Neighbourhood Policy vs. Remembrance Policy: Romania and Hungary[1]

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Abstract. In East-Central Europe, the past has always been a determining factor as a framework for interpretation: the social construction of the past often serves (served) current political purposes. It is no wonder that in the countries of the region, often different, sometimes contradictory interpretations of the past have emerged. In today's European situation, however, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are perhaps most keenly faced by the transformation of Europe, with unclear, chaotic ideas dominating political and intellectual markets instead of previous (accepted) values – in the tension between old and new, Europe's future is at stake. The question is: what role the states of Central and Eastern Europe play/can play, to what extent they will be able to place the neighbourhood policy alongside (perhaps in front of) the policy of remembrance and seek common answers to Europe's great dilemmas.

Keywords: neighbourhood (policy), Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary, Romania, remembrance policy, memorials

Neighbourhood Relations – Hungary

The First World War completely reorganized the borders of the central and eastern parts of Europe. While in the western part of Europe the study of neighbourhood relations is not complicated by changing borders, in Central and Eastern Europe there is a need to talk about eras and the processes that can be linked to them.

The longer-term priorities of a CCE country's foreign policy may be permanent (for Hungary: competitiveness in the European Union; success in the region; responsible Hungary in the world); the neighbourhood policy changes according to the political configuration of the region. In a 2010 paper, Majoros classifies neighbourhood

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policy as the second target group and mentions the issue of Hungarian communities across the border as well as the economic relations established with neighbouring countries (Majoros 2010).

I present the development of Hungarian neighbourhood relations based on Majoros's paper. The defining stages of the development of relations are: the end of the First World War (1918), the period between the two world wars (1920–1940), the communist period (1948–1990), and the periods before and after joining the EU (2004).

Before the First World War, the territories of the current neighbouring countries formed part of the much larger territory of the Kingdom of Hungary; moreover, for centuries, it was in personal union with the most developed neighbouring state, the Austrian Empire. During this period, the economic-trade relations could develop without borders. In this part of Europe, industrial development was delayed compared to the European West: in Austria, the process started in the 18th and in Hungary in the first half of the 19th century. Significant and close economic-trade partnerships developed during the period of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Within the Monarchy, the development was complementary: Austria was the administrative and infrastructural and the belonging Czech Republic the industrial centre, while Hungary was the supplier of foods, commodities, and raw materials (this is the result of the later development). The peculiarities of the regions complemented each other well, which formed the basis of the development of the Hungarian economy in the nearly half a century following the Austrian–Hungarian compromise. Although a border existed theoretically, it did not separate neighbouring countries.

The Treaty of Trianon, which ended the First World War, was a fundamental change in the history of Hungary, with huge reductions in terms of area (from 282 thousand to 93) and population (from 20.8 million to 7.9 million). The two-thirds of the existing rail network and raw material resources fell outside the new borders. The production structure of the economy and at the same time the structure of partnerships have changed significantly. The newly independent successor states consciously avoided trade partnerships with the former motherland, and relations between Hungary and its neighbours became strained: the border now separated the previously closely cooperating regions. The situation of the Hungarian (forced) minority stranded outside the borders also deteriorated. The socialist system, which emerged in the late 1940s, established its own framework for integration (COMECON, from 1949), in which a central (Soviet) interest prevailed; the integration was radial: everybody had a special relationship with the centre, and the role of the neighbourhood became secondary. In 1980, the share of Hungary's foreign trade relations with that of the neighbouring socialist countries (Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the non-COMECON) was 5%. Borders are difficult for the population to cross, i.e. borders divide.

