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A WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Dear colleagues, dear friends of ISHA, and dear readers!

On behalf of the International Board and Council of the working year 2015-16, I am very proud to introduce you to the 17th edition of *Carnival*, the annual journal of the *International Students of History Association (ISHA)*. *Carnival* was founded as a students' journal in order to collect and share the research of young scholars and students alike. The articles of each volume are thematically centered on the topics of the previously held international seminars and conferences of the *ISHA* network. The journal therefore collects some of the results presented and discussed in various *ISHA* workshops but also provides the opportunity for individuals to share their scientific passion, interests and findings in a professional online journal.

The volume at hand is the third one edited by Flavia Tudini and her team, and comprises articles dealing with the main themes of *ISHA* events held in 2015-16. Let me give you a brief overview of the interesting range and diversity of topics comprised here:

Right at the beginning, you can gain an insight in a new workshop-concept introduced by *ISHA* Vienna and their former president Pia Nagl as well as *ISHA* International's Archivist Georg Gänser. Based on a "hands-on" approach, the participants of the weekend seminar in Vienna explored issues concerning the city of Vienna at the end of the Second World War in cooperation with the *Municipal and Provincial Archives of Vienna*.

Following this, Marino Badurina asks "How Revolutionary Were the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe?" and takes on a promising journey of questioning established ("western") views of the events that brought the Soviet Union to an end.

Balint Fekete and Bence Bari both focus on 20th century Hungary; while the former takes a closer look at the propaganda produced during the so-called Horthy era, the latter leaps a little bit farther into the past and questions the development of Austro-Hungarian-European relations during the second half of the First World War.

A different time and topic is examined by Dániel Molnár who deals with military questions referred to by the title "The Merchant, the Spaniard and the Turks".

Two authors of this volume highlight issues of Memory and Remembrance: Susanne Korbel examines the *Bund Jüdischer Frontsoldaten Österreich* as an example of memory politics following the First World War and the constant rise in anti-Semitism in Austria, whereas Jeremy Stöhs looks at the impact of the book "Slaughterhouse-Five" on cultural remembrance.

A more mythological approach is taken up by Iliana Koulafeti, who investigates the story of the fairy Melusine.

Completing this wide range of topics, Constantine P. Theodoridis deals with the "Return to Algiers" of Thomas Hees in the 17th century and Uula Neitola deconstructs the reputation of Tiberius as represented in works of Roman authors.

This diversity of topics in this volume not only represent the diversity of the international events held by ISHA during the last term but also the diversity and uniqueness of *ISHA International* and its sections: The last year has seen many changes and rough, or let us rather call them *interesting*, times for *ISHA*. The organization has grown rapidly, admitting new member and observer sections and enlarging its bureaucratic organs (council) in order to ensure the association is equipped to meet all working challenges it may encounter in the future. These winds of change are helping to put *ISHA* back on a professional track – to further guarantee and foster an active academic exchange amongst students interested in history from all over the world.

VIVA ISHA!

Lisbeth Matzer

ISHA International Vice-President 2015-16

Vienna at the End of the Second World War: Continuities and Discontinuities

RESULTS OF RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE ARCHIVE WORKSHOP IN VIENNA

1. Introduction

This paper is based on the results of research conducted by the archive workshop, organised by ISHA Vienna in collaboration with the Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (Vienna City Archive), which took place from the 28th to the 31st of May 2015.¹ The aims of the workshop were twofold- to provide students with an insight into the main tasks and challenges of working with archive material, and to study the history of National Socialism and its consequences. The students were required to read primary sources, to critically analyse them, and to relate them to a major topic. This enabled them to explore the possibilities and limitations of working with primary sources in terms of the information that they can provide and how they can be used for historical research. The primary sources were pre-selected and introduced to the students by Mag. Georg Gänser (ISHA Vienna, intern at Vienna City Archive). The secondary sources were chosen and provided by Georg Gänser, Pia Nagl, Christina Wieder, Ruth Goren and Clara Peterlik to make background information available. The students spent a full day at the Vienna City Archive and a day and a half at the University of Vienna to summarise their findings. After their results were submitted, they were reviewed by the members of ISHA Vienna, commented on and returned to the students. They then revised their findings before re-submitting them for publication.

We dedicated the workshop to the 70th Anniversary of the End of World War II, which is one of the defining moments in Austria's history. We asked the students to find continuities and discontinuities in the primary material produced during the years between 1943 and 1948 and to summarise their findings in a short paper. They succeeded, leading to the following conclusions: A clear continuity was found in terms of the biography of Karl Hermann Spitzzy, who is referred to as the discoverer of penicillin. Although the primary sources show that Spitzzy was involved in war crimes, the physician didn't seem to have problems regaining his position in society after the war. In fact, he is still referred to as the discoverer of penicillin and considered an honourable figure in public memory of Austria, as shown by *Ulrike Achatz*, *Nicole Hanisch* and *Flora Fuchs (2.1)*. A combination of continuities and discontinuities were found by *Anamarija Bašić*, *Nadine Dobler* and *Riina Hyökki* when they looked more closely at the representation of women on political posters before and after the end of the war **(2.2)**. In the immediate post-war period, Vienna was governed by the Inter Allied Command, which was in close contact with the *Bürgermeisteramt* (mayor's office). *Lorenzo Vincentini*, *Vincent Regente*, *Maja Lukanc* and *Tobias Eder* took a more detailed look at the communication process between these bodies, and how it developed between 1945 and 1949 **(2.3)**. *Julia Demel*, *Jimena Alejandra Guardia Hernandez* and *Rok Piri* considered the ways in which the Austrian bureaucratic organs interacted with issues of personal fate after the Second World War **(2.4)**. Finally, *Victoria Buck*, *Alexandre Faure* and *Lorenz Reiter* focused on sources relating to the *Bürgermeisteramt*, as well as documents produced in the early days after the end of the war **(2.5)**.

¹ Furthermore, we wish to thank the Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, the Verein Zeitgeschichte, the Fakultätsvertretung für Geisteswissenschaften (GEWI Wien) as well as the Studienrichtungsververtretung Geschichte (StrV) for their support.

1. Workshop results

2.1. Dealing with war crimes in Austria after 1945 – The case of Karl Hermann Spitzky

The denazification process, as introduced by the Allied Forces, should support a discontinuity between the Nazi regime and the post-war period. In Austria however, this was not always so. An example of this is the case of Karl Hermann Spitzky. When Karl Hermann Spitzky died in 2013, many laudatory accounts of his research on the pharmaceutical use of Penicillin were published. In most of these, his occupation during the 1930s and 1940s is only described as far as his serving as a doctor in military hospitals on the Russian front. They generally do not mention Spitzky's early and staunch membership in the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei), nor his position as *Hauptsturmführer* in the *Waffen-SS*.² Although the evidence of this was compelling, no action was taken after the war and he was never prosecuted.

After 1945, the Austrian administration and the Allied Forces distinguished three types of liability amongst the former NSDAP members. Only party members who were in command were classified as war criminals who could face heavy punishment, whereas other categories were mostly only obliged to pay a fine.³ Other classifications were the *Belastete* (Offenders) and *Minderbelastete* (Lesser Offenders). In order to maintain the discourse of Austria as a victim of the Nazi Regime, the administration focused on the persecution of so-called *Illegale* (illegals), people who joined the NSDAP before the Anschluss (the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany), as the party was still forbidden at that point.⁴ When the administration initiated the denazification, it took a while for the process to get under way because many documents were not available or had been destroyed. They collaborated with society and in many cases considered the statements of former party members as trustworthy, although these often attempted to conceal their involvement. The former members of the NSDAP had to register themselves and could therefore decide which information they provided. These "registration lists" were public and everybody could "veto" the information.⁵ This is due to the difficulties the Austrian administration faced in the process of denazification: The majority of civil servants had been party members before 1945, a purge would have led to a breakdown of the entire national administration.⁶ As a result it is likely that former sympathies and friendships had an effect on who was prosecuted.

Spitzky, having joined the NSDAP in 1934, should have been classified as an illegal member. Moreover, he had held the position of an SS-Oberscharführer and was Hauptsturmführer within the Waffen-SS.⁷ There was sufficient evidence that he was an "Illegal." Nevertheless, he managed through repeated appeals, to have his process laid down in 1950. During these three years, he brought up several different arguments, such as that he was just in a riding club or was forced to join the SS. Unfortunately, these arguments were contradicted

² Ernst Klee, 'Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich – Wer war was vor und nach 1945, in *Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich – Wer war was vor und nach 1945*, Frankfurt am Main, Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 2003, p. 592 and 1; [http://www.meduniwien.ac.at/homepage/news-und-topstories/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=3479&cHash=561c8abdaf](http://www.meduniwien.ac.at/homepage/news-und-topstories/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3479&cHash=561c8abdaf); <http://wien.orf.at/news/stories/2587186>; http://www.medacad.org/vma/e/images/stories/img/Nachruf_K-H-Spitzky.pdf; http://www.billrothhaus.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=367 [last accessed: 30.05.2015].

³ Matthew Paul Berg, *Arbeitspflicht in Postwar Vienna: Punishing Nazis vs. Expediting Reconstruction 1945- 48*, *Austrian History Yearbook*, Vol. XXXVII, Minneapolis, 2006, p. 196.

⁴ Art. II §§1ff. Verbotsgesetz of 8th of Mai 1945, StGBI. Nr. 13/1945, 6th of June 1945.

⁵ Art. II §§1ff. Verbotsgesetz of 8th of Mai 1945, StGBI. Nr. 13/1945, 6th of June 1945.

⁶ Berg, 'Arbeitspflicht in Postwar Vienna', p. 188.

⁷ WStLA, M.Ab. 119, A42 – NS-Registrierung: 9. Bez. 7736, Karl Hermann Spitzky. (1947-1950), Bk 511/49.

by administrative records which clearly prove his involvement with the Nazi regime. Nevertheless, his appeals were sufficient to have him declared free from accountability and allowed him to resume his academic career without his past ever being publically scrutinised again. Until his death, Spitzzy was renowned for his research and publications in the fields of Medicine and Philosophy. He received many awards, including the “Wilhelm-Exner-Medal”⁸, the “Theodor-Körner-Award”⁹, the *Golden Medal of the city of Vienna* and was appointed honorary president of the *Wiener Medizinische Akademie*. This case shows that it was possible for former party members, even of high ranks, to escape persecution and resume life as a private citizens, even to become people of public attention without their past being scrutinized. The post-war career of Karl Hermann Spitzzy shows a clear continuity between the role he had before and after the end of the Second World War. This is but one example, however it epitomises the extent to which Austrian denazification failed to put even well known party members in influential positions within the regime to trial.

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2.2 Posters as Representation of Women’s Role in Society

This paper discusses the representation of women in political posters in Austria during and after World War II. The analysis focuses on finding out how women were perceived in different historical contexts and how their position in society was defined. The aim is to reveal possible continuities and discontinuities concerning the role of women.

The analysis applies a comparative approach and concentrates on two posters. The first one is an election poster for the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ) used for the first post-war Parliamentary elections in November 1945.¹⁰ The wartime perspective is represented by a German Red Cross (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, DRK) recruitment poster from 1943. In addition, research literature considering the Nazi perception of women and the early post-war situation in Austrian society is used to support the interpretation of the visual sources discussed.

2.2.1. Wartime perspective

⁸ <http://www.wilhelmexner.at/liste.html> [last accessed: 30.05.2015]

⁹ <http://www.theodorkoernerfonds.at/index.php?id=154> [last accessed: 30.05.2015]

¹⁰ Austrian Parliament, <http://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/PERK/HIS/REP2/1945/index.shtml>. [last accessed: 30.05.2015]

The wartime poster¹¹ displays a woman leaning on a red wall, gazing at a group of nurses who are performing the Nazi salute in the background. The group is situated in a white spotlight coming from the word *Sieg* ('victory') which, as a bright light, resembles the sun. Additionally, a red cross and the slogan "*und Du bist nicht dabei?*" ('and you are not participating?') written above is another point of focus. Additional information about how to join the DRK as a nurse can be found underneath the cross. The wartime DRK logo, which includes the *Reichsadler* and a swastika, is positioned on the upper left corner on a red background.

When contemplating the poster more thoroughly, a correlation between the colours, proportions of the displayed items and the message of the written text are observable. At first glance, the woman in the foreground appear to be the focus of the poster, but in fact she is turning her back towards the viewer and observing the action taking place in the background. Therefore, the centre of attention is actually deferred to what is in her eye line, namely the uniformed nurses, where by the audiences attention is once again deferred to the sun-like beam of light presenting the word *Sieg*. Observing the poster thus leads the viewer from the woman to the right top corner with the so-called sun and finally to the slogan on the Red Cross.

The colours play an important role in emphasizing the distance between the woman and the nurses. Whereas the woman, well-dressed in dark colours, remains in the shadow, the nurses and the word *Sieg* are depicted in exceptionally bright light compared to the surrounding darkness. Apart from this dark-light contrast, the colour red plays a central role, illuminating the implicated norms applied in Nazi ideology.



Fig. 1: DRK: *Sieg. Und du bist nicht dabei? Die schönste Kriegsaufgabe für die deutsche Frau ist der Schwesterndienst im D.R.K.* Waldheim-Eberle, Wien, 1943.

In the National Socialist ideology, the role of the German woman was essentially linked to motherhood and therefore a woman's position in society was clearly defined. Although the Nazis were not the first to perceive women in such a way, this idea of woman as the "second sex" was an indispensable part of National Socialist ideology.¹²

¹¹ See Fig. 1. Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, *Sieg. und du bist nicht dabei? Die schönste Kriegsaufgabe für die deutsche Frau ist der Schwesterndienst im D.R.K.* Waldheim-Eberle, Vienna, 1943.

¹² Ute Frevert, 'Frauen', in Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Enzyklopädie des Nationalsozialismus*, München, DTV, 2007, p. 242.

Nevertheless, motherhood was not exclusively bound to the nuclear family – it also had a broader dimension. Annemarie Tröger refers to the concept of “social motherhood”¹³, which expands the few legitimate roles for women to include, for instance, social workers, teachers or nurses. The poster represents these presumed female obligations by making the female observer feel guilty for not having taken part in social behaviour expected of her. This is implied clearly through the direct, negatively formulated question which evokes guilt. Moreover, the red colour on the cheek of the woman highlights the shame and disgrace of her situation.

2.2.1. Post-war view

After World War II, the first elections in Austria took place on 25 November 1945 under difficult circumstances. After thirteen years of being unable to vote, 94 percent of those entitled to made use of their democratic right. The winner of the elections, the People’s Party (ÖVP), obtained 49.8% of the vote, giving it a majority in the parliament. The results, however, left the Communists in Austria considerably disappointed: as the main advocate in the resistance to Nazi oppression, it had been assumed that they would gain greater support from the voters. Nonetheless, they attained only 5.4% of the vote; significantly less than expected.¹⁴ The outcome of the elections was 85 seats for the ÖVP, 76 seats for the Socialists and only four seats for the Communists.¹⁵

The Socialists’ campaign poster¹⁶ encourages the women of Austria to help and heal the nation by voting for the socialist party. It says: “Frauen! Helfen und heilen wollen wir wo Krieg und Vernichtung getobt!” (“Women! We want to help and heal where war and destruction rioted!”). This message is conveyed in an interesting way. A crowd of women are depicted in the background, whereas the slogan appears on banners in the foreground. Every single word is written on a different banner held by the female crowd. It seems as if the women are taking part in a rally. They are all dressed in a similar way - not wearing a uniform as such, but depicted wearing similar outfits of the same colour.

The women pictured in this poster are faceless, which perhaps suggests that every single woman in this poster is interchangeable and that the female audience could recognise themselves in this advertisement and become a part of the movement. The only thing one needs to do to be part of this seemingly active, aware and united mass, is to vote for the Socialist Party (SPÖ).

At the lower end of the poster it therefore says: “Wählt sozialistisch!” (“Vote socialistic!”). Next to this call, the logo of the SPÖ is displayed. The Socialists designed this logo, consisting of three red arrows, after the National Socialists introduced the swastika as a symbol of their movement in the early 1920s.¹⁷ After the war, a red circle was added to the logo to embrace the arrows in a so-called “Roten Ring der Einheit” (“Red Circle of Unity”).¹⁸ The existing representation of unity is intensified by the visual representation of unity through the mass of women on the poster.

Looking at the colours used in this poster, they also seem to support the idea of unity. All women have the same orange skin tone and lack of facial features, and their clothes are dark, varying slightly from a greyish blue to

¹³ Annemarie Tröger, ‘The Creation of a Female Assembly-Line Proletariat’, Renate Bridenthal (ed.), *When Biology Became Destiny. Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1984, p. 239.

¹⁴ <http://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/PERK/HIS/REP2/1945/index.shtml> [last accessed: 28.06.2015]

¹⁵ Dieter Nohlen and Philip Stöver (eds.), *Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook*, Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2010, p. 213.

¹⁶ see Fig. 2: Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs, *Frauen! Helfen und heilen wollen wir wo Krieg und Vernichtung getobt!*, 1945.

¹⁷ <http://www.dasrotewien.at/symbole-sozialdemokratische.html>. [Last accessed 29.06.2015.]

¹⁸ *ibid.*

black. Only the slogan sticks out – white banners with red letters on them and a white election request with the red and white SPÖ logo. The dominant lettering is the main theme of this poster. Women are an active, strong and unified part of society, yet still their main role and aim is to *help and heal*. They are encouraged to fulfil their duty to the nation by working in the social sector and become involved in other social activities.

Obviously, women were the sole group targeted by this election poster. This might seem rather uncommon, but makes sense if one looks at the political and economic situation in Austria at that time. In the context of the Austrian elections in 1945, women suddenly represented approximately 2/3 of eligible voters.¹⁹ This marks a change in the role of women in society and politics. It wasn't just the election poster of the Socialist party which addressed women directly, but also those of the other two relevant competing parties (KPÖ²⁰ and ÖVP²¹). In other words, women were considered a significant factor in this specific situation more than ever.



Fig. 2: SPÖ: Frauen! Helfen und heilen wollen wir wo Krieg und Vernichtung getobt!, 1945.

2.2.3 Conclusion

Despite the different political and social contexts of the discussed posters, certain similarities and continuities in the perception of women during and after World War II can be detected. Nevertheless, there are certain discontinuities as well.

Even though the comparison considered posters from two very different settings, the overall stereotypical image of womanhood has not changed. In both depictions, women are encouraged to take part in society as *helpers and healers*. This is clearly seen as their main role in society. The SPÖ election poster literally says that women should “help and heal”, whereas the DRK poster places women under pressure by shaming those who are not yet contributing to society as the stereotype dictates. The specific demands for women virtually stayed the same; the overall theme of motherhood, and the previously mentioned “social motherhood” were not disposed of after the war.²²

¹⁹ Oliver Rathkolb, 1945. *Zurück in die Zukunft. 70 Jahre Ende Zweiter Weltkrieg*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 2015, p. 32-33.

²⁰ Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, AC 10600139, Kummunistische Partei Österreichs, *Frauen, Mütter, Ihr seid es euren Kindern schuldig*, 1945.

²¹ Rathkolb, 1945, p. 32-35.

²² Tröger, ‘The Creation of a Female Assembly-Line Proletariat’, p. 239.

On the other hand, there is a tendency towards a more emancipated depiction of women in the post-war placard, as the women there are no longer looking away as mere followers or turning their faces to some imaginary and external goal. Instead, they are directly facing the viewer and therefore represented as a powerful and present part of society. In 1945 they were thus seen as active subjects and significant citizens, which was quite a different view compared to the previous ideology.

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2.3. The Correspondence between the Allied Forces and Civil Administrations in Vienna between 1945 and 1949

The following analysis deals with the Allied occupation of Vienna and the communication between the Allied forces and the re-established civil government and administrations between 1945 and 1949. After the end of the Second World War, Austria was put under the control of the Allied forces. Vienna was divided between the four Allied powers, with the inner district being jointly administrated by the "Vienna Inter allied Commission (VIAC)".²³ The reestablishment of the Austrian administration started on the base administrative level; the municipalities, led by the mayors and the offices connected to their position.²⁴ Vienna was no exception.

These findings are based on records from the *Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv*, focusing on primary sources from the *Alliierten-Verbindungsstelle* (Allied-liaison-department)²⁵ and the *Bürgermeisteramt* (mayor's office).²⁶ One

²³ Steven Beller, *A Concise History of Austria*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 250.

²⁴ Ernst Hanisch, *Der lange Schatten des Staates: Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert*, Vienna, Ueberreuter, 1994, p. 402.

²⁵ WStLA, MD, A9 – Alliierte-Verbindungen: 124/46, 127/46., bzw. WStLA, Kleine Bestände: Zeiträume und Ereignisse, A84 – VI/84 – Alliierte Besatzung: 4 – Vienna Interallied Command (Considerations on Wien).

²⁶ WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 246/46 (Städtisches Brauhaus, Probleme mit Roter Armee), bzw. WStLA, MD, B7 – Alliierte Verbindungen: Bd.1 (1946 – 1949).

source from the Allied-liaison-department – the *Protokollbuch* (register book)²⁷ – which lists all the issues the Allied forces and the mayor’s office corresponded about, provides a particularly valuable overview. The main interest of the research was the communication between the different occupational forces and the administration of the city of Vienna. Based on the examined sources it was not possible to make a general statement about the communication between the four Allied forces.

The *Bürgermeisteramt* – the central office of the city administration – functioned as a central office for the communication with the Allied forces. The mayor’s office received various requests, demands and complaints. It seems that the Allies directed the city authorities to execute their commands, since the Allies had a central role in the recreation of the state. For example, one of the documents of the Allied offices shows that the mayor’s office was required to prevent the spoiling of canned food and to inform the Allies about executed measures.²⁸ Documents from the *Bundesdenkmalamt* (federal office for memorials and monuments) also show that the local Viennese authorities were not just receiving orders from the Allied forces, but that they also received requests: the *Bundesdenkmalamt*, for instance, asked them for lists of damaged art objects and applied for refunds for those objects.²⁹

The sources also show differences between the four Allied forces. The Western forces were giving commands in order to contribute to the reestablishment of a working administration and also to improve the quality of life, as one document by the British forces shows: the British organised a military Tattoo in Schönbrunn, which also functioned as a charity event for children.³⁰ On the other hand, the Soviet forces confiscated large parts of the economic resources and the sources speak of a lot of complaints by parties harmed by Soviet troops.³¹

The register book from the Allied-liaison-department displays a general overview of the correspondence between the mayor’s office, the Allied occupation forces and the Vienna-Inter-Allied-Commission (VIAC) between 1946 and 1949. The entries show that authorities had to deal with several recurring topics, mainly issues of public health (e.g., sexual diseases, poisoning of rats), infrastructure issues (e.g., clearing rubble from the city, reconstruction), providing people with food, and organizing the traffic.³² Between 1946 and 1949 the entries in the minute book decreased drastically:

Year	Entries ³³
1946	373
1947	121
1948	32

²⁷ WStLA, MD, B7 – Alliierte Verbindungen: Bd. 1 (1946-1949).

²⁸ WStLA, MD, A9 – Alliierte-Verbindungen: 127/46.

²⁹ WStLA, M.Abt. 119, A29 – ÖV – Reste der Registratur: Mappe 8, MA 62: Anmeldung verschleppten Alliiertenvermögens (1946-1947); Mappe 10.

³⁰ WStLA, MD, A9 – Alliierte-Verbindungen: 124/46.

³¹ WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 246/46 (Städtisches Brauhaus, Probleme mit Roter Armee).

³² WStLA, MD, B7 – Alliierte-Verbindungen: Bd.1 (1946-1949).

³³ WStLA, MD, B7 – Alliierte-Verbindungen: Bd.1 (1946- 1949).

1949	2
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We can only guess why the number of entries decreased to such an extent. Maybe there was no longer any need for communication regarding basic questions of infrastructural, or perhaps the local administration had begun carrying out their tasks without detailed supervision of the Allied forces. Another reason might have been the increasingly problematic situation between the Allied powers. Considered in this way, the *Protokollbuch* can also be read as an indicator for the start of the Cold War.

In short, it can be said that the Allied forces and the civil administration of Vienna – especially the mayor’s office – corresponded mainly about issues regarding reconstruction, although the Western Allied forces had more interest in the reconstruction of Austria than the Soviet forces did. The mayor’s office mainly received requests and commands from the Allied forces and delegated them, but they also had the chance to send requests regarding damage refunds to the Allied forces in return. Thus the civil administrations were mainly – but not only – recipients of orders.

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2.4. “Der Tod eines Menschen ruft eine Reihe von Verwaltungsakten hervor”³⁴– The Reflection of Personal Fate within the Administrative Process of Austria in the aftermath of the Second World War

The first years in post-war Austria were a time of suffering and uncertainty as the country had to recover from the loss of millions of lives. The human tragedies left a terrible void in society, something the Austrian authorities were forced to deal with. As such, the following question arises when examining this topic today: how was personal fate reflected in administrative processes in postwar Austria? In order to answer this question, three examples with different characteristics were compared: two files from the *Landesgericht für Zivilrechtssachen* (Regional Civil Court) and one report for the *Bürgermeisteramt* (Mayor’s office). All these sources are found in the *Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv* (Vienna City Archive).

The first example is the case of the family Schwarz.³⁵ Hudes (Adele) Schwarz was never seen again after her deportation from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz on October 1st 1944, together with her daughter Antonie Schwarz.

³⁴ “The death of a human produces a series of administration files”. Magistrat der Stadt Wien, *Die Verwaltung der Bundeshauptstadt Wien 1945-1947*, Vienna, Magistrat der Stadt Wien, 1947, p. 203.

³⁵ WStLA, Landesgericht f. Zivilrechtssachen, A26 - 48T-Akten: 631/46.

Heinrich Schwarz, their husband and father respectively, had been looking for them without success and asked the Civil Court to give an official declaration of death for both women. After a long process, both women were pronounced dead by May 8th 1945, the date of Germany's surrender. However, Heinrich Schwarz found a woman who witnessed something that changed the course of the process. The woman had been in Theresienstadt with his wife and his daughter and was deported to Auschwitz after them; she arrived in Auschwitz some days later and found only Antonie alive. She told the woman that her mother was separated from the group right after their arrival in Auschwitz on October 12th 1944. The exact date of death was important for Heinrich Schwarz, because he and his wife owned real estate in Vienna which he wanted to inherit. If mother and daughter had died on the same day, some distant relatives from abroad would have received a share of the real estate due to Austria's inheritance laws.³⁶ After a long and complex debate, Hudes was finally pronounced dead by October 24th 1944, before Antonie's death on May 8th 1945. The whole process took almost one year; from July 1946 until May 1947, when the verdict was declared.

The second example is that of an Austrian soldier whose mother also wanted an official declaration of death from the Regional Civil Court.³⁷ Michael Geza Aumüller was on a transport ship to Norway which was torpedoed and destroyed in August 1941. A report about the sunk ship was sent to the mother in October 1941. In April 1946, she requested official proof of her son's death as she needed a legal document for the inheritance process. It took some time to collect the required documents as the Ministry of the Interior had to look for any records of the soldier in the Regional Civil Court. The mayor of his hometown confirmed that Aumüller was living there in 1940 and 1941 and that he held Austrian citizenship. In September 1946, the Regional Civil Court officially declared Michael Geza Aumüller dead, stating his time of death as August 1941 when the ship he was travelling on was torpedoed in Norway.

The last example is a report from June 30th 1945 which was sent to the Mayor of Vienna about the repatriation of concentration camp inmates.³⁸ It stated that two former prisoners from Dachau and Buchenwald, Hans Hermann Weber and Alois Winkelhaus, had been searching for Austrian inmates in Linz, Munich, Eichach, Dachau, Weimar and Buchenwald. They reported that it would not be easy to bring back their countrymen from the concentration camps as the Soviet Army did not allow anyone to get in and the US Army did not allow anyone to get out of their respective occupied areas. Therefore, the two men had to help some of their countrymen to cross the border illegally. When a food and clothing shortage occurred, a request was sent to the Red Cross in Geneva for assistance. The answer was positive. The Mayor of Vienna was asked to take over this matter as it was his duty to help his countrymen to return home.

These three examples show that on the one hand, the agony of Austrian inmates in concentration camps did not end with the end of the war. The task of the authorities was not only to manage to repatriate them, but also to provide food and accommodation for them through the assistance of international organisations. These tasks were not easy at all. On the other hand, there is a clear difference in the administrative process for the death of soldiers and concentration camp victims, mainly because their death occurred in different circumstances. There is a discrepancy regarding the way authorities dealt with the matter, namely a faster process for fallen army members and a slower process for victims of the Holocaust. Files, protocols and reports from administration do

³⁶ WStLA, Landesgericht f. Zivilrechtssachen, A26 - 48T-Akten: 631/46.

³⁷ WStLa, Landesgericht f. Zivilrechtssachen, A26 - 48T-Akten: 636/46.

³⁸ WStLa. MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 719/45.

not reflect individual tragedy, as oral history would, but they show that authorities had to deal with the gaps in society after the war (a wife was dead, a son was gone, surviving countrymen were unable to return, etc.). One can see that personal fate went together with complicated administrative processes. These documents also show how individual tragedy was processed differently, regardless of the duration and the nature of the suffering: the cases of the murdered women, the fallen soldier and the surviving inmates had different characteristics, and therefore authorities dealt with them in a different way.

