

# REMEMBERING EUROPE'S EXPELLED PEOPLES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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— LUNDS UNIVERSITET —

*CFE Conference Papers Series No. 4*

Lund 2009

*The CFE Conference papers series* is published by  
The Centre for European Studies (CFE) at Lund University:

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Editors: Barbara Törnquist-Plewa and Bo Petersson  
Assistant editor: Niklas Bernsand  
ISSN: 1654-2185

The paper is also available in pdf-format at CFE's website [www.cfe.lu.se](http://www.cfe.lu.se)

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# Remembering Europe's Expelled Peoples of the Twentieth Century

## A project outline

Barbara Törnquist-Plewa & Bo Petersson

It is no exaggeration to state that the way traumatic memories of the past are handled is important for Europe's future. By way of giving a prominent example, the handling of memories of forced migrations in post-war Europe is extremely problematic since the peoples involved often experience and interpret the same events in different ways. The shared past leads to different memories. The most important question is how to deal with these memories in such a way that it may lead to dialogue and not to conflict. What are we to do in Europe with this heavy historic heritage, the painful memories of genocide, mass violence, expulsions and deportations, so that they are not used in a politically destructive way?

On 7–8 December 2007 the network "Whose Memory? Which Future?" convened a group of internationally recognised experts within the field of memory studies for a two-day workshop organised by the Centre for European Studies in Lund on the theme *Whose memory? Which Future? Remembering Europe's Expelled Peoples of the Twentieth Century*. A planned large-scale research project, as outlined below, was presented, whereby the invited scholars had a chance to comment on the proposal as well as to deliver short papers in connection with the project theme. This volume reports on the main proceedings from the meeting.

## Background

One of the consequences of the end of the Cold War was an awakened interest in post-war European history, which was helped by the fact that the archives of the former Eastern Block were made more accessible. The disappearance of the Iron Curtain put an end to the simple division of the world into friends and foes, necessitated by the Cold War need for cohesion within the Western and Eastern blocks respectively; a cohesion which was often upheld at the price of silence and taboo. Thus after 1991 new opportunities were created for reinterpreting and rewriting history, causing changes in the collective memory of many European societies. Many historical topics that had hitherto been hushed up could finally be researched and debated. One such topic was the large-scale expulsions and genocides that took place in twentieth-century Europe, of which about 90 million people from around 30 different ethnic groups were the victims.

The history of the twentieth-century expulsions in Europe began in 1915/16 with the Armenian genocide and the expulsion of Greeks from Turkey in 1922–23. The second major phase was the Second World War and the Holocaust on Europe's Jews. Under the aegis of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact Hitler and Stalin ordered large-scale deportations, during which Poles, Balts, Karelians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Russians, Gypsies, Chechens and Crimean Tatars, among other groups, were deported by force, often to slave labour. The end of the war did not spell the end of mass expulsions, but rather the other way around. The war's end entailed the forced migration of around 14 million Germans and more than 300 000 Italians from Central and Eastern Europe. The definition of new borders in Europe after 1945 led to further massive transfers of peoples, euphemistically called "population exchanges":

Ukrainians within Poland and from Poland to the Soviet Union; Poles from the Polish territories annexed by the Soviet Union to the former German territories allotted to post-war Poland; Hungarians from Czechoslovakia to Hungary; Romanians from Bukovina and Bessarabia to Romania, and so on. Many of these transfers were accompanied by violence and cruelty, even after the end of the war. People were collectively punished for crimes perpetrated earlier by their countrymen. However, this was not the end of the story of expulsions in Europe. In 1974 there was a so-called population exchange in Cyprus during the conflict between Greece and Turkey about the island, and the 1990s saw new expulsions in connection with the devastating wars and ethnic cleansing operations in the wake of the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

As a result of all these events in post-war Europe, the ethnic composition of cities, regions and whole countries changed fundamentally. Sometimes the homes and property of the deported, expelled or murdered were taken over by their former neighbours from the remaining groups; at other times they came into the hands of people without any previous connection to the life of the city or region. On a collective level, multiethnic regions were drawn into processes of national homogenisation in which the memory of the former inhabitants was often not officially celebrated or even acknowledged. However, and as mentioned at the outset, since the end of the Cold War the memory of the former inhabitants and the memory of the expulsions have come considerably to the fore. Since the 1990s there has been an intensive debate in the countries concerned about what really happened: who were the victims and who were the perpetrators; who is to blame and who has to apologize; how the victims should be compensated and, generally, what is to be done with this memory. The issue became all the more relevant as European integration gained momentum at the turn of the twenty-first century, especially with the EU expansion eastwards. The central and eastern European countries' successful efforts to gain EU membership have opened up possibilities for the expelled and their descendants to somehow try to return to their homelands, for instance by making claims on real estate lost, or actively upholding the memory of their ethnic group's presence in the region, or requesting some kind of apology or compensation for the suffering.

The memory of traumatic events in the past has significant potential for creating conflicts and causing problems in relations between Europe's peoples and states. One recent example is the conflict in 2007 on the subject of the Soviet Victory monument in Tallinn (the "Bronze Soldier"), but we might also mention the demands put forward by France on Turkey to acknowledge the Armenian genocide before being allowed to join the EU, or Italian claims for compensation for damages from Croats and Slovenes. The heated topic of the memory of expulsions has also surfaced in connection with the Chechens' attempts to break free from the Russian Federation.

This kind of questions inspired the Centre for European Studies at Lund University to gather a group of researchers from different disciplines and initiate work on a project idea about the remembrance of peoples expelled in twentieth-century Europe. In 2007 a research network called "Whose Memory? Which Future?" was thus knitted together at Lund University. The group received seed money from the Bank of Sweden's Tercentenary Foundation and from the Crafoord Foundation in order to organise an international workshop and a seminar series to develop the project idea further. The aim of this publication is to document the work done so far on developing the project.

## **Levels of analysis**

The history and the memory of expulsions need to be studied on several levels – first, by going to archives and describing "what really happened", i.e., why and how the expulsions took place and what their direct consequences were; second, by conducting oral history studies and

recording the testimonies of the last witnesses alive, and last but not least, by studying how present-day populations of various European countries deal with the memory of the displaced ethnic groups that once lived among them. As to the first two levels, research has been conducted first by two historians - Joseph B Schechtman (1946; 1963) and Eugene M. Kulischer (1948) - shortly after the Second World War, and later, after a long silence during the cold war by a number of researchers, e.g. Barkan (2000), Ahonen (2003), Chinnow 2004, Clark 2006) and there is more in the pipeline, especially perhaps in Germany and Poland. However, the third level is much less researched, even if here again German and Polish scholars have broken some new ground (see Troebst 2005, 2006, Kruke 2006, Hryciuk et al. 2008). Therefore, the Lund University research group is mainly interested in studying how the resident peoples and nations in Europe today remember the expelled peoples and deal with the memories of expulsion. The idea is to compare different strategies of dealing with memories connected to expelled ethnic groups.

In order to explore this field a large number of pertinent questions are raised: has the particular memory been politicised or have there been efforts to neutralise it, i.e., disarm its politically explosive force? To what extent has there been a policy aiming at an active forgetting of events, and to what extent have there been attempts to rework and redefine the memories? How have the representation of memory and the politics of memory changed over time and what factors prompted the changes? What actors have been important in the memory work and why? Has the issue of guilt been debated, and if so, how? Where have reconciliation and understanding been achieved and where have there been failures? Can best practices be defined and can successful national experiences be exported elsewhere?

Thus, the idea is not to focus on history *per se* but on collective memory; a notion which will be discussed theoretically and put to practical use by the research group. Individual members of the group will work on different country case studies that will be compared with reference to a number of thematic areas but joined by a common theoretical frame of analysis.

In keeping with what was said above, the aim of the research group is to analyse the treatment of memory at a number of levels: at international and transnational levels, and at the national, local and individual levels (individual representations of memory). These levels are of course interrelated and it is important to pay attention to the interaction between them.

The international and transnational levels concern the study of how narratives about memory are influenced by transnational networks, international organisations and institutions. They involve an analysis of international initiatives to commemorate special events, as well as negotiations between representatives of states about how the specific events should be remembered and addressed. The national perspective involves an analysis of how political and intellectual elites and institutions at national levels in different countries deal with the memory of expulsions; for example in historiography, particularly in school books, curricula and mass media (so-called official memory produced by institutions and “popular memory”). In the former communist countries the media had for a long time been controlled by the state and thus been the tools of its memory policy. However, after the downfall of communism, a successive democratisation of the memory culture took place and forums were created where memory could be fought for and negotiated. It is important to investigate this change and see to what extent expulsions have been the topic of debates among historians and in society. Has the memory of expulsions and the expelled been used for political aims?

The local perspective implies studying how the expelled peoples are remembered in specific places which once were their homelands (e.g. the German-dominated towns in Polish Lower Silesia, the Sudetenland in the Czech Republic, etc.). This is thus about the memory culture of the new settlers in specific localities. Investigation at the local level cannot avoid involving an analysis of the townscape and its changes (Huysen 2003). Townscapes can be seen as arenas of symbolic (historical, social and political) conflicts (Bevan 2006). These can

concern matters like erecting or not erecting monuments, their shape and meaning, street names, the preservation of buildings, cemeteries, etc. All this can involve questions about the present population's attitude towards the material culture left behind by the expelled. Therefore it is important to study to what extent and in what ways elements of the townscape are perceived as recollections of the expelled group, and what consequences this has for their treatment and for urban planning. The studies of local memory culture must involve an analysis of the place occupied by the expelled in local commemoration practices, local historiography and media. Several researchers emphasise the importance of mass media texts for shaping collective memories of both national and local communities, especially in cases when living memories interact with personally transmitted, but not personally experienced, so-called "postmemories" (Hirsch 1997) or mediated memories that Landsberg (2004) calls prosthetic.

Another level to investigate is the relationship between the memories of individuals (private or intersubjective memories) and collective memory. To reach this level it is necessary to conduct interviews, within the framework of case studies, with the local population in order to reach representatives of different generations and conclude what memories of the expelled have been transmitted: what are the common patterns recurrent in individual recollections and how can they be explained? It seems important to analyse "commonplace" stories from everyday life about people who are today seen as "the others", i.e. stories about neighbourhood relations. What are the ethical and emotional frames of these stories? Are they influenced by official and medial discourses?

Yet another important source for the study of individual memory is literature – both biographical and autobiographical (memoirs and diaries) as well as fiction. Literature may be viewed as a type of "site of memory" (Nora 1996) where the individual meets the collective imagination in a clear and dynamic way (Nussbaum 1995, Eckstein 2006). Studies of literature dealing with remembering expelled peoples can show how individual memory is embedded in collective memory and thus help the researcher approach the emotional aspects of memory creatively represented in literature. To study individual representations of memory (interviews, literature) is important in order to reach the emotional dimension of memory, i.e. its psychological aspects. It goes without saying that the expulsions were highly traumatic for the expelled, but the story does not end there. Rather, that is where the story analysed by the Lund University research group begins. Are the people who took their place capable of feeling empathy for the suffering of the expelled; an empathy that might constitute the grounds for reconciliation? Or is empathy blocked by their own feelings of guilt, interests and needs? The last point should be taken into consideration if one strives to seek successful strategies for handling memories, and how these may be used in national and local strategies of reconciliation (van Beek 2005).

The focus on the remaining settler majorities, the expellers, is particularly interesting for many reasons. One is the fact that the searchlight has frequently been on the expelled; on their coping with their plight, and on their construction of narratives depicting the homeland while being in a situation of exile and diaspora. Extensive, and excellent, research has been undertaken here, which might indeed leave little room for added value. However, precious little has been written in regard to the expelling majorities' stories. How have the actions of expulsions been justified and explained? How has the expropriation of real estate been accounted for? How are the expelled being remembered, vilified, acknowledged or blamed? In the construction of narratives about the own nation – the in-group – the central position is often occupied by stories of heroism, of glorious victories or periods of moral greatness (Özkirimli 2005). Or, the other way around, narratives of great losses and immense suffering – of chosen traumas (Volkan 1997) – have often served as common grounds for welding collectives together. However, how does the national narrative cope and deal with stories of national perpetration; of guilt, shame and shady actions by the common people? The German post-war

experience has certainly guidance to offer here (Maier 1988; Neumann 2000), but aside from that, little has been done with regard to how majorities deal with gloomy and less than glorious pasts. Here the project group expects to be able to make a substantial contribution to theories of national identity construction.

## **Setup and sources of inspiration**

The project outlined above needs to be of a multi- and transdisciplinary nature. It has to involve researchers from various fields who will collaborate in order to identify and analyse memories of expelled peoples. It also requires a variety of methods taken from different academic disciplines: history, political science, ethnology, media and communication studies, literature, etc., but as said, the studies will be joined by a common theoretical framework and common understandings of key concepts.

The notion “collective memory” can be defined as “a group’s representation of its past, both the past that is commonly shared and the past that is collectively commemorated, that enacts and gives substance to that group’s identity, its present conditions, and its vision of the future” (Misztal 2003). This notion was established by Maurice Halbwachs and later developed by Pierre Nora (1996) Since, it has been problematised and sometimes questioned by many researchers (e.g. Paul Connerton 1992, Aleida Assman 1999, Jan Assman 1986, James E. Young 1993, Iwona Zarecka 1994 *et al.*), but has maintained its appeal within the academic community.

In its definition of theoretical frames for the planned research project, there are two Swedish research groups that the network “Whose Memory? Which Future?” has been particularly inspired by. The first one is the Memory Culture research group at Karlstad University, coordinated by John Sundholm (Film Studies) and Conny Mithander (History of Ideas). They study the links between collective memory and identity, culture and history and investigate how people’s view of their past is reflected and constructed in different media such as film, literature, the press, etc. (Mithander and Sundholm 2004). The Karlstad group has focused specifically on examining the manner in which the experience of war and conflict is remembered in various European countries (Mithander, Sundholm, Holmgren, Troy 2007), which of course is close to the interests of the network at Lund.

Perhaps even more important for the network “Whose Memory? Which Future?” have been theories about memory and the use of history formulated by the Lund historian Klas-Göran Karlsson. Some of the participants in the network group “Whose Memory? Which Future?” have worked with these theories and methods in the project “The Holocaust in European Historical Culture” under the direction of Klas-Göran Karlsson (Karlsson & Zander 2003). Thus they are inspired by Karlsson’s theoretical framework but intend to develop it further. According to Karlsson, instead of talking of “collective memory”, one should focus on its two most important dimensions, i.e. historical consciousness and historical culture. Historical consciousness may be defined as a mental process by which people orient themselves in their existence by linking memories of the past with their present and expectations of their future (Karlsson 2005). In order to understand one’s present, the past is ascribed a sense. Since historical consciousness is a cognitive process, it is difficult to study it empirically, but it is possible to study its material traces in culture, i.e., historical culture (Rüsen 1990; Karlsson 2005). Studies of collective memory thus involve, according to Karlsson, analysing texts relating to historical culture, such as school books, public debates, museums etc.

Collective memory can be viewed as a phenomenon reflected in a nation’s or a local group’s historical culture, and be studied as a process and a structure. The former implies a diachronic orientation: how has the memory of the expelled changed between the end of the



Second World War and now? Is there continuity in this process? What has caused these changes? The latter, i.e., the structural perspective, implies that the memory of expulsions and the expelled should be linked to the memory of other historical events in the countries and/or cities concerned and put into a specific social and political context. It involves the need to identify and analyse those elements of the expelled people's history that are emphasised by the memory actors and those that are repressed. To apply Klas-Göran Karlsson's functional approach is to ask about different uses of history of the forced migrations and the expelled in the communities concerned: scientific, moral, existential, ideological, political, and sometimes even commercial use. These questions are relevant, but the strictly functional focus needs to be supplemented with theories concerning actors and power structures involved in memory work. One idea would be to apply "the dynamics of memory approach" (Miztal 2003, Zerubavel 1997) in order to demonstrate, clearer than Karlsson does, that collective memory is a perpetual process of negotiation between different actors. The process involves conflict, contest and controversy, as well as attempts to achieve consensus. The actors are influenced by power structures which need to be identified. Moreover, the actors are also influenced by their emotional experiences (e.g. trauma), which have an effect on how they negotiate memory. Thus it seems to be worthwhile also to use psychological theories concerning collective memories – largely neglected by Karlsson (see for instance 1998) – and put the emphasis on the intersubjective character of memory (Miztal 2003). The latter presupposes the view of memory not only as a social construction but also a subjective mental act. At the same time one should be careful about applying individually oriented psychological and psychoanalytical models to whole communities, let alone nations, because it is far from certain that individual experience can be translated into a collective one. The danger of essentialising needs to be taken into active account at all times. A way to overcome the problem would possibly be to use Jeffrey Alexander's concept of "cultural trauma". According to Alexander, collective traumas are not a natural result of events painful to a group, but are socially and culturally constructed. Events are one thing, but representations of these events quite another. It is only through the imaginative process of representation that actors make sense of experience. Collective traumas occur when the memory actors (or carriers in Alexander's term) succeed in representing social pain as a fundamental threat to the community, thus persuading their audience that it has become traumatised. This is a line of reasoning akin to the Copenhagen School of International Relations and its ideas about the securitization and possible de-securitization of certain phenomena in the public realm (Waever et al. 1993; Buzan 1998), and possibly it might be a promising prospect to unite these two theoretical perspectives.

In any event, following Alexander's ideas it would be fruitful for research on the memory of expelled peoples to study processes of cultural trauma construction. It would involve the examination of the carriers of memory, the arenas in which they are active, messages they transmit, and the reception these messages receive in the audience. To sum up, it would be important for a project dealing with memory about expelled peoples to work not only with products of historical culture but also with individual narratives, and deepen the theoretical discussion on the link between collective and individual memory. A deeper understanding of this link may help people who endeavour to elaborate reconciliation strategies in communities that deal with difficult memories. This point again underlines the ambition of the planned project to discuss and identify possible reconciliation strategies in dealing with painful memories. This of course introduces a normative dimension. Avishai Margalit's (2002) and Jeffrey Blustein's (2008) reflections on "ethics of memory" can serve as a source of inspiration to problematise the notion of reconciliation and develop theoretical insights concerning normative perspectives within memory studies.

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It is now time to briefly introduce the papers of this volume in the order that they appear. In the first paper, Bo Stráth discusses the concepts of memory and history and especially the reasons why the memory concept is experiencing a boom within academia while history seems to be "out". He seeks the explanation for this in the fundamental changes that have taken place around the world during the last few decades. These changes were: the breakthrough of a new epistemology (postmodernism); radical changes in technology; a new organisation of economics, work and labour markets, and last but not least the erosion of earlier established interpretative frameworks following the end of the Cold War. As a result of this development, history as a "science" lost much of its legitimacy and the divisions between history, memory and myth became blurred. Stráth appeals for an awareness of the distinctions between these, even if they sometimes do overlap. For him, the term collective memory has an essentialising and homogenising potential that history has not. Therefore he pleads for not forgetting history while studying memory about the expelled peoples in Europe. He also recommends awareness about the critical distinction between memory and a political instrumentalisation of the past.

The second text, written by Barbara Misztal, starts with four illustrations of practices inspired by the memory of forced migrations. The cases described are autobiographical, biographical, as well as taken from fiction. Since memory as a mental phenomenon cannot be observed directly, people's memory should be studied by focusing on practices inspired by different memories, such as displaced people's search for their roots, the collecting of memorabilia, etc. Taking the four illustrations of practices as a point of departure, Misztal discusses their implication for the study of the memory of the expulsions. She dwells on the dialectical relationship between memory and forgetting, and points out that neither the value of memory nor of forgetting can be taken for granted. Both need to be evaluated in terms of their capacity to enhance societal well-being in the present. They can either nourish resentment or contribute to mutual understanding and tolerance. Misztal also discusses the relation between forgetting and forgiving, thus actualising the importance of ethics of memory. She concludes with the statement that understanding the memory of expelled peoples can help modern human beings map out conditions responsible for ensuring that cosmopolitan memory (that is being created in the globalising world) is open, self-reflective and promotes tolerance and cooperation.

The paper delivered by Stefan Troebst is a comprehensive account of the attempts at institutionalisation and Europeanisation of the memory of the expulsions in Europe. The author was by the German Minister of Culture appointed an expert in the "Visegrád + 2 Talks" that elaborated the establishment of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity, and also fulfilled a similar function in the Committee for Migration, Refugees and Population of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, tasked with working on the project "Centre for European Nations' Remembrance". Thus he accounts for the initiatives that took place between 2002 and 2006 as a combination of historian, witness and actor. Neither initiative brought the results hoped for, due to disagreements between politicians of different states. The author's conclusion is that the European memory culture is still nationally segmented and that politics of memory in various nation-states influence not only internal politics but also foreign affairs. The fact that the ethnopolitically motivated forced migrations became part of transnational memory discourse and was on the way to becoming part of institutionalised memory on a European level shows the importance of this subject for relations between European nations.

Oksana Kis elaborates in her paper the problem of missing memories of Polish inhabitants in the Ukrainian city of Lviv. Before the Second World War Poles constituted about 55% of the population of Lviv. When the Soviet Union took over the city, the Poles were deported (1940–41) or forced to migrate to Poland (1945), and Soviet citizens, mostly

Ukrainians, populated the city. For many reasons the remnants of Polish culture were considered unworthy of remembrance and thus vanished from collective memory. Kis speaks about the missing Polish narratives in Lviv in terms of intentional and unintentional forgetting. She emphasises that the post-Soviet Ukrainian memory is very much mobilised politically, so that it does not leave much room for an impartial dealing with the thorny Polish-Ukrainian past. However, the author suggests two possible ways to explore the memory of the displaced Poles in Lviv – studying the local tourist industry and the personal life stories of the elderly city dwellers. In her view, the kind of memory that exists in commercial commodities for mass consumption, as well as in everyday communication between individuals, seems to be less influenced by dominant political discourses. Kis states that the history and the memories of Poles and Ukrainians in Lviv are controversial and sensitive. Thus there is a need for an impartial view. An international project on these matters could become an external stimulus for researching into the forgotten parts of Ukrainian history.

The last paper is a short pilot study written by Mattias Nowak, a young scholar from the research network “Whose Memory? Which Future?”. The study is an example of what kind of subjects could be taken up within the framework of the project described above. During the workshop in Lund, several scholars from the research network, among them Mattias Nowak, presented ideas on such studies. In his paper, Nowak analyses the content of and the interaction between historical narratives articulated in the Polish public debate, concerning the ethnically motivated expulsion of Germans from Poland, which took place after the Second World War. Following the theoretical framework of the sociologist Antonina Kloskowska, as developed by the historian Kristian Gerner in studies of sites of memory, Nowak identifies and classifies the narratives dominating the debate. The strong polarization of opinions, including the problematic uses of concepts such as *perpetrators* and *victims* and *collective memory* is studied and elaborated.

Before closing the introduction the editors wish to acknowledge the Bank of Sweden’s Tercentenary Foundation for providing generous financial support for the workshop, and the Crafoord Foundation for the financial support that made the publication of this volume possible. Special thanks go also to Niklas Bernsand, coordinator at Centre for European Studies in Lund, who acted as an assistant editor in the final stage of the work with this publication.

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## A Memory or a History of Europe's Expelled Peoples?

Bo Stråth

The title of the new project at Lund University directed by Barbara Törnquist-Plewa is about memory, which makes it trendy. Few talk about history any more. A quick glance at book titles and journal articles over the last ten years demonstrates the shift of interest from history to memory. As if memory can be something that transgresses individual remembrances. Of course, it cannot. We can only with our own brains remember and sort out the past. One can call forth *feelings* of a collective experience, but the memory then becomes a social and cultural construct. The ongoing memory boom deals with such construction. This distinction is not spelt out sufficiently. Memory becomes a parallel or even a synonym to identity. While the identity language for various reasons is on the decline, the memory language continues. Being a social construct also means that collective memory feeds back on the remembrance of individuals. "Collective memory" provides a kind of interpretative framework to which individuals relate their remembrances.

A key question is why memory is in and history out. Why do we talk about memory instead of history? I think it is wise to reflect a bit on this development instead of uncritically taking it for granted.

There are close connections between memory and history, of course. 35 years after Hayden White's *Metahistory* few dispute any more that academic historiography, too, is a construct. However, if this is the case, the question remains: why the shift to memory? What are the origins of the astonishing career of the word memory in historiographical discourse? Is the use of this word necessary and irreplaceable in today's historiography?

When "collective memory" re-emerged in the 1980s as a subject of scholarly interest — after it had been absent from the agenda for a long time, since Maurice Halbwachs in his Durkheimian search for social community had launched the term in the 1920s — it was imagined as a counter-concept for history, as a critique of the totalizing aspects of history. There was a clear connection between constructivism and the linguistic turn where the understanding of "history" changed, and a growing awareness of the rhetorical and linguistic limits of history writing emerged. One dimension of the linguistic turn was the undermining and destabilization of the absolutising tendency of structural macro history. However, in retrospect the shift from the social to the cultural, from class to ethnicity, which was implicit in and went hand in hand with the linguistic and constructivist turn, also provokes questions about what came out of the shift (rather than about what was wrong before the shift, because quite obviously many things *were* wrong).

The conceptual slide during the last one or two decades from history to memory clearly relates to the construction of legitimacy. Who are the augurs of the past whose statements produce social cement and political legitimacy? What role do professional historians play in this process and what degree of exclusivity do they have? The question of control of the past, in turn, has obviously to do with the revision of history in the search for new interpretative frameworks after the Cold War. The experienced need for a new interpretation came a few years after the linguistic and constructivist turn. This argument about the search for meaning, in turn, sheds light on the proximity between two key concepts in the social debate during the last decades: collective memory and collective identity. There was a clear connection between the search for new meaning and the search for identity. This search, in turn, must be related to more long-term transformations than the sudden rupture around

1990, such as dramatically changing markets for labour and finance as well as the erosion of the capacity of the welfare states to deliver feelings of confidence in the future.

During the nineteenth century historians were key actors in the construction of foundation mythologies and the building of the nation-state. They emerged as the chief ideologues when the European nations were moulded on the foundation of the remembrance of a specific past. At the beginning of the twentieth century they were increasingly criticized as conservative myth-builders by new generations of radical historians with new academic ideals departing from positivist, Marxist or structuralist positions. Although they criticized the conservative foundation myths, they confirmed the nations, however. Nations were the gauges of measurement and the objects of investigations, the historical black boxes targeted by the analyses. A growing use of comparative methods did not change much in that respect. Professional historiography continued to be based on methodological nationalism. The other dimension of the conservative approach – methodological individualism with a focus on the *grosse Männer* who made history – was certainly challenged by more structural perspectives, but the methodological nationalism remained intact. During the Cold War the West European nations were portrayed as communities of destiny. They were outlined through demarcations in time (1945) and space (the Soviet Union and its satellites). Black and White were clear-cut categories in this depiction.

In the wake of the more general acceptance during the 1990s of the perspectives developed by White (1973), Lyotard (1979), Ricoeur (1969, 1971), Derrida (1979), Foucault (1969, 1975, 1976) and others, the distinction between categories like history, memory and myth has been blurred. They all undermined the master narratives outlined during the Cold War and the impact of this erosive work came to full expression in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War. These categories are now seen as overlapping and supplementary. However, against this backdrop of blurred distinctions, the question remains why there has nevertheless been an obvious conceptual slide from history towards memory.

The issue is addressed by Klas-Göran Karlsson's term history use referred to in the outline of this conference. One could here also refer to Rüsen (1983, 1990, 1999). History use is a term that I would see as an alternative to memory construction, a term that rather built a bridge between history and myth. At first it was used in order to label the abuse of history in the Soviet regime, but then the debate has demonstrated that abuse and manipulation of history is a phenomenon in Western democracies also.

In the search for a critical distance to the memory boom, it is necessary to distinguish between memory as individual experience and as collective construction. Individuals have memories but collectives do not. As collective phenomena, memories are discourses based on processes of social work and social bargaining.

Collective memories are often seen as analogous to individual memories and referred to in terms of trauma, repression and other similar psychological models. This is the case where silenced experiences are referred to as trauma, i.e., drawing on a definition of trauma that stems from individual psychology and psychoanalysis as something that one can neither forget nor talk about. A critical question I would like to pose is whether individual-oriented psychological and psychoanalytical models can be translated to express collective experiences. The term memory obviously argues that they can. For example, can the fact that the Holocaust was more or less silenced until the 1960s, or the fact that Srebrenica was silenced after 1995 until today, really be understood as a mass psychological question circumventing all inquiry about moral and political responsibility, or are more immediate political interests, instrumentalizations and power structures in operation?

The past is not only about what to remember but also about what to collectively forget, and in both respects the question of political interests and power cannot be ignored. Did the thematization of the Holocaust from the early 1960s onwards really depend on the sudden



passing of a traumatic shock after 15 years of repression, or should it rather be understood with reference to the state formation of Israel and the generational confrontation of young Germans questioning the actions of their parents during the war? Or is it a matter of generation?

In a perspective that emphasizes memory construction as a process of social contention and bargaining, Srebrenica must not necessarily be understood as a kind of traumatic experience, the discussion of which is precluded for psychological and psychoanalytical reasons, but might also be interpreted as an atrocity silenced for political reasons. Srebrenica was certainly a trauma for that part of the Muslim population which survived – as was, of course, the Holocaust for Europe's Jews – but hardly for the Dutch and French populations, or for the European populations after 1945 in the case of the Jewish genocide. There must have been other more instrumental reasons for playing down the genocides. If the Dutch and French responsibility for the massacre in Srebrenica had been openly admitted, it would have hit the core of the European Union in moral terms. The condemnation of the massacre, the second European genocide of the twentieth century, directed not at Europe's Jews but its Muslims, was circumscribed through the politically unriskey condemnation of the Holocaust in the Stockholm declaration in 2000, more than half a century after the genocide against the Jews. By this point the indemnity question had been solved in material terms. The condemnation of the Holocaust did not cost anything and did not mean any kind of recognition of responsibility. World leaders talked about Holocaust, but they meant Srebrenica. Moving outside Europe but remaining within the Western hemisphere, the discussion might be extended to include Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. In a time when Western ("universal" or "natural") human rights are increasingly used as an argument for war interventions and old imaginations of the white man's burden and civilizing missions are recurring, these connections between memory construction and political instrumentalisation should not be silenced.