After 1990, the performance of the economy and foreign trade will continue to decline, but the strict dividing role of borders will be dissolving: visa obligation with most European states will be abolished, cross-border co-operation will develop, and trade relations will be expanded and restructured. Hungary was in transition from the westernmost state of the East to becoming the easternmost state of the West. The COMECON was abolished in 1991; however, the political leadership had to understand that a small, open economy like Hungary could only develop properly as an integral part of a larger system, without the capabilities on which it can base an independent economic strategy (e.g. oil or gas exports). At that time and place, there was an opportunity: to join the Euro-Atlantic integration. The signed free trade agreements (EU, EFTA) widened the room for manoeuvre of the Hungarian foreign economy, accelerated the inflow of working capital, and, in political terms, the NATO accession has facilitated the rebuilding of relations. Relations with neighbouring countries improved between 1993 and 2004, with the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) playing a key role. The importance of neighbouring countries in Hungarian foreign trade has increased. In 2003, the weight of neighbours reached 17%, half of which is provided by Austria, the other neighbours (Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia) making up just over 8%. Austria's weight has increased relatively little, but in absolute terms very much.

The most important event of 2004 was joining the EU. Austria was already an EU member from 1995. Other neighbours of Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, joined EU together in 2004, followed by Romania in 2007. The joining negotiations with Croatia had been completed (2013), while the EU had signed an Association Agreement with Serbia and a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Ukraine. Hungary's joining the EU yielded an increase in foreign trade. Initially (2004–2005), exchange dynamics were lower with neighbours, while trade relations with some developed EU Member States (France, the Netherlands, Great Britain) and non-EU countries (China, Russia) were built faster. But from 2006 onwards, the weight of neighbouring countries would increase again, exceeding all previous ones. An important structural change in terms of partnership is that Austria's weight slightly decreases, while the proportion of Romania and Slovakia increases significantly. Since 2004, the country's foreign trade balance has been active with neighbouring countries (but still passive with Austria).

Neighbouring Relations – Romania

In the case of Romania, the periodization following the Hungarian pattern is difficult in several aspects. Romania was not yet a full-fledged state before 1920; the great unification (the annexation of Transylvania) was brought about by the Peace of Versailles (1920) after the 1918 declaration of the Romanian public will

in Transylvania. The Romanian foreign and neighbourhood policy before 1918 can be likened to fishing in confusion; in a changing political environment, it sought to establish good relations (Rădulescu-Zoner 1977) with the major powers (Russia, Austria-Hungary, Turkey). Uncertainty in foreign policy is a general characteristic. Meanwhile, Turkey is gradually losing territory, and Austria-Hungary is gaining power. The Italian–Turkish war, broke out in 1911, aggravated the situation with Bulgaria demanding Dobruja. In 1913, the great powers agreed that Romania would also receive South Dobruja, bringing relations with Bulgaria to a low point. Although (Austria-) Hungary supports Romania's independence (1878, Berlin Congress), there are issues that strain the relations: the customs war (Romania's livestock exports were restricted by Hungary), the Moldavian Csángós without any public law protection (while Romanians in Bukovina and Hungary had rights), and the Apponyi education laws. Romania joined the First World War on the side of Serbia, but later switched to the side of the Central Powers. At the end of the war, Serbia occupied the whole of Banat. The Romanian army could take control of Timişoara in August 1919, and Romania received approx. 65% of the historical region. The Romanian–Russian relations were complicated by the affiliation of the also disputed regions before the First World War: Moldavia and the fact that Russia received three South Moldavian counties at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Romania ended on the winner side of the First World War after multiple changes of position between the warring parties. This does not mean that their every (historically and ethnically unfounded) territorial claim was fulfilled.

The Romanian social élite looks back nostalgically at the period between the two world wars, the era of the Greater Romania. There was also a period of conflicts for Romania, partly because the minority protection treaties drawn up in Paris had first been rejected or not complied with. The nationality policy of the decades after the change of power was characterized by the simultaneous exercise of certain liberal principles of law and official nationalist arbitrariness.

Romania's foreign policy (and in this context its neighbourhood policy) was framed by the preservation of the Romanian territories (formally: insurance of the national unity and territorial integration) and the fight against revisionism. Economically, a kind of industrial development had started. Of Romania's neighbours: it only had better relations only with Yugoslavia (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes).