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2.5. A Glimpse at the priorities of the Viennese administration in the aftermath of World War II

This paper will be dealing with the occupation, reconstruction, and development of the city of Vienna, along with its infrastructure, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. This will be done using records produced in the post-war period. It is difficult to grasp a complete picture of the reconstruction process as the only data available for this paper were a few selected documents from the City Archive of Vienna. This means that this paper provides only a glimpse of the many projects and plans undertaken in Vienna following World War II. This is not to say that the documents in this paper have no use; on the contrary, they elucidate not only the problems which the administration faced and the reconstruction projects they were focused on, but also the hierarchical structure of the administration.

The records examined here come from the Vienna City Archive, and consist mostly of letters and protocol books from the mayor's office, dated between 1945 and 1948. The protocol books contain the basic details of the correspondences between the city administration and external actors. The main correspondences that were researched for this paper were from late April until July 1945. They were primarily concerned with the reconstruction and development of Vienna. The main issues they deal with include: the cleaning procedures of the city in the aftermath of World War II, the reconstruction of roads and public transport, the problems with the Red Army, and the treatment of Nazis.³⁹ The documents help to create a fuller picture about the kind of administrative initiatives undertaken after the war, and which groups of society were assigning them. They all show the importance of the municipality of Vienna in the reconstruction of the city. At the same time, the documents should be treated with caution because they depict just one perspective concerning the reconstruction of Vienna after the Second World War. For example, the Soviet perspective as occupiers cannot be discussed in this paper because the original documents, or the writings of Blagotadov, were not available. The "perspective", demands, and actions of Blagotadov and the Soviets are here represented through the writings of the mayor.

The documents within the mayor's office record the incoming and outgoing correspondences of the municipality

³⁹ WStLA, MD, B11 – Bürgermeisteramt: Jg. 1945-1948.

of Vienna. It is significant that these documents concern only the municipality and not the state administration. This means that it is difficult to know how much input the state had in these reconstruction projects for the city. The most frequent correspondences appear to have been between the mayor and the district mayor, who were the main actors responsible for dealing with the reconstruction and cleaning of Vienna. It can be deduced from the documents that the municipality had a principle role in the reconstruction of the city immediately after the war, and that there were various layers of administration: the district mayor answered to the city mayor, who answered to state secretary and general lieutenant Blagodatov. The general lieutenant appears to have acted as a representative of the Soviet army in Vienna. This makes sense given that the Soviet army liberated Vienna and were the only representatives of the Allied Forces in Vienna for the months preceding and following the end of the war.

Two of the documents are correspondences between the Soviet general lieutenant (*Chef der Garnison*) Blagodatov and the municipality's administration.⁴⁰ The purpose of the correspondence from July 1945 was to question progress concerning street cleaning. According to Vienna's mayor Körner, Blagodatov demanded that the streets be cleaned: "[er] hat unter anderen [sic] befohlen, dass die Straßen Wiens bis zum 1. August 1945 restlos gesäubert sein müssen." (Amongst other things, he has ordered that the streets of Vienna be clean completely by August 1, 1945). This demonstrates the fact that this was not seen by the mayor as a request, but rather something that had to be done under all circumstances.⁴¹ This is furthermore verified by a correspondence from earlier that year between Blagodatov and Körner which includes the original document from the Russian general lieutenant. The correspondence began on 27th May 1945, and deals with the removal of human and animal corpses from the Danube canal. From the translation of the original Russian document, although there was no trace of Körner's response to this demand, it can be assumed that the mayor took orders directly from Blagodatov. The correspondence, then, allows at least some insight into the hierarchical structure of the Viennese administration, as the conversation between the single agencies is well documented.

Other issues which are dealt with regarding the reconstruction and development of Vienna include the question of how the Nazis were to be treated after the end of the war.⁴² In one document from 9th June 1945, the state secretary, a representative of *Das Staatsamt für Inneres* (the Department of the Interior/Internal Affairs), writes to the mayor of Vienna about the treatment of the Nazis. They were prioritised to be put to work in the reconstruction of the city before all others. Of special concern were the "*Illegalen*" (*illegals*); former members of the *Die Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP) from before 1938 when the Party had been outlawed. In practice, only high-ranking Nazis needed to be concerned about manual punishment as the "ordinary" Nazis, that is, those who did not hold important posts, were so numerous that it was an extremely difficult policy to implement. The state secretary also wrote that basic laws should also apply to these citizens; it was, for example, forbidden to punish them by painting swastikas on their clothes making them recognisable to the citizen of the city. Confiscation of their possessions without going through a legal process was also forbidden. The government asked the municipality directly to respect this.⁴³ This is evidence of an order from the central government which was expected to be carried out at a city level, and indicates the hierarchical structure of the government.

⁴⁰ WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 1139/45; WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 337/45.

⁴¹ The information comes from a report of Blagodatov's demands from the mayor's perspective. Access to the original letter from Blagodatov would give further insight into the matter. Despite this drawback, the conclusion of a clear hierarchical structure is valid, given the mayor's letter.

⁴² WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 573/45.

⁴³ WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 573/45.

While some of the documents deal with the cleaning of Viennese streets and canals, and the reconstruction of the city, there are other documents with a different theme that are still valid in the post-war priorities of the city administration: the Soviet occupation of the city. These documents delineate the tensions between the Viennese population and the occupying Soviets. In particular, they depict several complaints from different companies about the Red Army.⁴⁴ The complaints came from individual firms to the *Amtsführenden Stadtrat für die Städtischen Unternehmungen und Betriebe* (Office Executive Councillor for the City Corporations and Establishments), stating that the Russian army had confiscated or stolen goods and machinery from their businesses. Following these complaints, the executive counsellor appealed to the mayor to intervene. It is difficult to know how the goods and materials were used and for what purpose, however the sources do indicate that the attitude of the city administration towards the Soviets and that their plundering of goods was an important issue.

The documents in this paper show the importance of the municipality of Vienna in the reconstruction of the city. This topic could be further explored through the use of other archives and more documents in order to construct a fuller picture of how the administration participated in the reconstruction of Austria, and gain insight into other perspectives about the post-war projects and priorities of the central administration of Vienna. It would also be useful to investigate the protocol books more thoroughly in order to find more cases about what was being reconstructed following the war. What can be grasped from the sources utilised in this study are the main priorities of the Viennese municipality in the aftermath of the war: The Soviet occupation and the reconstruction and 'clean up' of the city.

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2. Summary

This project led us to two main conclusions: firstly, the end of the Second World War cannot be seen as a clear cut and re-start, but rather as a system of continuities and discontinuities in different areas of social, cultural and political life. The biography of Hermann Spitzky for instance shows a clear continuity in terms of his career before and after the World War. Even if we look at motifs of political posters we can find recurring elements. On the other hand, a lot of bureaucratic methods clearly follow a re-start, at least in the very beginning of the after-war period when Vienna is governed by the Allied Command.

The second conclusion is rather a practical one: working with primary sources is a crucial element of historic research and yet it seems like it doesn't get a lot of attention in most university programmes. For many students, this was an entirely new experience. We hope that we were able to motivate the students to continue to work with archival material and we look forward to future events based on this sort of "practical experience".

We are also very thankful to everyone who made this possible. Our thanks go to the City Archive of Vienna, for access to the sources, but also for the rooms and coffee. To Univ.-Prof. Mag. DDr. Oliver Rathkolb for his advice and important hints on the selection of the materials and the association "Verein Zeitgeschichte", the

⁴⁴ WStLA, MD, A6 – Bürgermeisteramt: 134/45.

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How Revolutionary Were the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe?

MARINO BADURINA

Introduction

The word revolution is derived from the Latin word *revolutio* meaning “a turnaround”. It generally describes any sudden change that carries far-reaching consequences. Based on the experience of the French Revolution of 1789, the term has been generally used to describe changes initiated by violence and an armed struggle, along with necessary sacrifices. The concept of revolution can be used to describe rapid changes in culture, the economy, technology and society. It can also be used in scientific, political, and religious contexts, but the distinctions between them are not clear or well defined, and it is possible that each is mutually influential. The term that is usually opposed to revolution is the concept of evolution, which indicates a gradual and painless transition from the old condition to the new one, where there is a lower risk of old grievances and injustices under new circumstances.

What is a special feature of revolution is that it takes place outside, or at least on the edge of the legal norms, which in and of itself suggests a revolt against the existing order of political or social life. "Revolution" can take on a controversial meaning in some cases: if there is a clear break in the system of political decision-making but political actors largely remain the same and the targeted power becomes an associate in the act of non-violent expropriation of their own, for example. Likewise, the term can become contentious if social patterns formally change yet remain filled with practically the same content. The same can be said for a revolutionary outburst dismissed by those with the insight that “no revolution can change the past”, harking back to long-term political, cultural and economic heritage. This is precisely the case in 1989, a crucial year in recent European history. In this text, I am trying to answer the question of how far the events of 1989, which I colloquially call the revolution, contain such revolutionary elements. Specifically, the text will assess how much justice there is in the attribution of a revolutionary character to these events.

The Genesis of 1989

The events which took place for a short period in the late 1980s in Eastern Europe are, even today, a subject of much interpretation and are seen from many different perspectives.¹ Such multiperspectivity is understandable and even desirable, given the complexity of the relationships between all parties, the number of factors that played a role in these events, and the short space of time within which they took place. The year 1989 cannot be properly understood if we approach it unilaterally and one-dimensionally.

French political scientist Francois Fejto has described the changes in Eastern Europe as "a revolution without revolutionaries" as the communist systems collapsed in the region on their own, without the Soviet Union intervening and preventing this downfall. Communism as a system just imploded. American political scientist T. Garton Ash called these changes in Eastern Europe "refolutions": a combination of revolution and reform.² By

¹ Eastern Europe is not taken as a geographical, but as a political concept, and refers to all countries behind the so-called 'Iron Curtain', including Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR.

² Tomothy Garton Ash, *Mi građani: Revolucije 1989*, Zagreb, Novi Liber, 1993, p. 7.

this, he means the coupling of pressure "from below", that is, from the nations, and pressure "from above". The pressure from above came from the reform-minded communist rulers, who, mostly out of necessity, decided to accept the changes in their own backyard. In other words, one of the evaluations that can be accepted is that the respective events were uniting elements of social evolution and revolution, social continuity and discontinuity.³

It should also be noted that the coupling of the very concept of revolution to the events at that time might have been unpopular. This is because communists claimed exclusive rights to the term for decades, and called themselves "revolutionaries" as justification for their rule, which, it was claimed, would culminate in a successful and complete socialist revolution, and a better future for the citizens. In reality, the whole world at the end of the 70's into the beginning of the 80's saw the increasing erosion of the socialist system, and the idealistic projection of a large and strong economic upswing did not materialize. Instead, in time, the economies recorded a negative growth. Socialism failed to deliver on most promises of material prosperity, social justice, and improvement in demographic terms. The death rate, contrary to expectations, did not decrease, and life expectancy during the last twenty years was decreased; especially in the USSR, Poland, and Hungary.⁴

Great dreams of equality and justice were replaced by the harsh reality of the rule of a growing bureaucracy, poltroons, nepotism, and corruption. As time went on, citizens in these countries were offered the possibility of comparing their lives with those of citizens in Western countries through private channels of communication, and the semi-permeable state media. One need not be overly discerning to see that in this comparison, East Europeans turned out to be the unquestioned losers. However, the right balance was covered up, and the economic policy was reduced to a mere service, while you could not speak of any significant development under those conditions. Of course, the poor economic situation and the decline of living standards was also affected by the global economic trends; primarily the increase in oil prices. The borrowing continued, and the borrowed money was not used for the improvement of production. Instead, it was used to cover up the current costs, and for the maintenance of power and the status quo. It eventually led to numerous restrictions, which were mostly felt by citizens, and the deep structural reforms were avoided. Bearing in mind the nature of the system, this way of dealing with problems was understandable, in a way, given the fact that any radical reform that would be implemented by the communist government would be self-destructive, because tracing the cause of the problem would lead it to itself.

But the sole emphasis on economic causes as the reason for the events of 1989 may appear too reductive. By way of example, we can mention the GDR as a country heavily in debt, and as such it had to collapse. Romania could be viewed as a counterexample to this. In the eighties, mostly on the back of the impoverished population, it managed to almost entirely pay off its foreign debt. Upheaval was nevertheless much more rapid and bloody, and the Ceausescus paid with their lives. The lesson here would be: better for the country to fail than the people.

In addition to non-controversial economic causes, ideological motivations for revolution should be considered, such as the exhaustion of the Marxist-Leninist ideology which resulted in a relatively quick surrender of the government's forces in most countries. It was an indicator of how, in the 21st century, the causes of future revolutions would be hidden in critical issues of morality, in addition to political, economic and social reasons.⁵

³ Timor Kuran, 'The East European Revolution of 1989: Is It Surprising that We Were Surprised?', *The American Economic Review*, 81, 1991, p. 121.

⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *Doba ekstrema*, Zagreb, Zagrebačka naklada, 2009, pp. 401-402.

⁵ Daniel Chirot, 'What Happened in Eastern Europe in 1989?', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 38.

Here, the issue of the causes of revolution detracts from the field of dry sociometry and shifts into a sphere which is hardly measurable, and therefore less predictable. Thus, unlike other countries, the communist government in the Soviet Union was still relatively stable, and there was no immediate indication of any impending major changes. Communism ultimately survived longest in the USSR. The citizens simply did not know life outside of this system and did not have the possibility of comparing social systems the way older people had in countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR. This state of "stability", or, rather, a state of stagnation, began to change in 1985 with the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev to the seat of power. He would gradually start to apply pressure to implement changes, starting at the top. The Soviet Union would become a special case exactly for this reason, that pressure for change from below was minimal. Indeed, Gorbachev's reforms sought to overcome mass discontent and re-legitimize communism. On the other hand, for example in Poland, the pressure from below was crucial and decisive, while in Hungary the process was more complex. There, it was about the combination of pressure from above and below where, initially, the pressure from above had an even greater role. Had Gorbachev's efforts not been dedicated to reform and noninterference policies, (jokingly dubbed by Gorbachev: the "Sinatra doctrine", named after the song 'My Way'), this whole process might have been slowed down and perhaps even stopped for a while. Gorbachev sent an unequivocal message: the "respect of every sovereign right of people to choose their social system which they consider to be appropriate represents the most important prerequisite for a normal European process."⁶ It was an indicator of the strength rather than the weakness of the Soviet Alliance and communism in general, Gorbachev believed. But this would soon start a domino effect in Eastern Europe, of course, with certain peculiarities in each country.

In some countries, such as Poland, transition to a new state was peaceful and gradual, the Communists and the opposition initially joined in a coalition, and the combination of market reforms and political authoritarianism was predicted. A partial reason for this should be sought in the fact that the opposition was not fully prepared to take complete control over the land. The communist nomenclature was too deeply embedded in all structures and it was necessary to reach a certain degree of conformity to bridge divisions in society and avert further economic decline. This question supplements a subsequent issue of lustration, which contrary to some claims, was not extensively implemented in any Eastern European country, and in some cases, such as Yugoslavia (e.g. Croatia), this was impossible due to the war. As such, the consequences for the losing side were not at all revolutionary, but they were in some way rewarded for their non-resistance to changes and they were provided with accommodation to new opportunities.

That is why in hindsight many would refer to 1989 as a "failed revolution", after which the clash with the past was not complete; either in Eastern Europe, or in former Soviet republics except the Baltic states which opened the archives and to a certain degree implemented lustration. This is logical when we look at the division of the revolutions depending on who committed them. In the case when the revolution was initiated by the army, i.e. the armed forces, it could be expected that the clash with opponents would be harsher. However, in the case of such a conflict, the new government would be absent, and in order to ensure stability and continuity for itself, would act in a more conciliatory manner, especially when inheriting structures still largely linked with personnel from the old system who would be easier to 'acquire' than to fight against.

⁶ Padraic Kenney, *Breme slobode: Istočna Europa nakon 1989*, Zagreb, Srednja Europa, 2007, p. 17.

Eastern Europe at a crossroads

The first countries where the Communists were removed from power in a relatively peaceful and painless way were Poland and Hungary. There were some significant differences between them politically however. Poland had become the foremost country of reform within the eastern Communist bloc from 1980 with the emergence of the trade union "Solidarity". The head of the union was the young and charismatic Lech Wałęsa, a Gdansk shipyard worker who also became the focus of growing resistance. The country was taken over by a wave of protests with which the authorities brutally clashed. When, in 1981, by the orders from Moscow, General Wojciech Jaruzelski was elected to the Prime-Ministership, Poland introduced repressive policies, and the Government decided to put an end to trade union activity at all costs. Wałęsa was arrested and "Solidarity" forbidden, but in 1983 many members were granted political amnesty. A breath of freedom was felt after 1985 however, with the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev as the head of the Soviet Union. "Solidarity" was once again restored in 1986, and with Wałęsa receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983, the role and responsibility of the whole movement became even greater and more significant.⁷ Now the government could no longer ignore the growing discontent and the need for changes.

An important role in the life of Poland was played by the Catholic Church, with respect to the clear majority of the Catholic population.⁸ Regarding this, a special incentive occurred in 1978 when the archbishop of Krakow, Karol Wojtyła, was elected Pope. His visits to Poland in the subsequent years, despite the protests and restraint of communist authorities, further mobilized Poles, and many of them strengthened the belief of their almost messianic role in the liberation of Europe from communism.⁹ Accordingly, Garton Ash says that if he had to determine the exact point in time for the beginning of the end of communism in Eastern Europe, he would suggest 1979 and the first papal pilgrimage to Poland.¹⁰ On that occasion, enormous pent up national energy which had been repressed for decades was released in Poland. Therefore, we can agree that the choice of a Pope from Poland was a kind of litmus test; at best a catalyst for change, which brought Poland the flattering title of the pioneer in the fight for change.

In Czechoslovakia, the events of 1989 were termed "velvet revolution" because of the Communists, who, after initial reluctance at the round table and through negotiations, eventually decided to peacefully hand over power. This was in spite of the fact that many of the dissenters, led by Vaclav Havel, were initially surprised by the attempts of the Communists to keep their positions. The Communists were trying to push their concept of hybrid power, which would only be a cosmetically altered communist government, before they proposed a coalition to finally agree on a complete change of system. In Estonia, the Baltic State which was part of the Soviet Union, these events are remembered as the "singing revolution" since the people at one of the festivals used songs to express their opposition to staying in the USSR. The terms: "velvet revolution", "singing revolution", and "non-violent revolution" can be considered oxymoronic, yet they can be also be characterized as revolutionary because of the change from the one monologue and directive attitude of the communist elite to the realization that there is a need for public dialogue, although the pressure of the people and the newly established opposition political actors essentially directed the dialogue and narrowed the maneuvering space

⁷ Wałęsa was given the Nobel peace prize in 1983., but since the government had taken away his passport, he couldn't receive it personally.

⁸ According to the data collected by the Polish government, 95% of Poles say they belong to the Roman Catholic Church <http://www.poland.gov.pl/?document=397> (14.4.2015.)

⁹ Leszek Kolakowski, 'Amidst Moving Ruins', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 57.

¹⁰ Timothy Garton Ash, 'The Year of Truth', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 107.

of the former rulers.

In the context of these events, one should not ignore the important role of the media. For example, when, during the gathering of the crowd in Berlin intent of bringing down the Berlin Wall, West German state television announced that large cracks in the wall were even more obvious and that the wall was falling. It was still not completely clear whether it would fall, but such news was a trigger, motivating even more Berliners both from the East and from the West to go out onto the streets to greet each other. This momentum became irreversible. It is precisely because of this role played by the media, especially television which aired events as they happened, which led to the revolutions of 1989 being coined the "televised revolutions".

The speed of unfolding events was surprising for many. This was confirmed by the attitude of American policy which was cautious in the beginning. The then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his reforms were seen as a possible passing phenomenon, due to an awareness that there were powerful currents and groups in the Soviet Union that were dissatisfied with Gorbachev's moves, which would be confirmed later when Gorbachev was kidnapped and military circles in Moscow tried to perform a kind of coup d'état. Gorbachev's peacefulness and passivity irritated those who advocated a more radical solution and wished not to relinquish Soviet communism and the Soviet Union as a world leader of the Communist bloc. In this regard, perhaps the concerned circles were not completely unrealistic. The fact that the West and the greater part the population of Eastern Europe were surprised by bubbling changes indicates that the capacity of a counter-attack from conservative factions within the Communist government, at least in the beginning, existed.¹¹ However, over time, this possibility certainly decreased as a wave of change had been unleashed which quickly grew beyond the control of the state.

Revolution or not?

The specificity of the events in 1989 was reflected in the fact that they represented the opposition to Jacobin (Marxist) wishes to transform the world on the basis of some eschatological projections. There were no promises of a utopian future, except perhaps a partial "free market" utopia. Instead, proven old recipes of pluralist democracy, a parliamentary system, and the rule of law were "offered".¹² The reason for this lack of a utopian vision should be sought in the anti-communist character of these revolutions, and consequently, it was not logical that one utopia could simply replace another. Therefore, although the very concept of "revolution" was usually tied to violence and violently forced changes, the case of 1989 suggests otherwise. Indeed, violence was largely absent, and there was no missionary characteristic to the revolution. When, as Eisenstadt says, Havel came to Poland, "he did not bring an army to revolutionize Poland, he came as a friend of a friendly neighboring state, to speak before the Polish Sejm."¹³

¹¹ For example, four months after the fall of the Berlin Wall the Allensbach Institute conducted a study among East Germans with a question: "A year ago did you expect such a peaceful revolution?" Only 5 percent answered "yes", 18 percent responded „yes", but not that fast, but even 76 percent admitted they were completely surprised by the events. Kuran, 'The East European Revolution of 1989: Is It Surprising that We Were Surprised?', p. 121.

¹² S.N Eisenstadt, 'The Breakdown of Communist Regimes', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, pp. 91-92, and Jeffrey C. Isaac, 'The Meanings of 1989', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, pp. 121-159. However, Tony Judt as a guideline of dissident intellectuals in Eastern Europe highlights a "myth of Europe" in which up until 1989, the belief in the West was somewhat diminished. The war in the former Yugoslavia will break the fame that the era of wars on the territory of Europe, thanks to the new ever more perfect post-war security system, which was finally completed. Tony Judt, 'Nineteen Eighty-Nine: The End of Which European Era', *The Revolutions of 1989*, New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 166. Today's turn of circumstances in Europe are an additional blow to the founding myth of Europe as an area of complete peace and stability.

¹³ Eisenstadt, 'The Breakdown of Communist Regimes', p. 92.

Also, it goes without saying that a superficial understanding of revolution as an act of violence could lead one to think that revolutions and various events involving violence lead to certain changes, but do not bring with them anything revolutionary. Therefore, the consequences of a revolution should always be considered: sometimes a certain time lag is required to ascertain whether something is a revolution or not. Hannah Arendt would say that "revolutions are the only political event that directly confront[s] us with the problem of starting."¹⁴ The events of 1989, however, set the agenda of facing the problems of the past and its reevaluations.¹⁵ It was necessary to correct the injustices of the past, which is clearly reflected in the verse of 'The Internationale' which says "of the past let us make a clean slate". Here, therefore, it was not just about starting anew, but, if possible, establishing continuity with the old interrupted by communism, which was subsequently shown only as a kind of historical interlude; a period between two freedoms. With this, the old regularity was resumed, and almost every major change and aim was justified as necessary in order to achieve the freedom that was seen as a fundamental guiding principle of political thought. Arendt, however, considered that even an American representative system of government, which was seen as the proudest of Freedoms, was deficient. She, for example, refers to the fact that it opens a space to the representatives of the people, not the people themselves. Parties thus become oligarchies isolated from the people, maybe representing their interests, but not their views and opinions.¹⁶

In this way, if the possible revolutions of 1989 could be measured against a meter of freedom as absolute, it is clear that these events would fail the test of what is considered 'revolutionary'. The area of freedom is further narrowed since the masses in Eastern Europe expected rapid changes in their social, or financial, situation soon after the destruction of the monopoly of communist authorities and the transition to non-communist societies. Because of that, a relatively new and unprepared government structure was simply forced upon them, only to largely rely on precisely those former communists, which is why a significant number of them survived Communism's political death.

In fact, from this we can conclude that a 'true revolution' was yet to come, the events of 1989 making only a transitional phase. Historical experience, however, teaches that such a transitional phase persists the longest in the end. Eventually the discordant voices started to appear: one began to speak of "unfinished revolution" and wished for a final showdown with the structures of the past, while others wanted to take a break and start a long-term transitional phase. Therefore, we could partially apply to 1989 what Francois Furet said about the French Revolution in 1789: "The Revolution thus continued to escape from those who wished to end it, for they continually bumped against either those who wished to erase altogether the Revolution or those who wished to start it up all over again."¹⁷

To understand these devotees of transition we can connect it with the thoughts of Gustave Le Bon, a French psychologist who said that, "the real revolution, one that changed the destiny of the people, was generally carried out so slowly that historians can hardly mark the beginning so that word evolution would fit them better

¹⁴ Hanna Arendt, *On Revolution*, New York, Penguin Books, 1977, p. 146.

¹⁵ Jerzy Jedlicka, 'The Revolution 1989: The Unbearable Burden of History', *Problems of Communism*, 39, 1990, pp. 39-40.

¹⁶ Arendt *On Revolution*, p. 238.

¹⁷ François Furet, 'From 1789 to 1917 & 1989: Looking Backward at Revolutionary Traditions', *Encounter*, Vol. 75, 1990, p. 4.

instead of the word revolution."¹⁸ We can further clarify the understanding of revolution as a specific leap in evolution. Essentially, this evolution is the evolution of discontent growing, thus preparing the ground for revolution which had to be driven from the top, at the right time, and after disseminating it to the masses, it eventually reached its climax. The term "transition" generally refers to the development of post-communist societies. However, there are different possible definitions. If the transition is understood as a sudden reversible twist, then it is like a revolution, and it represents revolutionary change. If, however, the transition is a process that takes place over a long period and gradually affects different spheres of society then this is a change of evolutionary character.¹⁹ Most scholars will agree that the transition is a process which began with the disintegration of the socialist system. Yet surely it was more of a long-term process whereby the beginning of the transition coincided with the beginning of the decomposition of these systems.

Of course, it is difficult to achieve a consensus about when exactly these processes began, but the last decade before the fall of the Berlin Wall are indisputably the years when significant change took place in the eyes of those who lived in this system, and those who were watching from the West. Therefore, if we accept the extension of the transition to the period before the collapse of the system - to the 1980s - then the standpoint of those who deny the revolutionary events of 1989 makes more sense. Per Hobsbawm, the term "Eastern European revolution" may be misleading because it suggests a sudden overthrow of the regime, and it simply does not fit the facts. In fact, none of the regimes in Eastern Europe were truly overthrown (excepting Nicolae Ceausescu's government).²⁰ Today it is clear, however, that this was more about the coup planned by parts of the army and the intelligence services, instead of a true revolution motivated by the anger of a people who were "thirsty for the dictator's blood". Thus, the tip of the iceberg was removed, and the political, intelligence, and military structures generally continued to exist. As such, these structures decided to participate in the transition, and the Communist oligarchy in these systems declined as "rotten pears". That the Soviet Union would not intervene and would leave the Eastern regimes to their fate is significant. These regimes had already lost faith in their own legitimacy. They confirmed de Tocqueville's theorem of a revolutionary situation that arises when the ruling elite loses faith in their own right to rule.²¹ Therefore, the revolution failed not so much because of the activities of an attacker, but rather because of the inactivity of the attacked.

Otherwise, if there was a determination, perhaps the fall of communism could have been prevented, or at least postponed for some time, as proven by the Chinese example when the government decided to violently suppress protests in Tianmen Square. Le Bon, in the example of rebellion in Russia in 1905, tried to confirm that power with sufficient determination could win a revolution if it decided to vigorously defend its position. In extremely difficult circumstances- losing the war against Japan and faced with pressure from all social classes- the Russian government, through concessions to the peasants who made up the vast majority of the population, managed to neutralize the enemy and remain in power for the next decade. This can lead to the conclusion that the government does not overthrow but instead commits suicide.²² By contrast the Soviet Union simply chased away many of its inhabitants in the republics and in its spheres of influence. As such, some countries gained independence that they did not even want, such as Belarus. However, they were told very clearly that they were on their own and that they had to worry about their recovery and future. Despite the principled attitude

¹⁸ Gustav Le Bon, *Psihologija naroda, gomila, revolucija*, Zagreb, GMTK, 2004, p. 289.

¹⁹ Nada Švob- Djokic, *Tranzicija i nove europske države*, Zagreb, Barbat, Zagreb, 2000, p. 15.

²⁰ Hobsbawm, *Doba ekstrema*, p. 414.

²¹ Garton Ash, 'The Year of Truth', p. 112.

²² Le Bon, *Psihologija naroda, gomila, revolucija*, pp. 307-308.

that the Soviet Union should be preserved as a union of sovereign republics, the decomposition of its institutions could not be stopped. Various theoretical considerations, among other things, the new concept of "planned-market economy" remained a dead letter. No one had a concrete idea of how this could be carried out in practice. This discrepancy between desire and reality, theory and practice was too obvious. Facing the reality has led to the fact that yesterday's rigid communists have finally allowed a peaceful transition, in which they decided to participate.

