting it on both sides with dark green paint and arranging the spray cans. Cag had many cans in storage. Some were old, others were empty or without caps, all unsystematically placed in boxes and bags. During a busy afternoon at the center, the group reorganized the cans according to color shades, substituted broken caps, and disposed of the empty or dry cans. Dozens of hands helped complete the cans' reorganization in as little as an hour. Painting the background in green was a harder task but was completed over two days thanks to Vincenzo's unwavering organizational and practical skills. Vincenzo, a Cag regular with strong experience in painting and construction work, took it upon himself to make the panel the best green possible and taught everyone how to use paint rollers so that the color would be evenly spread without marks and imprecisions. As Cag's closing time was approaching, Davide and Antonia, the social worker, took bigger paint rollers to quickly fill color gaps in the panel's middle. Lesser was the engagement with the conceptual aspects of the project. The street art piece was meant to reflect on one of the Goals of the Agenda 2030, but this agenda did not generate much interest in the group. One afternoon, Antonia gathered the group outside the center, circulated a printout illustrating the goals, and listed the points. "Which ones do you find more interesting?" she asked encouragingly. Someone called attention to the "Gender Equality" goal, others pointed out the "Climate Action." These two themes were decided quickly, the gathering was dissolved in less than ten minutes, and everyone returned to their usual afternoon routine, playing table football and music on YouTube. Antonia seemed relieved to tick the selection of the agenda goal off her "to-do-list". Once the group selected the panel theme, Franco, the leading artist, stopped by Cag to discuss the reference image for the panel. He suggested painting something featuring birds, especially the iconic image of the dove on a tree. He had asked the group to think of ideas and send him

reference photos via Antonia. In the days leading up to the open-air painting session, Antonia kept reminding the group about the image and, as Franco had not received much input, he ended up choosing a photo himself. That Saturday afternoon, only three of the regulars at Cag came, together with the two educators, me and the two artists. Many others said they were busy with their usual Saturday activities, and even Vincenzo, who put much effort into the panel's background, preferred an afternoon at a beer garden outside town to the afternoon with Cag's group.

Despite the smaller-than-usual number, the Cag regulars try their best at maneuvering spray cans with irony, following Franco's instructions with reverence. Franco takes time explaining to them what to do with minimum details, inviting them to stop often, step back, look at the panel in its entirety, and compare the work with the reference image. However, the teens' contributions to the panel remain limited to gap-filling and background. Franco and Noah take the lead in drawing the image's outline and its main features. The artists' families, friends, and several members of the cooperative managing Cag came and went throughout the afternoon, often accompanied by their partners and children. For most of them, this is a chance to chat and show support for the event, but a few men picked up spray cans themselves and started working on the panel with dexterity and a few directions. The adults' familiarity with each other and with the graffiti tools makes me wonder if some of them are the same people I see in Cag's archival photos, busy painting the buildings' internal and external walls.

Going back in time: young people and placemaking

Imaging how past events occurred through archival photos involves hypothesizing, and there will always be uncertainty in our estimation of how events took place. Nonetheless, comparing a large volume of photos of events often narrated in Cag's oral history with the observation of the graffittata to which I participated in May 2021, made me wonder who the target audience of this event was.

On the center's Facebook page, a folder from April 2010 collects about two hundred photos picturing the murals inside the old youth center building and the process of making them. Most of the images revolve around a single wall and show all the stages leading to its

mural's completion, from a dirty white wall to the result (to add image). In another folder, various disorganized images from July 2010 feature a girl painting the details of an outside door, several using large rules on the larger walls and someone using a glue-gun to paste broken CDs. A folder from March 2013 features five young men painting a wall at a refurbished space on the edges of the historical center briefly opened in 2013 for organizing events around the local Peace March. In the folder, several pictures display the same people painting, with several others watching them on the margins of the room and outside. There are also photos of teenagers busy cleaning the park paths of snow in winter or cooking on large grills in summer. The largest number of photos portray concerts and music festivals held in the park. This rich, and partly disorganized, archival visual material suggests that the teens who spent regular time at Cag in the early 2000s were hands-on with the refurbishment of the center and its surroundings and that they often chose street art as a medium of expression.

Street culture, and its manifestations through writing, breakdancing, and skateboarding, arrived in this provincial area only in the early 2000s, and it chose hardcore music as a soundtrack. Street art was just one of the many components of Do-It-Yourself (DIY), which is the main characteristic of underground culture. In Noah's¹ recounting of the Cag's history, DIY culture seems to have been the driving force of Cag's daily and extraordinary activities. In a semi-formal interview, Noah recounts that at the Cag's beginnings, there was "Punk-Rock, music played in groups that rejects keyboards and effects, with the 3 elements - guitar-bass-drums -, there [was] skateboarding, there [was] writing, and there [was] the DIY - do-it-yourself - a method which covered everything: I make the T-shirts myself or my friend makes them for me, I make my flyer myself, I organize my own event, if there is a concert, I bring my own amplifier. This was the surrogate for everything we have built [in the Cag]" (N., interview). The DIY culture promotes self-sufficiency, and it is holistic. It is not surprising to see that, at the time, it had extended beyond artistic production and consumption to the use of the space available. With the help of the two young social workers, dozens of teens took control of the park and

¹ Noah worked for many years as an educator at the Cag and helped establish it. Now he moved to an admin position in the San Francisco, but sometimes still helps plan specific events, especially if connected to street art.

adjusted it to fit its needs and to use the language of the subculture they felt they belonged to the most.

The social workers have now realized that street art, inadvertently, worked as a hook to bring in teens who would otherwise refuse to attend an “educative space”. Noah suggests that people who would have always refused to go to SERT or to talk to psychologists would often find themselves mixed up with Cag and its proposed activities without realizing the educative purpose of this space. Once involved with Cag’s members and activities, they would willingly accept the social workers’ educative role and, at times, directly ask for help.

“People who have always refused (to go to the SERT or to speak to a psychologist) who found themselves at that point entangled in a place that discovered that it was educational and willingly let themselves be educated, this is a bit of the positive trap of the low threshold. You come there because you see that there is a concert, that there is a moment of celebration, a graffiti, you begin to feel that there is movement there or your group of friends begins to hang out there or a person you know, you discover that you are comfortable with it (and therefore the task of the social workers is always to try to build a welcoming concept with as wide a mesh as possible).”

Engaging in DIY, in particular, teaches one to take responsibility for one’s environment and adjust it. In his study in Indianapolis, Carriere (2022) noted that the engagement with DIY and the experience of creating a community space concerned with art and politics as a kid, persist in people’s personal lives, careers, art, and activism as they become adults. But youth alternative culture has been instrumental in placemaking in many different settings globally, with squatting and rave culture perhaps being some of the most iconic examples.

As street culture’s utility as a pedagogical tool has been accepted among social workers and local politicians, social workers have taken aspects of youth underground culture – for example, music consumption and production (usually hip-hop or punk rock writing or dancing) - and used them as tools for educational programs in schools, community spaces, penitentiary houses, and other similar spaces. Particularly, Hip hop

culture's strengths in dealing with marginalized communities have been proven in various contexts globally, departing from its origins in the United States. For example, Martins and Canevacci (2018) show how, in the Lusophone context of São Paulo and Lisbon, hip-hop stimulates civic participation and helps develop new social connections for young people in marginalized groups who become 'authors of their reality' (p. 22). The authors show how "Hip-hop stimulates civic participation and helps develop new social connections among youth" in San Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. In Italy, former hip-hop artists such as Amir Issa (2022) or Diamante, to name just some of the main known representatives of this trend, transformed their artistic practice into a pedagogical project. They all agree that activities linked to hip-hop contribute to the citizenship-building of young people who engage in a 'deconstruction of subalternities' (p. 32) when speaking in the first person and engaging in empowering educational projects that use alternative pedagogical methodologies.

As suggested by Noah, in the first years of the Cag, the engagement with aspects of youth alternative culture was not directly understood as a pedagogical methodology, but it actually emerged from the interests of the young people hanging around the Cag and from a desire to fuel this socialization. Nowadays, at Cag, one will rarely hear any punk or underground hip-hop, but more commonly the most recent and commercially known trap tracks, the latest mainstream hits, and some occasional reggaeton songs. In the context of Cag, this culture doesn't seem to represent the needs of the teens of this generation – or at least of the cohort of teens participating in Cag's activities - at the time of my research. Various aspects of hard-core and hip-hop culture appear in today's youth gathering in Cag but are initiated by the social educators and follow a model of what young people's gatherings could be and used to be.

Situating the painting event between two sites undergoing requalification

Considering the live painting solely as a reenactment of events common in the past would be ignoring the machinery at play in making this afternoon occur. This event was part of the larger project – Voices of The City - organized under the frame of the European Union's Development Education and Awareness Raising Program (DEAR). This project's aims are

said to be to “raise awareness among citizens, public entities, and political decision-makers in the EU on topics related to global development and the objectives of the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations in recognizing the role of cities and local authorities in reaching some of its Sustainable Development Goals” (Municipality’s website). Voices of The City was designed through the cooperation of six partners from the fields of community building, arts, urban regeneration, integration, and community welfare, who pooled resources to contribute to the 11th goal of the 2030 Agenda: making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, long-lasting, and sustainable.

To this end, they planned “urban planning observation workshops within upper secondary schools to stimulate a critical and in-depth look at the places in the city, (...) the design and creation of audio guides to be made available to the population for guided tours of the city that bring out alternative narratives; aggregation activities aimed at minors to enhance the living and meeting spaces in the urban areas identified through dance and artistic creation; and the creation of communication materials, that can tell the project within the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and remain usable even after its conclusion.” These activities were organized over several months and interrupted by the pandemic. The weekend here described was officially described as “aggregation activities aimed at minors, from which to give rise to interventions to enhance the living and meeting spaces in the urban areas identified, through dance and artistic creation”: a street dance event was held for three consecutive days, Friday to Sunday. The weekend I describe in this paper is just a small part of the Voices of The City project, and it was led by San FRANCO and Cag, who managed the street art event, and by the Ex-Group. The Cag group attended it on Friday and the art workshop described above, while other teens were following the third dance workshop at the same location.

Although the official number of associations involved in the Voices Of The City project was six the project is led primarily by the Atac group and in a smaller part, by the San Francesco Onlus/Cag group. Unifying the four out of six organizations listed as partners of the project under the Atac group is not only convenient for this text. These organizations are all involved with the Atac building unit, and it reflects people’s perception of them in town.

Atac used to be the headquarters and warehouse of a local transport business. Its entire site was left vacant in the '90s as the transport enterprise moved into a larger space. Since 2010, two associations (one involved in performative art and the second in mapping and regeneration of urban vacancy) have taken an interest in this area, which is conveniently located on the margins of the historical center and represents a picturesque totalitarian architectural unit. They finally negotiated temporary use of the space with the owners in 2014 and the Atac building became the headquarters of their activities, and the location for festivals and various public events. They eventually convinced the local municipality to purchase the site and to invest in transforming it into a cultural hub, open to all organizations in town but managed by the two associations above. A few groups today rotate around this space, using it for activities, but the area is only partially accessible, still in need of costly refurbishment, and requiring further funding.

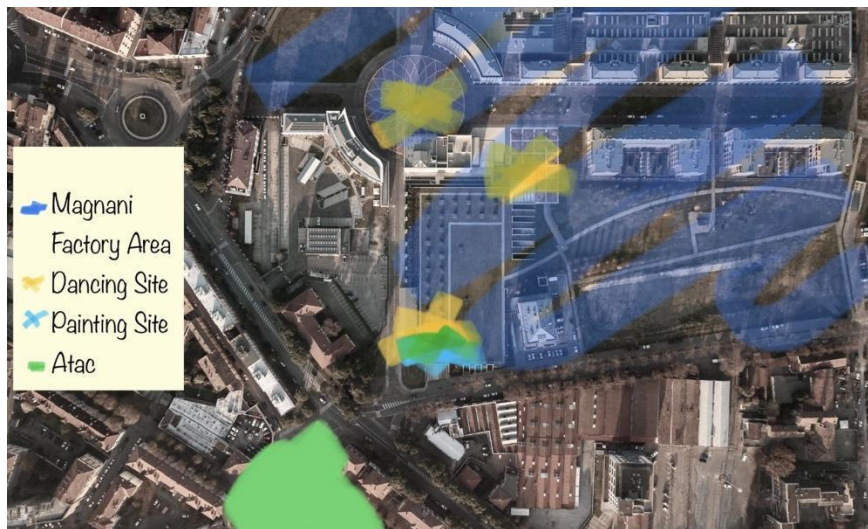


Figure 1. A map of the area showing where the event took place in relation to the areas object of requalification (Source, my elaboration on Atac's map)

For the past few years, the activities pursued by the Atac group have revolved around the theme of “rethinking spaces and forms in a contemporary perspective” - as they call it - and it has been used as a site, both Atac's site and the area around it. Particularly, the small Voices of the City event was launched (and only postponed because of lockdowns) at a time when Atac group was carrying out all sorts of small events to connect with the

neighborhood and to “co-design” public spaces by adding children’s parks, porches, decorations, and the creation of “urban lines”, which connect spaces of the city. These lines include the Magnani area, just a few hundred meters away from Atac (See Figure 1).

I participated in only one out of three dance workshops, the one aimed specifically at the Cag group and held on Friday, the day before the painting action. Antonia advertised the dance afternoon in advance, registered participants interested in the event, and tried to convince others to attend by showing them videos of lo-fi dance practices. Many more people attended the Friday dance event than the Saturday one, perhaps because the group was used to spending all their weekday afternoons in each other’s company. Most of the people gathered at Cag earlier than the usual opening time and walked together to the rehearsal space, about 20 minutes away by foot. Others were driven later in the afternoon by Davide on the cooperative’s van, directly from their after-school program at the cooperative. Before performing at the Magnani site, the group rehearsed the steps at Atac, under the guidance of Sabina, a performing artist invited for the occasion.

Nobody grasped the logic and rhythm of the dance. Sabina was a patient instructor but not well-equipped to deal with the Cag group. To teach us one choreography, she positioned us in a circle, facing the group, making it very difficult to understand the directions of the steps and to follow her. We suggested that she turn, and halfway through the afternoon, she followed the advice so that we didn’t need to mirror her movements but copy them. The groups started to grasp the basic elements of the choreography only after the instructor repeated it several times. Sabina insisted that everyone practice the choreography stepping alone in order to learn the movements better and using her laptop’s camera booth as a mirror, even though Antonia suggested doing them all together to avoid spotlighting anyone. Eventually, the group moved to the performance site, the underground parking space at the Magnani site.

The site chosen for the performance was central to this event’s organization. A member of staff from Atac joined us to explain the value of dancing on this site: the area is considered a sketchy area, but many young people come here to skate and engage in other activities. “With our work - they said - we want to show how young people can use these spaces, especially this parking lot.” The same message would be repeated on the organization’s social media page, but the intervention of “urban regeneration” seemed to

remain a discursive practice. More than dancing in the public space, the group ended up dancing in front of a camera strategically positioned to showcase the public space. There are two cameras: Sabina places her computer on the floor with the photo booth open, while the second staff member from Atac places a phone on a small tripod. Though the camera only frames a minimal part of the parking lot, it defines the space of the performance and its nature. Dancing only occurs in front of the camera, and it stops suddenly when the dancers' feet exit the frame. Nobody seems interested in or perhaps able to replicate the more complex choreography or to invent their own steps. Sabina instructs the group to follow more simple jumps and turns, and eventually, most of the group ends up trying out a few steps. Nobody is interested in repeating or practicing, and after conforming to the requested task ("to do a few steps in front of the camera"), the group ends up sitting around and chatting.

Only six months later would an edited video appear on the hosting organization's Instagram page. This was a five-minute mix of all three days of the workshop shot in various parts of the industrial site, which included a group dancing in front of our panel while the artist was busy painting. Lots of the images featured the instructor herself, recognizable from the clothing and shoes. Three shorter cuts of the same video were reposted throughout the following page on the same Instagram page, and a photo of the event was used to advertise an unrelated event. The heavy recording during the days and dissemination on social media after the event suggest that the organization's core interest was in the mediatization of this activity.

The photo has the following caption: "we concurred the city with dance steps! Sunday ended the three days of the workshop footwork led by @nameoftheinstructor. It was beautiful to be able to meet safety at Atac, to study the steps and to then go and perform at the Magnani area.

Media is a powerful tool for "discursive investing" in digital place-making (Zukin et al. 2017), and Bronsvoort and Uitermark, 2022). The representation of the event on social media suggests the "reconquering of the public space" but through dancing doesn't mirror the event attended, as described above. None of the participants attending the workshop had a direct connection with the area of intervention; only one person lived in the area. Through an event like this one, the organization took ownership of the public place and

brought people who otherwise might not have come to this area, and it is unclear if they will now come to this area more, especially in the absence of an event.

According to the organizers of this event, this area “is known in the collective imagination of the people of the town for being an empty, degraded, and unsafe place”. However, the scale of this degradation and unsafety is exaggerated. The local press had told stories of some drug dealing happening in the area or occasional arrests for public disorder (usually a few drunk people), and certainly, cans of beer or empty broken glasses are occasionally found in the middle of the Magnani inner square. But the same area has hosted for many years the only mall in the town, built inside the re-qualified former factory, and for many winters, the local ice-skating rink was installed there. If the area was that degraded and unsafe, certainly nobody would have allowed their children to spend long afternoons in the winter dark around there. The area suffered a “degradation” after the opening of a bigger and more modern mall further away from the city (which nowadays also took over the winter ice skating rink). Nowadays, it functions as a walking path connecting the historical center to the train station. Maybe this discursive investment starts at an earlier stage than what Zukin et al. (2017) and Bronsvoort and Uitermark (2022) suggest, at creating a collective imaginary of a space that doesn’t even have commercial units by showing the need to be requalified and make gentrification an acceptable solution.

In a brief text about this area, written during one of Atac’s workshops about this area, a participant agrees with my rejection of this negative connotation. They say: “the area is not downgraded in the usual sense of the word. It certainly isn't for those who live there or walk through it today. The real degradation is having broken that very strong thread (...) that binds the partisan Magnani to the working class Magnani of the seventies, the thread of a times of labor rights and social conquests. The same thread that today needs to be patiently knotted again”. The writer recalls the history of the social uprising that took place here during the resistance years and the ‘70s, calling for this area to become once again a site of social resistance. The history of the factory, which closed in mid ‘70s, is mostly nonreferred to in the site’s modern refurbishment, except for its iconic chimney cake which is conserved to this day. Moments of the local industrial history are rarely mentioned by Atac too, which lie in the aesthetic value of the industrial heritage and not its

historical nature. Yet, as exemplified by the citation above, they relay and reproduce a common desire to see areas of the city gain social significance and embody a sense of community, however undefined and polarized.

The nature of collaborations

Establishing partnerships and collaborations is at the core of grant-based economy, but in a low-density setting, there is a limited choice of partners, and all organisations eventually partner up with each other. In the events described here, it seems that the resulting outcomes were neither harmonious nor consistent with the stated projects' intentions. Despite officially sharing an event, a theme, and a location, the two groups operated alone. Perhaps their collaboration was much stronger in other stages of organisation that I didn't witness, but during the days of the event, their interaction was forced and at times hostile.

None of the Cag group were thrilled by the event, nor did they have a friendly interaction with the organisers. In fact, some actually seem to have been unhappy with how the event happened. Complaints were raised throughout the afternoon, and various elements were not appreciated. Susan especially kept quietly complaining about the way the steps were taught and only tried to take part because of Antonia's encouragement. While chatting on the ground and looking at other paintings, I learned that some teenagers overheard the event organisers saying something along the lines of "they are all disabled, they are useless at this stuff". Perhaps the negative experience of the previous day had contributed to a lesser participation at the live painting afternoon, although for many Saturdays it wasn't a "Cag day" and they preferred to follow up on their usual Saturday plans, like strolling around the mall or the city center. The event wasn't appreciated by Cag's staff either. "I didn't realise today was about creating promo material for them", Antonia tells me quietly when nobody else is paying attention. "I am living this day very badly – *Me la sto vivendo malissimo questa giornata*". Despite the overwhelming presence of the camera, few images of our group will be posted in the following days. "They didn't post any photos of us, did they?" Antonia pointed out that the very first post about the event featured only the teens attending the Saturday workshop. The interaction between the Atac group and the Cag group continued to be two-faced during the Saturday as well:

cordial in direct interaction and condescending behind back. When on Saturday a Lo-Fi group arrives at the live painting, they forcefully change the music (“if it is street dance, shouldn’t they be able to dance on hip-hop too?”, Noah would joke before agreeing to change the music). The Lo-Fi group wants to dance with the painted panel as a background, but for this to happen, the artists need to stop working and let them dance. Pressured by the quickly passing time and the amount of work needed to complete the panel, the artists and organisers disregarded this request, and the dancing group failed to have a clean and empty background for their video.

Although the intentions of the organisers of the event here described are not fully known to me and I can only rely on the official documentation available, overall, my observations suggest that their goals were divergent. The Cag educators were more interested in using the painting and the dancing as a way of providing an opportunity to introduce Cag’s members to activities they rarely engage in but might enjoy, push them outside their routine, and provide an environment for socialisation. For them, the quality of the art and their representation on social media were marginal. However, the modality of the event and the artistic choices were imposed on the participants, and worse, it contributed to an agenda they did not share.