During the 1960s Germany experienced a dramatic confrontation with the past. This was labelled *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or "coming to terms with the past". This term quite obviously contains a certain social-psychological dimension: a society learns to master its past. However, as Jan-Werner Müller (2006) has demonstrated, Jürgen Habermas and indeed the academic and social debate in Germany since the 1950s upon which Habermas bases his view, instead of making references to social-psychological models emphasized a political dimension closely linked to a militant defence of the achieved democracy. The original connotation to social-psychological models was diluted in particular through the linkage of the concept to another Habermasian key term, *Verfassungspatriotismus*, or "constitutional patriotism". The connotation shifted from social psychology to political communication and contention under democratic forms.

However, the use of the term *Geschichtsaufarbeitung*, or "re-work, or just work, on history" might prove more effective in removing any remaining connotation of social psychology. Work on history is not necessarily coming to terms with the past. There is not necessarily any end point where we once and for all have evaluated a specific past event. Work on history means contention about the past and use as well as abuse of history. Use and abuse means political instrumentalisation and a manipulating dimension. Instrumentalisation and manipulation, in turn, might provoke strategies of opposition and resistance, not only in democratic but also in totalitarian societies. There is in these contentious processes of work on the past no outside position from which the historian can observe the past. This is one important insight, for better and for worse, that we must be aware of when we discuss the question of memory of or history of the expelled peoples in Europe. As a highly politicized issue in today's European debate about migration, there is no reason to assume that the outline of the past of the expelled would be less politicized. On the contrary, the past is a crucial part of the politicization.

The question is, then, what this politicization and instrumentalisation means for historians. Is the solution as simple as to stop talking about history and exchange history for memory? Indeed, what is to be done with this memory? Is the debate about memory in the sense of remembrance or is it about a revision of history? Is it about *our* remembering or about the memories of the objects of our research questions? Why have questions about memory become so topical at the present time? How should the identity boom be understood? A few decades ago there was no discourse on either memory or identity.

One answer to these questions can – as I just suggested – be found in the end of the Cold War and in the social and cultural fragmentation that ensued in East and West alike. The Second World War had produced cohesion through the resistance to Nazism, and many foundation myths that contributed to the construction of national identity were built upon this idea. These myths continued to give meaning and cohesion during the Cold War. The language of a pacifist peace in 1945 was, within a few years, transformed into the language of an armed peace in which the Soviet Union replaced Nazi Germany as the representation of evil. This was different to the development of interpretative frameworks and world views after the First World War, when evil was seen much more as an historical category, and the Russian Revolution and the League of Nations, for a short while, seemed to offer the promise of a better world. There was, however, nothing to replace these loci of hope when the expectations faded away. In this context, there are similarities between the situation at the end of the 1920s and that of today, as the expectations invested in the market utopia after 1989 begin to fade away. It is indicative of this erosion of interpretative frameworks that the issue of resistance and collaboration during the Second World War has come under increasing scrutiny since the end of the Cold War, and many established truths have been questioned and challenged. This development, in turn, has brought the issue of collective memory to the fore. Questions about identity, about who we are and where we come from are raised in situations where we do not know the answers. When we feel confident about who we are, we do not talk about it, and it is generally only in periods of identity crisis that we look for a new identity and social community. It is in this framework that the issue of national identity and the collective memory boom should be seen.

A second reason why identity, memory and the nation are currently at the forefront of our preoccupations is the breakthrough of a new epistemology indicated by concepts such as construction and postmodernity and the collapse of epistemologies based on concepts like materialism, idealism and positivism. This also involves the relativising of concepts like truth and reality, which had previously been understood in absolute terms (for instance, reality may now be "virtual"). The end of the Cold War and the new epistemological view have meant new challenges for professional historiography and have given a concept like history new perspectives, not least with the growing insight that there is no reality which can be conceptualised and analysed beyond the limits that language sets upon its meaning. The constraints of language when coping with reality mean, among other things, that the discourse creates its own interests. One might choose to see this "linguisticism" as a burden, but it also justifies certain optimism as a result of the interpretative freedom that it gives. Language is multivocal and constitutes a huge semantic field with vast ranges, and for this reason it offers greater freedom in the selection of perspective.

The historian does not stand above or beyond the processes that he or she is analysing, but is part of them through the language that, by means of the act of translation or representation, connects the present with the past. In the wake of Foucault, it is not only history, but also epistemological schemes in general that are ideological and political. This also means that the past is constantly changing with the present.

This approach emphasises that social cohesion and community are invented rather than discovered, that they are constructed rather than existing "out there" and derivable, for

example, from real economic structures. This does not mean, of course, that events as such are also invented. Rather, the facts are constructed by reflection upon the documents that attest to the occurrence of the events. The construction of community means that images and myths emerge from the transformation of existing inventories of historical heritage and culture. Successful construction appeals to certain cultural chords and conceptual tropes, to narrative plots or discursive frames. Such tropes and plots are not, of course, primordial; they too are the products of human creation. In these processes of community construction, the *idea* of a collective memory and a specific history is a tool that bridges the gap between high political and intellectual levels and the levels of everyday life.

Identity – as a parallel or even synonym to memory – emerged as a theoretical problem in the 1970s. While it is an old concept, with roots in ancient Greece, it remained a more or less technical term in philosophy for a long time. It came to the social sciences by way of psychoanalysis, a field in which it had become a key concept in the 1880s. Significantly, psychoanalysis also works with "memory", which it problematises by distinguishing between "memory traces", that are retrievable at will, and "dynamically unconsciously repressed memory traces". From psychoanalysis, the concept of identity spread to debates and reflections on society. This happened, for instance, in the 1920s when, for a brief period after the First World War, there was talk about identity, and then again from the 1970s onwards (Niethammer and Dossmann 1999). In the interim, it was not a problem. During the Cold War, when political economies in the West were based upon economic growth, full employment and universal social rights guaranteed by the welfare states, we knew who We were, and we knew who the Other was, and there was no need to search for identity or evoke memory. Identity is not, for example, analysed in the German masterwork on historical key concepts, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Brunner et al. 1972-1992). And memory was called history, which had a starting point located either in the preindustrial poverty society, in the Great Depression of the 1930s or in 1945.

The new conceptual and symbolic topography around concepts like identity and memory must therefore be understood in the light of experiences of intellectual disorientation and the erosion of earlier established frameworks of interpretation since the 1970s. These experiences have been the result of fundamental changes in epistemology, technology, and the organisation of economies, work and labour markets. These shifts have produced new views, both of the past and of the preconditions for history, the science of the past. History as "science" is a translation from the German *Wissenschaft*. Since the 19th century, the writing of the past in Germany has been seen as analogous to the description of nature, the *Naturwissenschaften*. In English-speaking cultures, history was never a science, but belonged to the faculty of arts. This distinction between the two linguistic cultures was ignored for a long time, but has recently begun to take on meaning. The insight that the writing of history is less a matter of the unproblematic discovery of a past "out there" by means of refined techniques of source criticism, and more something dependent upon the context of the present in which questions about the past emerge, has come to be generally accepted.<sup>1</sup> The recognition of the role of narrative and the shift from a theoretical and methodological focus on causes towards a heuristic approach poses new problems along the science-arts axis.

How culturally determined is the writing of the past? How are histories about the past constructed? How are the narratives that aim to translate the past in order to give meaning to the present plotted? Why did the question of nation and the related issues of identity achieve such a predominant position in the debate from the late 1970s? To these questions, we might

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<sup>1</sup> For a groundbreaking development in this debate, see White, 1973. White has, however, built on a long tradition of philosophical thought. Spinoza developed a sceptical view on the opportunities of coming to terms with the past. The Neapolitan philosopher of history and law, Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744), was another, even more important source of information for White.

also add another: how does memory interrelate with oblivion? History and community are not only built on memory, but also on forgetting. As Ernest Renan observed, unity is created by assigning to oblivion that which divides a community:

L'oubli, je dirai même l'erreur historique, sont un facteur essentiel de la création d'une nation, et c'est ainsi que le progrès des études historiques est souvent pour la nationalité un danger ... l'essence d'une nation est que tout les individus aient bien des choses en commun, et aussi que tous aient oublié bien des choses... (Renan 1992 [1887]).

Renan has a point. However, his point is that he does not connect the silence to trauma but to a political construct. The pacts of silence in Germany after 1945 and in Spain after 1975 were cases of political instrumentalisation. In the German case the silence was staged by the Allied victory powers, who through the Nuremberg trial argued that the German population had been seduced by a gang of criminals who, with the verdicts, had been punished, implying that the problem of guilt and responsibility had been solved. This view emerged in an attempt to avoid the spread of feelings of revanchism in Germany, and the political instrumentalisation of these feelings, like after the First World War. The silence lasted until the 1960s. The Spanish pact is about to erode now. In both cases the pact lasted about one generation (White 1973).

Pacts of silence have a mythological dimension. The linguistic or rhetoric turn, which argues that it is language that sets the limits when realities are constructed, brought the insight that there is a connection between myth and historiography through the form of narrative, through the very way in which the story is told. Historiography is much more dependent upon its literary-textual organisation than has been recognised in more conventional views. Historiography cannot, as a matter of fact, be easily separated from myths and myth-building. In the most radical versions of the linguistic/rhetoric methodological approach, historiography and mythography become – as argued above – more or less identical. Such views, however, are much older than the rhetoric turn. The idea that truth is contextual, rather than immutable and absolute, and that grounding myths are expressions of power, was clearly present in the works of Vico (1977 [1725]), Croce (1963), Nietzsche (1980 [1882]), and Weber, long before White and Foucault (Szakolszai 1998 and Peukert 1989). This idea of contextual truth was also present in the thinking of Spinoza, who considered that historical myths are not a false kind of historical knowledge, but rather that they reflect, in an imaginary manner, the relation of a society to itself (Hippler 2000).

Myths assume the dimensions of reality in the sense, and to the extent, that people believe in them. From this perspective, they cannot be separated or distinguished from reality and truth, but rather they constitute this reality and truth through language. This means that reality and truth are contested and contextual entities. Grounding myths, the myths upon which societies ultimately rest, draw their power to legitimate from some specific connection to God, history or the truths of the social and economic sciences. It is within this context of legitimation or *doxa* of everyday life that right and wrong are defined and laws are promulgated which separate the proclaimed communities of destiny from the arbitrary and capricious.

Processes of meaning production are processes of selection. The Holocaust and its preliminary stages took place before and during the Second World War, but it only became a theme in the 1960s, and then again in 2000, begging the question of why these events were more or less ignored in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s. Constructed memories are continuously subject to critical scrutiny and revision in the framework of a history that is constantly written and rewritten from an ever-changing present. History is in flux; it is, like the present, in a permanent state of transformation. History does not exist "out there", waiting to

be discovered, but is permanently invented in order to give meaning to the present - and to the future - through the past.

Myth, in this sense of constructed memory and oblivion, is emancipated from its pejorative connotation and assumes the role of the provider of meaning, becoming a constituent element of politics and social cohesion. In this context, emancipation takes on a different meaning from that in the self-understanding of positivist historiography, where activity in the name of science and source criticism is seen as an emancipation or liberation of the sources from the myths which enshroud them. This positivist approach was embodied by Leopold von Ranke and his followers, who believed that they stood outside and above the processes they studied. They believed that they were the judges or referees who were capable of disclosing the truth, *wie es eigentlich gewesen*, and failed to realise that they too were party to the production of the past.

These epistemological developments have also had another side: the erosion of the exclusivity of professional historians in the evaluation of the past. Media representatives and politicians have entered the scene with as much confidence as the historians, and often with a capacity to give faster and straighter answers to complex questions about the past.

One can see these developments as a problem for professional historians; a problem of legitimacy and a problem of erosion of power and prestige. The narratives and constructs of professional historians have no position of exclusivity in relation to other narratives and constructs. However, one can also see the growing and widening interest in the past as a potential. The critical question would then be what the role of professional history could and should be.

One crucial role could be to look for positions of critical distance to the debate. Instead of competing with mass media and politics in an ever tighter space of information, the role would be destabilisation and deconstruction of established truths. The insight that there is no final and absolute Truth with a capital T should not be confused with the still valid argument that the reconstruction of the past must be based on true assertions. There is still a task for professional historiography to critically evaluate what true assertions are. This would be a more active way to identify a professional role under new framework conditions than to stop talking about history and replacing history with memory. Exactly the fact that there is no exclusive position from which one can speak and write about the past should be an invitation to more self-reflection on what the role of academic history is and should be.

I would suggest a clear methodological critical distinction between memory and political instrumentalisation, between the situation as it was in the past and as it is judged today. For such a distinction a penetrating discussion of the sources and the archive situation is necessary. The distinction is necessary, although it does not change the fact that we will never be able to describe the situation as it once really was but only reconstruct it *ex post*. This is what *representing* the past is about. There is never a *representation* on the scale of 1:1.

The critical question deals with how to establish a critical distance, from which we can evaluate these processes of meaning construction. How do we avoid becoming political instruments in these processes; *les scribes du pouvoir*, as Michel Debré put it? It is quite clear that there is no zero point, no fixed position from which we can analyse these processes of meaning construction from the outside. We are with our research interests involved in them whether we want it or not. However, it is already a good thing to be aware of this fact. This awareness is the first step in an active search for positions of critical distance.

Professional history has always been debated and subject to contention. The frame of the debate was certainly truth claims which are less relevant today (in the sense of eroded beliefs in *the Truth*, which does not mean that the historical arguments cannot or should not be based on true assertions based on the sources). The term “collective memory” has a homogenising and essentialising potential, which history understood as contention and debate

has not (White 1973). Therefore, it is important to retrieve a more critical and destabilising role for the historical debate; to find the critical distance that the term history connotes. Saying this does not mean arguing for taking shelter in ivory towers, and the insight that there is no exclusive position for professional historians should be clear. However, there is a different position in a distribution of labour where the role of the historians would be to question and destabilise and to emphasise complexity and risks. The role of the historians would be to undermine teleologies upon which social and economic sciences build their theories. The modernisation and the globalisation narratives are the two evident cases in point. It is not difficult to discern the spirit of Hegel and his imagination of the Reason of History, and the *Weltgeist* as well as the *Zeitgeist*, in the globalisation narrative; not in the shape of Napoleon on his white horse at Jena but as the Market. As opposed to such simplistic and fundamentally a-historical theories about society, the role of the historians could be to emphasise the human conditions of search for stability and recurring experiences of fragility in social arrangements. One of the key instruments in the search for stability is the construction of teleologies about the past and its connection to the present. The role of historians would be to relativise and problematise such teleologies.

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## Memories and Practices: The Expelled Peoples' Ways of Dealing with The Irreversibility of The Past

Barbara A Misztal

I was immediately interested in this workshop's topic not only because I have been writing about sociological theories of remembering for several years but also because of my mother's family's repatriation from Lithuania to East Prussia after the World War II. In what follows I will present my family's experience and three other illustrations of practices prompted by the memory of the expulsion. Two of these three examples are taken from literary works. I use novels not only because the writer "remembers as a profession" (Grass, in Moeller 2003:172) but also because the writer often works through the past in a dynamic way and he or she can put together narrative memories of various groups. For example, Günter Grass, a German writer, in *Crabwalk* tells a story in which Germans, Soviet Russians and Poles all appear as parts of one narrative and he shows the effects of the past on several generations.

After a short presentation of my family's story I will look at the memory work as portrayed in a novel by Günter Grass, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1999, acclaimed as Germany's greatest living writer (Moeller 2003). Moreover, Grass, like many other exiles, refugees, migrants "carried a city around with him in his baggage", which makes him a representative of this century migration (Rushdie, quoted in Moeller 2003: 150). Grass knows about the responsibility of the survivor and his earlier works, labelled the *Danziger Trilogy*, show that it is possible to write a history which includes both the crimes and the tragedies of the Germans

My next example comes from a novel by Maria Kuncewicz (1895-1989), one of the most important and popular twentieth century Polish novelists. Our final example refers to Maria Kuncewicz's own life and experience of exile and her consistent commitment to transcending its boundaries (Zaborowska 1993).

I present all four illustrations in support of the argument that memories of the dramatic events of the expulsion do not necessarily translate into the same set of practices; they can, directly or indirectly, produce a rich array of actions. Of course, tales of the expulsion need always to be seen in the larger political context which frames the public articulation of memory. Memories of expulsions in the Cold War period differ from memories of expulsions in the post-Cold War period, where there is less interest in weaving the personal testimonies of expellees into the fabric of politics. So the difference is not only because of the decline in political support for the expellees' calls for revision of post-war boundary settlements but also because, especially in Eastern Europe, the resettlers' stories have changed status from officially unacceptable memories of outsiders to recognised voices of insiders. However, it is not my task here to paint the picture of the larger context. I am interested only, in the first part of the paper, in showing various ways in which memories are expressed. In the second part of the paper I will discuss the implications of the four illustrations for a study of the memory of expulsions.

To start with my mother family's experience; after being forced to leave Lithuania, the family settled in the "regained Polish historical land" from which more than 6 million Germans had been expelled. They made a conscious effort to construct a home in a small town which until 1945 had belonged to Germany and was known as Alleinsein (now Olsztyn). For many reasons this was not an easy task, one of them being the uncertainty as to the "Polishness" of the region. Of course, the official propaganda aimed at easing this insecurity by providing

ample historical evidence of the "Polishness" of the land. Yet, it was not the official propaganda that helped the Poles "to make that past into their own" (Elon 1992:29), but rather their individual attempts to construct a new memory.

My grandmother had been expelled from her own home and in order to find herself in a new place she searched for tokens of the past that could serve as substitutes for real memories. As a child, I used to spend hours with her cleaning French pilots' graves in Olsztyn; it was my grandmother's way of settling in a new place. She felt that in the new town apart from a few rescued and enormously valued souvenirs/memorabilia, she did not have anything that was "her own", not even "her graves" and that, by caring for the French soldiers' graves from the Second World War, she could attach herself to a new locality.

I believe that she was simply doing what many others do when they do not have the actual remains of the past or the objects of memory; they invent their own past at the new place. Her choice of graves, however, was also a statement about the conditions on which she accepted the present. She did not choose Soviet soldiers' graves, firstly because they were taken care of officially (for example, my primary school was responsible for several rows of such graves) and, secondly, because these graves, uplifted to the role of official monuments, were an expression of propaganda, which aimed at providing official memory. Her distrust for this "ready-made – memories" also came from her own memories of the property confiscated by Soviet authorities and of her hard labour in the Soviet Union, where she spent six years as a deportee and prisoner. These memories were not only painful but also, more importantly, not officially acknowledged.

She also did not choose the German soldiers' graves, although they were not officially taken care of, probably because she saw the Germans, as the majority of Poles did, as aggressors, and probably because – since the graves were located in an old Evangelical German cemetery – it would require her to overcome her rather narrow understanding of the meaning of being a devout Catholic and a Pole. Her choice of the French pilots' graves was a result mainly of the fact that she believed that somewhere in the West there was somebody taking care of a grave of her only son killed by Germans when on a flying mission during World War II.

This example illustrates the deportees' search for roots or, in other words, their efforts to establish their right to the place. The importance of the cemetery as an indicator that we are part of the past of a certain place, the proof of our existence there, or our duration in that place, is highlighted by Günter Grass, in his novel *The Call of the Toad*.

It is a story of two displaced people: a German widower, expelled from Danzig, and a Polish widow, expelled from Vilnius (Wilno in Polish). He lives in Germany, just as the majority of the former inhabitants of Danzig, who "had found reasonable accommodation if not a home in Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Bremen and Lower Saxony" (Grass 1992:76). She lives in Gdańsk, in which more than the third of the population come from Vilnius, and associates herself and her family with "all refugees driven from the East to an uncertain West" (Grass 1992:12). He, being obsessed with "The Century of Expulsion" theme, frequently speaks about all those who had fled; "all the Armenians and Crimean Tatars, Jews and Palestinians, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, Estonians and Latvians, Poles and finally Germans who had fled west with bag and baggage" (Grass 1992:27).

The relationships between the Polish widow and the German widower are cemented by their awareness of their common fate. She says "We had to leave Wilno, like you all had to leave here" (Grass 1992:12). The lovers' bond is also strengthened by their shared understanding of what we call "home" which "means more to us than such concepts as fatherland or nation, and that is why so many of us - not all, to be sure, but more and more as we grow older – long to be buried in our home soil. A natural longing which for the most part

remains cruelly unfulfilled, as only too often circumstances stand in the way of its fulfilment” (Grass 1992:27).

Arguing that it is only natural that people should want to know that the graves of their closest relatives are in good condition and that it is a natural right to be buried in your home soil (and that it should be included in the catalogue of human rights), the lovers founded the Polish–German Lithuanian Cemetery Association in order to offer displaced Poles, Lithuanians and Germans a chance to be buried in their homelands. They set up a German cemetery, to be known officially as the Cemetery of Reconciliation (Grass 1992:30, 96).

From the worldwide loss of homelands, the widow and widower developed the idea of the homecoming of the dead, and the idea of reconciliation (ibid: 232). Their idea of the right to a homeland is very different from the right to a homeland demanded by German refugees’ associations, as the widower says: “Our true home has been lost to us forever, a consequence of our own crimes – but the right of the dead to return is something that could and should be urged”(Grass 1992:27). Yet, even the right of the dead is not easy to recognize as illustrated by the unwillingness of the Lithuanians to guarantee a cemetery for Polish citizens of any background (ibid: 174).

Grass’s novel demonstrates the irreversibility of the past and therefore a need for the rejection of the old “truth”, as expressed in the famous words of Maria Konopnicka, a Polish poet, “We will never let go of the land from which our people come...” (quoted in Grass 1992:26). The way forward is not oblivion but mutual recognition and reconciliation. The process of reconciliation is helped by finding a new balance between remembering and forgetting with the assistance of a new definition of a home (or the homecoming of the dead). Apart from the idea of reconciliation rooted in the homecoming of the dead, Grass’s book also brings to our attention the experience of being a foreigner/ stranger in your own country. This experience, illustrated by our heroine’s mother’s cry during excursions to the Kashubian hills (in the vicinity of Gdańsk), “as beautiful here as at home!” (Grass 1992:28), is a reminder of the importance of the past and an evidence of how painful it is to lose one’s home.

The pain of being an “unhappy foreigner” is the main topic of Maria Kuncewicz’s book *Cudoziemka* (1935, 1976), translated into English as *The Stranger* (1945). Roza, the heroine of the novel, returns from Russia to Poland, the country from which her grandparents had been expelled by the Russian power of the day for their participation in the fight for Polish independence. The paradox of her situation is that in Poland, her regained homeland, she is defined as a stranger from the periphery. She feels alienated, lonely and inferior, like one coming from the margin of the national culture. Being a re-emigrant, Roza is always perceived as a “foreigner”. Her accent is ridiculed, while her efforts to speak correctly are rejected with the statement: “Look at her, she speaks like from a book” (Kuncewicz 1975:39).

In order to be accepted by her aunt in Warsaw Roza is forced to change her name into “a more Polish” one and to suppress her memories of her Russian home and the Russian people (ibid: 209). Her happy memories of her childhood in Russia, her fondness for the Russian landscape and Russian food separates her from the mainstream of Polish culture. Roza is aware that everyone thinks: “It is clear that she is a stranger” (Kuncewicz 1976:82). The fate of a “vozvrashchentsa” (returnee) is loneliness, being stigmatised as a stranger, always being an external observer rather than a participant. Furthermore, being a stranger in Poland means that Roza is a stranger everywhere else as well. She feels closely connected to all foreigners in all European cities that she visits. So, despite her comfortable middle-class life, the continuous feeling of exclusion and the pressure to forget the past accompany Roza throughout her life. In other words, assimilation took away her right to happy memories of the past.

Kuncewicz’s novel anticipated her own homelessness as she herself became one of the countless World War II refugees. Although she spent more than twenty years in exile, she chose not to forget and tried to defend her right to remember. Kuncewicz (1977: 27) did not

want to accept a refugee status, which – according to her - is tinted "with disrespect" and means humiliation in all languages. Therefore, she redefined the world as "a shared homeland" (Parandowski, quoted in Szalagan 2000:59) and searched for her place in this universal global unit.

For Kuncewicz, the right to memories meant not giving up the right to die in "your own land", a right that could be secured only by remaining stateless. Living in London during the World War II and socializing with refugee writers from the whole of Europe, Kuncewicz saw the emergence of a new humanistic post-national utopia which stresses the cult of an abstract human being (1971:187). Her belief in the world community and her unwillingness to accept the citizenship of any other country led Kuncewicz to undertake efforts to get the recognition for world citizenship (or a stateless status) and to create the PEN section for refugee writers (she established the PEN Club Centre for Writers in Exile). In 1949 she organised an appeal to the United Nations which reads:

### **Appeal to the UN**

The undersigned appeal to the UN to consider their attitude towards the refugee problem. Let the refugees have a say in the cultural construction of the world; let them take part in the activities of organisations created by the UN to better the conditions of man's life.

Do not force stateless people to apply for new nationalities by obstructing their liberty of travel, education and employment. By the sheer force of events they belong to a wider community than one nation. Indeed, History made them citizens of the world and they should be treated as such. Let the idea of world citizenship subsist not exclusively in theories and programmes but also – and above all – in courageous experimenting and genuine respect for the human person (quoted in Szalagan 2000:62).

The appeal to the UN was signed by 26 famous scientists, writers and intellectuals including Albert Einstein, Aldous Huxley, Francois Mauriac, Bertrand Russell, George Bernard Shaw, Laurence Olivier, Rebecca West and John Dos Passos. However, many famous people (for example Thomas Mann) who were approached refused to sign the appeal. Moreover, a negative reply from the Secretary General of the UN, pointing out that displaced people were taken care of, showed that he really did not understand what it meant to change "their attitude towards the refugee problem" (Kuncewicz 1997: 93). In response, Kuncewicz wrote that the practical meaning of such an appeal was a call to grant Nansen passports to people in exile, who, in the name of freedom, gave up their homes. (ibid: 95).

The so called Nansen passport, recognised by more than 50 governments and almost a "badge of honour" (Huntford 1998:522), was the achievement of Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930), a scientist, explorer, statesman, humanitarian, internationalist and High Commissioner for the repatriation of World War I prisoners. In order to find homes for 1.5 million refugees from the Russian revolution, Nansen had to regularise their national status. Under his aegis and with the help of the Red Cross stateless refugees from Russia were granted a special passport. Nansen passports "enabled many Russian émigrés to move as freely as other citizens at this time, and start a new life elsewhere. Stravinsky, Chagall, Pavlova, Rachmaninoff were some illustrious holders." (Huntford 1998:522). Nansen's work inspired in many the feeling "that the family of Man is one, whatever its national or social divisions" (Stang, <http://Nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1922/press.html>).

Kuncewicz's desire to be a citizen of the world can be seen not only as her way of coping with the memories of her past but also as her attempt to rethink interdependence and reciprocity beyond the limits of national boundaries. The concept of the world citizen arises from the concept of exile. However, such cosmopolitanism is also accompanied by the idea of home, as the experience of exile also reinforces the importance of home. As her increasing preoccupation with exile makes it impossible to separate her life from her art (Zaborowska 1993:63), Kuncewicz explores the impact of the loss of home on our identity and a sense of belonging. Her writings that reflect and arise from the status of being a refugee writer, show her awareness that "being removed from a beloved home - "nest of generations"" – is one of most acute pains of a displaced person. The remembrance of home means not only the "things past" but also the present, and even the attempts to "remember" the future as a result of the now happening in the beloved interiors of her own place. Vivid memory and imagination are the major components of the complex state of exile" (Zaborowska 1993:65).

The four described practices found among expelled people illustrate differences in the displaced peoples' ways of coping with the past. These practices can vary from demands of the right to a homeland voiced by German refugees' associations, through the replacing of real memories with the token of the past, to calls for the right to burial in a home, and for world citizenship. On the basis on these examples it can be said that, firstly, there is no single answer to the question what happened with the memory of people expelled from different European countries in the twentieth century, in other words, the relationship between remembering and forgetting can have many different shapes. Secondly, since memory, as a mental phenomenon, can not be directly observed, people's memory of the expulsions and their relation to their past and heritage should be studied by focusing on practices inspired by these different memories. Thirdly, forgiving, as the expelled peoples' way of dealing with the irreversibility of the past, is an essential step on they way to the creation of a cosmopolitan society.

In what follows, I will look at the implications of these observations for a study of the memory of expulsions. For a start, the right to the truth about the past is an essential element of our human rights. The significance of memory can not be overestimated because it is, as we all know, essential to our identity and the health of our democratic systems (Misztal 2005). Yet forgetting also has its value, and memory is not a remedy for everything. Moreover, the fascination with memory can undermine our concern with the public good and some people claim that memories can "do more harm than good" (Gupta 2005). From the liberal perspective it is argued that to achieve political and legal equality, through a contract or a covenant, the individual has to forget past injustices and social categories that were the marks of inequality (Wolin 1989:38). So, to endorse equality between people, "we must first learn to forget our prejudices and our petty memories if we are to be equal to the task that modernity has set for us" (Gupta 2005: 48). It is also argued that when memory is seen as the vehicle for establishing collective rights and voicing collective demands, remembering is less likely to serve the public good. When group memories are externally forged and controlled, group members may be deprived of their own authentic voice. On the other hand, in the case of the politicization of group memories, group members may suffer from a lack of equal opportunities and discrimination because of "the systematic neglect of alternative causes of group disadvantage" other than their distinctive memory (Barry 2001: 305). Hence, while recognizing that identity group politics as whole "cannot fairly be said to undermine a political distribution" (Gutmann 2003:23), we should be suspicious of groups that elevate their memories above democratic standards of equal freedom and opportunity for all.

However, forgetting is equally problematic, because the culture of forgetting ultimately threatens democracy (Misztal 2005). If we accept that the value of neither memory nor forgetting can be taken for granted, it can be said, paraphrasing Hegel, who famously said that tragedy involves the clash not between good and evil but between two goods, that paradoxical

conflict between remembering and forgetting involves the clash between two practices beneficial to society. Thus, any search for possible resolutions of the dialectical relationship between remembering and forgetting should be taken in the interest of cultivating a relationship with the past that enhances societal well being in the present.

The importance of remembering and forgetting for shaping people's lives and the selection of what we remember and forget have a great deal to do with the society we live in. How much we remember and how much we forget can be studied with the help of Bourdieu's concept of *field* seen as a sphere of social life in which, through various strategies, struggles take place with respect to valuable goods, resources and symbolic rewards defined by the field's focus. In other words, a field is an area of struggle in which agents' strategies are concerned with the preservation or improvement of their positions with respect to the defining capital of the field.