Conclusion

The fall of Eastern European regimes took place in a peace disproportionate to the energy invested that could have resulted in a much more dramatic outcome. Under those circumstances there was no guarantee of a peaceful unfolding of events, and things could have gone downhill dramatically. This, however, has led to the creation and use of several seemingly paradoxical and oxymoronic terms, including "velvet revolution", "singing revolution" and "non-violent revolution". If we accept violence as a prerequisite of revolution, then these were not 'true' revolutions. The fate of those against whom the revolt was directed also does not support the assertion that the events of 1989 were 'revolutionary', as most communist rulers were not punished, and many of them, who were probably not devout communists, were quickly co-opted into the new government structure and accepted the new social relations. On the other hand, when we look at the consequences of these events, we can conclude that they, for many people behind the Iron Curtain, meant a big change and the unfolding of new opportunities which had not previously been possible, accompanied by the great hopes and illusions which accompany all revolutions. Reality, however, has brought neither rapid nor expected changes. It was just one revolutionary moment, a flash of freedom replaced by a long-term and arduous evolutionary process that is commonly referred to as "transition". In the process, per historical and environmental correctness, many experienced soberness of its ideals, and they had to accept that no changes which involve the demolition of the old order would necessarily mean that the result be better and more durable. Finally, there is no revolution that can change the past, or undo cultural, social and economic realities. As such, it has been demonstrated that after disintegration, which represented only a transitional phase for new European integration, the countries of Central, Eastern Europe and Southeast Europe, contrary to optimistic expectations, were not equal players. Indeed, they are faced with a new arrogance which this time comes from the West, and again represent a kind of periphery. However, resources and peripherals for some prove to provide a bigger chance than earlier roles for those in the former outposts of the Red Empire.

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The Merchant, The Spaniard and the Turks: How not to build an army and siege a city?

DÁNIEL MÁRTON MOLNÁR

The year of 1552 in Hungary began with a very interesting and, in some ways, strange venture. A group of self-declared soldiers, led by a former merchant, tried to recapture the town of Szeged from the Ottomans, who had captured the town a decade earlier. Indeed, the Hungarians failed, but the events which lead to this and the aftermath are far more interesting than the actual battle.

Szeged is situated at the current Hungarian-Serbian border. In the late medieval and early modern period, the town was one of the greatest settlements of the country. It was built on the shore of river Tisza, opposite the Maros (or Mures in Romanian) estuary. It made it a very important junction and trade center.

Szeged was a wealthy town. Because of its perfect location, it became a center of trade. Firstly, the river Maros which also runs through Transylvania, was the main salt-trading route of the region. Salt was like gold at that time, so Szeged quickly became an important center of the salt-trade, seat of the “Sókamara”, the main salt-trading state-monopoly. Secondly, there was the river Tisza, an important waterway on which wine was transported from the northern vineyards. Thirdly, both rivers were rich in fish, and Szeged had at least 1500 fishermen working regularly. Fourthly, the town was just south of the main cattle-breeding area of the Great Hungarian Plain (Alföld), where hundreds of thousands of horses and cows were bred, ready to be transported to other regions for food or for battle.¹

Thanks to its suitable position and important role, Szeged had numerous citizens; it was among the five biggest towns in Hungary at the time, with a population of 10000.² The population was diverse; numerous servants, fishermen, boat- and ferrymen, shopkeepers, and merchants. The merchants of Szeged were, on the one hand, among the richest people in Hungary, and on the other hand, very well connected socially. Being at a crossway, Szeged was also therefore a centre of information. Greater merchants had friends, employees or shops in other cities, such as Debrecen, Várad (today: Oradea), Kolozsvár (today, Cluj-Napoca), or Buda.³

When the Ottomans captured Szeged in 1541, the town was divided in many ways. At first, the town was divided physically; Szeged was very unique, not like a classic town of its time. It was more like an “Oppidum”, or *Mezőváros*, in Hungarian, which means “field town”.⁴ Szeged was built up from three greater parts, each separated from the other by fields and marshes of nearly two to three kilometres. Each of these parts was shaped like a semicircle, with three or four gates, and was situated on the shore of the river Tisza. Between these three parts were swampy fields, and in rainy weather, earth- and wooden bridges linked the parts of the towns together. The central part was named Palling, because it was circled by an earth rampart and a

¹ More about the history of the city in Hungarian see: Gyula Kristó (ed.), *Szeged Története*, Szeged, 1983.

² Kristó, *Szeged Története*, p. 541. Regarding the society, see pages 635 to 663.

³ Ferenc Szakály *Mezőváros és reformáció*, Budapest, Balassi kiadó, 1995, pp. 172-175.

⁴ A field town was a unique kind of settlement in medieval and early modern Hungary. Field towns had no or negligible walls, but were huge, and their inhabitants were not “townsmen” but peasants and serfs, under feudal lords. Some of them developed into cities – Szeged was one of them.

moat that was nearly three meters deep and more than fifteen meters wide. At the bank of the river Tisza, in the middle of Palling semicircle was a small medieval castle.⁵

Secondly, the newly-founded Lutheran church and the Catholics had a bitter conflict. Protestantism was relatively young, but during these decades spread rapidly in Hungary – especially in the border regions and areas under Ottoman control. Until 1552, Szeged was a town where tensions grew between the two sides.

Thirdly, the townsmen could not decide what strategy to use to avoid the Ottoman threat and further raids. Some of them had thought to surrender to the Ottomans in order to stop them from raiding or extorting the city. Another group thought that if they could gather an army, they could resist. The quarrel ended with the victory of the “peace-party”, if we can say that; the town sent an envoy to the Grand Vizier (*serasker*) Rüstem, and to the Pasha of the just-fallen Buda, and swore loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.⁶ The main leaders of the other group, who thought that resistance would be better, went into exile. The peace-party contained all the Protestants and many Catholics too, and they lived in the non-protected northern and southern sections of the region, Alsó-Szeged (Lower Szeged, the southernmost of the three parts) and Újsziget (New Island, the northernmost, opposite of the Maros estuary). The resistance-party came from the better defended Palling, and were homogenously Roman Catholic.

One of the main characters of our story is a rich merchant, Mihály Tóth. He traded cattle and horses, and had one of the largest herd of cows in the country at that time.⁷ He was also a Catholic zealot, and one of the leaders of the “resistance-party.” After the Ottomans had taken control of the town, Tóth went into exile. He had good contacts with the people of Debrecen, the center of cattle-breeding and trading, – those were so good that when he went into exile there, he quickly got a house and became a member of the town’s magistrate.⁸

His network of contacts was wide; he not only had friends among influential townsmen, but also among the hajduks. The hajduk were an odd group. Until the 1990’s they were described as poor and declassed peoples, guarding and herding the huge cattle of the Plain.⁹ They were described as champions of the poor and guardians of Protestantism,¹⁰ and infantry on the battlefield. Recent studies, however, indicate something quite different. At first, the hajduks were not poor; at our time, nearly one third or more of them were cavalymen. Warhorses were expensive; a single serf could certainly not buy one. Also, a horseman needed at least two battle-ready horses – which mean that among the hajduks were numerous noblemen and townsmen, rich enough to buy warhorses and try their luck as free soldiers. Another thing is that hajduks widely used firearms, especially muskets. A single musketeer was unheard of at this time, and rifles were not made to guard cattle from wolves but to use against humans. As such, it appears that the hajduks were on the way to becoming something similar as the zaporizhian Cossacks.¹¹ Later they became musketeers as the Hungarian armies consistantly lacked mass infantry with firearms.

⁵ Kristó, *Szeged Története*, pp. 498 and 537.

⁶ Kristó, *Szeged Története*, p. 530.

⁷ Szakály, *Mezőváros és reformáció*, p. 175.

⁸ Szakály, *Mezőváros és reformáció*, pp. 176-177.

⁹ Imre Dankó, ‘A hajdúság eredete’, *Hajdú-Bihari Múzeumok Közleménye*, 10(3-10), Debrecen, 1969, p. 5; László Nagy, *Hajdúvitézek*, Budapest, Zrínyi kiadó, 1983, p.14.

¹⁰ Their early 17th century leader, Stephan Bocskay even has a full-size statue at the “Reformer’s wall” in Geneva, along with Oliver Cromwell, William the Silent, Gaspar de Coligny and others.

¹¹ See: Gellért Ernő Marton, ‘Királyi hajdúk és regisztrált kozákok hazájuk szolgálatában’, *Acta Universalis Segediensis: Acta Historica*, 1, 2012, pp. 23-36.

After his exile, Mihály Tóth constantly sought an opportunity to retake Szeged from the Ottomans. The Ottomans, however, were aware of this; they rebuilt and fortified the old castle of the town, and also strengthened the older defenses, especially the city's palling. By the year 1552, a fort with 3 or 4 cannon, a small castle and a huge encircled town were finished, with approximately 300 soldiers garrisoned in the city, and an additional several hundred mercenaries bolstering numbers.¹²

The opportunity to reclaim the city came in the winter of 1551. That year, King Ferdinand and George the Friar¹³ came to an agreement about the reunification of the country – from 1526 until the date mentioned, the country was divided amongst pro-Habsburgs and anti-Habsburgs (or pro-Szapolyai).¹⁴ Ferdinand sent 7000 soldiers to Transylvania under the command of Giovanni Battista Castaldo. The Ottomans, however, didn't want to lose their vassal state, so they launched an attack in the autumn of 1551, led by Mehmed Sokollu.¹⁵ They captured Lippa and besieged Temesvár (Timisoara), but they could not take the fort. Lippa was retaken very soon by the royal army, and some minor victories were scored against the Ottomans, so Tóth saw it as the optimal moment to reclaim Szeged. He mobilized some four or five-thousand men and moved to Temesvár in the hope that his close ties with George Friar would grant him some assistance. The Friar's political maneuvers, however, made him suspicious in the eyes of the pro-Ferdinand nobility and the soldiers of Castaldo, so he was assassinated in his quarters at Alvinc in December of 1551.

Tóth did not give it up, however, and he continued searching for an accomplice. As such, he sought the help of Giovanni Castaldo, the Superior Commander of the Transylvanian royal army. Tóth told him that he had contacted his friends in Szeged, and that everything appeared to be suitable for a quick raid on the town. The citizens would open the gates of the Palling, enabling his best soldiers to enter the town and kill the Ottoman garrison guarding it, then wait for the royal army to arrive and reinforce the city. His plan was risky, but had some strong elements; As the castle was too small to house the Ottoman garrison, the whole host slept in the city, and the gates of the castle were not closed.¹⁶ If the attack came as a surprise, success could follow. Castaldo agreed.

In addition to Castaldo, Tóth presented to Bernardo Villela de Aldana, a Spanish Tercio-Commander and Commander of the castle of Lippa. Aldana was a strange figure, and one of the most debated individuals of the time.¹⁷ Aldana was only "de jure" Master de Campo as he never had a complete tercio. This is because after his promotion he was sent to Hungary with only a third amount of the Spanish soldiers needed to form a proper tercio.¹⁸ He was, however, extremely skilled in artillery and fortifying buildings, as well as in seizing fortresses – he was among the people who planned and built the fortress of Szolnok a year before, and he commanded the artillery during the sieges that followed. He also took part in the successful defense of Temesvár at 1551. Sadly, he was also a man who wanted great deeds, glory, and honour, and therefore he

¹² The town's *defter*. Official Ottoman list regarding income and taxes of paid soldiers and officials of a town) talks about 12 gunners and 350 soldiers in 1551. (Antal Velics, *Török kincstári defterek*, Book I, Budapest, 1883, pp. 70-71.)

¹³ His name refers to him being a Pauline monk, bishop of Várad (Oradea), and also a cardinal. He mostly referred to as a "Friar" in contemporary texts.

¹⁴ For a more in-depth analysis of this period of Hungarian history, see: Géza Pálffy, *The Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York, East European Monographs, 2009.

¹⁵ Later he became Pasha of Rumelia, later grand vizier.

¹⁶ Szakály, *Szeged története*, pp. 536-538.

¹⁷ More about him can be found in Hungarian, including his memoirs, written around 1555-58. See: Bernardo de Aldana, *Expedición del maestro de campo Bernardo de Aldana a Hungría en 1548-1552*, László Scholz (trans.), Budapest, 1986. Also of interest: Zoltán Korpás, 'Egy spanyol zsoldosvezér levelei a XVI. század közepén vívott magyarországi háborúkról', *Fons*, 1999, pp. 1-129.

¹⁸ A tercio in general is 3000 soldier, however, Aldana had 1200 soldiers in 1548, and 1400 in 1550. Korpás, 'Egy spanyol tiszt levelezése', p. 7-14.

risked too much. He quickly accepted Tóth's plan, and started to recruit a group of some thousand soldiers from the royal army to become the garrison of the freshly taken town.¹⁹

Their plan was so risky that it was questionable if would end in success. At first, there was no "plan B", so if the hajduks couldn't take the town by surprise, the whole plan would collapse. The "army" had no cannons at all, because moving cannons out from the endangered frontier castles was banned by Castaldo and King Ferdinand. The hajduks, lacking discipline, were incapable of conducting a proper siege, and the number of the royal detachment consisted mostly of cavalry, something which was quite unique, because in most battles the royal army gave the infantry and the Hungarians the cavalry.

The town was not impregnable, but if the Ottomans managed to dig themselves into the castle, they were a hard nut to crack for an army without artillery. Plus Szeged was situated between other Ottoman fortresses-nearly halfway between Belgrade and Buda- with only Szolnok and Temesvár controlled by the Hungarians nearby. As such, the town was surrounded by Ottomans from three sides.²⁰ If the siege stuck, the Ottomans could gather forces to break it, and an open-field battle would be risky to fight with mostly self-made soldiers and officers.

The soldiers, as I mentioned, were not professionals, and their local leaders were not either. Although Aldana was skilled, he lacked experience in open-field battles and as High-Commander, and had no experience in fighting with so many and such diverse "soldiers." He had experience with tercios, but these, the most professional, well-trained, disciplined, and organized units of the time were markedly different from the hajduks. While the Commander of a tercio gave the order and the soldiers obeyed, hajduks had little discipline, disobeyed direct orders, and broke formation – or never even assumed it. As such Aldana was unable to lead them into battle. To make his work harder, the hajduks had a well-documented hatred of foreign soldiers and officers.²¹

As mentioned above, Hungarian leaders were also inexperienced. The two main commanders were Tóth and his associate from Debrecen, Ambrus Nagy, but both came from the civil life. They had never been in battle before, led an army, organized battle-order, or commanded a siege. The whole plan showed that they had no idea how a siege was supposed to be conducted. They thought that inexperienced, undisciplined hunters cum soldiers could attack a town and its garrison by surprise. As such, they did not order cannons from those higher in command because they were so sure in their jobs.

What eventuated highlighted all of the faults of their plan. On the night of 22 of February, 1552, some thousand hajduks crossed the Tisza on 600 fishing boats with the help of the town's fishermen. Tóth's supporters managed to open the gates of the Palling, and the hajduks attacked the Ottoman soldiers inside. The plan, however, quickly collapsed. This was not because the Ottomans fiercely resisted, but rather because the hajduks started to immediately loot the city, making a huge amount of noise. The Ottomans woke up, and did what most do when attacked by surprise; they ran. They ran into the castle, together with their Bey,²² and

¹⁹ Aldana, *Expedicion*, pp. 191-192.

²⁰ Szakály, *Mezőváros és reformáció*, pp. 177-179.

²¹ Even Aldana remarks that they had a bad relationship with the regular Hungarian soldiers. Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 197.

²² A Bey is an Ottoman-Turkish military rank and/or governor of a "sandjak" (a medium-sized administrative district) or commander of a town, fort.

closed the gate.²³ Half of the garrison died, but some hundred managed to get into the castle, and wait until the hajduks were done.

When the sun came up, the Palling was looted. Struck the hardest were the Turkish, Serbian and Jewish traders. The Hungarian leaders of the attack also forgot about the castle, turning their attention to their political rivals. Prominent members of the “peace-party,” as well as all protestants, were banished from the town by the order of Tóth, who supervised the action himself.²⁴ He sent a message to Aldana that the city had fallen but the Ottomans made it into the castle, and when his men tried to assault them, they were beaten back.

When Aldana received Tóth’s message, he was in Makó, a village about thirty kilometers east of Szeged. He immediately sent a letter to Castaldo and to András Báthory, the governor of Transylvania.²⁵ He asked for siege cannons. Unfortunately, the river Maros was frozen and it was impossible to send guns quickly over the water. As such, there was a need to prepare the huge bronze and iron cannons for field transportation, but these cannons were only in Várada, because Temesvár was so often attacked that it was forbidden to transport cannons from the fort. Unfortunately, Várada was twice as far as away as Temesvár, and required the cannons to be transferred across a swampy plain. So time passed, and aided the Ottomans; the Bey of Szeged immediately sent a message to the Pasha of Buda, Hadim Ali.²⁶ Ali started to summon an army to Buda from the Ottoman fortresses of the area, quickly moving to break the siege.

This venture ended quickly from there. Aldana arrived to Szeged, where he realized the unbearable conditions of the Tóth’s forces; the hajduks had found the wine stores and became drunk. Half of them were somewhere in the nearby villages where they intended to find minor Ottoman detachments to kill or supply trains to loot. The rest were scattered among the three parts of the city, and were busy looting and drinking. Aldana tried to construct a siege-trench around the castle utilising the labour of the royal army, especially his 200 Spanish infantrymen, and some of the hajduks. But without cannons it seemed impossibly to attack. Aldana did not know that the transportable cannons in Várada still hadn’t been moved. Soldiers in Várada only started to prepare them when news came on the 4th of March that Ali’s army had attacked the Hungarian army, breaking the siege.²⁷

The ensuing battle brought an end to these events. On the morning of 1st of March, peasants approached Aldana with a report that an Ottoman army was approaching the town. Aldana decided to take up the battle eastward from Szeged (where present-day Kiskundorozsma is), leaving the royal infantry in the trenches to cover the army’s back from Ottoman attack. He then summoned the hajduks and the royal cavalry, and took up positions. His plan was to scatter the Ottomans when they attacked, then counterattack their camp. However, half of the hajduks were not present in the battle; they were still drunk or elsewhere hunting supply-caravans.²⁸

²³ The description of the battle came from Aldana, *Expedicion*, pp. 192-193. See also: Martin Fumeé, *The historie of the troubles of Hungarie containing the pitifull losse and ruine of that kingdome, and the warres happened there, in that time, betweene the Christians and Turkes*, London, Felix Kyngston, 1600, pp. 177-185. Here, Mihály Tóth appears under the name “Ottomiall.”

²⁴ Miklós Istvánffy, *Historiarum de rebus Vngaricis*, Pál Tályyai (trans.) Budapest, 2003, p. 176.

²⁵ ÖStA HHStA UA AA Fasc.62. Konv.B. fol 86-88 Letter from Aldana to the Commander of Várada castle on 24 February, 1552.

²⁶ It is sometimes stated that he used a dove. Istvánffy, *Historiarum de rebus Vngaricis*, p. 176.

²⁷ Báthory sent a letter to Castaldo that when he was ready to send the cannons from Várada, he got the message about the loss of the battle. HHStA UA Fasc. 63. Konv. A. fol., p. 14-15, Báthory’s letter to Castaldo on 4 March, 1552.

²⁸ Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 194, and Szakály, *Mezőváros és reformáció*, p. 185.

Battle began when the Ottoman artillery opened fire from twelve cannon. This barrage did little damage, allowing the Ottoman cavalry to mount an attack. They were immediately scattered by the Royal Heavy Cavalry on the wings, which a detachment of Silesian Heavy Riders, led by Aldana himself, scattered the Ottoman's main infantry unit, capturing the Ottoman flag. The hajduks also managed to repel the attack of the janissaries. Then everything collapsed suddenly. Hajduks started to loot the dead Ottomans, trying to capture runaway Ottoman horses. Aldana tried to reorganize them, without success. Seeing the chaos of the Hungarian central, Ali again ordered an attack, scattering the hajduks. Seeing this, some in the royal cavalry started to run away. The battle was lost; Aldana managed to get back to the town, and retreated with the royal infantry which suffered minimal losses. He retreated to the northern Szolnok fortress, while some parts of the army retreated along river Maros. The Ottomans had so many casualties that did not chase them, instead attacking the drunken hajduks still in the town, slaughtering them all. At the end of the day, four thousand hajduks, some dozen regular soldiers and thousands of Ottomans were dead.²⁹

After these events, Aldana and Tóth remained together; Aldana used Tóth as his deputy officer.³⁰ Why did he do this? Because he realized that leading Hungarian soldiers was far beyond his capabilities, but he needed to work with them successfully. For that, he needed to find someone who had experience, and whom he trusted. Aldana had had in the past – and had later – many conflicts with other Hungarian leaders. While other, more experienced commanders among the Hungarians didn't like Aldana's thoughts regarding the way of war, Tóth, who had little experience, was convinced of the usefulness of the cooperation with Aldana. He also thought that the re-capture of Szeged was only possible if he cooperated with someone else ranked highly in the royal army, and had the ability to lead a siege.

Aldana, however, had no energy to take care of Szeged. He was ordered by Castaldo in mid-April to go to Gyula, an important castle, to take control of it after the death of its pro-Habsburg owner as there was a fear that his relatives would try to give it to the Ottomans. Castaldo wanted to integrate the castle into the defense line of the royal guard, and as such, Aldana was chained to Gyula, forbidden to leave.³¹ Furthermore, Aldana had a serious carriage-accident on the way to Gyula and suffered major injuries – an infected wound on his right hand made him unable to take part in any action.³² He only recovered to the first weeks of June after suffering from a fever caused by sepsis.³³

Soon after he had partly recovered, he summoned Tóth and his re-organized group to Gyula. Rumours came that the Ottomans were planning a greater action against Hungary. The reason for their attack was that they wanted to avoid the unification of the two parts of the country. The situation was not good: Temesvár wasn't fully renovated, Lippa was nothing but a ruin, and Castaldo had only 7000 soldiers willing to defend Transylvania from an attack which could come from three directions simultaneously: from Moldova, from Wallachia and from the south-west.³⁴

Aldana heard that the Ottomans would command at least two armies: one led by Ali, the Pasha of Buda, who would attack the Trans-Danubian fortresses, and one led by Vice-Serdar Ahmed who would attack Temesvár,

²⁹ There are two sources about the battle from witnesses: One was sent by the commander of a cavalry unit, Reimpracht von Oppersdorf, (ÖSTA HHSa UA Fasc. 63. Konv. A. fol 14-15: Oppersdorf's letter to Ferdinand on 4 March) and the other is from Aldana, in his memoirs. Aldana, *Expedicion*, pp. 192-196. See also: *Historiarum de rebus Vngaricis*, pp. 177-78.

³⁰ Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 207.

³¹ ÖSTA HHSa UA Fasc. 63. Konv. B: Castaldo's letter to Ferdinand, where he explains this decision (14 April, 1552).

³² A personal letter of Aldana to his brother on 1 June, 1552. Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 273.

³³ See previous letter. Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 204.

³⁴ About 1552. See: Imre Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen Magyarországon*, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985.

Szolnok, and perhaps Eger. Aldana received information about Ali's attack on Veszprém, so ordered Tóth to gather his light cavalry and attempt to disrupt Ali's supply line.³⁵ They were moderately successful, but because of the desertion of the defenders, Veszprém fell after a three-day long siege.³⁶ After minor clashes with smaller collections Ottoman troops, Tóth returned to Gyula.

The attack of the main Ottoman army, led by Achmed, was an even greater threat. In the first days of June, the still sick and weak Aldana relocated to Lippa where he found nothing but ruined walls and a badly paid and equipped garrison with extremely low morale.³⁷ This garrison was at least large, consisting of about two-or three thousand soldiers. Some of them were, however, defectors of Temesvár, others were hajduks, Serbian irregulars, and armed peasants. On paper, there was many soliders who were members of the royal army,³⁸ but most of them were killed in earlier battles, or suffered from illnesses caused by the swampy area.

The siege of Temesvár began at the 10th of July. The castle was controlled by István Losonczy, Comes of Temes and an earlier rival of Aldana.³⁹ Earlier historians blamed Aldana for the eventual result, stating that he did not try to lift the Ottoman siege on Temesvár because he hated the commander,⁴⁰ but as we now see, this had little to do with it. Castaldo urged him to try to attack the Ottomans,⁴¹ but his troops were in bad condition, and he was still sick and weak.

He, however, did try to aid the defenders of the fortress: he asked Tóth, together with the relatives and friends of the commander of Temesvár, to try to slip through Ottoman lines and carry gunpowder to the fortress. According to Aldana, the group scattered on the road after being ambushed by the Ottoman cavalry, and were overrun and killed. Tóth barely escaped, receiving several wounds. He recovered after some weeks, but his cooperation with Aldana ended. Aldana was arrested because of his abandonment of Lippa some days after the fall of Temesvár. Their cooperation here ended, and in general, had little to no effect on the course of the war.

Conclusion

Why, then, is this story important? Because earlier historians have said, that cooperation between Hungarian and foreign soldiers and officers was generally bad, as personal problems making cooperation difficult. Here we see that a Spanish and a Hungarian soldier could cooperate, even if this cooperation did not affect the course of war. This is not surprising: some hundred soldiers can't make a difference when armies of tens of thousands fight on the battlefield. Their actions against supply lines could have helped the defenders of the besieged city, but Veszprém fell too quickly, and the army that besieged Temesvár was well-prepared enough that disturbing the supply lines had minimal effect. This story is also important as Aldana was described as a man who could not cooperate even with his fellow Spanish comrades. But as was demonstrated, he realized the necessity of cooperating with someone who could lead the Hungarians under

³⁵ Aldana's letter to his brother at the 1st of June, 1552, In. Aldana: *Expedicion*: 207. Also see: Szakály: *Mezőváros és reformáció*: 187-188.

³⁶ Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés*, p. 97.

³⁷ Aldana, *Expedicion*, p. 183.

³⁸ ÖStA HHStA UA Fasc 65. konv. A: Letters from Castaldo to Ferdinand, 8 and 19 July, 1552.

³⁹ Earlier that year, Aldana wanted to become the Comes of Temes, and it poisoned their relationship.

⁴⁰ Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés*, p. 133.

⁴¹ ÖStA HHStA UA Fasc 65. Konv. A: Letters from Castaldo, 22 and 26 July, 1552.

his command. Why did he choose Tóth? Beside Tóth's connections among the hajduks, Tóth was not his rival: earlier he had had conflicts with others— Hungarian and foreigner – because he feared for his own reputation. Tóth did not demonstrate any intention of acquiring lands or castles, wanting only to aid the royal forces in exchange of the re-capture of his hometown, Szeged.

What was problematic, and demonstrates a significant problem of the era, was the successful command of soldiers from different traditions. When Aldana tried to lead the Hungarians, he failed because he had no experience and was undignified in the eyes of the hajduks. He was not the only foreign commander of the era who had these problems; there were Hungarian commanders, too, who had the same problem commanding non-Hungarian troops.

Here, however, we find an example of a co-dependence. The short and not-so effective cooperation of Aldana and Tóth demonstrates that the will for cooperation existed, even if the relations between Hungarian and foreigner military personnel remained bitter-sweet for the next two centuries.

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The ‘Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich’ as ‘cultural institution’: an interactive and interdependent concept to fight anti-semitism by memory

SUSANNE KORBEL

Identity is intrinsically tied to memory and vice versa. The ‘Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich’¹, which describes itself as a paramilitary veteran’s organization, composed a counter-narrative to anti-Semitic stereotypes in Austria during the interwar period, more precisely during the authoritarian, fascistic regime [Austrofaschismus] of Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuß and his successor Kurt Schuschnigg. The narrative was based on memories of frontline experiences of Jewish and non-Jewish soldiers in First World War. However, appearing as a cultural institution was an equally important part of those concepts of identity. The aim of this article is to examine identities in a critical way. Firstly, taking the issue of categorizations into consideration, I will illustrate how the Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten attempted to include not only combatants but also women and children into newly formed concepts of identity. I want to claim that staging of corporeity and memory acts were thereby equally important and were part of a non-determined understanding of culture. Next, I want to highlight that performing as cultural institution was one of these concepts. Overall, the article examines the interactions of Jews and non-Jews, discussing the impacts that these interactions caused. For the purposes of this article, the organization’s official organs of publication, the *Jüdische Front* and the *Mitteilungsblatt der Jüdischen Kulturstelle* are analyzed.² In doing so, I utilize a theoretical approach that examines cultures as products of co-construction.³

The Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich

In August 1932, the Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich was founded following its German counterpart the Reichsbund jüdischer Frontsoldaten Deutschland to overcome the vehement daily anti-Semitism experienced in interwar Austria:⁴

“Die in Oesterreich von Tag zu Tag radikalere Formen annehmende antisemitische Hetze verschiedener politischer Parteien hat eine kleine Gruppe ehemaliger Frontsoldaten bewogen, eine

¹ It would be literally translated as *Organisation of Jewish Front-line soldiers Austria*. As the term was a personal name I will use it on the following pages as *Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten*.