The association of youth dancing and painting with spray cans in this area on social media creates an unbreakable connection between the young people and the area. The posts omit that they were brought there specifically for the event and implies authenticity and a space of belonging that doesn’t exist. The group of youngsters from Cag left their usual hangout area to do something special and eventful, which required some prior preparation on their part. They were heavily filmed and photographed while performing small choreographies they learned from the event, but they had little other audience besides themselves and the social workers accompanying them who also took part in the performances.

The Atac group’s use of this event, and certainly of other similar events, is understandable under the frame of “investment” provided by Zukin et al. (2017). I follow Bronsvort and Uitermark’s (2022) contribution to Zukin et al.’s notion of “discursive investment” in the sense “that people use their time and skills to communicate visual, textual, or physical representations of a place, be it an establishment, a street, a

neighbourhood, or a city. By shaping the image of the place, they depict, such representations partake in the construction of place and define who belongs. Discursive investing implies that people take an interest in a place and produce narratives and images that have material consequences” (2859). If for Zukin et al. Yelp reviewers are the discursive investors “in a taste-driven process of neighbourhood change” (475), in this context and time, Yelp has certainly been overtaken by Instagram. Atac’s use of social media has a “material effect on capital investment in the urban environment” and we shall see its effects in the coming years.

In a context where the idea of “community” and “social emancipation” is valued, Atac works on building a very specific type of neighbourhood identity that reflects these values. The “authenticity” of the urban environment is created a priori by bringing specific social groups to an urban area through an event and not through the grounded day-to-day lives of different social groups sharing the same urban setting. On the contrary, the organisation of collective cultural events not only turns the artists into “actors” but also transforms their neighbourhoods “into staged experiences of event consumption” (Jakob, 2013). Not only the artists (on this small scale, the instructors) are brought here, but the event fails to interact with the residents of the area, as most of the participants come from all across the town.

Conclusion

In this paper, I discussed how event-based urban regeneration occurs at the very micro level in a town in Emilia Romagna. The analysis shows how the “‘festivalization’ of urban politics” is no longer limited to the organisation of sporadic mega-events” (ibid 448) but also affects small-scale events held at the neighbourhood or district level. The “experience economy” is growing even in provincial municipalities in reaction to what happened in the urban metropolis. As Claude Fischer (1995) argues, “the size and density of cities lead to more diverse, extreme lifestyles and cultures” and by consequence, how events and festivals are used in urban development is by default adjusted to a low-density setting. For example, it is unsurprising that people travel from all across town and outside it to be in this shared public space, and it is probably impossible to have such a high concentration of

people interested in or in the position of taking part in this, and other events. The representation of this event creates a representation of it which doesn't mirror the interests and needs of the population living nearby.

By describing a two-day event, the dance workshop and the live street art action, involving and targeting young people, I wished how the proposed goals of two organisations dealing with youth socialisation and community-driven urban regeneration, respectively, manifested in the event itself Franco In the history of Cag (as explained in paper 2) writing and street art are were central to creating a space of belonging and identity for the youth, and this tool has been used across the town. In the case hereby discussed, street art was not a chosen medium of expression by the youth but was chosen by those with interests in defining public space. Although the event officially aims at empowering youth people by showing their "vision of the city", youth need in the city and their visions of it still remain unclear. By creating an association between the Magnani and young people engaging in artistic practices traditionally associated with youth underground culture, the organisers of this event not only cannot address the cultural specificity of the contemporary generation of youth but allowed their presence to be instrumentalized as part of their work of restyling of this setting.

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Iringó Tompa-Horváth

Vineyard in the shadow of the Iron Curtain | Viticulture and winemaking as forms of resistance and adaptation on the Vas-hegy (Eisenberg) in the 20th century

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Introduction

Since the early days of cultural anthropology and ethnography, special attention has been paid to borders and boundaries, as well as to the economic and social phenomena related to them. As complex and layered phenomena, borders are going beyond their physical presence. They can be physical or symbolic. They can be natural or artificial. They can be global, they can be local. They can be political, they can be cultural. They can be visible or invisible. What's more, they can be all of these at the same time, depending on what they mean to those who they affect. The essence of borders is that they are not historically permanent. During their continuous transformation, they collapse, arise, disappear or become spiritualized places of memory (Jeggle 1994).

In 2020, I chose a special point of the Austrian-Hungarian border region in Western-Hungary as the site of my fieldwork, where several different aspects of the border can be detected, and local history merged with them. Since then, I've been trying to understand and interpret the complexity of the border through the history of Vaskeresztes, and its grape-growing hill, called Vas-hegy (Eisenberg). I call the site special because the Austrian-Hungarian border cuts through this geographically and ecologically homogenous landscape and divides the territory of the hill between two countries. The twist in the story is that in this region there was no natural or artificial border before 1920. Until then the mountain and its surroundings belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The space-structure was open and provided unlimited passage to the residents of the region. Accordingly, the traditional socio-economic networks extended beyond the border which is known today.

From 1920 to 1989 the two sides were strictly separated by a militarized border. As a military object, the border itself has changed several times between these dates, thus I marked this period as the timeframe of my research. As I see, these changes can be interpreted as physical imprints of the most important historical events of the 20th century. The evolution of the border also followed the flow of the changing political winds. In 70 years, the border became from non-existent to visible then turned to heavily threatening, later slowly softened and finally collapsed and became almost invisible. Time by time, these dynamic changes forced the local residents to be resilient and adapt flexibly.

Many and more question arose in me about adaptation since I started this research. One of them questioned passivity and enlightened another aspect as an answer to changes. What if the residents tried to actively change their situation in crisis by being consciously resistant to the system? My theory is that local residents had the ability to resist and successfully adapt because they recognized their unique weapon: wine. In this paper, I'll try to prove the continuous presence of everyday resistance and adaptation through local examples in a wider historical context. I chose four turning points of general Hungarian history which had a fundamental impact on both the function of the border and the everyday lives of the people of Vaskeresztes. I hope that this micro-level case study can connect to the wider context of 20th century Hungarian rural history.

Wine on the border: a few words about the Vas-hegy (Eisenberg)

The Vas-hegy (Eisenberg) is located in Vas County, in the Western-Transdanubian region of Hungary. Three villages share the hill: Vaskeresztes and Felsőcsatár in Hungary, Eisenberg an der Pinka in Austria. The long, narrow lines of vines, old orchards and small cellars give the special character of the landscape. Looking at the charming and coherent landscape, it might not even occur to the viewer that two different countries can be seen in one place. Here, the landscape connects, while the border officially separates Hungary and Austria. Even though the border is almost invisible nowadays, a sharp-eyed hiker can still discover the remains of the formerly militarized border in many places. Boundary stones, concrete elements, wires and ruins of the guarding huts remind that a few decades ago, two countries, or even two whole worlds were strictly separated here by the border. Although,

a few decades ago people prepared their passports with fear before crossing, the border is almost imperceptible now and crossing is as free as it was before 1920.

Viti- and viniculture has centuries long tradition on the Vas-hegy. From the Middle Ages until the beginning of the First World War wine was the main source of income for the locals. Merchants sold the wine mainly to Austrian and German markets¹. The winehill has had a specific regulatory system since the 17th century. The institution called '*hegyközség*' had its own administration, written regulations and elected officials. On one hand, the purpose of this unique institution was to ensure the sustainable management of the land, and on the other hand, to create social coherence by transmitting collective memory, knowledge, traditions and identity. The fragmentation of the land started after the Abolition of Serfdom in 1853, as the vineyards became privately owned properties. After the Treaty of Trianon, the new border fundamentally changed the space-structure of the wine hill. New national regulation did not let winemakers freely sell their wine in the Austrian markets. Traditionally, the cultivation and procession of the grapes was made by hand or simple tools until the middle of the 20th century. Mechanization started only after collectivization. Despite the fact that winemaking was one of the most important branches of cooperative production here, local viticulture never developed into monoculture. The reason for this is that during the collectivization of the land, these small, fragmented, steep pieces of land were declared unsuitable for large-scale, monocultural cultivation. Official regulations let the owners keep their vineyards as private property. The long-lasting and intense presence of the border also affected the wine culture of the Vas-hegy. Even though viti- and viniculture still has a primary importance on both sides of the hill, the quantity and the quality of production shows significant differences in the two countries. In those years when the Hungarian side of the hill was almost inaccessible and even the winegrowers could only go to their cellars with special licenses in their pocket, the industrialized, capitalist type of production had already started on the Austrian side. The wine production of the Vas-hegy in Hungary remained primarily for self-sufficiency and

¹ The western direction in trading was based on historical tradition. Since the Middle Ages, most of the vineyards on the Vas-hegy were owned by 'extraneous' Styrian nobles. The serfs of the village were given the opportunity to cultivate the grape and make wine in order to keep a specified amount of the product.

small-scale sale, whilst on the other side high-quality production made Eisenberg one of the most important wine regions of Austria.

Keywords, methods, and the background of the research

The issue of this paper is a quite new subtopic of my ongoing doctoral research. In general, I examine connections and interactions between the border, the landscape and people. To interpret changes in social, economic and cultural structures of the examined community, I use the transformation of the landscape as illustration. The narratives about the landscape help me to understand how the local community was tied to the border and coped with its changes. I categorized my doctoral research as an intersection of landscape studies, border studies and ethnology. We can confidently consider all of these as interdisciplinary fields of research, in which countless methodological trends can be used. One of the most important keywords of this subject is '*border*'. A detailed definition of the term itself would fill the whole frame of this paper, thus I am limited to explanations related to my own research. At first, fundamental distinction between physical and symbolic border-interpretations should be made. My research focuses mostly on physical borders and interprets them within the framework of political geography. According to this approach, the border can be defined as an externally constructed, artificially created limitation of a state, whose main function is to demarcate the territory of the state and to protect its sovereignty. At the same time, it can be described as a more or less passable, dynamically changing line between two countries, which not only divides but also connects by providing new possibilities and resources to the residents of the border region. Created by official actors of power, national borders establish physical limitations and restrict the dynamic flow of capital, resources and people. The urge to find a way out of peripheral position, forces the residents of the border region to rearrange their life strategies flexibly (Ruotsala 2015). From this point of view, various social, economical and cultural cross-border relations and networks can be detected and described (Aschauer 1995). In this context, the border is not only a physical object, but also a social fact (Böröcz 2002).

In my opinion, the ethnological and anthropological point of view in border research helps to reveal and interpret the complex connections of borders and communities. The

ethnographical description of a border can be carried out from different methodological directions. Regarding my own research, I considered the so-called '*deductive method*' to be the guiding principle. In the deductive approach „the starting point of the ethnographic research is the border, as an external, given category, that defines political units, and the question of the research is how this border affects the people living in its area" (Mészáros 2015(1):13). I added a little to the question since my theory is that not only the border affects those living near it, but the communities also shape the border in their own way. Needless to say, the question is how?

My actual answer to this question is: everyday resistance. For me, the phenomenon of resistance is a bit similar to the earlier described concept of the border. I sense layeredness and polarities in the appearance of resistance. The better-known types of resistance are loud, spectacular and usually end in a cathartic way. These classical forms of resistance are usually known from general history. Besides these, there are also smaller, almost hidden forms of resistance. James S. Scott called and categorized them as everyday forms of peasant resistance (Scott 1996). According to Scott, the said-to-be powerless individuals, groups and communities are actually hardly ever only passive victims of a regime's rule, because they have the ability to somehow shape the system a bit. In Scott's theory, crises force oppressed communities, groups or people to find their own specific way of resistance and adaptation. Usually, these are based on local resources, since the political system limits the access to wider, external goods. Unlike direct opposition, everyday forms of resistance avoid spectacular, violent manifestations. Perpetrators do not want to draw attention to themselves. These are usually small-scale actions that are carried out almost secretly in a smaller community, with the implicit cooperation of the members. The goal is the assertion of interests, while avoiding the threatening sanctions of the official authority (Scott 1985). Scott presents numerous examples of everyday peasant resistance, such as petition, assembly, march, protest, the conscious slowdown of work, feigned obedience, strike, desertion, sabotage or smuggling. These strategies of everyday resistance are intensified when personal lives are threatened, or subsistence is jeopardized. Scott emphasizes that if these techniques and strategies are used widely and persistently, they can sooner or later bring a change in the structures of the official exercise of power by creating a compulsion to compromise (Scott 1977). If a compromise is reached, living

conditions can improve so everyday resistance can turn into active adaptation (Fitzpatrick 1994). This pattern has shown itself in my research site as well, where the resources of long-term resistance were grape and wine.

Since I started my research, I did participant observation on field and made numerous interviews². I realized that grapes, wine and land – along with Swabian ethnicity and border consciousness - were fundamental cornerstones of social cohesion in the community. From the beginning, I collected several narratives about how different and important vineyards have always been for the local residents. It is well-known that wine hills are not only working places, but also active social spaces (Illés 2017). Usually mnemonic places, where tradition is passed on through a unique regulatory system (Simon 2015). This function made the vineyard a place of shelter, rest and freedom (Ambrus – Csoma – Somlósi 2003). Nevertheless, I sensed something more while analyzing the narratives. As the collection of my gathered narratives grew, the wine hill loomed before me as a sovereign world which was almost independent from the village. It seemed that on the hill the regulations of the *outside* world could be broken. I felt like people sometimes went out to their cellars to stay *against* what was happening in the village. I understood the wider context only after I read the theory of everyday peasant resistance. After that, I started looking for signs of everyday resistance. Since these are unwritten, almost hidden or implicit acts, it's not easy to find their evidence. However, with the right questions everyday resistance can be dug out of personal or collective memory. Therefore, my research is mainly based on oral history. In parallel, I also searched in archival sources³ and found the official imprints of resistance. The documents are mostly complaining about the disobedient behavior of the residents and find their attitude to official regulations troublesome. When I compared the archived documents and the oral narratives, I realized that everyday resistance accompanied the 20th century history of Vaskeresztes in parallel with the existence of the border. It seems that the Vas-hegy and its centuries long tradition of viticulture and winemaking helped the locals to maintain resistance. I marked three

² I recorded 20 semi-structured interviews so far but the research is still incomplete so the amount is expected to increase.

³ I used several different kinds of documents related to Vaskeresztes from the collection of the National Archives of Hungary, Vas Country Archives and more recently the Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security.

historical turning points of the century - from the Treaty of Trianon, through the Expulsion of the Hungarian Germans and the collectivization until the collapse of the Iron Curtain - after which resistance strengthened. In the following, I'll present some local examples of everyday resistance connected to the viti- and viniculture of Vaskeresztes.

After Trianon: resistant answers to a newly formed border

Before the First World War, the area that is known today as the western border region of Hungary was a unified area with today's Burgenland of Austria. Neither geographic, nor social or cultural characteristics separated them sharply (Murber 2019). Before the First World War this region of Austria-Hungary was traditionally referred to as '*Westungarn*' or '*Deutsch-Westungarn*'. This name construction primarily referred to the traditional linguistic and ethnic characteristics of the region, since a large number of people with German origins lived here. In the years of the First World War, as a result of the war economy and food supply difficulties of the Austrian part of the empire, the economic importance of the region has increased, since it was highly suitable for agricultural production (Murber 2021). In the fall of 1918, the Austro-Hungarian Empire lost the war. Although both Hungary and Austria were defeated, the Government of Vienna put forward its claim to the German-populated areas of Western Hungary and with minor modifications, Austria received the requested territory. After the Treaty of Trianon, new borders were marked. The demarcation of the border was a multi-step process, carried out by a committee of international experts. During the demarcation, the main problem in the newly formed border region was that in many cases the cadastral maps of the affected villages were not taken into account (Suba 2019). Due to the traditional property structure, many owners happened to have plots of land in the other country. The abuse of private property caused general outrage among the local residents who started to act resistant against the new public administration system. Their behaviour finally necessitated the reorganization of the border. Around a dozen of the villages in the border region were annexed back to Hungary under the pressure of public demand. The eventual consolidation of the border was done in 1923. I realized that this period was full of spectacular examples of everyday resistance. Archived daily press seemed to be an excellent source for examination. Reports

and articles preserved the local acts of everyday resistance. Even though these articles pictured the life of not only Vaskeresztes and the Vas-hegy but also the whole micro-region, the transgenerational interviews and memories from my collection confirmed that the practices of everyday resistance were common there as well.

After the Austrian occupation, political mobilization began in many villages of the region. The aim of these campaigns was to fire the residents up to demand their return to Hungary. Residents formulated public requests, signed petitions and organized protests (Horváth 2020). Right after Trianon, Vaskeresztes and the Vas-hegy were annexed to Austria, but due to strong civil resistance, the village and the third of the mountain returned to Hungary. The transformed border was re-marked across the mountain. From this moment, the separation of this unified, homogeneous microworld has begun. The militarization of the mountain started shortly after. New objects - such as guarding towers, barriers, boundary stones - have appeared in the landscape. As an act of everyday resistance, these new infrastructural objects were regularly removed or damaged⁴. The early signs of the transformation of traditional landscape management began then, as the previously used paths, roads and bridges disappeared. The residents of the border region could no longer move or travel freely in the direction of Austria. The border could only be crossed at official border crossings. The changed spatial structure also limited the previous socio-economic relations. The vineyard-owners had several smaller plots all over the hill, which belonged to another country after the demarcation of the border. In this situation, the owners would not have been able to approach their property without unlawful passage. Merchants could only take goods across the border by paying duties. Commuter workers faced difficulties when crossing the border. In order to solve the situation and let everyday life to flow, the states provided various specific passes, licenses, and certificates to the residents of the border region (Bencsik 2007). Applying for permissions or certificates was complicated. The licenses could only be requested for one specific purpose, which severely restricted personal freedom. Unsurprisingly, these documents were often forged.⁵ The economic change soon had a serious impact on the border region after the limitless flow of goods had stopped. The previously available markets of the region were transferred to the territory of

⁴ Kőszeg és Vidéke, 28. January 1923, pp. 2.

⁵ Kőszeg és Vidéke, 22. October 1922, pp. 3.

two different countries, but there was still a strong social need to maintain transborder economic networks and relations. After the border appeared, the forms of informal economy quickly escalated and smuggling became common in the region. Despite the official restrictions, blackmarket was able to flourish in the region for a long time due to the food shortages and the economic crisis of Austria. The most sought-after contrabands from Hungary were butter, eggs, flour and sugar, but the most inventive smugglers even tried to drive livestock across the border⁶. In Vaskeresztes, wine also appeared as a commonly smuggled good because the official taxes on wine were too high to sustain profitable trading. Not only the liquid itself was valuable, but also the cellars and the barrels. Smugglers hid the goods in the cellars because it was easier to transfer anything across the border from a smaller location blended into nature. Barrels were suitable to upload with sugar, tobacco or flour.

The second half of the 1920s in the new border region of Western Hungary was spent processing the economic and social traumas associated with the rearrangement of the border and developing an attitude to adapt to the new situation. The economic, social and administrative fragmentation and disorientation of the war years strongly affected the region for a long time. The integration processes associated with the consolidation of the new border took place slowly and partially. As I see, these unstable circumstances supported the continuation of everyday resistance and made the economic and social structures of the new border region a bit *grayish*.

Adaptation as a form of resistance: strategies after the expulsion of the Hungarian Germans and the Czechoslovak–Hungarian population exchange

The village had barely recovered from the trauma of Trianon and the Great Depression when Hungary entered the Second World War. Like most villages in the western border region, Vaskeresztes was a transit area for the Hungarian and German armies as well as civilian refugees. The war intensified and strengthened the militarization of the landscape. Eisenberg was bombed and there were even armed conflicts between the vines. Even

⁶ Kőszeg és Vidéke, 5. November 1922, pp. 2.; 28. January 1923, pp. 3.

though the landscape received several wounds, the village itself was mostly spared from the destruction of the war. The former flexibility of the Trianon border has ceased. Although border traffic was restored for a short time immediately after the war, the changing political winds and the new regime in Hungary no longer supported the previous conditions.

After 1945, a new dimension of terror and seclusion started in the country and concentrated in border regions, especially where the non-Hungarian ethnicities lived. Sovietization started with the abolition of private property and the – so called – modernization of agriculture. The soviet normatives of large-scale agricultural production required large, integrated pieces of land which wasn't common in rural Hungary before. For agricultural transformation, the state acquired new territories through expropriation. The acts of the new regime severely violated personal freedom and threatened the lives of the people. That time Vaskeresztes was affected by the expulsion of Hungarian Germans⁷. Ethnic identity and personal freedom were seriously violated (Márkus 2020). The decree on the expulsion was published in the last days of 1945 and implemented in 1946 (Zielbauer 2002). After the deportation was done, the lands of the victims became state property. The expulsion was soon followed by an exchange of the population. The agreement on the Czechoslovak-Hungarian population exchange was concluded in 1946. Several families from Upper Hungary were moved to Vaskeresztes in 1948. They were planned to be accommodated in the houses of the previously expelled but since there weren't enough free houses for them, the officers of the Hungarian Communist party removed local families from their homes in order to settle the newcomers down. Families, who were forced to leave their homes, only had 24 hours to pack and move out. They were not allowed to keep any of their animals, agricultural tools or materials. They lost not only their homes but also the most important conditions and supplies of traditional farming. The authorities did not provide any opportunity to accommodate the evicted. They ended up on the street. Based on the 1949 census data, despite all this struggles, almost no one left the village in these troublesome years⁸. People resisted the violent oppression of authorities

⁷ The expulsion applied to all citizens who declared themselves to be of German nationality or native speaker in the 1941 census.