From the late 1940s, Bucharest, like other socialist countries, did not pursue an independent foreign policy, listening to Moscow. In 1948, the Soviets took away the Zmiinyi (Snake) Island, the continental shelf which Romania had claimed for itself. The establishment of the COMECON in 1949 meant the strengthening of the Soviet influence. Following the change in leadership in Moscow (Khrushchev followed Stalin as the head of the party and the country), the Warsaw Pact (1955), i.e. the framework for military cooperation, was established. During his visit to Bucharest,

Khrushchev was asked about the repatriation of Soviet troops – the answer was a vehement rejection. Romania took part in the political action against the 1956 Hungarian revolution, and Imre Nagy was brought to Bucharest with the promise of inviolability. The party leadership in Bucharest actually served Moscow politics and had exposed Imre Nagy. Bucharest proved a loyal satellite, and in the emerging new international situation, in 1958, Khrushchev repatriated Soviet troops from Romania. This meant an expansion of foreign policy room for Bucharest but no improvement in neighbourhood relations. From the early 1960s, Romania announced its new foreign policy doctrine, whose keywords were non-intervention in internal affairs, territorial integrity, national sovereignty on the basis of equality, and the territorial issue. In his diary, Khrushchev noted how disturbed he was when Romanian Prime Minister Ion Gh. Maurer remarked at their 1964 meeting that in 1940 the Soviets occupied Bessarabia. Territory – the eternal Romanian motif. Nicolae Ceauşescu, as a party leader, opened up to the West, and then he denied the 1968 military incursion in Prague; moreover, he condemned the intervention led by Moscow. The new Bucharest leader was openly attacking Moscow, changing this way Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej's small-steps politics. These events did not help the neighbouring relations of Romania, the only exception being Yugoslavia (Lache 2007).

Following the revolutionary events in Timişoara (Romania), Bucharest (Ion Iliescu) preferred Moscow. In 1991, an agreement was signed with the power, which collapsed a few months later, in December. In 1995, the country's official goal became joining the EU.

The basic treaties played a major political role in the Central and Eastern European region, and although the German–German Treaties were signed in 1972, according to Dávid Meiszter (1994), 'the idea of basic treaties arose in Hungarian foreign policy after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact'; their goal is 'friendship', 'good neighbourliness', and/or 'cooperation';[2] nevertheless, they did not do so only in a Hungarian relation. In terms of the basic treaties, their inventors hoped it could be a supplement to the security guarantee. According to Miklós Bakk, one of the fundamental questions is the security of the borders: the basic criteria is the mutual recognition and guarantee of the *ensemble of states* and their *territorial status*. The other dimension, not independent of the issue of territoriality, is the situation of the national minorities, one of the unresolved issues in the region since 1919

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[2]   Signed treaties: agreement about the basis of the neighbourhood and the cooperation between the Hungarian Republic and Ukraine – 6.12.1991; agreement between the Hungarian Republic and the Slovakian Republic about the neighbourhood and the friendly cooperation – 19.3.1995; friendly and cooperation agreement between the Hungarian Republic and Slovenia – 1.12.1992; agreement about understanding, cooperation, and neighbourhood between the Hungarian Republic and Romania – 16.9.1996; friendly, cooperation, and neighbourhood agreement between Romania and Bulgaria – 27.1.1992; cooperation and neighbourhood agreement between Romania and Ukraine – 2.6.1997; friendly and cooperation agreement between the Republic of Moldova and Bulgaria – 7.9.1992.

(Bakk 1996). These two related problems logically became the central issues of the basic treaties signed in the region (Poland–Germany, Hungary–Ukraine, Poland–Lithuania, Hungary–Slovakia, etc.). With regard to Romania, the Hungarian Horn government accepted the border clause at the beginning of the negotiations, after which it is no wonder that the minority clause became secondary – the treaty was concluded in the absence of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR). For the Romanian public opinion, however, the treaties resulted that the dilemmas of the (state) national identity and the Romanian orientation crisis had become more and more apparent in connection with these dilemmas.