Bourdieu's more empirical applications of the term to intellectual activities of various kinds add an emphasis on the resources at the disposal of the competitors, the strategies they use in their struggles, and the recognition or denial of the positions adopted by the participants (Bourdieu 2002). Resources to establish, say, the meaning of a significant past event and the way it can be commemorated can be imported from outside or supplied within the field by the institutions which help to organise it in a stable and visible way. Fields are neither wholly autonomous nor static since both the definition of the field and the relations within it are contested. Each field has a relative autonomy from other fields. But the field of power is the most important one. Moreover, the concept of a field has the advantage of not prejudging which kinds of social relations animate or link the contributors and which may therefore be most significant in helping us to explain the content of their contributions. Taking this approach to describe the construction of the social vision of the past leads us to focus our attention on four participants in the memory game, namely, the state institutions (from national to local levels), the institutions of civil society, non institutionalised agents, or private/informal actors, and finally external, international actors (international public or other agencies).

Moving now to the second statement's implications for the studying of memory, following Bourdieu, we can say that memories, like *habitus*, understood as "a past which survives in the present and tends to perpetuate itself into the future by making itself present in practices structured according to its principles" (Bourdieu 1977:82), cannot be observed. Memories are constituted by external conditions but they "are also capable of producing and reproducing those structures" (Bourdieu 1977:72). Memories, like *habitus*, inspire practices through which social order makes itself "meaningful" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127-8). Through their practices people construct social reality. Only by studying practices, such as the displaced people's search for roots, collection of memorabilia, memberships in exile/refugee associations, we can see the expelled people's way of dealing with the past.

Moving to the third point, following Arendt's (1958:237-244) argument that reducing the irreversibility of human life requires forgiveness, it can be asserted that forgiveness is the only reaction which frees from its consequences both the one who forgives and the one who is forgiven. According to Arendt, forgiveness offers the possible "redemption from the predicament of irreversibility - of being unable to undo what one has done though one did not, and could not, have known what he was doing" (1958:237). Arendt (1958:242) observes that forgiveness has "always been deemed unrealistic and inadmissible in the public realm", yet forgiveness is an appropriate response to the irreversibility of action as without being forgiven our capacity to act would be "confined to one single deed from which we could never recover" (Arendt 1958:237), as forgiveness alleviates the irreversibility of action by refusing to allow the past to determine the possibility of the present and by bringing to an end a process initiated by trespassing. Only by constant willingness to change our minds and start again, we can "be

trusted with so great a power as that to begin something new” (Arendt 1958:240). As the exact opposite of vengeance and as the only reaction which does not merely re-act but acts anew, forgiveness is a necessary condition of creating trust and new conditions for a common life. Also Derrida (2001) situates forgiveness between responsibility for the past and for the future, and sees forgiving as a struggle to settle the meaning of the lesson from history for the sake of our life in community.

In the same way, the proposal of reconciling memory and forgetting on the normative level has recently been suggested by the ethics of memory perspective which focuses on relations between forgetting and forgiving. This perspective formulates the relationship between remembering and forgetting from the point of view of the construction of trust relationships and argues that memory of the past can be useful for us if it enhances the cause of justice. Ricoeur (1999), Todorov (2003) and Margalit (2002) - all assert that the value of memory needs to be evaluated in terms of its capacity to benefit others.

The argument that we cannot take the value of group memory for granted and that we, therefore, need to evaluate the value of group memory in terms of its capacity to benefit others, brings to our attention the relationship between memory and trust towards others. Since groups’ cooperative attitudes towards others are a result of their ability to critically evaluate their own respective pasts in a way that secures tolerance and removes barriers to mutual understanding, only an open, critical and reflective memory represents the morally important value. On the other hand, a closed, fixed memory of the event that offers only the single authorized version of it, can cause moral damage to civil society by conflating political and ethnic or cultural boundaries. So, memory, when used to close boundaries of ethnic, national or other identities and to accept some versions of the past as to be ”the true”, can aggravate conflict, but when memory is open-ended it can be an important lubricant of cooperation.

The importance of the relations between memory and trust is also essential in attempts to set aside resentment. Forgiveness is rooted in, and a source of, trust in our life in community. To forgive the other for the sake of the frailty of the world one holds in common entails trust in a common future. Trust that is offered for the sake of establishing a new relation based on mutual recognition of each other involves a suspension of judgement. Such ”knowing forgetting” does not mean that ”one falls into radical present-mindedness and the delusion that the past counts for nothing; rather one assesses and judges just what the past does for in the present – how much it should frame, shape and even determine present events” (Elshtain Bethke 1999:43). Since only this type of relationships between memory and forgetting is compatible with a just, pluralist and democratic cosmopolitan society, understanding of the nature of the relation between memory and forgiveness is a very important move in assessing the possibilities and limits of cosmopolitanism.

## **Conclusion**

In today’s global world one of main dilemmas is how to mediate the relationship between strangers and provide for the development of a global civil society. In addressing this problem we can be assisted by enhancing our understanding of the expelled peoples’ memory as such knowledge may help us to map out the conditions for ensuring that cosmopolitan memory is open, self-reflective and promotes a discourse of hospitality, mutual understanding, toleration and cooperation. If it is the cosmopolitan future that can make possible our survival (Beck 2006), the construction of cosmopolitan memory is essential, as it is an important step toward the creation of post-nationalist solidaristic political communities.

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## Europäisierung der Vertreibungserinnerung? Eine deutsch-polnische *Chronique scandaleuse* 2002-2007\*

Stefan Troebst

Jede Nation hat das Recht auf ihre eigene kollektive Erinnerung. Diese Erinnerung darf allerdings nicht selektiv sein. Schwierige Wahrheiten dürfen nicht ausgeblendet werden, nur weil sie für die nationale Identität problematisch sind.

Beschluß des polnischen Sejm vom 23. November 2003<sup>2</sup>

„Ethnische Säuberung“ war das Etikett, mit dem die zahlreichen ethnopolitisch motivierten Zwangsmigrationen belegt wurden, die zwischen 1991 und 1995 in der Folge des Auseinanderbrechens der jugoslawischen Föderation in Kroatien, Serbien sowie Bosnien und Herzegowina stattfanden. Sie haben im kollektiven Gedächtnis Europas die Erinnerung an Holocaust, GULag, Porrajmos (Ermordung der europäischen Roma im Dritten Reich), Holodomor (sowjetischer Hungergenozid in der Ukraine), Aghet bzw. Yeghern (Genozid an den Armeniern im Osmanischen Reich) und andere Völkermorde, Soziozide, Ethnozide und Gesellschaftsverbrechen sowie vor allem an die gigantischen erzwungenen Bevölkerungsverschiebungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa in den beiden Kriegsdekaden 1912-1922 und 1939-1949 geweckt. Und regelrecht alarmierend auf die europäische Öffentlichkeit wirkte die Vertreibung von fast einer Million Kosovoalbanern durch serbische Sicherheitsorgane aus Rumpf-Jugoslawien nach Makedonien und Albanien 1999. Als eines der wenigen Vertreibungsgeschehen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts konnte dieses Verbrechen eines Staates an seinen Bürgern mittels Intervention von außen binnen weniger Monate fast vollständig rückgängig gemacht werden.

Zeitlich parallel zu den Ereignissen auf dem Balkan mit ihrem Echo in den europäischen Medien kam es zu einer erheblichen Intensivierung der polnisch-deutschen Forschungskooperation zum Thema Flucht und Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem westverschobenen Polen und der Polen aus den jetzt sowjetischen vormaligen polnischen Ostgebieten von 1945 an<sup>3</sup> – mit Spillover-Effekten in den politischen Raum. Während jedoch

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\* Vorabdruck aus: Verflochtene Geschichtskulturen. Polen und seine Nachbarn im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Hgg. Martin AUST, Krzysztof RUCHNIEWICZ, Stefan TROEBST. Köln, Weimar, Wien 2008 (= Visuelle Geschichtskultur, 3).

<sup>2</sup> Uchwała Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 27 listopada 2003 r. w sprawie ustanowienia Centrum Pamięci Narodów Europy pod auspicjami Rady Europy (M. P. z dnia 15 grudnia 2003 r.) [Beschluß des Sejm der Republik Polen vom 27. November 2003 zur Frage der Einrichtung eines Zentrum des Gedenkens der Völker Europas unter den Auspizien des Europarats (Staatsanzeiger vom 15. Dezember 2003)] (<http://www.abc.com.pl/serwis/mp/2003/0867.htm>). Deutsche Übersetzung von Thomas Strobel in Vertreibungsdiskurs und europäische Erinnerungskultur. Deutsch-polnische Initiativen zur Institutionalisierung. Eine Dokumentation. Hg. Stefan TROEBST. Osnabrück 2006, Dok. Nr. 24, 105f., hier 105.

<sup>3</sup> Kompleks wypędzenia [Der Komplex der Vertreibung]. Hgg. Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ und Artur HAJNICZ. Kraków 1998; Verlorene Heimat. Die Vertreibungsdebatte in Polen. Hgg. Klaus BACHMANN und Jerzy KRANZ. Bonn 1998. Siehe auch die Ergebnisse eines einschlägigen deutsch-polnischen Forschungsprojekts: „Unsere Heimat ist uns ein fremdes Land geworden ...“Die Deutschen östlich von Oder und Neiße 1945-1950. Dokumente aus polnischen Archiven. Hgg. Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ und Hans LEMBERG. 4 Bde. Marburg 2000-2004.

die polnische Gesellschaft von der im Jahr 2000 einsetzenden Debatte um die Ermordung der Juden Jedwabnes 1941 durch ihre polnischen Nachbarn präokkupiert war, machte in Deutschland zeitgleich das Projekt des Bundes der Vertriebenen (BdV) der Gründung eines primär nationalen "Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen" in Berlin Furore. Erst die Entschließung des Deutschen Bundestages "Für ein europäisch ausgerichtetes Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" im Sommer 2002 und vor allem eine heftige innerdeutsche sowie deutsch-polnische Debatte über diese private Initiative im Sommer 2003 transportierten das Thema dann auch nach Polen. Die Stiftung "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" und vor allem ihre (Ko-)Präsidentin, die CDU-Bundestagsabgeordnete Erika Steinbach, gelten seitdem in einem beträchtlichen Teil der polnischen Öffentlichkeit als Inkarnation eines aggressiven deutschen "Drangs nach Osten".<sup>4</sup>

Um so bemerkenswerter war es daher, dass sich parallel zur schrillen grenzüberschreitenden Debatte über das "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" 2004 ein deutsch-polnischer Diskursstrang bezüglich einer Europäisierung der Vertreibungserinnerung samt Institutionalisierung entwickelte. Und noch erstaunlicher war, dass dafür Partner in anderen Teilen Zentraleuropas gefunden werden konnte. Im Folgenden sollen diese europäische (Teil-)Erfolgsgeschichte, deren Bedeutung weniger in ihren – bescheidenen – Ergebnissen, als vielmehr im Umstand ihres Ereignisses liegt, nachgezeichnet werden. Dies geschieht zum einen aus fachwissenschaftlich-zeithistorischer Perspektive, zum anderen mit dem Blick des Zeitzeugen und Akteurs. 2004 und 2005 fungierte ich als von der damaligen Kulturstaatsministerin Christina Weiss ernannter deutscher Experte in den so genannten "Visegrád + 2"-Gesprächen zur Vorbereitung des Europäischen Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität und im selben Zeitraum versah ich eine ähnliche Funktion mit Blick auf das Projekt eines "Centre for European Nations' Remembrance" des Komitees für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Bevölkerung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarats. Zentrale Dokumente dazu habe ich in dem 2006 erschienen Quellenband *Vertreibungsdiskurs und europäische Erinnerungskultur. Deutsch-polnische Initiativen zur Institutionalisierung* ediert, auf den ich mich im folgenden stütze.

## **Deutsch-polnische Initiativen zur Institutionalisierung des Vertreibungsdiskurses 2002-2003**

Der Europäisierungsschub, den die Idee einer Institutionalisierung der Vertreibungserinnerung in Deutschland und Polen erfuhr, läßt sich ziemlich genau auf das Frühjahr 2002 datieren. Am 21. Februar 2002 optierten auf einer Potsdamer Podiumsdiskussion der damalige Kulturstaatsminister Julian Nida-Rümelin für eine Europäisierung des BdV-Projekts und der sozialdemokratische Bundestagsabgeordnete Markus Meckel für ein europäisches Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen mit dem Standort Breslau.<sup>5</sup> Die Bevölkerungsstruktur der niederschlesischen Metropole, so das Argument, war im Zeitraum 1938-1952 durch Holocaust, Krieg, Flucht, Vertreibung der Deutschen und Ansiedlung von Polen, Ukrainern, Lemken,

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<sup>4</sup> Siehe dazu PETERSEN, Thomas: Flucht und Vertreibung aus Sicht der deutschen, polnischen und tschechischen Bevölkerung. Bonn 2005, 96-104, und ŁADA, Agnieszka: Debata publiczna na temat powstania Centrum przeciw Wypędzeniom w prasie polskiej i niemieckiej [Die öffentliche Debatte über das Thema der Errichtung eines Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen in der polnischen und deutschen Presse]. Wrocław 2006, sowie zum Hintergrund PISKORSKI, Jan M.: Vertreibung und deutsch-polnische Geschichte. Eine Streitschrift. Osnabrück 2005, sowie KRAFT, Claudia: Die aktuelle Diskussion über Flucht und Vertreibung in der polnischen Historiographie und Öffentlichkeit, in: Zeitgeschichte-online ([http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/portal/alias\\_rainbow/lang\\_de/tabID\\_40208128/DesktopDefault.aspx](http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/portal/alias_rainbow/lang_de/tabID_40208128/DesktopDefault.aspx)).

<sup>5</sup> Wie viel Geschichte liegt im Osten? Die Deutschen und das östliche Europa. Podiumsgespräch im Alten Rathaus Potsdam mit Norbert Lammert, Markus Meckel, Julian Nida-Rümelin, Julius Schoeps und Manfred Stolpe. Moderation: Hansjürgen Rosenbauer. Potsdam 2003, 34. Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 1, 30.

Griechen und Makedoniern, desgleichen von aus ganz Europa rückkehrenden polnischen Zwangsarbeitern, Kriegsgefangenen und anderen DP's sowie von Umsiedlern aus dem Inneren Polens einer ebenso dramatischen wie totalen Veränderung unterworfen, und zugleich galt die Stadt als Brennpunkt deutsch-polnischer Beziehungsgeschichte.<sup>6</sup> In einem Artikel mit dem Titel „Warum Breslau?“ erläuterte Meckel am 7. März 2002 in der polnischen Tageszeitung *Rzeczpospolita* seinen Vorschlag<sup>7</sup>, der seitens polnischer Intellektueller wie Włodzimierz Borodziej, Adam Michnik und Adam Krzemiński auf umgehende Zustimmung stieß.<sup>8</sup>

Am 16. Mai 2002 debattierte der Deutsche Bundestag über die Gewichtung von Nationalem und Europäischem im Plan der Einrichtung eines Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen<sup>9</sup> und verabschiedete am 4. Juli mit rot-grüner Mehrheit eine maßgeblich von Meckel konzipierte Entschließung „Für ein europäisch ausgerichtetes Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen“. Die Schlüsselpassage lautete:

Der Deutsche Bundestag spricht sich dafür aus, einen europäischen Dialog über die Errichtung eines europäischen Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen zu beginnen. Ein solches Zentrum - als Dokumentations- und Begegnungszentrum mit Forschungsstätte - soll die Vertreibungen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts in ihren verschiedenen Ursachen, Kontexten und Folgen, darunter die Vertreibung der Deutschen, dokumentieren. Die Betroffenen sollten ihr Schicksal und Leid in dieser Dokumentation wiedererkennen können - und gleichzeitig das der Vertriebenen anderer Völker sehen. So wird ein solches Projekt ein Ort historisch-wissenschaftlicher Aufarbeitung sein und zugleich daran erinnern, dass wir als Deutsche und Europäer alles dafür tun müssen, um solches Leid in Zukunft zu verhindern.<sup>10</sup>

Während der BdV sowohl den Standortvorschlag Breslau als auch die Europäisierungstendenz der Diskussion kritisierte<sup>11</sup>, begrüßte die polnische Nichtregierungsorganisation KARTA die deutschen wie deutsch-polnischen Vorschläge zur Einrichtung eines „Dokumentationszentrums

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<sup>6</sup> THUM, Gregor: Die fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945. Berlin 2003; CIESIELSKI, Stanislaw: Umsiedlung der Polen aus den ehemaligen polnischen Ostgebieten nach Polen in den Jahren 1944-1947. Marburg 2006.

<sup>7</sup> MECKEL, Markus: Dlaczego Wrocław? Cierpienie wypędzonych powinno być tematem wspomnień i rozważań [Warum Breslau? Die Leiden der Vertriebenen sollen Thema von Erinnerung und Nachdenken sein]. In: *Rzeczpospolita* vom 7. März 2002 (<http://arch.rzeczpospolita.pl/a/rz/2002/03/20020307/200203070066.html>). Deutsche Übersetzung in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 2, 31-34.

<sup>8</sup> Ebd., Dok. Nr. 3, 34-36, und Dok. Nr. 4, 36-38. Vgl. zu diesem frühen Stadium der deutsch-polnischen Debatte über einen bilateralen Zentrumsplan auch Pamięć wypędzonych. Grass, Beneš i środkowoeuropejskie rozrachunki. Antologia tekstów polskich, niemieckich i czeskich [Das Gedächtnis der Vertriebenen. Grass, Beneš und mitteleuropäische Abrechnungen. Eine Anthologie polnischer, deutscher und tschechischer Texte]. Hgg. Piotr BURAS und Piotr M. MAJEWSKI. Warszawa 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographischer Bericht, 236. Sitzung, Berlin, Donnerstag, den 16. Mai 2002 (<http://dip.bundestag.de/btp/14/14236.pdf>); Rede von Kulturstaatsminister Julian Nida-Rümelin „Für ein europäisch ausgerichtetes Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen“ im Deutschen Bundestag am 16. Mai 2002 (URL <http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/rede/27/80527/multi.htm>). Beide Texte finden sich auch in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 5, 38-57, und Dok. Nr. 6, 57-60.

<sup>10</sup> Beschluss des Deutschen Bundestages „Für ein europäisch ausgerichtetes Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen“. Deutscher Bundestag. 14. Wahlperiode. Drucksache 14/9033/9661, 4. Juli 2002 (<http://www.bohemistik.de/beschlussmain.html>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 10, 67.

<sup>11</sup> Ebd., Dok. Nr. 7, 60-62, und Dok. Nr. 9, 65-67.

der Vertreibungen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts“.<sup>12</sup> Auch die Präsidenten der Slowakei, Bosniens und Herzegowinas sowie Ungarns, an die Markus Meckel und Rita Süßmuth am 5. Juli 2002 Briefe mit der Bitte um Mitwirkung an dem vom Bundestag am Vortag angeregten europäischen Zentrum geschickt hatten<sup>13</sup>, bekundeten ihre Unterstützung für die deutsche Initiative.<sup>14</sup> Das Staatspräsidium von Bosnien und Herzegowina beschloß gar die Einsetzung eines eigenen Beauftragten.<sup>15</sup>

Positiv reagierte auch die internationale Wissenschaftskommunität.<sup>16</sup> So fand vom 5. bis 7. Dezember 2002 auf Initiative des Deutschen Polen-Instituts, des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas an der Universität Leipzig (GWZO) sowie des Historischen Instituts der Universität Warschau und unter Beteiligung von mehr als 40 Wissenschaftlern aus Asien, Nordamerika und zahlreichen ost- und westeuropäischen Staaten im Haus der Deutsch-Balten in Darmstadt ein Kolloquium zum Thema „Ein europäisches Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen. Historische Erfahrungen – Erinnerungspolitik – Zukunftskonzeptionen“ statt, dessen Organisatoren in einer Erklärung vom 7. Dezember unter Berufung auf die deutsch-polnischen Wissenschaftskooperation im Bereich der Zwangsmigrationsforschung erste Denkanstöße zu Zielsetzung, Arbeitsmethoden und Struktur eines „Europäischen Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen“ gaben. Erstmals taucht hier der Netzwerksgedanke auf:

Die gemeinsame europäische Erinnerung und Mahnung für die Zukunft, die Solidarität des Gedenkens, könnte durch die Entwicklung einer Konzeption dezentraler Strukturen von Gedenkstättenarbeit gefördert werden. Ausgehend von einem zentralen, bündelnden Ort sollte ein Überblick über die zahlreichen Vertreibungsorte und vielfältigen Aktivitäten vom russländischen Karelien bis Nordgriechenland, von Bessarabien bis Niederschlesien, geschaffen und könnten die Möglichkeiten einer virtuellen Vernetzung genutzt werden.<sup>17</sup>

Das Jahr 2003 war dann gekennzeichnet von einer schärfer werdenden Kontroverse innerhalb Deutschlands zwischen den Verfechtern eines in Berlin anzusiedelnden deutschen Zentrums

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<sup>12</sup> GLUZA, Zbigniew: Dokumentationszentrum der Vertreibungen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts. In: Karta. Zeitzeugnisse aus Ostmitteleuropa. Historische Zeitschrift 3 (2002), S. 1-3. Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 8, 62-65.

<sup>13</sup> Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 11, 68-73, hier 68f.

<sup>14</sup> Ebd., 69-73. Keine Antwort erfolgte seitens der Präsidenten Polens und der Tschechischen Republik.

<sup>15</sup> Ebd., 72. Es handelte sich um Dragan Ivanović, den außenpolitischen Berater des Staatspräsidiums.

<sup>16</sup> Siehe dazu die Übersichten in Flucht und Vertreibung in europäischer Perspektive. Hgg. Jürgen DANYEL und Philipp THER. Berlin 2003 (= Themenheft der Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 51 [2003], H. 1); TROEBST, Stefan: Unterwegs in Europa. Wissenschaftler plädieren dafür, die Vertreibung europäisch zu erforschen und zu erinnern. Eine kleine Übersicht zum Stand der Diskussion. In: Freitag Nr. 6 vom 30. Januar 2004, 15; und DERS.: Geschichte als politisiertes Szientifikum: Ein europäisches Netzwerk zur Erforschung ethnopolitisch motivierter Zwangsmigration. In: Zwangsmigration und Vertreibung – Europa im 20. Jahrhundert. Hg. Anja KRÜKE. Bonn 2006, 41-48.

<sup>17</sup> Dieter BINGEN, Stefan TROEBST, Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ: Erklärung zum internationalen wissenschaftlichen Kolloquium „Ein europäisches Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen. Historische Erfahrungen – Erinnerungspolitik – Zukunftskonzeptionen“, Darmstadt, 7. Dezember 2002 (URL [http://www.deutsches-poleninstitut.de/PressemitteilungenArchiv/Archiv\\_2002.html/pm\\_Erklaerung.kolloquium.html](http://www.deutsches-poleninstitut.de/PressemitteilungenArchiv/Archiv_2002.html/pm_Erklaerung.kolloquium.html)). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 12, 73-77, hier 76f. Zum Kolloquium vgl. den auch die Diskussion dokumentierenden Tagungsband: Vertreibungen europäisch erinnern? Historische Erfahrungen – Vergangenheitspolitik – Zukunftskonzeptionen. Hgg. Dieter BINGEN, Włodzimierz BORODZIEJ und Stefan TROEBST. Wiesbaden 2003.

und den Propagandisten einer europäischen Einrichtung.<sup>18</sup> Parallel zu dieser deutschen innenpolitischen Kontroverse entwickelte sich im Sommer des Jahres eine hitzige polnisch-deutsche Debatte<sup>19</sup>, die zunehmend die kooperativen Ansätze der Zeit davor überlagerte. Um dem entgegenzuwirken ging Markus Meckel am 14. Juli 2003 mit dem Appell "Gemeinsame Erinnerung als Schritt in die Zukunft. Für ein Europäisches Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen, Zwangsaussiedlungen und Deportationen – Geschichte in Europa gemeinsam aufarbeiten" an die europäische Öffentlichkeit<sup>20</sup> und erntete damit breite Zustimmung auch und gerade in Mittel- und Osteuropa.<sup>21</sup>

Die Verschlechterung der bilateralen Beziehungen im Zuge der sommerlichen Kontroverse vom 2003 um das BdV-Projekt veranlasste Berlin und Warschau zum Krisenmanagement. Im Juli 2003 begannen die Präsidenten Polens und Deutschlands, Aleksander Kwaśniewski und Johannes Rau, über eine gemeinsame Initiative zur Entschärfung der Situation nachzudenken, wie der polnische Staatspräsident in einem Interview Ende August enthüllte.<sup>22</sup> Das Ergebnis war die so genannte Danziger Erklärung beider Präsidenten vom 29. Oktober 2003, welche die Grundlage sowohl für die weiteren polnisch-deutschen Initiativen in diesem Politikfeld als auch für eine Europäisierung der bisherigen Institutionalisierungsiniciativen legte, und dies nicht zuletzt aufgrund ihrer schnörkellosen Diktion:

Im 20. Jahrhundert wurden in Europa viele Millionen Menschen Opfer von Umsiedlung, Flucht und Vertreibung. Einen besonderen Platz in der Erinnerung des polnischen und des deutschen Volkes nehmen Gräueltaten ein, die an Millionen von Menschen in Folge des vom menschenverachtenden nationalsozialistischen Unrechtsregimes entfesselten Krieges verübt worden sind. Dieses Martyrium hat Millionen von Menschenleben gekostet. Es hat das Leben vieler weiterer Menschen mit Schmerz, Verlust und Trauer überschattet. Es hat viele Gesellschaften grundlegend verändert, und es beeinflusst weiterhin die Beziehungen zwischen unseren Völkern. Umsiedlung, Flucht und Vertreibung sind Teil der Geschichte Europas und damit auch Teil seiner Identität. Angesichts dieser bitteren Vergangenheit müssen wir unsere Anstrengungen für eine bessere Zukunft vereinen. Wir müssen der Opfer gedenken und dafür sorgen, dass es die letzten waren. Jede Nation hat das selbstverständliche Recht, um sie zu trauern, und es ist unsere gemeinsame Verpflichtung, dafür zu sorgen, dass Erinnerung und Trauer nicht missbraucht werden, um Europa erneut zu spalten. Deshalb darf es heute keinen Raum mehr geben für Entschädigungsansprüche, für gegenseitige Schuldzuweisungen und für das Aufrechnen der Verbrechen und Verluste. Die Europäer sollten alle Fälle von Umsiedlung, Flucht und Vertreibung, die sich im 20. Jahrhundert in Europa ereignet haben,

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<sup>18</sup> Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 13, 77-79; Dok. Nr. 14, 79-82; Dok. Nr. 17, 85-87; Dok. Nr. 18, 87-91; und Dok. Nr. 21, 95-99.

<sup>19</sup> Siehe dazu LUTOMSKI, Paweł: The Debate about a Center against Expulsions: An Unexpected Crisis in German-Polish Relations? In: German Studies Review 27 (2004), 449-468, sowie die sowohl inhaltliche als auch quantitative Analyse bei ŁADA: Debata publiczna.

<sup>20</sup> Siehe den Text unter URL <http://www.markusmeckel.de/alteseite/pdf2/zentrum-vertreibung/auf-ruf-europaeisches-zentrum-gegen-vertreibungen.pdf>. Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 15, 82-84.

<sup>21</sup> Ebd., Dok. Nr. 16, 84f.

<sup>22</sup> Interview des Präsidenten der Republik Polen, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, in der Sendung "Sygnaly dnia" im ersten Programm des Radiosenders "Polskie Radio", 29. August 2003. Deutsche Übersetzung in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 19, 91-93, hier 92.

gemeinsam neu bewerten und dokumentieren, um ihre Ursachen, ihre historischen Hintergründe und ihre vielfältigen Konsequenzen für die Öffentlichkeit verständlich zu machen. All dies kann nur im Geist der Versöhnung und Freundschaft erreicht werden. Es wird uns umso fester miteinander verbinden. Wir rufen dazu auf, einen solchen aufrichtigen europäischen Dialog über diese wichtige Frage, die unsere Vergangenheit und unsere gemeinsame Zukunft betrifft, zu führen, und erwarten, dass hoch angesehene Persönlichkeiten, Politiker und Vertreter der Zivilgesellschaft ihren Beitrag dazu leisten werden. Sie sollten auch Empfehlungen formulieren, in welche Formen und Strukturen dieser Prozess einer europäischen Bestandsaufnahme und Dokumentation durchgeführt werden kann. Wir sind überzeugt davon, dass die Ergebnisse dieses europäischen Dialoges einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Vertiefung unseres gegenseitigen Verständnisses und zur Stärkung unserer Gemeinsamkeiten als Bürger Europas leisten werden.<sup>23</sup>

Zwar fand die Danziger Erklärung in Öffentlichkeit, Wissenschaftskommunität und Medien Polens und Deutschlands ein überwiegend positives Echo, so etwa seitens der bilateralen "Kopernikus-Gruppe"<sup>24</sup>, wie auch umgehend konkrete Schritte zur Umsetzung des Dialoggebots unternommen wurden<sup>25</sup>, doch gab es in beiden Staaten auch erheblichen innenpolitischen Gegenwind. Vor allem in Polen hatte die deutsch-polnische Debatte des Sommers in weiten Teilen der politischen Klasse eine Aversion bezüglich Thema und Begriff "Vertreibung" ausgelöst. Dies schlug sich am 27. November 2003 in einem auf Initiative des Abgeordneten Bogdan Klich von der liberalen Bürgerplattform (Platforma Obywatelska) gefassten Beschluss des Sejm zur Gründung eines "Zentrums des Gedenkens der Völker Europas" nieder. Diese paneuropäische Neugründung, die unter der Ägide des Europarates stehen sollte, sollte sich thematisch mit den Totalitarismen des 20. Jahrhunderts und ihren negativen Folgen in ihrer Gesamtheit – also nicht unter Fokussierung auf den Ausschnitt des Vertreibungsgeschehens der 1940er Jahre – befassen:

Der Sejm der Polnischen Republik erklärt, dass eine Institution, die an die tragischen Erfahrungen der Europäer im 20. Jahrhundert erinnert, einen internationalen Charakter haben sollte. Ihre Aufgabe sollte es sein, an die Gesamtheit der Verbrechen beider totalitärer Systeme zu erinnern – an die des kommunistischen und an die des Hitler-Regimes. Sie soll sowohl die Leiden der Völker wie auch den gesellschaftlichen Widerstand gegen die Totalitarismen, etwa die Geschichte der Widerstandsbewegungen und der demokratischen Opposition wissenschaftliche erforschen und dokumentieren. [...]. Der Sejm der Polnischen Republik plädiert für die Schirmherrschaft eines solchen Zentrums des Gedenkens der Völker Europas durch den Europarat.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Pressemitteilung des Bundespräsidialamts vom 29. Oktober 2003: Bundespräsident Johannes Rau und der Präsident der Republik Polen, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, haben heute in Danzig folgende gemeinsame Erklärung abgegeben (<http://www.bundestkanzlerin.de/Content/DE/Artikel/2005/12/Anlagen/danzigererklarung927524-property=publicationFile.pdf>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 22, 99f.