² *Jüdische Front*, 1933-1938, Vol. 1-7, Vienna, [³ David Biale, ‘Confessions of an Historian of Jewish Culture’, *Jewish Social Studies*, \(1\)1, 1994, p. 41.](http://digital.cjh.org/view/action/singleViewer.do?dvs=1433496914484~218&locale=de_DE&VIEWER_URL=/view/action/singleViewer.do&DELIVERY_RULE_ID=5&frameld=1&usePid1=true&usePid2=true©RIGHTS_DISPLAY_FILE=lbi-copyrightnotice-01(5.6.2015); Mitteilungsblatt der Jüdischen Kulturstelle, The National Library of Israel, Archive Journals, 1933-1937.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

⁴ Emanating from those groups of the Habsburg Monarchy which mostly understood themselves as ‘German’ after World War One and the subsequent peace negotiations. As a continuing line from the end of the 19th century onwards, anti-Semitism was a constitutive element of the policies of national and liberal parties, see: Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity. The Jews of Habsburg Austria during World War I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004. The interwar period was dominated by an increasing anti-Semitism among all parties, see: Marsha L. Rozenblit, ‘From Habsburg Jews to Austrian Jews: The Jews of Vienna, 1918-1938’, in Lappin, Eleonore (ed.), *Jüdische Gemeinden, Kontinuitäten und Brüche*, Vienna, 2002; Warren Seger, *Austria in the Thirties: Culture and Politics*, Riverside, Ariadne, 1991.

Abwehrbewegung ins Leben zu rufen.”⁵

To attract a substantial number of campaigners, a first proclamation was published in several daily journals in Vienna in May. Motivated by the harsh anti-Semitism, 51 people answered the call. Further advertisements were published to appeal to a broader audience. It attempted to commemorate the Jewish support for First World War and those who died as a result. As an emerging paramilitary institution, in these recruitments the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten refers to the participation of Jews in the army of the Habsburg monarchy in World War I. In doing so, it aimed to construct a ‘commonsense’ based on a shared experience to build collective memory:

“Jüdische Frontsoldaten, Kameraden! Kommt alle ohne Rücksicht auf Rang und Stand un auf politische Einstellung zu unserer ersten öffentlichen Versammlung Donnerstag, den 28. Juli 1932 [...]. Kommet und protestiert mit uns schärfstens gegen die ständigen Verleumdungen und täglichen Besudelungen jüdischen Namens und jüdischer Ehre. Kommet und protestiert mit uns schärfstens gegen die konstante Bedrohung harmloser jüdischer Passanten, gegen die untragbare Schädigung und Vernichtung jüdischer Existenzen, gegen die skandalösen Ueberfälle an den Hochschulen, [...]. Wir jüdische Frontsoldaten und Invaliden haben gemeinsam mit den nichtjüdischen Frontkameraden unsere Heimat verteidigt und beschützt. Soll nun die Judenschaft für den verlorenen Weltkrieg in dem sie ungeheure Opfer an Gut und Blut brachte, für die Weltwirtschaftskrise, unter der sie selbst am meisten leidet, für alles Elend als Sündenbock an den Pranger gestellt werden? [...] Soll das der Dank für die ungezählten jüdischen Heldenopfer sein? [...] Wir verlangen von der Regierung die selbstverständliche Respektierung staatsbürgerlicher Rechte, wir verlangen auch als die größten Steuerzahler Wiens Ruhe und Ordnung, um mitwirken zu können am Aufbau und Fortschritt Österreichs.”⁶

The First World War and Emperor Franz Joseph (who was denounced as “Judenkaiser” in anti-Semitic agitations) were not able to repress the immanent anti-Semitism. What is more, anti-Semitism was exploited for daily political issues shortly after the end of the war. Thus, I want to emphasize that increasing anti-Semitism and manifestations of it were characteristic of the interwar period.⁷

⁵ Literal Translation: “Antisemitic agitation of different political parties, which adopts more and more radical forms every day, has induced a small group of former front-line soldiers to initiate a defense group.” *Jüdische Front*, no.1, 1933, p. 5.

⁶ Literal Translation: “Jewish Front-line Soldiers, Comrade! Come all of you without consideration of classes or political attitude to our first official assembly on Thursday, 28th July 1932 [...]. Join us and protest harshly against the constantly defamations and daily defilements of Jewish names and Jewish honor. Join us and protest against the constant threat of harmless Jewish passerbies, against the unbearable injury and annihilation of Jewish existence, against the scandalous mugging on universities [...] We Jewish frontline-soldiers and disabled people defended and protected together with non-jewish companions our homeland. Should now the Jewry be responsible for the World War, in which the Jewry made tremendous sacrifices on blood and good, and responsible too for the Great Depression, under which the Jewry suffer mostly from, and should be pilloried and scapegoated for all misery? [...] Should this be the honor for the uncountable Jewish heroic deeds? [...] We call for naturally respect of civic rights from the government, as those who pay the highest amount of taxes we call for peace and ordinance to be able to contribute to the building up and progress of Austria.” *Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich, Drei Jahre Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich*, p. 18.

⁷ Albert Lichtblau, ‘Antisemitismus 1900-1938. Phasen, Wahrnehmungen und Akkulturationseffekte’, from: Stern, Eichinger, *Wien und die jüdische Erfahrung 1900-1938. Akkulturation - Antisemitismus - Zionismus*, Vienna, e.a., 2009, p. 40; Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution. A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism*, London, Chapel Hill, 1992, p. 73. For a theoretical approach in anti-Semitism research see: Victor Karady *Gewalterfahrung und Utopie, Juden in der europäischen Moderne*, Frankfurt, Fischer Taschenbuch, 1999, pp. 204-225 or Shulamit Volkov, *Antisemitismus als kultureller Code*, München, C.H. Beck, 2000, pp. 13-36; for the dimensions of anti-Semitism see: Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, New York, Vintage, pp. 54-57.

It should become more and more important that the Jewish support for the war would be remembered in the collective memory of Austria's interwar society. Therefore, although the organization was actually right-wing and Zionist, it expressed interest in incorporating the entirety of the Jewish population - however defined - of 1930s Austria. It supported the 'corporate state' and became a member of the 'Vaterländische Front' shortly after its foundation in 1933.⁸ As the political interests of the Jewish communities of Austria were greatly diverse, this aim was not easy to achieve.⁹

The Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten emerged not only as an organization for ex-servicemen and veterans, but also as a cultural institution interesting in attracting a broader Jewish audience. It is the contention of this article that the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich pursued the idea of a united 'Jewish population' to act in opposition to anti-Semitism, thereby elaborating upon different identities: the culturally interested veteran was but one of them.

Co-Construction of memory/ies and identity/ies

In this article, I wish to delve into the multilayer phenomenon of identity/ies focusing especially on the interactions between Jews and non-Jews, looking beyond the depiction of 'Jewish history' most often depicted in the historiography of this period.¹⁰ This approach is closely related to the work of David Biale, and as such, I will utilize it to overcome this methodological gap. He conclusively establishes a relationship between "text and context" and developed the concept of co-construction of relations between Jews and Non-Jews. "This is not, therefore, a call for doing social history as opposed to intellectual history, but rather for studying the tensions and interactions between texts and contexts, between intellectual elites and the broader culture of which they are a part."¹¹

'Identity/ies' of individuals are a composition of 'collective identity/ies' and 'collective memory' and memory and identity intrinsically tied together. Identity occurs in discourses which determine at specific times who is part of a group. On the one hand, identity offers the inclusion of those who are accepted without reservation by the group. On the other hand, identity includes a high potential for the exclusion for those who are not accepted. Collectives are particularly unveiled at their boundaries; hence the exclusive potential is even intensified.¹² Stuart Hall argued that identity is something that develops over time, is never completely stable and should be seen as being subject to time and difference.¹³ Additionally, Identity/ies are subject to interactions in spaces - which are imagined and constructed themselves as well. Stephan Whitfield expressed this interdependence of frameworks and encapsulated the elusiveness of the concept as follows: "If communities are not primordial but imagined, if tradition is not ancient but invented, then identity is, according to this fashionable view, not something with which one is born. Identity is constructed. It is mutable, subject to

⁸ *Drei Jahre Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten*, p. 24.

⁹ Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna 1918-1938*, Indianapolis, Bloomington, 1991.

¹⁰ Klaus Hödl, 'From Acculturation to Interaction: A New Perspective on the History of Jews on Fin-de-Siècle Vienna', *An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 25(2), 2007, p. 85.

¹¹ Biale, 'Confessions of an Historian of Jewish Culture', p. 41.

¹² Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, C. H. Beck, Frankfurt am Main, 2013, pp. 34-37; Astrid Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen. Eine Einführung*, Stuttgart, Weimar, 2011, p. 19.

¹³ Stuart Hall, 'Ethnizität: Identität und Differenz', in Engelmann Jan (ed.), *Die kleinen Unterschiede. Der Cultural Studies-Reader*, Frankfurt, Campus Verlag, 1999, p. 91.

collective transmission and also to individual will and agency.”¹⁴ He draws primarily on the point that the category ‘Jews’ should not be taken to be fixed, but moveable and imagined. The implementation of this fashionable view - as Whitefield puts it – for ‘being Jewish’ in the Habsburg Monarchy and interwar period will be discussed with below.

Being Jewish at the Turn of the 20th Century

Marsha Rozenblit developed the concept of a “tripartite identity” for the Jews of Habsburg Austria. She emphasizes that “[t]hey [the Jews] espoused a fervent Austrian state patriotism, and adopted the languages and cultures of one or another of the peoples of Austria if they modernized. But, they continued to regard themselves as members of the Jewish people. Hence, modernized Austrian Jews were Austrian politically; Germ, Czech or Polish culturally; and Jewish in an ethnic sense.”¹⁵ At the turn of the 19th century, the categorization of ‘being Jewish’ became part of a racialized discourse which is described as modern anti-Semitism, and is mainly characterized by its perception that the denunciations and stereotypes of Jewish people must an essential reality behind them.¹⁶ The First World War raised the hope of the Jews of the Habsburg Monarchy that anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic stereotypes could be assailed by participating in it. Even if anti-Semitism was not as harsh in the Habsburg army as in the German Empire one (there was not anything comparable to the “*Judenzählung*”¹⁷ (*Jewish census*) of the German army in 1916), the integrative force of war was confined. The expression of loyalty and the participation in the First World War meant virtually nothing for the Jews at the end of it, and anti-Semitism increased roughly in interwar Austria.

Moreover, the end of the First World War resulted in a lack of belonging for the Jewish population. The struggle for identity and belonging in the community resulted in anti-Semitism being the sole commonality between all communities.¹⁸ Remembrance of the First World War in society became a controversial issue and representation in memory is unavoidable if a group pursue to be included in the collective at present and in the future. Memory of the First World War in interwar Austria is, as Gerald Lamprecht claims, not without confession: The tomb of the *unknown soldier* in Austria is in a crypt at the *Äußeres Burgtor* in Vienna. Therefore, while the soldier is unknown, he is undenominational - memory was catholically connoted.

The Bund jüdischer Frontsoldaten advocated for the preservation of the remembrance of the heroics of Jewish soldiers. However, it has to be seen as a more complex institution: It was primarily a veteran’s organization but focused for example on the formation of an “*Einheitsfront*” (united front), which encouraged all Austrian Jews to fight against anti-Semitism. The Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich encouraged the formation of different identities as a means by which to attract women and children in addition to men and campaigners.

¹⁴ Stephen J. Whitfield, ‘Enigmas of Modern Jewish Identity’, *Jewish Social Studies*, 8(2-3), 2002, p. 165.

¹⁵ Rozenblit, ‘From Habsburg Jews to Austrian Jews: The Jews of Vienna, 1918-1938’, p. 110.

¹⁶ Victor Karady, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era. A Sozio-historical Outline*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2004, pp. 304-335)

¹⁷ In 1916, the Jews in the Army were counted because of anti-Semitic denunciations saying that Jews would not really participate in the war - that they were not fighting but rather doing desk work. The findings which repudiated this were not published. For further data see Jacob Rosenthal, “*Die Ehre des jüdischen Soldaten*” *Die Judenzählung im Ersten Weltkrieg und ihre Folgen*, Frankfurt am Main, Campus Judaica, 2007.

¹⁸ Marsha L. Rozenblit, “Sustaining Austrian “National” Identity in Crisis. The Dilemma of the Jews in Habsburg Austria, 1914-1918” from: Judson, Pieter M. and Rozenblit, Marsha L., *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*, New York, Berghahn, 2005, pp. 178-180.

Appearing as a cultural organization, the staging of corporeity and commemorations (memorial services) were thereby equally important. As such, the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich was not only a defense strategy against anti-Semitism, but also one of the largest Jewish organizations in the interwar period, counting approximately 20.000 members in 1935.¹⁹ It offered new identities for Jewish people in interwar Austria and attempted to construct a counter narrative to the anti-Semitic denunciations. Memories of the frontline and experiences of Jewish and non-Jewish soldiers were equally important as cultural aspects or corporeity.²⁰

It developed, for example, an image of the Jewess being strong, idealistic, and faithful [*glaubenstreu*], and willing to make sacrifices [*opferbereit*].²¹ She was primarily responsible for the recollection [*Rückbesinnung*] of Jewish tradition through which Jewish unity would be recovered. Moreover, a separate women's organization [*Frauengruppe*] was founded in autumn 1933, the tasks of which were charity and economy.²² After the February Uprising of 1934, they worked together with Catholic and Evangelical women's organizations.²³ The women active within this Frauengruppe represented the connection between the adult soldier and the children in the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten.²⁴

In the concepts of identity of the *Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten*, adolescence and childhood were rigorously separated: Children were associated with 'women', whereas youth was associated with soldiership and masculinity.²⁵ The male young adults were considered as the successors of the campaigners and had to be physically fit to be able to defend themselves as well as, as the Bund pointed out, Jewish honor.²⁶ In addition to physical fitness and discipline, however, the BJJF also insisted that the mind should be shaped through lectures in Jewish culture.²⁷

The anti-Semitic stereotype of the cowardly Jew was often physically coded.²⁸ The Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten attempted to overcome this stereotype by, on the one hand, arguing of the Jewish support for the war and the prowess of the Jewish soldiers, while on the other hand, constructing images of a well-conditioned body. Based on biblical quotes and the Maccabees, the will to fight [*Kampfeswille*] should be illustrated through an exercised body.²⁹ Sport became the basis for prowess.³⁰ Furthermore, the body was staged as the visible sign for the prowess, thus horrible stories of wounded soldiers were reported.³¹ However, this discourse was not unique to the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten, and can be considered as related to the German *Turnbewegung* which was an important issue in the national movement.

¹⁹ *Drei Jahre Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten*, p. 20.

²⁰ The strong, faithful, idealistic and willing to make sacrifices Jewess or Palestine supporting community as well as the militant *Jungbund* were drafts of identity constructed by the Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten (Korbel, 2014: 65-78).

²¹ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.15, p. 5.

²² *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.2, p. 3.

²³ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.3, p. 2.

²⁴ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.1, p. 2.

²⁵ *Jüdische Front*, vol.5 no.2, p. 6.

²⁶ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.2, p. 4.

²⁷ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.15, p. 6.

²⁸ Klaus Hödl, *Die Pathologisierung des jüdischen Körpers. Antisemitismus, Geschlecht und Medizin im Fin-de-Siècle*, Vienna, Picus Verlag Ges., 1997, pp. 175-177.

²⁹ *Jüdische Front*, vol.4 no.3, p. 4.

³⁰ *Jüdische Front*, vol.2 no.11, p. 2.

³¹ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.8, p. 2.

The Bund Jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich as Cultural Institution

We shall see below that the performance as cultural institution was one further concept of identity that the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten attempted to offer to its (future) followers. I will explore the reason why the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich was founded and desired to appear as cultural institution. How did a veterans' organization become a cultural institution? What was its understanding of culture? Who did they wish to address and how did it affect the negotiation of identities in interwar Austria?

The *Jüdische Kulturstelle* (Jewish culture spot) was founded in autumn 1933 - merely one year after the foundation of the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten.³² It was an association of the *Jüdische Kunststelle*, the *Verein zur Förderung jüdischer Musik*, the *Jüdischen Gesangsverein*, the *Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, the *Jüdische Volksheim*, the *Volksbibliothek Zion* and the *Theatergruppe des Clubs Erez Israel*.³³ According to its assertions, it was the only institution of its kind in Vienna. The question soon emerged as to whether a veterans' organization alone would be enough to fight anti-Semitism. Culture represented a daily matter on which communality could be established and the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten could gain new followers.

The *Jüdische Kulturstelle* sold cheap theater and concert tickets to their members, arranged lectures and organized museums visits. In addition, their own performing group staged 'Jewish plays' in German, Yiddish and Hebrew. The *Kulturstelle* sought the foundation of libraries and book clubs. Moreover, Hebrew concerts were held regularly, including one to honor the anniversary of the famous poet Chaim Nachman Bialik.

The *Mitteilungsblatt der Jüdischen Kulturstelle* (Newsletter of the Jewish Culture Institution) was first published in September 1934 and appeared monthly. In this newsletter, the purpose of the *Jüdische Kulturstelle* was outlined as follows:

*„Der Inhalt unseres jüdischen Daseins wird von Menschlichem und Menschenmöglichem bestimmt. Wenn eine Anzahl Juden ähnlicher Geistesverfassung ein Streben zur Erhöhung des Menschlichen empfindet, ist der Drang zur Kultur, zur Bildung vorhanden; dann entsteht eine Stätte der Kultur und so entstand auch unsere ‚Jüdische Kulturstelle‘ (JKa) mit allen Verzweigungen.“*³⁴

They assert that Judaism and culture are associated with humanity and with all kind of human possibilities - the longing for culture goes hand in hand with a longing for education. As such, all were encouraged to actively participate in the *Jüdische Kulturstelle*.

In October 1934, one year after the establishment of the *Jüdische Kulturstelle*, a new replica appeared in the *Jüdische Front* called "Aus dem jüdischen Kulturleben" (Out of Jewish Cultural Life), aimed at the administration of Jewish intellectual life. The *Jüdische Kulturstelle* attempted to address "intellectually interested Jews" with "[...] aus der Feder berühmter und bedeutender Persönlichkeiten [stammende] Beiträge

³² *Jüdische Front*, 19.9.1933, p. 3.

³³ *Impressum Mitteilungsblatt der Jüdischen Kulturstelle*

³⁴ Literal translation: „The content of our Jewish entity is contingent on humanity and humanly possible. If a number of Jews of similar mental state conceive quest for enhancement of humanity, exists the drive for culture, for education; in that case a place of culture arise and the same way our ‚Jewish culture institution‘ with all its ramifications arose. *Mitteilungsblatt der Jüdischen Kulturstelle*, 9.1934, p. 2.

über alle Gebiete in Kunst und Wissenschaft,[...]”.³⁵ It seems that the institution became well known soon after its establishment resulting in the opening of new cultural spots and a the plan for a Jewish academy with 24 classes to be opened at the end of 1934. In addition, a “Lehrgang für jüdische Wissenszweige” (Seminar for Jewish Disciplines) was planned to open shortly after. Hebrew language, Jewish history, literature and art were labeled as “fields of Jewish knowledge.” Classes in these fields were held at the Jewish community college.

Even so, soldiership and military tradition was connected to education in all regards. The culturally concerned and well educated veteran became a popular subject in this discourse:

“Wenn die jüdischen Soldaten und die ihnen Gleichgesinnten erkannt haben, daß die Pflege jüdischer Bildung ihre Pflicht ist, dann wird³⁶ keiner zurückstehen und jeder dem Rufe folgen: Jüdische Front! Auf zur Pflege jüdischer Bildung!”³⁷

The Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten and “his Jewish Front” should initiate the emergence of a new Jewish community whereas the Kulturstelle should provide a cultural program that was affordable and included something for everyone in the community.

Culture, however, was associated with the notion of ‘cultural state’ [*Kulturstaat*]. For example, relations to non-Jews were regulated in Austria like the relations between Jews and non-Jews were regulated in ‘cultural states.’ The discussion is correlate with national discourse and refers as well to the term *Volksgemeinschaft* (ethnic community).³⁸ Moreover, the Jüdische Front suggests that the preoccupation with ‘Jewish history’ should make the Jews conscious about their connection through destiny.³⁹ This issue was discussed under the term “Jüdische Volksbildung” in the following years:

“Die jüdische Volksbildung ist so alt wie das jüdische Volk selbst; denn die Männer die das Judentum begründet, erhalten und neuerlebt haben, waren zu allen Zeiten ängstlich darauf bedacht, daß ihr Erkennen und Wissen in alle Teile des Volkes, ohne jedweden Unterschied Eingang finden.”⁴⁰

What does Culture and Jewish Culture Mean for the BJF?

The Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten’s understanding of ‘culture’ was highly diverse and did not distinguish ‘lowbrow’ culture from ‘highbrow’ culture. The offer of cultural activities and reviews fit the organization’s self-understanding. In its performance as cultural institution, it defined itself ultimately not through experiences of war, but instead, almost stereotypically, through Hebrew and Yiddish literature. Through the cultural

³⁵ Literal translation: „[...] out of the feather of famous and important personalities contributions above all areas in art and science, which interest the mental Jew [...]”. *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.15, p. 4.

³⁶ “[...]eine musikalische Komödie in zwei Akten von J. Siegel, Musik von N.Sekunde[...]” *Jüdische Front*, 5.11.1934, p. 7.

³⁷ Literal translation: “If the Jewish soldiers and their like-minded people have recognized, that the care of jewish education is their duty, nobody will reserve and everyone will follow the reputation: Jewish front! Towards care of Jewish education!” *Jüdische Front*, 1.12.1934, p. 4.

³⁸ *Jüdische Front*, vol.3 no.15, p. 4. For the term and concept ‘Volksgemeinschaft’ and a critical examination see Frank Bajohr, *Volksgemeinschaft: neue Forschungen zur Gesellschaft des Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt, FISCHER Taschenbuch, 2009.

³⁹ „Lernen wir wieder jüdische Geschichte, nicht um trockene Daten und Tatsachen unserem Gedächtnis einzuprägen, sondern um die Schicksalsverbundenheit mit unserem Volke zu erleben und zu betonen!” *Jüdische Front*, vol. 3 no. 16, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Literal translation: “The Jewish public/popular education is as old as the Jewish people (Volk) itself: the men who established, retained and re-experienced Judaism were at all times apprehensive concerned about that their knowing and knowledge would find its ways in all parts of the Volk.” *Mitteilungsblatt der jüdischen Kulturstelle*, vol. 2 no. 3, p. 1.

reconnection to Judaism, unity could be achieved. A strong Jewry should come up together against the anti-Semitic denunciations and abuses of daily life.

In February 1935, a vaudeville theater was founded which staged its first performance on the 20th November 1935 on Franz-Josefs Kai 3rd, Vienna. Leopold Rosenbaum, who cooperated closely with famous Viennese cabaret artists like Oscar Teller, was its director. Since its foundation, the theater produced cabarets, Jewish operettas, and revues.⁴¹ Before that, other theaters of the institution staged plays like *Masseltow*, which was described as a musical comedy in two acts by J. Siegel and N. Sekunde, and *Die Komödiantin*, a comedy in two acts with a prologue by Levi and music by Nelly Kossmann.⁴²

The Jüdische Kulturstelle pursued a Zionist conception of culture. In the *Mitteilungsblatt*, reviews of books discussing the situation in Palestine were exclusively discussed. The Palestinian storybooks, "Jews and Judaism in German Letters through Three Centuries" were some of the most attention gaining volumes.

Another aspect that was negotiated as cultural issue by the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten was a soccer team founded in February 1935.⁴³ Soccer fit perfectly with the convictions which the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten held. Playing soccer was interpreted as an activity to shape the body and refresh the self-esteem of the Jewish population. Additionally, soccer is a game played in teams and thus, strengthens group dynamics. Being popular among a large number of people and an alternative to organized leisure time, it became a responsibility of the Jüdische Kulturstelle.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I described the ways in which the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten Österreich, a paramilitary organization in interwar Austria, pursued its objectives, including its performance as a cultural institution. As possibly the most successful Jewish organization in the interwar period, it sought to address all Jews and evolved different concepts of identity. Taking all the aspects of the organization into consideration, I conclude that this performance cannot be seen as a cultural institution that stood on its own, but rather as one aspect of an identity concept that the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten offered to the Jewish population of interwar Austria. In this process, the performance as a cultural institution addressed people beyond its initial aims of memory and mourning. 'Culture', or 'cultures', were a broadly discussed issue that could not be limited to a single genre; not even in categories like theater or music - the Jüdische Kulturstelle's area of responsibility included soccer and 'popular' education as well. This fact implies that 'Jewish culture' was not separated in to categories of 'highbrow' and 'lowbrow' and thus more all-encompassing.

The Jüdische Kulturstelle is a paradigmatic example of the range of Jewish and non-Jewish relations and interactions. I find it fascinating that 'war' and 'culture' are often seem to be contradictory but the Bund jüdische Frontsoldaten managed to reconcile both issues to persevere its interests and succeeded in constructing identity/ies out of this connection.

⁴¹ The theater was closed in April 1938 after the seizure of power of the National-Socialists.

⁴² "Lustspiel in zwei Akten und Prolog von Levi, Musik von Nelly Kossmann" *Jüdische Front*, 15.11.1934, p. 7.

⁴³ *Jüdische Front*, 1(3), p. 7.

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Newsreels and Propaganda in Horthy Era Hungary

BALINT FEKETE

This paper is about the semi-official Hungarian newsreel series, The Hungarian News-report (Magyar Híradó and later Magyar Világhíradó/The Hungarian World News). The series was – or should have been – shown in almost every Hungarian cinema week-by-week from the beginning of 1924 until the end of 1944. Although most of the Hungarian newsreels (various series, both silent and talkie) survived the 20th century, and moreover they are available for everyone on the internet, only a few historians have dealt with them as an historical source.

This paper discusses the institutional background and the content of the most important Hungarian newsreel-series of 1924 to 1944 to point out the historical value and significance of this material. First, the institution that produced the films, The Hungarian Film Bureau (Magyar Filmiroda Rt./MFI) and its international connections will be shortly presented. The content will then be analyzed by focusing on the depiction of violence, destruction and anti-Semitism during the Second World War. The main objective is to reconstruct how the editors (and thus the governments) exploited the propagandistic potential of The Hungarian World News.

Introduction

The interwar period of Hungarian history is characterized by Regent Miklós Horthy, leader of the country for two decades, who provided posterity with a set of unique and intriguing sources: newsreels. Although little is known about the infrastructure behind the state-produced newsreels between 1924 and 1944, and professional historical research on the topic is still to be undertaken, the present paper will discuss the newsreels produced during this period, in addition to a select set of examples of Second World War era motion picture propaganda.¹

Hungarian newsreels of the Horthy era trace their roots back to the pre-First World War Austro-Hungarian Empire, where the *Kinoriport* series were produced privately. Following the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy, the events of the 1918-1919 period (i.e. the Hungarian People's Republic, led by Count Mihály Károlyi), including the Aster Revolution, were reported on a weekly basis by *The Evening Film (Az Est Film)* series, which were produced privately but in cooperation with the government.² The Károlyi administration was subsequently overthrown and the state was reorganised into the communist Republic of Councils, lasting from 21 March 1919 until 1 August 1919. The new state socialized the movie industry and established the first centralised newsreel service, *Red Report Film (Vörös Riport Film)*, to convey government propaganda to movie-going audiences. The series produced by this service later served as a model for Horthy's counter-revolutionary system, and filmmakers carefully preserved and studied these newsreels.³ The materials also

¹ Other aspects of the movie industry are not concerned here. See more on these at István Nemeskürty *A képpé varázsolt idő*, Budapest, Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1983, and John Cunningham, *Hungarian Cinema: from Coffee House to Multiplex*, New York, Wallflower Press, 2004. In Chapter 10, Cunningham discusses newsreels briefly, although there are a number of inaccuracies.

² *The Evening (Az Est)* was one of the most widespread daily papers of the period and the company launched *The Evening Film (Az Est Film)* newsreel series as a subsidiary project in September 1918, parallel to the films of another emerging press business, the *Pest Journal (Pesti Napló)*. András Lengyel, 'Hatvány Lajos Pesti Naplója (1917–1919)', *Magyar könyvszemle*, 122(4), 2006, pp. 456-460.

³ Márton Kurutz, 'Budapesti helyszíntár. Budapest a híradó- és dokumentumfilmek tükrében, a kezdetektől 1945-ig', *Budapesti negyed*, 9(31), 2001, pp. 25-26; Zsuzsa Perjési, 'A néma híradók megújulnak', *Filmspirál*, 7(26), 2001, pp. 28–29; Nemeskürty, *A képpé varázsolt idő*, pp. 180-186.

served an additional purpose in the counter-revolutionary system, later being used as evidence in court trials.⁴ As the new political system was being consolidated after the lost World War and the trauma of the Trianon peace treaty, István Bethlen's government introduced its own films in the semi-official series, *The Hungarian News-report (Magyar Híradó)*, later renamed *The Hungarian World Newsreel (Magyar Világhíradó)*.

The public discussion of newsreels was predominantly influenced by the experience of the World War and the desire to uncover the reasons behind the defeat, as well as to process and understand the shock of the Treaty of Trianon in the interwar era. Motion picture was seen as one of the primary motivators of the failure and collapse of the previous social structure, in addition to being a major cause of the spreading of crime.⁵ Moreover, the worldwide conflict became to be regarded as a total war of propaganda, in which the losing central powers had accordingly been defeated.⁶ Those losing the war concluded that the victorious had managed to better reach the peoples of the world through media and had had a deeper impact on the audiences, promoting their own agenda. In terms of propaganda, additionally, press and media were regarded as "almighty".⁷ The way psychologist Olivér Brachfeld put it in 1937: "In Germany, a few with insight have realised that the central powers had not lost the war on the battlefield as much as they had lost it in terms of propaganda. Be aware, these press and propaganda analysts say [...], not to let this be the case ever again and to be prepared to use the press more effectively during any possible future conflict."⁸ In a similar manner, preparations started in Hungary as early as the 1920s.