With the accession of Romania to NATO and the EU, diplomatic opportunities have improved according to the official opinion, but the situation has hardly changed with regard to Hungary: Romania still has its own position on the minority issue (the Romanian solution to the minority issue is exemplary); however, the official point of view and the interpretation of the Hungarian minority's own situation is in sharp contrast to each other. Teodor Meleşcanu as foreign minister (2017) said in an interview that: 'I cannot say that there are no important plans for Hungary', and at the same time he made it clear that, although there is a close economic relationship with Hungary, a number of national political dilemmas and other matters burden the relationship' (Barabás 2017: 5–6).[3]

However, Romania is consistent in not taking decisive action for Romanian communities outside its borders. The Ukrainian education law of 2018 is anti-minority and may abolish minority education in the long run – the Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister responded in a statement but did not take any concrete steps. Romanian NGOs in Northern Bukovina called for concrete support in a statement in the summer of 2020, to which Bucharest remained silent. Earlier, even during Băsescu's presidency, the Vlachos (Romanians) of Timok Valley (Serbia) asked Bucharest for help to finally have a Romanian-language education, at least a kindergarten, which had never been seen before in history. The promises of the Romanian head of state remained simple promises. Moldavia is a separate issue, not a neighbouring country; however, it is inhabited by a people with whom they share language, culture, history, and traditions. Moldavia is continuously and significantly supported by Romania.

Romania's foreign policy has no neighbourhood component, no neighbourhood strategy, the question being restricted at the level of cross-border cooperation. It exists only in a regional political dimension. The Romanian foreign policy lacks a clear direction and criteria, slipping between East and West (Fati 2020). Miklós Bakk talks about strategical hesitation, while Valentin Naumescu explains in a 2016 presentation[4] that Romania's international situation is fragile, its foreign policy is

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3   Translated by the author.
4   https://cdn.cursdeguvernare.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Valentin-Naumescu-copy-1-ilovepdf-compressed1.pdf (downloaded on: 14.11.2020).

mediocre, vulnerable, and characterized by minority complex. It aligns, it is seeking stronger powers, so it cannot represent its own interests. It has no voice of its own, no vision of its own. Naumescu declares: there is a lack of strategy in bilateral (meaning: neighbourhood) relations. The Visegrád Four Group presents a clear Central European (Naumescu: Eurosceptic) position, with Romania being left out.

In his doctoral dissertation, Tamás Szabó raises the following summarizing question: in the long run, what kind of frameworks can we talk about in relation to historical agreement, reconciliation, and rapprochement between the two peoples when the participation of the Hungarians in Transylvania and their legitimate political representation are missing from the processes of elaboration of important documents and treaties regarding the Romanian–Hungarian relations that directly or indirectly affect the Hungarian minority (Szabó 2019)?

Neighbourhood Policy

The concept of neighbourhood policy can be understood in many ways. The neighbourhood policy between the two world wars is historical from the Hungarian point of view since the basic problems of the neighbourhood policy were developed in this period. In today's interpretation, there is a traditional, i.e. direct (geographical) neighbourhood, and a functional, a not direct neighbourhood policy resulting from the EU institutional membership. The distinction between traditional and functional neighbourhood policy is not only theoretical-analytical but also practical. Foreign policy can be effective if it is based on the selectivity relying on geographical and functional weightings (Kiss J. 2007).

The issue of Euro-Atlantic institutional membership became paramount in the profound transformation that followed the regime change, although the disintegration of the Soviet-dominated international subsystem necessarily meant a return not only to Europe but also to traditional bilateral neighbourhood policies. The change of regime and the emergence of new neighbours highlighted the issues of the identity of states and the (re)definition of the nations and 'nation-states' of the region as well as the multi-level processes of transformation (Kiss J. 2007).