<sup>24</sup> Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 25, 107-110.

<sup>25</sup> Siehe dazu meinen eigenen Bericht über ein polnisch-deutsch-tschechisches Treffen in Warschau am 16. November 2003 zur Vorbereitung einer (nicht stattgefundenen) internationalen Konferenz zum Thema "Displaced, Forced to Escape and Expelled Persons in Twentieth Century Europa" in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 23, 100-105.

<sup>26</sup> Uchwała. Hier zit. nach Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 24, 106.

In seiner Eigenschaft als Mitglied der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarats hatte Klich bereits am 30. September 2003 gemeinsam mit Abgeordneten aus Polen, Litauen, Lettland, der Slowakei, der Ukraine, Liechtensteins und Großbritanniens einen ähnlichen Antrag auch in diesem Gremium eingebracht.<sup>27</sup>

## **Die Gründung des Europäischen Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität 2004-2005**

Die Kontroverse in den deutschen und polnischen Medien über das "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" vom Sommer 2003 hatte aber nicht nur die Staatspräsidenten und Parlamente alarmiert, sondern auch die Regierungen in Berlin und Warschau bewogen, eine nachhaltige Entschärfung des im öffentlichen Vertreibungsdiskurs enthaltenen bilateralen Konfliktpotentials zu unternehmen. Motor dabei war unverkennbar die grün-rote Regierung in Berlin, wobei die Initiative vom sozialdemokratischen Regierungspartner ausging, der mit Gerhard Schröder zugleich den Bundeskanzler stellte und mit dem Abgeordneten Meckel über einen in Polen ausgezeichnet vernetzten Sachkenner verfügte. Entsprechend fungierte die Historische Kommission des SPD-Parteivorstands als Braintrust in der Angelegenheit.<sup>28</sup> Parteiintern wurde vereinbart, die Angelegenheit der im Kanzleramt angesiedelten und parteilosen Kulturstaatsministerin Christina Weiss zu übertragen. Dies zum einen deshalb, weil somit das von dem Grünen Joschka Fischer geführte und als übervorsichtig geltende Auswärtige Amt in dieser Sache marginalisiert werden konnte, und zum anderen, da dadurch das international als heikel eingestufte Thema von der konflikträchtigen Ebene der „großen Politik“ auf diejenige der als weniger problematisch empfundenen Kulturbeziehungen verlagert wurde. Hinzu kam, dass Weiss über einen guten Draht zu ihrem polnischen Amtskollegen Waldemar Dąbrowski verfügte, mit dem sie im August 2003 eine mehrtätige gemeinsame Reise entlang der Oder und der Neisse unternahm. Bereits am 16. September teilte die Kulturstaatsministerin in einer Rede in Leipzig die Eckpunkte der deutschen Regierungsinitiative mit:

[Die deutsche Historikerin] Ute Frevert hat in einem Beitrag zur Diskussion um das geplante ‚Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen‘ gemeinsame Orte der Erinnerung im neuen Europa angeregt. Dieser Gedanke ist nicht neu. Doch er verdient die größte Aufmerksamkeit. Noch ist es nicht selbstverständlich, dass Deutsche und Tschechen, Litauer und Polen, Rumänen und Ungarn sich ihrer Geschichte gemeinsam stellen. [...] Uns geht es beim ‚Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen‘ nicht um einen Ort, sondern um einen Prozeß. Einen Prozeß der Verständigung, der Forschung und der Aufarbeitung. Ich plane deshalb, ein internationales Netzwerk zu etablieren, in dem Wissenschaftler, Politiker und Betroffene miteinander in Kontakt treten können. Die europäische Einigung ist ohne die Aufarbeitung von Flucht

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<sup>27</sup> Parliamentary Assembly/Assemblée parlementaire. Council of Europe/Conseil d'Europe: Establishment of the Centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe, Doc. 9945, 30 September 2003, Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Klich and others (URL [http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ListDoc\(SQL\).asp?Session=2003-4](http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ListDoc(SQL).asp?Session=2003-4)). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 20, 93-95.

<sup>28</sup> Im Laufe des Septembers 2003 erarbeitete dieses Gremium konzeptionelle Vorschläge mit den Schwerpunkten auf Europäisierung und Netzwerkstruktur. Siehe dazu die Stellungnahme der Historischen Kommission beim Parteivorstand der SPD zur Debatte über ein Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen [23.10.2003] (<http://archiv.spd.de/servlet/PB/menu/1011224/1029804.html>).



und Vertreibung im 20. Jahrhundert unvollkommen. Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland wird daher bei den obersten Gremien der Europäischen Union eine entsprechende Initiative einbringen.<sup>29</sup>

Und in einem Beitrag für die Wochenzeitung *Die Zeit* vom 2. Oktober präzisierte die Ministerin das Vorhaben inhaltlich wie folgt:

Die Chance der Versöhnung mit dem Osten ist gegeben, wenn es gelingt, mit unseren Nachbarn gemeinsam die Lücken in der Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts zu schließen, wenn es möglich wird, nach der Öffnung der Archive die gemeinsame Forschung voranzubringen. Aus diesem Grund unterstütze ich die Forderung des Bundestages nach einem Europäischen Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen. Ich verstehe darunter einen starken Verbund dezentraler Werkstätten der Erinnerung. Er sollte nicht nur auf Flucht und Vertreibung im 20. Jahrhundert spezialisiert bleiben, sondern die Erinnerung an das nationalsozialistische Regime und die kommunistischen Diktaturen ebenso beinhalten wie die Suche nach den historischen Wurzeln des Nationalstaates und der Wahnvorstellung von seiner ethnischen Homogenität. Mir geht es nicht um ein Museum oder eine Erinnerungsstätte, nicht um einen Ort der Ab- und Aufrechnung. Mir geht es vor allem um eine wirksame historische Aufklärung.<sup>30</sup>

Der näher rückende Termin der EU-Osterweiterung durch acht Staaten Ostmitteleuropas am 1. Mai 2004 sorgte im Frühjahr 2004 für positiven Druck auf das Netzwerkprojekt mit dem deutsch-polnischen Tandem als Lokomotive. In Zuge intensiver Reise- und Gesprächsdiplomatie konnte Kulturstaatsministerin Weiss die polnische Seite dazu bewegen, den 1991 gegründeten multilateralen Rahmen der Visegrád-Staatengruppe für den Netzwerkplan zu instrumentalisieren. Und in der Tat gelang es Warschau, Budapest und Bratislava dafür zu gewinnen. Dass selbst Prag zur Mitarbeit bereit war, ging wohl auf die Erfüllung der Bedingung zurück, dass neben Deutschland auch Österreich in die neue Konstruktion einzubinden sei. Im März kamen die sechs Kulturminister überein, für den April 2004 ein erstes Treffen im neu gezeimerten "Visegrád + 2"-Rahmen in Warschau anzusetzen

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<sup>29</sup> WEISS, Christina: Europa als kultureller Raum. Kulturpolitische Perspektiven der EU-Osterweiterung. In: Osteuropa 53 (2003), 1595-1604, hier 1603. Vgl. auch FREVERT, Ute: Die Rückkehr der Opfer im Land der Täter. Über den Erinnerungsboom und die Chancen der Historisierung. In: Neue Zürcher Zeitung vom 30./31. August 2003.

<sup>30</sup> WEISS, Christina: Niemand will vergessen. Aber nur ein Netz von Geschichtswerkstätten in ganz Europa dient der historischen Aufklärung. In: Die Zeit Nr. 41 vom 2. Oktober 2003 (<http://www.zeit.de/2003/41/Vertriebene?page=all>). Christina Weiss' Amtsleiter Knut Nevermann konkretisierte das Vorhaben am 11. Dezember 2003 weiter: "Ich glaube, wir brauchen kein Zentrum, wir brauchen es erst recht nicht in Berlin. Wir brauchen ein Netzwerk mit unseren europäischen Kollegen in der Europäischen Union. Und ich glaube, wenn wir dieses aufbauen könnten und dieses mit einer Geschäftsstelle oder wie auch immer versehen, mit einem kleinen Zentrum versehen können, in dem diese Arbeiten koordiniert werden, in dem gemeinsame Veranstaltungen geplant werden, dann wären wir einen erheblichen Schritt weiter." Vgl. NEVERMANN, Knut: Zur Haltung der Bundesregierung. In: Zwangsmigration in Europa. Zur wissenschaftlichen und politischen Auseinandersetzung um die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten. Hgg. Bernd FAULENBACH und Andreas HELLE. Essen 2005, S. 63-68. Nevermann äußerte sich auf dem Forum der Historischen Kommission des SPD-Parteivorstands „Vertreibungen im 20. Jahrhundert. Geschehen und Vergegenwärtigung“, das am 11. Dezember 2003 in Berlin stattfand. Siehe auch dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 26, 110-116, hier 116.

und dabei die beiden Themen “Political and ethnic conflicts, forced migrations and expulsions seen through our cultural heritage“ und “Cultural cooperation“ zu besprechen.<sup>31</sup>

Deutscherseits erfolgte eine weitere Weichenstellung mittels einer Tagung der SPD-nahen Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Mitte März 2004, welchen den Zuschnitt der Neugründung in einem programmatischen Dokument, der “Bonner Erklärung, Europäisches Netzwerk: Zwangsmigration und Vertreibungen im 20. Jahrhundert“, umriss.<sup>32</sup> Dieses Dokument wurde dann von der deutschen Seite in die Verhandlungen mit den ostmitteleuropäischen Partnern eingebracht, obwohl es seitens des maßgeblichen polnischen Experten und Unterhändlers bereits im Vorfeld seiner thematischen Schwerpunktsetzung auf das Vertreibungsgeschehen wegen auf eindeutige Ablehnung gestossen war.<sup>33</sup>

Die Kompliziertheit der Konstruktion der “Visegrád + 2“-Kulturministergespräche über ein europäisches Netzwerk zur Beschäftigung mit Zwangsmigration und damit deren geringe Praktikabilität erwiesen sich bereits beim erste Treffen der Sechs am 22. und 23. April 2004 im Warschauer Königsschloß. Schon die ebenso umständliche wie kryptische Benennung der Zusammenkunft deutete auf einen mühsamen politischen Formelkompromiß hin: “Spotkanie Ministrów Kultury: For Mutual Understanding“. Der erste, polnischsprachige Teil des Titel – “Treffen der Kulturminister“ – enthielt keinen Hinweis auf die “Visegrád + 2“-Konstruktion, wohingegen der zweite, englischsprachige Titelteil – “Für gegenseitiges Verständnis“ – keinen Aufschluß über die beiden auf der Tagesordnung stehenden Themen Zwangsmigration und Kulturerbe gab. Das Treffen selbst bestand aus vier Teilen: Den Auftakt bildete eine Eröffnungsrunde, in welcher die Kulturminister Polens, Deutschland und der Slowakei sowie Vertreter der Kulturminister der Tschechischen Republik, Ungarns und Österreichs kurze Statements abgaben. Dem schloß sich eine Diskussionsrunde der Minister und ihrer Vertreter an, an der sich auch die von ihnen mitgebrachten Experten beteiligten, gefolgt von einer Pressekonferenz der Minister und ihrer Vertreter sowie – am nächsten Tag – einer Expertenrunde unter Beteiligung von Beamten. Vor allem in dieser letztgenannten Runde prallten die divergierenden thematischen Interessen von Polen und Deutschen unvermittelt aufeinander: Die polnische Seite war strikt gegen jegliche inhaltliche Fokussierung auf Flucht und Vertreibung, sondern optierte für breite historische Kontextualisierung, sprich: für die Einbeziehung der totalitären Regime von Nationalsozialismus und Stalinismus. Und die deutsche Seite in ihrer Absicht, das BdV-Projekt eines ”Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen“ in Berlin zu konterkarieren, hielt an einer Ausrichtung des geplanten Netzwerks auf Zwangsmigrationsprozesse samt einschlägiger Bezeichnung fest. Hinzu kam das deutliche Bestreben der tschechischen Seite, jegliche Art von Institutionalisierung zu verhindern sowie die gesamte Unternehmung auf das Thema kultureller Zusammenarbeit, nicht auf Zwangsmigration, auszurichten. Im Ergebnis konnte man sich zwar auf einen Termin für ein Folgetreffen, nicht hingegen auf eine Benennung und folglich auch nicht auf ein

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<sup>31</sup> Vgl. dazu “Agenda. For Mutual Cooperation. Meeting of the ministers of culture. Warsaw 22-23 April 2004“. In: Vertreibungsdiskurs, 126f., Fußnote 4.

<sup>32</sup> Bonner Erklärung ”Europäisches Netzwerk: Zwangsmigrationen und Vertreibungen im 20. Jahrhundert“. Bonn, 13. März 2004 (<http://library.fes.de/history/boll-eu-netzwerk-bonner.pdf> ). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 28, 120-122. Vgl. auch den Tagungsband Zwangsmigration und Vertreibung.

<sup>33</sup> MACHCEWICZ, Paweł: Das Netzwerk aus polnischer Sicht. Ebd., 147-150. Vgl. auch dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 27, 117-120. – Der Zeithistoriker Machcewicz, der im Zeitraum 2000-2005 eine leitende Funktion in der polnischen Regierungsbehörde Institut des Nationalen Gedenkens (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej) inne hatte, hat nach seiner Rückkehr an die Polnische Akademie der Wissenschaften seine negative Einstellung zum Netzwerk revidiert. Vgl. MACHCEWICZ, Paweł: Polityka historyczna to nic nowego [Geschichtspolitik ist nichts Neues]. In: Gazeta Wyborcza vom 20. April 2006, 20.

Schlusskommuniqué einigen – zu groß waren weiterhin die Meinungsverschiedenheiten über Namensgebung und Zuschnitt der geplanten Neugründung.<sup>34</sup>

Der polnische Gastgeber, der Minister für Kultur und Nationales Erbe, Waldemar Dąbrowski, sowie der den tschechischen Kulturminister Pavel Dostál vertretende Staatssekretär Zdeněk Novák sprachen in der Pressekonferenz am 22. April vom "Netzwerk des europäischen Gedenkens und der Verantwortung" bzw. vom "Netz des Gedenkens und der Verantwortung in Mitteleuropa", ihre deutsche Kollegin hingegen vom "Netzwerk zu Zwangsmigrationen im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts".<sup>35</sup> Lediglich der dezentrale Charakter war unstrittig, desgleichen dass das Netzwerk "Forschungs- und Gedenkstätten, Museen, Archive und Denkmäler in ganz Europa, die sich mit Vertreibung und Totalitarismus-Forschung unter europäischen zukunftsorientierten Aspekten auseinandersetzen, miteinander verbinden" sollte, wie es in einem informellen polnischen Zwischenbericht hieß.<sup>36</sup> Seitens der Bundesregierung wurden diese vagen Übereinkünfte als "wegweisend"<sup>37</sup>, das Kulturministertreffen von Ministerin Weiss gar als "unbeschreibliche Erfahrung" bezeichnet<sup>38</sup>, und selbst die Initiatoren des "Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen" begrüßten die Vereinbarung.<sup>39</sup> Auffallend gering war indes das Medienecho in Polen.<sup>40</sup>

Zwar waren die Interessengegensätze der "Visegrád + 2"-Partner beim ersten Treffen Ende April 2004 offen zutage getreten – vor allem diejenigen zwischen Polen und Deutschland sowie zwischen der Tschechischen Republik und allen anderen –, doch zeichnete sich bereits vor dem zweiten Treffen, an dem Experten und Beamte teilnahmen und das am 12. und 13. Juli 2004 ebenfalls in Warschau stattfand, ein Kompromiß zumindest in der Namensfrage in der Form "Europäisches Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität" ab. Überdies erwies sich nun, dass das tschechische Vorhaben, die gesamte Unternehmung mittels eines Vetos zu stoppen, an einer neuen polnisch-deutschen Interessenkongruenz scheiterte. Denn die Vertreter beider Länder konnten sich bei diesem zweiten Treffen relativ rasch auf einen thematischen Zuschnitt einigen, der das Vertreibungsgeschehen des 20. Jahrhunderts in den Kontext von Weltkriegen

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<sup>34</sup> Siehe dazu meinen eigenen Bericht über das Treffen der Kulturminister Polens, Deutschlands, der Tschechischen Republik, der Slowakei, Ungarns und Österreichs zum Thema „For Mutual Understanding“ in Warschau am 22. und 23. April 2004 in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 29, 122-139.

<sup>35</sup> Ebd., 130f. – Der slowakische Kulturminister Rudolf Chmel regte lediglich die Einrichtung einer Bibliothek an (ebd., 131), wohingegen der den ungarischen Kulturminister István Hiller vertretende Staatssekretär Lajos Vass und der in Vertretung von Kulturministerin Elisabeth Gehrler anwesende österreichische Botschafter in Polen, Georg Weiss, keine Äußerung zum organisatorischen Rahmen abgaben.

<sup>36</sup> Bericht des vom polnischen Kulturministerium beauftragten Moderators Edward Wąsiewicz über das Warschauer Kulturminister- und Expertentreffen vom April 2004, 7. Mai 2004. In: Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 34, 145-147, hier 145.

<sup>37</sup> Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung. Pressemitteilung Nr. 199: Konferenz zum Thema Vertreibung: Kulturstaatsministerin Weiss zieht positive Bilanz“, 23. April 2004 (<http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/pressemitteilung/42/641242/multi.htm>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 30, 140f., hier 140.

<sup>38</sup> Interview mit Kulturstaatsministerin Christina Weiss in der "Tageszeitung" (taz) vom 4. Mai 2004 (<http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/interview/38/647138/multi.htm>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 33, 144f., hier 144.

<sup>39</sup> Ebd., Dok. Nr. 32, 142f.

<sup>40</sup> Eine Ausnahme bildete die liberale Tageszeitung *Rzeczpospolita*. Vgl. ZACHOWICZ, Piotr: Opowiadziec Europejczykom historie. Sześć państw jednym głosem o wypędzeniach [Den Europäern Geschichte erzählen. Sechs Staaten mit einer Stimme zu Vertreibungen]. In: *Rzeczpospolita* Nr. 96 vom 23. April 2004, A7. In derselben Ausgabe findet sich ein Interview mit Ministerin Weiss: Gość "Rzeczpospolitej": Sieć zamiast centrum. Christina Weiss, minister kultury Niemiec [Gast der Zeitung "Rzeczpospolita": Netz statt Zentrum. Christina Weiss, Kulturministerin Deutschlands]. Ebd., A2.

und Kaltem Krieg einordnete und dem auch die ungarischen und slowakischen Experten zustimmten.<sup>41</sup> Überdies war das Wort "Solidarität" in der Bezeichnung der Neugründung ein Zugeständnis an die polnische Seite, das wegen seines Bezuges zur Gewerkschaft *Solidarność* als besonders symbolträchtig gewertet wurde. Schließlich spielte eine nicht unbeträchtliche Rolle, dass die Verhandlungsführung polnischerseits mittlerweile in den Händen des pragmatischen Geschichtspolitikers und Zeithistorikers Andrzej Przewoźnik lag.<sup>42</sup> Ein Kommuniqué des Expertentreffens machte den Kulturministern daher erste konkrete Vorschläge zu thematischem Zuschnitt, Struktur und Funktionsweise des zu gründenden Netzwerks.<sup>43</sup>

Nach intensiven deutsch-polnischen Abstimmungen fand dann am 22. November 2004 in Krakau das dritte und letzte Expertentreffen statt, welches unter Beteiligung Polens, Deutschlands und Ungarns sowie mit Zustimmung der Slowakei den Entwurf einer Gründungsvereinbarung samt Organigramm finalisierte.<sup>44</sup> Dass das Fehlen tschechischer und österreichischer Vertreter dabei kein Zufall war, wurde im Januar 2005 deutlich: Sowohl der tschechische Kulturminister Dostál als auch seine österreichische Kollegin Elisabeth Gehrler stiegen förmlich aus dem "Visegrád + 2"-Rahmen aus und lehnten das deutsch-polnische Netzwerkprojekt ab.<sup>45</sup>

Die förmliche Ankündigung der Kulturminister Deutschlands, Polens, der Slowakei und Ungarns, "das Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity) gründen zu wollen", erfolgte am 2. Februar 2005 in Warschau.<sup>46</sup> Die Präambel und die zentralen Bestimmungen dieser Erklärung lauten:

Die Kulturminister Deutschlands, Polens, der Slowakei und Ungarns – eingedenk der Geschichte Europas im 20. Jahrhundert, die in hohem Maße durch Kriege und totalitäre Diktaturen geprägt war, welche eine ungeheuere Anzahl Opfer forderten und unermessliches Leid über die Menschen brachten, auf der Grundlage der seit 1945 geschlossenen völkerrechtlichen bi- und multilateralen Verträge, politischen Vereinbarungen und Abkommen, die als historische Tatsachen respektiert werden,

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<sup>41</sup> Siehe meinen eigenen Bericht über dieses Warschauer Treffen in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 35, 147-161. Allerdings veranlasste der Ausstieg der Tschechischen Republik aus dem Netzwerkprojekt Ungarn dazu, das Thema von der Tagesordnung eines für den 5. Oktober 2004 geplanten Kulturministertreffens der Visegrád-Staatengruppe abzusetzen: "The Visegrád cooperation is the main dish", so der Vertreter des ungarischen Ministers für das Nationale Kulturerbe, "the network only the desert" (ebd., 155).

<sup>42</sup> Przewoźnik ist Sekretär des dem polnischen Ministerium für Kultur und Nationales Erbe unterstelltem Rates zum Schutz des Gedenkens an Kampf und Martyrium (Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa), einer 1947 gegründeten Regierungsbehörde unter der Leitung des ehemaligen Außenministers Władysław Bartoszewski. Zu Przewoźniks programmatischen Vorstellungen bezüglich des Netzwerks siehe sein Interview mit dem ersten Programm von "Polskie Radio" vom August 2005 (Rusza Europejska Sieć Pamięć i Solidarność [Start des Europäischen Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität]. Polskie Radio Jedyńka, 24. 08. 2005 [<http://www.polskieradio.pl/jedynka/news.aspx?iID=5026&c=3>]).

<sup>43</sup> Zum Text des Kommuniqués vom 13. Juli 2004 siehe Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 36, 161f.

<sup>44</sup> Siehe dazu meinen eigenen Bericht über das Krakauer Treffen in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 39, 169-185.

<sup>45</sup> KPS: Prag gegen Vertriebenenprojekt. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 22 vom 27. Januar 2005, 6; MAURER, Manfred: Netzwerk gegen Vertreibung: Auch Österreich nicht dabei. In: Neues Volksblatt [Wien] vom 1. Februar 2005 ([http://www.volksblatt.at/25NV\\_1161920.stm](http://www.volksblatt.at/25NV_1161920.stm)).

<sup>46</sup> Vgl. dazu DIETRICH, Stefan: In den Mühlen der Geschichtsdiplomatie. In: Warschau wird das "Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität" gegründet. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 27 vom 2. Februar 2005, 5; WEFING, Heinrich: Christina Weiss: Hartnäckig. Ebd., 10; und SCHULLER, Konrad: Dialogisch und gleichgewichtig. Die Gründung des "Europäischen Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität". Ebd., Nr. 28 vom 3. Februar 2005, 5.

in Anerkennung des politischen Wandels in Europa seit 1989, insbesondere der am 1. Mai 2004 vollzogenen Erweiterung der Europäischen Union, die den zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen der beteiligten Länder einen neuen Charakter verliehen hat,

in dem Wunsch eine gemeinsame, ausschließlich vom europäischen Geist der Versöhnung getragene Analyse, Dokumentation und Verbreitung der Vergangenheit zu unterstützen, die Geschichte der Völker Europas miteinander zu verbinden, zur Entwicklung einer europäischen Erinnerungskultur beizutragen und damit die freundschaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen den beteiligten Staaten zu festigen, -

erklären, das Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity) gründen zu wollen. Die an der Gründung dieses Netzwerks beteiligten Länder werden offen sein für die Aufnahme weiterer Länder.

#### 1. Gegenstand des Netzwerks

Gegenstand des Netzwerks ist die Analyse, Dokumentation und Verbreitung der Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, eines Jahrhunderts der Kriege, der totalitären Diktaturen und der Leiden der Zivilbevölkerung - als Opfer von Kriegen, Unterdrückung, Eroberung, Zwangsmigrationen sowie als Opfer von nationalistischen, rassistischen und ideologisch motivierten Repressionen.

#### 2. Aufgaben des Netzwerks

Aufgaben des Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität sind:

a.) die Verbindung der in den einzelnen Ländern bereits bestehenden Initiativen sowie die Organisation der Zusammenarbeit zwischen öffentlichen, staatlichen und Außenregierungsinstitutionen, Forschungseinrichtungen und Orten der Erinnerung;

b.) die Förderung, Finanzierung und Durchführung gemeinsamer Forschungs- und Bildungsprojekte sowie von Konferenzen, Ausstellungen, Veröffentlichungen und weiteren einschlägigen Aktivitäten.

#### 3. Struktur des Netzwerkes

Für die Koordinierung des Europäischen Netzwerkes Erinnerung und Solidarität soll ein Sekretariat mit Sitz in Warschau eingerichtet werden. Das Sekretariat soll von einem Direktor / einer Direktorin geleitet werden.

Zur Unterstützung der Arbeit des Sekretariats wird ein Lenkungsausschuss (Steering Committee) eingerichtet, dem jeweils ein von den beteiligten Ländern benannter Koordinator und der Direktor des Sekretariats angehören sollen. Ferner sollen ein Wissenschaftlicher Beirat (Advisory Council) sowie ein Kuratorium (Board) geschaffen werden, das aus Persönlichkeiten des öffentlichen Lebens gebildet wird.

#### 4. Zusammenarbeit mit europäischen Institutionen

Das Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität strebt eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit der Europäischen Union, dem Europarat und der OSZE an und wird sich auch um eine gemeinsame Beantragung von EU-Finanzierungen bemühen.

5. Die Länder, die sich an der Gründung des Netzwerkes beteiligen, erklären ihre Absicht, eine Vereinbarung zu treffen, die über die Aufgaben und die finanziellen Aspekte des Netzwerkes konkrete Regelungen beinhalten wird.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Absichtserklärung über die Gründung des "Europäischen Netzwerkes Erinnerung und Solidarität", Warschau, 2. Februar 2005 (<http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/artikel/33/782733/multi.htm>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 45, 216-218.

Dass es sich dabei noch immer um eine bloße Absichtserklärung, nicht hingegen bereits um eine Vollzugsmeldung handelte, hatte seinen Grund in juristischen Problemen. Denn den beteiligten Regierungen gelang es nicht, eine gemeinsame Rechtsform für die Neugründung zu finden, so dass hilfs- und übergangsweise am 23. August 2004 in Warschau eine private Stiftung nach polnischem Recht eingerichtet wurde. Erst als deren vierseitig zusammengesetzter Stiftungsrat sich am 7. September 2004 in der polnischen Hauptstadt mit dem besagten Regierungsbeamten Przewoźnik an der Spitze konstituiert hatte, war das Netzwerk formell gegründet.<sup>48</sup> Zugleich beschloß der Stiftungsrat die Förderung einer Reihe erster Projekte der Netzwerkpartner im finanziellen Rahmen des Netzwerks.<sup>49</sup> Und am 9. September hielt Kulturstaatsministerin Weiss in Berlin eine Pressekonferenz ab, in welcher sie diese Projektliste präsentiert.<sup>50</sup>

Der Ausgang der Bundestagswahl mit dem Ende von Rot-Grün wenige Tage später und die Bildung einer großen Koalition unter der CDU-Politikerin Angela Merkel mit den Sozialdemokraten als Juniorpartner veränderten die politischen Rahmenbedingungen für das Netzwerkprojekt ebenso wie der Ausgang der Parlaments- und Präsidentschaftswahlen in Polen im selben Herbst mit dem Machtwechsel von den Postkommunisten zu den Nationalkonservativen. Allerdings haben die neuen Regierungen in beiden Staaten in der Phase ihrer Etablierung zunächst am Kurs ihrer Vorgänger festgehalten. So wurde im Koalitionsvertrag von CDU/CSU und SPD vom 11. November 2005 das Netzwerk nicht nur explizit erwähnt – neben der Absicht, „im Geiste der Versöhnung auch in Berlin ein sichtbares Zeichen [zu] setzen“ -, sondern auch das Vorhaben einer Netzwerkserweiterung über die vier Gründungsstaaten hinaus.<sup>51</sup> Und der weiter amtierende polnische Netzwerkverantwortliche Przewoźnik hat am 23. November 2005 in einem Interview mit der Tageszeitung *Die Welt* ausführlich die Erwartungen und Hoffnungen benannt, welche die neue Führung in Warschau an diese Neugründung knüpft.<sup>52</sup> Ähnlich haben sich im Winter 2005/06 deutscherseits auch Bundeskanzlerin Merkel, der neue, von der CDU gestellte Kulturstaatsminister Bernd Neumann sowie dessen Amtsleiter Hermann Schäfer geäußert.<sup>53</sup> Mit anderen Worten: Es schien zunächst so, als würde die deutsch-polnische Netzwerksinitiative von 2004 auch unter den neuen politischen Koalitionen eine Fortsetzung finden.

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<sup>48</sup> Siehe dazu die Aufstellung „Europäisches Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität, 07. 09. 2005“ in Vertreibungsdiskurs, 224-227, hier 224, Fußnote 1

<sup>49</sup> Ebd., 225-227.

<sup>50</sup> Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung. Pressemitteilung Nr. 366: Kulturstaatsministerin Weiss begrüßt Vereinbarung von Projekten des „Europäischen Netzwerks Erinnerung und Solidarität“, 9. September 2005 (<http://archiv.bundesregierung.de/bpaexport/pressemitteilung/58/886458/multi.htm>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 49, 224-227.