The Institutional Background of Newsreels

In the early 1920s, former military officer Miklós Kozma was tasked with (re-)organising the media and redefining the role of the state within its structure, earning the title of "Medialord" from historian Mária Ormos.⁹ His agenda included the introduction of the Hungarian News Agency (Magyar Távirati Iroda/MTI) and the establishment of the Hungarian Radio as well as the Hungarian Film Bureau (MFI).¹⁰ Closely affiliated with the state, this media conglomerate had been designed to assist the government in the delivery of effective propaganda, and as a result, the formally privately owned MTI is often considered a semi-official news agency.

⁴ István Molnár, 'Adalékok a hazai filmpropaganda és filmoktatás történetéhez (1895–1945)', *Módszertani füzetek. Agitáció, oktatás, szemléltetés*, 4, 1983, pp. 32–33.

⁵ Péter Bihari, *Lövészárkok a hátszágban. Középosztály, zsidókérdés, antiszemitizmus az első világháború Magyarországon*, Budapest, Napvilág Kiadó, 2008, pp. 114-116, 168-170.

⁶ Balázs Sipos, 'Az első világháború médiahatásai', *Médiakutató*, 11(1), 2010, pp. 103-108.

[http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2010_01_tavasz/10_elso_vilaghaboru_mediahatasai] (Last download: 25 October 2014); Susan Tegel, 'Third Reich newsreels – an effective tool of propaganda?', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 24(1), 2004, p. 143.

⁷ Péter Bajomi-Lázár, 'Manipulál-e a média?', *Médiakutató*, 7(2), 2006, pp. 77-95.

[http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2006_02_nyar/04_manipulal-e_a_media/?q=filmh%C3%ADrad%C3%B3#filmh%C3%ADrad%C3%B3] (Last download: 25 October 2014).

⁸ Quoted in Sipos, 'Az első világháború médiahatásai'.

⁹ For more on Miklós Kozma, see Mária Ormos, *Egy magyar médievész: Kozma Miklós. Pokoljárás a médiában és a politikában (1919–1941)*, Vol. I-II, Budapest, PolgART, 2000. For more on film censorship see Márk Záhonyi-Ábel, 'Filmcenzúra Magyarországon a Horthy-korszak első évtizedében', *Médiakutató*, 13(2), 2012, pp. 91-101; Márk Záhonyi-Ábel, 'Magyar filmes intézményrendszer', *Metropolis*, 17(2), 2013, pp. 14-27.

¹⁰ Sándor Pirityi, *A nemzeti hírügynökség története*, Budapest, MTI Kiadó Kft., 1996, especially pp. 53-113.

As far as newsreels are concerned, it seems appropriate to first review the evolution of the MFI series, *The Hungarian News-report*, which had been defined in the MFI founding charter as “the domestic propaganda newsreel service on Hungarian matters”.¹¹ The first newsreel was premiered in 1924 “to show the Hungarian working days and holidays with the liveliness of life itself, if mute,” as said by one of the most recognised actors of the age, Ferenc Kis, in the introduction of the first dubbed newsreel a decade later.¹² The numbered episodes and occasional specials of the series were then produced for two decades, gradually improving in quality.¹³

The Agency had had strong political support during this period, and in 1926, the Minister of Religion and Education, Count Kuno Klebersberg, declared it obligatory for movie theatres to screen the latest newsreel episodes before movies, ensuring state-sponsored propaganda reached an even wider audience.¹⁴ The distribution of newsreels to the entire country was therefore guaranteed, with the decree securing the production of the series.¹⁵ Once the international stage started to open up to Hungary, the MFI managed to acquire materials from foreign (in the beginning, predominantly Italian) news agencies in the framework of exchange agreements, which were in turn edited into the episodes. Consequently, the series was renamed *The Hungarian World Newsreel* in 1928. Kozma paid close attention to the series to ensure that it met Western European quality standards, and as such, the first dubbed reels appeared as early as 1931, from episode 398 onwards. Additionally, he managed to acquire a building in downtown Budapest, further extending the reach of the MFI, calling this theatre Newsreel Theatre in 1939. Here, newsreels, documentaries and culture films were exclusively screened.¹⁶ To meet an increased demand, the Downtown Newsreel Theatre was opened a year later in the city.¹⁷ The network of cinemas was established in Budapest and other major cities. When “slim movies”, or theatres using 16 mm film projectors became obliged by decree to screen newsreels in 1942, audiences of smaller towns were supposed to finally be reached by the *Hungarian World Newsreel*

¹¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also contributed financially to the foundation. István Molnár, *A magyar tényfilmek története 1920–1930*, Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Digitális Archívum és Filmintézet Könyvtára, 1972-1974, p. 15. Notably, the domestic series was complemented in the theatres by the weekly compilations of the German and Italian services, in addition to the newsreels of the Paramount, Fox and Pathé studios. Nemeskürty, *A képpé varázsolt idő*, p. 325.

¹² MVH, 398.

¹³ Kurutz, ‘Budapesti helyszíntár’, p. 28.

¹⁴ The cinema owners obtained the copies for cost price. In 1933 the official responsible which paid for MFI, the National Association of Hungarian Cinematography-licensees (Magyar Mozcóképzemengedélyesek Országos Egyesülete) calculated 5700 Pengő for a newsreel episode. Pál Morvay, *A Magyar Híradó problémája és számszerű megvilágítása*, *Filmkultúra*, 6(12), 1933, pp. 3-4. A feature film cost approx. 110000 Pengő in the 1930s. Tibor Sándor, *Őrségváltás után. Zsidókérdés és filmpolitika 1939–1944*, Budapest, Magyar Filmintézet, 1997, pp. 40-41.

¹⁵ Andor Lajta, ‘A magyar filmlaboratóriumok története. 3. Rész’, *Filmspirál*, 7(2), 2001, pp. 110-119.

¹⁶ Culture films were short documentaries focusing on specific topics, shown between newsreels and movies to neutralise the mood of the audience. Topics presented in an entertaining style varied on a large scale, including cities, landscapes, cultural values, etc. Cunningham, *Hungarian Cinema: from Coffee House to Multiplex*, p. 161; Kurutz, ‘Budapesti helyszíntár’, p. 32.

¹⁷ Sándor, *Őrségváltás után*, pp. 65-71, 85; Anonymous, ‘Megnyílt a Híradó Filmszínház’, *Magyar Film*, 1(43), 1939b, pp. 2-3; v. d., ‘Megnyílt a második híradómozsi’, *Magyar Film*, 2(41), 1940, pp. 2-3.

as well. In the years of the Second World War, lack of film material, the frontline situation and, eventually, the Arrow Cross Party seizing power, restricted the options of the MFI news editors, yet production did not stop until as late as December 1944. Finally, with episode 1084, the series was concluded.¹⁸

The dynamic nature of the observed evolution of newsreels suggests that the medium and, with it, governmental propaganda reached the vast majority of the population. “It is clear that the audience of the *Hungarian World Newsreel* is incomparably wider than that of the daily papers issued in the highest volume. Consequently, editorial work on the series demands a high sense of responsibility,” Ernő Gyimesy Kásás, journalist of the moviemakers’ chamber official magazine *Hungarian Film* wrote in 1943.¹⁹ While he had provided no specific data to support this statement, it still justifies the inclusion of newsreels in historical research as sources, given their significant role in the public information service and propaganda.

Whenever media is examined by historians, an important factor to consider is the size and status of its audience. Unfortunately, this is still yet to be done with newsreels. Despite this, however, the number of theatres screening them and the method of their delivery is observable and can indicate who was watching them and where. Firstly, the number of cinemas and their seats should be considered.

	Hungary	Budapest	Number of copies
1914	-	108	-
1918	-	77	-
1924	-	79	1 → 4
1926	120	-	7
1928	488	87	13
1929	530	-	

¹⁸ The Hungarian Communist Party (MKP) was quick to seize the MFI assets, including theatres and materials, and forfeit them to the newly formed and communist-led Hungarian Film Industry Corporation (Mafirt). Abandoned by its staff, the MFI was rendered impossible to maintain and eventually got dissolved. (Gábor Z. Karvalics – Andreides, *A Magyar Távirati Iroda története 1945–1948*, Budapest, Napvilág Kiadó – Magyar Távirati Iroda, 2006, pp. 101-103.) Newsreels were produced and showed until 1991, but during the Kádár era the genre had lost its significance owing to television (news) (András Petrik, ‘A filmhíradók története Magyarországon 1948-ig’, Hargitai, Henrik – Hirsch, Tibor (eds.), *Médiatörténet*, [http://mmi.elte.hu/szabadbolcseszlet/index.php?option=com_tanelem&id_tanelem=576&tip=0] (Last download: 25 October 2014).

¹⁹ Ernő Gyimesy Kásás, ‘A magyar híradófilm diadalútja. A Magyar Filmhíradó ezredik hete áll a nemzeti talpraállásunk szolgálatában’, *Magyar Film*, 5(16), 1943, p. 8.

	92		
1933	414	77	-
1934	410	75	-
1938	517	81	19 → 24
1939	581	-	30
1943	770	-	55

Fig. 1 – Number of movie theatres in Hungary and in Budapest, and the number of film copies of MFI newsreels²⁰

Figure 1 indicates that from the 1920s, prior to the Great Depression, the number of cinemas had been gradually increasing. Following a temporary decline brought about by the economic crisis, the introduction of voiced reels and the revision of theatre licenses, a total of 581 cinemas of various sizes were open throughout the country at the beginning of the Second World War.²¹ About one fifth of that amount was in the capital, and were amongst the largest in general. As far as the audience is concerned, 453 theatres offered 171,500 seats in 1927, with numbers increasing to 530 and 180,400, respectively, by 1930. Meanwhile, ticket sales dropped from 26 million to 19 million during these years.²² No other statistics on the war period are available as yet, though the tendencies observable during the First World War and the increase of cinemas suggest that an increased demand for news may have resulted in the further growth of newsreels due to their popularity.²³ In his 1943 article, Gyimesi Kásás estimated there were 770 theatres in operation, including 189 in the regained territories: 40 cinemas in the Highlands (Felvidék), 15 in Transcarpathia (Kárpátalja), 40 in Northern Transylvania (Észak-Erdély) and 89 in Délvidék were incorporated into the domestic network.²⁴

²⁰ Henrik Castiglione, 'Budapest mozgóképüzemei', *Statisztikai Szemle*, 7(2), 1929, p. 218; *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv 1929*, Vol. 37, Magyar Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1930, p. 280; *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv 1930*, Vol. 38, Magyar Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1931, p. 281; *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv 1935*, Vol. 43, Magyar Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1936, p. 347; Lajos I. Illyefalvi (ed.), *Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai és közigazgatási évkönyve 1934*, Budapest, Budapest Székesfőváros Statisztikai Hivatala, 1934, p. 421; Lajos I. Illyefalvi (ed.), *Budapest székesfőváros statisztikai és közigazgatási évkönyve 1939*, Budapest, Budapest Székesfőváros Statisztikai Hivatala, 1939, p. 522; Henrik Castiglione, 'Ruszinszko és a magyar mozipark', *Magyar Film*, 1(19), 1939, p. 8; Henrik Castiglione, 'A magyar filmgyártás problémája', *Magyar Film*, 1(31), 1939, p. 6; v[itéz]. M[orvay]. P[ál], 'A Magyar Híradó fejlődése', *Magyar film*, 2(42), 1940, p. 9; Gyimesy Kásás, 'A magyar híradófilm diadalútja', p. 7.

²¹ Only officially licensed movie theatres had been allowed to legally operate and authorities were eligible to review and revoke licenses; as a result, statistics often differentiated between licensed and operating cinemas. Revisions took place after the First World War, the recession and during the Second World War. After the Second Jewish Law was passed, the Minister of Interior could review and revoke „show licenses” issued to „non-Christians”, while Christians were forbidden to acquire licenses under their own names for the benefit of Jews (Anonymous, 'Életbe lépett a második zsidótörvény', *Magyar Film*, 1(13), 1939, pp. 1-2).

²² *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv 1927*, Vol. 35, Magyar Kir. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest, 1928, p. 240; *Magyar Statisztikai Évkönyv 1930*, p. 281.

²³ See more on the press and radio at Balázs Sipos, *Sajtó és hatalom a Horthy-korszakban*, Budapest, Argumentum, 2011, pp. 47, 77-84.

²⁴ Gyimesy Kásás, 'A magyar híradófilm diadalútja', p. 7.

When evaluating the historical significance of newsreels, estimates of the size of the audience reveal little. The method of distribution is not clear, yet it is safe to say that copies ideally took 33 weeks to travel around the cinemas of the country in the late 1920s. This time was reduced to a “modest” 14 weeks by 1943. The latest newsreels, including their propaganda value, were therefore less than up to date by the time they had reached their final destinations.²⁵ During the war, lack of materials and the frontline moving through the country rendered distribution problematic, making newsreels secondary to radio and printed press in disseminating accurate information.

News Content and Propaganda During the War

Hungarian newsreels fit into the tendency of delivering a set of topics in a standardised way, instead of detailed explanation and analysis through “easily conceivable and superficial imagery” edited in the style of tabloids.²⁶ During the war, the audience was shown a customary set of pieces of news in a fixed total timeframe, mostly depicting political acts (speeches, nominations, visits, etc.), sports (athletics, football, tennis, ice-skating, etc.), religion, arts, science or miscellaneous events (news from the zoo, fashion shows, etc.); however, war added another thematic layer to the episodes, especially after victories. This plurality was intentional: images of the ongoing war were contextualised by the previous and following pieces of news, augmenting them with a new, propagandistic level of meaning. Reports on the well organised, militarily prepared, socially concerned state were common, with pieces on Hungarian culture, sports and economic values supporting the picture of a country operating normally and successfully (most notably represented in the title sequence, where the successes of the territory revision works were illustrated). However, locations shown in the reports about heroic soldiers, award ceremonies and medical care were closer and closer to the border from 1943 on, while the messages of the episodes, still edited and delivered at the usual level of quality, kept revolving around stability. The gap between reality and its representation increased gradually, undermining the perceived validity of the newsreels.²⁷

²⁵ Cinemas were ranked on the basis of screening new movies. The best established were the premiere of first week theatres (which explains Kozma's efforts for the MFI to acquire an own cinema), followed by second and third week ones. In comparison, German newsreels needed 16 weeks to be fully distributed in the 1930s, which was reduced to a couple of weeks by the time of the Second World War by increasing the number of copies (Kay Hoffmann, 'Propagandistic problems of German newsreels in World War II', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 24(1), 2004, pp. 133-134).

²⁶ Frédéric Barbier and Catherine Bertho Lavenir, *A média története. Diderot-tól az internetig*, Budapest, Osiris, 2004, p. 213; Balázs Sipos, 'Hogyan kerül(t) a jelentés a moziba? Amerika-képek és -értelmezések a Horthy-korban', *Médiakutató*, 14(1), 2013, p. 36.

²⁷ In this respect, Hungarian newsreels resemble their German counterparts (Barbier and Bertho Lavenir, 'A média története', p. 219).

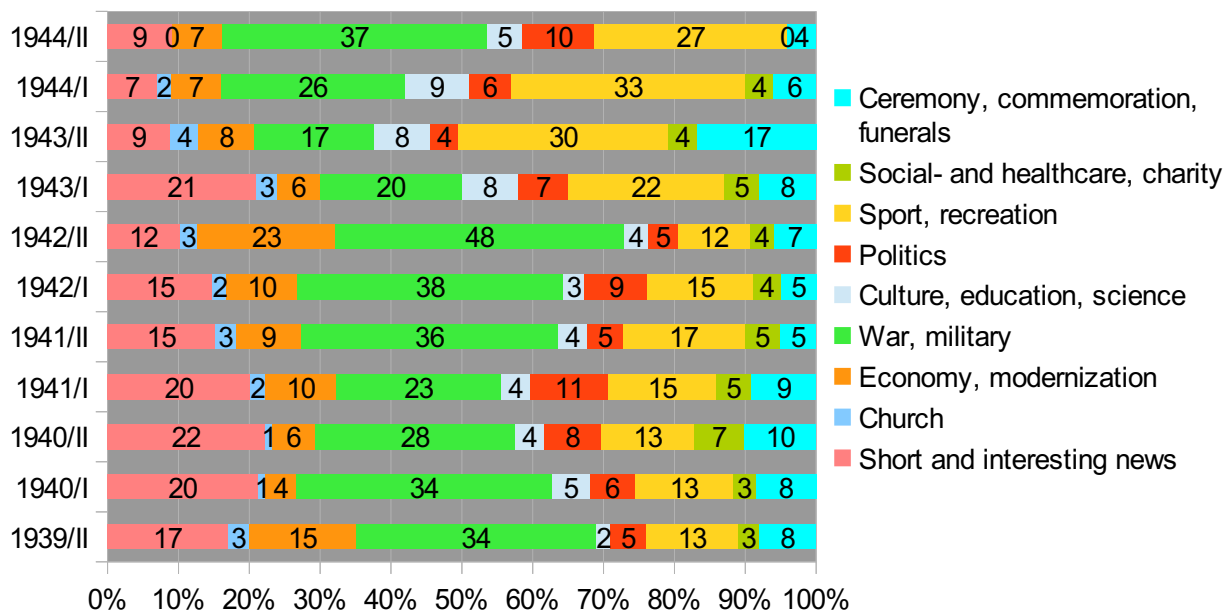
In the years during the war, more specifically, the period between September 1939 and December 1944, over two thousand news pieces were screened.²⁸ About 22% of those currently available were from foreign sources and the remaining 77% were produced in Hungary. Earlier, the proportion of foreign materials, including British, French, Dutch, German, Italian, Japanese, Czech, Finnish and Swedish footage, was higher. Already before Hungary entered the war, German news pieces dominated the foreign intake, although the events of the Western front were initially depicted from the perspectives of multiple combatants. Later, the range of sources narrowed and from the second half of 1942, foreign news tended to be absent for months. In 1944, only Swedish, Swiss and German materials were used (not even the German occupation of the country on 19 March 1944 changed that significantly).

To highlight the major tendencies in the shaping of the thematic structure of the newsreels, individual pieces of news were categorised as follows:

- Ceremony, commemoration funerals
- Social- and healthcare, charity
- Sports, recreation
- Politics
- Culture, education, science
- War, military
- Economy, modernization
- Church
- Short and interesting news

Each news item was given a single category, with the length of the individual items considered unimportant; a 30 second report on a zoo event was considered equal to a 3 or 4 minute long account of the situation at the Ukrainian battlefront as equal units, not to mention items like the 27 minutes special on the 75th birthday of Regent Horthy.

²⁸ Conserved and digitalised newsreels are available for watching at <http://filmhiradokonline.hu>. The three available episodes of the *Hungarist Newsreel* were also examined in the course of researching this paper.



The diagram shows the main tendencies of the editing of newsreels between 1939 and 1944 in units of six months. The series was dominantly characterised by the war until the catastrophic defeat and destruction of the 2nd Hungarian Army at the River Don in January 1943, in addition to the turn in foreign policy under the Miklós Kállay administration.²⁹ News from the front, and sometimes even the war in general, was disregarded for an extended period before reporting resumed on the – now defensive – fighting in a heroic, idealised manner, although the locations shown were forebodingly closer to Budapest each time. Notably, sports news above all gained significantly more screen time at the expense of accounts of the war.³⁰

Examples of Propaganda: Violence, Destruction and Anti-Semitism

Following the overview of the thematic structure of newsreels, two subtopics are discussed in the following. First, the appearance of violence and destruction in the newsreels will be touched upon, followed by that of anti-Semitism. Through these topics, the propagandistic nature of the *Hungarian World Newsreel* is examined; more specifically, of interest is the way violence and destruction appear, while any depiction of anti-Semitism is notably absent.³¹

²⁹ Ignác Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században*, Budapest, Osiris, 2005, pp. 257-263.

³⁰ Susan Sontag described the phenomenon this way: “War was and still is the most irresistible – and picturesque – news. (Along with that invaluable substitute for war, international sports.)” Susan Sontag, *A szenvedés képei*, Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó, 2004, p. 53.

³¹ There are some published articles based on content analysis though focusing on different topics like propaganda (Zsuzsanna Seres, ‘Az 1935. évi MFI-filmhíradók tartalomlemezése. (A Gömbös-korszak propagandájának preferenciái)’, *Tájékoztató. A*

Violence appeared in the series exclusively in the context of the war; no reports of crime, murder, atrocities or discrimination were screened.³² The depiction of wartime aggression and fighting followed two distinct approaches: first, when reporting on “us” (the in-group), a heroic, united, well equipped and devoted army was shown shooting and bombing, yet death, destruction and demolition were never visualised, except when distant and distinctively military targets were hit (it is worth noting here that shots and explosions were almost always accompanied by their original sound, inserted into the background music track).³³ The enemy remained faceless, depersonalised, unless making an appearance as ragged, unarmed prisoners of war.³⁴ Violence, therefore, did not seem to bring about brutal and bloody destruction in the newsreels. Civilians of the enemy state were usually being assisted onscreen, contributing to the sense of legitimacy of the war. “Our” wounded were always filmed in a safe, caring environment and after being treated, while the dead were never featured.

Attacks carried out by “them” (the out-group) were often designated as terror once the frontline reached Hungary; although the audience were not shown the fighting itself, they could witness its consequences. Members of the group were most often tagged as “Bolsheviks”, “partisans” or “Chetniks”; meanwhile, the domestic enemy, anti-war movements and other elements never appeared in the newsreels, and viewers were not informed of their existence.

As far as visualising death is concerned, the deceased seldom appeared onscreen; episodes of the *Hungarian World Newsreel* featured the dead once in 1940, two times in 1941, six times in 1942, a single time in 1943 and, after an entire year, twice in 1944 - a dozen times in total. Please note that the validity of the reports was not questioned during the research and all footage where human bodies were shown as corpses and the viewer was able to interpret them as such, regardless of age, are taken into consideration.

Művelődési Minisztérium *Marxizmus–leninizmus Oktatási Főosztályának Kiadványa*, 3, 1983, pp. 9-42.), representation of regent Miklós Horthy (Dávid Turbucz, ‘Vezérkultusz és nyilvánosság. Horthy Miklós „országglásának” húszéves jubileuma (1939–1940)’, *Médiakutató*, 11(2), 2010, pp. 72-89.), the possible interpretations of news from USA (Sipos, ‘Hogyan kerül(t) a jelentés a moziba?’ and the usage of newsreels in teaching history (Bálint Fekete, ‘A Horthy-kori filmhíradók kutatása és használata az oktatásban’, *Médiakutató*, 15(4), 2014, pp. 13-23).

³² An instance of depicting violence in newsreels this way can be witnessed in news item “Pictures from Shanghai at War” from 1932. MVH, 417.

³³ German newsreels were edited in a similar manner (Tegel, ‘Third Reich newsreels’, p. 152). In a 1937 article, journalist and critic György Bálint focused on the sound effects of a newsreel on the Sino-Japanese War. As opposed to military displays customary in the age, most importantly organised parades and ceremonies, newsreels offered yet another layer this way (György Bálint, ‘Igazi halál a vásznon’, *A toronyőr visszapillant, Vol. II*, Budapest, Magvető Kiadó, 1981, p. 119). Examples from the *Hungarian World Newsreels* include: MVH, 706.; MVH, 709.

³⁴ See for instance: MVH, 895.; MVH, 914.; MVH, 961.; MVH, 1078.

Of particular interest as far as the visualisation of violence is concerned, is episode 908, published July, 1941.³⁵ Following the regular editing pattern of the series, a short, interesting piece of news introduces the newsreel, showing bear cubs playing in Sweden with cheerful background music. The report is directly followed by the pictures of slaughtered Ukrainian civilians, the killing attributed to GPU *agents* but without the revelation of the causes. According to the credits, the source of the footage was the *Die Deutsche Wochenschau*. In this narrative, the citizens of Lviv cheer for the German troops marching in, greeting their “liberators”, just before the audience is shown civilians laying down the bodies of their murdered fellow citizens, surrounded by a crying crowd, mostly women (a unique feature of this episode in the researched period is the crying and screaming of women heard in the background). Direct shots of the corpses are shown with the camera scanning them for almost an entire minute, from several positions and in complete silence.

In this instance, the dead are not depersonalised parts of the “setting” but people with recognisable features for the viewer to feel sympathy for.³⁶ Several interpretations are possible: first, the brutality of the enemy is displayed to further legitimate the recently launched campaign against the Bolsheviks. Second, it justifies military actions beyond the historical borders by depicting the occupation as liberation in the eyes of the locals (it is worth noting, regarding the meta-narrative of the news pieces, that the next report is about a successful attack on Soviet airfields, i.e. military targets, including slow motion footage; in a short period of screen time, the audience is taken from a zoo in Sweden to the Eastern Front of the war).³⁷ Finally, the news forebodes what was to come if the Soviet system were to gain influence in Hungary, an additional incentive to support the war effort.

Other examples of depicting death include *Hungarian World Newsreel* episode 848 of May, 1940, featuring the first appearance of a dead body onscreen. The footage of the German *UFA-Tonwoche* shows the advance of troops on the Western Front just before the pictures of a body lying on a bridge surrounded by a number of wounded people. The corpse is “faceless”, unidentified and no commentary is made, resulting in a static, dramatic imagery much like that of 19th century war photos.³⁸

Footage recorded by the Hungarian War Correspondent Company shows death to illustrate the ruthlessness of Soviet troops in episode 909 of July, 1941.³⁹ As shown in one of the recordings of the destruction left by the retreating enemy, “Hungarian soldiers found the scorched remains of burnt political prisoners in the

³⁵ MVH, 908b.

³⁶ Sontag, *A szenvedés képei*, p. 75.

³⁷ MVH, 908a.

³⁸ Sontag, *A szenvedés képei*, pp. 53-59.

³⁹ MVH, 909.

courtyard of the church reconstructed into a prison.” Once again, the images are naturalistic in style, the camera focusing on the blackened bodies for many seconds before eventually finding an almost white skull. The entire sequence features slow music in the background.

In the same month, episode 912 borrows the *Die Deutsche Wochenschau* report on taking Smolensk.⁴⁰ The dominant element is the poverty that greets the occupants, most disturbingly visualised by the naked bodies of four infants, covered with flies, further emphasised by the sound of babies crying and dramatically countering the rumours of the well-being and prosperity of the locals. As usual, oral narration is kept to a minimum in the piece of news; the editors let the pictures tell the story.⁴¹

Any other instance of depicting death is significantly subtler in this respect, briefly showing a single “faceless” body. In general, therefore, Hungarian newsreels tended to disregard the destruction of the war and completely refrained from reporting any casualties, including military and civil casualties of the homeland. The dead pictured could only be enemy soldiers (either “Anglo-Saxon”, see episode. 1052 or “Bolshevik”) or civilians murdered by them.⁴² The Hungarian army is never seen killing, especially not (Hungarian) civilians or on a mass scale. What is more, the act of killing is never portrayed on either side, with the exception of a single scene in episode 967, where the crew of an armoured vehicle shoots an armed soldier on the run and he falls just as the camera turns in his direction.⁴³ No recording of enemy soldiers killing Hungarian civilians was screened either. Additionally, death remains static, i.e. the audience is not confronted with the agony of the dying; the suffering is neither seen nor heard. Newsreels never fully revealed to the viewers at home the amount of death caused by the war and the violent nature thereof; they were merely implying it by presenting memorials, cemeteries and military hospitals.

Devastation, on the other hand, was portrayed as a consequence of war, focusing on material losses and the destruction of buildings, enemy military equipment and vehicles. In terms of propaganda, however, of more importance is the visualisation of the relation between the war and culture and heritage. Newsreels tended to

⁴⁰ MVH, 912.

⁴¹ Just like in the case of German newsreels. Hoffmann, ‘Propagandistic problems of German newsreels in World War II’, pp. 134-135.

⁴² MVH, 1052.