The European Union launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in May 2004, which has been updated several times. Although the formal aim of the ENP is to promote the economic and political development of the countries neighbouring the European Union and its rapprochement with the Union, it is primarily in the EU's security and economic interests (Tálas 2011). Since the launch of the Common Foreign and Security Policy in 1992, the Union has focused primarily on building the southern dimension of the neighbourhood policy, reducing the impact of security challenges in the Mediterranean area. This policy does not cover EU candidate countries, potential candidates, EFTA Member States

(Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), or European micro-states (Andorra, San Marino, Monaco, and Vatican City State). The countries with a southern or Mediterranean dimension to the ENP basically cover the North African and Middle Eastern coasts of the Mediterranean, while the Eastern Partnership countries launched in May 2008 cover the Eastern European (Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldovia) and the Caucasus regions of the post-Soviet region (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan). Cooperation with Russia is based on a separate strategy. Although the ENP operates as a political toolbar, it allows the Union to adjust its policies to the specific partner's characteristics and to differentiate the policies according to it.

The Eastern dimension came to the fore after the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the EU, when it was recognized in Brussels that many of the more or less economic and political problems of the Eastern European region would be brought closer to the Union. The Eastern partnership aims to promote democracy and responsible governance, strengthen energy security, encourage sectoral reforms (including environmental protection), foster people-to-people contacts, support economic and social development, and provide additional support to reduce the social-economic inequalities and to fund stability-enhancing projects. The four thematic platforms of the Eastern partnership are: democracy, good governance, and stability; economic integration and convergence with EU policies; energy security; personal relationships. Senior officials meet at least two times a year, and foreign ministers meet annually. The work of the platforms is sometimes assisted by sector-specific meetings.

Neighbourhood assistance was initially funded from existing aid funds: TACIS (Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States), MEDA (Mediterranean Development Assistance), and EIDHR (European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights). From the 2007–2013 budget period, the Southern and Eastern ENPs have a multi-pillar system of financial support instruments: the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (bilateral assistance; regional assistance; interregional assistance; cross-border assistance; neighbourhood investment instrument; governance framework; thematic instruments); investment and loan support, other forms of support, e.g. Civil Social Facility.

The neighbourhood policy is not only an instrument but also an objective in the sense of 'multiple bilateralisms': to promote regional organization. The defining element of Hungarian foreign policy is the historical dilemma of Hungarian foreign policy, namely the response to the duality of nation and state. Based on the theorem of a unified Hungarian nation (cultural nation) crossing borders, the national-conservative conception started from a specific foreign policy dualism, namely the duality of the foreign policy of the Hungarian state and the national policy of the Hungarian nation as a whole. Furthermore, it started from the possibility of establishing some special legal relationship between the Hungarian state and its minorities. There is a close interaction between the national policy dealing with the survival of the Hungarian minority communities living in their homeland and their

relationship with the motherland and the neighbourhood policy. This is contrary to the social-liberal interpretation, which is based on the premise of the political nation and on the national policy explicitly, and its implicit forms are subordinated to the state's foreign integration policy and the issue of relations with neighbouring states.

Even before the accession to NATO and the EU, in the process of adaptation leading to NATO and the EU, national policy was not merely Hungarian–Hungarian policy and was not limited to traditional interstate relations with neighbouring countries. Moreover, the issue of minorities is not taking place only in the triangle formed by the motherland–minorities–nationalizing nation but rather with international organizations, and it can be interpreted within a functional rectangle enlarged by the EU. In the case of a neighbourhood policy limited to national policy, both an effective neighbourhood policy and a national policy become impossible. An effective national policy can only be successful in the context of a region-based European Neighbourhood Policy and can only count on support in this sense (Kiss J. 2007).

Remembrance Policy

Remembrance policy is a real definition and practice: it exists as a fundamental attribute of the states with a nation-building past, it exists even when its role is passive, that is, it reproduces memory based on existing schemas. Remembrance policy is not a state policy, but through some political concepts and steps – most notably with the official approval of textbooks – it can influence the collective consciousness over a wide historical time horizon. All these have a serious impact on the image of the neighbouring peoples (in this case, the image of the Hungarians formed in the Romanian public memory). Remembrance policy is not defined consensually, the term merely describes the phenomenon that there is a state or, more broadly, a public will to shape collective memory. The term assumes awareness, a lack of spontaneity. In reproducing memory, Pierre Nora refers to detachment from the past when he argues that 'places of memory' become places of history; a reconciliation of history and memory is necessary precisely because spontaneous memory ceases (Nora 1999).