⁸ 1949 CENSUS 9. Demographic results (1950), Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), pp.136.

and refused to flee. Instead of leaving, the dragged residents found their way to adapt and stay. Some got shelter at their relatives, whilst several families chose to live in their vineyard cellars. Based on the narratives, a whole neighborhood formed on the Vas-hegy. Winegrowers continued to make wine and sold it to the newcomers and even to the soldiers and officers who served in the village. Also happened that the Upper Hungarian families let the previous local owners to use their sheds and tools in exchange for wine.

„We were evicted from this house and the authorities gave it to an Upper Hungarian family. I was three years old then. I don't remember much from my childhood, but that day is deeply etched in my memory. An officer shouted at us that we had 24 hours to leave our home. We could only take what my mother could pack. Clothes, some household items, nothing else. And yet, what a yard it was! Full of sheds, animals, tools. That's all were taken. My father took us up to the cellar in the vineyard. There was a small room with a stove, so we moved into it. I went to kindergarten in the village from there for years. There were several families like us. Those who had nowhere to go, moved into the cellar instead of leaving the village.”⁹

„Our situation was hopeless, but in the end my father agreed with that Upper Hungarian man to let him use the tools and machines, because we would not have been able to make a living otherwise. We brought wine in return, because we had our own grapes, and we made wine every year. That's why we didn't leave. We wanted to stay on our own land. That's it.”¹⁰

The long-term consequences of the collective social and economic traumas between 1945 and 1948 left a serious mark on the history of the village. As I see, persecution strengthened the resistant attitude of the community against the regime. In order to protect their lives and freedom, people chose adaptation as a form of resistance. I call this *silent resistance*, which means that people keep their traumas alive until the right time for further resistance. The Vas-hegy and its specific function in social coherence helped this community to adapt and get ready for resistance.

⁹ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 78 yo.

¹⁰ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 82 yo.

Passive resistance in the shadow of the Iron Curtain

The social transformation of the village was not yet over after the expulsion and the population exchange, the community had to face another trauma. The post-war protection of the border became a main state security issue. After the Iron Curtain was built in 1949, unprecedented isolation and heavy structuring began at the border zone. The well-known military object was designed to prevent crossing at any cost. The history of the Hungarian section of the Iron Curtain can be divided into three periods. Each period reflected the current changes in domestic policy and foreign relations (Sallai 2012). The militarization of the landscape reached the top during the construction of the Iron Curtain. A buffer zone was created near the structure of the border. This lane had to be cleared, and regularly maintained. Since the zone affected private properties as well, confiscation and expropriation took place but the owners were still obliged to remove the vegetation, regardless of what the area was used for previously. Hundreds of vines were cut down that time. The spatial structure became even more closed, and the possibility of free movement was drastically reduced. Every step in the zone was watched. Vineyard owners could only access their cellars and plantations with a special permit and were only allowed to stay there during daylight.

„Practically no one could enter the village, but going out wasn't easy either. No stranger could approach the vineyards and the border. This village has become such a dead end. For example, we could only go out to the vineyard if we had the permit papers and identity cards. We also got unique identification numbers. However, we weren't able to be out as much as we would have wanted. For example, it was forbidden to stay overnight, which was quite common before the Iron Curtain. When it started to get dark, everyone was driven down. Those who did not pick up their ID on time were immediately accused of running away. The soldiers watched us arrive, work and leave.”¹¹

In this period, smuggling revived, especially migrant smuggling, which had a specific infrastructure in the border region. However, this was done primarily for personal gain, not as an expression of resistance against the regime.

¹¹ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 82 yo.

„One definitely had to have a local connection, because one had to know the landscape to organize the transition. There was a demand, and several people were involved in human smuggling, there was no secret. Some may honestly wanted to somehow help the defectors to escape...I can imagine that as well... But as I see, most of the smugglers only saw business and easy valuta in these acts. That's more likely to be the truth.”¹²

During the existence of the Iron Curtain, the Scottian forms of everyday resistance were not significantly linked to the border, but rather attached to private property, independent work and secure livelihood. All the mentioned issues were threatened after the forced transformation of agriculture began in 1948. The resistance peaked when the government implemented the Stalinist model of collectivization on the previously independent farmers. A specific attitude has formed nationwide against the newly founded agricultural cooperatives and cooperative work that „had caused producers' cooperatives to become sites of passive resistance whereby the majority of members either sabotaged collective agricultural work or reduced production to a minimum” (Varga 2013:150). Everyday resistance in the cooperatives included such acts as work avoidance, shortening of work time, leaving without permission, decreasing the quality of work or stealing materials from the cooperative (Varga 2015). These trends were valid at a national level. The serious problems of the agricultural sector called for change (Varga 2009). As a result of the changing power reactions, a specific form of collectivization developed, which permitted, for example, the expansion of private production, the modification of labor remuneration, and the transformation of the work organization (Varga 2006). The goal was to convince the members about the benefits of the cooperative and to persuade them to work hard.

The most spectacular local examples of everyday resistance in Vaskeresztes were also in connection with the agricultural cooperative and the production. The first cooperative was founded in 1950, mostly by the Upper Hungarian residents. The conditions for establishing a successful agricultural cooperative in the village were fundamentally unfavorable due to the traditional property structure and landscape

¹² Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 73 yo.

management. The story of the cooperative was unbalanced and cumbersome (Kovács 2000). For generations land ownership was a cornerstone of identity and livelihood in the village. The "self-governing" people of Vaskeresztes apparently did not trust in the common. They imagined the future in traditional agriculture, based on private property. Collective farming and cooperative work were unknown structures for those whose production was based on self-sufficiency. People did not know why and how to work in the cooperatives, and they weren't even interested after their land was violently taken from them.

*"People weren't used to that here. Everyone worked for themselves as they could, and they have had their own system of work. The land could be trusted, whatever happened. If it was cultivated, it produced something. No one was really vulnerable in livelihood then. It was possible to force people to join into the collective, but it was certain that everyone worked the most for their own property. Personal growth was the main goal, and it was based on private land."*¹³

In the first attempt of the collectivization, joining the cooperative was optional for private landowners, but the table turned fast. After crushing the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, the entry became inevitable. Propagandists and agitators were prepared to speed up the entry with various forms of physical and mental violence (Ö. Kovács 2022). In the case of Vaskeresztes, forced collectivization was completed in a few days as a result of threatening and violence. Despite the fact that after the forced collectivization the membership increased greatly and the conditions of production officially improved, the cooperative did not become more profitable. It seems that formal entry was not nearly synonymous with active work. Even though they were officially members, people have done everything in order to avoid working in the cooperative. One of the characteristic strategies of resistance was that cooperative members *saved* working time from the collective, in order to use it for their private production. Vineyards had a primary importance in the maintenance of passive resistance. Since these small plot vineyards were not suitable for large-scale cultivation, the owners could keep them as private property.

¹³ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 82 yo.

What they produced there, could be delivered to the cooperative. In Vaskeresztes, wine was a prosperous branch of production, and the unstable cooperative needed the income from winemaking. Accordingly, people saved time from the cooperative in exchange for winemaking.

"I did what was necessary to complete the mandatory work unit. But nothing more. Whenever it was possible, I went about my own business. I always had plenty of work outside the cooperative, because I had grapes and there was something to do there all year round. I preferred to take care of what was my own, that seemed more useful than working for the cooperative."¹⁴

"There were quite a few of us who had private gardens. We were out in the vineyards even though it wasn't necessary. That was really ours, what we produced there went to ourselves. Another thing is that we didn't really want to cultivate sugar beets in the cooperative. We didn't know how to work with those plants. We knew grapes and wine. That was our fitting workfield."¹⁵

Referring to the vineyard works, the members often did not go to the cooperative, which hampered joint production. The annuals of the cooperative complain about these incidents in a recurring manner¹⁶. The management tried to solve the problem by improving salaries and working interest of the members by letting them broaden the winery branch of production. Despite the beneficial motivation and the strengthening of viticulture, integrated, focused work never formed in the cooperative. People didn't agree with the goals of the cooperative and didn't feel the ideological background either.

"We were not born to be a communist. We worked hard for the village, the land, the grapes and ourselves, but totally not for any ideology. Here, instead of roaring socialism, we rather lifted the glass".¹⁷

¹⁴ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 71 yo.

¹⁵ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 76 yo.

¹⁶ Annuals of the agricultural cooperatives of Vas county 1963, 1964, 1967, 1968.

¹⁷ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 76 yo.

Another interesting form of resistance was specifically linked to the quality of the wine. It seems that it wasn't uncommon among the winegrowers to give the lower quality wine to the cooperative and keep the higher quality for private purposes.

*"Well...you know, not a single year is the same when it is about wine. Some years better, some years worse. In a better year somehow, the cooperative got less wine, but I earned more anyway. Then in a worse year the comrades could have swam in it, I wouldn't even have cared."*¹⁸

*"Sometimes they said that the administered amount wasn't enough...»not enough?«- I asked. »Okay, I can bring more if the dear comrade and the cooperative needs it«. - I replied. I went back then, grabbed some water or the leftovers from last year and poured everything together. It was perfectly fine for them, and we could continue drinking the good stuff."*¹⁹

These years also gave importance to the *other world-function* of the Vas-hegy, though it was affected by the border. Spending time on the winehill ensured the preservation of cultural identity. Despite the fact that the official form of the "*hegyközség*" was nationally terminated in 1949, winegrowers continued to practice their centuries long traditions informally.

*"We came out here often. The control of the soldiers down here was not as strong as in the area above, where the border was. Here we could sit down, talk and gather a bit. We celebrated name days, birthdays, and saints' days. There was no 'hegyközség' that time, but we kept the traditions unofficially...in a smaller, simplified form, but it meant a lot anyways."*²⁰

After the end of Communism and the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989, the forced model of large-scale production was less and less efficient in the changing economic circumstances. The agricultural cooperative of Vaskeresztes became unsustainable and

¹⁸ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 73 yo.

¹⁹ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 79 yo.

²⁰ Interview excerpt from my own collection. Man, 72 yo.

finally ceased in 1992. Livestock was liquidated, acquisitions ceased, production units were closed, and cooperative sites were sold off. During the years of the Iron Curtain, the economic and social development of the once prosperous village was disrupted. Complete rehabilitation could not take place later either.

The new beginning of transborder relations

From the end of the 1970s, there was an easing in border protection and crossing the border became significantly easier. From the 1980s, more and more opportunities opened up to travel to the Austrian side. The dismantling of the Iron Curtain in 1989, the opening of borders, and then the transition to democracy brought liberation for the secluded Vaskeresztes. After 1990, new conditions and opportunities opened up in establishing and renewing cross-border economic and social relations. In economic terms, the Western Transdanubian region became the biggest winner of the fall of the Iron Curtain (Mészáros 2015(2)). After the regime change, an economic survey of the settlements in the border region was carried out and the first development plans were prepared (Metz 2003). In the peripheral regions of Western Hungary, the priority has been the initiation of cross-border cooperations and touristic developments. Due to its geographical features, the wine culture and the language skills of the population, Vaskeresztes also joined this direction of development with great hopes. At the same time, several people reclaimed their confiscated lands and a rehabilitation of agriculture began. Several professional wineries were founded on the Vas-hegy which produce wine for both the Hungarian and Austrian markets. Revived traditions in connection with viti- and viniculture are still determinants of community coherence today.

Conclusion

Looking at the examples of everyday resistance and adaptation in Vaskeresztes, I think that the authorities could not completely impose the central political structures on the inhabitants. In my opinion, the main reason for that was the border location of the village. Due to the strong central control of the border, the village was a strictly locked, peripheralized settlement during the years of the Iron Curtain. As I see, less control was

spent on the daily life of the community, thus everyday resistance could intensify. The strategies of resistance and adaptation indicate to me that despite the current political will, the villagers insisted on the fundamental elements of their traditional economic and social system such as ethnic identity, individually organized work, and private land ownership. All the forms of everyday resistance were closely linked to the Vas-hegy and its viti- and viniculture because it was easier to trick the system on home turf. I consider the border and its functional changes to be a determining factor in the intensity of resistance and adaptation. In those decades when the border was less *visible* and threatening, the resistance appeared in more subtle forms and was less intense. During these periods, the residents tried to use the advantages of the border for the purposes of individual growth. However, in those periods when the border was visible and oppression was significant, the resistance also strengthened. In such cases, it was more typical that forms of resistance were consciously practiced at a whole community level, mostly as an expression of dissatisfaction against the system.

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EXPLORING BOUNDARIES IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Anudei Erdenebat

Dorje Shugden conflict in Mongolia

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Introduction

Tibetan Buddhism's roots in Mongolia date back to the Yuan Dynasty, experiencing a significant revival in the 16th century under Altan Khan, who established the Gelugpa¹ lineage as a dominant religious force. This historical intertwining of Tibetan Buddhism with Mongolian culture is pivotal to understanding its contemporary relevance, especially post the 1990s democratic revolution. As the main religion of over 60% of Mongolians today, Tibetan Buddhism's influence extends deeply into Mongolia's national identity, making the study of specific aspects like the Dorje Shugden worship a compelling lens to explore the interplay of religion, culture, and politics in modern Mongolia.

Dorje Shugden is a wrathful deity of Tibetan Buddhism, and since 1970, the 14th Dalai Lama has restricted the worship of this protector in Tibetan Buddhist communities.

The history of this protector begins with the assassination of Tulku Dragpa Gyaltseng, a Gelugpa monk in the 17th century. According to the researcher G. Dreyfus, Dragpa Gyaltsen was a political rival of 5th Dalai Lama. However, as written by Lama Zava Damdin, it is noted that Drakpa Gyaltsen was the legitimate 5th Dalai Lama for Mongolians. After the death, Dragpa Gyaltsen reincarnated as an evil spirit, but "turned his anger from personal revenge to a nobler task, the protection of the doctrinal purity of the Gelug tradition" (Dreyfus 1998, 231).

Until the 20th century, there was no controversy in the worship of Dorje Shugden, but starting from 1920s, Pabonha, an influential Tibetan monk, was honored Dorje Shugden as the main protector of Gelugpa. When he made the argument that Gelugpa should be pure

¹ The Gelug or Gelugpa also known as the Yellow Hat Sect, is a school of Buddhism founded by the Tibetan religious leader and philosopher Tsongkhapa (1357–1419).

and could not be mixed with the teachings of any other school, the 13th Dalai Lama, who has teachers from other Tibetan Buddhist schools, prohibited the practice of this protector.

The first part of this article will set the stage by briefly discussing the Tibetan perspective on the controversy surrounding the protector Dorje Shugden, including the concept of protectors/amulets in Tibetan Buddhism. This background is essential for understanding the subsequent focus of the article, which is the historical trajectory and current attitude towards Dorje Shugden worship in Mongolia. The article then delves into the significant influence of Dorje Shugden in the nation-building process of Mongolia after its democratic revolution. Unlike the Tibetan context, where the controversy has led to significant divisions, in Mongolia, the worship of Dorje Shugden appears to have taken on a different dimension, aligning closely with national identity and cultural independence. The research and interviews conducted for this study are exclusively centered in Mongolia, highlighting the unique Mongolian perspective on this issue.

Methods and Sources of Data Collection

Within the scope of the topic, I have participated in 5 activities in Mongolia and conducted observational research between 2020 and 2023. Most of the interviews were taken at the homes of Zasep Tulku Rinpoche and Dandar Lharmba Rinpoche, in Ulaanbaatar and during Dorje Shugden's World Day and Dorje Shugden's initiation ceremony, in Ulaanbaatar and Dund Gobi. On international Discourses on the Dorje Shugden Deity in Contemporary Mongolia research works by Dreyfus, Georges: *The Shuk-den Affair: History and Nature of a Quarrel* (1998) and Iuliia Liakhova *International Discourses on the Dorje Shugden Deity in Contemporary Mongolia* (2020) was mainly used to make a comparison with Mongolia about the conflict of this worship in Mongolia and internationally. In terms of studying the history and progress of Shugden worship in Mongolia, Zava Damdin's book on Dorje Shugden: *A response to the conflict against Gelugpa's great dharmapala, the heart of a great story*² (2001), and 14th Dalai Lama's book: *Comments on Shugden*³ (2010) were used to make a comparison on the issue of conflict in Mongolia from the religious point of view.

² The original title in Mongolian: Шарын шашны хувилгаан их сахиусан лугаа үүдсэн тэмцлийн хариу “сайн өгүүллийн цогт зүрхэн” хэмээх оршвой

³ The original title in Mongolian: Шүгдэнгийн Тухай Айлдвар

Dharma protector

This research work is done on the conflict of the worship of certain Dharma protector in Buddhism, and in order not to cause any misunderstanding and confusion, it is worth briefly mentioning the concept of protector in Buddhism.

The teachings of the Lord Buddha are known as dharma, or teachings, as the right way of living. According to Buddhist scriptures, Dharma protectors have been created to protect the teachings of Buddhism. These deities are believed to be helpful not only in removing the obstacles encountered by Buddhists in the process of realising their teachings, but also in removing any obstacles in their daily life (Bzad-pa'i-rdo-rje, Sle-lun Rje-drun 1979).

"-Why do we need Dharma protectors? Why isn't taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha sufficient to protect our Dharma practice and our lives?

*-I would answer that we Dharma practitioners need Dharma Protectors in the same way that teachers may themselves need teachers and doctors may themselves need doctors. Sometimes we cannot help ourselves; at such times we must rely on the help of others. Dharma Protectors protect our Dharma practice by helping us overcome our day-to-day problems and removing all kinds of inner and outer obstacles to our Dharma practice."*⁴

Dharma Protectors transcend mere functionality in Buddhism; they embody profound symbolic meaning. They illustrate that spiritual practice is a collective journey, upheld by a universal cosmic framework. Interviews with Buddhist practitioners, monks, and scholars as above yielded valuable insights into the real-world significance and experiences of Dharma Protectors in daily practice. These discussions illuminate how these protectors are both perceived and engaged with, offering a window into their practical and lived applications. This notion provides practitioners with comfort, motivation, and a sense of belonging to something larger than themselves.

⁴ From an interview with Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, teacher of Zava Damdin, one of the main representatives of Mongolian Dorje Shugden worshipers.

To sum up, Dharma Protectors in Tibetan Buddhism play a dual role. They are not only guardians aiding practitioners in surmounting spiritual and worldly challenges, but they also symbolize the unity and supportive essence of the universe in the pursuit of enlightenment. This dual nature emphasizes their crucial role in Buddhist practice, encapsulating both practical support and deep symbolic value, essential for navigating the complexities of spiritual advancement.

International discourse on the Shugden conflict

In Tibetan Buddhism, Dorje Shugden or Shugden is considered to be the protector of Je Tsongkhapa's pure dharma, traditionally regarded as the founder of the Gelug school (Sparham, Gareth, 2011). The Dorje Shugden controversy arose in the 1930s within all schools of Tibetan Buddhism, including the Gelug school itself, regarding Dorje Shugden's nature, status of enlightenment, differences from traditional Gelug teachings, replacement of traditional Gelug protectors, sectarian functions, and actions by western adherents of the New Kadampa Tradition (Kay, David N. 2004. 100–113).

Starting from the 1930s, Pabonha Rinpoche⁵ created many literatures about this protector, and based on it, he favored an "exclusive" stance, started to promote Shugden as a major protector of the Gelug school, who harms any Gelug practitioner who blends his practice with non-Gelug practices (Mills, Martin A. 2003). 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Gelug school, worshiped Shugden until 1975 when the "*Yellow Book*" (1973) by Zemey Rinpoche appeared. The book contained stories of monks who invoked the wrath of Dorje Shugden by mixing practices from various schools (Dreyfus 1998, 257). On the other hand, as the head of state and unifying symbol of Tibetan people 14th Dalai lama who promotes Rime⁶ to Tibetan Buddhism began speaking out against the Dorje Shugden practitioners. It can be assumed that Dalai Lama's idea was to avoid religious fundamentalism, because he publicly rejected *The Yellow Book*⁷, which could only damage the common cause of the

⁵ Rinpoche is an honorific term used in the Tibetan language. It literally means "precious one", and may refer to a person, place, or thing—like the words "gem" or "jewel".

⁶ The Rimé movement is a movement or tendency in Tibetan Buddhism which promotes non-sectarianism and universalism. Teachers from all of Tibetan Buddhism have been involved in the promoting Rimé ideals.

⁷ The book by Zemey Rinpoche that contains stories about Shugden's wrathful acts against Gelugpas who also practiced other Tibetan Buddhist traditions' teachings.

Tibetan people because of its sectarian divisiveness. In a series of talks, he sought to undermine the status elevation of Dorje Shugden by reaffirming the centrality of traditional supra-mundane protectors of the Gelug tradition.

This is when the conflict began to escalate. After the Dalai Lama's announcement in 1996, where he publicly restricted the Shugden veneration, the conflict entered a new phase, some monks in the Tibetan exile community had to break away from their monasteries and establish new ones where they could continue to worship this deity. The controversy was not constrained to the Tibetan exile community and after the Dalai Lama's restriction, it began spreading among Buddhists all over the world. (Iuliia Liakhova 2020, 67) He also vehemently rejected Dorje Shugden's associated sectarianism, emphasising that all the Tibetan traditions are 'equally profound dharmas' and defending the 'unbiased and eclectic' approach to Buddhist practice as exemplified by the Second, Third and Fifth Dalai Lamas. (Kay, David N. 2004. 44–52.)