<sup>51</sup> „Gemeinsam für Deutschland. Mit Mut und Menschlichkeit“. Koalitionsvertrag von CDU, CSU und SPD. Berlin, 11. November 2003, Kapitel VII, Abschnitt (<http://www.spd.de/servlet/PB/show/-1589444/111105Koalitionsvertrag.pdf>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 51, 228.

<sup>52</sup> „Vertreibung nicht aus dem Kontext reißen“. Das Europäische Netzwerk nimmt Gestalt an: Ein Gespräch mit dem Vorsitzenden des Stiftungsrats, Andrzej Przewoźnik. In: *Die Welt* vom 23. November 2005 (URL <http://www.welt.de/data/2005/11/23/807419.html>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 52, 229-231.

<sup>53</sup> Ebd., Dok. Nr. 53, 231f.; Dok. Nr. 54, 232-234; und Dok. Nr. 55, 234-239.

## Das Scheitern des Parallelprojekts des Europarats

Im Vorfeld der EU-Osterweiterung entfaltete die bislang bilateral geführte deutsch-polnische Debatte samt Institutionalisierungsinitiative insofern eine neue Dynamik, als nun nicht nur das von Berlin gemeinsam mit Warschau ersonnene Design der so genannten "Visegrád + 2"-Gespräche der Kulturminister Polens, der Tschechischen Republik, Ungarn, der Slowakei, Deutschlands und Österreichs zur Bildung eines wie auch immer zu benennenden Netzwerks mit Zwangsmigration befasster europäischer Institutionen konkrete Gestalt annahm, sondern sich auch die polnische Europaratsinitiative vom Herbst 2003 materialisierte. Allerdings war ließ sich das Projekt des Komitees für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Bevölkerung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarats ähnlich widersprüchlich an wie der als Gegenentwurf zum BdV-Projekt eines "Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen" in Berlin gedachte deutsch-polnische Netzwerkplan. Initiiert durch den besagten Antrag des polnischen Sejm-Abgeordneten Klich vom September 2003 auf Gründung eines thematisch breit angelegten "Zentrums des Gedenkens der Nationen Europas", nahm diese Idee im Verlaufe des Jahres 2004 europaratsintern insofern eine Wendung, als der vom Komitee in dieser Angelegenheit nominierte Berichterstatter, das Mitglied der schwedische Linkspartei (Vänsterpartiet) Mats Einarsson, die Klichsche Absicht auf Erweiterung des zeitgeschichtlichen Horizonts mittels inhaltlicher Reduktion auf den Themenbereich der Zwangsmigration zurücknahm. Klichs Intention, "the general character of criminal activities of totalitarian regimes, unvaryingly Nazi and Communist", zum Schwerpunkt zu machen<sup>54</sup>, wurde von Einarsson thematisch auf "forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in the 20th century" eingeeengt<sup>55</sup> – in enger Abstimmung mit dem britischen Komiteevorsitzenden John Wilkinson und dem Politischen Direktorat des Europarats.

Die dergestalt in ihr Gegenteil verkehrte polnische Europaratsinitiative, die noch Ende November 2003 die Unterstützung der Mehrheit im polnischen Sejm gefunden hatte, stieß daher in Polen selbst bald auf Indifferenz, ja Widerstand. In einer Expertenanhörung des Komitees am 28. April 2004 stellte Einarsson den überarbeiteten Entwurf eines Memorandums "Establishment of the Centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe" vor, welcher 2005 der Parlamentarischen Versammlung zur Entschließung vorgelegt werden sollte.<sup>56</sup> Zuvor fand am 4. November 2004 in Genf ein Seminar des Komitees zum Thema statt, an welchen Klich selbst nicht teilnahm. Hier befürwortete der den postkommunistischen Sozialisten angehörende Sejm-Abgeordnete Tadeusz Iwiński die thematische Volte des Berichterstatters Einarsson ebenso wie dies Klichs lettischer Mit Antragsteller, der russophone Menschenrechtsaktivist Boris Cilevičs, tat.<sup>57</sup> Deutlich wurde,

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<sup>54</sup> Vertreibungsdiskurs, 93.

<sup>55</sup> Ebd., 169, 179 und 186.

<sup>56</sup> Parliamentary Assembly/Assemblée parlementaire. Council of Europe/Conseil d'Europe. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Populations: Establishment of the Centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Rapporteur Mr Mats Einarsson, Sweden, Group of the Unified European Left (AS/Mig (2004) 18 rev. 14 April 2004. Or. Fr. Zu der Anhörung siehe meinen eigenen Bericht in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 31, 141f. Zum neuerlich revidierten Entwurfstext in der Fassung vom 20. Dezember 2004 vgl. ebd., Dok. Nr. 40, 186-209, sowie zur aktuellen Endfassung Parliamentary Assembly/Assemblée parlementaire. Council of Europe/Conseil d'Europe. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population: Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing. Report. Rapporteur: Mr Mats Einarsson, Sweden, Group of the Unified European Left. Doc. 10925rev. 2. 3 October 2006 (<http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/Working-Docs/Doc06/EDOC10925.htm>).

<sup>57</sup> Siehe dazu meinen eigenen Bericht über das Genfer "Seminar on the Establishment of the Centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe" in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 38, 164-

dass sowohl das Komitee wie die Politische Direktion des Europarats großes Interesse daran hatten, das Thema Zwangsmigration ganz oben auf die Agenda des Dritten Gipfeltreffens der Staats- und Regierungschefs des Europarats im Mai 2005 in Warschau zu setzen. Entsprechend weit fortgeschritten waren bereits die internen Straßburger Planungen zur Gründung des besagten Zentrums.<sup>58</sup>

Am 20. Dezember 2004 legte das Komitee Einarssons Bericht in Endfassung vor, nun bereits mit neuer Überschrift. Denn das Dokument enthielt den Vorschlag, die Parlamentarische Versammlung des Europarats möge auf ihrer für Januar 2005 angesetzten Sitzungswoche dem Ministerkomitee die Gründung eines “European Remembrance Centre for Victims of Forced Populations Movements and Ethnic Cleansing“, also nicht länger eines neutral bezeichneten “Centre for European Nations’ Remembrance“, empfehlen. Ein dem Bericht vorangestellter Resolutionsentwurf sah wie folgt aus:

#### I. Draft Recommendation

1. During the recent history of Europe, millions of people have been forcibly expelled, transferred or exchanged by reason of their ethnicity, as a result of the delimitation of new state borders or to solve the question of ethnic minorities or, again, on the basis of deliberate policies of ethnic cleansing. Mass deportations have been used to punish some national, ethnic or social groups for their imputed political opinion and hundreds of thousands of people have felt compelled to leave their homeland for fear of being persecuted by oppressive regimes or within new state borders.

2. In the twentieth century hardly any European region has been exempted from this tragedy: in Central and Eastern Europe, massive migration movements took place as a result of treaties concluded during or in the aftermath of the Second World War which produced the forced displacement of Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Slovaks, Czechs and Romanians; in Germany and other territories under Nazi influence, Jews and Roma but also Russians, Poles, Ukrainians and others were deported to concentration and death camps and the former were victims of genocide. In the countries of the former Soviet Union, Russians, Poles, Finns, Ukrainians, Germans, Byelorussians, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Azeris were forcibly resettled as well as Chechens, Tatars, Meskhetians and many others. Among these, some groups were displaced in their entirety. In recent years, millions of people have been forcibly displaced in the Balkans and the Caucasus due to conflicts in these regions.

3. For a long time in history, the international community has acquiesced in, and sometimes even encouraged, deportations and population transfers as a means to bring durable peace to a region. Nowadays, these acts are considered as a crime against humanity under the statutes of a number of international tribunals, including the International Criminal

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169. Vgl. außerdem Seminar on the establishment of a Centre for European Nations’ Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe. In: pace news. The Assembly’s Electronic Newsletter (<http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/APFeaturesManager/defaultArtView.asp?ArtId=63>).

<sup>58</sup> Council of Europe. Directorate of Political Affairs: Draft. Concept Paper. European Centre for the remembrance of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in the 20th Century. Strasbourg, 19 November 2004. In: Vertreibungsdiskurs, 179-185.



Court. In addition, it is widely recognised that they imply numerous and serious human rights violations.

4. The Parliamentary Assembly regrets the plight of those Europeans who have suffered deportation, expulsion, transfer and forced resettlement. For their odious character, these acts offend the conscience of all the peoples of Europe and not only of the populations who had to endure them. It is the task of the Council of Europe, as a pan-European organisation with the aim of achieving a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, to commemorate the victims of such acts while ensuring that history is not repeated.

5. To this end, the Council of Europe should establish a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing to remind Europeans of their history of forced migration, favour reconciliation, act as an instrument of conflict prevention and sensitize public opinion to the personal tragedy of individuals who, as part of a group, had to leave the countries or regions where they were settled due to fear of persecution or because they were physically removed.

6. Finally, bearing in mind the gravity of forced population movements in Europe, the human rights and humanitarian aspects involved, the geographical dimension of these tragic events and the intensity of the current debate in some Council of Europe member states, the Assembly believes that the issue of the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing should be included in the agenda of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of member states of the Council of Europe due to take place in May 2005.

7. The Assembly, therefore, recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

i. take action for the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing (herewith 'the Centre'), under the auspices of the Council of Europe, according to the following guidelines:

a. the aims of the Centre should be to:

A. favour reconciliation by promoting impartial studies of history and contributing to the creation of a common European memory, overcoming the divisions of the past;

B. act as an instrument of conflict prevention by promoting the respect of human rights and the rights of national minorities; and

C. combat racism and xenophobia by sensitizing European public opinion to the human and human rights aspects of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing, in co-operation with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI);

b. its mandate should cover forced movements of populations or groups, including those connected with policies or practices of ethnic cleansing which affected, affect or will affect the geographical area of the Council of Europe member states, with a particular focus on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, whether they take place within the borders of one state or between two or more states;

c. its functions should include, amongst others:

A. conducting or promoting research in the historical or legal fields;

B. supporting the elaboration of educational materials for history teaching;

C. acting as a permanent forum of public and academic analysis and discussion, with the purpose of applying the lessons of the past to meeting the challenges of today and of the future;

D. establishing a network of relevant national and international institutions and acting as a liaison centre for them;

E. organizing conferences, seminars, exhibitions and other events; and

F. funding and supporting cross-border NGO initiatives in this field;

ii. as a legal basis for the establishment of the centre, consider drawing up an Agreement or a Partial Agreement, as set out in Statutory Resolution (93)28 of the Committee of Ministers, open to signature by Council of Europe member states;

iii. when establishing the Centre, take full account of relevant national and international initiatives, with a view to establishing an international network under the auspices of the Council of Europe;

iv. include the issue of the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in the agenda of the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of member states of the Council of Europe.<sup>59</sup>

Für seine schwedischen, deutschen, niederländischen und anderen Initiatoren überraschend stieß das Vorhaben der Neugründung auf massiven Widerstand der Delegationen der

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<sup>59</sup> Draft Resolution. In: Report. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population. Rapporteur: Mr Mats Einarsson, Sweden, Group of the Unified European Left. Parliamentary Assembly/Assemblée parlementaire. Council of Europe/Conseil d'Europe: Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing, Doc. 10378. December 2004 (<http://www.assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc04/EDOC10378.htm>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 40, 186-209, hier 187-189.

Parlamente Frankreichs, der Rußländischen Föderation, der Türkei und sogar Armeniens. Vor allem der französische Delegationsleiter Bernard Schreiner kritisierte vehement zum einen die zeitliche Koinzidenz der auf den 27. Januar 2005 angesetzten Debatte zum Thema in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung mit dem internationalen Auschwitz-Gedenktage sowie die Verwendung des Begriffs "Deportation", den er für den Holocaust reserviert wissen wollte. Zum anderen sah er in der "Schaffung eines dauerhaften Zentrums zum Gedenken an die nach dem Zusammenbruch des Dritten Reiches umgesiedelten Menschen durch den Europarat zum Zeitpunkt des 60. Jahrestages der Befreiung der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager" eine "inakzeptable Gleichsetzung der ‚Opfer‘ und einer Beleidigung der Millionen Märtyrer der ‚Endlösung‘ oder der Widerstandskämpfer [...], die die Befreiung ihrer jeweiligen Länder mit dem Leben bezahlt haben."<sup>60</sup> "Zwei verschiedene Tragödien", so Schreiner, "werden auf derselben Ebene abgehandelt: Deportationen in Todeslager und Zwangsvertreibungen von Volksgruppen."<sup>61</sup> Ungeachtet des unter Beteiligung der deutschen Delegation von statten gehenden Krisenmanagements von Komitee und Parlamentarischer Versammlung, das die Modifizierung des Resolutionsentwurf einschloß, kam am 27. Januar zwar eine absolute Stimmenmehrheit, nicht hingegen die für die Weiterleitung an das Ministerkomitee erforderliche Zwei-Drittel-Mehrheit zustande.<sup>62</sup>

Ungeachtet des Umstandes, dass Polen und Deutschland in beiden Initiativen eine zentrale Rolle spielten, scheint es keine effiziente Koordinierung zwischen den beiden Ebenen "Visegrád + 2" und Europarat gegeben zu haben. Entsprechend kam es zu Friktionen, die sich nachteilig auf beide Vorhaben auswirkten. Das selbstkritische Bonmot "Interlocking institutions instead of interlocking institutions", das in der Staatengemeinschaft seit dem Zerfall Jugoslawiens die Runde machte und auf die notorische Unfähigkeit multilateraler Organisationen wie UN, NATO, EU, OSZE und Europarat zu zielorientierter Kooperation abhob, bestätigte sich also auch hier.

## 2006: Stillstand auf zentraleuropäischer wie gesamteuropäischer Ebene

Am 2. März 2006 traf der neue, von der rechtskonservativen Partei "Recht und Gerechtigkeit" (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość) der Gebrüder Kaczyński gestellte polnische Kulturminister Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski zu seinem ersten Besuch bei seinem gleichfalls neuen CDU-Amtskollegen Neumann in Berlin ein. Im Mittelpunkt standen dabei Gespräche über das Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität. Im Vorfeld hatte Neumann erklärt, er plane "im Auftrag der Bundesregierung einen Dokumentationsort in Berlin [...]. Dieser solle innerhalb des ‚Europäischen Netzwerks‘ und im Einvernehmen mit den europäischen Partnern entstehen."<sup>63</sup> In Reaktion auf die Erläuterung der Koalitionsvereinbarung vom 11. November

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<sup>60</sup> Délégation française à l'Assemblée parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe: 60. Jahrestag der Befreiung des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz-Birkenau - Zentrum des Gedenkens oder Entstellung des Gedenkens. Straßburg, 24. Januar 2005 (Übersetzung PB 1/0170-05). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 41, 209-211, hier 211. Vgl. auch ANR: Widerstand im Europarat. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 21. vom 26. Januar 2005, 6, und Europarat nicht für Vertriebenenzentrum. Ebd., Nr. 24 vom 29. Januar 2005, 5.

<sup>61</sup> Pressemitteilung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarats: „Versammlung lehnt Gründung eines Gedenkzentrums für Opfer von Zwangsvertreibungen ab“. Straßburg, 27. Januar 2005 (<http://www.coe.int/t/d/Com/Presse/Web-News/2004/NE20050127-Gedenkzentrum.asp>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 44, 216.

<sup>62</sup> Ebd.

<sup>63</sup> 3Sat-Kulturzeit: Regierung fördert „Europäisches Netzwerk“. 1. März 2006 ([http://www.3sat.de/3sat.php?http://www.3sat.de/kulturzeit/kuz\\_titel.html](http://www.3sat.de/3sat.php?http://www.3sat.de/kulturzeit/kuz_titel.html)). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 56, 239f.

2005 samt den "Plänen für einen Dokumentationsort zur Vertreibung im 20. Jahrhundert" in Berlin durch Neumann riet Ujazdowski zur Zurückhaltung:

Heute habe ich beinahe darum gefleht, die Gestaltung der Koalitionsvereinbarung neu zu überdenken [...], weil wir der Meinung sind, dass die Gründung eines solchen Ortes des Gedenkens als eine spezielle Institution die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen nachhaltig stören wird.<sup>64</sup>

Die deutsche Seite blieb indes bei ihrem Verweis auf den Koalitionsvertrag mit der Erwähnung sowohl des Netzwerks wie eines "sichtbaren Zeichens" in Berlin, so dass die Gespräche mit Ujazdowski kein Ergebnis brachten. Entsprechend informierte der Kulturminister den polnischen Staatspräsidenten, der eine Woche später zu einem Besuch in die deutsche Hauptstadt aufbrach. Auf das Netzwerk angesprochen, erklärte Lech Kaczyński am 9. März 2006 unverbindlich in *Die Welt*: "Wir werden uns daran beteiligen und sehen, wie sich dieses Projekt entwickelt."<sup>65</sup> Entsprechend schleppend verlief dann die Entwicklung im weiteren Verlauf des Jahres 2006: Die polnische Seite bestand darauf, dass die deutsche ihr Vorhaben eines wie auch immer gearteten „Dokumentationsortes“ als "sichtbares Zeichen" in Berlin aufgabe, während die deutsche Seite daran fest hielt, ja sich die CDU-Kanzlerin und ihr Kulturstaatsminister erkennbar auf ihre Parteikollegin Steinbach zu bewegen. Am 17. Mai 2006 verkündete Neumann, die von seinem Amtsleiter Schäfer in dessen früherer Funktion als Direktor des Hauses der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Bonn konzipierte Ausstellung "Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration" solle "Herzstück" einer künftigen Dauerausstellung im Stadtzentrum von Berlin sein, welche zugleich das im Koalitionsvertrag genannte "sichtbare Zeichen" verkörpern werde. Bezüglich des Netzwerkes führte Neumann zum geplanten "Dokumentationsort" aus:

Hierbei sollen auch Schicksale insbesondere aus denjenigen Ländern einbezogen werden, mit denen wir im Europäischen Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität partnerschaftlich zusammenarbeiten. Wir laden unsere Partner im Europäischen Netzwerk zur Mitarbeit recht herzlich ein.<sup>66</sup>

Ende November 2006 teilte Neumann mit, der Bundestag habe für 2007 die Summe von € 750.000 für die Erarbeitung einer Konzeption des "sichtbaren Zeichens" in Berlin-Mitte bereitgestellt und die polnische Seite sei ausdrücklich eingeladen, sich daran zu beteiligen.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> 3Sat-Kulturzeit: Netzwerk vor dem Aus? – Deutsch-polnische Streit um Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen dauert weiter an. 3. März 2006 (<http://www.3sat.de/kulturzeit/themen/89408/index.html>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 58, 242f.

<sup>65</sup> "Ein künstliches Gebilde". Lech Kaczynski hält den Integrationsgrad der EU für ausgeschöpft. Polens Präsident über die Priorität des Nationalen, die Furcht vor den Nachbarn und deutsche Literatur. In: *Die Welt* vom 9. März 2006 (<http://www.welt.de/data/2006/03/09/857067.html>). Dass. in Vertreibungsdiskurs, Dok. Nr. 62, 246f.

<sup>66</sup> Rede von Kulturstaatsminister Bernd Neumann anlässlich der Eröffnung der Ausstellung "Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration" in Berlin am 17. Mai 2006 (URL <http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Rede/2006/05/2006-05-17-eroeffnung-der-ausstellung-flucht-vertreibung-integration-in-berlin.html>).

<sup>67</sup> wfg: Sichtbar in der Mitte. Zeichen gegen Flucht und Vertreibung. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* Nr. 280 vom 1. Dezember 2006, 37. Der sozialdemokratische Koalitionspartner war gegen die Bewilligung der genannten Mittel gewesen, musste sich aber kompromissbereit zeigen, da die CDU/CSU drohte, ihre Zustimmung zur Bewilligung von € 5.000.000 für Maßnahmen gegen Rechtsextremismus im Rahmen des Bundeshaushaltes zu verweigern. Vgl. Eine finanzielle Förderung des "Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen" wird es durch die Bundesregierung nicht geben. Pressemitteilung von Markus Meckel MdB vom 11. September 2006 (<http://markusmeckel.de>).

Immer deutlicher wurde nun, dass der Kulturstaaatsminister einen zentral gelegenen Memorialkomplex in der Bundeshauptstadt plante, der sich mit dem Zentrumsprojekt des BdV sowohl bezüglich des Standorts deckte als auch Elemente der von der Stiftung "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" im Zeitraum August-November 2006 im Berliner Kronprinzenpalais Unter den Linden gezeigten Ausstellung "Erzwungenen Wege. Flucht und Vertreibung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts" enthalten sollte.<sup>68</sup> In der deutschen Medienlandschaft hatte diese Ausstellung eine heftige Debatte ausgelöst sowie Kritik seitens des polnischen Ministerpräsidenten Jaroslaw Kaczyński auf sich gezogen.<sup>69</sup> Dennoch wurde ein von Neumann im Mai 2007 vorgelegtes Konzept zur Gestaltung des "sichtbaren Zeichens" in Form eines "Museums mit einer Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte" von der Bundeskanzlerin zur Überarbeitung zurückgegeben, da ihrer Meinung nach der BdV und die Stiftung "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" nicht ausreichend in die Planung eingebunden gewesen seien.<sup>70</sup>

Deutscherseits nahm der Bezug auf das Netzwerk im Verlauf des Jahres 2006 zunehmend formelhaften Charakter an – so etwa in einer Rede der Bundeskanzlerin im Rahmen einer Gedenkveranstaltung der CDU/CSU-Bundestagsfraktion zum Thema "60 Jahre Vertreibung – 60 Jahre Wege zur Versöhnung" am 18. September in Berlin<sup>71</sup> -, während seitens Präsident und Regierung Polens selbst die Nennung des vierseitigen Unternehmungs ("Europejska Sieć Pamięć i Solidarność") unterblieb. Auch auf parlamentarischer Ebene fand man nun keine gemeinsame Sprache mehr.<sup>72</sup> Ein polnischer Zeithistoriker beschrieb die Haltung der neuen Führung in Warschau zum Netzwerk Ende 2006 wie folgt:

Genauso wenig [wie durch Versicherungen deutscherseits, Vermögensansprüche von Vertriebenen würden regierungsseitig nicht unterstützt - S. T.] sah sich Warschau durch die Schaffung des internationalen Netzwerks ,Erinnerung und die Solidarität' überzeugt, dessen Ziel in der Schaffung einer Alternative zum Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen bestand. Zwar nahm es an seiner Arbeit von Anfang an teil, an den konkreten Handlungen blieb es aber unbeteiligt. Polen hat

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<sup>68</sup> APA/AP: Dokumentationsstätte für Vertriebene als innerdeutscher Zankapfel. Einrichtung wegen Angst vor geschichtlicher Relativierung umstritten - Bedenken auch in Polen. In: Der Standard [Wien] vom 29. Dezember 2006.

<sup>69</sup> HOFMANN, Gunter: Trübe Vitrine der Vertreibung. Die Ausstellung "Erzwungene Wege" entlastet die deutsche Geschichte und erschwert die Beziehungen zu Polen. In: Die Zeit Nr. 33 vom 10. August 2006, 8; PCA: Steinbach: Vertreibungsoffer dem Vergessen entreißen. "Ausstellung Grundlage für Dokumentationszentrum" / Kaczynski: Eine schlechte Angelegenheit. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 185 vom 11. August 2006, 4; DIETRICH, Stefan: Polen bleibt ablehnend. Ebd., Nr. 186 vom 12. August 2006, 6; und DERS./Konrad SCHULLER: Glocke der "Gustloff" zurückgefordert. Polen geht gegen die Berliner Vertriebenenausstellung vor / Steinbach: Hetzjagd auf Leihgeber. Ebd., Nr. 191 vom 18. August 2004, 1f. Vgl. auch den Katalog Erzwungene Wege. Flucht und Vertreibung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts. Eine Ausstellung der Stiftung Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen. Vorsitzende: Erika Steinbach. Potsdam 2006.

<sup>70</sup> PCA: Erinnerung an Vertreibung sorgt für Verstimmung. Kanzlerin will von Neumann neues Konzept / Steinbach beklagt Ausgrenzung / Die Rolle der SPD, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 117 vom 22. Mai 2007, S. 11.

<sup>71</sup> Rede von Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel auf der Veranstaltung der CDU/CSU-Bundestagsfraktion "60 Jahre Vertreibung – 60 Jahre Wege zur Versöhnung", Berlin, 18. September 2006 ([http://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/nm\\_5296/Content/DE/Rede/2006/09/2006-09-19-rede-bkin-60-jahre-vertreibung.html](http://www.bundeskanzlerin.de/nm_5296/Content/DE/Rede/2006/09/2006-09-19-rede-bkin-60-jahre-vertreibung.html)).

<sup>72</sup> "Der Begriff der ,Vertreibung' trennt uns". Fragen an Sejmmarschall Marek Jurek. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 199 vom 28. August 2006, 5; "Es gibt keine staatliche Deutungshoheit". Bundestagspräsident Lammert über das deutsch-polnische Verhältnis und den Streit über den Begriff der Vertreibung. Ebd., Nr. 204 vom 2. September 2006, 4; LEITHÄUSER, Johannes: Zwischen Misstrauen und Hoffnung. Begegnungen deutscher und polnischer Parlamentarier. Ebd., Nr. 250 vom 27. Oktober 2006, 4.

somit zu seiner Stagnation beigetragen, und die Aktivitäten des Netzwerks blieben auf die deutsche Seite beschränkt.<sup>73</sup>

Entsprechend fand sich zeitgleich die einzige offizielle Erwähnung des Netzwerks auf einer amtlichen Homepage Polens auf der Website des in der Angelegenheit federführenden Ministeriums für Kultur und Nationales Erbe. Bezeichnenderweise handelt es sich dabei allerdings um eine Pressemitteilung aus dem Juli 2004.<sup>74</sup>

Zum Jahresende 2006 kam es zu einer neuerlichen Belastung der mittlerweile vielfältig gespannten bilateralen Beziehungen durch die Aktivitäten der von Vertriebenenfunktionären im Jahr 2000 gegründeten „Preußischen Treuhand GmbH & Co. KG a. A.“<sup>75</sup>, deren Aufsichtsratsvorsitzender Rudi Pawelka zugleich Bundesvorsitzender der im BdV organisierten Landsmannschaft Schlesien ist.<sup>76</sup> Die von der in Anlehnung an die Jewish Claims Conference international auch als „Prussian Claims, Inc.“ auftretenden Gesellschaft am 15. Dezember 2006 beim Europäischen Gerichtshof für Menschenrechte eingereichten 22 Einzelklagen auf Rückgabe von Immobilien in Polen an ihre ehemaligen deutschen Besitzer bzw. auf Entschädigung sowie die Linie der Bundesregierung, die Angelegenheit zu einer die bilateralen Beziehungen nicht tangierenden Privatsache der Kläger herunterzuspielen, haben in Warschau kurzfristig zu hysterischen Reaktionen<sup>77</sup>, in der polnischen Öffentlichkeit zu neuerlicher großer Besorgnis und mittelfristig zu weiterer Abkühlung im deutsch-polnischen Verhältnis geführt.

Die deutsch-polnische Lokomotive des Netzwerkprojekts ist im Laufe des Jahres 2006 zum Stillstand gekommen, und damit entsprechend das gesamte Vorhaben. Der ehemalige polnische Außenminister Bronisław Geremek hat dies in einem Interview mit dem Berliner *Tagesspiegel* im September 2006 auf den Punkt gebracht, als er die Journalistenäußerung „Die jetzige Regierung in Warschau macht nicht den Eindruck, an dem Alternativprogramm ‚Europäisches Netzwerk für Erinnerung‘ ernsthaft interessiert zu sein“ mit der Frage kommentierte „Ist es denn die deutsche?“<sup>78</sup> Die schwarz-rote Koalitionsregierung in Berlin hat auf Geremeks Frage bislang keine klare Antwort gegeben. Dies vor allem deshalb, weil zum einen der christdemokratische Partner eine eindeutige Präferenz für den Zentrumsplan seines Parteipräsidiumsmitglieds Steinbach hegt und diese zunehmend öffentlich äußert, zum anderen aber auch der sozialdemokratische Sozius sein eigenes Netzwerkprojekt mittlerweile reserviert betrachtet. Weder die sich 2006 in rascher Folge ablösenden Parteivorsitzenden Franz Müntefering, Matthias Platzeck und Kurt Beck noch die SPD-Minister im Kabinett Merkel

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<sup>73</sup> RUCHNIEWICZ, Krzysztof: Geschichte und Perspektiven der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen. In: *Silesia Nova*. Zweitmonatsschrift für Kultur und Geschichte 2006, H. 4, 6-16, hier 8.

<sup>74</sup> Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego. Wydział Prasowy. Archiwum wiadomości. Rok 2004: Europejska Sieć „Pamięć i Solidarność“ (21. 07. 2004) [Ministerium für Kultur und Nationales Erbe. Presseabteilung. Nachrichtenarchiv. Jahr 2003: Europäisches Netzwerk „Erinnerung und Solidarität“ (21. Juli 2004)] (<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/website/index.jsp?artId=607>). Hier findet sich auch die Absichtserklärung zur Gründung des Netzwerks vom 2. Februar 2005 (Deklaracja o powołaniu Europejskiej Sieci „Pamięć i Solidarność“) (<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/website/document/?docId=228>).

<sup>75</sup> SCHULLER, Konrad: Berlin und Warschau wollen Verhältnis verbessern. Merkel für gemeinsamen europäischen Gasmarkt / Kaczynski: Gute Erfahrung / Weiter Differenzen. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* Nr. 253 vom 31. Oktober 2006, 1f.; MÜLLER, Reinhard: Die offene Vermögensfrage. Ebd., 2.

<sup>76</sup> Vgl. die Treuhand-Website (<http://www.preussischetreuhand.de.vu>) sowie die Homepage der Landmannschaft Schlesien (<http://www.schlesien-lm.de>).

<sup>77</sup> Vertriebenenklagen: Warschau stellt Grenzvertrag mit Deutschland in Frage. In: *Die Welt* vom 19. Dezember 2006 (<http://www.welt.de/data/2006/12/19/1151272.html>).