According to Slovak historian L'ubomír Lipták, all significant historical events are recorded and displayed by three levels of memory: learned memory, represented by science; the official memory overseen by the power and its institutions; the memory of the individual, which often disputes the former yet intertwines with them (Lipták 2000: 192). Learned memory is teachable (also 'approved' by the public authorities), corresponds to the subject of the institutional remembrance policy, and is mostly embodied in textbooks.

State/official remembrance policy places great demands on the historized self-image of the national community, on the nationalist way of speaking (nationalism:

everyday discourse on identity and community; it summons the causes and ways of belonging, the imagined past, and the supposed common sense), which flourishes again, and it results in a kind of post-flowering. An important guarantee of the omnipotence of state history policy is school (history) teaching – history as a school subject fully serves the objectives of state memory policy (Gyáni 2016). In more and more countries, the state declares its competence to judge the things of history, in this sense determining what kind of historical images should be circulated in the spheres it directly controls (school, public media, political discourse, and identity politics), i.e. it approaches history with a (political) utility pragmatism.

In Central and Eastern Europe, where state borders differ from national borders in many cases, official remembrance policies do not allow – on a community basis – the social integration of ethnic communities living in (nation-)states, which form even a majority in a given area. One obstacle to reconciliation is precisely the different interpretations of history, especially if the narrative of the majority is central to the justification of statehood or if one of the most important symbols of the state, such as the majority and minority narratives of a national holiday, differs significantly (Manzinger 2019).

With regard to the emotional side of reconciliation, the responsibilities of minority and majority élite are significant in the development and political use of narratives on historical issues. According to Horowitz, care should be taken with reference to the issue of historical opposition as political leaders may distort historical content in order to legitimize the current content (Horowitz 1998, qtd. in Manzinger 2019: 141). Reconciliation also presupposes the acknowledgment of certain facts, exclusion, and bias, as the official view of history almost exclusively uses the narratives of the majority. This relieves him of the moral responsibility of past actions.[5] Not only the display of different narratives is necessary but also the free formulation of approaches different from the majority, which in turn should not prevent the repressed group from also facing its own sins.

One dimension of emotional reconciliation is emotional stability. The traditional starting point sharply contrasts emotions with reason. Question: How much more do we understand from political processes, from politics, when we pay attention to emotional aspects? The democratic system is more or less able to strike the right balance, a proportion between political indifference and over-politicization (Kiss 2013). Political restraint is needed among the parties interested in reconciliation(?).

One of the dimensions of emotional reconciliation is emotional stability. The traditional starting point strongly opposes emotions to the mind, emotions to the

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5   One example: Axente Sever was involved in the revolution of 1848–49 and was one of Avram Iancu's companions in the battles of the Apuseni Mountains. He took part in the January 1849 massacre. On 8 January 1849, the town of Aiud was stormed and the city set on fire. This was followed by a 9-day massacre, during which nearly 8,000 innocent Hungarians were executed in the city and the surrounding settlements. Axente Sever is today a Romanian hero, streets and institutions bear his name, and a statue also evokes his memory in Aiud.

rational. A democratic system can find the appropriate balance, ratio between political disinterest and overpoliticization (Kiss 2013). In reconciliation, there is a need for political restraint between the interested (?) parties.