Dorje Shugden in Mongolia

Dorje Shugden protector has been worshiped in Mongolia since the 5th Dalai Lama (B zad-pa'i-rdo-rje. 1979) until his worship was interrupted during Soviet times, and during the 19th and 20th centuries, Bogd Khan, the last king of Mongolia honoured this protector as a state Dharmapala and built several monasteries, temples⁸ and even created national holidays where special worship and prayers are held for it, which continues as a tradition. Specially the Chojjin Lama Temple was built for Dorje Shugden, a sacred monastery, which the government used to ask for guidance on political issues by welcoming the spirit into the body of a specially trained monk through trance.

After the democratic revolution in 1990, religion has had an important effect on the creation of national identity and unity, and the role of deities has been revived. Therefore, as an independent nation state, in attempts to get rid of cultural and religious influence of the Tibetans and in the light of the traditional connection between local beliefs, politics,

⁸ Amarbayasgalant Monastery in Selenge province, Mongolia.
Chojjin Lama temple in Tuv province, Mongolia.
Summer Palace Monastery in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
Delger-un Choira Monastery in Dundgovi province, Mongolia.

and the importance of protective deities, Dorje Shugden became pivotal for the nation-building process and an important instrument of international politics.

It was seen in 5 participant observation studies, Zava Damdin, the largest representative of Dorje Shugden in Mongolia, regularly holds conferences such as "Ikh Khuree Takhilga" and "Dorje Shugden's Initiation" involving approximately 500-1500 people, and organises Children's summer camps where he discusses values, the meaning of being a Mongolian, and how Dorje Shugden tries to keep the Mongolian state holy. On this point, M. King who did participant observation in Zava Damdin's monastery in August 2007, concludes: "For them learning Buddhism meant learning their history, ethnicity and a properly 'Mongol' social and cultural system. According to the program, by being Mongolian they were already Buddhist. [...] This highly innovative camp [...] incorporated these youth into a narrative of a timeless, Buddhist and 'historical' Mongolian identity" (King 2012, 23- 24).

Dorje Shugden conflict in Mongolia

The Shugden controversy reached Mongolia only in the early 2000s. After the democratic revolution, Guru Deva Rinpoche, an Inner Mongolian monk educated in Tibet, visited Amarbayasgalant, one of the oldest existing monasteries in Mongolia. He brought with him a considerable sum of money that he used for the reconstruction of the monastery and established the Dorje Shugden worship there. It is not by chance that he chose Amarbayasgalant to be the centre of the Shugden practice in Mongolia. There is evidence that this deity had been traditionally worshipped in this monastery since the early 19th century (Kollmar-Paulenz 2020). Guru Deva Rinpoche sponsored the reconstruction of the monastery and assembled a group of disciples including influential businessmen. At the same time, Dorje Shugden was worshipped in Gungaachoilin datsan, one of the Gandan's monasteries and another historical place of the Shugden worship in Mongolia that was established by the 4th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu in 1809 (Kollmar-Paulenz 2020). In the 1990s and early 2000s, Dorje Shugden was worshipped in Mongolia alongside other protector deities. Only few people close to the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exile community (or, probably, close to Guru Deva Ripoche) knew about the conflict (Iuliia Liakhova 2020).

It can be said that the Dalai Lama's visit to Mongolia in August 2006 shed light on the Shugden conflict in Mongolia. During that visit, he arranged the documents of rules and regulations of Mongolian monasteries and monks, presented them to the heads of Mongolian Buddhist monasteries, and for the first time gave 52 monks ordination.

“During this activity, he was refused to visit Gungaachoin datsan, and the monks of that temple was forbidden to receive Dharma teachings from him, because they were still practicing Dorje Shugden there.”⁹

The incident involving the refusal of an influential religious figure to visit Gungaachoin datsan, where the practice of Dorje Shugden was prevalent, is a striking example of the complex dynamics surrounding this controversial deity in Buddhist circles. This act of avoiding engagement with Dorje Shugden practitioners or places of worship, particularly by a person of significant religious influence, is more than a personal choice; it symbolizes a clear stance against the worship of Dorje Shugden.

Such public actions serve not just to express personal beliefs but also to promote a broader ideological position. The refusal to impart Dharma teachings at a temple practicing Dorje Shugden worship underscores a deliberate distancing and non-endorsement of this deity, reflecting a strategic effort to influence the beliefs and practices within the Buddhist community.

The attitude of Mongolians towards this conflict

Although, Gelugpa Buddhism was introduced from Tibet since the 16th century, has occupied an important place in the history of Mongolia, in the process of nation building after the democratic revolution in 1990, as an independent country, it was important to have its own independent Buddhism.

Important Mongolian religious figures like Zaya Pandita and Lobsang Damdin have helped preserve Dorje Shugden practices, showing Mongolian Buddhism's unique path, different from Tibetan Buddhism. This independence is also seen in how Dorje Shugden was viewed during the Qing Dynasty, where he was seen as an enlightened being, not just a worldly spirit as in Tibet.

⁹ Interview with Dulamdorj, [ex-nun in Tugs Bayasgalant monastery, Ulaanbaatar, 2021]

In recent times, despite disagreements and the Tibetan leadership's view, Mongolian religious leaders continue to protect Dorje Shugden practices as part of Mongolia's cultural and spiritual identity. They focus on religious freedom and compassion. Contemporary leaders like Guru Deva Rinpoche and Zava Damdin Rinpoche have worked to keep this practice alive and help revive Buddhism in Mongolia after Communism, showing the lasting importance of Dorje Shugden in Mongolian Buddhism.

In essence, the Mongolian perspective on the Dorje Shugden controversy reflects a broader narrative of religious independence and cultural identity. While the practice is a point of contention within the Tibetan Buddhist community, for many Mongolians, it represents a significant and historic element of their spiritual tradition, distinct from the Tibetan influence. This divergence highlights the nuanced and multifaceted nature of Buddhism as it intersects with national and cultural identities.

The historical importance of Dorje Shugden for Mongolians and the conflict with the Dalai Lama make Shugden something specifically Mongolian, independent of Russia, China and, most importantly, of Tibet. Shugden's importance for Mongolian politics is based on two significant facts. Firstly, protective deities have traditionally been playing a specific role in Tibetan politics, and Dorje Shugden is no exception. When brought to Mongolia, he retained his political importance. Secondly, deities and spirits in general have been traditionally involved in the Mongolian political process. Against the backdrop of rising nationalism and attempts to get rid of cultural and religious influence of the Tibetans and in the light of the traditional connection between local beliefs, politics, and the importance of protective deities, Dorje Shugden became pivotal for the nation-building process and an important instrument of international politics (Iuliia Liakhova 2020. 74).

Therefore, Tibetan concern for Shugden conflict become unimportant when it reaches Mongolia. Thus, the Tibetan internal affairs, the sectarian vs. anti-sectarian struggle and the related dogmatic issues, are not important to Mongolians.

Conclusion

Since Kublai Khan (1215-1294) replaced traditional shamanism with Tibetan Buddhism as the national religion of Mongolia, Buddhism has been the dominant religion in Mongolia

until now. After 1763, the supreme leaders of all religions until Bogd Khan (1869-1924) were Tibetans, and the last Mongolian emperor, Bogd Khan, was a Tibetan as well. Since the independence of Mongolia in 1990, Mongolia has encouraged national consciousness, ideals, and patriotism. As can be seen from the following, Mongolia has focused on restoring and promoting its national culture as a priority.

The "Cultural Policy of the Government of Mongolia" adopted in 1996. According to this policy, Mongolia is taking various measures to protect and develop national traditional culture, one of which is Mongolia's 1993 Law on State-Church Relations. In Chapter 2, Article 4, Part 2 of this law pointed out: "*The State shall respect the dominant position of Buddhism in Mongolia in order to value the unity of the Mongolian people and their historical traditions of civilisation. This does not prevent citizens from practicing other religions*". As mentioned in the 3rd part of this article, Dorje Shugden worshipers play an important role in the creation of this religion with a national style. Based on this, Shugden conflict in Tibet lose its significance upon reaching Mongolia. Thus, as mentioned above Mongolians don't prioritise Tibetan internal affairs, the sectarian versus anti-sectarian strife, or the associated dogmatic matters. The Shugden issue did not cause any conflict in Mongolian Buddhism, and rather these conflict issues are seen as an impetus to create a new, unified new Buddhism in Mongolia.

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Jesuit spaces in early modern Japan

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Introduction

The Japanese mission of the Jesuit order is a fairly interesting and unique mission in the order's Eastern-Asian presence, founded by Saint Francis Xavier in 1549 and was operating until the 17th century's first decades, facing increasing prosecution starting from 1597. In my paper I will focus on the period between 1549 and 1597, as it was a relatively peaceful time period which let the mission grow and develop. Unfortunately, because of the mentioned prosecution in the second half of the mission, most of the Christian-related buildings, spaces and architectures got destroyed, as Christianity was banned, the missionaries expelled from the country and Christian converts forced into hiding.

Examining the Jesuit spaces during the Japanese mission can yield interesting, new avenues regarding the relationship between the mission and the Japanese people and their customs and culture and about the self-identity of the mission as a whole.

The Jesuit Order was officially established in 1420 by Pope Paul III's *Regimini militantis ecclesiae* bull. Even in its infancy, the Jesuit Order had strong missionary characteristics thanks to the original vision of the founder, Ignatius Loyola which manifested itself in the fourth vow taken by the Jesuits (O'Malley 1999). And thus it is not a surprise that the Order shortly after its establishment joined the missionary scene of Asia with Francis Xavier arriving in India in 1542 and began his work first on the Indian peninsula, then in the Indonesian Archipelago followed by the Japanese Mission.

The mission had an open and accommodating attitude towards the Japanese culture and its customs, especially when compared to other, non-European missions, which was set by the founder of the mission, Saint Francis Xavier who wrote with deep respect and admiration about the Japanese people and culture in his letters (Coleridge 1881). This openness towards the Japanese culture to a great extent didn't just stayed with the mission

until its end, but even grew stronger through the works of missionaries such as Cosmé de Torres, Juan Fernandez, Organtino Gnechi-Soldo, Luís Frois and visitator Alessandro Valignano. In my presentation I would like to highlight this attitude showcasing some of the spatial practices during the mission as examples of the relationship between the members and the whole of the mission and the Japanese people, their customs and culture.

Aside from this pronounced openness towards a foreign culture, the other major deviation from the norms of other Asian missions, was the independence of the Japanese mission. Jesuit missions in Asia were established in the spheres of Portuguese control and presence, which had multiple advantages for these missions. However, Japan had no permanent Portuguese presence but rather a; short; trader presence of a few weeks or months long. This meant that the Jesuits couldn't rely on the Portuguese infrastructure and protection to the same extent as they did in India or in the Indonesian Archipelago. This caused a large dependence on the Japanese nobility and local feudal lords or *daimyos*¹, whose authority and support was indispensable if the mission hoped to succeed. These local lords gave permission for preaching, conversions, protection and most importantly for the topic of this paper: they had the power to grant lands and buildings to the Jesuits to use, or in some cases, even own them. However, these grants and patronages didn't come free, as the lords sought to secure the lucrative trade with the Portuguese traders visiting Japan, through the Jesuits mediation.

In this paper when referring to the architectural styles of the building, I'm using the terminology framework set up by Japanese researchers studying which divides the Japanese Christian buildings into three categories: Western style buildings, Japanese style building and the eclectic style (Arimura 2014).

¹ The feudal lords, or *daimyos* in Japanese were independent lords with their own territories, militaries, policies and political ambitions during the late medieval and early modern period of Japan. This type of lordship emerged after the Onin War (1467-1477) and they were actively warring and competing with each other for control resulting in a civil war which is often referred to as *Sengoku Jidai* or Warring States period.

Categories

When talking about the Jesuit space and building usage in Early Modern Japan we can examine them through two main organizing principles: 1. Ownership and 2. Usage, and these two main categories can also be further divided.

In 1. Ownership there are three groups: First the 1a. Donated buildings and spaces in which we can place the already existing buildings or spaces that were donated by the local *daimyo*. 2a. Newly built buildings and spaces' category contains the buildings and space that were newly constructed for and by the Jesuits and the Japanese Christians. And finally, the 3c. Rented buildings and spaces in which the buildings were owned by the Japanese people and were rented out to the Jesuits for a set amount of price. However, it is important to mention that even in the case of 2b. Newly built buildings and spaces, the land on which these buildings stood was the land of the local feudal lord, it wasn't owned by the Jesuits.

As for 2. Usage there are three major functions that we can differentiate:

- Religious buildings and spaces (mainly the churches)
- Living buildings and spaces (housing)
- Utility buildings and spaces (such as school, hospitals, printers etc).

The Jesuit space and building usage can be described almost wholly by some combination of the above groups and labels.

Ownership

Granted buildings

These buildings were most commonly given to the Jesuits by the local *daimyos* to serve as housing or preaching locations, and most often these were Buddhist monasteries and pagodas that got re-purposed as Christian churches and places of worship. This method of acquiring building and spaces for the mission and of Christianity started early on, in 1550 when the local feudal lord after meeting with Francis Xavier for the second time granted an abandoned Buddhist monastery to the missionaries in Yamaguchi (Coleridge 1881, p. 299). The absolute pinnacle of this practice was the donation of the land by Omura Sumitada in 1580, on which the port city of Nagasaki was founded, and unlike other land donations the

city of Nagasaki became fully owned and governed by the Jesuits and became independent (Hesselink 2016).

Gaspar Vilela's letter from September of 1559 is one of the sources speaking about the re-purposing of the Buddhist monasteries and pagodas as Christian temples and places of worship. In the letter Vilela talks about his time in Hirado (Hesselink 2016). In the same year, he writes that during a two-month period he baptized 1300 persons and they „built 3 churches” that were previously pagodas (Ruiz-de-Medina 1995). Based on Vilela's letter, these donated monasteries got modified or re-built to serve as Christian churches.

The usage of Buddhist monasteries was a double edge sword, on one hand it was a sort of continuation of religious activities in a location already familiar for the local people, and it resonated with the early perception of the Jesuits and Christianity, it being seen as a new branch of Buddhism propagated by priests coming from the birthplace of Buddhism, India (or Tenjiku as it was called in Japanese). However, on the other hand, using these monasteries didn't always provide a strong enough identity for Christianity, and converting them to Christian churches would have fostered animosity from the Buddhists. When donating, aside from already existing buildings, sometimes even materials, like tatami mats or different woods were donated for constructing churches or other buildings or they used materials from already existing buildings (Arimura 2014).

Newly built spaces

Donation wasn't the only method of acquiring buildings for the mission, as their support grew in a given area the possibility of constructing new ones appeared as well. Often these newly constructed buildings were used for activities which were indirectly supporting the mission's success, such as schools, printing presses, orphanages/hospitals. It could be argued that these types of activities didn't have a parallel on the Japanese side, so they required their own, newly, purpose-built buildings instead of modifying already existing Japanese ones.

For newly built, Jesuit owned buildings and spaces one of the earliest example is the orphanage founded by Balthazar Gago in Funai in 1555, which got turned into a hospital and renamed to Confraternity of Mercy (Confraria da Misericórdia) in the following year (Fujitani 2019, p. 3).

The campus grounds on which the hospital stood was separated into two parts: in the upper one we find the housing of the missionaries, the Japanese brothers and the chapel, meanwhile in the lower one we have the hospital itself, the housing of the nun and the houses of the 12 families and their servants who helped in the running of the hospital (Fujitani 2019). As we can see, it was a complex institution with satellite buildings instead of just one construct. The finances of the institution were covered by alms and donations, based on Luis d'Almeida's letter from 1559 (Ruiz-de-Medina 1995).

The hospital building went through at least two modifications, the first one happening in 1557 (Fujitani 2019 p. 12). And the second one happened two years later, when 4 separate spaces were created for the different roles: one space for the lepers, one for the "ritually clean" wounded, one for the Japanese doctors and one for Luis d'Almeida for western surgery (Ibid). With these modifications the building went from the western style to an institute which had more in common with the Buddhist style of architecture (smaller, separate buildings), however it kept some of the western design elements, like the main hallway and the small altar at the end of it, which the Jesuits called oratory (Ibid).

The hospital thus provided a space in which the western medicine and surgery could exist and practice in parallel with traditional Japanese medicine, and as a result aside from being a place of healing, it provided an important space where two very far away worlds could meet. Also, with the modifications it mixed two separate building style's elements, resulting in a new, eclectic style somewhere between a Western-style building and a Japanese-style building.

Rented or bought

Lastly, the case of renting buildings or buying them, these methods of acquiring and using space was primarily used in Miyako, modern day Kyoto, the seat of the emperor. Most of the Jesuit missionary activity focused on the island of Kyushu and its immediate surroundings, and thus the presence in Miyako was little to none, and it took multiple tries to establish the Jesuit presence in the city. Because of this very limited presence, the Jesuits at first didn't manage to secure a stable housing for themselves, instead had to rely on renting apartments and small buildings and only later on did they managed to buy one for themselves. One of the most insightful sources for this is Luís Fróis' *Historia de Japan* in

which he compiles the history of the mission in Japan including his own 12 year long stay in Miyako. In this he writes about the living situations of the missionaries in the city, during this time period they used 5 houses in total, the first 4 were rented houses, and the final and fifth one they bought from a monk (Higashino 2014). According to Fróis, finding housing was especially difficult, because at first, they had no permission to settle in the city, thus they had to resort to hiding, and secondly the locals were against having Christian missionaries living in the same streets as them, so they often protested against house owners renting out buildings or selling one to the Jesuits. In this hostile social setting, they usually only had access to low quality housing, like the first building which was a building debris storage, which according to Fróis had a single room, mud walls and thatched roofs (Ibid).

As we can summarize, the renting and buying of buildings was a last resort by the Jesuits when they lacked other way to acquire a place to stay and/or preach. It shows us how vulnerable the mission was, how much they relied on donations by the *daimyos*.

Usage

Religious spaces

Aside from places of worship and religious activities, the Christian churches also acted as important social beacons and centers for Christianity in Japan, often causing the movements of Christian Japanese people in an effort to practice their new religion more freely and feel closer to God. Juan Fernandez writes about a Japanese Christian called Sylvester who lived in Hirado and was the carpenter of the local feudal lord, moved to Bungo after the Christian church got destroyed in Hirado. Meanwhile another Japanese Christian called Alexander moved from Yamaguchi to Hakata leaving the service of his lord in the process (Ruiz-de-Medina 1995). These examples show us the social gravity of the churches among the baptized locals, being a strong enough to entice relocation(s) from the natives.

On occasions the churches served more purpose than just the place to listen to sermons and preaching, for example as Guillermo Pereira wrote in his letter from 1559, during the Christmas celebration the Christian Japanese came to the church to sing

(covered with flute and chirimíassa music) and have a feast together, and in that year the Portuguese traders wintering in Hirado also joined the celebrations together with the *daimyo* (Ruiz-de-Medina 1995). This suggests that these churches and religious spaces and buildings served as community spaces too for the converted.

Many of the early churches were repurposed Buddhist monasteries and to reinforce the new, Christian presence, these Buddhist monasteries got decorated with liturgical ornaments (Arimura 2014). The other major physical distinguishing element was the cross on the roof (Ibid). There are also cases when Japanese houses got decorated and turned into houses of prayers or chapels, used by the native converts (Arimura 2014). We can say there was a deliberate attempt from the Jesuits to make the churches distinct and have a catholic look, which showed itself especially after the early periods of the mission as they got access to more resources and didn't have to rely on Buddhist monasteries as much anymore.



A nanban screen art depicting a Christian church from 1600 by Kano Naizen

Living spaces

On Kyushu, the main area of activity of the mission the Jesuits, the Japanese brothers and the *dojoku*² lived together in the same houses. Based on the Catalogus Rerum Indiae

² Lay brothers, mostly tasked with everyday jobs.

Orientalis Octobris, in 1575 the Jesuit mission operated 5 houses (domus) in the following regions or domains: Hirado house (re-opened in 1564), Omura house (1568), Kuchinotsu house (1564), Funai residence (1553), Miyako residence (first opened in 1559, reopened in 1569). After 1579, Valignano set out new directives regarding the housing, he set number of residence per house as follows: 3 priests, 3 Japanese brothers, a Portuguese brother and three or four *dōjoku* on probation (Arimura 2014).

As part of his radical reformation of the mission, he ordered the houses to be built in Japanese style, with special rooms to accommodate the Japanese tea ceremonies and separate, appropriate rooms for greeting guests and female visitors (Ross 1994). These reception rooms are called *zashiki* (座敷) in Japanese and played an important part in Japanese etiquette and socialization.

By mandating the Japanese style living Valignano not just returned to Xavier's openness and acceptance of Japanese culture, but even went above the founder in many regards. This helped new missionaries arriving in Japan to make themselves familiar with the Japanese costumes much quicker and reach higher proficiency, which in turn supported the missionary work and made it easier for them to get accepted by the all so important *daimyos*.

Utility spaces

Aside from religious and living spaces, the Jesuits had different spaces for activities that supported the mission either directly or indirectly, aside from preaching or other religious acts. The two most prominent of these supportive activities were healing and teaching. As I briefly went over the hospital headed by Luis d'Almeida, in this section I would like to touch upon the teaching related spaces.

One of the most important activities the Jesuits pursued during the mission was education. For this purpose, they opened multiple schools and *seminarios* the first ones opening in Bungo and Shima in 1580, (Hall 2008) and a third one in 1581 in Azuchi, (Murakami 1943) in these institutions, following the tradition of Jesuit schools in Europe, they accepted Japanese children from all classes of society without a fee. The teachers were the Jesuits themselves and the curriculum was overseen by Alessandro Valignano,

containing both ancient and medieval, Christian and pagan authors such as Lactantius (Laures 1957), Cicero, Vergil and Caesar (Nejime 2013).