<sup>78</sup> „Geschichte ist wie ein Messer“. Polens ehemaliger Außenminister Bronislaw Geremek über deutsch-polnische Irrwege und Traumata. In: *Der Tagesspiegel* Nr. 19314 vom 17. September 2006, 7.

haben sich zum Thema geäußert. Und die Polen-Fronde in der SPD-Bundestagsfraktion um Parlamentsvizepräsident Wolfgang Thierse, die für Europapolitik zuständige stellvertretende Fraktionsvorsitzende Angelica Schwall-Düren und den stellvertretenden außenpolitischen Fraktionssprecher Markus Meckel sowie die Koordinatorin der Bundesregierung für die deutsch-polnische Zusammenarbeit Gesine Schwan haben in der neuen Regierungskonstellation nicht mehr dasselbe Gewicht wie in der vorigen. Insofern ist nicht auszuschließen, dass die SPD "ihr" Netzwerkprojekt als Verhandlungsschiff bei künftigen Koalitionskompromissen einsetzt und letztendlich aufgibt - dann wäre der Weg für Erika Steinbach frei.<sup>79</sup>

Auf diesem Hintergrund kommt es einer Ironie der (Zeit-)Geschichte gleich, dass der 2004 von christdemokratischer Seite vorgeschlagene Bundespräsident Horst Köhler derzeit der einzige Berliner Politiker von Gewicht ist, der öffentlich für das Netzwerk Partei ergreift – so geschehen in seiner Rede beim "Tag der Heimat" des BdV am 2. September in Berlin. Zum einen nannte er das Netzwerk beim Namen:

Die [...] Ausstellung ‚Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration‘ zeigt, dass es möglich ist, an das individuelle Leid der Opfer von Vertreibung zu erinnern und zugleich den historischen Zusammenhang im Blick zu behalten. Ich bin überzeugt, dass diesem Anspruch auch das ‚sichtbare Zeichen‘ genügen wird, das die Bundesregierung in Verbindung mit dem ‚Europäischen Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität‘ in Berlin setzen will, um an das Unrecht von Vertreibungen zu erinnern und sie als Mittel der Politik zu achten.<sup>80</sup>

Und zum anderen griff er die Europäisierungskonzeption des Netzwerkplans auf:

Es gibt ein riesiges Interesse an Büchern, Fernsehdokumentationen und Ausstellungen über ‚Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration‘. Für die gleichnamige Ausstellung des Bonner Hauses der Geschichte habe ich die Schirmherrschaft übernommen. Warum? Weil ich überzeugt davon bin, dass wir auch weiterhin über dieses Kapitel der deutschen und europäischen Geschichte sprechen und nachdenken müssen, damit wir den Weg in die Zukunft finden. Wir müssen darüber sprechen, weil die Menschen, denen unermessliches Leid widerfahren ist, Anspruch auf unser Mitgefühl und unsere Solidarität haben. Wir müssen darüber sprechen, weil die Kultur und die Geschichte der Vertriebenen zu unserer Identität gehören. Und wir müssen das Gespräch darüber mit unseren polnischen, tschechischen, slowakischen, und ungarischen Nachbarn, den anderen Nachbarländern und Freunden suchen, weil zu einer gemeinsamen guten Zukunft auch gehört, dass wir aufrichtig und auf Versöhnung bedacht mit unserer Vergangenheit umgehen. [...] Unsere eigene Diskussion über das Thema Flucht und Vertreibung sollte eingebettet sein in einen europäischen Dialog. Die vergangenen Jahre haben gezeigt, dass wir für diesen Dialog Sensibilität und auch die Fähigkeit zur Differenzierung brauchen.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> In diesem Zusammenhang ist darauf zu verweisen, dass sich die Stiftung "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" unter dem Druck des Netzwerk-Gegenprojekts seit 2004 zunehmend europäisiert hat, und dies sowohl in inhaltlicher wie personeller Hinsicht. Ein deutlicher Beleg dafür ist auch die Konzeption der genannten Berliner Ausstellung "Erzwungene Wege".

<sup>80</sup> Rede von Bundespräsident Horst Köhler beim Tag der Heimat des Bundes der Vertriebenen am 2. September 2006 in Berlin (<http://www.bundespraesident.de/-2.632658/Rede-von-Bundespraesident-Hors.htm>).

<sup>81</sup> Ebd.

Köhler nahm hier überdies deutlichen Bezug auf die Danziger Erklärung und traf am Beispiel seiner eigenen Biographie die vor allem für die polnische Öffentlichkeit so zentrale Unterscheidung zwischen Umsiedlung und Flucht einerseits und Vertreibung andererseits:

Wie Sie wissen, stammen meine Eltern aus Bessarabien. Sie wurden umgesiedelt nach Polen. Sie wurden in Polen in ein Haus einquartiert, das vorher die Nazis den polnischen Bauern weggenommen haben. Die Flucht vor der Kriegsfront brachte uns dann nach Deutschland. Die Biografie meiner Familie ist also von Umsiedlung und Flucht bestimmt. Nicht von Vertreibung, aber ich weiß, was die ganze Geschichte bedeutet - durch mein eigenes familiäres Erlebnis.<sup>82</sup>

Wie belastet das deutsch-polnische inzwischen Verhältnis ist, machte die Reaktion des polnischen Ministerpräsidenten auf Köhlers Rede deutlich. Gänzlich in seiner Steinbach-Obsession verhaftet, stellte Jaroslaw Kaczyński zum Auftritt des Bundespräsidenten beim BdV fest:

Das ist eines jener beunruhigenden Ereignisse, die in jüngster Zeit in Deutschland stattfinden. [...] In Deutschland besteht eine große, vom Staat unterstützte Struktur, die ständig die Frage der polnischen Gebiete anspricht, die einst zum Deutschen Reich gehört haben.<sup>83</sup>

Allerdings erntete der Ministerpräsident für seine tunnelblickbedingte Fehlinterpretation massive Kritik in der oppositionellen Presse Polens, wie auch regierungsnahen Zeitungen anerkennende Worte für die Rede des Bundespräsidenten fanden.<sup>84</sup> Die verzerrte Wahrnehmung Jaroslaw Kaczyńskis ist aber durchaus symptomatisch für die polnische Regierungssicht: Die Kombination der Begriffe "Zwangsmigration" und "Deutschland", ja allein schon der Gebrauch des Terminus "Vertreibung" (*wypędzenie*), lösen ungeachtet von Kontext und Stoßrichtung unkontrollierbare allergische Reaktionen aus. Ein länderübergreifender Dialog darüber ist derzeit kaum mehr möglich – schon gar nicht mit einem Berliner Dialogpartner, der demonstrativ indifferent ist und nur zum Teil mit offenen Karten spielt.

Gleichfalls statisch blieb 2006 die Lage im Europarat, dessen Komitee für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Bevölkerung am 24. Januar beschloß, den Einarsson-Bericht von 2004 zu überarbeiten und ihn erneut in die Parlamentarische Versammlung zur Abstimmung einzubringen. In einer tumultartigen Sitzung vom 5. Oktober 2006, in der es zu einem harten Schlagabtausch zwischen dem niederländischen Sozialdemokraten und Holocaust-Überlebenden Ed van Thijn und dem französischen Delegationsleiter Schreiner kam, lief die polnische Delegation mehrheitlich von der schwedisch-niederländisch-deutschen Unterstützerfraktion zur französisch-rußländischen Ablehnungsfront über; lediglich der genannte sozialistische Abgeordnete Iwiński blieb bei seiner Zustimmung von 2005. Im Ergebnis kam nach mehreren Wahlgängen erneut eine knappe absolute Mehrheit für die Annahme der Resolution (43 Ja-Stimmen, 42 Nein-Stimmen und drei Enthaltungen) zustande,

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<sup>82</sup> Ebd.

<sup>83</sup> PCA./RVE.: Warschau empört über Köhlers Auftritt bei den Vertriebenen. Kaczynski: Ein beunruhigendes Ereignis / Bundespräsident: Polens Sorgen ernst nehmen. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 205 vom 4. September 2006, 1f., hier 1.

<sup>84</sup> SCHULLER, Konrad: In Polen Kritik an Kaczynski wegen Angriffs auf Köhler. "Sitten wie in der Volksrepublik Polen" / Die Vertreibungsdebatte. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 206 vom 5. September 2006, 2.



nicht hingegen die erforderliche Zwei-Drittel-Mehrheit für die Weiterleitung an das Ministerkomitee (41 Ja-Stimmen, 40 Nein-Stimmen und fünf Enthaltungen).<sup>85</sup> Die in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung ungewöhnliche Situation, dass eine Resolution zwar angenommen wurde, aber mangels qualifizierter Mehrheit nicht an die Europaratsexekutive weitergereicht werden kann, hält also an. Die deutliche Verhärtung der Fronten in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung sowie die Solidität der Sperrminorität etlicher Ost- wie Westeuropäer lassen die Aussichten eines neuerlichen Anlaufs zur Umsetzung des Projekts auf längere Zeit hinaus als wenig erfolversprechend erscheinen.

## Zwischenbilanz Anfang 2007

Ob das Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität nach schwerer Geburt und zwei Jahren der Mangelernährung doch noch an Gewicht zunehmen sowie altersgemässen Bewegungsdrang entwickeln wird, ist Anfang 2007 nicht absehbar. Zwar hat das embryonale Warschauer Netzwerk-Sekretariat im Dezember 2006 mitgeteilt, man plane für Mai 2007 eine erste internationale Konferenz zum Thema "Erinnerungsorte in Ostmitteleuropa" in Warschau, doch sind seit 2004 mehrfach Ankündigungen dieser Art erfolgt, ohne dass sie sich materialisiert hätten. Das Verdikt indes, dass der polnisch-deutsch-ungarisch-slowakische Zusammenschluss eine Totgeburt sei, wie ein Journalist einer großen deutschen Tageszeitung nicht müde wird zu verkünden, entsprechend "sein Sitz in Warschau [...] seine Begräbnisstätte geworden" ist<sup>86</sup>, erscheint verfrüht. Immerhin hat die Behörde des Beauftragten der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien 2005 im Netzwerkrahmen erste Forschungsmittel bewilligt, so dass zumindest im wissenschaftlichen Bereich handfeste Ergebnisse zu erwarten sind.<sup>87</sup> Aufs Ganze gesehen indes ist der bisherige Ertrag der mit erheblichem Aufwand gegründeten Unternehmung mehr als bescheiden. Und ihre künftige Entwicklung wird gänzlich vom politischen Willen der beteiligten Regierungen, vor allem derjenigen in Berlin und Warschau, abhängen.

Nun ist es ein Allgemeinplatz, dass die Erinnerungskulturen Europas national segmentiert sind: Das 2000 in Stockholm festgeschriebene Bestreben, das Holocaust-

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<sup>85</sup> Protokoll der 30. Sitzung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarats am 5. Oktober 2006 (AS (2006) CR 30) (<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/Records/2006-4/E/0610051500E.htm>), sowie SATTLER, Karl-Otto: Tiefe Wunden im Gedächtnis der Völker. Parlamentarische Versammlung des Europarats berät über Vertriebenengedenken. In: Das Parlament 56 (2006), Nr. 43 (23. Oktober 2006), 10.

<sup>86</sup> DIETRICH, Stefan: Unfähig zur Versöhnung. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Nr. 208 vom 7. September 2006, 1. Vgl. auch DERS.: Begräbnis erster Klasse. Vom Europäischen Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität wird man so bald nicht mehr hören. Ebd., Nr. 30 vom 5. Februar 2005, 12. Zum Urteil anderer deutscher Printmedien siehe BICKERICH, Sebastian: Risse im Netz. Der Zusammenschluss europäischer Gedenkstätten gegen Vertreibung fällt bescheidener aus als geplant. In: Der Tagesspiegel Nr. 18735 vom 2. Februar 2005, 4; KAHLWEIT, Cathrin: Erinnern mit Hindernissen. Netzwerk soll Gedenken an Vertreibungsorte koordinieren. In: Süddeutsche Zeitung Nr. 26 vom 2. Februar 2005, 1; ROSER, Thomas: Erinnerungs-Netzwerk mit Startproblemen. Vier europäische Staaten unterzeichnen Absichtserklärung zum Gedenken an Vertreibung / Wenig Enthusiasmus. In: Frankfurter Rundschau Nr. 28 vom 3. Februar 2005, 7; GNAUCK, Gerhard: Für eine Wiedervereinigung der Erinnerung. Im Krebsgang voran – das "Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen" und das „Netzwerk“. In: Neue Zürcher Zeitung vom 23. November 2005 (URL <http://www.nzz.ch/2005/11/23/fe/articleDCFB8.html>); VETTER, Reinhold: Europäisches Erinnern. Das „Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität“ hat seine Arbeit begonnen. In: Dialog Nr. 72/73 (2005/06), 115-118; und URBAN, Thomas: Ein überflüssiger Streit. In: Berliner Republik 2006, H. 6, 27-30.

<sup>87</sup> So wird etwa seit September 2005 das Vorhaben eines Lexikons zum Thema "Das Jahrhundert der Vertreibungen. Deportation, Zwangsaussiedlung und ethnische Säuberung in Europa 1912-1999" gefördert, dessen Herausbergremium aus deutschen, polnischen und tschechischen Historikern besteht. Eine Projektankündigung siehe unter H-Soz-Kult. Kommunikation und Fachinformation für die Geschichtswissenschaften, 1. Dezember 2005 (<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/projekte/id=137>).

Gedächtnis nachträglich zum Gründungsmythos der Europäischen Union zu machen, ist eine Illusion geblieben, und auch transnationale selbstkritische Erinnerungsdiskurse über Kolonialismus, Rassismus oder Kollaboration in Europa sind nicht vom Fleck gekommen.<sup>88</sup> Selbst das sich weiter verstärkende europaweite Interesse am Genozid an den Armeniern im Ersten Weltkrieg ist insofern eben keine regelbestätigende Ausnahme, als hier primär Kritik an anderen, nicht am eigenen Kollektiv geübt wird. Auf diesem generell problematischen Hintergrund nimmt es sich als es durchaus bemerkenswert aus, dass ein so konfliktbeladenes Thema wie ethnopolitisch motivierte Zwangsmigration überhaupt zum Gegenstand grenzüberschreitender Gedächtnisdiskurse in Zentraleuropa, gar für europaweite Institutionalisierungsinitiativen genommen wurde. Denn die involvierten Gesellschaften sind sich neben ihrer jeweiligen Opferrolle durchaus auch ihrer Täterrolle im Vertreibungsgeschehen bewusst. Dass auch dabei die Fixierung auf jeweils nationale Geschichtsbilder hemmende Wirkung entfaltet hat, kann kaum verwundern - auch wenn die "Ökumene der Historiker" hier deutlich weiter ist als die jeweiligen politischen Klassen. Dies ist gleichsam die Haben-Seite der Angelegenheit.

Auf der Soll-Seite steht der Umstand – und das zeigt der Ausgang bzw. das Nicht-Ergebnis der beiden hier geschilderten Initiativen -, dass auch im erweiterten Europa der sich zunehmend rechtlich, monetär, sozial, ökonomisch und infrastrukturell integrierenden Europäischen Union nationale Geschichtspolitik nicht nur immer noch, sondern in zunehmendem Maße neben der Innenpolitik auch die Außenpolitik bestimmt. Dies gilt nicht nur für traditionelle Sonderfälle wie Frankreich und Großbritannien oder schwierige Fälle wie Griechenland, Zypern oder die Tschechische Republik, sondern mittlerweile auch für die vormaligen versöhnungspolitischen Musterknaben Deutschland und Polen. Die zentrale Frage, die sich dabei stellt, ist natürlich, ob es sich hier um einen kurzfristigen konjunkturellen Ausschlag handelt, der durch aktuelle innen- und parteipolitische Konstellationen in den jeweiligen Staaten bedingt ist, oder ob es sich, ähnlich wie beim Klimawandel, um eine langfristige und damit unmittelbar kaum beeinflussbare Entwicklung handelt – eine Entwicklung, die möglicherweise in kausalem Zusammenhang mit eben der vertieften Integration EU-Europas steht - nationale Selbstvergewisserung durch Abstoßungsreaktion gleichsam.

Zur Beantwortung dieser Frage reichen die beiden hier skizzierten Sample "Visegrád + 2" und "Europarat" sicher nicht aus. Vielmehr wären weitere Fallstudien zu nationalen Erinnerungskulturen und transnationalen Gedächtnisinitiativen im Europa von EU und Europarat anzustellen. Auf jeden Fall aber demonstrieren die beiden gewählten Beispiele, das sich das Geschehen auf dem "Sonnendeck" aufwendig inszenierter gesamteuropäischer Gedenk- und Jubiläumskultur deutlich anders ausnimmt, als das, was im "Maschinenraum" europäischer Geschichtspolitik vorgeht, in dem Vertreter von Parlamenten, Regierungen und Präsidenten Europas (gelegentlich unter Mithilfe von Historikern) in zähen Verhandlung und

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<sup>88</sup> Zum Forschungsstand siehe ASSMANN, Aleida: *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik*. München 2006; WINKLER, Heinrich August: *Erinnerungswelten im Widerstreit. Europas langer Weg zu einem gemeinsamen Bild von Jahrhundert der Extreme*. In: *Antisemitismus und Erinnerungskulturen im postkommunistischen Europa*. Hgg. Bernd KAUFFMANN und Basil KERSKI. Osnabrück 2006, 105-116; ACKERMANN, Ulrike: *Das gespaltene Gedenken. Eine gesamteuropäische Erinnerungskultur ist noch nicht in Sicht*. In: *Internationale Politik* 61 (2006), H. 5 (Mai), 44-48; TROEBST, Stefan: *Jalta versus Stalingrad, Gulag versus Holocaust. Konfligierende Erinnerungskulturen im grösseren Europa*. In: *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 15 (2005), 381-400; ROUSSO, Henry: *Das Dilemma eines europäischen Gedächtnisses*. In: *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 1 (2004), 363-378; *Verbrechen erinnern. Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord*. Hgg. Volkhard KNIGGE und Norbert FREI. München 2002; *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe. Studies in the Presence of the Past*. Hg. Jan-Werner MÜLLER. Cambridge 2002; LEVY, Daniel, Natan SZNAIDER: *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter. Der Holocaust*. Frankfurt/M. 2001; *Stalinisme et nazisme. Histoire et mémoire comparée*. Hg. Henry ROUSSO. Bruxelles 1999.

mittels häufig wolkiger Kompromissformeln versuchen erste Elemente einer europäischen Erinnerungskultur auszuhandeln – Rückschläge inbegriffen.

## **Displaced Memories of a Displaced People: Towards the Problem of Missing Polish Narratives in Lviv**

**Oksana Kis**

Every time when it comes to discussion on historical memory, I recall one story told by an elderly woman long ago. It was in mid 1980s, I was a teenager then and she was probably in her sixties. We were stuck together in a hospital room for about one week. The old lady was quite talkative so I had a chance to hear a lot about her life. With time most of that has been forgotten, but one story gives me no rest even today.

“When we came to Lviv”, she said, “everybody was so happy, people welcomed us warmly. They had been looking forward to having us, so they had prepared everything for us. Immediately upon our arrival we were taken to an apartment downtown, which was prepared for us so carefully. You know”, she maintained with enthusiasm, “we came over with few suitcases; I had no more than a couple of dresses and one pair of shoes. And we were so tired after that long train journey...” (Her speech became more emotional, as she was coming to the point of this story.) “So you can imagine how generous the locals were to us, so they equipped that apartment with literally everything we could possibly need. There were all kinds of garments in closets, bed linen, kitchenware... There was even a pot of hot soup for us on the kitchen-range! So we knew for sure: people are glad to have us down here in Lviv. I know this from my personal experience!”

The described events took place in 1946. Then she was married to a mid-rank Red Army officer who was commanded to serve with the western frontier troops, and they moved from eastern Ukraine to the city of Lviv which was going through perhaps the hardest times in its history.

Even at that time I understood that something was wrong with her interpretation of the situation, and that hot soup was scarcely cooked for the newcomers. But the old woman really believed in what she stated. At that time she still lived in the apartment they were given upon arrival. She remembered everything, every little detail from that time and later on. But she did not remember what was there before their arrival. Indeed, she could not remember what she had never witnessed or experienced or was a part of. For her, and for many other Lviv city-dwellers, the entire history of Lviv started afresh only after the Second World War.

That story makes me uneasy and pushes me to think about the mechanisms of personal and collective remembering and forgetting. Would it be correct to assume that “one cannot forget what one does not remember”? (Zehfuss 2006: 226). Does one’s historical memory derive from one’s experience only? Is any forgetting of the past spontaneous and natural, or is it man-made and manageable, just like historical memory which often is deliberately constructed?

### **Lviv – a contested city**

Lviv is known for its centuries-long multicultural history; yet it has gained fame as a citadel of Ukrainian nationalism in the 20th century and especially in the most recent past. Lviv is perhaps not unique in its seemingly contradictory historical fate. Some scholars consider it to be just “one of many divided, contested cities, cities that switched hands and now belong to two separate and often competing histories” (Grabowicz 2000:313-314); yet others insist that

“in Central and Eastern Europe Lviv was an exceptional city... where elements of the western and eastern cultures were tightly intertwined and simultaneously actual” (Janowski, 2002: 24, [my own translation]).

Lviv became the symbolic battleground of several competing national narratives long ago. Images and visions of Lviv/Lwów in, respectively, Ukrainian and Polish history and culture go to the very heart of national memory and provide for each society powerful symbols of national identity, particularly as narratives of collective struggle, victory, and defeat. In his study on images of this city in Polish and Ukrainian literature, George Grabowicz revealed the ways and mechanisms of creating the great myth of Lviv. His analysis showed that despite the antithetical or sometimes even antagonistic nature of the two competing national identities, “the symbols and narratives that subtend them are remarkably similar .... While partaking of various common themes, topos, and (often repressed or unconscious) intertextualities they coalesce into national myths which are central to the respective collective, national experiences and are characteristically defined by an implicit and explicit confrontation with the Other.” (Grabowicz 2000: 313-314). “As far as historical and emotional involvement and investment are concerned,” Grabowicz concludes, “it seems at times ... that Lviv/Lwów becomes the preeminent objective correlative of narratives of national self-assertion.” (Grabowicz 2000: 313-314)

The Second World War and the following events played a crucial role in the fundamental transformation of the cultural landscape of the city. First, its demographic composition changed drastically during and after the war. The remarkable figures of those days’ population changes show the harsh rupture in an otherwise evolutionary development of Lviv’s urban culture.

The Nazi and Soviet regimes combined to destroy the historically multicultural character of the city. According to the Yaroslav Hrytsak’s study, from 1772 to 1939 the ethnic structure of Lviv had evolved in a rather stable tripartite manner among the dominant Poles (from 50 to 55 percent), and the two minorities of Jews (30-35 percent) and Ukrainians (15-20 percent). The German Nazi invaders totally decimated the Jewish population (only some 2-3 percent survived the mass murders), while the Soviet regime deported Poles and repopulated the city with people from other parts of the Soviet Union (Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Belarusians, Moldovans, and others) and with Ukrainians who had been deported from territories allotted to postwar Poland. The remaining Ukrainians and Poles were repressed by the Soviet regime; many fled to Western Europe or North America. All told, Lviv lost about 80 percent of its pre-war population. Resettlement transformed Lviv into a predominantly East Slavic city of Ukrainians and Russians. (Hrytsak 2000: 58-59)

In 1950s the Soviet government decided to transform Lviv - a previously successful commercial, cultural and academic centre - into an industrial city. This decision was inspired partly by the idea that the increasing number of mill-hands – considered to be the base of Communist Party – could help to root out the strong Ukrainian nationalist underground movement which plagued the city. The army of workers was replenished mostly with young migrants from the west-Ukrainian villages, as recent research has shown. In 1959-1989 over 230 000 people migrated to the city. The migrants constituted more than 60% of the entire growth of the city population at that time (Bodnar 2007:10). Taking into account that Ukrainians comprised the absolute majority of the local peasants, one can speak of the “physical Ukrainization” of the city as a side-effect of its industrialization plan. As a result, the Ukrainians steadily increased their proportion of the population from 44.2 % in 1955 to 79.1 % in 1989 (while the Russian proportion dropped from 35% down to 16% during the same period). By 1989 Jews and Poles comprised 1.6 % and 1.2 %, respectively. No other ethnic minority constituted more than 1.0% of the population on the eve of Ukrainian independence (Hrytsak 2000:58-59). The census of 2001 showed an even further reduction of ethnic

minorities in Lviv: at that time Poles comprised 0,88%, Jews 0,27%, and Armenians 0,11% respectively (Sereda 2008: 95).

In that way it becomes clear that the majority of contemporary Lviv city dwellers had not lived there during the war, nor had their ancestors, and they therefore had no direct memories or memories transmitted through the family of events preceding the war. That is why one should agree with Omer Bartov, who states: “The lack of direct experience with the eradication of the large Jewish and Polish urban populations of the region may have made it even easier to recreate a historical narrative cleansed of the populations that had once been such an integral part of it” (Bartov 2007: 32-34). Those dramatic ethno-demographic changes combined with and strengthened by Soviet politics of history construction resulted in near total erasure of any memories of pre-war urban life in Lviv. The remark by Luisa Passerini aptly describes that situation: “There is nothing left to transmit if nobody is there to receive the message” (Passerini 1992).

The demographic figures are not, however, sufficient to understand the reasons and scope of forgetting Poles and Polish history in Lviv. Knowledge of general cultural, historical and political contexts could help one to see those complex processes and factors (peculiarities of interethnic relations in the city, official ethnic policies and politics of memory, etc.) which facilitated if not determined this situation.

Indeed, Polish-Ukrainian relationships were problematic for centuries, as Poles have dominated Ukrainians in eastern Galicia for hundreds of years in terms of statehood (in 1387-1772 and 1918-1939 Poland governed this territory); social stratification (Poles prevailed in the nobility whereas Ukrainians constituted an absolute majority of the peasants), and religion (Poles attempted to impose Catholicism over mainly Orthodox Ukrainians). Therefore, in Ukrainian national mythology and nationalist thought a Pole appears as an eternal Other; an oppressor, whose centuries-long domination and discrimination hindered the progress of Ukrainians as a fully-fledged nation. The most recent history of Polish rule over this land (in the inter-war period) left Ukrainians little reason to feel sympathy towards Poles. Although Ukrainians constituted the majority of the local population, the religious, cultural and language policies of the Polish government were clearly discriminatory (if not harsh)<sup>89</sup>, so it would be rather problematic for Ukrainians to cherish a good memory of Poles afterwards.

The 20th century happened to be the turning point, as Ukrainians finally took over power in the region (in 1939 eastern Galicia became part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, which obtained sovereignty after the USSR’s disintegration in 1991). Then this event was interpreted as the triumph of historical justice; a fulfillment of an eternal dream of all Ukrainians – the dream of a United Ukraine.

In 1946 Poland and the USSR undertook a compulsory exchange of populations; hence a huge number of Poles and Ukrainians living on the borderland were forcibly resettled. Ethnic Ukrainians living in south-eastern Poland were deported either to the north-western parts of the country or to Soviet Ukraine, whereas Poles were simultaneously expelled from Ukraine to Poland. Many of the displaced Ukrainians ultimately found themselves residing in Lviv. Their extremely traumatic personal experiences of expulsion – marked by cruelty and loss – have

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<sup>89</sup> In 1924 the use of the Ukrainian language in public offices and local administration was prohibited; since that time the number of schools where instruction was offered in Ukrainian language dropped dramatically in eastern Galicia. In the autumn of 1930, in the course of the Polish public campaign of *pacification* of Ukrainians in Galicia, a number of representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia were repressed, and many Ukrainian cultural and educational institutions were ravaged. In June 1934 the Polish government established a concentration camp in Bereza-Kartuzka, where a number of important Ukrainian political figures of nationalist views were imprisoned together with other political opponents of the regime. In 1939 the Polish administration ravaged the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the Kholmshchyna region, so over 180 churches were destroyed, and about 150 converted into Roman-Catholic ones.

strengthened pre-existing negative attitudes towards Poles amongst local Ukrainians<sup>90</sup>. Thus the memory of Poles has been reduced to the memory of suffering from Polish dominance. Consequently, the remnants of Polish culture were considered unworthy of remembrance or preservation: they have been either ignored or vanished from collective memory. Indeed, Iwona Irwin-Zarecka is right when she states that “When we are asked not to remember, we are essentially being asked not to honor or respect; at issue is usually whether a person, a group, or a movement *deserves* remembrance” (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 127).

Besides this, memories of the pre-war Soviet atrocities and post-war massive repressions against the west-Ukrainians (accused mostly of “bourgeois nationalism”) have virtually supplanted the memories of the Polish times. Indeed, the victims and their relatives, neighbours and friends have preserved their painful recollections for decades. The history of Ukrainian national struggle and suffering had ultimately dislodged the memories of the exterminated Jews and deported Poles for there remained virtually nobody to sustain them. Those few who survived were not in a position to claim back their memories during the Soviet era. The Soviet politics of history assisted considerably in this massive amnesia, as the Holocaust and the ethnic deportations were strictly concealed in the official historical discourse.

Furthermore, the Soviet politics of history have also implicitly fostered the negative image of the Poles. The official history of the Ukrainian SSR constantly stressed the centuries-long ethnic discrimination and humiliation Ukrainians endured under Polish rule in order to justify the Soviet occupation of these territories in September 1939 (this event was normally presented as an act of liberation of oppressed counterparts and the reunion of Ukraine as an integral state). This stereotype of the Poles as eternal oppressors of Ukrainians remained mostly untouched in post-Soviet Ukrainian official historical narratives, as an analysis of school textbooks on Ukrainian history has shown. “Ethnocentrism peculiar to the representations of the past and the way historical memory is reproduced in school history textbooks rather stimulate – not overcome – mutual Polish-Ukrainian ethnic stereotypes”, Victoria Sereda concluded her study (2000: 397).

It is remarkable that during the wartime the cityscape did not change much, as physically Lviv survived nearly untouched by military operations. Most transformations have taken place on a symbolic level, though. The Soviet politics of memory, aimed at the inclusion of west-Ukrainian history into a unified Soviet model of the past, started with transformation of the multicultural image of Lviv into a Soviet one. This process assumed thorough erasure of any visible traces of previous presence of other ethnic cultures there, so the Soviet regime has removed the majority of pre-Soviet monuments, accompanied by massive changing of street names in post-war decades. The few remaining streets and monuments bearing names of Polish historical figures have been ascribed new meanings in line with the Soviet model of the past (Sereda 2008: 76).