⁴³ MVH, 967. Note that the production of the footage seems to have taken place in Hungary, soldiers acting out the fighting in one of the military camps. This was a common method of shooting war reports in the period, the footage complemented by a few authentic recordings of the frontline (especially of the landscape or cities). See Nemeskürty, *A képpé varázsolt idő*, p. 553; László Bokor mentions in his dissertation that, attempts were made, but these were wasteful (e. g. nothing interesting was filmed during an aerial recording), “un-cinematic” or unwatchable and also very dangerous (László Bokor, *A háborús propaganda szerepe a második világháború alatt (Különös tekintettel a filmpropagandára)*, Vol. I-II, Budapest, MTA Kézirattára, 1970, pp. 412-415). Naturally the producers tried to convince the audience of the contrary (Ernö Gyimesy Kásás, ‘A filmhíradó útja a harctértől a harctérig’, *Magyar Film*, 5(16), 1943, pp. 5-6).

include reports on culture in its broader sense, as seen in the diagram above: arts, science, technology, economic progress, church, ceremonies and more. Once the frontline reached the territory of the country, “terror bombings” would be shown levelling churches, hospitals, cemeteries and the houses of (usually poor) civilians, carried out during sacred periods like the Holy Week.⁴⁴

One such example is offered in episode 1051, which depicts a ‘demonised’ enemy attacking a unified Hungary.⁴⁵ The first element used to convey this message to the Hungarian audience is the stressed placed upon the timing of the bombing, the *Holy Week*, an important and sacred period (the newsreel being concluded by the images of the procession on Holy Saturday); by linking the nation to the Western Christian civilization, the ‘barbarity’ of the bombardment is thus implied.⁴⁶ Additionally, the attack is described as an “act of terrorism”, supported by the images of *civil targets* being destroyed (cf. the report on Lviv) and pictures of the ruins and locals clearing the streets being accompanied by appropriately solemn music. While the presentation of St. László Hospital, which was hit by a bomb, further emphasises this message of barbarity, the casualties, either civilian or military, are not mentioned, and are not in any of the newsreel episodes. The shooting down of one of the *terror bombers* also takes an important role in the news story, with the remains of the plane which crashed into Lake Balaton shown in several cuts. The captured crew appears well treated, underlining the empathy of the in-group and the vulnerability of the enemy. The storyline of the episode culminates in the visualisation of rebuilding and social caretaking of the children and those losing their homes to the bombing, giving way to the feeling of unity.

Another aim of the present research is to observe the way Jewry appeared on the news. Jews in Hungary had been subjected to discrimination in interwar Hungary, especially in the late 1930s and the 1940s, before most of the people legally determined to be Jewish were ultimately rounded up, deported and killed in 1944. The answer to the research query could be summarised as follows: Jewry did not appear in the reports in any way. Audiences of the newsreel series were not introduced to Hungarian Jews as a social group, as

⁴⁴ The transcription of one of the oral narrations reads as follows: “The bombers, flying high in the sky, did not damage military targets at all. Instead, their bombs fell on civilian or unoccupied areas everywhere. Among others, Lajos Zilahy’s [renowned contemporary writer – B. F.] house was hit. It is of almost symbolic meaning that the first Soviet attack on Budapest targeted the house of God, hitting the Városmajor church. It took heavy damage but its enormous walls withstood the explosion of the bomb and did not crumble.” MVH, 968b. The next report is also of interest in terms of the dichotomous relation between destruction and production, as well as civilians: „All around occupied Soviet lands, our troops join the currently ongoing harvest. Not only do they organise and supervise the work but also get their fair share of the efforts.” MVH, 968a. The oral narration in the aforementioned episode 912 also highlights that churches had been converted into production facilities. MVH, 1051; MVH, 912.

⁴⁵ Transcript: “Early into the Holy Week, Anglo-Saxon bombers attacked Hungarian territory, dropping bombs on numerous areas. The terrorist attack on Budapest mostly destroyed civilian targets. The peaceful homes of ordinary citizens were demolished by the murderous bombs. Not even the helpless patients were spared as about 30 bombs fell on the St. László Hospital in Budapest.” MVH, 1051.

⁴⁶ In episode 915, the report on the arrival of Hungarian soldiers in Ukraine is shown as followed by masses and baptism ceremonies. While the film footage did not survive, the transcript of the narration remained. MVH, 915. In her last essay, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag also mentions such occasions (Sontag, *A szenvedés képei*, pp. 14–16).

persons of interest or as a distinct culture between 1939 and 1944, or, in fact, even before that. The single exception is episode 1062 from 1944, reporting on the launch of the destruction campaign of Jewish literary works, as had been ordered by *vitéz* Mihály Kolosváry-Borcsa in June that year.⁴⁷ The footage shows protesters, including Kolosváry-Borcsa himself, destroying books in a ceremonial setting. Narration is distant and objective, providing no real explanation, leaving the report with its anti-Semitic content and reserved tone somewhat out of place in the set of pieces of news. Jewish people do not make an appearance even here, with the writers of the books face- and nameless; for all intents and purposes, invisible.

Jews ultimately tended *not* to be represented in the *Hungarian World Newsreel*, but merely as a pile of books to be destroyed and featured in a news story for a couple of seconds. In other words, editors resorted to the tool of keeping silent about and disregarding the topic, as was the case with the opposition or losses and defeat in the war. Meanwhile, similar tendencies could be observed in *Actualités Mondés*, the newsreel series of occupied France, as well as in the official German issue of reports. One of the possible explanations for this is the fear that anti-Semitic material might have led to anti-German and pro-Jewish reactions on the part of the audience.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, withholding information is one of the main tools of propaganda in Hungary during this period, a representative example of which being the lack of anti-Semitic content in newsreels during the Second World War.

What is more, of the three available episodes of the *Hungarist Newsreel* (*Hungarista Híradó*), only the report on the coup of 15 October 1944 concerned Jews: the carefully orchestrated footage is rich in comparisons (i.e. the urban, Jewish, café-goer, playboy, melancholic, saboteur worker versus the countryman, the “true Hungarian”, the soldier, the Hungarist, the working woman, the youth, the real worker and the peasant), featuring old stereotypes of Jews by focusing on their supposed wealth, lazy metropolitan lifestyles, greediness and foreignness.⁴⁹ The remaining two episodes of the *Hungarist Newsreel* lacks such content and the series, together with the Arrow Cross regime, eventually met a premature end.

The examples presented here show the kind of message newsreels aimed to convey to the audience, its method of delivery as well as its goals (including raising and feeding the feeling of hatred, demonising the enemy and emphasising domestic unity).⁵⁰ The question arises: what effect did the reports have on the viewers? How did their reception change as the war was beginning to come to an end and the reality of the

⁴⁷ MVH, 1062.

⁴⁸ Brett Bowles, , ‘German newsreels propaganda in France, 1940–1944’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 24(1), 2004, pp. 49-50, 55-56; Tegel, ‘Third Reich newsreels’, p. 151.

⁴⁹ HH, O.

⁵⁰ Propaganda during the First World War had a similar agenda (Sipos, ‘Az első világháború médiahatásai’).

newsreels began to drift more and more dramatically from the everyday experience? As yet, no definite answer can be given, although Balázs Sipos published the results of a survey carried out in 1944, shedding some light on the effect of propaganda in general. According to the poll, in early March 1944, as “the vast majority of the press” promoted “that all German allies must endure, [...] Most people answered yes to the question if Finland had had better quit the war as far as her own interests were concerned. To the question whether this step would have been beneficial or detrimental to the fate of Hungary, the *majority* answered it would have been *beneficial*. Evaluating the two answers together reveals that ordinary citizens *favoured ending the war* in these crucial days.”⁵¹

Conclusion

In interwar Hungary, newsreel production was in its golden age. Through the media conglomerate of the MTI, established by Miklós Kozma and strongly supported by the state, the government had access to potentially effective tools of propaganda. While the newsreel series was but one element in this structure, its strong institutional background and the size of the moviegoer audience renders it a rewarding source to research.

As a result of constant improvements, the position of the *Hungarian World Newsreel* was well established by the time of the Second World War, and weekly episodes travelled all around the movie theatres of the country. During the years of the war, reports represented a unified, well organised, modern state without internal conflicts, discrimination, opposition or minority groups subject to persecution. Available episodes prove that the series was produced with propagandistic aims in mind, in addition to providing information and entertainment, the degree of effectiveness of which being, however, so far unknown.

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Melusine: The Fairy that Founded a Dynasty

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The present article's purpose is to examine the relationship between History and Fiction in the Middle Ages through the example of The Romance of Melusine, a romantic novel written by Jean D' Arras and, more specifically, how this powerful fairy founded the dynasty of the Lusignans. In any event, no medieval history would be complete without an account of this powerful dynasty, for it is argued that the story of the "fairy of the feudal imagination"¹ has much to tell us about the Middle Ages. It is to be questioned how the author, the readers and the Lusignans themselves reacted to this tale. To what degree did the Lusignans think that their origins derived from Melusine's lineage? Moreover, did Jean d' Arras consider himself a novelist or a historiographer? And lastly, what did the readers feel about Melusine and her reactions? These and many more questions about the beautiful fairy, from whom more than a century of kings from Armenia to Scotland are descended, will be discussed.

The imaginary world of medieval fiction seems to reflect the earthly world. Every culture and, consequently, every society has over time developed their own and unique folkloric culture. Because of this, the imaginary of medieval texts is nothing less than the dreams of a society, transforming reality into passionate spiritual views. As Evelyne Patlagean has said in her work "*L' histoire de l' imaginaire*," "the imaginary consists part of the space of representation, but it occupies part of the non-reproductive translation, not simply converted to spiritual images, but is also creative, poetic in the etymological sense". The imaginary manufactures myths and legends, and is the result of the mentality and sensitivity of a society as well as the culture that infuses it, activating the imaginary through the making and the usage of stories and images. The medieval thought and word are structured by the ideology set by the imaginary in its service. Through characters, buildings, and objects, it creates a world of ethos for the medieval society. The image of King Arthur is the mythical incarnation of the eminently political head of medieval societies, the King. The utopian institution of the roundtable created knights who were exemplary heroes. It also consists of the dream of an equal world, which never found its incarnation in the highly unequal and hierarchical medieval society. The Fox and the Unicorn reflect the moral life of people. Essentially, animals in medieval fiction constitute a tool of fear or enjoyment; condemnation or salvation. Additionally, the myth of Tristan and Isolde is the biggest myth of fatal love that leads to death and escapes the luminal ethics. Last but not least, there is the absence of powerful women. Georges Dubys has characterized the earthly medieval world as a "male world", where most of the mythical figures and creatures are male.²

¹ Jacques Le Goff, *Ἡρώες και Θαυμαστά του Μεσαίωνα*, Αθήνα, εκδόσεις Κέδρος, 2005, p. 153.

² Le Goff, *Ἡρώες και Θαυμαστά του Μεσαίωνα*, p. 8.

Even though, during the Middle Ages, the female absence is substantial, we must not forget that Christianity during this period imposed the presence of a powerful woman, the Holy Mary. Fairies, mermaids, warriors, witches contribute to a list of mythical powerful women, that not only exerted considerable power, but enjoyed social prestige through couples. Melusine, as a fairy of feudalism, stood in medieval society as the concept of success and failure. Pope Joan incarnated the fears of the clergy. Valquiria kept alive the Viking tradition, bringing the Scandinavian imaginary to the medieval, and subsequently to the European, imaginary.

One of the most important issues raised during the development of historiography has been whether narrative histories or historical fiction have been readily accepted in the academic world as a legitimate form of history. As Samantha Young notes, “to accept narrative as a precise, learned method of historical representation, we would first have to overcome the demand that historical works must present clear, documented evidence to be taken as true, and challenge the assumption that all fictions are merely stories conjured in a writer’s mind”.³ The relation between folklore and historiography had to go through three phases to end up in a co-operating level, where historiography had a lot to learn from fiction in texts.⁴

Truth be told, fiction in texts can clearly co-operate with history. Even from the early ancient Greek period and from Latin texts there are examples that have helped history be written; from Homer’s *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, to the myth of Romulus and Remus and the founding of Rome. In addition, literary texts have always reflected the ethics, forms, traditions, feelings and transformations of societies, through honest and clear language. Anthropology, sociology and historiography can rely on “once upon a time” as long as the analysis of these texts goes hand in hand with a thorough observation of other sources.

And that is because history is not just about political or military conflicts; on the contrary, it is about how people of each era felt and interacted with each other to make history happen. And information about these complicated issues can only be taken from cultural texts that do not aim at objectively describing situations and facts.

In any way, the folklore of a nation contains the culture that people have created through their own recourses. A series of questions might be drawn from the study of a nation’s fairy tales compared to another’s: What is common to other countries? Do the tales of a country originate there or are they borrowed and rewritten from other people?

³ Samantha Young, ‘Based on a True Story: Contemporary Historical Fiction and Historiographical Theory’, *Otherness: Essays and Studies*, 2(1), 2011, p. 1.

⁴ Peter Burke, ‘History and Folklore: A Historiographical Survey’, *Folklore*, 115(2), 2004, p.133.

While Jean d' Arras was writing the novel of Melusine as part of the history of the Lusignans, he perhaps considered himself "half" historiographer, "half" novelist, if these terms may be used. The romance presents itself as historical, "as accurately as I could, according to the chronicles that I believe to be true", Jean d' Arras notes.⁵ And because of this, any medievalist reading this long poem might find prominent points about the late Middle Ages and the founding of this powerful dynasty. Even the name given by him, "Melusine", was used as an abbreviation of the phrase "Mere de Lusignans", which means mother of the Lusignans.⁶ One can tell that Jean d'Arras considers himself a historiographer. He assures the reader that he himself believes the story he has undertaken to tell, and throughout the text he reiterates truth claims in a variety of forms. Among the most remarkable of these is the attestation that in his own day, Melusine's human footprint was still visible on the sill of a high window in the castle of Meurvent, where it was "inscribed" at the moment before her transformation into a dragon.⁷

Through "Melusine", written around 1393 in the "calamitous fourteenth century," Jean d' Arras provides historians with a range of information about the Middle Ages, the folklore and the traditions of medieval life. Despite the protracted upheavals caused by the Black Plague and widespread dearth, feudal culture and folklore flourished.⁸

The scene of a supernatural creature wedding a mortal has been previously found in Latin texts since the twelfth century, but it is argued that these supernatural creatures never play a powerful role in the lives of mortals. On the contrary, Arras' Melusine not only founds one of the most powerful Medieval Dynasties but also brought a new prestige to the line. Furthermore, the author portrays her having a story and a destiny of her own, entirely unconnected to that of the Lusignans at a time where women were hardly independent or well respected.

The story is actually about the violation of an interdiction, or the breaking of a promise.⁹ Starting with her mother's story and repeating a pattern, Presine, Melusine's mother, meets Elinas, king of Albany, during a hunt in the woods. It takes place in a medieval land, a place where humans and supernatural creatures mingle. Thirsty as he was from hunting, Elinas decides to walk to a fountain and have some water, but as soon as he listens to the exotic voice of Presine singing, he forgets his desire to drink. Hidden behind bushes, he finally

⁵ Jean d' Arras, *Melusine; or, The Noble History of Lusignan*, Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (trans), Penn State University Press, 2012, p. 19.

⁶ Jacques Le Goff and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, 'Melusine maternelle et defricheuse', *Annales E.S.C.*, 26(3), 1971, pp. 587-662.

⁷ d' Arras, *Melusine*, p. 4.

⁸ See: Barbara W. Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century*, Random House Trade Paperbacks, 1987.

⁹ Le Goff, *Ἡρώες και Θαυμαστά του Μεσαίωνα*, p. 147.

decides to approach her, and after talking for some time, proposes marriage. Presine agrees on one condition; he promise to never enter her chamber while she gives birth to or baths their children. After giving birth to three daughters – Melusine, Melior and Palestine – Elinas violates their agreement. She then has no choice but to take her daughters away and leave the kingdom; because when the ethical code of fairies is violated, they see no other way but to keep their word. She travels to the lost island of Avalon, where she raises her daughters, isolated and alone. By the age of fifteen, Melusine, being the eldest, wants to find out why they have been kept away from their father. Upon hearing of their father’s broken promise, Melusine seeks revenge. Her sisters and her mustered their inherent supernatural powers, capture Elinas and lock him, along with his riches, in a mountain. Presine becomes enraged when she learns of the girls’ actions, and punishes them for their disrespect towards their father. Melusine is condemned to take the form of a serpent from the waist down every Saturday. The only way to reach salvation is to find a gallant mortal and marry him with the promise that he will never see her on a Saturday, otherwise she would be condemned to live a life as a half serpent, half human until Judgment Day. Raymond of Poitou comes across Melusine in the forest of Coulombiers in Poitou in France, and asks for her hand in marriage. Just as her mother had done, she agrees under one condition; that he must never enter her chamber on a Saturday. He breaks the promise and sees her in the form of a half-woman, half-serpent. Unlike her mother, she forgives him. When during a disagreement he calls her a “serpent” in front of his court, she takes the form of a dragon, provides him with two magic rings and flies off, never to return.

Medieval fairies are to men and women the progenies of ancient Greek *Moirai* (destinies) – even their Latin name *fatae* indicates their relation to *fatum*.¹⁰ Those fairies were incorporated into the Christian imaginary and were later categorized as good and evil beings. Essentially, if fairies are seen as beneficial or crucial to people, their role in society is usually to mate with mortals.

According to Lorans Harf-Lanser, Melusine belongs to the pattern of fairy-mistresses that bring happiness, a stark contrast to Morgana, for example, who leads her husband to the Other World.¹¹ The latter are known as the fairies of misery and unhappiness. A fact worth highlighting in Melusine’s character is that she combines characteristics of a mortal and a supernatural creature at the same time. In contrast to her mother, she forgives Raymondin for violating his promise, colliding in that way with the ethical code of fairies regarding the keeping of promises, as has been mentioned above. Melusine lusted for her mortal nature so much that, despite her disappointment, she kept supporting Raymondin and his kingdom, retaining the strength of his powerful reign.

¹⁰ Le Goff, *Ἡρώες και Θαυμαστά του Μεσαίωνα*, p. 146.

¹¹ Le Goff, *Ἡρώες και Θαυμαστά του Μεσαίωνα*, p. 148.

Prosperity and wealth were her actual gifts in order to be loved and gain back a way to salvation through her transformation to a mortal being.

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Despite the fact that she remains the image of positivity, happiness and fertility, she is miserable and unhappy because of the betrayal that she experiences in front of the court second time. She has the strength to forgive Raymondin for breaking his promise, but it is impossible for her to accept his insult about her true nature in front of the whole kingdom.

Melusine unintentionally embodies both natures of good and evil. Her hybrid form- half human, half serpent- confuses not only researchers but medieval people themselves about her true nature. Does her mortality overcome her supernatural powers? In spite of all the prosperity she offers, medieval people, sensitive and suspicious as they were, and due to her diabolical origins, saw a reflection of Eva through her that was never forgiven.

What could be argued through this research, is that Melusine cannot avoid her supernatural form because of her birth, despite her attempts to gain mortality. It can be said that from the beginning of her story, and even before her mother's punishment, she and her sisters use their powers in order to take revenge on their father. No human being would be able to trap a strong man within the depths of a mountain. Moreover, Melusine, despite her attempts to hide her true nature, uses her supernatural powers once more in order to grant Raymodin wealth and power. Furthermore, while reading the novel it can be noticed that Raymondin grows suspicious of his wife because of the bizarre looks of their first seven children.

Through his words "Ah, most false serpent, by God, you and your deeds are nothing but phantoms, and no heir whom you have born will come to a good end. How those who were cruelly can burned come back to life, including yours on who took holy orders? You bore no child more worthy than Fromont. Now he is dead through demonic art, for all those who are mad with rage are under the power of the princes of hell; and it was in this way the Gieffroy committed the enormous, horrible, and hideous crime of burning his brother and the monks who did not deserve to die", he demonstrates his inability to handle his wife's true nature, blaming her for their son's behavior. But in response, instead of revealing her supernatural origins, the heart-broken Melusine speaks of her identity in terms of human genealogy: "I want you to know who I am and who my father was, so that you will not reproach my children with being the sons of a bad mother or of a serpent or a fairy, for I am the daughter of King Elinas of Albanie and of Queen Presine, his wife".

In general, she retains a series of identities. Jean D'Arras presents her as self-reliant, and in that she can clearly be seen as a symbol of feminism. Strong and powerful as she is, her husband's success depends on her. After her departure, all the wealth and strength she had given him are lost with her. In addition, Melusine is connected to nature. Her half serpent form is connected to liquid elements, while her dragon wings transform her to an empyrean fairy. She is a combination of human and supernatural creatures in all ways - positive and negative. Even though she benefitted the late medieval societies, she ends up being demonized. Lastly, she reveals that prestige and success are connected to the Devil.

Melusine combines, as said above, all characteristics of medieval society. It can be argued that she reflects the forms and situations of medieval societies in the 12th and 13th century. Her myth suggests a highly ambiguous explanation of success in a feudal society. What Melusine offers to her husband is what the West did during the 12th and 13th centuries: forest reclamation and construction of castles and towns. Finally, in order to study the history of a society, we have to first understand its consciousness, its historical evolution and the imaginary as a collective phenomenon.¹²

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¹² Jacques Le Goff, *Το φαντασιακό στο Μεσαίωνα*, Αθήνα, εκδόσεις Κέδρος, 2008, p. 14.

“Return to Algiers”: Thomas Hees’ Missions in Barbary Through his Verbalen (1683-1685)¹

CONSTANTINE P. THEODORIDIS

Throughout the 17th century, hundreds of Dutch sailors were captured and sold off as slaves along the coast of North Africa by the corsairs of the cities of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. In theory, all three were under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Sultan. In practice, they possessed a high degree of autonomy and pursued their own foreign policy, with their fleets preying on Christian shipping as late as 1830. As a counter-measure, the Dutch government had decreed that all merchant ships passing through the Straits of Gibraltar would have to carry cannons or sail in convoy with warships. When such measures proved futile, the Dutch decided to establish diplomatic relations with the corsair republics in order to conclude peace agreements and have all Dutch slaves ransomed: Thomas Hees was one of envoys chosen for this daunting task. Hees went to North Africa on three different missions, in 1675, 1683 and 1685. His first mission has been studied through his lengthy journal. No such source survives for his second and third missions but - luckily enough - the National Archives in The Hague are in possession of his two Verbalen (Relations). Much like Venetian ambassadors who were expected to submit their famous Relazione, Dutch envoys were summoned in The Hague to appear before the assembly of the States-General and to give a testimony of their actions during their missions – the Verbalen (sing. Verbaal). These are unique sources in the sense that they are personal narratives which include the afterthoughts and post-reflections of diplomatic representatives which otherwise would have found little space in other diplomatic documents. In this paper, we will give a succinct account of Hees’ Verbalen and their unique characteristics. Furthermore, we will examine the two texts through the prism of New Diplomatic History by focusing on the actions of lesser actors of diplomacy such as translators, renegades or even former slaves.

Ever since their conquest by the Ottoman armies in the first half of the 16th century, the cities of Barbary – the name that Europeans used to refer to the North African shore collectively – had incited fear in the hearts of European sailors and merchants.² Until the battle of Lepanto (1571) and the end of the large-scale galley warfare, North Africa had been at the front line of the Christian-Muslim struggle between Habsburg Spain and the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean basin, and had provided ships, men and commanders for the Sultan’s

¹ This research was funded by the Onassis Scholarship (2015-2016). An earlier version of this paper has benefited from the remarks and corrections of Dr. Maurits Ebben, Dr. Maartje van Gelder, and Prof. Dr. Basil Gounaris.

² Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language: Dealing with the Origin of Words and Their Sense Development Thus Illustrating the History of Civilization and Culture*, Amsterdam, Elsevier, 1971, p. 70.

cause.³ After Spain's withdrawal from large scale naval operations, the cities of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli continued to prey on Christian shipping, seizing ships, cargoes and crews and selling them in the markets of North Africa. Estimates considering the total number of Christian slaves in Barbary during the Early Modern Period vary wildly, with one scholar putting the figure as high as one million.⁴ Operating from the northern shores of the Mediterranean, Christian navies were also taking part in this blend of piracy and holy war: the galleys of the Knights of the order of St. John of Malta, the ships of the Order of St. Stephen of Livorno and the corsairs of France captured thousands of Muslims in numerous slaving raids.⁵

The Dutch started trading past the straits of Gibraltar in the last decade of the 16th century and capitalized on the fact that grain from the Baltic was needed urgently to feed the growing populations of the Mediterranean.⁶ Since both their ship's crews and the goods carried belonged to Christians, they were seen as legal prey by corsairs of Barbary. Thus, the Dutch were forced to use the French flag when trading in the Ottoman domain: this is because the French had acquired a set of legal and commercial privileges, the so-called "Capitulations", which allowed them to trade freely in Muslim areas.⁷ The States-General⁸ of the Dutch Republic concluded a peace treaty with the rulers of Morocco in 1610 and shortly afterwards initiated the necessary contacts to obtain their own Capitulations from the Ottoman Porte.⁹ This was achieved when Cornelis Haga was appointed Dutch ambassador in Constantinople in 1612.¹⁰ Shortly after the acquisition of these important privileges, it became very clear that the three corsair cities were not willing to respect what had been agreed upon: preying on Dutch ships continued, while releasing their crews without compensation remained out of question.¹¹

It was under the instructions of Haga that the States-General decided to send a diplomatic representative to Algiers. The man chosen for the task was Wijnant de Keyser, who was authorized to negotiate directly with the Algerian government in 1616-1617. De Keyser managed to release some Dutch slaves but failed to procure a

⁴ Robert Davies, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters. White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500-1800*, New York, Palgrave, 2003, pp. 3-26.

⁵ Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary 1589 – 1689*, Miami, Florida University Press, 2005, p. 111.

⁶ Hermann Wätjen, *Die Niederländer im Mittelmeergebiet zur Zeit ihrer höchsten Machtstellung*, Berlin, Karl Curtius, 1909, p. 4.

⁷ Maurits van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Beratlis and Consuls in the 18th Century*, Leiden, Brill, 2004, pp. 20-24.

⁸ The States-General (Staten-Generaal) was the highest political authority in the Dutch Republic between 1581 and 1795. Each one of the seven united provinces (Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Friesland, Groningen and Overijssel) sent its delegates to convene in the General Assembly in the Hague.

⁹ Johan de Bakker, *Slaves, Arms, and Holy War: Moroccan Policy vis-à-vis the Dutch Republic during the Establishment of the 'Alawī Dynasty, 1660-1727*, Amsterdam, Proefschrift Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1991, p. 9.

¹⁰ Alexander de Groot, *The Ottoman empire and the Dutch republic: a history of the earliest diplomatic relations 1610-1630*, Istanbul/Leiden, Netherlands Institute in Turkey, 1978, pp. 13-58.

¹¹ In fact, things could only get worse considering that the Dutch had also concluded the Twelve Years Truce (1609-1621) with Spain – the traditional rival of the corsairs.

lasting peace agreement.¹² A second mission was organized by Cornelis Pijnacker in 1626, but was again in vain. Realizing the limited effects of diplomacy, the States-General opted to employ stronger merchant convoys.¹³ Accordingly, the Directorate for the Levant Trade (*Directie Levantse Handel*) was instituted to regulate commerce in the Mediterranean and – along with the Admiralties – to provide revenue for the armament of warships that would accompany the Dutch *fluyt* ships through the Straits of Gibraltar until they reached Smyrna (modern Izmir). Punitive missions were also deemed necessary: Michiel de Ruyter, the most famous admiral of the Dutch Republic, was sent in the Mediterranean on two punitive expeditions (in 1662 and 1664), in order to retaliate against the corsairs. During these missions, he was authorized to conduct diplomacy on his own terms, to conclude peace if it were possible, and to release as many Dutch slaves as he could.¹⁴ De Ruyter managed to conclude short lived treaties, but he was unable keep his fleet in the Mediterranean long enough to actually enforce them.

Hostilities between the Dutch Republic and the fleets of North Africa continued throughout the early 1670s. The city of Algiers was at war with England, France and the Netherlands at the same time. The attrition caused by the constant fighting, led the government of the city to consider making peace with at least one of its enemies. Therefore, in 1674 the Dey¹⁵ of Algiers wrote to the States-General of the Dutch Republic and asked for the dispatch of an envoy to negotiate the terms of a potential peace.¹⁶ The Dutch government opted for a doctor residing in Amsterdam, Thomas Hees.

Little is known about Hees' early life. He was born to a wealthy family in Weesp (a city in the province of Holland) in 1634. In 1654, he started studying philosophy and then medicine at the University of Leiden. It is not clear in what capacity he participated in this mission, but we do know that Hees had accompanied Jacob Boreel during his embassy to the court of Czar Alexis I in Moscow between 1664 and 1667. This seems to have been his very first contact with the world of diplomacy.¹⁷ His appointment as envoy to Algiers might be related to the fact that his brother, Johannes Hees - a wealthy merchant based in Amsterdam - was involved in the ransoming of Dutch slaves in Barbary and had contacts with Jewish merchant communities in the

¹² Gerard van Krieken, *Kapers en Kooplieden: De Betrekkingen tussen Algiers en Nederland 1604-1830*, Amsterdam, De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1999, pp. 14-17.

¹³ Richard Weber, *De Beveiliging van de Zee tegen Europeesche en Barbarijse Zeeroovers 1609-1621*, Amsterdam, Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1936, p. 145.

¹⁴ Alexander de Groot, 'Ottoman North Africa and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 39, 1985, p. 139.

¹⁵ The highest authority of the city, head of the corsairs and the Ottoman janissaries bore the title of the "Dey".

¹⁶ Caroline Coffrie, *Gezant in Barbarije: Thomas Hees, Commissaris van de Staten-General in Algiers, 1675-1680*, Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam Unpublished MA Thesis, 2010, p. 22.

¹⁷ Coffrie, *Gezant in Barbarije*, p. 22.

Mediterranean.¹⁸ Some of these Jews served as semi-official diplomatic representatives of the Dutch Republic. Jacob de Paz,¹⁹ for example, was the representative of the Jewish community of Algiers but also acted as *commissaris* for the Dutch. He had not received the title of consul because the States General had not yet concluded a peace agreement with Algiers and therefore the government of the city would not recognize de Paz's credentials.