The average Romanian, but also the Hungarian citizen, lives in a kind of 'isolation'; s/he does not know the language, culture, and history of the neighbouring peoples, and thus s/he willingly or unwillingly accepts the official position. For the most part, s/he does not even try to orient him-/herself as there are parallel narratives that simultaneously save and reinforce his/her ignorance. First, there would be a need for a distance that would allow for reconciliation. Do not look for a person in charge at the time of fact-finding! An exemplary institution for this is the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which makes it possible to confront South Africa's painful past: anyone can take action, tell what they have done, and then move on; personal confessions have no consequences. The basic idea here is clear: we cannot change ourselves or our circumstances until we can talk, understand, and accept the current situation. There is a need for objective, cool distance, without which the creation of new, shared concepts will not be possible.

Proponents of inclusive citizenship say that the only way to build democracy is to replace or supplement previous nation-building policies with ones that allow for the collective appearance, representation, and participation in public affairs of culturally diverse, previously excluded groups, indigenous peoples, and national minorities.[6]

Memorials

In a larger dissertation,[7] I analysed the current situation of memorials once erected in the Romanian part of the historical Banat: I identified a total of 85 public monuments that fell victim to the changing history after 1918. Of the examined cases, 53 are Hungarian – if I take the dual-related memorials here, then 55 (almost 65%); there are 4 Romanian, 3 German, and no Serbian ones. The difference lies in the memorials associated with the royal house. The vast majority of the monuments (about 80%) were erected after 1880.

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[6]   In February 2016, the court of Târgu-Mureş prevented the registration of an association promoting the tourism of Szeklerland in a final judgment, on the grounds that such a geographical unit, i.e. Szeklerland, did not exist. The justification is false: there are associations with the name of a territorial unit that is not on the map: the Association for Tourism in Bukovina (Asociaţia pentru Turism Bucovina), the Association for the Oaş District (Asociaţia Ţara Oaşului), and various associations in the Făgăraş District (Manzinger 2019).

[7]   Barna Bodó: Between Yesterday and Tomorrow – What Happened to the Memorials in Banat after 1918. *Minority Protection* Special Issue (2020). Institute for the Protection of Minority Rights and the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of Pázmány Péter Catholic University. Budapest.

After the imperial change in 1918, Banat (part of Romanian rule) had to become part of a new country, of Romanian history. The new power demanded a new view of history and, with it, a new, different memory. The Romanian authorities eliminated a significant part of the public representations referring to the previous system. The new power had to legitimize itself, it had to build up its own publicity. The aim of the new power was to recreate social spaces, to acquire public spaces for itself in order to organize them with its own memorial elements. The initiated process, the attack against existing memorials raises the question: what kind of message was formulated by the disappeared memorials? The answer: none of the memorials could have endangered the new power as none of the 85 memorials that had been removed had (would have) articulated a message against a Romanian community or person.

In protest, Catholic Bishop of Timişoara Augustin Pacha informed the nunciature of Bucharest about the cutting, desecration, and profanation of the sculptures on the façade of the Piarist Grammar School and Piarist Church (Szent István/St. Stephen, Szent László/St. Ladislaus, Szent Imre/St. Emericus, Szent Erzsébet/St. Elizabeth). The most brutal attack on memorials is not their destruction but the use of certain parts of them to create another (Romanian) memorial. The destruction and 're-use' of memorials is almost unclassifiable from an ethical point of view: destruction, insidious theft takes place when the stolen object is simply incorporated into one's own creation. There are several such cases: the Révai memorial column (now Eminescu) in Sânnicolau Mare, the Soldier Statue in Bocşa (now a Romanian military monument), and the Hungarian inscription on the Detta Millennium Memorial were scraped in 1923, and the names of the local victims of the war were inscribed on the memorial. After the 1990s changes, the Orthodox stone cross was replaced by the Turul bird. In the early 1920s, a large clock was erected on the pedestal of the sculpture of General Scudier in Timişoara, knocked down in 1918 and then replaced in 1962 by the Soviet Liberation Monument, whose inscription was changed after 1990: today, it is a monument to Romanian heroes.