And on top of this, teaching and overall work in these institutes followed the examples set in the European schools of the Order, with emphasis on the study of Latin (Laures 1957) while not neglecting the Japanese language either) and religious matters, as the goal of Valignano was to raise a new generation of Japanese Christians who would be well equipped to become priests and preachers and thus set the foundations for a Japanese church staffed by natives (Hoey 2010).

This meant that the spaces of the *seminarios* served as exchange points between European and Japanese cultures and as inter-societal connections between the lower and higher classes of Japanese society. And on the top of this, the schools acted as a gateway for the importing of printing into Japan, given they required printed schoolbooks and the transportation of books printed in Europe was less than ideal, so to remedy this, Valignano brought a printing machine with himself when he returned (Laures 1957). The machine produced texts in both Latin/Portuguese and in Japanese.



The depictions of the Azuchi and Arima *seminarios* from Ciappi's *Compendio Delle Heroiche Et Gloriose Attioni Et Santa Vita di Papa Greg. XIII.*

What do the spatial practices tell us about the mission?

The Jesuit spatial presence in Japan was vulnerable to external factors such as wars, approval of Christianity/the Jesuits by the local *daimyos*, and thus it reflects the overall standing of the mission in a given area or region. For example, in Kyoto, where the mission held a much weaker presence than in Kyushu, the Jesuits struggled to secure permanent housing for themselves, and at some point, they had to hide their presence, so up until April of 1562, the Jesuits had to resort to rent houses for themselves (Higashino 2014). Meanwhile on the island of Kyushu, where the Christian and Jesuit presence was the strongest, they had multiple spaces and building with different purposes and at the height of the mission, they even managed to gain the ownership of the newly built city of Nagasaki in, which basically functioned as an independent, Christian ran city-state.

As discussed earlier, the Jesuit hospital became a mixture of western and Japanese styles of spatial practices which embodied the joint venture of running the institute, accommodating both western and eastern styles of medicine. This cooperation and acceptance towards the Japanese culture and practices was a hallmark of the Japanese mission since its start in 1549 and got even more prominent during Alessandro Valignano's term as *visitator* starting in 1579. The hospital's mixed spatial profile was the result of practicality, instead of deliberate thought. On the other hand, we have examples of the latter too, in the form of the housing and living spaces of the Jesuits.

The spatial practices got a major reform in the wake of Alessandro Valignano's arrival in 1579, who edited a manual for the mission, how to accommodate the Japanese culture and customs the best, in order to increase the effectiveness of the mission. This explicit ordering of the building style lends itself to the assumption that before Valignano, Jesuit housing wasn't intentionally set up to support the accepting and open philosophy of the mission. The lack of tearoom and other special spaces give base to the assumption that the previously built Jesuit houses weren't built in the traditional Japanese style of architecture, even though the workforce must've been from the native Christians, given the low number of Jesuits.

However even Valignano insisted, that the churches had to be build according to European customs, (Arimura 2014) as the *seminarios* were newly built and they served a

very European purpose, they most likely followed the same pattern as the churches did and were built in a western style.

Conclusion

The Jesuit Order's Japanese mission was one of, if not the most successful mission in Asia in terms of total number of Christians between 1550 and 1599 (Boxer 1969) and in great deal this success rested on the mission's open and accepting attitude towards the Japanese people and their culture. One of the aspects of this attitude is the spatial presence and practices during the mission's duration between 1549 and 1630.

With the research of the spatial presence and practice we can gain valuable insight into the social standing of the mission in a particular area, the social life of the converted population and the self-identity of the mission. In my presentation I attempted to categorize the different buildings and spaces used by the Jesuits based on criteria such as method of acquiring said building or the different usages and the consciousness of the building usage following Alessandro Valignano's reform in 1579.

Based on the examples provided we can see that the usage of the Japanese building style was both a practicality and a philosophy-based decision, meanwhile the usage of a Western style was aimed to strengthen and help preserve the catholic/Jesuit identity and look of the mission. And following Valignano's reform the successful integration of the two distinct styles shows us the success of the Jesuits as cultural agents, transferring knowledge and culture between Europe and Japan.

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**SOCIAL INTERACTIONS: POWER,
GENDER, AND COMMUNITY**

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Group dynamics, power relations and core values in two food rescue groups

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Introduction

Food waste is a major environmental and social problem. The UN reports that one third of all food produced for human consumption each year is wasted, while food waste is responsible for 8-10% of greenhouse gas emissions (Forbes et al. 2021:20 in Mbow et al., 2019:200, Gustavsson et al., 2011:56). In Spain, food rescue organizations are important actors in the food system, and there are many organizations working to rescue and redistribute food, and among these there are numerous self-managed grassroots groups. However, in Hungary, food rescue is not as widespread, especially not in its self-organized, bottom-up grassroots form.

My PhD dissertation aims to find the reasons for this; therefore, I plan to dissect the historical background of the two countries, the laws regarding food waste management, and the moral, political, socio-economic and group factors of food rescue. This article will focus on the group organizational and group operational factors of food rescue, based on a comparison of two food rescue groups, Xarxa d'Aliments Reciclatos de Can Batlló (Xarxa) in Barcelona and Food not Bombs (FNB) in Budapest. I hypothesize that the structure and practices of the two food rescue groups may also influence the size and popularity of the movement. The leadership style, the way the groups operate, the way members relate to each other and the value orientations of the two groups are all aspects that influence the success and sustainability of food rescue groups in different social contexts.

Methods

The data for this article was collected using the methods of cultural anthropology, mainly through participant observation. Participant observation essentially means the

participation in the daily life of a community. Thanks to a prolonged and constant presence in the field, a close relationship or rapport is established between the researcher and the participants, which, somewhat blurs these boundaries, moving the researcher from an outsider to an insider position (Guest 2018:76; 80).

The data in this paper is therefore based on my observations, field diary notes, and materials generated by the community, such as leaflets and documents, as well as their online posts on their social media. The data used, as well as the quotes in the article, are taken from my fieldwork in Barcelona from October 2021 to January 2022, and from my fieldwork in Budapest, which is ongoing since May 2022.

Introducing the Xarxa and FNB

Food not Bombs is a grassroots international social movement that advocates for socially important issues such as food waste, poverty and hunger in many countries around the world, including Hungary. The group was founded in 1980 by anti-nuclear activists, who opposed the use of atomic energy. They sought to raise awareness of their activism by collecting food for disposal and using the collected food to make vegan meals, which they then distributed to the needy and homeless, along with leaflets about the movement and other social and environmental issues (it is not included among the activities of the Hungarian FNB group, more on this later). Their name is meant to draw attention to the fact that a state should not spend its revenues on warfare, but on food (in a broader sense, helping people) (McHenry 2012:99-102).

Generally speaking, Food not Bombs is an unofficial, unregistered movement, not affiliated to any political party or organization, and entirely voluntary, operating on the basis of non-violent intervention. It is ideologically linked to both the anarchist movement and punk culture, which this paper will also discuss later. Since the founding of the “original” Food not Bombs in 1980, the movement has spread to many places, with a presence in over 30 countries worldwide (LOCATIONS - foodnotbombs.net). The movement is fully decentralized, i.e., it operates autonomously through a network of local groups and volunteers but is bound together by the philosophical foundations and principles that underpin its operation (McHenry 2012:107-115).

The Xarxa d'Aliments Reciclatats is a Spanish organization to combat food waste. Although overall these organizations operate on a voluntary basis, the term “Xarxa d'Aliments Reciclatats” (“rescued food network” in Catalan) is a name for several types of food rescue groups, which can be registered “official” organizations with a tax number, or unregistered organizations, and can vary in both their ways of working and their motivations. The other subject of this research is the Xarxa d'Aliments Reciclatats de Can Batlló (Xarxa), an informal, grassroots group founded in 2011, located in the Sants neighborhood of Barcelona, and linked to a community space called Can Batlló.

Can Batlló was formed in 2011, when the nine-hectare-big, abandoned textile factory owned by the Barcelona Municipality, was donated to the initiative “Can Batlló és pel barri” (“Can Batlló is for the neighborhood”) (QUI SOM - Can Batlló). This initiative was mainly made up of civil activists living in the neighborhood, who were fed up with the fact that the municipality had been promising for nearly 30 years to transform the empty factory building into a park and a community space but had done nothing to help the cause. Over the years, after the keys were handed over to the members of “Can Batlló és pel barri”, a number of groups with different activities have been set up in Can Batlló, such as the Bar, the Library, the Bike Workshop, the Garden, the Brewery – the list goes on, as Can Batlló is now home to nearly 30 different groups, and around 300 active members, along with numerous cultural events. Can Batlló has thus become a center for many social and cultural activities, where the local community has transformed an abandoned building into a community center. Therefore, Can Batlló also has turned into a symbol of social activism, community organization and the struggle for democratic participation in Barcelona (QUI SOM - CanBatlló). The principles and modus operandi that have driven the creation of Can Batlló have also shaped the principles and way of working of the groups that are based there, including the Xarxa.

Group structure: Xarxa

The number of people participating in the Xarxa is around 20-30, of which 5-10 are regulars who have been members for years. The rest of the group has a relatively high turnover, with people joining for a few weeks or months and then dropping out when their

individual circumstances change. In terms of its operation, 3-4 members of the Xarxa go to two grocery stores in the Sants district on Monday mornings, where they give the unsaleable products to them instead of throwing it away. This is repeated on Monday at 8 pm as well, when all the Xarxa participants meet at Can Batlló. In the evening, they split up into groups of 2-3 people, take shopping trolleys to the other grocery stores and bakeries and collect the leftover food. Members then put out their own boxes or bags, tell how many people are in their household, and the 1-2 people who are responsible for distributing the food of that week, put a proportional amount of food in their boxes or bags. This is followed by the “assemblea” (an assembly or meeting in Catalan), where they discuss both the food collection and other issues concerning the group, and only then go home with the food they have rescued.

At assemblies, decisions are made based on consensus, meaning that instead of simply relying on the majority vote, group members work together to come up with a solution to a problem that everyone can support. Consensual decision-making is about ensuring that everyone in the group can participate equally in the decision-making process, and it encourages a shared understanding and ownership of decisions. Linked to this is the notion of “horizontal hierarchy”, an important concept in the functioning of the Xarxa (and Can Batlló as a whole). This refers to an organizational structure that also prioritizes equality, shared decision-making and collective responsibility, rather than relying on traditional forms of hierarchy and power. In horizontal hierarchy, all members of the group are equal participants with an equal say in decision-making.

These concepts detailed above (assemblies, consensus-based decision making, horizontal hierarchy) are strongly linked to the neighborhood movement (“movimiento vecinal”). The neighborhood movement emerged in the 1960s in Spain's major cities in response to the rapid urbanization. As the Franco regime were unable or unwilling to respond to the many urban problems caused by the mass immigration of people, the city's inhabitants sought to solve issues and problems such as housing, public services and urban greening through direct action organized by themselves, locals in the neighborhood (Martín Mate 2018:4-8) (Mesa 2007). Can Batlló also came into existence thanks to the neighborhood movement, as some activists in Sants formed the already mentioned group called “Can Batlló és pel barri” (“Can Batlló is for the neighborhood”) to pressure the local

government to put into usage the abandoned factory building. This group (and so did other groups in the neighborhood movement) functioned based on the same practices mentioned before.

The movement took its practices from anarchism. In Spain, during and after the civil war, it was a common practice for factory workers to take control of the factory and continue working through self-organization/self-management (“autogestión” in Spanish) (Guérin 1991:423-441). This happened in Can Batlló, too: during the Spanish Civil War, the factory manager Juan Batlló and his family fled the country, and the factory was taken over by the workers, who operated it as a collective, by means of self-management. Although the factory was briefly returned to its former owner after the war, in 1937 the workers took control of the factory again and it was run as a cooperative until 1939 (LaCol 2013:165).

Although the occupation of factories and self-management is part of the history of Can Batlló (and the history of Spanish anarchism in general), it was a relatively short-lived phenomenon (in 1939 Franco came to power, and his fascist regime aimed at the dismantling of all kinds of left-wing and workers' movement organizations), (Alberola and Gransac 2005: 23). However, this event is an important part of the history of the labor movement in Spain, which continues to inspire many contemporary movements that aim to achieve social and economic justice through community organizing and that seek to realize alternative social organizing beyond capitalism. (Ibáñez 2014:23-24)

Assemblies, consensus-based decision making, horizontal hierarchy are part and parcel of the Xarxa, however, in reality, they are not executed perfectly. Members who put more time, energy and effort into the group acquire higher status. So, horizontality is really an aspiration to horizontality, as there is hierarchy in the group based on the just mentioned factors. But this is not left unreflected in the Xarxa (unlike in many other groups in Can Batlló). *“There are these dynamics that emerge after a long time, but we don't want older members to have more influence”*, said one of the members, during a discussion of grassroots initiatives in Sants, and then went on to talk about the roles they created in the group.

There are three roles in the Xarxa, which are basically tasks related to the group's activity: handling emails, handling the calendar, and handling the Xarxa's budget. These roles “rotate”, which means every couple of weeks a new member in the Xarxa fulfills them.

The idea behind this is to enable the members of the group members to relate to each other as horizontally as possible. This way, a new person can have responsibilities from the moment they join, which will lift them from passivity and quickly turn them into a competent member who invests time and energy in the activities of the Xarxa.

Value: Xarxa

Some group values¹ the Xarxa has are strongly related to its group structure: equality, self-management, self-organization, self-financing, independence. Openness is a value, too, as anyone is free to join the Xarxa and become a member. On an individual level, consistency is important, as well – if someone in the group agrees to be in charge of a task, they are expected to be responsible and do it. People should also communicate with each other in an assertive way – it is also written in the “Bases polítiques”, a document created by the group members summarizing the Xarxa’s politics.

The food rescue initiative itself is linked to environmental protection, another value that defines the group. *“We want to challenge the capitalist system where overproduction results in a surplus of food that is thrown away,”* the Xarxa's leaflet says. So, as we can see, the environment protection represented by Xarxa is expressed through the lens of anti-capitalism, which is also a major ideology and value that defines the group's activities and identity. As the sentence quoted in the paragraph shows, the Xarxa presents its own food rescue activities as the antithesis of the capitalist system, in which they seek to mitigate the damage caused by capitalism.

Localism is also one such larger scale value for the group. *“We are a group of people who come together to recycle food, practicing mutual support and solidarity among neighbors in the Sants neighborhood.”* – says the first sentence of the self-definition document “Bases polítiques”. It also involves the fact that only food shops in Sants are visited (there are, of course, practical reasons for this as well, given that Can Batlló is in Sants, and food is collected on foot). The reason for the importance of localism can be

¹ I use Kluckhohn’s value definition: „A conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action” (Kluckhohn 1951:395).

traced back to the neighborhood movement mentioned above, and also to the idea that focusing on local communities can help build strong relationships.

Linked to this is the importance of community. Although the Xarxa members are practical with food rescue, meaning that most of their Monday sessions are limited to this activity, there have been instances of people staying after the assembly to talk and have a beer together. In fact, special occasions have sometimes been organized when members of the group met independently of food rescue, usually at Can Batlló's bar. However, these initiatives are nowadays on the decline, so at one assembly it was suggested that there should be more regular informal gatherings. *"We propose community building within the Xarxa. Suggestion: once a month there should be a Xarxa dinner. We agree to decide on the first Monday of each month which day the gathering will be. The person with the calendar role will be responsible for raising the topic."* – they wrote in their online weekly summary of events.

Structure: FNB

The other subject of this research is FNB Budapest, a group that was founded in Budapest in 2009 and has been operating continuously since then. Every Saturday, FNB members collect leftover fruits and vegetables from the markets in Fővám Square and Fehérvári Street and transport them by car or bicycle back to the FNB's base. On Sunday, with the help of the coordinator, the cook, and other volunteers, prepare 100-120 portions of soups, main courses, and salads. Then, at 4pm, the prepared meals are distributed to people in need and the homeless people in Boráros Square.

Auróra in Budapest provides the space for storing and cooking the rescued food. It is a community center in Budapest, in the 8th district in Auróra Street, which hosts a number of cultural, social and environmental initiatives in the city. The center was created in 2014 by a group of volunteers who wanted to create a space for different community and cultural organizations in Budapest (RÓLUNK - Auróra) However, in contrast to the Xarxa, there is not such a close connection between FNB and Auróra, neither in terms of principles nor in terms of the way the two communities operate.

The number of volunteers in the FNB varies. On Saturdays, a “market coordinator” is responsible for collecting the fruits and vegetables, usually assisted by 2-4 people. On Sundays, there are usually many more members present, about 5-6 people from the “Inner Circle”, which consists of the oldest and/or most active group members responsible for decision-making with about 10-12 people (more on this in a few paragraphs below). In addition, there are about 5-10 people from the “Operational Support Group”, which has a total of about 90 people (not all of them are active) and is made up of *“FNB volunteers who can and want to get involved in other tasks and things to do, other than slicing vegetables on the weekend.”* In addition, there are always people who are first-time or occasional attendees, although the majority of the people who go on Sunday are also members of the first two groups.

This is in contrast to the “original” Food not Bombs, the very first initiative that originated in the US and was/is basically characterized by similar intentions as the Xarxa. As a grassroots initiative, they are also concerned with horizontality, bottom-up, consensus-based decision-making and community engagement (McHenry 2012:114-115) – the latter is also reflected in the fact that they bring leaflets on various socio-economic and environmental topics to their food distributions, which they distribute to people in need. The aim of the leafleting is to raise awareness of the issues that Food not Bombs addresses (such as hunger, poverty and food waste), to create a dialogue with those in need and to promote participation, whether in Food not Bombs or in other similar organizations (McHenry 2012:32).

In the Hungarian FNB, the integration of the people in need has not been addressed for a while now. In the past, at the beginning of the Hungarian FNB, there were still joint cooking sessions with the people in need – it was announced at the weekly food distributions and was also posted online that they could come to the cooking sessions to help. But then some *“troublesome people”* appeared, so this initiative was discontinued. *“I told one of them not to come anymore and he threatened to kill me. I understand that people in need can't come anymore, it's not very nice to volunteer like this...”* said a member, who used to be a person in need himself. So, although this form of inclusiveness is supposed to be present in the American Food not Bombs, it has been missing in the Hungarian FNB for quite some time.

However, it is not only this grassroots characteristic that is absent from the Hungarian FNB, but also the horizontality or the attempt to achieve it. As I have already mentioned, the core group of the FNB is called the Inner Circle, and they are responsible for decision making. This implies a hierarchy, with members of the Inner Circle at the top. In contrast to the Xarxa, this is explicitly stated: *“the Inner Circle is an elite training, it's by invitation only”*, said a member of the Inner Circle, half-jokingly, half seriously.

The invitation process to the Inner Circle is organized along similar lines as in Xarxa. Of the factors already mentioned, it is mainly the investment of time and energy in the group's activities that can get one into the Inner Circle, taking into account two components of time investment: how much time one invests in the group in the present, and how long one has been active.

So, horizontality is not as important an issue as it is in the Xarxa, even at the aspirational level, and neither is consensus-based decision-making. The Inner Circle holds meetings and not “assembleas”, so neither do they use the language and practices of the anarchist tradition. The meetings are held with the involvement of all members, but they discuss important issues related to the FNB in a democratic way, with majority voting. *“In principle, there is a veto right if something is decided that somebody is so strongly opposed to, but that doesn't happen very often.”*, said one of the Inner Circle members, when I asked him about their functioning, as I am not a member in that group. In the light of this, it is perhaps not so surprising that there is a hierarchy within the Inner Circle, presumably also based on the criterion of time invested. After all, those who have a higher status in the Inner Circle are the oldest members of the FNB, who have been investing a lot of energy in the functioning of the group for a very long time, even since the beginning of the FNB.

The reason why the Hungarian FNB and the “original” American Food not Bombs initiative are so different can be traced back to the historical background of the group. Food not Bombs in the US is directly linked to the anarchist movement, so much so that in 2015, the group's founder Keith McHenry published a book called *“The Anarchist Cookbook”* (2015), which details what is and is not anarchism, what the effective anarchist practices are, and how these activities can be incorporated into the work of Food not Bombs. It also includes practical information and advice on how to start a new Food not Bombs group, as well as recipes for vegetarian and vegan meals.

The Hungarian FNB is a grassroots group, but it does not go back to the anarchist roots of the “original” Food not Bombs initiative does not operate with anarchist practices in its functioning because there is not much to go back to in the absence of serious historical anarchist practices in Hungary (Bozóki and Sükösd 2007:159-167). Unlike the members of the Xarxa, who can draw from practices that emphasize the importance of decentralized, non-hierarchical decision-making and action, as these were and are common practices in Spain, in Catalonia and the host community, Can Batlló.

This does not mean, however, that the Hungarian FNB is completely free of anarchist ideas – it is indirectly linked to anarchism through the punk movement. It should be added, however, that punkism gets manifested more in terms of music than ideology. A constant theme at the Sunday cooking sessions is the discussion or introduction of a new track, band or gig, mostly in the punk genre, although other styles of music (mainly rock and metal) are also often discussed, and a number of members have played or are playing in a band. *“The great thing about FNB is that people get together, open a beer, put on some music. That's why they come back, otherwise cooking would be very boring.”*, a member said.