It appears that Hees was first "discovered" by Dutch scholars as a diarist, rather than as a diplomat. In the course of his long stay in the city of Algiers during his first mission, he had kept a journal (*dagboek*) which covered the events pertinent to his efforts of concluding peace with Algiers between 1675 and 1680. The part of the journal that covers the period of the first year of Hees' mission was published in 1950 by Herman Hardenberg (cf. Hardenberg 1950), the leading Dutch archivist of his time. The text was considered interesting not so much because of its insights in the conduct of Early Modern diplomacy, but because it recounted the stories of Christian slaves and the ordeals they had to suffer in the *bagnos* (slave prisons) of the Ottoman Empire. Interestingly enough, as the battle of Algiers was raging (1956-1957) during the Algerian War of Independence, this first part of this journal was translated and published in French.²⁰ The French factions struggling to maintain Algeria, must have sympathized with the challenges that Hees' faced *vis-à-vis* the local, 17th century Algerian "pirates".

Hees arrived in Algiers in October 1675 and started negotiations with the Dey and members of the government. Unfortunately for him – and the Republic – the Algerians managed to postpone the settlement of a peace treaty under various pretexts, forcing Hees to stay and drag the negotiations out over five long years: by 1678 he had managed to set free only half of the approximately 420 Dutch slaves.²¹ During his stay, he worked closely with Jacob de Paz for the ransoming. It soon became clear that the latter's connections, his linguistic skills, and his access to the Algerian government were indispensable for Hees, and that no friction seems to have arisen between the two men.

Although the efforts of the Dutch envoy finally produced a peace agreement with Algiers in 1680, there were two pending problems: firstly, not all the slaves had been set free, and secondly, there was no peace with the other two corsairs cities of Barbary: Tripoli and Tunis. Hence, it was imperative to organize a new mission. Thomas Hees was appointed for the arduous task once more. There is no doubt that Hees' first mission to Algiers had

¹⁸ Gerard van Krieken, *Kapers en Kooplieden: De Betrekkingen tussen Algiers en Nederland 1604-1830*, Amsterdam, De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1999, p. 47.

¹⁹ De Paz had lived in Amsterdam for years and was a trading partner of Johannes Hees.

²⁰ Gerard Bousquet, 'Thomas Hees, Journal d'un Voyage à Alger (1675-1676)', *Revue Africaine*, 101, 1957, pp. 85-87.

²¹ van Krieken, *Kapers en Kooplieden*, p. 49.

been by far the most important, considering that this was the most important hub of corsair activity. However, although his second (1682-683) and third (1684) missions had no spectacular results (neither had lasting effects, as it will be seen) they are worth studying in the sense that they provide insights into the peculiar nature of Early Modern cross-confessional diplomacy.

Hees' *Verbalen*

Not only were these two missions less spectacular in result and scope than the first one, but the problem is also one of sources: generally, the material that is available for Dutch diplomacy in North Africa in the 18th century is much larger in quantity than that available for the 17th century. This also holds true for the archives of the *Legatie Turkije*, which contain the correspondence of the Dutch Embassy in Constantinople. This lack of documentation is unfortunate because Dutch commerce in the Mediterranean was much more dynamic in the second half of the 17th century. However, we do possess the two *Verbalen* which Hees delivered to the States General after the end of second and third missions. Klaas Heeringa has included both *Verbalen* in his vast compendium of sources pertaining to the Dutch Levant trade - albeit not paginated.²²

Egodocuments of the Dutch “Golden Age” – diaries being the most representative example - were mainly intended to serve as records for posterity.²³ Hees' *Verbalen* were in fact state-commissioned egodocuments and they were meant to be kept in the archives of the States-General. Future Dutch diplomats who were about to be deployed in North Africa may have found them very useful as sources of information on local conditions. In fact, it is quite possible that Hees himself might have read the *Verbalen* of his predecessors before embarking on his mission. Cornelis Pijnacker's report of his mission in 1622-1623 was available in the archives of the States-General. Generally speaking, the decentralized nature of the Dutch state made sure that a large array of individuals would have access to official documents. The famous historian (and libertine) Lieuwe van Aitzema managed to put together a vast amount of official documents while writing his seminal *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh* (Affairs of State and War), with treaties of the States General appearing verbatim throughout its volumes.²⁴ As for the paper trail left behind by Hees, there are at least some indications that the documents sent by him to the Dutch government during his first and second missions were consulted by his contemporaries. In fact, some of them were even incorporated into works of historiography: In 1684 Simon de Vries wrote a history of the relations of the Dutch Republic with North Africa, which was published as a second volume to (the Dutch

²² Klaas Heeringa, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van den Levantschen Handel*, Vol. 2, Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1917, pp. 513-522.

²³ Jeroen Blaak, *Literacy in Everyday Life. Reading and Writing in Early Modern Dutch Diaries*, Leiden, Brill, 2009, pp. 136-137.

²⁴ Jan Jozef Poelhekke, 'Enkele aantekeningen over Aitzema' in *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen en Letterkunde*, Vol.15, Amsterdam, 1960, pp. 406-407.

translation of) Pierre Dan's *Histoire de Barbarie*. In his lengthy work, De Vries managed to include some of the letters sent by Hees to the States General, placing special emphasis on the dispatched lists of liberated slaves and their places of origin.²⁵ Let us now turn to the *Verbalen*.

The documents in question are dated 1683 and 1685 respectively. In terms of length, it is noteworthy that they are both considerably shorter than those produced by Dutch envoys who were sent to important European courts like – for example - those of France and Spain.²⁶ The first *Verbaal* is 25 pages long²⁷ while the second is 29 pages in total.²⁸ Both of their introductions are very straightforward and simple. They contain the objectives of the two missions: The first states that Hees' task is to “free the remaining slaves in Algiers and then conclude peace with the governments of Tunis and Tripoli”.²⁹ In the second *Verbaal* Hees states the objectives of his mission as being to present himself to the governments of Barbary and to “renew and perfectionate” the treaties of peace as well as “to free some slaves”.³⁰

What is noteworthy is that an important set of instructions that are usually present in *Verbalen* are missing from Hees'. When visiting European courts, Dutch ambassadors had to pay extreme attention to not embarrass the Republic in matters related to ceremony or the general respect of the State. For example, delicate arrangements had to be worked out considering diplomatic precedence: as representatives of a Republic, the Dutch envoys were often instructed not to be given an inferior rank than that of Venice. The absence of relevant clauses in Hees' instructions could be due to the fact that in North Africa, issues of protocol - especially when reflecting the balances between Islamic and Christian states - only became delicate in the first half of the 18th century.³¹

The *Verbalen* also mention nothing of the collection of the necessary sums for the release of the remaining Dutch slaves in North Africa. Usually, the majority of the funds –between 50 to 75% of the total - collected by the States General for the release of Dutch slaves came from the treasuries of the large cities of the maritime provinces and their surrounding villages.³² Although the Dutch Reformed church was not as active as the Catholic “Redemption Orders” in the Mediterranean, the acts of *kerkelijke liefdadigheidsinstellingen* (i.e. church charities)

²⁵ Simon de Vries, *Historie van Barbaryen, en des zelfs zeeroovers. Behelzende een beschrijving van de Koningrijken en Steden Algiers, Tunis, Salé en Tripoli*, vol. 2, Amsterdam, Jan ter Hoorn, 1684, pp. 160-169.

²⁶ The Dutch embassy to the Spanish court in 1660-61 is a case in point, see Maurits Ebben, *Lodewijck Huygens' Spaans journaal: reis naar het hof van de koning van Spanje, 1660-1661*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers, 2005.

²⁷ DNA, SG, 12593.73.

²⁸ DNA, SG, 8610.

²⁹ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 1.

³⁰ DNA, SG, 8610, p.1.

³¹ Christian Windler, 'Diplomatic History as a Field for Cultural Analysis: Muslim-Christian Relations in Tunis, 1700-1840', *The Historical Journal*, 44, 2001, pp. 91-94.

³² Charles den Ridder, *Gedenk de gevangenen alsof gij medegevangenen waart. De loskoop van Hollandse zeelieden uit Barbarijse gevangenschap*, Amsterdam, Tijdschrift voor Zeegechiedenis, 1986, pp. 3-15.

could sometimes contribute as much as 25% to the total sum for the redemption of individual slaves.³³ Even the lands of the “Generality”³⁴ were considered liable to contribute, although they sent out hardly any seamen: as can be seen from a Resolution of the States-General dated April 29, 1682, Thomas Hees himself proposed to collect money from Breda, Buren, Lingen en IJsselstein if the *Stadholder*, William of Orange³⁵, would allow it.³⁶ We can assume that the same pattern of fundraising was followed in this case.

Around 115,000 *guldens* became available from the collections of the cities of Holland for Hees’ second mission to Algiers – the one which involved the largest number of slaves.³⁷ That being said, slave ransoming and negotiations with the rulers of North African cities were an intertwined process. In the initial phase of describing his actions, Hees stresses the fact that apart from his loyalty to the Dutch government, he was motivated by his deep Christian devotion and sympathy for the misery of Dutch captives at the hands of the Muslims and their “harde persecutie.”³⁸ Let us now turn to the events of Hees’ missions.

Hees’ Second and Third Missions

Hees reached Algiers on the 17th of October 1682 and was received by the *Dey* of the city, Baba Hasan. Strangely enough, the consul of the Dutch Republic, Carel Alexander van Berck, was not there to greet him: he had fled to Cadiz and refused to return to his post, forcing Hees to start looking for a replacement.³⁹ Hees dispensed nearly 80.000 *guldens* for the ransoming of the remaining Dutch slaves, made presents to the government, and secured promises that the treaty of peace and friendship would continue to be respected. The only point of contention was that Baba Hasan insisted that consul Berck return to Algiers because of the promises that he had made for more ceremonial presents to the city, but this was something that Hees could not guarantee.⁴⁰ After settling all the ransoming issues, he left Algiers and sailed eastward.

In March 1683, Hees arrived in Tunis to conclude peace with the city, only to find a struggle going on between two local factions that were supporting different *Deys*: ever since 1675, a power struggle between the Muradids

³³ den Ridder, *Gedenk de gevangenen alsof gij medegevangenen wart*, p. 17.

³⁴ Territories of the Republic on the border with the Spanish Netherlands that were governed directly by the States General and had no provincial estates or representatives of their own in the Hague.

³⁵ This is no other than William III, who would ascend the English throne in 1688 after the “Glorious Revolution”. He kept the title of *Stadholder* in the Netherlands until his death.

³⁶ Isabella Henriëtte van Eeghen, ‘Verlossing van Christenslaven in Barbarië’, *Amstelodamum Maandblad voor de Kennis van Amsterdam*, 40, 1953, p. 72.

³⁷ van Krieken, *Kapers en Kooplieden*, pp. 52-53.

³⁸ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. ii.

³⁹ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Gerard van Krieken, ‘De missies van Thomas Hees naar Algiers, Tunis en Tripoli (1675-1685)’, in *Sharqiyyat*, 4, *Tijdschrift van de Nederlandse Vereniging voor de Studie van het Midden-Oosten en de Islam*, Leiden, 1992, pp. 32-33.

(who held the title of *Bey*) and the janissary militia of the city (headed by the former *Dey*) had been raging. Hees had to wait until Ali Bey had won the battle to negotiate the terms of the peace: 15,000 guilders had to be paid by the States General as a gift to the *Dey* and one thousand *vaatjes* (vases) of gunpowder had to be sent as a token gift.⁴¹ A truce of eight months would come into being, until the money and the presents finally arrived from the Republic. There is no mention of any ransoming of Dutch slaves at this instance. Hees left Tunis in May and reached Tripoli on the 9th of June 1683. After an audience with the *Dey* and the principal members of the government, the terms for a peace agreement were agreed. In fourteen months, the Dutch would have to send 150 *vaatjes* of gunpowder, three thousand bullets and five masts.⁴² From Tripoli, Hees made his way back to Livorno and then back to the Republic by land. We can safely assume that Hees' mission had already yielded positive results by then. In fact, 1684 was perhaps one of the best years for Dutch diplomacy in North Africa altogether: in November of that year, the States General concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Morocco thereby securing a safe passage from Gibraltar to the whole of the Mediterranean.⁴³ Peace had not yet been concluded with Tunis, but Algiers and Tripoli had ceased their corsair activity.

The third mission was a less spectacular follow up to Hees' second. In February 1685, Hees was back in Algiers and this time he was properly greeted by the newly-appointed Dutch consul, Christoffel Mathias. The city's *Dey*, however, did not really bother receiving the Dutch envoy: on one occasion, he claimed that he was too busy "sending money to Mecca" to greet them.⁴⁴ Hees would have to wait for an audience that would be satisfying for the Dutch. Finally, on the 17th of March, he managed to present his gifts to the Algerian government and secure promises of friendship. The atmosphere was hostile because news had just reached the city that a corsair of Algiers had captured a Dutch *fluyt* and sold the cargo (and the crew) in Tangier.⁴⁵ Hees and consul Mathias asked for immediate compensation, but only managed to secure promises of future reparations instead. In April, Hees decided that it was time to leave and made a present of 100 *vaatjes* of gunpowder to the city of Algiers and then left for Tripoli, where he arrived later the same month.⁴⁶

There was not much to be done there: the only issue was the delivery of the gifts promised in his previous mission. These were finally delivered, along with Hees' excuses for the delay.⁴⁷ The final destination of Hees' third mission was Tunis. Sailing westward this time, he arrived there in May. This time, he was faced with total failure:

⁴¹ van Krieken, 'De missies van Thomas Hees naar Algiers', p. 33; DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 14.

⁴² van Krieken, 'De missies van Thomas Hees naar Algiers', pp. 33-34.

⁴³ Johan de Bakker, *Slaves, Arms, and Holy War: Moroccan Policy vis-à-vis the Dutch Republic during the Establishment of the 'Alawī Dynasty, 1660-1727*, Amsterdam, Proefschrift Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1991, pp. 91-92.

⁴⁴ DNA, SG, 8610, p. 4.

⁴⁵ van Krieken, 'De missies van Thomas Hees naar Algiers', p. 35.

⁴⁶ DNA, SG, 8610, p. 9.

⁴⁷ DNA, SG, 8610, p. 15.

the gifts promised to the city had not been delivered on time and enormous sums were demanded for the release of Dutch slaves. Hees did not pursue the matter any further and chose to begin his journey back home.⁴⁸ As a general remark, we can conclude that the independent diplomatic mechanism set up by Hees was a product of the realization that Barbary was a unique case which had to be dealt independently from Constantinople. There is further proof of this, confirming that Hees understood very well the environment in which he operated: During his last visit to Algiers, Hees first visited the *Dey* (head of the corsairs) and only afterwards went on to visit the representative of the Ottoman Porte residing in Algiers, bearing the title of “Basha” (*pasha*).⁴⁹ This was an effort to recognise that the real power of the city lay with the *Dey* but at the same time a theatrical attempt to pay lip-service to Ottoman suzerainty of North Africa.

All in all, as far as Hees could remember, everything had worked according to plan: peace had been established thanks to his actions and most of the slaves had been freed. On the 18th of August 1685, the *Oprechte Courant* of Haarlem (by then one of Europe’s most famous newspapers) was informing its readers that: “Captain Laer arrived in Texel, having [on board] Commissaris Hees [coming] from the Coasts of Barbary with whose Corsairs he prolonged the Peace.”⁵⁰ Thus Hees’ missions were concluded.

For all his short-term successes, Hees could not have contributed to a significant altering of long established Mediterranean realities. Quite simply, the economic penetration of the “Northerners” through the straits of Gibraltar did not erase the divisions based on religion as fast as previously thought.⁵¹ Violence at sea and slavery would survive largely intact, so in the long run the Dutch Republic would have to come face to face with the corsair cities of North Africa again and again, until European imperialism managed to completely subdue resistance in the region in the first three decades of the 19th century. This turn of events may even have been predictable for the Dutch, considering that Algiers had now made peace with the French and the English once more: in March 1686, just a year and a half after Hees’ return to the Republic, Algiers chose to unilaterally call off the peace agreement of 1680 and started preying on Dutch shipping with full force.⁵² It was only after 1726 that a new peace agreement was established. This new treaty lasted until 1815, with two minor breaks in 1755 and 1793. This state of affairs could be expected considering that during the 18th century, relations between Europe and the Ottoman Empire were becoming more stable and systematized.⁵³

⁴⁸ van Krieken, ‘De missies van Thomas Hees naar Algiers’, p. 36.

⁴⁹ DNA, SG, 8610, p. 3.

⁵⁰ *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant*, No. 34, 1685, p. 2.

⁵¹ Molly Greene, ‘Beyond the Northern Invasion: The Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century’, *Past and Present*, vol. 174, 2002, pp. 42-50.

⁵² van Krieken, *Kapers en Kooplieden*, pp. 56-57.

⁵³ de Groot, ‘Ottoman North Africa and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, p. 143.

Renegades and Former Slaves as Instruments of Dutch Diplomacy

In the last three decades, the field of diplomatic history - a hitherto neglected field because of its supposed affiliation with the traditional “great men theory” of history - has slowly been reshaped by significant developments, linking to the scholarly gains of the so-called “cultural turn”. New Diplomatic History, as the historiographic end-product of this change of scholarly attitudes is called, focuses on the processes of diplomacy rather than its results, employing an international (rather than national) point of view and paying special attention to historiographic questions centered around cross-cultural contact, identity and memory. Furthermore, when it comes to what is important to be studied, New Diplomatic History privileges the agency of a vast array of individuals rather than just narrating the dealings between states and their most formal agents, such as ministers and ambassadors. In the case of European – North African relations in the Early Modern Period, focusing on “lesser” diplomatic actors such as – for example - translators (*drogmans*), has allowed recent scholarship to dismiss the notion of a solid Christian – Muslim divide that rendered cross-confessional diplomacy a European prerogative. Instead, this model can be replaced by a more balanced picture of a “shared diplomatic idiom and even co-production of diplomatic genres” as the process of mediation was carried out by go-betweens who had mixed loyalties.⁵⁴

By studying the journal of Hees’ first mission (1675-1680), Coffrie has noted the importance of local intermediaries such as Jews, translators and renegades.⁵⁵ Thankfully, the *Verbalen* of Hees do offer insights into the same groups of “lesser actors” that proved useful for the aims of Dutch diplomacy in North Africa. We have already mentioned the circle of Jewish merchants around Jacob de Paz - by far Hees’ most important connection. We will now focus on renegades, former slaves and even Muslim captains. The first category is by far the most interesting: a large number of Christians enslaved by the corsairs of North Africa chose to convert to Islam in order to regain their freedom or – when the latter scenario was impossible – receive better treatment from their masters. Some of them even joyfully embraced Islam in order to pursue an active career as corsairs, often preying on the ships of their erstwhile homeland: such is the case of the notorious Jan Janszoon from Haarlem, who turned Muslim and changed his name to Murat Reis. Janszoon went on to become the first “President” of the so-called corsair Republic of Salé.⁵⁶

Such was the animosity towards renegades in the 17th century Dutch Republic that the States General had decreed that if any of them made it back home, they would have two options: “return back to the fold” of

⁵⁴ Martje van Gelder and Tatjana Krstić, ‘Introduction: Cross-Confessional Diplomacy and Diplomatic Intermediaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean’, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19(2-3), 2015, p. 103.

⁵⁵ Coffrie, *Gezant In Barbarije*, pp. 29-33.

⁵⁶ Peter Wilson, *Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs and European Renegades*, New York, Autonomedia, 2003, p. 98.

Christianity or face execution.⁵⁷ This punishment was deemed fair, since Islamic law decreed the same for those who would dare to leave the faith of the Prophet. However, thanks to a recent study, we now know that there was a large number (or at least a number larger than previously thought) of Dutch converts to Islam who managed to return to the Republic and gain a degree of toleration for themselves. Some renegades even managed to be recruited into the Dutch navy - especially through the Admiralty of Rotterdam - in order to fight against the corsairs of Dunkirk. According to van Gelder, these renegades had played an important role in the establishment of Dutch-Algerian relations earlier on, in the first decades of the 17th century.

Even though Hees had spent five years in Algiers, he still possessed little command of local languages and had to rely on translators and intermediaries. Looking for Dutch renegades who were fluent in his native language and had established connections with local networks of power was the means of Hees' success. In his second mission, during the negotiations for the fixing of a price for the release of the Dutch slaves in Algiers (October 1682), Hees not only made use of Ali de Kuijper - a Dutch convert to Islam originally from Amsterdam - as a translator (*tolk*) but also dispatched him to the Dey's palace to negotiate the terms of the transaction himself. In his *Verbael* Hees refers to him as an "instrument of the State" - albeit a "very malicious [...] and pernicious" one.⁵⁸ This is because during Hees' second mission, the two men had a falling out: while negotiating the price for the release of the Dutch slaves in Algiers, Ali had made underground talks with both Jacob de Paz (the old *commissaris*) and even the captain of Hees' ship, Pieter Constant. It appears that the three men were willing to agree on a much higher price for ransoming than what was deemed reasonable and so Hees decided to take intervene and take care of the issue himself, by pressing for a lower price.⁵⁹

Hees did not reserve any hard feelings against De Paz for the incident. In fact, before leaving Algiers in 1682, Hees had advised one of De Paz's factors - along with other "good friends" - to help with everything that could prove useful for the Dutch Republic.⁶⁰ In Tunis, Hees came across another Dutch renegade from Amsterdam, a "lieutenant" (*Kaya*) now called Murat, who was authorized by the city's government to take care of the dealings in the name of the Dey and the Bey.⁶¹ Apart from being useful as a speaker of the Dutch language, Murat does not seem to have played any other special role or to have been particularly favoured by Hees.

Before leaving Tripoli in July 1683, Hees had to find a provisional consul in order to take care of any possible

⁵⁷ Benjamin Kaplan, *Muslims in the Dutch Golden Age, Representations and Realities of Religious Toleration*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2006, p. 24.

⁵⁸ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 7.

⁵⁹ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 7.

⁶⁰ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 10.

⁶¹ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 13.

issues that may have arisen. With no need to ask for the permission of a higher authority, he decided that the right man for the job was Zacharias Cousart, a former domestic servant who had followed Hees to Algiers and possessed “good knowledge of the Turkish affairs”.⁶² During Hees’ third mission, Cousart was still at his post: he welcomed Hees in the harbor (April 1684) and was present during the Dutch envoy’s audience with the city’s government. Cousart does not seem to have taken part in the negotiations but it appears that he had managed to acquire the title of consul by the States-General.⁶³ Thus, an erstwhile humble domestic servant managed to become a diplomatic representative of the Republic.

An even more interesting case, is that of a former slave. Dirk Hendrikz Riesselman (Rijselman?) had been captured in Tunis and lived as a slave with the name (Signor) “Andrea”. He was released without ransoming, as a sign of good will by the Dey of Tunis during Hees’ second mission. Right after his liberation, he was chosen by Hees as the right man to take up the post of providing the necessary paperwork⁶⁴ for the corsair ships of Tunis and to report directly to him for every problem that could arise.⁶⁵ Hees was particularly fond of this “jongman” who had helped him during the negotiations. Thus, a former slave, was now acting as a diplomatic representative of the Dutch Republic.

It is interesting how even certain Muslim captains were acquainted with Hees and helped him during his second mission. In 1683, Mohamed, a corsair captain from Tripoli, had accompanied Hees during his voyage from Algiers to Tripoli and helped the Dutch envoy to negotiate with the city’s government.⁶⁶ For Mohamed, this mediation may have been a way to express his prestige, especially if he was involved in the politics of the corsair and janissary factions of the city. Thus, by reading the *Verbalen*, we can conclude that Hees’ description of these “lesser” actors of diplomacy is rather positive and in line with his general views about Islam and the politics of North Africa.

Conclusion

When Thomas Hees had first sailed for Algiers in 1675, he had done so in the company of a heavily armed naval squadron, assigned for this mission by the Admiralty of Amsterdam. The outcome of his actions was hard to predict and perspectives must have looked gloomy: the Dutch Republic was still at war with all three corsair states of the North African coast. Ten years later, in 1685, Hees was sailing to Algiers aboard a single merchant

⁶² DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 21.

⁶³ DNA, SG, 8610, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Every North African corsair ship was accorded a pass which stipulated that if the said ship was to encounter a Dutch warship in the open sea, it should be left unmolested.

⁶⁵ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 16.

⁶⁶ DNA, SG, 12593.73, p. 17.

ship called *De Vrede* (the Peace). By the end of this last mission, most of the Dutch slaves had already been ransomed and the States General had - at last - a sound, albeit short-lived agreement with the corsairs of Algiers.

Like other “egodocuments” of this sort, Hees’ *Verbalen* largely function as a sort of defense of his actions and choices during his diplomatic missions: they convey the picture of a most able envoy, worthy of dealing with the most challenging of environments but at the same time a “most humble servant” (*Uw onderdanigst*) of the Dutch Republic. Hees’ lack of negative judgments about Islam and his deep appreciation of his Jewish acquaintances were already clearly discernable in the journal kept during his first mission. This image is not contradicted by the *Verbalen*, which thus constitute an immensely useful insight into the dynamics of Early Modern cross-confessional diplomacy. In this regard, of particular interest is the mediation offered by Dutch converts to Islam (renegades) and corsair captains, but also the use of the services of liberated Christian slaves. As a concluding remark, we can attest that focusing on such “lesser” actors of diplomacy is essential if we are aiming to come up with a more detailed image of Christian-Muslim relations in the Early Modern Mediterranean. This would be a complex and confusing image of co-operation across confessional lines and mixed loyalties.

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'The Bad and the Ugly': Austria, Hungary, and The New Europe (1916–1918)

BENCE LÁSZLÓ BARI

"Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view" – if we accept the Oxford Dictionary's definition of 'propaganda' then we must acknowledge that it is a concept which creates fiction; a tool of power that has its influence on contemporary conditions as well as historical perspectives. The perception of the Habsburg Monarchy, for example, was dominated by the key terms 'ramshackle empire' and 'prison of nations' for a long time. The source of this narrative can be located to the period that preceded the fall of the empire: The First World War (1914–1918). The stronghold of those who held these opinions was a periodical titled The New Europe (1916–1920). The founder of this press organ was the Scottish historian Robert William Seton-Watson, who was, from the beginning, heavily aided by the emigrant Czech politician and later Czechoslovak President, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. The main goal of this international, intellectual circle gathered around the newspaper was the reorganization of the Old Continent along national lines. This cause was propagated along with the destruction of the main obstacle in its way: the Habsburg Monarchy.

My article will focus on the portrayal of the two main components of this state sentenced to death by the authors of The New Europe: the Empire of Austria, and the Kingdom of Hungary. The collaborators initially agreed on labeling the inner structure of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy as a system of dual oppression. However, serious differences can ultimately be detected between the images portrayed of the two states during the First World War.

Introduction

Hungary (*Transleithenia*): a chauvinistic, corrupt and imperialist state of a most vicious nature – Austria (*Cisleithenia*): a weak and decadent, yet positively developing, country. Within the ranks of *The New Europe*, this was a common opinion in relation to the two states – both of which were autonomous parts of the very same empire they were seeking to destroy. My work will describe the reasons behind this duality. During this process, I will make use of not only the articles published in *The New Europe*, but also other contemporary publications. By this determination, I will describe the construction of a long-lasting and largely fictional image of the Austrian and Hungarian parts of the Habsburg Empire.

“Dual Oppression”: The Nationalities Question

The criticism of *The New Europe* towards the Habsburg Monarchy went in two important directions. The first was a practical one in terms of Entente politics as it concerned the Dual Alliance of Germany and Austria–Hungary which formed the core of the Central Powers’ bloc. The infamous German concept of *Mittleuropa* was based upon this relationship, a concept which implied that the leading state of the Central Powers should organize an empire of ‘Central Europe’ from its conquests and the territories controlled by its allies.¹

The very first article of the British periodical – written by Masaryk – interpreted this aim as an extreme form of ‘Pangermanism’ and as a Germany attempt to conquer the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa alike.² While this statement was an obvious exaggeration, it was undoubtedly a goal of German politics in the Great War to transform the Reich into a power equal to Russia and Great Britain.³ Seton-Watson drew from this the conclusion that the Habsburg Empire was the key element in the process of German expansion, and, consequently, it had to be defeated and destroyed.⁴

On the other hand, Masaryk’s article interpreted the moment when the Habsburg Empire was transformed into the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy – the Compromise (German: *Ausgleich*, Hungarian: *kiegyezés*) of 1867 – as the transition of power from the Habsburgs to the Germans in Austria and the Magyars (ethnic Hungarians) in Hungary.⁵ Thus, the Dual Monarchy was born to be the ‘prison of nations’. Seton-Watson later supplemented the readers with exact numbers in relation to this question: the Scottish historian pointing out that the empire of 52 million people was ruled by a German–Hungarian minority of only 18 million.⁶ The problem of ‘minority rule’ proved to be especially important in relation to Transleithenia. The writer working under the pseudonym ‘Dr. P.’ made a statement truthful to the contemporary statistics that the Magyars constituted a slight majority of 54% in the historical Kingdom of Hungary.⁷ Conversely, the Romanian author Dimitru Drăghicescu claimed that the ruling nation made up only the 41% of the residents located in the “lands of the crown of saint Stephen” (Hungary and Croatia).⁸

Drăghicescu’s main argument was that Magyars could only have been found in the Central Plains (the Hungarian ‘*Pousta*’) of the country, while they represented the minority in the outer ‘provinces’ of nationalities. Per these

¹ Ignán Romsics, ‘Magyarország helye a német Délkelet-Európa-politikában, 1919–1944’, *Helyünk és sorsunk a Duna-medencében*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2005, pp. 177–181.