I must talk at length about the two most egregious cases. The monument to Franciska Maderspach, erected in 1909 in Ruszkabánya/Rusca Montana by her sons at the place of their father's suicide due to his mother's public Austrian caning, was damaged in the 1920s, and the bust and inscription were removed. The rest of the monument was moved to the centre of the village, where in 1933 a marble plaque listing the heroes of the First World War was placed on it. The list was later supplemented by the names of those who fell in World War II. What kind of monument of reverence is created by the destruction of the miraculous example of the sons' grace? In Karánsebes/Caransebeş, after the change of state sovereignty, the statue was removed from the monument of Franz Joseph/Francisc Iosif/Ferenc József, the ruler, against which the local Romanian intelligentsia protested. The rest of the monument has been preserved. In the warehouse of volunteer firefighters in

Caransebeş, in 1924, the 2.75 m high bronze statue preserved there was discovered. Military officials wanted to transport it to Bucharest to melt it down, and from this bronze they wanted to erect a statue of Romanian king Ferdinand I, on the same pedestal. The city leadership sabotaged this in various ways, and then in 1930 it was decided that the city would not give up the sculpture, which is of a special artistic value, as the plan of János Fadrusz was executed by the also famous sculptor G. R. Rollinger. In 1931, the statue was still in the local fire station. In 1943, a statue of General Ion Drăgălina was placed on the pedestal of the monument. Two circumstances are important here: local politics opposed Bucharest on the issue of an Austrian monarchy. In the end, however, the central authority enforces its will, the statue is removed, and, finally, the local Romanian élite accepts the monumental humiliation, that is, erecting the statue of Romanian General Drăgălina, which replaces the statue of Franz Joseph.

In several cases, the disappearance of the memorials presupposed the existence of serious logistics, which is why the question is unavoidable: what role did the authorities play at that time? Data from the post-1990 period show that we are facing a new version of Romanian remembrance policy, when the power does not act openly but is forgiving, sometimes outright helping to take action against memorials. An example of this is the case of the table from Hercules Bath/Băile Herculane, which records the meeting of the rulers. In 1896, on the occasion of the opening of the Vaskapu/Porţile de Fier navigation canal, Băile Herculane is the venue of the royal meeting: Emperor Franz Joseph, Romanian King Charles I, and Serbian King Alexander I met here and stayed here for several days. The meeting was immortalized by a huge marble slab mounted on the hillside. The memorial plaque was dismantled and made to disappear by unknown perpetrators in 1993 – those remembering the incident say the heavy plaque was lifted off the high rock face by crane; a 'simple theft' is out of question, a high level of technical competence was needed. In 1992, 'unknown' perpetrators, using heavy machinery, demolished the monument of János Hunyadi/Iancu de Hunedoara, warlord and governor of Transylvania, at the top of Zeicani Hill, at the height of 669 meters, using heavy-duty machines. The monument consisted of a mace set on a high pedestal; the mace disappeared. In 1993, the iron mace was fished out of Lake Ostrov and taken to the museum in Sarmizegetusa, from where the iron mace disappeared permanently in 1994. In April 2003, the pieces of the monument that still existed on the site disappeared, and the pedestal was demolished.

An important and still unanswered question: where should/could the removed monuments not liked by the new power be stored temporarily or permanently? In Romania no attempt has been made to solve this problem. The storage of some memorials (or parts of memorials) in the museums has not been resolved; several of them have disappeared, and they are not put on display in exhibitions (I know of one exception).

Although a historical apology would be needed for the disappeared monuments, the events after 1990 show that the dominant Romanian memory construction continues, the time for attacks on memorials is not over; however, no one wants to admit any mistakes, so let us not expect a correction attempt.

To summarize:

a) Romania does not have a consciously structured neighbourhood policy, as if it did not want to get involved in regional processes, while the European area is under serious contradictions, and the way out is likely to assign an increased role of the nation-state.

b) In Romania, the remembrance policy between the world wars continues even today. There are no signs of relief, and the political practice is not building but destroying the relations established by belonging to a common structure.

c) National minority communities could be the engines and the first beneficiaries of networking. Romania is addicted to the previous policy, which has done no good to this issue. They do not admit and accept that today the world (would) dictate(s) another way.

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