Values: FNB

Some of the FNB's values are similar to the Xarxa's – being grassroot, self-financing, independence, consistency, reliability and openness are some of the ideas the two groups share. The importance of community is also there, a lot more so than in the Xarxa. Many members also meet outside FNB, for example to go to concerts or skating together, although the most popular of these “friendly activities” is drinking alcohol together. It is a regular custom to go out for a beer together on Sundays after cooking (and sometimes also on Saturdays after rescuing food at the markets). Drinking and getting drunk together offers many shared experiences – everyone remembers the occasion, known only as the *“Tubi² night”*, when *“seventy-eight Tubis were consumed.”* It's also not uncommon to see someone opening a beer on a Sunday before the cooking starts (i.e., in the morning). This is often attributed to punkness, which, in addition to DIY, anti-establishment views and a commitment to social and political activism (O'Hara 1995:105-118), also often involves

² A popular Israeli herbal spirit.

drinking alcohol, according to the members. *“We can pretend that it's a very well-groomed group and it's not done by punks, but that wouldn't be true because it's done by punks.”* said one Inner Circle member in response to the “alcohol ban” announced in October 2022.

The ban was proposed by someone from the Inner Circle, and it meant an abstinent month where no alcohol or drugs could be consumed during the food rescue on Saturdays and the cooking on Sundays. *“Many people are sliding on their snot³, especially in the summer”*, the person who proposed a month of abstinence said. Another member against the ban commented on this with the following: *“On the one hand, the work is always done on time anyways, so what's the problem?! On the other hand, these members [who proposed the alcohol ban] don't even come on Sundays. Why can't they just say 'sorry guys, I'm at a stage in my life when I can't come' instead of saying 'I don't come because other people are drinking’”*. There are several layers of interpretation to this quote. It suggests that productivity compensates for alcohol consumption, and it also implies that only those who are physically there should have the authority to intervene in weekend events.

“But we survived it and we had a good time, so it shows that that's not what the FNB is about.”, the same member said. It means that although alcohol consumption is an important part of the gatherings for most of the members (much more so than in the case of the Xarxa), it is not the only thing the group does. And although the FNB does function more like a group of friends, it is a group of friends who also exercise social responsibility in their activities. *“Sometimes people tell me how much we drink, but then I tell them that they may be right, but we also give food to a hundred people. And then they keep quiet.”* – someone from the Inner Circle said.

Environmental protection is also an important point of FNB's operation – they refer to it mainly in their online communication, for example, the Facebook event for the food rescue on Saturday always includes the following sentence: *“We want to rescue as many usable fruits and vegetables as possible from being thrown away, so we invite you to the market in Fővám Square and Fehérvári Street.”* Environmental protection also includes the fact that the FNB only and exclusively prepares vegetarian food, and that several members are vegan or vegetarian, mainly for environmental reasons. And although they rarely talk

³ “Sliding on one’s snot” is a colloquial and humorous expression in Hungarian, which in this case means “to be very drunk”.

about anti-capitalism, they do talk about anti-fascism. There are several stories of them standing up to people or groups they call fascists or Nazis. Once, for example, one of them asked a man to leave Auróra who, judging by his clothes, belonged to a far-right group.

Values that are different from the Xarxa are for example, providing help and assistance to the people in need. In the FNB's understanding, aid is first and foremost a humanitarian act to eradicate poverty. *"The action is a demonstration of solidarity against housing poverty, homelessness and food waste: we want to draw attention to the fact that all is far from well with the current socio-economic system, and that we can see poverty, hunger, homelessness and the increase in housing problems every day by stepping out onto the streets."* says the post of the weekly Facebook event. The paragraph reflects on many things, but poverty and solidarity with the poor is a significant part of it.

Another different value is being blunt or rude, in their words, *"not being PC"*. This "non-PC-ness" manifests itself in many ways, but mostly in xenophobic and sexist jokes. *"Look at the gypsy!"* someone once said when someone else took a salad for themselves, insinuating that they were stealing. These jokes always cause a big laughter, and although the source of the humor is questionable, it is important to note that these are essentially ironic expressions of "not being PC" and not necessarily actual prejudice. So are the "misogynist" jokes. *"Did you just tell a woman she was right?!"*, shouted one male group member to another in the bar of Auróra when the community center was hosting a feminist event. This is, of course, in sharp contrast to the assertiveness of the Xarxa.

Conclusion

In the light of all these value orientations (equality, self-management, self-organization, self-financing, independence, openness, consistency, reliability, community, assistance, not being PC, environment protection, localism, anti-capitalism, anti-fascism), both the Xarxa and FNB can be considered as counterculture, i.e., "a rejection of the values of the established society" (Váriné 1987:255).

However, the "degree" of counterculturism differs between the two groups, and the historical background of the two countries may explain why. Anarchism has a long and distinguished history in Spain (especially in Catalonia), dating back to the late 19th century,

when it emerged as a major political and social movement (Alberola és Gransac 2005:17-21). At the same time, in Hungary anarchism was never, and still is not, a significant political ideology (Bozóki and Sükösd 2007:159-167). Thus, in the absence of such a cultural and political tradition, even movements operating with less countercultural values cannot establish themselves in the contemporary movement scene.

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An ethnographic approach to Palestinian women in Abu Dis, West Bank: practices and representations

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Introduction and theoretical framework

This dissertation is an integral part of my master's thesis in Cultural Anthropology, for which I did fieldwork in Palestine and where I worked with different field records. On this occasion, I will focus on developing a description and analysis of two of those records: on one hand, an institution organized by women for women empowerment called Talleh Cultural Center; and on other hand a meal organized by a family, from a girl I met while walking through Bethlehem (West Bank).

Palestinian-Israeli dispute adversely affects women, children and men, nevertheless the highlight of this work is on Palestinian women and the situations they are facing within their social context. I have conducted fieldwork in the West Bank, Palestine for almost two months. After my departure, I have kept in touch with some of the women I worked with through phone calls, video calls, WhatsApp messages and social networks, which has allowed me to continue working on different topics and ideas with them.

This research proposes an ethnographic approach from a gender and decolonial perspective to analyze and interpret the everyday life of a group of Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim women, considering their activities and representations, as well as the social relationships they establish at the Talleh Cultural Centre in Abu Dis (West Bank). To approach the examination of the daily lives of these women, this study aims to contextualize and describe how women experience Israel's occupation/colonization of the territory and identify what it is like to be a woman in Palestine, reflecting the particularities of their society and recognizing how their personal stories and social markers such as ethnicity, nationality, religion, and gender intertwine in their social relationships.

In this work, I take into consideration authors from Latin/Latin American decolonial thought: Enrique Dussel, Catherine Walsh, María Lugones, Ramón Grossfoguel, and Nelson Maldonado Torres, among others, to explain and contextualize the phenomenon under study; works of various Muslim thinkers, especially women, like Adlbi Sibai Sirin, Asma Lamrabet and Lila Abu-Lughod who have read and understood Islam and Qur'an in original and innovative ways; and within this group, special attention is given to what is academically known as Islamic feminisms. Understanding, in this way, Islamic feminisms as an intellectually and socially transformative movement that, through different strategies, is expanding gender equality and empowering Muslim women.

Recalling how Edward Said (1978) studied the Western view and construction of the "other" and the "Oriental"; it is important to say that he observed how Orientalists simplify the identities of these "others," of their traditions, and of Islam itself. Everything that represents the East will be considered barbaric and as an inferior culture and religion. The fate of women is also marked in this structure of thought. "Oriental women" are exhibited as objects of desire, fragile, at the service of men. Said analyzed in an original and groundbreaking way the impact of Western narratives on creating and shaping perceptions, not being left out of his analysis of the power these statements possess to influence a certain image of women.

Coloniality and colonialism have been deeply theorized and problematized through a long discussion throughout history (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Gosfoguel, 2006; Shohat, 2008; Hall, 2008). Nevertheless, there are numerous criticisms that appeared in the early 1990s about the concept of "post-colonialism" as if the prefix "post" designated that the colonial era and the anti-colonial struggles have been left in the past, as if the examples of the Gulf War, the invasion of Iraq and the occupation of the Palestinian territory were not evidence that the colonial project is still active (Shohat, 2008).

It was in the mid-1990s that a group of critical thinkers, intellectuals and theoreticians from Latin America transformed the approaches to colonialism and postcolonial studies. Aníbal Quijano, Enrique Dussel, Walter D. Mignolo and Edgardo Lander, among others, started to question the inseparable and necessary relationship between modernity and coloniality, exploring how to characterize the pattern of power of the world

system (Wallerstein, 1974) and how coloniality is a constitutive and an indispensable element of modernity (De la Fuente Espinosa, 2022).

Modernity, established from these logics of domination and exploitation that are inherent to it, will have a hidden side shaped by a pattern of power: coloniality. This coloniality, as a pattern of power of modernity will be associated with different forms of domination or material, or physical violence, but it will also be associated with other forms of violence related to knowledge and the production of subjectivities, so coloniality will play a very important role in maintaining asymmetrical geopolitical relations of power/knowledge (Quintero & Petz, 2009)

Maria Lugones (2008), taking up Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano's concept of "coloniality of power" by questioning the absence of references to patriarchal violence in his theorizations. She argued that gender as well as race are elements of the colonial pattern of power-knowledge where the capitalist and Eurocentric framework of analysis suppresses how colonized, non-white women were subordinated and disempowered.

Lat Crit and Critical Race Theory are analytical frameworks that have stressed the concept of intersectionality and demonstrated the historical and theoretical-practical exclusion of non-white women from liberatory struggles carried out in the name of women. Lugones follows Quijano's concept of the coloniality of power in order to analyze what she called "the modern-colonial gender system" (Lugones, 2008, p.77) to highlight that gender differences in the Western matrix of thought are attributed to biological casuistry, when - following her analysis- the categories of masculine/feminine as gender roles are themselves constructed within colonial thought, and were introduced into other socio-cultural organizations by Europeans after the colonial enterprise that began in the 15th century. As a historian, Scott (1989) makes a thorough review for the uses of the concept of gender, from the discussion of its functionalist use to the theoretical debate. As a constitutive element of social relations, gender comprises cultural symbolic elements, normative concepts, political notions, and subjective identities. For this author, gender is a primary form of significant power relations; it is the primary field within or through which power is articulated. Historically, the most diverse forms of violence and segregation were founded on some characteristics considered natural and inferior: sex, skin color, place of birth, religion, and sexual choice, among others (Femenías, 2013). The mechanisms of

discrimination, invisibilization, subordination, oppression and exclusion are the foundations of differential gender relations and historically place women in conditions of inequality and inequity.

If modernity became a universalist discourse that dictated the norms of those who are and those who are not through the coloniality of being and power, the Western feminism discourse would establish a universal subject of feminism without attending to fundamental issues such as class, religion, race, or colonial condition. In this way, Western feminist discourse reproduces the colonial strategies of power, knowledge, and being, dictating who can be feminists and what will be the guidebooks to follow in the feminist struggle (De la Fuente Espinosa, 2022).

Consequently, new terms arise to designate this new heterogeneous current: feminisms from the South, Third World, dissidents, subalterns, Latinos, Islamic, anticolonial, postcolonial, and decolonial, among others, but all of them, although crossed by differences, which is understood as the possibility of defining oneself from one's own subjectivity, have a common objective: to question from a critical and deconstructive perspective the centers of hegemonic feminist theory, dominated by a single thought, advocating for it the recognition of multiple subjects (Vidal, 2017).

Concerning the objective of this work, I pay attention to what is called Islamic feminisms. Those feminisms represent a very diverse and heterogeneous movement, but in general terms, they make a solid critique of the interpretations and readings of the sacred texts that have been written by the powerful men of the Islamic communities for centuries, reproducing in those readings the patriarchal principles of oppression and inequality towards women (Ali, 2014). Western feminisms usually understand Islamic women as a homogeneous, dependent, and oppressed group. The discourse and media propaganda surrounding Muslim women with their precarious legal status, lack of emancipation, and their several burqas and “veils” has created in the contemporary collective imagination, an immobile image of a Muslim woman, eternally passive and totally ignored. The direct effect of this paternalistic Western perspective is the creation and reproduction of the idea that it is mandatory to liberate and empower those Muslim women who, without exception, suffer from a cruel and biased religion with barbaric nuances. And such liberation can be realized only through idealized Western pathways (Lamrabet, 2018).

In contrast to this image constructed by the West for centuries, Islamic feminists propose their solutions from their own referential philosophical, epistemological, and political framework, which pays special attention to the fight against Islamophobia and, more specifically, gender-based Islamophobia, which discriminates against Muslim women “twice”, based on their religion and their gender adscription.

Considering all of this in the phenomenon under study, we can reflect that Palestine is a scenario in which Orientalist -as understood by Said- and Islamophobic discourse have justified the implementation of colonialist policies for more than 75 years (Hernández, 2022). The literature on the Israeli-Palestine matter has been sustained by different disciplines, from economics, political science, anthropology, sociology and psychology, among others. This work endorses the thesis elaborated by Ramos Tolosa (2022) who argues that explaining what is happening in Palestine as a "conflict" suggests that the historical relationship between Zionist Colonialism/State of Israel and the colonized Palestinian population and territories is somehow a relationship between two symmetrical parties and forces playing similar roles: “(...) not only is there a great imbalance in the way each side applies violence, but it also overshadows the fact that Israel-Palestine has been the place where an (ongoing) project of settlement colonialism is taking place. Therefore, from the historical precision, the proportional language of "conflict" is not compatible with the realities of settlement colonialism” (Tolosa, 2022, p. 17-18 translation is mine)

Methodology

The ethnographic field, following Bourdieu and Wacquant (2005) is a relational construction, neither substantialist nor territorialized, which allows the recovery of the native senses of the actors (Menéndez, 2002) by constructing data and documenting the processes, practices and representations of a prolonged social relationship established between the researcher and the actors involved. In this sense, ethnography constitutes not only a technique but an approach that makes it possible to study the habits of the subjects and reconstruct their life trajectories in the context of social relations and practices in everyday life and collective processes. Therefore, the fact of “being there”, as it is recorded by the anthropological methodology, not only allows the researcher to study the social

processes in which the interlocutors are immersed and where their practices are taking place but also to conceive the researcher's own experience as an ethnographic fact (Grimberg, 2009). This makes the production of ethnographic data subject to review by the researcher and their interlocutors regarding the political and social implications that such data entail. Likewise, ethnographic research is a process that simultaneously includes a literature review, fieldwork, source analysis, conceptual redefinition, theoretical elaboration, and the writing of both field records and reports (Achilli, 2005; Rockwell, 2009).

Talleh Cultural Center, which has received external funding from the United Kingdom for its creation, has a dual mission: to integrate women into the labor market through the development of handicrafts that allow them to achieve a certain economic independence, and, at the same time, the possibility to transmit the Palestinian cultural heritage while impregnating their creations with symbols and references that keep the traditions alive, using mostly materials with high symbolic value for their representation of nationhood, such as olive wood. I interviewed women who participated in the workshops and women who are part of the institution's management staff. I used data collection techniques such as participant observation and semi-structured interviews, as well as "open talks". The information collected in the field was registered in a field notebook and in several field records that allowed me to process the information I gathered during my stay in the different spaces I visited to later analyze and rethink based on my theoretical framework. This group of women is composed of women between 18 and 70 years old. Six of them have been present in all my visits to the Center and with whom I have established a closer relationship and trust; most of them have a very good command of English. Most of the time I did participant observation in the ceramics and weaving workshops, but I have also collaborated as a volunteer on various tasks of the institution.

Finally, with three women in the group (19, 22 and 49 years old) I have had meetings outside the institution and continue to dialogue currently through social media apps, especially Instagram.

During my fieldwork in Abu Dis, I gave special importance to the use of my social networks to establish and strengthen relationships with different women, especially the younger ones. Thus, I had regular conversations with many of them on the days we did not

meet face-to-face in the places where we usually coincided, and many of them shared information or audiovisual content with me on the Palestinian political situation. But in addition to the communication mediated by the networks, I was able to make observations on the uses that those women make of their social media by recording the way they present themselves in their bios, the avatars they create, or the photos they upload, the interactions they have with me and with other users, as well as the publications or content they share daily, both about their personal lives and about the socio-political situation in Palestine. In this way, I considered the possibility of using ethnographic methods to analyze the interactions between actors in the online culture or space of sociability and conduct digital ethnography (Pink et al, 2016). Given the aims of my research, I followed the methods of virtual ethnography that focus on online/offline mixtures to understand how virtual spaces form part of and feed back into the cultural worlds in our societies (Hine, 2015). I was able to gather a lot of valuable information by making those observations, but as they are part of these women's social media and I do not have their explicit permission, I made an ethical decision to not include them in this paper. Nonetheless, I believe that it helped me to paint a more complete portrait of contemporary Palestinian society, and I will only include those things I was explicitly allowed to incorporate in my thesis.

The concept that this writing proposes to explore is the practices and representation of Palestinian women in their everyday lives. To approach the study of this central concept, I have selected and created two different dimensions; the first of them corresponds to the effects of (I) the spatial-territorial component in their daily practices and their representations of meaning. The empirical indicator studied in this instance is the Apartheid Wall and the dynamics of Israeli checkpoints. And (II) the component that I named the system of social and religious values, where some empirical indicators are analyzed, such as the use/non-use of the hijab, the Salah (prayers), women's "roles" in their families/communities, and the representations of meaning around being women in Palestine.

These elements of analysis are not exhaustive, much less mutually exclusive; they both represent fragments of the daily lives of Palestinian women, which have been described "separately" for purely organizational purposes. I do think it is important to

mention that the territorial element can be thought of in transversal terms since it crosses and impacts all the other dimensions of daily life.

Talleh Cultural Center

"Talleh is an injection of modernity to revive Palestinian culture. But above all it is an opportunity for women to learn an art, a trade and gain independence. In Jerusalem the unemployment rate for women is around 80% and 75% of Palestinian women live below the poverty line; that is why all team members are women (...) One of the objectives of this institution is the empowerment of women."

(Interview to Al-Quds¹, from my fieldwork notes. January 2023)

"Women learn a trade, they develop skills, and practice to later in time work from their homes, thus seeking more personal, and economic independence."

(Interview to Ramallah, from my fieldwork notes. January 2023)

These were some of the first answers I received in my interviews when I asked what Talleh Cultural Center was. By then, their responses had been formal, even reconstructing slogans of the institution or descriptions of Talleh on social networks such as Facebook's fan page. Over time, and as we talked more deeply about what it means for them to be part of the Center, those first answers became more personal.

This space represents the possibility of leaving home, breaking the routine, and of doing something "for themselves". Talleh is a place for socialization, connection with other women, communication; a place where women feel free and capable of doing, a place where they are in intimate connection with the Palestinian heritage, which they try to represent in each piece they create with conviction and creativity.

The women who are participating in the workshops seek to develop themselves, learn the techniques, and imagine a future where they can put a market price on their productions to achieve more economic independence. They all give value to the exercise of learning and sharing this space with other women. A symbolic value that escapes the

¹ For the interviewees, I have chosen names of cities in historic Palestine (pre-occupation of Israel) to preserve their identities. Some of these names have also been suggested by themselves.

classic economic-political logic of merchandise. In the workshops, work is done in community, women are learning from other women and women are constantly helping each other. In Talleh there is a valuation of women's work and their effort to learn, and this is what gives value not only to the objects they produce but also to the practice of making them.

Concerning my work, participating in the workshops and activities in Talleh has opened a communication platform for me, and from which I have been able to articulate not only my participant observation but also the possibility of interrogating some women in depth, dialoguing with others, and discovering what are the topics and issues that they are most interested in, and what they want to express about their daily lives and Palestinian reality.

Being a woman in Palestine

Like other women in the world, Palestinian women live according to the level of social development, standards, and prevailing customs of their societies. From the following extracts selected from broader interviews, some guidelines can be deduced to analyze, mainly the tension that exists between how women perceive themselves and how they imagine other people see them from the outside (where I could include myself in this context of dialogue)

“Being a woman is nice, but it is not easy. It's not easy to be a woman anywhere in the world but being a woman here, being Palestinian, being Arab, being Muslim, has its difficulties. When we chat about my routines and my daily life, you know I can't do everything I want, I can't travel, I can't visit all the places I want, I can't walk freely. Anyway, and despite Israel, I think women here are in a better position than women in other Arab countries. We have kind of freedom to choose, for example regarding our profession. We can be whatever we want to be.”

(Interview to Ramallah, from my fieldwork notes, Ramallah, January 2023)

“Sometimes it is annoying to have to explain that there is no differentiation between men and women in the Qur'an. There isn't. They are the interpretations

that were made [by men] that put us in a lower position (...) the Qur'an is from the 7th century. Society today is different; women are as powerful as men, and we can do whatever we want. We are free and capable. Well, there is still a lot to fight for. But I am studying medicine. I travel alone. I help my family. I don't depend on any man, neither on my father nor on any husband."

(Interview to Sa'ir, from my fieldwork notes, Abu Dis, January 2023)

One of the most interesting questions to me has been to talk about theirs or another's perceptions around the idea of Muslim women. In general, they consider that "from the outside", this concept is used to encapsulate all women in the same notion without considering the diversity of Muslim women in terms of nationality, culture, social, and economic status. This has been expressed even more emphatically in cases where women have had the possibility of traveling, studying, or living abroad.

"It happens that the Muslim, Arab woman is thought of as a woman without rights, vulnerable, covered with her veil, without the ability to think. You see, how now the Taliban in Afghanistan forbid their women to study. Here that would be strange to happen. But we are going through that other context that is the occupation. And the greatest freedom we can feel on the one hand, we don't have on the other. Do you understand? I feel free and imprisoned at the same time."