Despite the majority of scholars studying symbolic representations of Lviv agreeing that it is one of the key elements in Polish national mythology, some alternative views have recently been expressed in historical debates on Polishness of the city cultural landscape. Thus Maciej Janowski, a Polish historian, is confident that “among the numerous [ethnic] cultures in Lviv the role of Polish culture was not leading” even at the time of Polish governance (Janowski 2002: 24). Searching an answer to the question of which factors created Lviv as it looks now, Janowski considers Austro-Hungarian, Ukrainian and Soviet elements to be the

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<sup>90</sup> In fact the memory of Ukrainian deportation from Poland is maintained on the institutional level, as there are several associations of resettled with their headquarters in Lviv (*Tovarystvo Nasyannya*, *Tovarystvo Lemkivshchyna*, *Asotsiacia Deportovanyh Ukrainciv Zakerzonnya*). Those organizations and people (known as *pereselentsi* - resettlers) are perhaps the most passionate opponents of restoring the Polish traces in Lviv, so the study of their activities could be fruitful in the framework of research on memories of Poles here.

most influential in forming its present-day image. “During over seven hundred years of Lviv history”, the scholar maintains, “the Polish element was real, but not decisive. [sic] Paradoxically, the important role of Lviv in Polish history in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries made nearly no impact upon the city exterior!” he claims (Janowski 2002: 23[my own translation]).

In the post-socialist Ukraine seeking to establish a great national narrative of its own, one could find even less reasons to retrieve from oblivion the perished history of Polish culture. In short, one could find but few interested in restoring Polish traces in Lviv among the insiders. This is not to say, however, that there are no such stakeholders beyond Ukraine, especially among the nostalgic Polish nationalists for whom Lviv represents an important symbol of (once) Great Poland. As a matter of fact, the discussion over the question “whose history?” has never taken place within the limits of scholarship; neither was it ever free from political pressures. Despite all the efforts made by Soviet authorities to suppress the nationalist activities in the city of Lviv, in the post-war decades Lviv became a leading centre of anti-Soviet nationalist opposition; in fact, it played the crucial role in awakening national awareness among Ukrainians throughout the country. Indeed, since the Second World War Lviv has been steadily reasserting its Ukrainian character, and after the collapse of the Soviet regime this process became even more intensive. Its current narrative is focused on depicting the Ukrainians as the only and eternal victims of ethnic discrimination and political repression before and under the Soviets. The national revival in the 1990s and the process of nation-state building have facilitated rooting into the public discourse the idea of the Ukrainian nation’s martyrdom on its way to independence. Ultimately Lviv has played the crucial role in the very becoming of an independent Ukrainian nation-state, so today it is perceived as a representation of pure and genuine of Ukrainian-ness.

## **Remembering and Forgetting in Lviv**

The problem of forgetting – intentional and unintentional – appears as one of the most disputable in studies on historical memory today. The very nature, general mechanisms, key factors and other peculiarities of distortion in human memories attract the attention of scholars from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds – from philosophy to neurophysiology. As a matter of fact, this interdisciplinary character of research on individual, collective and historical memories has proved to be especially productive today. In one of his articles, “Memory-Forgetting-History” (2006), Paul Ricoeur discussed the problem of the two most widespread “sicknesses” of collective memory, namely excess of memory and shortage of memory. He explains the discrepancy between the two in terms of psychoanalysis. Ricoeur refers to Freud’s essay of 1914, “Remembering, Repeating and Working-through”, where the author tried to “define the basic obstacle hindering the ”work of interpretation” as it seeks to recover traumatic memories. He designates this obstacle ... by the term ”repetition compulsion””. According to Freud, a repetition compulsion consists of a tendency to act instead of remembering when a patient reproduces the forgotten fact ”not as memory, but as an action: he repeats it” (Ricoeur, 2006: 13). This idea is perfectly in line with the observations made by other scholars studying socio-psychological consequences of a historical trauma. Thus, Duncan Bell in his introduction to the volume *Memory, Trauma and World Politics* correctly remarked that one of the post-traumatic memory problems “is the absence of temporal distance, the failure to regard the past as past, as something that can be left behind” (Bell 2006:8).

If extrapolated to the scale of nations, according to Ricoeur, “that excess of memory resembles repetition compulsion, which puts a turn to action in place of the genuine memory through which the present and the past could be reconciled with each other .... In this case some people take a sick pleasure in cultivating the repetition-memory” (Ricoeur 2006: 13-14). Indeed, the anxiety that many scholars express thereupon concerns those pernicious social and



political consequences which such an obsession with the past could cause. Todorov, for example, argues that European societies are dangerously obsessed by a cult of memory: "Possessed by nostalgia for an age now irrevocably past, we revere its relics and indulge in magic rituals that are supposed to keep it alive". Charles Maier suggests that this leads to the danger of "complacency and collective self-indulgence" and he warns that "an addiction to memory can become neurasthenic and disabling" (both cited from Bell 2006:25).

Another disturbing effect of traumatic events on collective memory, Ricoeur argues, is its shortage, represented in the form of forgetting. He defines two kinds of forgetting, passive and active. "Passive forgetting manifests itself as ... an *escapist forgetting*, ... a strategy of avoidance, that for its part is guided by an obscure desire not to know, not to be informed about, and not to inquire into atrocities committed in one's own neck of the woods" (Ricoeur, 2006:16). At a certain point, according to Ricoeur, this rather spontaneous escapist forgetting could turn into an *active forgetting* or selective forgetting which takes place when forgetting is deliberately practiced by "official history" attempting to conceal particular aspects of the past (Ricoeur 2006:16-17).

In the case of Lviv, one could easily detect the complete set of described symptoms with regard to the memory of its recent past. Indeed, here we deal with an abnormal memory, which is excessive in what concerns the history of local Ukrainians and deficient when it comes to the remembering of other ethnic cultures which once constituted important elements of the vibrant multicultural cityscape. These seemingly opposed tendencies are just two sides of the same coin, though; they do not contradict but rather complement each other. The excess of memory of events which suit the Ukrainian-centred historical narrative is to compensate for the void caused by the shortage of memory of other nations considered to be irrelevant; the excessive commemorative practices of the former are to dissemble the lack of commemoration of the latter. Indeed, "most of the time, when we speak of forgetting, we are speaking of displacement (or replacement) of one version of the past by another" (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 118). In short, in Lviv the memory of the multicultural past and its dramatic ending is successfully substituted by the narratives of national liberation struggle and nation-state building, which implies that the Ukrainian identity is to be constructed around the notions of martyrdom and glory.

The manifestations of this situation are very visible in western Ukraine today; indeed, here one can easily discover numerous "examples of Ukrainian self-glorification along with remarkable neglect, suppression, and even destruction of all signs of the land's multiethnic past" (Bartov 2007: 40). The most indicative practices of symbolic marking of the cityscape are showed by the fact that 24 out of 38 new monuments erected after the disintegration of the USSR in Lviv are dedicated to Ukrainian historical figures or events; none of those newly-established *lieu de memoir* is related to Polish history (Sereda 2008: 78). The same tendency has been revealed in the study conducted by Yaroslav Hrytsak and Victor Susak. Their research proved that the massive change of the street names undertaken by Lviv city council in the early 1990s aimed at creating a Ukrainian city image by promoting and rooting in public consciousness the Ukraine-centred historical memory. Following this idea, the downtown has been transformed into a symbol of unity of all the Ukrainian lands struggling for national liberation (Hrytsak-Susak 2003: 153-154). In this context the conclusion of Omer Bartov after his search for the (erased) traces of Jewish culture in Galicia sounds logical: "In this memory, there is no room for any other victims [except Ukrainians themselves]" (Bartov 2007: 33-34)<sup>91</sup>.

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<sup>91</sup> In recent years, however, some promising changes have taken place in the city of Lviv. One can detect a stable tendency of gradual inclusion of certain elements of multicultural historical memory into the Lviv symbolic space. During the post-Soviet times the number of streets bearing Polish names increased from 9 in 1986 to 17 in 1997, and the share of loci named after non-Ukrainian historical figures now comprises 20 percent (Hrytsak-Susak 2003: 155-156). The distribution of newly established memorial plaques proves this trend as well, as four percent of

## Absence of memories of the Poles in official local discourses

In post-Soviet Ukraine, memory was totally mobilized for political purposes, and today it remains in the service of politics. Indeed, collective memory is a subject of politics struggling for self-assertion through historical legitimization. Following on the heels of Peter Burke, Alon Confino provides an easy yet very correct explanation of what the politics of memory are about: “simply stated, it is who wants whom to remember what, and why” (Confino 1997:1393). In this context, research on historical memory would never be a purely academic undertaking in Ukraine nowadays. The Ukrainian national great narrative has not been completed yet; it is still the battleground of competing political powers promoting different – sometimes alternative – versions of the Ukrainian past. As a matter of fact, the Ukrainian-centred historical narrative, though it prevails in political discourse and official historiography today, has not been firmly established and avowed yet. In this unstable situation its partisans are on the alert to secure its legitimacy and to suppress any attempts to question its integrity.

“To justify the new ways of remembering, whether on moral, intellectual or emotional grounds, is often to undermine some very cherished cultural values and beliefs”, Iwona Irwin-Zarecka warns those who aspire to overcome forgetting. “On all counts, many of the basic principles guiding collective life may come under attack”, she explains. “If remembrance tends to maintain social identity and order, working against forgetting is often a radical challenge to both. As such, it is likely to meet with resistance and opposition, even when (or perhaps especially when) the new ”infrastructure” of memory is in fact allowed to be constructed”. (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 126). That is exactly what a historian interested in the restoration of the Polish history of Lviv should expect to face at all levels of memory construction – from national to personal.

Lviv’s local authorities (most of which are the right-wing parties’ representatives) are doing little (if anything) to retrieve and maintain the memories of other nationalities once living there (Poles and Jews alike). Scandalous developments surrounding the allocation of the future Polish cultural centre (which does not exist in Lviv today) and procrastination on allotting the construction site for the new building of the Consulate General of Poland in Lviv suggest that the local authorities are not very interested in the preservation or promotion of Polish culture here. A seemingly minor disturbance in the Ukrainian-Polish relationship (i.e., Poland’s recent signing of the Schengen visa treaty and subsequent complications of visa procedures for Ukrainians) could aggravate considerably negative attitudes towards Poles in Lviv, where the Consulate General of Poland resides. In addition, the majority of museums in Lviv belong to the state and are supported either by national or local budgets. Their exhibitions would rather represent the official, Ukrainian-oriented history; one lacking some of the others’ stories. In general, the current political situation on the national level in Ukraine does not encourage the re-introduction of any counter-narratives on the local level, so there is not much pressure from above. This phenomenon of mass social amnesia Omer Bartov calls *an erasure* of the others’ cultural traces; Iwona Irwin-Zarecka considered the notion of *an absence of memory* or even such a term as *a memory void* more appropriate when one is “to speak of forgetting in respect to experience that had been deemed irrelevant from the start.” (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 117).

At the same time a successful – though difficult and time-consuming – solution to the highly politically and emotionally charged problem of restoration of the official Polish military memorial cemetery of the ”Eaglets” (“Cmentarz Orłąt”) in Lviv testifies that reconciliation is possible if there is sufficient political will from both national governments. The cemetery was

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them refer to the history of the Poles (Sereda 2008). The restoration and official unveiling of the Polish military cemetery ‘Eaglets’ in Lviv in 2005 can also be interpreted as a sign of changes.

restored and its official unveiling was attended by the highest government officials – the presidents of Ukraine and Poland – and followed by a mass ecumenical prayer in Lviv in June 2005. This should be considered an important step in the process of national reconciliation and the righteous return of the historical memory of Lviv's multicultural past. However, the optimism that the event may give rise to is rather illusory, as permanent fights for power at the highest levels of Ukrainian politics constantly divert the leaders' attention from these questions. In such an unfavourable situation there is little chance of finding any visible and established representations of memory of the Polish heritage.

In what concerns the memory of Poles in Lviv, the politics are very clear: there is a general – although informal - unanimity among local officials, historians and ordinary city dwellers of what concerns forgetting Polish culture in both active and passive ways.

This seemingly hopeless state of affairs, however, pushes us to think about some alternative ways to retrieve the missing elements of the past. Indeed, Alon Confino was perfectly right when he said:

A search for memory traces is made mostly among visible places and familiar names, where memory construction is explicit and its meaning palpably manipulated, while in fact we should look for memory where it is implied rather than said, blurred rather than clear, in the realm of collective mentality. We miss a whole world of human activities that can not be immediately recognized (and categorized) as political, although they are decisive to the way people construct and contest images of the past. We can think of the family, voluntary association, and workplace but we should also include practices such as tourism and consumerism ... There exists in memory studies the danger of reducing culture to politics and ideology, instead of broadening the field from the political to the social and the experiential, to an everyday history of memory (Confino 1997: 1395, 1402).

Following these suggestions, a scholar should focus on at least two possible ways to explore the remnants of memory of displaced Poles in the city of Lviv. The local tourist industry and the personal life stories of the elderly city dwellers could in fact be those realms which are least affected by official historical discourses (ideologies) and political practices.

### **The tourist industry and studies of collective memory**

The rapidly growing tourist industry makes every attempt to satisfy the needs of a variety of tourists coming to the city. Famous for its rich multicultural past, eastern Galicia in general and the city of Lviv in particular found themselves among the most popular tourist destinations in the post-Soviet time. It is especially true after the inclusion of Lviv in the UNESCO list of places of World Cultural Heritage. It is not surprising that most Lviv visitors are Poles. Obviously, this cannot be explained only by the geographical proximity of Poland; one should not underestimate the role of strong nostalgic sentiments towards Lviv among many of those visitors. This attitude is being both *used* and *stimulated* by the numerous travel agencies located on both sides of the border. It is not a secret that the excursion itineraries vary depending on the nationality of the tourists, so different narratives are constructed and offered for the city tours designed for each particular target groups<sup>92</sup>. These itineraries and narratives are of special scholarly interest. They could be analysed in terms of what kind of loci, events,

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<sup>92</sup> An assumption that tourist agencies may offer counter-narratives which are not loyal to or perhaps even contradict the Ukrainian-centric history of Lviv is based on the fact that recently the Lviv city council attempted to assume control over all city tours by means of special licensing of the travel agencies and tourist guides.

personalities and stories they consist of, and what meaning is ascribed to all this. In this case, the method of participant observation could be useful in addition to textual analysis and interviewing.

An analysis of age and gender composition of the Polish tourist groups could also bring insights for verification of the hypothesis of mainly nostalgia-inspired tourist interest towards Lviv. Its ancient downtown area is relatively small, so city walking tours proved to be the most popular among tourists. This way of sightseeing allows visitors to come closer to the sites of interest, enter the buildings and inner courtyards, touch the artefacts and to visualize the bygone events at the scene. Tanya Richardson, observing such a group experience in Odessa (another Ukrainian city with rich and ethnically polyvalent history), came to the following conclusion: "In walking and talking about the past, they [tourists] evoke, imagine and reassemble it, which enables them to sense history. The experience of sensing history is shared and personal [sic]. The group's critique of the present is largely based on nostalgia for past epochs" (Richardson 2005: 5).

Another very promising source in the search for Polish historical and cultural traces in Lviv could be tourist guide books. A great variety of such publications in several languages is available for Lviv visitors today. Rudy Koshar in his illuminating article *What Ought to Be Seen: Tourists, Guidebooks and National Identities in Modern Germany and Europe*, devoted to the analysis of the entire history of guidebooks in Europe, has demonstrated the heuristic potential of this source in research on national identity construction. "Whether traveling within the nation or abroad, tourists learned not only about the sites they visited but also about their origins in a national collectivity. Tourism and the nation thus met on hallowed cultural ground for which tourists guidebooks offered markers pointing the way to the objects, places and people that had to be seen", he concludes (Koshar 1998:340). Alon Confino in his research also explores the nexus between tourism, consumer culture and national identity in twentieth-century Germany, revealing how the past is turned into a commodity for mass consumption and how consumer culture shapes modern perceptions of the past. Studies on the role guidebooks play in representations of national history and collective memory have been done also in other parts of the world.<sup>93</sup> Similar attempts recently undertaken in Lviv by both local and foreign scholars<sup>94</sup> suggest that at different times tourists were directed to different places; the trajectories of their tours vary greatly depending on what kind of national narrative is to be offered. Taking into account that over the last decade a number of guidebooks came out in Lviv in both the Ukrainian and Polish languages, the study of their structure and content seems to be really relevant and advantageous in terms of revealing both the national and historical discourses they represent.

## Oral history promises

Oral history seems to be another alternative way of searching for the missing Polish memory in Lviv. Since 1991, a number of research projects have successfully applied this method in studies of the most traumatic and previously concealed memories of the recent Ukrainian past

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<sup>93</sup> For example in Vietnam, Singapore and Japan, see Laderman, S. (2002). Shaping memory of the past: Discourse in travel guidebooks for Vietnam. *Mass Communication and Society*, 5 (1), 87-110; Lew, A. A. (1991). Place representation in tourist guidebooks: An example from Singapore. *Journal of Tropical Geography*, 12, 124-137; Nishimura, S., Waryszak, R., King, B. (2007). The use of guidebooks by Japanese Overseas tourists: A quantitative approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45, 275-284.

<sup>94</sup> A master's thesis in Cultural Studies entitled "National discourses formation in Lviv: analysis of tourist guidebooks" has been completed by Andriy Vladymyr at the Lviv National University in 2005; Donna K. Rumenik, professor of psychology at Mayers University (USA) also included an analysis of several guide-books into her research "Exploring the missing Jewish narrative in Lviv" at the time of her Fulbright fellowship in Lviv in 2006-07.

(e.g. the forced collectivization of the peasantry in the 1930s; the Great Famine of 1932-33; the history of the forced labourers during the Second World War; the underground work of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church; the post-war nationalist guerilla struggle against the Soviets in western Ukraine; activities of the underground dissident movement, etc.)<sup>95</sup>. In most cases oral history turned out to be the most productive way to learn about these events from an individual, human perspective, whereas other documentary sources appeared to be too biased, depersonalized, and incomplete. In fact, without personal accounts of the survivors, witnesses, participants of those events our knowledge of the past would be not only inaccurate, it would be considerably distorted.

The accumulated experience of Ukrainian oral historians allows defining some insights of peculiarities of doing oral history on sensitive issues in post-socialist Ukraine. The complexities of doing oral history in totalitarian and post-totalitarian societies have been widely discussed in the 1990s (Passerini 1992). One of those is caused by the state-dictated official history, which for decades was considered to be the only acceptable way of remembering the past – one history for all – so people ultimately found themselves deprived of their multiple and controversial individual memories. As a result, often their “silence gave an illusory unity to collective memory: everyone’s experience was made to seem the same” (Angel and Vanderbeck 1998: 2). The compulsory unification of memories, along with the gradual, unavoidable forgetting of individual experiences ultimately resulted in a “storytelling disability” when it comes to politically charged issues. In practice, elderly narrators tend to recite some politically correct stock phrases adopted from communist or nationalist propaganda and text-books. It is really hard to make them provide their first-hand accounts of bygone events, personal opinions and views. The current political debates around some controversial historical events also impact on the way those individual stories are constructed and narrated.

Peoples’ distrust and suspicion could become another challenge for an oral historian (especially foreigners) doing field research in a post-socialist country. For decades the Soviet people have been trained to hold back their – often unsuitable for official history – private recollections. Indeed, experiencing enormous pressure from the ubiquitous brain-washing Soviet propaganda and living in an atmosphere of overall terror, ordinary people learned well to conceal their critical personal opinions<sup>96</sup>. Therefore a scholar has to be aware of the extraordinary complexity involved in motivating people to discuss their particular historical experiences openly and comprehensively. It is especially difficult to get individuals to reflect critically upon specific topics that were taboo in the USSR, including ethnic discrimination and deportations.

The method of structured interviews (using a list of precise questions) seems to be rather inappropriate and ineffective in oral historical study in post-Soviet Ukraine, especially when it comes to politically charged issues. The research project “Twentieth Century Ukraine in Women’s Memories”<sup>97</sup> showed remarkable differences between women’s spontaneous reflections on some sensitive issues in the course of biographical narration and their opinions as stated in response to the direct questions asked when the life-story telling was over. Indeed, their answers to the questions “What do you think about the people of various ethnicities living next to you?” or “What is the significance of Ukraine’s independence for your life?” tended to be more politically correct, formulated in accordance with the current “political mainstream”

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<sup>95</sup> The specific experiences of Ukrainian scholars doing oral historical research in post-socialist Ukraine have been lively discussed during several national conferences in recent years; it ultimately resulted in the creation of the Ukrainian Oral History Association in November 2006. For more information see: *Ukraina Moderna*, Vol.11, 2007.

<sup>96</sup> For further discussion on the destructive effects of fear on public remembering in the Soviet Union, see: Khubova, Ivankiev-Sharova, in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, ed. Luisa Passerini. International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories. Vol. 1, Oxford University Press, (1992), 89-101.

<sup>97</sup> For project outline and other details, see: Kis in: *Ukraina Moderna*. Vol. 11 (Winter 2007), p. 266-70.

and being “loyal” from the viewpoint of the dominant historical discourse. For instance, those who in fact showed their profound prejudices towards certain ethnicities throughout the life-story telling often represented themselves as perfectly tolerant, unbiased and open-minded persons while answering direct questions on this subject. Those who were obviously nostalgic about the Soviet regime suddenly expressed their appreciation of the independent Ukrainian nation-state afterwards. This readiness to provide the “correct” answers which are perfectly in line with the “general political mainstream” was cultivated in Soviet citizens for decades. So asking straight questions seems to be a rather unproductive way of searching for memories which have been concealed, suppressed, or just abandoned for a long time.

The situation could be even more complicated when it comes to the issues not openly discussed or studied in full before. Having no clue in official history, narrators could feel confused and lost; unable to produce an independent personal opinion. Polish history of/in Lviv is one of those publicly concealed, forgotten, neglected subjects. A philistine could hardly find any relevant and publicly accessible information on Polish culture in Lviv before the Second World War, so for the general public this subject would seem rather irrelevant, strange and inappropriate. Even having some (direct or transmitted) memories of Poles, people may find it difficult to inscribe them into the general historical canvas they currently have at their disposal.

Naturally, for lack of any coherent narrative of displaced Poles within the local historical memory, a scholar has to deal with very dispersed, scrappy, vague and ambiguous individual recollections, which – if they have ever been recounted – were most probably told occasionally and/or in private. That is why the notion of *communicative memory*, as described by Jan Assman and John Czaplicka in their article “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity” (1995), appears to be most appropriate in the study of personal memories of expelled Poles in Lviv.

The concept of “communicative memory” includes those varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications ... Through the practice of oral history we have gained a more precise insight into the peculiar qualities of this everyday form of collective memory, which we call communicative memory ... Every individual memory constitutes itself in communications with others. These “others” however are not just any set of people, rather they are groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past. Halbwachs thinks of families, neighborhood and professional groups... up to and including nations (Assman, Czaplicka 1995:127).

This kind of memory, which exists on the level of informal individual interactions, is perhaps the most resistant to influences of dominant political discourses. Indeed, it is part and parcel of everyday communicative practices of story-telling amongst close friends, family members, and trusted neighbours. Moreover, it is well known that in these very milieux all kinds of counter-narratives and oppositional discourses (political, religious, ethnic, etc.) existed and thrived during the Soviet era. Therefore there is a high probability of being able to track down some unconventional memories exactly at the level of everyday communicative practices.

This idea brings us to the question of possible actors in such communication. It is rather obvious that those who actually maintain informal communicative networks on a regular basis are predominantly women. Indeed, the repertoire of the women’s habitual conversations includes a fair amount of personal stories reflecting the variety of events, situations, special cases and people’s experiences. These very stories – isolated and dispersed – are perhaps the only ones which survived, precisely because of their very private nature. They – despite their

fragmentary character – could become a good starting point from which to reconstruct the local memory of Poles.

There is one more reason to pay special attention to gender aspects in oral historical research in Ukraine today. Currently women constitute the absolute majority of those who could provide first-hand accounts of bygone events. Indeed, the higher life expectancy of women as compared to men<sup>98</sup>, and their relatively better health often determine the prevalence of female interviewees in virtually every oral history project without regard to the research topic. Consequently, a scholar has to be aware of the fact that, nolens volens, all kinds of specific women's perspectives and experiences are coming to the fore in their stories, and this is ultimately reshaping (gendering) our knowledge of the past.

Life experiences and memories of men and women – survivors of the same events – proved to be different as well. For instance, the stories of *ostarbeiter*s – eastern forced laborers in Nazi Germany – disclosed the highly gendered nature of their experiences and subsequent recollections. So the stories narrated by men often address the issues of power and authority between workers and the German management; the rules and regulations of work (and their transgressions); episodes of resistance, etc. At the same time, women's stories are focused mostly on relationships among workers and with the local people, and unconventional ways of survival. There are more details of everyday life, of personal encounters: because of their sex women were exposed to a different kind of endangerments, related to their sexuality and reproductive function. In general, numerous oral historical research projects recently conducted in Ukraine proved the category of gender to be essential for both fieldwork and the following analysis. Gender peculiarities of historical experiences, memories and storytelling should not be neglected in research on displaced Polish culture in Lviv, either.

## Concluding remarks

The history of Poles and Ukrainians in Lviv is really controversial, and either side has a truth of its own. One cannot deny that “even in the convoluted and multifaceted East European context Lviv exemplifies a city of different, at times polar, experiences and interpretations. Its history and historiography were, and to a large measure still are as much hostages to ethnic and national experiences, perspectives, exclusiveness, and denial” (Grabowicz 2000:313-314). The reconciliation of two national versions of history is possible only when the mutual will and readiness are clearly expressed and equal efforts from both sides are made. In the search for missing historical memories, of attempting to reconstruct the past from the dispersed scraps of individual recollections, scholars have to be aware of those at times unpredictable consequences this may lead to. Possible political uses and abuses of those retrieved historical narratives in the context of long-term tensions between the nation's stakeholders are more than real. Indeed, scholars doing research in similar circumstances repeatedly warn about certain “dangers” that the restored memory could bring about. Avishal Margalit points out that “memory breathes revenge as often as it breathes reconciliation”. (Margalit, 2002: 5). With regard to this Maja Zehfuss refers to Ilana R. Bet-El comment on the situation in the former Yugoslavia: “Words of the past became weapons of war.” This “danger” of memory may appear even more acute given the alleged scope for manipulation, though distortion is often by no means necessary to incite a desire for revenge (Zehfuss 2006: 217-218). In the case of Lviv, however, some scholars are more optimistic as another development seems to be more probable. “Ukrainian culture is indubitably dominant in Lviv today, and no other culture – its former rival – can threaten it anymore”, Maciej Janowski claims. “Paradoxically, this situation

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<sup>98</sup> Women normally live up to 72.5 years and men up to 60.5 years on average in Ukraine today.

comprises certain potential opportunity: when the other cultures stop endangering they could become a source of enrichment” (Janowski 2002: 24 [my own translation]).

This idea does not seem paradoxical in the context of *ideological decolonization of memory* as defined by Pierre Nora (2005). The phenomenon is typical for countries liberated from totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, where societies turn to the memories previously destroyed or distorted in favour of those regimes, so the numerous historical counter-narratives could be publicly voiced, heard, appreciated. Ukraine could be a good example of such a decolonization of memory, as a general democratization of Ukrainian society after 1991 created an opportunity for public discussions on history and strengthened academic debates on problematic pasts and the politics of memory of the former regimes (Sereda 2008: 75). This process – although sometimes arduous, controversial and slow – is still an inevitable and irreversible step on the Ukrainian way towards becoming a fully-fledged nation.

Contemporary Ukrainians are facing several challenges, and one of them is the necessity to retrieve from oblivion and to appreciate the displaced narratives of the other nationalities; to ultimately grant them their proper place in the national and local histories. The first step towards this goal would be to recognize that something is really missing from the collective memory. To accomplish this, the Ukrainian nation has to put itself at a certain distance from its past and have an impartial look on it from afar. This task, however, is very difficult to put into practice, especially taking into account the adolescence of the nation and rawness of its grand narrative. “Outsiders may have an easier task here”, Iwona Irwin-Zarecka suggests, “but it is often up to insiders to construct plausible alternatives to the once legitimate interpretation of the events” (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 115). In this regard, an international research project could become an external stimulus which might give impetus to further research on undeservedly forgotten parts of Ukraine’s history.



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## Perpetrators or victims?

### A pilot study of the contemporary historical debate in Poland on the expulsion of Germans in the aftermath of the Second World War

Mattias Nowak

I agree with President George W. Bush, who stated that 'Ethnic cleansing is a crime against humanity, regardless of who does it to whom.' I also agree with the United Nations Draft Declaration on Population Transfer, which states that 'Every person has the right to remain in peace, security and dignity in one's home ... It is this basic human right that has been grossly violated ... The world should also learn about these violations of the basic human rights of many millions; if for no other reason, then to prevent any future expulsions (Otto von Habsburg, 2003)

The above-quoted words, expressed by a former politician of the Christian Social Union of Bavaria and the current head of a royal family so strongly associated with the history of Central Europe, addressed particularly the memory of Germans expelled from their homes in the aftermath of the Second World War. The end of this war did not put an end to the ethnically motivated expulsions of people. Between 1945 and 1950 millions of ethnic Germans – and people considered as Germans by various political authorities – were forced to leave their homes in the western parts of two new socialist states, Czechoslovakia and Poland. While in the Czechoslovak case, historical processes of expulsions and their current socio-political relevance have during the last years received growing analytical attention (see: Schiller 1995, Glasheim 2000, Komska 2004), scientific studies of Germans forcibly leaving western Poland have been carried out to a relatively small degree. Furthermore, the contemporary process of remembering this expulsion, characterised by a variety of conflicting historical narratives, has barely constituted an object for scholarly analyses. At the same time, the public debate in Poland, where sensitive questions regarding the history and the memory of the expulsions are raised, is intensive. Answers to these questions are provided by influential journalists, scholars, politicians, members of the clergy, and many others having power over societal knowledge and thus influencing the collective images of the past.

In the present pilot study, the author analyses the content of and the discursive interaction between historical narratives articulated by Polish political and intellectual elites concerning the ethnically motivated resettlement of the German minority in the second part of the 1940s. The strong polarization of opinions, including the problematic use of concepts such as *perpetrators* and *victims* and *collective memory* is elaborated. By following the conceptual framework of the sociologist Antonina Kloskowska, as used by the historian Kristian Gerner in analyses of historical sites of memory, the author aims to “capture the general outlook of the public debate, discussing and classifying the existing historical narratives.