(Interview with Ramallah, from my fieldwork notes, Abu Dis, January 2023)

I find it interesting to observe in the narratives of the women with whom I worked how the colonization of the territory is an element that governs the order of daily life. The constraints of the context of occupation impede the normal reproduction of daily life. However, it is also interesting to highlight the central role of the second component of the analysis that I propose, the social and cultural values, insofar as they allow the development of strategies of resistance and preservation of Palestinian memory and cultural heritage, even despite the restrictions on mobility and the state of siege developed by the Israeli occupation forces in the West Bank. It is these values, material elements, and practices related to Palestinian culture and tradition that acquire a symbolic place of utmost importance by enabling social and symbolic spaces, which aim to emulate a

"normal" reproduction of the values socially upheld as Palestinian heritage and which are constantly threatened by the exercise of different forms of violence by the State of Israel that seeks to dismantle them. These spaces, not necessarily territorialized but also inhabited and revisited online through digital platforms, develop as interstices of political, economic, and colonial conjunctures through which women, through their encounters, weave, protect, and reinvent cultural heritage as a political device that resists attempts to silence historical memory.

Cooking Heritage and Other Gifts

During my stay in Palestine, I was invited to lunch and dinner with families I have met on different occasions. From all of them I learned that inviting someone into their homes and sharing a table is a basic precept of hospitality that is widespread in Arab culture, and that it represents not only a social code of behavior, but also the recognition of *the visitor* as "a member of the family".

Of these encounters and visits I made, I would like to highlight one in particular. During a walk through the city of Bethlehem (West Bank), and more specifically while I was leaving the Church of the Nativity, the place where, according to Christian tradition, Jesus was born, I met two teenagers posing and having their pictures taken in front of the Church. They probably noticed that I had a professional camera, so they kindly asked me to take some pictures of them. After the funny sequence, we exchanged Instagram profiles to send them the photos. A few days after sharing the photos with them, one of these girls wrote to me inviting me to have lunch with her and her family, as her mother wanted to share a typical Palestinian dish as a way of thanking me for "my kind gesture" of photographing her daughters. As I was traveling with my partner, she apologized in advance for not being able to invite him, she mentioned that her father works in Jericho and is not present at home, and as she has no male siblings, they could only receive visits from other women.

So it was that one Sunday at noon I headed back to Bethlehem (an hour away by van - the West Bank public transport service - from where I was residing in Abu Dis) to meet them:

“We walked down a pedestrian street to her house. (..) When we were arriving at the house, one of her younger sisters came out to meet us and hugged me as if she had known me all her life. We arrived at her house. Including her, there are seven women in her family: She, her mother, and five sisters. They prepared mosajjan. They cooked this traditional dish for me to taste and enjoy and they taught me something more about Palestine. As almost none of them spoke fluent English while we had lunch, they were reading and translating with their phones information about the dish we were tasting. The word msajan simply means 'warmed', a reference that began when Palestinian peasants would often take bread from a day-old and brush it with olive oil before reheating and enjoying it. Over time, the dish evolved from a simple piece of reheated bread to an elaborate one. I tried it with onions cooked in olive oil, chicken, pine nuts and almonds. We all ate a lot, and this is a dish that is eaten with hands: It was finger licking good! Literally”.

(From my fieldwork notes, Bethlehem, January 2023)

They told me that according to Palestinian folk songs and folklore this dish has existed for centuries. The msajan can be enjoyed at any time, however, it is a dish that is usually reserved for large gatherings or weekend family meals, as it requires time and preparation. The mother of the family made it clear to me: they hadn't invited me to share just one meal, when someone cooks you a Palestinian dish it's an act of love and respect.

(From my fieldwork notes, Bethlehem, January 2023)

From the conversations I have had with a lot of people, especially when they shared food or snacks with me, I could say that gastronomy as well as the production of handicraft goods such as Talleh's, is a practice that helps to preserve Palestinian memory and identity and plays a main role in maintaining social relationships, a role, and a privilege that women possess in their families and communities. The invitation to share a purely and exclusively women's lunch provided me with a first-hand opportunity to understand part of the code of female behavior in social spaces, and allowed me to have a relatively fluent conversation - since we communicated in English with the older daughters, while with the mother and

other sisters we did so only through translators on the mobile phone - about the importance of preparing typical dishes that vindicate the cultural and ancestral value of sharing a plate of food:

"Palestinian cuisine represents a space of resistance in itself, through recipes, women keep tradition alive. (...) When a typical Palestinian meal is cooked, it keeps alive a whole culture and tradition that is also threatened. Many of our dishes are also appropriate. (...) Women have an essential role in the transmission of the recipes of our kitchen. And not only in cooking, but in gathering our whole family at a table and sharing."

(Interview to Al-Quds, from my fieldwork notes, Abu Dis, January 2023)

Far from being a cultural reification, the typical dishes thus represent an act of resistance that preserves memory by inviting and making visitors part of the home, and the oral transmission of the teaching of how they should be prepared from generation to generation also follows the same direction: that of recognising their cultural belonging deeply affected by the military occupation, a cultural belonging that despite systematic attempts to make it disappear, stands firm and resilient with each shared plate of food.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the two elements of the analysis of this paper, the territorial and the socio-cultural as two opposing forces would be incorrect; rather we can understand that the constrictions coming from the context of occupation and colonization prevent the normal reproduction of daily life and that trying to preserve and reproduce the social and cultural values, tasks that women naturally assume in their families and communities, could be understood rather as an act of resistance, preservation of memory, and cultural heritage. Palestinian women face several "enemies": the Zionist movement, the settlers, imperialism, "Western feminism", poverty, unemployment, retrograde social rules and institutions, as they have pointed out many times. However, their strength and determination are immense and inspiring. In the context of their reduced opportunities and facing constant challenges, they play a fundamental role as pillars in their families and

communities. Their participation in the nationalist struggle, the creation of constant women's networks such as Talleh, and their solidarity are truly long-standing. Women are a united and often organized collective. In my opinion, they are capable of constituting themselves as active subjects, and they are especially resilient. They have always been in charge of creating and sustaining the social webs on which the family and the community depend to develop. Women are the channels of transmission of heritage, culture and traditions, but this "role" cannot be analyzed from a Western logic, nor only from a dimension of analysis that considers it as a simple transmission. Keeping Palestinian heritage alive is a form of resistance.

I finally consider that the practices and representations of Palestinian women can be understood according to their personal histories, their ages, professions and studies, that is to say, everything that makes up their particular being, their identity; while I also consider, concerning my universe of study, that many of these practices that Palestinian women undertake in their daily lives have a collective dimension, a very present collective identity. This collective identity is visualized even in the most personal decisions they make: *"I study medicine, because more doctors are needed to save Palestinian lives"; "I wanted to be an architect to create and apply my ideas for a more effective organization of our communities"; "I want to be a professional dancer to travel the world and show my Palestinian culture"*.

In a context where their culture and their survival, as individuals and as a people are under constant threat, many of the actions that women assume are aimed, visibly, at fighting for the preservation of their culture and resisting colonization.

After Words

At the time of my thesis and paper presentation, the scenario in Palestine/Israel was different. Today, after more than 45 days of continuous bombardment of Gaza and systematic attacks on civilians in the West Bank, there is no doubt that the living conditions of those women who have helped me in my fieldwork, as well as of all those Palestinian friends with whom I shared my research instance, are being drastically threatened and violated. This work, far from pretending to be exhaustive, has as a crucial objective to make visible and discuss, mainly in western academic circles, those assumptions that make

invisible the situation of colonial oppression that Palestine has been living for more than 75 years and the silences plagued by islamophobia that flood the common sense and do not allow to glimpse the real power structures.

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**TRAVERSING CULTURAL
BOUNDARIES IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

Alexandra Korom

"The Day of Folk Costume and Dance in the town Hajós" | Examples of ethnic identity and the symbolic use of space

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Introduction

As a result of the political regime change in Hungary in 1989 and the economic and social changes that took place in parallel, the number of civil society organisations and voluntary groups started to develop in response to the needs of the population, and thanks to the possibility of free self-organisation (Nárai 2003). In addition, the Act No. LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities provided a legal framework for legitimising the individual and community interests of nationalities living in Hungary and for preserving and nurturing their native language and culture (Act CLXXIX/2011). From the 1990s to the present day, national minority organisations in Hungary, especially groups¹ involved in the preservation of traditions, have become key players in the preservation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and identity of Hungarian national minorities (Szeidl 2022). The need for self-assertion and self-representation in the local area has become increasingly strong in the groups that have been formed based on the opportunities provided by the law.

In this study, I will show the possibility of preserving national identity through the symbolic use of space by the group under study by means of a highlighted example of an event of the Hajós Swabian Traditional Dance Association.²

¹ By groups, I mean officially registered associations as well as informal civil initiatives and associations.

² Hereinafter: Association.

Interpretation framework

The focus of my study is an event called *Hajoscher Tracht- und Tanztag* - used in the field interviews and in the local context: *Trachttag*³ - created by the association, which plays a key role not only in the expression of local community identity but also in the expression of individual national identity. The event doesn't take place in a specific enclosed space - in a community centre, theatre hall, other rehearsal rooms, schools, etc. - but uses the open spaces of the town. In line with Ágnes Erőss's idea that "research on symbolic spaces and uses of space is highly inter- and multidisciplinary", I consider the interdisciplinary approach to my research, in addition to ethnographical and anthropological methods, to be applicable to research approaches in proxemics and environmental psychology (Erőss 2019:68). Studying the relationship between the preservation of national identity, social relations, and the use of space is even more fascinating in a multiethnic environment where the community under research exists. In a multiethnic settlement, the expression of „the need to belong” is more strongly present, and the dilemma of „self-representation” arises, to which the individual (or social group) responds with a reaction that affects its environment (Marinka 2018:121).

Before World War II, Hajós was a closed Swabian settlement in terms of nationality. As a result of the war and subsequent forced deportations, the number of ethnic Germans decreased. In 1941, 80% of the population of Hajós identified themselves as having German as their mother tongue, in contrast to the 1990 data, which showed a decrease to 15% (T.Molnár 1995). Based on the 2022 census data, although 35,1 % of the population indicated an ethnic affiliation, this still falls significantly short of the pre-war figures. These pieces of data are showing the strengthening of the local Swabian identity, which may have led for example to the formation of the dance association.

In addition to the German ethnicity, the settlement is also home to Hungarian, Roma, Croatian, Serbian, and other ethnic groups. Therefore, I interpret the settlement as a multiethnic community.⁴ In this context, following Melinda Marinka's approach, I interpret local ethnic self-expression as a representation, in which space can also be seen as a symbolic manifestation of unique identity representation (Marinka 2018). The public

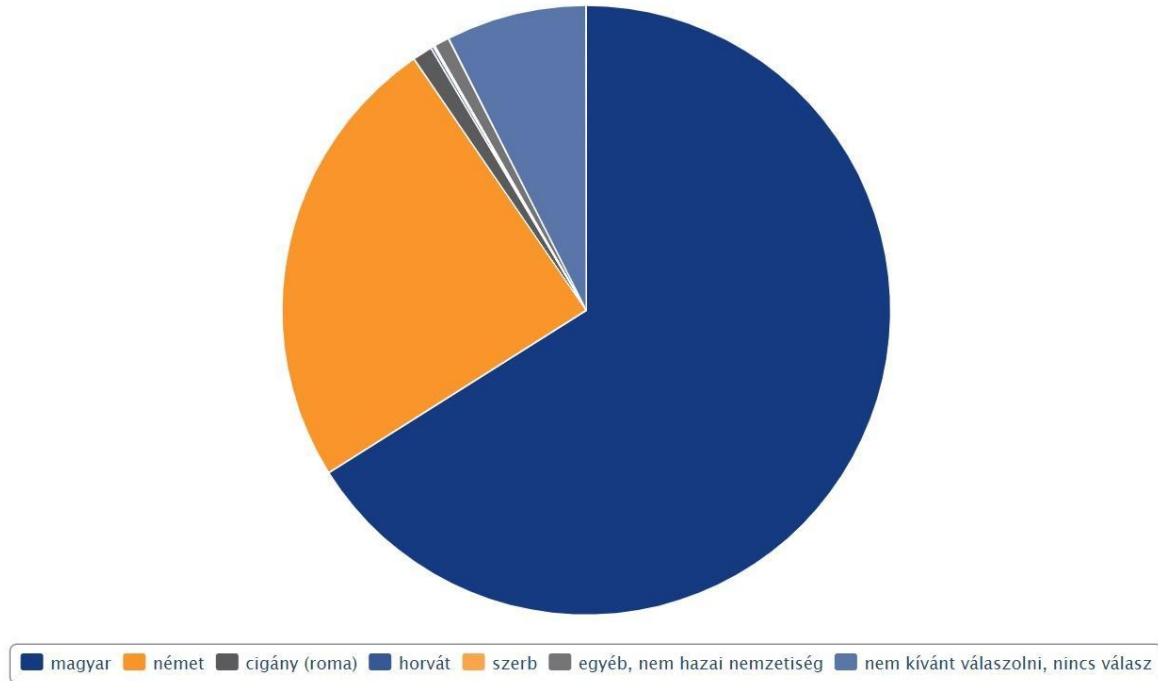
³ In English: Day of Folk Costume and Dance in the town Hajós.

⁴ For more information: [Hungarian Central Statistical Office - Hajós](#)

declaration of identity is of particular importance in my opinion, especially for an ethnicity whose social perception has been precarious in the crossfire of historical and political events for an extended period from the perspective of the majority society and which has had its rights legitimised by the nationality laws mentioned in the introduction to this text. By historical and political events, with regard to the German national minority in Hungary, I refer to the period of World War II (1939-1945) and the subsequent period of deportation (1945-1948).

The preservation of a community's identity can be perceived through various representational methods that manifest different events and actions (Marinka 2018). These occasions, in addition to being interpretable as representations of the group to the majority society, can also have repercussions for its members. As a result of this reflection, I believe that individuals develop a sense of self-expression in which there is a simultaneous presence of local (and, in some cases, regional) representation, a desire to maintain group cohesion, and the expression of individual identity. The relationship between ethnic identity and symbolic space usage can be examined from multiple perspectives. In this study, I interpret the "Day of Folk Costume and Dance in the town Hajós" as a cultural phenomenon, through which the local attachment and ethnic identity of the Hajós Swabians can be articulated.

A helység lakóinak nemzetiségi kötődése 2022-ben



1. Figure | The graph shows the ethnicity of the settlement's population in 2022. | The order of ethnicity under the graph is: Hungarian, German, Gypsy (Roma), Croatian, Serbian, Other ethnicity, which is not registered in Hungary, No answer | Source: [Hungarian Central Statistical Office](#)

Sources and Research Methods

The research drew its sources from several avenues. Firstly, it relied on relevant academic literature pertaining to the subject matter. Additionally, it incorporated materials found in the private archives of the interviewees.⁵ During my fieldwork, through structured interviews and informal conversations with my interviewees, I delved into the *Trachttag*, its impact on them and the local community, and their participation in the organization of the event. Furthermore, the research relied on on-site fieldwork, during which I produced my own photographs, dance films, and field diary and I participated from 2019 in the

⁵ Thesis (Mónika Beck-Manga), project work (Hédi Lakner), the first anniversary DVD about *Trachttag*, which were made available to me by my interviewees, as a freely usable source reference.

Trachttag event several times. In addition to *Trachttag*, I went as much as I could to all the local events that the dance group participated in or organised.⁶

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic closures, I had limited opportunities to conduct fieldwork. Therefore, in the examination of the topic, I employed not only ethnographic-anthropological research methods, but also the tools of digital ethnography. Digital spaces are well-suited for addressing societal questions. With digital ethnography, we can employ methods that allow us to examine communities using the tools of anthropology in online spaces (Povedák 2023).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, communities shifted their presence into the digital space. Therefore, it was essential for the research to also examine the dance group's online presence. To conduct this investigation, I analysed the dance group's social media posts, news reports about the event, comments on those posts, online press materials related to the *Trachttag*, as well as materials posted on the local television's YouTube channel.

All these sources contributed to my understanding of the German ethnic identity representation within the studied community and allowed me to explore potential forms of symbolic space usage through the lens of the dance group.

Political and social context

To examine the spatial representation of the identity of the Swabians in Hajós, it is necessary to provide a brief historical and sociological context for the dance group.

Prior to World War II, Hajós was primarily inhabited by descendants of Swabians who had originated from the vicinity of the Bussen mountain in Germany in the 18th century (Beck-Manga 2021). The political retribution invoking the principle of collective guilt following the Second World War also affected the Swabian population in the village. After World War II, political acts of collective guilt and reprisals also affected the Swabian population of the town.⁷

In the summer of 1945, during the deportations, Hungarian destitute individuals were resettled in the vacated Swabian houses. This resettlement of Hungarians essentially

⁶ For example: Celebration Day of St. Orbán, Swabian ball, dance rehearsals.

⁷ The framework of this article does not allow me to write in more detail about the deportations of German minority of Hajós. See more on this topic: T. Molnár 1995; 1997.

marked the dissolution of Swabian unity in the town of Hajós. Concurrently, the collective accountability of the ethnic Germans in Hungary and the effects of the post-1945 deportations contributed to the emergence of a trend among the Hajós Germans that was observable throughout the country. The hardships contributed to the damaged self-awareness of the Swabians of Hajós and to the loss of their Swabian identity. The number of deportees can only be estimated on the basis of the limited archival data (T. Molnár 1997). In the summer of 1945, Hungarian penniless people from the Great Hungarian Plain were resettled in the former Swabian houses, which became abandoned as a result of the deportation (T. Molnár 1997). With the settlement of the Hungarians, the disintegration of the unit of the Swabian community in Hajós actually began. The hardships contributed to the damaged self-esteem of the Swabians in Hajós and the loss of their Swabian ethnic identity (T. Molnár 1997).⁸ Following the regime change, census data indicated a slow increase in the German ethnic affiliation in the town, although it remained far below the pre-World War II proportions.⁹ From a settlement sociological perspective - Gizella T. Molnár notes - the events of the war significantly transformed the structure of Hajós. The village lost its closed, isolated nature, and a mixed population replaced the previously homogeneous Swabian community (1995). Within this societal context, the Swabian Traditional Dance Group of Hajós was established in 1963, officially registering as an association in 2010.

Hajós Folk Costume and Dance Day

The *Trachttag* was first organized by the dance association in July 2013. The occasion for the event was the fiftieth anniversary of the informal establishment of the dance group. The celebration in this manner can also be interpreted as a forum for expressing historical consciousness, through which the German community of the village symbolically embeds and reinforces its position in the local space. During the event, a consciously structured celebration of identity preservation, awareness of origin, and tradition conservation was organized, which, in a complex form, combined the symbolic forms of religious rites,

⁸ According to census data, until the regime change the population declared itself as ethnic German in the following proportions: 1960: 1 %; 1970: 0 %; 1980: 1,3 %; 1990: 14,5 %. See more: T.Molnár 1997.

⁹ See footnote 6.

historical memory, and cultural heritage preservation. Since 2013, the *Trachttag* events have followed the same program structure, with variations related to significant anniversaries and commemorations. Between 2013 and 2022, the event was organized every year. Even during the pandemic, the association made efforts to maintain the continuity of the event.

In 2023, the event celebrated not only the sixty-year existence of the dance group but also the three-hundred-year settlement of the Germans and the fifty-year twinning with Hirrlingen. Over the years, the event has not only become a defining contemporary tradition for the Swabians in Hajós in terms of their sense of identity but has also evolved into a regional and national tourist attraction (Vörös 2020).¹⁰

Due to the complexity of the event, I will analyse only a few key points from the first jubilee occasion, which I consider to provide guidance for the examination of the study's topic. During the *Trachttag* event held in 2023, the dance association revitalized a traditional Swabian wedding. The guests included not only the dance group but also the residents of the village, interested visitors attending the event, and guest ensembles from Hirrlingen, Germany who were also invited as symbols of their connection to the motherland. Prior to the event, the residents of the village were encouraged to wear the Hajós Swabian folk costume, known as the *Tracht*, if they had one, as a way to symbolize group cohesion.¹¹

¹⁰ It is not the aim of this article to analyse the relationship between tourism and identity but in the future it would be worth to study the event from the perspective of folktourism and its impact on the community.

¹¹ My interviewees could not tell me how many people wore the costume but the estimated number was around 300 person.



2. Figure | Wedding guest front of the folklore museum in Hajós | Photo by Author | Hajós, 2023.

The symbolic spatial designation of conscious ethnic representation can be well interpreted in the procession of the wedding guests through the village. The folklore museum, called the *Heimatmuseum*, represents the house where a wedding is celebrated, serves as the starting point of the event. In most cases, museums play a role in preserving the identity of an ethnic community when they appear as "community representation tools during social gatherings and events, with a clear emphasis on highlighting ethnographic and historical values" (Marinka 2018:131). In this case, the folklore museum of Hajós represented both the venue for evoking the past and Swabian wedding customs and the space for the jubilee celebration, serving as a place for historical commemoration.

Furthermore, the German- Hungarian bilingualism of the Swabian can be noted in event advertisements, which can be seen as a reflection of dual identity: "Felvonulás a *Heimatmuseumtól*" ("March from the *Heimatmuseum*").

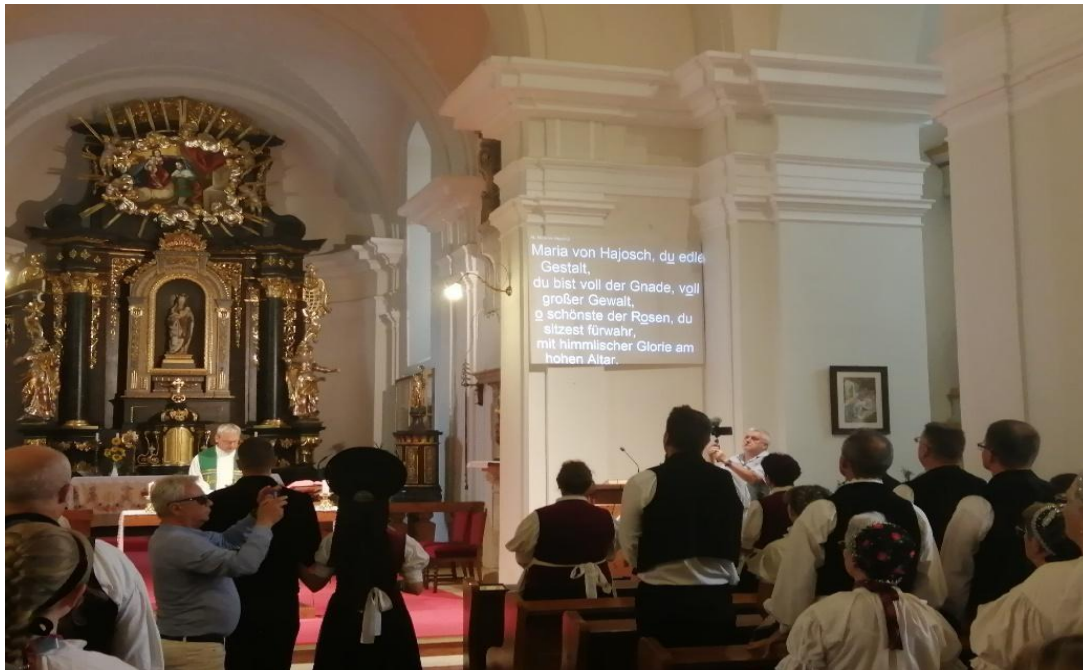


3. Figure | Advertisement of the event in 2022 | The bilingualism of the Swabians is clearly discernible in the advertisement: “Felvonulás a *Heimatmuseum*tól” (“March from the *Heimatmuseum*”).

| Photo by: Róbert Gínál, Hajós | Source: <https://www.facebook.com/hhsne/photos> | 2022.

The wedding procession, following a predetermined order set by the organizers, proceeded along the main street of the town to the sports field, with three designated stops along the way. The symbolic wedding procession succeeded in the following order: 1. the wedding orchestra, 2. adult dancers representing the wedding guests, 3. godparents, and 4. wedding guests (including dressed children and other adults). The not-dressed spectators could join the wedding guests either at the very end or by walking alongside them. The procession had the following stations in order: 1. the square in front of the post office, 2. the Roman Catholic Church, and 3. the Baroque Castle of Hajós. In front of the post office, the square becomes sacralized by the dancers. During the dancers' initial stop, they dance encircling the space, symbolizing unity and communal solidarity, where the dance can be perceived as a form of ritual action and dance. Through the ritual dance they are indicating their existence, presence, and relevance to the community. These individual stops can also be

perceived as a kind of sacred space where a ritual of identity expression for the dance



4. Figure | Wedding guest in the Roman Catholic Church of Hajós. Front the statue of Virgin Mary. The text of the German-language Mass, which is a prayer to Virgin Mary of Hajós, is visible on the wall. | Photo by Author | Hajós, 2023.

German text in English – Tranlated by Author:

““Maria of Hajós, you noble spirit,
You are full of grace, full of great might,
O beauty of roses, you indeed sit,
With heavenly glory at the high altar.”

group is manifested. The second stop of the *Trachttag* event was the Roman Catholic Pilgrimage Church, which I highlight from the perspective of the research topic. It was significant for the Swabians who settled in Hungary due to the sanctity of the religiously neutral local environment, such as their intention to bring their own priest or to construct a church (Marinka 2018).

The first invitation of the Swabians to Hajós (1715) was connected with the name of Count Imre Csáky. At the beginning of the 18th century the parish of the town became the Mother Church of the newly organized German-speaking communities in the area. Following this, Count Csáky established the church in 1728, which was declared a shrine by Pope Pius VI in 1794 (Hajósi Plébánia 2023). In the case of the Swabians in Hajós, their religious life played a prominent role in solidifying their presence in their new homeland,

highlighted by the statue of the Virgin Mary. The statue arrived with the last group of settlers in 1726, brought from their motherland, and it remains on the main altar of the church to this day (Flach-Paul 1976). The church can be interpreted as the center of religious life and a symbol of the local community throughout history, serving not only as a site of "sacred occupation" but also as an expression of their ethnic identity (Marinka 2018:127). This is supported by the German- Hungarian bilingual sermon delivered during the Mass, in which the statue of Mary was defined as a crucial sacred object determining the self-identity of the community. Following the Mass, as a symbol of ethnic occupation and religious representation, a hymn was sung in the churchyard as a prayer to the Virgin Mary (Hajósi Hagymányörző Sváb Néptánc Egyesület 2013).

Summary

In this study, my aim was to illustrate the possibilities of the manifestation of ethnic identity and symbolic spatial use through selected examples from the Hajós Folk Costume and Dance Day. Through the highlighted examples, my goal was to demonstrate how a once homogeneous ethnic community, due to external factors, can represent itself in a multi-ethnic environment.

The examples from the examined event, in my opinion, are in line with the thoughts of András A. Gergely, who suggested that the occupation and possession of space are not intentional but rather an inherent human strategy and symbol, often manifesting in a non-cognitive manner for those participating in the process of acquiring space (2001). As the organizer of the event, the dance association can be seen as actively engaged in preserving a wide spectrum of traditions. As a result, we can speak of a nuanced tradition preservation in which local attachment, historical memory creation, and group as well as individual identity are inextricably intertwined.

In response to the opportunities afforded by the modern era, the studied community, in addition to representing its spatial acquisition and identity on a local level through the organization of local or regional space-acquisition events, has expanded into the virtual space through the use of digital platforms and social media. Thus, in agreement with Melinda Marinka 's perspective, a community's self-representation is no longer

confined solely to the objective space surrounding us but can also be interpreted within a realistic context (2018).



5. Figure | Swabian women of Hajós with a portable statue of the Virgin Mary. | Source/Photo: https://www.hajosiplebania.hu/11_szuzmaria.html | 2023.

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Performing Heritage: Between Tradition and Innovation

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Concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage

In the context of the ever-changing concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage (only ICH), the questions of its content and how the concept of ICH can be understood have come into debate. The concept of intangible cultural heritage was established by a political act, namely the proclamation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris on October 17th, 2003 (only Convention). According to this Convention, the actual content of ICH is the practices, knowledge, and skills, but also the artifacts or cultural spaces designated by their bearers. The text of the Convention further specifies five main types of manifestations of ICH, which are:

1. "Oral traditions and expressions, including language,
2. performing arts,
3. social customs, ceremonies, and festive events,
4. knowledge and experiences relating to nature and the universe,
5. skills associated with traditional crafts" (UNESCO 2003(1)).

This Convention also established two lists - the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (only Representative list) and the manifestations inscribed therein, which are the subject of this paper, and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

Inscription on this Representative list is quite a complex operation; there are certain conditions for inscription steps to an inscription, and each nomination requires approval. The whole concept of ICH, especially the existence of the UNESCO list, is political. For a manifestation to be inscribed on the Representative List, it must meet specific criteria. These stem from the Convention, which established the Representative List. The

Convention defines ICH as the „intangible cultural heritage, which means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history, providing them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups, and individuals, and of sustainable development” (UNESCO 2003(2)).

However, the ICH is more than just a list of the mentioned practices. “It has also become an independent concept that has established itself as a new terminological starting point for European ethnology, replacing, complementing, or expanding the content of the hitherto segmented phenomena under study, such as folklore, traditional folk culture, or tradition” (Janeček 2015). In this way, European ethnology has adapted the general characteristics of ICH, and the cultural policy established to protect ICH is, to some extent, based on the perception of disciplinary and, in some respects, national history.

Of course, questions have begun to arise about how to approach and research heritage in a way that preserves its essence: its link to history and its future viability. In this context, the following issues began to emerge, which are not only related to the general paradigm of heritage but also, to a large extent, to those practices that were subsequently identified as intangible cultural heritage. “The representative aspect of heritage is primarily emphasized in the study of heritage. Emphasis is given to the symbolic functions of heritage, particularly as a repository of cultural memory, the relationship of heritage to national history, and the close relationships between the development of national heritage and similar national developments within literature, history, or the arts” (Urry, 1996; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Laurajane Smith, who is one of the leading contemporary experts in cultural heritage research, attaches a political character to heritage: “In the European context, heritage is traditionally associated with preserving the (imagined) past

and thus potentially excludes marginalized experiences and interests from the past it represents. Studies of such marginalized examples of heritage often draw heavily on postcolonial and discursive approaches to question and expose the power structures at work in the creation and implementation of »authorised heritage discourse«¹ focusing on manifestations or objects of heritage as something aesthetically pleasing, valued for their (national) symbolic significance” (Smith 2006).

The situation in the Czech Republic

Each country then sets its own policy when joining the Convention, which will define what expression in that country should be included in the international list. In the Czech Republic, the concept of ICH is linked to traditional folk culture; this is stipulated in the cultural policy created when the Czech Republic joined the Convention in 2009. Despite all efforts to create adequate measures to promote these expressions in their diversity and vitality, interest is often focused only on external, aesthetically exciting elements such as costumes or folk art, which is mostly determined by the romantic folkloristic concept. The further problem is that these elements often represent, as a rule, the last phase of the development of folk culture during the onset of industrialization in the 19th century, when, thanks to prosperity, folk culture abounded in varied forms, and the valued expressions, therefore, do not represent folk culture as a whole.

This practice entailed many pitfalls, as it raised many questions concerning the form of these expressions. To innovate or to preserve? What is tradition? Is the traditional form immutable, or can tradition change? Moreover, how does the audience influence this form? What do they expect? This paper will explore these questions using two phenomena registered on the Representative List in the Czech Republic. The theory of performativity, which emphasizes, among other things, corporeality, bodily experience, and actor-viewer interaction, can deepen our understanding.

¹ The term Authorised heritage discourse is used by Laurajane Smith, and in her conception, it refers to the way we think, speak, and write about heritage and how we influence it through all of these.

Performance as a methodological approach

Questions arise, therefore, as to how to study these phenomena to avoid not only the problems mentioned above but also to ensure that the grasp of the manifestations of ICH becomes an “essential factor in preserving cultural diversity, promoting intercultural dialogues, mutual respect for other ways of life, and bringing sustainable social and economic value” (UNESCO 2003 (3)). A possible way is to use performance as a methodological approach.² Performance represents an artistic and social tendency that blurs the boundaries between artistic modes and opens space for other elements as active co-creators of the emerging event.

The performance approach to studying the concept of heritage also accents its incessant movement and the possibility of being influenced by context factors, as Professor of History David Crouch also noted: “Reflections on performance and performativity remove the concept of heritage from being perceived as something »ready-made« or »finished«, these considerations emphasize the changing aspects and dynamic construction of heritage and the fact that heritage (and its making) is constantly in motion. It also emphasizes the relationality rather than the polarity of what is representational and what is not” (Crouch 2010). “The Performative Turn has also made it possible to understand heritage practices as emerging in relational, contingent, and dynamic spaces” (Coleman – Crang 2002; Bærenholdt et al. 2004). According to Erika Fischer-Lichte, the Performative Turn is also characterized by “the use of cultural performances as tools of communication” (Fischer-Lichte 2005). “From the perspective of their creators, the dominant carrier of culture ceases to be the text and becomes the performance” (Fischer-Lichte 2011).

“The idea of the application of the characteristics of performance permeates debates about heritage because it fits into the notion of intangible heritage as a set of practices or processes and because both heritage and performance are linked to questions of identity” (Smith – Akagawa 2008). Richard Schechner identifies several elements in performance that separate it from everyday life. In his words “one element is place, as performance always occurs in a particular space. It can be a building, a specific environment, or, as the

² The entry of performance as a methodological approach appeared in the social sciences and humanities of the 1990s, with roots in the 1940s and 1950s, and emerged from the theory of performativity (stimulated by the ideas of George Herbert Mead, John Austin, and Judith Butler in particular). The whole change in approach and outlook towards society that emerged from this concept is called the Performative Turn.

author points out, a space created by a group of people. Another aspect is the relationship between those who create and those who watch” (Schechner 2013). This kind of interaction can then provoke an outwardly perceptible reaction, and this interaction is often highlighted as one of the critical characteristics of live performance.

Erika Fischer-Lichte “uses an »autopoietic feedback loop« to describe this interdependence between performers and the audience“(Fischer-Lichte 2011). Marvin Carlson adds other aspects that a performance should include, especially in relation to the audience, which are: “specific ideas, actions, or »things« to be presented, performed, or experienced“(Carlson 2004). Thus, it can be a demonstration of a particular skill or a renewed behavior - that is, “actions that begin with a rehearsal process and then result in another process - performance - and subsequently form a culturally coded pattern of behavior“(Schechner 2009). All this can also be found in the presentation of ICH. In both cases, it is also about creating belonging through a collective understanding of the past or present. Richard Schechner’s concept of renewed behavior is also helpful in performance theory. This notion of human behavior opens up a way of thinking about how history, memories, or identity, individual or collective, are embodied and made present. For Schechner, then, “renewed behavior is a living behavior that can be manipulated similarly to how a director manipulates a filmstrip. In this concept, Schechner highlights the process of repetition and, at the same time, the awareness of the original behavior. It can, therefore, be reshaped and reconstructed, and the manifestations are not dependent on the causal systems that caused it“(Schechner 1985). The specific mechanism that participates in the development of culture despite its ephemeral materiality is the aforementioned cultural performances. These allow - alongside text or art - phenomena to enter into existence, to be incorporated into the structure of culture, and, at the same time, to model the lived reality of a community.

Shrovetide Door-to-Door Processions and Masks

The first inscribed phenomenon to be introduced is the Shrovetide Door-to-Door Processions and Masks in the Villages of the Hlinecko Area. In the area of Hlinecko, there are documented descriptions of Shrovetide processions and masks from the end of the

19th century. This time-honored tradition was spontaneously preserved in active awareness and is still practiced today. The ethnographer Ilona Vojancová, who, as an expert, is responsible for preserving this procession writes: “The form of the Shrovetide procession in Hlinecko is unparalleled in the Czech Republic. (...) It is a unique proof of customary folk culture.” (Vojancová 2006:38).

No folklore group was in charge of the maintenance of this procession, but it was organized every year by the village community. Each village, keeping the Shrovetide procession in its original form, takes excellent care in its preparation; masks are often handed down from father to son or within the extended family. “Shrovetide processions in Hlinecko have a prescribed course and consist of several analytically distinguishable elements. There is a structure and a program. The procession has a visibly expressed beginning and a visibly expressed end. Masks perform a dance or unique choreography. Through masks, gestures, jumps, dances, songs, and sounds, the interests of the originally rural community are expressed“(Blahůšek – Vojancová, 2011). They are also linked to the magical assurance of fertility. ICH status has also extended the phenomenon to the museum sphere. The Vysočina Open Air Museum has displays of traditional costumes, photographs, and the opportunity to watch a short video demonstration. The exhibition promotes the idea of the original custom and the need to preserve it unchanged.

Thus, as this inscription implies, Shrovetide Processions are represented as a stable and unchanging cultural phenomenon. The inscription on the UNESCO list was also supported because it is a procession without significant interventions and transformations. The bearers feel obliged to keep the exact form of the procession, as they feel it took place in the past. The procession has the same script every year; the costumes are used the same, and so on. It is the bodily expression that is distinctive in the procession. The bearers express their movements, gestures, and dance as a reference to the past and practice these choreographies in an unchanging form. It is, therefore, an embodiment of the past. In this way, they express a sense of belonging and connection with the past, even though the

dance had a different meaning (such as agricultural harvests, magical fertility rites, etc.). Today, these physical expressions remain only in memory and folklorism³.

Then, we reach the critical part of the bearers - the audience. Although they are only apparently passive observers, they influence the dynamics of the processions through their expectations. They see the UNESCO inscription as a confirmation that the phenomenon is to be immutable: „*In the city, Processions are too commercial and modern. If it's UNESCO, it's right*” (Informer 1 2023). The audience wants to see the form of the procession precisely as it was "originally," and the status of ICH supports in this interest. „*This is the way it's done here*”(Informer 2 2023). Autopoiesis here generates the image of the same procession over and over again. Thus, we see that both the bearers and the viewers influence each other to create a constantly repeating, unchanging process. They support each other in this way, with the bearers feeling proud and preserving "their heritage" in an unchanging form, as do the spectators who want to see the "ancient" form of the rounds. Tradition is, therefore, seen by both the bearers and the audience as something unchanging and established, with only a little innovation necessary.

Puppetry in Slovakia and the Czech Republic

The second example will be the phenomenon of Puppetry in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. “The puppet theatre is perceived as a phenomenon in all its historical forms and various expressions, blends, syncretic manner, dramatic, dramaturgic, staging, rendering, stage designing, graphic, and music skills” (UNESCO 2016). This initially artificial product of nomadic puppeteers who came to us from abroad has become widespread in the Czech lands. However, puppetry eventually reached several social spheres, from nomadic puppeteers to family home productions, amateur puppeteers performing in towns and villages, professional puppeteers, and the emergence of entire professional puppet scenes to establishing independent and alternative scenes. Puppetry, inscribed in all its forms, has diverse manifestations today. Puppetry goes against the perception of ICH as something established. However, at the same time, it is based on a long historical tradition that continues to be passed on from generation to generation and sustained by communities.

³ Folklorism or folklorismus is a concept of folklore transmission developed by Hans Moser. Folklorism is understood as the transmission and continuation of „second-hand“ folk culture.

Bodily representation is conceived here in a different way. Not only do the puppeteers perform the content of the performance through the puppets, but there is also a more significant role for voice work, puppet guiding work, puppeteers entering the action, and the question of visibility or invisibility on stage. In this case, the puppeteers know that the performance differs every time, as they act differently with their bodies, as one of the informants explains: „*I always play it differently, it's a different environment, somehow I feel like it, I'm tired or energetic*” (Informer 3 2023). The body changes in space and time and is a different manifestation each time. This awareness creates a vast space for transformation and innovation. The puppeteers themselves recognize that tradition is mutable, and the form of puppet theatre is meant to innovate: „*Puppet theatre was, is and will be here. But I think it will evolve and new forms will come, they will have to*” (Informer 4 2020). They also see innovation as the essence of puppet theatre, as it has always responded to some contemporary situations and reflected the contemporary world.

Audience expectations are similar in this case. Although some audiences like to seek out "classical" puppets, in the Czech environment, it is marionettes or "classical" titles such as fairy tales and legends; they want it to be interesting, they want to be entertained, and the audience wants to laugh (or cry) at current issues that are close to them and that they understand: „*I just go, I want to be there, I want to be involved, I want to be there for everything that's going on, whatever it is*” (Informer 5 2023). Here, then, is where the need for innovation is generated - but in the sense of updating - rather than some technical improvement.

Conclusion

What do the bearers relate to in all cases? Is there even such a thing as a core tradition? In this context, research looks at what is happening inside the body and tries to understand more about the internal charges of the representation of inheritance and how all these charges interact. What this means for a comprehensive understanding of these aspects or spaces of heritage here is that some animated timeline emerges on which to consider the complex power relations involved and usually evokes some emotion. What is tradition? Does tradition include both innovation and preservation? Where is the boundary? Who is

responsible for the form of phenomena? Experts? The bearers? The answer lies somewhere in the middle.

Although the concept of ICH is rooted in European nostalgia, the Herderian idea of saving a disappearing "humanity" is instead a political one, on some levels, even as a subjective concept, it has the potential to transcend traditional ethnocentric and colonial thinking, which is often associated with the sphere of preservation and musealization - especially in Central European conditions. The research, therefore attempts a different way of looking at it, which would help to understand intangible cultural heritage that thus reconceives the body, memory, and intersubjectivity. In this context, then, the research is concerned with what exactly is going on inside the body, and it also seeks to understand more about the internal charges of the representation of the phenomena under investigation and how all these charges interact.

What this means for a comprehensive understanding of these aspects and spaces of inheritance here is that some animated timeline emerges from considering the complex power relations involved and usually evokes some emotion and cultural geographers Divya P. Tolia-Kelly and Mike Crang emphasize this connection in their article: "This axis is crucial if we are to understand more fully the significance that heritage, places, and experiences perform in broader social and political life, particularly in terms of creating feelings of belonging, identity, inclusion, and, as a consequence, marginalization, subordination, and exclusion"(Crang – Tolia-Kelly 2010).

In the end, the manifestations of intangible cultural heritage must always be examined in a specific context, not only historical but also political and social, emphasizing the individual experience of each bearer. The unique representation of the manifestations of intangible cultural heritage reflects the embodiment of identity and the specific message that individuals or communities transmit in the present tense from the past to the future.

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Informants

Informant 1: Spectator of the procession, date of interview 21. 2. 2023

Informant 2: Spectator of the procession, date of interview 21. 2. 2023

Informant 3: Artist, puppeteer, date of interview 5. 7. 2023

Informant 4: Artist, puppet designer, date of interview 17. 2. 2020

Informant 5: Spectator of the puppet festival, date of interview 4. 7. 2023

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