## How to begin? Theoretical reflections

The main theoretical inspiration for the present analysis is drawn from the so-called interpretative traditions recognising that collective social phenomena – e.g. identities, images, memories – receive constructed and thus changeable meanings through the articulation and social embodiment of these meanings. The process of articulation is most often carried out by political and cultural elites. Interpretations of these social phenomena, their construction and alteration, ought thus to constitute the subject of an analytical inquiry. (cf. Howarth in Marsh & Stoker 1995, p.115). While socially constructed and thereby having a potential for deconstruction, the collective images may during long periods of time remain fixed, concretely influencing political actions. They may furthermore be based on real historical events and should therefore not be confused with so-called invented traditions or fabricated narratives. On the basis of such an assumption, I understand the concept of “collective memory” as a system of ideas and images about the past, which are actively articulated within historical narratives circulating in socio-political life. Regarding the expulsions of Germans after the Second World War, the collective memory in present-day Poland is thus understood as a result of the contemporarily existing narratives, which during recent years have been articulated by actors able to influence the topics and the meanings of the public debate. It is, however, not the collective memory itself, but the voices of political and intellectual elites having power to “activate” collective images, that constitute the analytical sources in the present work. The aim is to grasp and analyse the outlook of contemporary historical messages and meanings, which are articulated, or silenced, in the existing historical narratives. My ambition is to find the main narrative (or narratives) and discuss their interrelations as well as the actors behind them.

The Polish sociologist Antonina Kloskowska (1996) identified several patterns of national self-identifications, defining them, inter alia, as being *univalent*, *bivalent*, *ambivalent* or *polyvalent*.<sup>99</sup> As shown by the historian Kristian Gerner (2003 in Karlsson & Zander p.125-137), these concepts may be helpful in identifying and classifying historical narratives in relation to sites of memory. Gerner’s line of reasoning holds that particular places and objects – e.g. cities, monuments, museums – can encompass enclosed and exclusive (univalent) or broad and inclusive (bivalent or polyvalent) patterns of recognition. He argued, for example, that after the unification of Germany in 1990 various aspects of German Jewish history became acknowledged to a larger degree than before. The Jewish Museum in Berlin may be seen as a platform for bivalence within the formation of inclusive historical knowledge that is simultaneously open to the German and the Jewish voices. Furthermore, Gerner meant that cultural bivalence or polyvalence transcends mono-ethnic patterns of identification because the focus is on territory. A concrete place can at the same time be remembered as representative of Jewish, Polish and German victimhood. I believe that the same line of reasoning may be applied in studies of historical narratives on expulsion, which can for example have a univalent, a bivalent or even a polyvalent character.

Regarding the ethnically motivated expulsions of the Germans, a generally *univalent* pattern of historical memory existed in Poland more or less through the entire communist period. The Polish nation was almost exclusively depicted within a framework of victimhood. Historical textbooks portrayed the Poles as one of the greatest victim groups of a war started by the “evil Germans”. This univalent historical narrative, which did not recognise the suffering of the German expellees, included furthermore a collective amnesia regarding the Polish Jewish history. A significant change emerged during the 1990s, and particularly after 2000 when a

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<sup>99</sup> Univalence exists when a person’s self-image is clearly related to a particular nationality; ambivalence concerns an unclear perception of the self; bivalent identity relates the self-image to two nationalities at the same time (for example feeling both Polish and German), while polyvalent patterns of identification regard a situation where a mosaic of national and/or ethnic self-perceptions together constitute the I or the We.

book by Jan T. Gross entitled *Sasiedzi: Historia zaglady zydowskiego miasteczka* (Neighbours: The story of the annihilation of a small Jewish town)<sup>100</sup> was published in Poland. According to the author, some Polish peasants in the village of Jedwabne collaborated with the Nazis and murdered their Jewish co-inhabitants. This book led to a stormy debate and initiated an enormous challenge for the societal collective memory. While many nationalist-minded politicians, scholars and journalists criticised Gross' book as an example of an anti-Polish agenda aimed at discrediting Poland in the international arena, many did argue that the general and correct self-identification with victimhood should not blind the Poles to deal with their own history of anti-Semitism. A *bivalence* recognising Polish sufferings as well as Polish guilt in the Second World War and its aftermath became visible in the public debate. One of the tasks of the present work is to see if a representation of Poles as victims of the war, and simultaneously as perpetrators concerning the expulsion of German civilians, is possible in present-day Poland.

The last concept borrowed from Kloskowska and adjusted to the study of historical narratives is that of *ambivalence*. In relation to history, an ambivalent framework may appear in times of great social changes causing intellectual and ideological confusion. It may happen when the actors responsible for the creation and social embodiment of historical knowledge are themselves articulating unclear, contradictory and/or often changed messages. Such a scenario can be characteristic for very sensitive questions, which are discussed in times of political transformations when the main articulators are themselves – e.g. because of shame, fear, deficient knowledge, political pressure – not representing clear and stable narratives. Furthermore, it ought to be acknowledged that no clear-cut border has to exist between a bivalent and an ambivalent pattern of collective memory. It is possible for a discursive bivalence to slide into ambivalence, or that an expressed wish to create bivalence, i.e. a space where the historical perspectives of two nations are included, de facto results in ambivalence, unclear attitudes and new unexpected conflicts.

## **A new challenge for the Polish collective memory**

In 1999 the *Federation of Expellees* (Bund der Vertriebenen – BdV), headed by Erika Steinbach, announced its ambition to create a *Centre Against Expulsions*, dedicated to the documentation and commemoration of millions of Germans expelled from eastern Central Europe. While supported by many historians, politicians and human right activists, arguing that all victims of the war deserved to be commemorated, this project provoked great controversy in neighbouring Poland but also within Germany itself. While not supporting the BdV's initiative, the German Bundestag debated the question of a commemoration of German victimhood and proposed an alternative project to erect the *Visible Sign* museum in Berlin. According to the plans, it aims to be based on strong international cooperation and constitute a balanced and Europeanised alternative to the BdV's original proposal.

In Poland, both projects initiated a stormy debate concerning the potential Polish responsibility for the suffering of many German civilians. During the same year as the BdV issued its plans, the collective memory of the Poles was moreover shaken by the previously mentioned book of Jan T. Gross about the events that took place in the town of Jedwabne. Thus, after decades of a general "silence" regarding many sensitive aspects of Polish history, grounded as much in communist censorship as in the collective univalent self-image of the Poles as great victims of the Second World War, the public had to deal with a very controversial question: were the Poles not only and not always the victims but in some

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<sup>100</sup> All translations from Polish are in the present work made by the author.

cases also initiators of historical wrongdoings during and after the war (cf. Törnquist-Plewa p.141-176 in Karlsson & Zander 2003)?

In August 2006 a new project was initiated by the BdV. An exhibition dedicated to the remembrance of the forced migrations in 20th century Europe, with a focus oriented on the ethnic Germans forcibly resettled from Central Europe, was set up in Berlin. The public discourse, including the voices of politicians, scholars, journalists and representatives of the clergy, intensified, which started to affect bilateral relations between the Polish and the German states. In 2006, after visiting a former Nazi concentration camp, the Polish prime minister of that time, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, commented on the exhibition by stating that “Nothing good will come out of it for Poland, Germany or Europe”. He added that although many civilian Germans did suffer, it was however important to remember “who was the perpetrator and who was the victim” of the Second World War (quoted after Landler 2006). The voice of the prime minister and a leader of the party *Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc* (Law and Justice) went hand in hand with a greater number of articulated meanings, at one and the same time supporting, contradicting and moderating the ones of the prime minister. During no more than a couple of years, the generally univalent character of the Polish historical discourse experienced a rapid growth in the expressed ideas and values aiming to affect the historical consciousness of the nation. The single concept of “nationhood” was highly important. Despite differences in the arguments used, the entire debate became related to the meaning of Polishness. Arguments about a Polish responsibility for evil actions; about German historical revisionism; about a wish of some Western journalists to compromise Poland as a new member of the EU, were often related to the history, the identity and the future of the uniformly understood Polish nation. A collectivist conceptualization of nationhood has deep roots in Polish history and it is possible that this historically formed pattern affected the debate. It was common for representatives of various political stances to similarly articulate images of nations as organic entities. In the analysis of the debate one may easily find discursive representations of the “revisionist Germans” as one unified force, or of the Poles as a “collective victim” of historical revisionism.<sup>101</sup>

The public discussions about the expulsions were largely initiated by voices coming from Western Europe, particularly from Germany. This situation was well captured by the German filmmaker Gerhard Gnauck (2007), who wrote in the Polish German magazine *Secesja* a thought-provoking article entitled *Katalysator Steinbach, Masochist Kaczynski. Wie die deutsche Geschichtsdebatte Polen verändert hat* (Catalyst Steinbach, masochist Kaczynski. How the German historical debate changed Poland). Although having elements of polyvalence, the intense public debate was particularly dominated by an interaction of two main narratives. They were very different in the used language and argumentative strategies. Both narratives were however articulated by actors representing, at the same time, the political, the cultural, as well as the scholarly spheres.

One was represented by the strongly patriotic, rightist opinion of the Kaczynski brothers and their conservative compatriots belonging to, or at least sympathizing with, the Law and Justice party.<sup>102</sup> In general it was argued that the developments in Germany have a

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<sup>101</sup> A conceptualization of the Polish national identity and thus an intellectual uniformization of a people along ethnic lines developed strongly already in the second part of the nineteenth century, in accordance with the paradigm of “positivism”, which included the Spencerian application of organic theory on the society. The strong position of nationalism that permeated the interwar period, as well as the uses of ethnic nationalism by the post-war communist regime, contributed furthermore to a general development of a collectivist-uniform line of reasoning.

<sup>102</sup> There were examples of important actors articulating a nationalist narrative who were associated with other political parties, Liga Polskich Rodzin (The League of Polish Families) being the most accurate example. However, in regard to the question of the expulsions, these actors often spoke with a similar voice or even created a united front together with conservatives within or around Law and Justice.

revisionist tendency and are politically dangerous by giving fuel to a radicalization of social attitudes in both countries. Furthermore, they downplay the history of the Polish suffering. This narrative was often supported by right-wing media such as the daily *Rzeczpospolita*, the weekly *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* and by several prominent scholars, for example philosophers and historians from *Osrodek Myśli Politycznej* (The Centre of Political Thought) in Cracow. It is worth emphasising that this narrative, articulated by the political right, was and continues to be relatively similar to the univalent historical memory advocated during the communist epoch. Although there is no room for an elaboration of this aspect in the present study, it should be noted that the historical narratives advocated by the communist regime had strong nationalist tendencies. That is why we can today, on the right side of the political spectrum, find examples of anti-German or anti-Jewish rhetoric that sound similar to that of Communist Poland.<sup>103</sup>

The other main narrative may be related to various moderate rightist, centrist and leftist actors, who often described themselves as liberally-minded and oriented towards reconciliation. In the political sphere the concept of “liberals” and “moderates” may here be related to figures working within or being supportive of the party *Platforma Obywatelska* (The Civic Platform) or the broadly understood social democrats. Although ideologically not united, the liberal Civic Platform, the left-wingers and some moderate forces within the Church interestingly articulated a similar idea, which was as tolerant and inclusive as thought-provoking. It was sometimes argued that Poland and Germany ought to work deeply for mutual reconciliation, but also to avoid any risk for a development in which German historical consciousness would include only the Jews and thereafter the Germans themselves as the main victims of the war. Thus, a fear of marginalization of Polish victimhood becomes visible, even if not accompanied by a tendency to view the Germans almost exclusively as perpetrators. A balanced stance was advocated, emphasising the need to recognise all victims of the war but without forgetting that the Poles constituted one of the nations that suffered most.

### **The cornerstones of the debate**

The previously mentioned German filmmaker Gerhard Gnauck (2007) argued that since the beginning of the new millennium the Polish debate circulated around three concrete topics, which together characterised the public opposition towards the *Centre Against Expulsions* proposed by the BdV. I argue that these topics together constitute a general framework for the entire debate, in which narratives on the expulsions were articulated. Gnauck stated that the Polish discourse included:

- 1) The fear of a revision and a relativization of history within German society.
- 2) The argument that the expulsions were initiated by the Potsdam conference and constituted a “natural” consequence of a war initiated by the German state.
- 3) The idea that current Polish responses are in fact only reactions to the unnecessary series of actions taken by German organisations and politicians.

After the opening of the BdV exhibition in 2006, the mayor of Warsaw at that time, Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, accompanied the general critical rhetoric of the Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński by cancelling his official visit to Berlin. He argued that such a visit would not be

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<sup>103</sup> For an elaboration of Polish nationalism during the Cold War epoch, see: Tyszka (2004) *Nacjonalizm w komunizmie: ideologia narodowa w Związku Radzieckim i Polsce Ludowej* (Nationalism in Communism: national ideology in the Soviet Union and People’s Poland).



appropriate during the time the exhibition was shown, stating that “This exhibition is basically targeted against Poland” (quoted after *Wprost* 06.08.17). While listening to the politicians from the Law and Justice Party, or while reading journalistic articles in *Rzeczpospolita* (e.g. Semka 2002, Krasnodebski 2002), one can often notice an expressed anxiety about an allegedly ongoing strengthening of revisionist ambitions within German society. This tendency, which sometimes is related to the issue of seeking financial re-compensation from the Polish state for lost material properties, is depicted as a dangerous development harming as much the bilateral German-Polish relations as the true historical knowledge itself. The representatives of this stance seem to fear that a relativization of history carried on by such figures as Erika Steinbach may marginalize the Polish sufferings during the Second World War and, moreover, spread false historical awareness, even on a European level. In an interview from 2006 organised by activists from the organisation *Humanity in Action*, a member of parliament representing the League of Polish Families party, Daniel Pawlowiec, expressed his conviction that Erika Steinbach’s actions constituted a sophisticated political provocation conducted in order to gain support from a part of the German electorate which still harbored some historical resentment (Kaj & Esser 2006).

If we look at the moderate right-wing media, we may since the time when the *Centre Against Expulsion* was initiated find several examples of a depiction of the BdV and its leader as a dangerous political force. In 2003, the weekly *Wprost* published an issue with a vastly provocative front-page picture. Steinbach was portrayed in a black SS uniform sitting on the back of then-chancellor Gerhard Schröder. This picture gave an impression of the chancellor’s weakness in relation to the social influence of the BdV. It can also be interpreted as an example of Polish anxiety for a growth of revisionist tendencies in German politics. Such visual representations, as well as the above-mentioned statements of politicians from Law and Justice and from the League of Polish Families, constitute a quite univalent historical narrative. This narrative continues to follow a dichotomy of pitting German danger against Polish victimhood.

In 2002, Adam Michnik, the famous dissident from the communist epoch and today the chief editor of the left-centrist daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, wrote with the journalist Adam Krzeminski an official open letter to chancellor Gerhard Schröder and to the Polish prime minister Leszek Miller. The title of this letter, published also in the pages of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, was “Wrocław, nie Berlin” (Breslau, not Berlin). The authors argued that a museum for commemoration of the expellees in fact deserved to be erected, but in present-day Poland, in the city of Wrocław. This alternative site was presented as a more appropriate one due to its multinational history and its experiences regarding the forced replacements of its inhabitants. Wrocław witnessed the expulsion of German civilians in 1945 and later became a city inhabited mainly by Poles and Ukrainians forcibly transferred there from the former eastern territories of interwar Poland.<sup>104</sup> It may be added that for centuries Wrocław also constituted an important centre of Jewish intellectual life and that many survivors of the Holocaust, who after the war settled in that city, became victims of an “encouraged emigration” during the 1950s and then again in the late 1960s.<sup>105</sup> In the letter, Michnik and Krzeminski (in Buras & Majewski 2003, p.279) stated the following:

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<sup>104</sup> To this day, Wrocław is sometimes described in Polish public discourse as the state’s most eastern city. This label is grounded in the fact that the majority of Wrocław’s inhabitants have roots in present-day Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, particularly in the city of Lwów/Lviv. The University of Wrocław is, for example, often referred to as a continuation of the academic traditions of the former Polish University of Lwów. A large number of scholars from Lwów continued their academic careers from the late 1940s onwards – particularly in mathematics and in sociology – in their new place of residence in south-western Poland. For a detailed history of Wrocław/Breslau, see Davies & Moorehouse (2003).

<sup>105</sup> Before the Second World War fifteen scholars, who won or would after the war win a Nobel Prize, were in different ways connected to the scientific life of the city, many of them being famous scholars of German and Jewish backgrounds.

We are coming with a warm appeal, so you gentlemen – together – would want to support the proposal, which has been discussed for some time, to build such a centre-museum not in Berlin, but in Wrocław. It would not be a museum of German suffering and complaints, changing the perpetrators into victims, nor a museum of Polish martyrdom and settlement, but – a museum of a catastrophe and a sign for a renewal of our common Europe.

This proposal was originally initiated by a Polish-German project named the Copernicus Group, organised by the German and Central Europe Institute in Szczecin and the Deutsches Polen Institut in Darmstadt (Kaj & Esser 2006). While oriented towards dialogue, reconciliation and a European character for the museum, the Polish members of the project and the Polish liberal and leftist media supportive of it stressed, however, the importance of placing a museum within contemporary Polish borders. It was acknowledged that the museum should not be a platform for German complaints and should include a general European perspective. In my opinion, even the actors emphasising an inclusive and universalist approach to the history of the expulsions were not convinced that such an approach would be guaranteed if the main site of memory of the expulsions was placed in Germany. Some degree of fear of creating a revised historical knowledge was present in the statements of liberally-minded politicians, journalists and scholars.

Thus, a fear of German domination in the uses of history was de facto visible in both mainstreams of the Polish public debate. The difference was, however, that while a large part of the right-wing position was univalent, many elements of bivalence existed in the narrative articulated by liberal and social-democratic actors, for example by *Gazeta Wyborcza*. This bivalence meant that a space was created for both the Polish and the German voices on the history of the expulsions. In this space two national perspectives and two national narratives could co-exist simultaneously. Such bivalence may be compared with the one studied by the historian Kristian Gerner (2003 in Karlsson & Zander p.125-137), concerning sites of memory. Because the moderate and liberal narrative did de facto include some portion of fear for a revision of history and some degree of a lack of trust towards the German side, one may notice that it was however not simply bivalent but sometimes possessed ambivalent elements.

Although I did not find any great polyvalence in the studied debate, it should be noted that, regarding the issue of historical revisionism, the meanings articulated by minor actors outside the two mainstream positions tended more often to support the nationalist stance. It is, however, also important to emphasise that the moderate one was often articulated by the Polish clergy, otherwise more supportive of the political right. The moderate voices were, for example, expressed by the Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*. This fact may in my opinion be related to the tradition of activity towards reconciliation, which was visible within a large part of the Polish Catholic clergy from the 1960s onwards. While in the immediate post-war years no intensive attempts towards reconciliation between the Poles and the Germans developed, in 1965 the Polish Catholic bishops issued an official letter to the German bishops in which the famous phrase “we forgive and ask for forgiveness” was included. Their plea for reconciliation was well acknowledged in Germany and in a way responded to by the chancellor Willy Brandt’s official visit to Warsaw in 1970 (cf. Gerner 2003, p.123-124 in Karlsson & Zander). The letter is well remembered in present-day Poland and has together with later activities of the Polish-born Pope John Paul II importance for the dialogue-oriented narrative articulated by parts of the contemporary clergy.

Regarding the milieu gathered around the Civic Platform Party, one may acknowledge that the current government of Donald Tusk, which in 2007 replaced the government of Jaroslaw Kaczynski, showed non-aggression but still scepticism towards the plans of the German political leadership to erect the *Visible Sign* in Berlin. Although it became recognised

that this project constitutes an inclusive and balanced alternative to the BdV's *Centre Against Expulsions*, the scepticism was articulated even by professor Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, one of the leading figures in the history of Polish-German reconciliation. Bartoszewski, who currently serves as Donald Tusk's plenipotentiary for questions concerning international dialogue, emphasised publicly that no Polish institution participates in the formation of the *Visible Sign*. He added that the Germans may very well do what they wish, but their actions will be carefully looked upon and analysed. "These are your decisions, but not common ones with ours. We do not participate in this" (quoted after *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2008.03.19). The Polish government headed by the Civic Platform recently proposed erecting a European Second World War museum in Gdansk, where all victims of the war could be commemorated equally on the soil of a country which was one of the most affected by the horrors of the war. This proposal can be seen as an alternative to the *Visible Sign* project, accused even by the Polish moderates of a wish to downplay the German responsibility for the Second World War. The idea of the Gdansk-based museum was presented as having a truly transnational and European ambition to commemorate not only the expulsions but the entire spectrum of evils of the war, without neglecting the sufferings of anyone.

To a lesser extent than concerning the issue of historical revisionism, but still in a notable way, the public debate in Poland included the question of the Potsdam conference in 1945 as a source of the expulsions. The political decisions made by Western leaders in Potsdam, which were throughout the communist epoch emphasised as legitimizing the expulsions, became during the last years raised again by Polish politicians and scholars. With similarities to the narrative of the communist authorities, the forcible evacuation of the German minority from the Polish state continues to be described by representatives of various ideological opinions as a process not only supported but initiated by the Allies. This line of reasoning has two interconnected consequences. Firstly, the actions carried out by Polish authorities become politically legitimized as internationally sanctioned. Secondly, the responsibility of the Poles is automatically downplayed. If anybody should be blamed for the expulsions, the role of the Polish authorities should thus never be exaggerated; something that could happen if the voices of the expellees' organizations were not balanced by a Polish counter-narrative. Many historians have, for example, emphasised the role of Winston Churchill, who in 1944 stated:

Expulsion is the method which, insofar as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble ... A clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed by the prospect of disentanglement of populations, not even of these large transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions than they have ever been before (quoted after NationMaster Encyclopedia).

One may argue that the participants of the Potsdam Conference shared the opinion that the expulsions constituted a difficult but necessary development, which could prevent ethnic conflicts in the future. What is important in the context of the present work is that, regardless of the true attitudes of the policy makers, their decisions became recently emphasised in Polish historical narratives. Many intellectuals, both those politically supporting Law and Justice and those sympathising with the Civic Platform or with the social democratic parties, agree with the ideas of Churchill saying that the expulsions did in fact prevent other conflicts. This particular issue unites the majority of actors participating in the debate and constitutes an example of a univalent element in the general historical discourse. However, differences exist concerning answers to the question if and in what ways Polish society was supportive of the forced resettlements. In both mainstreams of the debate it is generally recognised that

collective anti-German feelings were common and “natural” after the war. Some nationalistically-minded intellectuals argued that these feelings and support of the expulsions can thus be seen as legitimate and the Poles have nothing to feel ashamed about or apologise for. Others tried to articulate a bivalent stance by identifying both the Polish and the German suffering. The moderate voices stressed that while the expulsions were not initiated by Poles, present-day society should be open to remembrance of German victimhood. Specific places such as former German cities, now inhabited by a Polish population, should thus offer a public space for commemoration of all tragedies in the history of these places. In concrete terms it could, for example, mean that monuments dedicated to the remembrance of the former German population and its culture could be erected in these cities. This openness is furthermore related to a larger polyvalent framework of memory where an inclusive space for remembering as well Polish as well as German and Jewish inhabitants and their victimhood is created. It is precisely such a polyvalence in which the memory of the Jews, the Poles and the Germans is interconnected that has been advocated by the historian Kristian Gerner.

The journalist of the left-wing weekly *Polityka*, Andrzej Krzeminski (2005), acknowledged that while the decisions made in Potsdam had extensive support in the societies from which the Germans were expelled, this history ought to become a universal lesson for all Europeans. He thought that the result of the conference can be seen as a necessary outcome of its time but should constitute a unique event: expulsions ought never to be politically sanctioned again. In my opinion, by opening a space for the perspectives and memories of many nations and by wishing to draw universal lessons, Krzeminski tries to present a polyvalent option followed by a normative vision.

A line of reasoning emphasising the role of the Allied forces and the need to prevent future ethnic conflict has by the American scholar David Curp (2006) been related to the wishes of the communist leadership to form national unification and promote a post-war Polish national identity. According to Curp, the ethnic cleansing of the German minority was to a large extent initiated by the communist regime and helped to restore national unity and political stability in the socialist Polish state. This policy was quite successful in forming a collective feeling of national solidarity, but the “success” was in turn dependent on the transformation of a formerly multicultural society into an ethnographic monolith. The communist politicians used anti-Germanism and anti-Semitism in order to create a collective national organism, loyal to the regime.

Yet another element permeating the historical debate was the mechanism of “action – reaction”. After BdV’s proposal concerning the *Centre Against Expulsions*, several Polish politicians and intellectuals initiated a number of projects, which could partially be perceived as a response aiming to strengthen Polish historical narratives. A concrete step in this direction was the creation of a large and technologically advanced Warsaw Uprising Museum, opened in 2004. A year earlier, a major conference named “Polish expellees” was organised in the city of Zamosc. It was attended by some of the country’s leading cultural authorities, for example Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek and the eminent historian Andrzej Friszke, who then represented the *Institute for National Remembrance*. The conference was accompanied by an exhibition entitled “A childhood of the war – the fate of Polish children under the Nazi occupation”. In 2004 the so-called “House for Encounters with History” opened in the Polish capital. It constituted a platform for intellectual elaboration of Poland’s modern history, where various scholars could work with, among other things, sensitive questions concerning the Second World War and present Polish perspectives. Besides these concrete projects, a general pattern of reaction and response emerged in the statements of various leading politicians, including the Kaczynski brothers. It was for example said that any German demand concerning financial re-compensation for the lost property would be countered by a bill for the destruction of the Polish cities, which will be sent to Berlin. In this context, the narrative of the BdV and its head

Erika Steinbach was presented as a dangerous revisionist force, the actions of which provoked fear within the entire Polish society. The Polish version of the magazine *Newsweek* remarked that not every Pole knows much about Angela Merkel and Helmut Kohl, but even every child has a clear picture of Erika Steinbach as an epitome of evil (Bota & Wefing 2008). Regarding the question of financial re-compensations, the Polish socio-political elite spoke mainly with a unified voice. There was thus another example of a univalent aspect in the discourse on the history of the expulsions. This reasoning about unnecessary and wrong German actions was often related rhetorically to the idea that the Poles lost much more than the Germans, even if the latter could also be considered victims of the Nazi regime.

The concept of “German actions” was also discussed in relation to the ways in which the expulsions took place. Several scholars stated in the media that it should not be forgotten that the Nazi authorities themselves organised the first large transfers of the German population. It was emphasised that while the eastern front came closer, a massive project of “wild evacuations” was initiated by the German army itself. While given numbers vary, many historians argued that millions of people, who today are defined as expellees, were in fact forcibly removed from their homes on the basis of decisions made by the Nazis. Additionally, many civilian Germans fled of their own will after being frightened by official messages about the approaching Red Army. An emphasis of these events by scholars was in turn used by politicians, who highlighted the academic professionalism of Polish historians as a guarantee for an objective historical knowledge. It was not uncommon in the debate that politicians motivated by ideological preferences used the voices of scholars in order to legitimize their point of view. As an interesting example in this context one may mention the “collaboration” between the party Law and Justice and the Cracow-based organisation named the Centre for Political Thought. Many conservative scholars from this centre supported the severe right-wing stance. I believe that it is adequate here to speak about an integration of a scholarly and an ideological use of history (cf. Karlsson 1999).

## Conclusion

On 29 October 2003, the presidents of Germany and Poland, Johannes Rau and Alexander Kwasniewski, published an official statement called “The Gdansk declaration”. The two politicians emphasised a common will to favour the documentation of all forced resettlements which took place during 20th century European history. Their common voice united the Polish and the German perspectives and opened a space for bivalence in the historical memory of the two nations. It also created room for a polyvalence in which the victimhood of many national and ethnic communities could be included in a common historical discourse. In their declaration, the presidents stated:

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tens of millions of people in Europe have suffered as a result of displacement, flight and expulsion. In the memory of the Polish and the German nations the atrocities perpetrated on millions of people as a result of the war unleashed by the brutal and evil National Socialist regime occupy a special place. ... The bitter past must unite our efforts for a better future. We must remember the victims, and we must make sure they were the last. It is each nation’s natural right to mourn for them, and it is our common obligation to make sure that remembrance and mourning are not abused to divide Europe again. Therefore, there can be no more room for material claims, for mutual accusations and for setting off crimes and losses against each other. ... The Europeans should jointly reappraise and document all cases of displacement, flight and expulsion in Europe during the 20th century in

order to make their causes, their historical contexts and their manifold consequences transparent for the public. All this can only be achieved in a spirit of reconciliation and friendship. It will unite us all the more closely.

As we have seen in the present pilot study, the vision articulated by Rau and Kwasniewski is yet far from being dominant in the historical narratives circulating in the ongoing public debate in Poland. Especially the presidents' call for an abandonment of "mutual accusations and for setting off crimes and losses against each other" is difficult to obtain when many actors still emphasise the importance of remembering who was the victim and who was the perpetrator of the Second World War. The warm diplomatic climate present in the meeting of presidents in 2003 did not go hand-in-hand with the general development of historical narratives and the practical policies undertaken by Polish authorities. Especially after the parliamentary elections of 2005, bringing the party Law and Justice to power, but also after the election of the liberal government in 2007, national interests and particularities did not disappear. They are visible in Poland as well as in Germany. While the German government is clear in its ambition to proceed with the project "Visible Signs", the Polish side, represented among others by Professor Wladyslaw Bartoszewski has stressed the importance of isolating Erika Steinbach from the project. Simultaneously, the current government in Warsaw is proposing to create a Second World War museum in Gdansk, where all the victims of the war could be commemorated.

The Polish debate on the expulsion of the Germans is dominated by two main narratives; one articulated by nationalistically-minded right-wing forces, and one by the liberals and the broadly understood left. While the historical narrative of the former is univalent and somewhat similar to the ideas propagated during the communist epoch, the other is developing in a bivalent direction. This development is, however, far from completed and a clear bivalence is not yet present in the public debate. I argue that the liberal and leftist framework does include some important actors expressing a more or less bivalent option but this framework, in general, also possesses many univalent and even ambivalent tendencies. It is not difficult to hear voices calling for reconciliation and togetherness concerning interpretations of history. These voices are, however, at the same time often stressing the need to remember that Poles should primarily be seen as victims and that Germans ought not to be striving to achieve an equal status of victimhood. Many Polish politicians and intellectuals emphasise the need for commemoration of German suffering but seem to be somewhat afraid of a development where too much such commemoration could marginalize the Polish victimhood and move the focus away from the question of German guilt to German suffering. The situation of bivalence becomes thus influenced by ambivalent elements arising from the Polish fear of German revisionism. One may get the impression that an opening for the German voice is favoured but on the provision that it is kept within a framework that does not clash with the Polish historical memory.

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