² *The New Europe*, I (1), 1916, pp. 1, 19.

³ Woodruff D. Smith, *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 112.

⁴ *The New Europe*, I (1), p. 27.

⁵ *The New Europe*, I (1), p. 11.

⁶ *The New Europe*, I (11), 1916, p. 337.

⁷ *The New Europe*, VIII (92), 1918, p. 12.

⁸ *The New Europe*, VII (80), 1918, p. 39.

statements, the territorial peripheries were rightfully demanded by the neighbouring 'soon-to-be' states of Romania, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. A minor flaw in this argument is that the Romanian author seemed to forget about the noteworthy Szekler population in the heart of Transylvania. The slight of the Szekler question can also be observed in the Romanian claims for the region, presented at the Peace Conference of Versailles.⁹ Nevertheless, the authors of *The New Europe* agreed that the Magyars were acting like despots towards the numerous nationalities of their country from 1867 on. As such, the various problems of the Hungarian political system were discussed by Seton-Watson in the second article of the periodical ('The Roumanians of Hungary'). Disproving the image of Magyar 'liberal rule' over minorities, Seton-Watson depicts the ruling elite as one which utilized the fierce assimilationist policy of 'Magyarization'. As he had travelled to Hungary before the war, he also discusses the corrupt electoral system in place in the country, outlining the observations he made while there.¹⁰

In contrast, Austria was portrayed more positively in terms of minority policy. In Seton-Watson's view, the introduction of general suffrage (1907) made national conflicts more moderate due to the equalized possibilities in political representation. However, conditions in Cisleithenia were not perfect either as the dominant position of the Austrian-Germans remained basically untouched, and the monarch had the possibility to govern without the consent of the parliament.¹¹

While the Seton-Watson presented a balanced opinion regarding the Austrian situation, Masaryk magnified the negative elements of the political system in his interpretation. He states that the aim of the dominant nation was to Germanize the Bohemian provinces and the Slovenian territories.¹² This policy was depicted in great detail in an article titled 'The International Situation of Austria' in January 1917. As political power was transferred to the military over Cisleithenia, franchise was restricted and censorship was introduced. The 'Germanization' of the Bohemian lands had started before with the suppression of the minorities.¹³

Nonetheless, Hungary went way beyond Austria in its terror of the nationalities according to 'Dr. P'. with the anonymous author declaring that Hungarian minorities were victims of an actual genocide. The government, 'Dr. P' states, strived to control the local churches and education in order to create the Hungarian unitary state. As such, the elite tried to colonize the territories inhabited by the nationalities and attempted to Magyarize the borderlands so that minorities could be separated physically from their homelands of Russia, Serbia and

⁹ Romsics, 'Magyarország helye a német Délkelet-Európa-politikában, 1919–1944', p. 198.

¹⁰ *The New Europe*, I (1), pp. 22–26.

¹¹ *The New Europe*, I (11), pp. 337–339.

¹² *The New Europe*, I (5), 1916, p. 154.

¹³ *The New Europe*, I (12), 1917, pp. 354., 357–360.

Romania.¹⁴ It must, however, be stated that while Serbians, Romanians and Ruthenians were victims to various atrocities in Hungary, the Hungarian state did not want to exterminate its subject peoples.¹⁵ Accusations of this nature were no more than attempts to demonize and denigrate the enemy, similar to the British propaganda regarding Germans during the course of the Great War.¹⁶

Internal Politics During the First World War

The authors of *The New Europe* did not only observe the conditions and the national policies of the Monarchy, but were also attentive towards the internal situation of Cis- and Transleithenia. Consequently, they depicted the main figures and the most important events of Austrian and Hungarian politics on the pages of their periodical. The Hungarian prime minister Count Stephen Tisza appeared as a dictator,¹⁷ a criminal responsible for the outbreak of the war and an invisible hand directing the inner life of the Monarchy in *The New Europe*.¹⁸ The author of the article 'The Fall of Count Tisza' – written in May 1917, after the prime minister met with King Charles – held the opinion that the crimes and the importance of Tisza in the course of the conflict were equivalent to those of the German Emperor Wilhem II. The prime minister had inherited the corrupted country from his father, Koloman Tisza. His personality was defined by crudity, impulsiveness and fanatic chauvinism.¹⁹ In terms of symbolism, the portrayal of the Austrian prime minister Count Karl von Stürgkh was equally compelling – the focus in this case, however, being on the weakness of character and country. According to the anonymous author of *The New Europe*, the decadent nature of Cisleithenian politics took form in the person of Stürgkh. The politician did not have any program and was only a helpless puppet in the hands of the Emperor-King Francis Joseph and the Magyars.²⁰

Regarding the leading figures of the Hungarian opposition, Seton-Watson portrayed them in a negative tone similar to the one utilized in the case of Tisza. All oppositional figures turned out to be faithful supporters of the 'Pan-German' war aims. Even the pacifist and anti-German Mihály Károlyi was accused of trying to deceive the public opinion of the Entente Powers. Additionally, Seton-Watson proved that Károlyi was as Chauvinist as his associates, advocating the policy of Magyarization.²¹ In contrast to its Hungarian counterparts, the oppositional Austrian Social Democratic Party was evaluated more positively after their split with the

¹⁴ *The New Europe*, VI (72), 1918, pp. 197–201.

¹⁵ József Galántai, *A Habsburg-monarchia alkonya*, Budapest, Kossuth Kiadó, 1985, pp. 322–323; József Galántai, *Magyarország az első világháborúban*, Budapest, Korona Kiadó, 2001, pp. 136–140.

¹⁶ J. Lee Thompson, *Politicians, the Press, & Propaganda: Lord Northcliffe & the Great War*, Canterbury, Kent University Press, 1999, p. 38.

¹⁷ *The New Europe*, I (7), 1916, p. 200.

¹⁸ *The New Europe*, I (10), 1916, p. 315.

¹⁹ *The New Europe*, III (33), 1917, p. 215.

²⁰ *The New Europe*, I (2), 1916, pp. 53–54.

²¹ *The New Europe*, II (14), 1917, pp. 16–21.

government in 1918. The new aims of the political force were to trigger social revolution, to reach a compromise with the Entente and the federalization of the Habsburg Monarchy – the latter of which, however, was unacceptable in the eyes of *The New Europe's* guard as it presupposed the integrity of the Danubian Empire.²² There was only one spot of light in the shadows of the Magyar policy. According to 'Dr. P.', the sociologist and politician Oszkár Jászi was the hope of Hungary. Leading the progressive National Civic Radical Party, the Hungarian scholar also issued the influential sociological periodical *Huszadik Század (Twentieth Century)*, which was described as an outstanding press organ by the aforementioned author.²³ The source of the positive opinions on the side of *The New Europe* was probably Seton-Watson, who was exchanging letters frequently with Jászi before the war.²⁴ The collaborators of the periodical projected that Magyar peasantry and working-class – oppressed like the nationalities of Hungary – would be led by the Hungarian politician.²⁵

“Hungarian Foreign Politics”

Hungary had already proven to be victorious twice over Austria in its sins. But the guard of *The New Europe* anathemized the former state not only for its oppressive politics towards minorities and for its corrupt political system; In his first article, Seton-Watson also stated that Magyars were as responsible for the out-break of the First World War as the Germans: “In a single phrase, this is not only a German War, but also a Magyar War. Nay more, it is as much a Magyar War as it is a German War: for the Magyars have done more than any other people to create that electrical atmosphere in South-Eastern Europe which produced the fatal explosion.”²⁶

Controversially, Masaryk denounces both dominant nations of Austria–Hungary as the enthusiastic supporters of German endeavours of world domination. In his opinion, Austrian-Germans aimed at the already mentioned Germanization of Cisleithenia.²⁷ Masaryk's judgement was especially strong in relation the Social Democratic Party of Austria as a subservient of 'Pan-Germanism'. The Magyars, in contrast, were only interested in keeping their privileged position within the power structure of the German *Neue Ordnung*.²⁸ Masaryk, however, was in the minority with his negative opinion of the Austrian-Germans and Magyars. Most of the workers on the periodical held the view that Hungary was more responsible than Austria in relation to both the First World War and the failure of the Habsburg Monarchy as an experiment of various peoples living under the same roof. As one article stated:

²² *The New Europe*, VIII (94), 1918, p. 67.

²³ *The New Europe*, II (20), 1917, pp. 202–203.

²⁴ Géza Jeszenszky, 'Jászi Oszkár és R. W. Seton-Watson levelezése az első világháború előtti években', *Századok*, 111(4), 1977, pp. 749–759.

²⁵ *The New Europe*, III (34), 1917, p. 242.

²⁶ *The New Europe*, I (1), 19 October 1916, p. 20.

²⁷ *The New Europe*, I (5), 16 November 1916, p. 154.

²⁸ *The New Europe*, I (8), 1916, pp. 247–248.

It is no accident that these expert writers, dealing with national problems, should find that all roads in Central Europe lead to Budapest. Some would, perhaps, say Vienna; we prefer the Magyar capital, because, but for Magyar nationalism and its veto upon toleration and race-reconciliation, the Habsburgs might have re-fashioned their strange realm by a bold and liberal policy towards the subject peoples.²⁹

According to this group, Austria was economically dependent on Hungary, the latter being heavily supported by Germany.³⁰ The Magyar elite did not hesitate to intervene in the inner life of Cisleithenia.³¹ Additionally, the dominant nation of Transleithenia was highly resistant to the idea of federalization as it would have meant their loss power in relation to the Dual Monarchy and the territory of Hungary itself.³² The authors of *The New Europe* saw the Magyars not only as the ones who controlled the Austrian state, but as a nation with an imperialistic appetite towards the Balkans. The most extreme accusation stated that Hungarian politicians wanted their country to annex Serbia, Romania, Bosnia and Dalmatia on the basis of the ancient rights of the Holy Crown of Hungary.³³

This very determination was the one which made Magyars the loyal servants of Germany. While the latter would not have lost its importance in European relations even in the case of losing the war, Hungary would have only become a Great Power if the Central Powers won the war.³⁴ Seton-Watson treated the country as an independent belligerent state which would have outlasted the weaker Austria during the course of the Great War.³⁵ Germany also needed the alliance of Hungary in order to keep Austria and the Habsburgs under control.³⁶ Through its servant, the Great Power could block the planned reforms of the Habsburg Monarchy. According to rumors received by *The New Europe*, Germany would have even enabled Hungary to become an autonomous state on its own.³⁷ The pledge of the German–Hungarian friendship was the very existence of Austria itself. Cisleithenia – controlled by the Austrian-Germans – neutralized the national movements dangerous for the two allies as a weak buffer state and averted the attention of Pan-German imperialism from Transleithenia in a calming way for the Magyars.³⁸

No such accusations were proclaimed concerning the Austrian part of the Monarchy – but other fondnesses were suspected. In his article on Pan-German literature, Masaryk stated that a group of Austrian-Germans devoted

²⁹ *The New Europe*, VIII (100), 1918, p. 195.

³⁰ *The New Europe*, I (10), 1916, p. 315.

³¹ *The New Europe*, I (2), 1916, pp. 53–54.

³² *The New Europe*, IV (41), 1917, pp. 42–43.

³³ *The New Europe*, III (33), 31 May 1917, p. 218.

³⁴ *The New Europe*, II (21), 1917, p. 227.

³⁵ *The New Europe*, I (13), 1917, p. 385.

³⁶ *The New Europe*, III (28), 1917, p. 55.

³⁷ *The New Europe*, II (23), 1917, p. 313.

³⁸ *The New Europe*, VI (74), 1918, pp. 272–273.

themselves to the *Alldeutsch* unity.³⁹ Later, this opinion was interpreted to be a dominant one among the ranks of the Cisleithenian dominant nation.⁴⁰ It is important to stress that the Magyar influence on the foreign policy of the Monarchy was enlarged in an absurd way by the authors of *The New Europe*. In reality, the most important issues were decided upon by the common Ministerial Council, in which the vote of the Hungarian Prime Minister was only one of many.⁴¹ The inner life of Cisleithenia was also basically undisturbed by the will of its counterpart; the parts of the Monarchy were independent from each other by internal means. The supposed war aims of the Hungarian state advocated by *The New Europe* must be observed in a similar way. It is true that Count Stephen Tisza would have liked to see Bosnia-Herzegovina and Dalmatia as regions of Hungary.⁴² Moreover, he also contemplated on partly annexing the hostile Romania.⁴³ However, it is important to emphasize that such vague territorial claims were not endorsed officially by the government of Hungary – simply because this would have meant an end to the balance of power within the Habsburg Empire and the Magyar dominance in terms of population over Transleithenia. The maxima of the military aims were, thus, simple ‘corrections’ along the Serbian and Romanian borders.⁴⁴ Similarly, the German alliance was not solely the fetish of the Magyar elite, which was also viewed favorably during the reign of Francis Joseph.⁴⁵ It was the very same period when ambitious plans of expansion were produced by the military circles of Vienna, plans like those found in *The New Europe* and credited to the Magyars – for example, Conrad von Hötzendorf, the Chief of the General Staff seriously planned the annexation of Serbia, Montenegro and Albania to the Habsburg Empire.⁴⁶

Conclusion

All in all, the staff of the British periodical primarily voiced their criticisms against the Hungarian State during the First World War. Most of the authors interpreted the nation as a ‘Hungaro–Austrian Monarchy’, the dominant nation of which would have planned to incorporate the Balkans within this structure. Thus, the pages of *The New Europe* echoed the sweetest delusions of contemporary Hungarian chauvinists.⁴⁷ The rulers of Transleithenia were also seen as the faithful servants of Germany. This was due to their joint influence that the development of the Monarchy was stuck – and it was due to this failure that the destruction of the Habsburg Empire became necessary. Apart from this, the imperialist Magyars appeared in the pages of British periodicals as the butchers

³⁹ *The New Europe*, I (5), 16 November 1916, p. 154.

⁴⁰ *The New Europe*, III (33), 1917, pp. 222–223.

⁴¹ Marvin Benjamin Fried, *Austro-Hungarian War Aims in the Balkans during World War I*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 7–8.

⁴² Ignác Romsics, ‘A magyar birodalmi gondolat’, *Gondolatok a múlttól a máig*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2004, p. 147.

⁴³ Emil Palotás, *Kelet-Európa története a 20. század első felében*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2003, p. 82.

⁴⁴ Iván Bertényi Jr., ‘Az első világháború okai’, *Magyarország az első világháborúban*, Budapest, Kossuth Kiadó, 2010, pp. 221–222.

⁴⁵ Holger H. Herwig, *The First World War. Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914–1918*, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 1997, pp. 14–15.

⁴⁶ Herwig, *The First World War*, p. 10.

⁴⁷ János Gyurgyák, *Ezzé lett magyar hazátok*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2007, p. 109.

and oppressors of the subject nationalities. The latter opinion was apparent in the views of the intellectuals who later composed the company of *The New Europe*.⁴⁸ The former, however, might have had its base in Bohemia – where similar accusations were voiced by Czech politicians in 1918. A radical turn was implied in the case of a democratic revolution in Hungary, which would have been led by Oszkár Jászi. Seton-Watson suggested, however, that such a transformation could not take place in the historical territories of Hungary.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, several aspects of this radical turn were not taken into account. For the dominant nation, the integrity of the country was an axiom and an unshakeable taboo. Jászi himself shared this belief as well – along with the expectation that the minorities of Hungary would be assimilated to the Magyar ethnicity in time.⁵⁰ In fact, Jászi's peculiar atheist and radical thoughts did not mobilize the masses in contemporary Hungary. It is not by accident that the democratic revolution taking place in 1918 was not led by him but by Mihály Károlyi, who was demonized – somewhat unfairly- by the authors of *The New Europe*, for while it was true that Károlyi did believe in the sanctity of the historical borders of Hungary, he was also a friend of the Entente.⁵¹

Propaganda has always been based on extremities and generalization – thus, it has never been an efficient tool of unbiased evaluation. Due to this fact, the friendly tone of *The New Europe* in relation to the lower classes and Oszkár Jászi could not overshadow the frequent accusations of the elite labelled generally as 'Magyars'. Austria, while also being a hostile country, was treated more mildly than Hungary. Most of the authors held the opinion that the weak Cisleithenia fell victim to the power of imperial Germans and Magyars. Other authors have already pointed out that Austria's responsibility in causing the war was lesser than that of Hungary.⁵² This point of view was represented strongly by the editor of *The New Europe*, Seton-Watson, not only in the periodical, but in his other publications too. The Scottish author nurtured sympathetic feelings towards Austria since – and despite its various failures – it allowed space for nationalities to promote their political aims through the parliamentary system based on general suffrage.

"Austria's besetting sin has been superficiality and apathy, coupled none the less with the growing feeling of tolerance..." wrote Seton-Watson in his 'German, Slav and Magyar' in 1916.⁵³ The source of this interesting evaluation can be found in the period before the First World War, as Seton-Watson was a true Austrophile until late 1914. While he demanded the reformation of internal politics before the war, he truly hoped that the

⁴⁸ Géza Jeszenszky, *Az elveszett presztízs. Magyarország megítélésének megváltozása Nagy-Britanniában (1894–1918)*, Magyar Szemle Könyvek, 1994, pp. 228., 250–251.

⁴⁹ *The New Europe*, IX (109), 1918, p. 104.

⁵⁰ Gyurgyák, *Ezzé lett magyar hazátok*, pp. 181–184.

⁵¹ Pölöskei, 'A dualizmus válságperiódusa (1890–1918)', p. 540.

⁵² Iván Bertényi Jr., 'Tisza István és az I. világháború', *Mítoszok, legendák, tévhitek a 20. századi magyar történelemről*, Budapest, Osiris Kiadó, 2005, p. 29.

⁵³ R. W. Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar. A study in the origins of the great war*, London, Williams & Norgate, 1916, pp. 10–11.

Monarchy could revive itself as a joint and voluntary association of the peoples living inside its borders and that even the often-criticized Magyar elite could understand the necessity of such a renewal.⁵⁴ This point of view was only subject to change after the outbreak of the Great War, mainly due to the influence of Masaryk who argued successfully for the dismemberment of Austria–Hungary and for the creation of an independent Czechoslovak state.⁵⁵ Nonetheless, the remnants of Austrophilic feeling were still powerful. That is the reason why the otherwise widely respected Masaryk remained a minor voice regarding his negative opinion on both sides of the Monarchy. His point of view, however, was absolutely understandable – being the leading figure of the Czechoslovak separatist movement, it would have been preposterous to expect Masaryk to admire the very state he wanted to tear apart for the cause of his own people.

The influence of *The New Europe* was significant in Great Britain regarding the public images of Hungary and Austria. According to the memoirs of Masaryk, the propaganda of the periodical resulted in quite a few politicians and key figures of the Entente supporting the establishment of new national states in Eastern Europe.⁵⁶ As the former British diplomat Harold Nicolson pointed out in his reminiscences from 1965: the enthusiasm felt for the Czechoslovak, Yugoslavian, Romanian and Polish good causes went hand-in-hand with disregarding the interests of the often-scourged, 'bad' Hungary and the 'ugly' Austria during the creation of the Versailles system in 1919/20.⁵⁷

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⁵⁴ Géza Jeszenszky, 'Seton-Watson és a "magyarellenesség"', *História*, 9(1), 1987, pp. 20–21.

⁵⁵ Hugh Seton-Watson and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe. R. W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1981, pp. 98–99.

⁵⁶ Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, *The Making of a State. Memories and Observations. 1914–1918*, New York, Howard Fertig, 1969, pp. 91, 126.

⁵⁷ Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919*, New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1965, pp. 33–34.

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Revealing the Tyrant: The Image of Tiberius By Roman

Authors

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At the beginning of the first century, the governance of the Roman Empire was in a state of transition. The Republican period ended following Octavian's defeat of Antonius and his subsequent receipt of the title of Augustus, the venerable. Augustus is the first ruler of the Roman Empire, and the concentrated power system of the Empire was his inheritance. Augustus' management and the executive bodies he altered for the new system of dictatorship became the foundation for rulers in future. Following the death of Augustus, between 14-37 CE, this new stylized system of government was dominated and managed by Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus. This article explores the historical image constructed of Tiberius; specifically, whether this image is based on fiction or reality. The general view concerning the histories that document the reign of Tiberius is that they intentionally depict Tiberius as a stereotypical tyrant or despot or superhuman. However, current and past research has not addressed the dynamics that led to the construction of this image of Tiberius by his four Roman biographers from the early 1st to 3rd centuries CE. It is rather important to understand why histories or biographies about high-level political figures vary in tone and what the cause of this variation is. In the case of Tiberius, his image as a tyrannical despot has endured for centuries. This article examines the Roman authors responsible for this unflattering image of Tiberius; namely, Dio Cassius, Suetonius, Tacitus, and Velleius Paterculus, and their motives for their respective depictions of Tiberius. Through research into historical imagery, we can begin to better understand the early imperial period; particularly, fiction in the literature of Roman historians.

Introduction

When trying to gather information about other cultures, peoples or certain individuals, one will be surrounded by different kinds of information from different sources. Depending on the nature of the source, the objectiveness of the information is colored in varying tones and shades. When trying to decipher if the information is correct or not, we can begin to understand how a particular source viewed the subject matter; this is commonly referred to as image. Research on historical image concentrates on the study of relationships between cultures and the people in those cultures; generally, this research focuses on the image of certain important individuals. Theory regarding the research of historical image has become increasingly established through continuous development, and it seems that there are practically no limits to its possibilities. Some scholars have claimed that one could approach all historical sources through the study of historical image, since every source is at the same time a

relic as well as a reflection of the past.¹ Traditionally, research of historical image has been employed by esteemed researchers since the 1970s in the Department of History at the University of Oulu. The research of Olavi Fält, Kari Alenius, and Seija Jalagin, whose work *Looking at the Other – Historical Study of Images in Theory and Practice* (2002), has been the basic methodological work in my research.

Approach and Hypothesis

According to Luke Pitcher, there are generally two ways to approach the study of ancient history. The first approach focuses on understanding the relationship between ancient historians and other relevant data about the classical world; testimony from other historians, evidence from inscriptions or other physical remains, or non-historical writings. The second approach focuses on viewing the works of ancient historians as literary productions.² Research concerning the use of historical imagery draws attention to what an image is like, how a particular image has been formed by our perceptions and why, what the function of an image is, how has an image evolved, and what can we discern about the authors of an image.³

The Latin term *auctor* is defined as an author, a promoter, producer, father or progenitor. The authors that were active in Rome were founders of different literature styles; as a result, their writings were undisputed. When examining Roman historiography, it is important to understand the background of an author; for example, an author's social class and civil status provides substantial information concerning his literary style. Additionally, one can discern his educational experience and training by examining the texts produced; specifically, the text measured knowledge in literature and history. In practice, anyone from the senatorial or equestrian class could, with the help of friends or family, to disseminate his texts to even the most influential persons in society.⁴ Moreover, an author's motive is likely to vary according to their social and political contexts. Defining the role and place of the author in the corpus of Roman literature is a common problem for researchers. It seems that several authors, especially historians, were motivated by the desire to be the first to discuss events and situations.⁵ History in Rome, in other words, was not often written for *bona fide*, in good faith.

History in antiquity was strongly associated with poetry and rhetoric, and it was often enjoyed as entertainment and for education. Historical events sought to make examples and provide guidelines for leaders and members of the Senate. History concentrated primarily on great individuals and exceptional military and political exploits

¹ Kari Alenius, Olavi K. Fält, and Seija Jalagin (eds.), *Looking at the Other: Historical Study of Images in Theory and Practice*, Oulu, Oulu University Press, 2002, "Preface".

² Luke Pitcher, *Writing Ancient History: An Introduction to Classical Historiography*, London, I. B. Tauris, 2009, p. viii.

³ Olavi K. Fält, 'Introduction', in Kari Alenius, Olavi K. Fält, and Seija Jalagin (eds.) *Looking at the Other: Historical Study of Images in Theory and Practice*, Oulu, Oulu University Press, 2002, p. 9.

⁴ Elaine Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture from Cicero to Apuleius*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 2-3.

⁵ Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture from Cicero to Apuleius*, p. 6.

undertaken for the good of the State; essentially, history aimed to build a collective memory. Roman authors also became popular and improved their reputations because of their work, regardless of their differing adherence to standards with respect to their truthfulness. Ancient conceptions of historical accuracy were different from the criteria of objectivity today. The Roman authors, therefore, tend to follow their Greek idols in regarding the truth, which is carried out primarily by going *ad fontes*, to the sources. Above all, the Romans were proud of their traditions, and the past provided value and a foundation for their greatness.⁶

During the imperial period of ancient Rome, history was often written by individuals who were politically active. An author could come up with invented happenings at open spots and write events with rather limited knowledge. The most valued method of ancient Roman historians, however, was to rely heavily on their personal observations rather than objectively viewing the facts or events. Roman historians continued the Greek tradition, in which the most important and prestigious method was detecting with an author's own eyes, *autopsia*.

The storyline of any particular work is often enlivened by the confrontation of the author with powerful, memorable phrases, and moral or ironic stories. Authors also adopted the practice of including invented speeches by historical persons as a narrative to explain underlying motives and to reveal the nature of the characteristics of the speakers. Drafting speeches in the name of the persons of the past was a typical rhetorical tool, becoming a narrative element in most prose literature during the imperial period. If a writer wanted to be understood, however, he had to share the same meanings with his audience.

Roman literature, written in the Latin language, remains an enduring legacy of the culture of ancient Rome. Some of the earliest extant works are historical epics telling of the early military history of Rome, followed by poetry, comedies, histories and tragedies. Latin literature drew heavily on the traditions of other cultures; particularly, the more mature literary tradition of Greece, and the strong influence of earlier Greek authors. The "Golden Age of Roman Literature" is usually considered to cover the period from about the start of the 1st Century BCE up to the mid-1st Century CE. Three of the four more widely known ancient Roman authors who wrote a biography of Tiberius - Suetonius, Tacitus, and Velleius Paterculus - had careers during this period. The fourth, Cassius Dio, produced his histories during the "Silver Age of Roman Literature" which followed and extended into the 2nd Century CE.

The purpose of this article is to examine the image constructed of Tiberius by these Roman authors by employing the methodology regarding research of historical imagery traditionally used. Whether this image of Tiberius is

⁶ Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 1.

a “right” or “wrong” one is secondary to this study, as one cannot even aspire to “correctness” in such matters. On the other hand, we can easily come to terms with the creator through the medium of the image itself.⁷ It is for this reason that the traditional methodology for conducting research on historical imagery best suits the topic of the image of Tiberius: it examines the subject as much as the object. How dominant are the authors’ personal additions, and how accurate are they according to the known history? In this, I am not concerned with how authentic the authors’ historical reality is, but rather I am concentrating on the factors that created the image and how that image was born.

Creating the Tyrant

Images guide the world. Whether the image appears as part of a history book, a cartoon, or a movie, the affect, or impression of the image upon the audience is relevant. Images guide our behavior subconsciously. Before one analyses these affects, however, a few basic facts about the image should be explored. Who does the image describe? Who does the describing? What is the perspective of the image, from the author, subject, and audience? The most important question is the latter.

During the Empire, *epitome*, short-term histories dealing with the highlights of the past, became more common. The authors often repeatedly apologized for the fact that many events had been excluded because of urgency. The author was, therefore, able to conveniently ignore unpleasant or less glorious events. Additionally, omission was often essential to ensure the safety of the author. Essentially, a truthful and objective review was not the primary objective of histories, but, rather, education. Despite its strong tendency to emphasize personalized and moralistic anecdotes, Roman historiography was much more than a mere collection of *exempla*.⁸

The Authors

Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, known as a historian and biographer, was from an equestrian family. He was a protégé and frequent correspondent of Pliny the Younger. Suetonius began his career at the court of the Emperor Hadrian and in 121 CE was elevated to the office of Manager of Imperial Office. Due to his association with the court of Hadrian, Suetonius’ work was heavily influenced by the Emperor’s interests. To this end, it is probable that Hadrian freely gave Suetonius the freedom to explore the imperial archives and libraries. Suetonius’ *magnus opus*, *De vita Caesarum* (Lives of the Twelve Caesars), has been an invaluable and often cited source for historians wishing to explore the characters of Roman rulers. *De vita Caesarum* includes biographies

⁷ Fält, ‘Introduction’, p. 9

⁸ Andreas Mehl, ‘How the Romans Remembered, Recorded, Thought About, and Used Their Past’, *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*, Chichester, Wiley Blackwell, 2014, pp. 264, 270; Kurt Raaflaub ‘Introduction’, *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*, Chichester, Wiley Blackwell, 2014, p. 2.

of the first twelve rulers of Rome following the Republican period, including Tiberius.⁹ The style of Suetonius' biographies have been referred to as "the history of gossips" by Edwin Linkomies, former professor of Roman literature at the University of Helsinki, due to Suetonius' habit of including all rumors and scandals he heard about the emperors.

Publius Cornelius Tacitus, in addition to being one of the most renowned and significant ancient Roman authors, was a Roman politician and consul. His final work, *Annales*, includes annual events in Rome beginning with the succession of Tiberius and ending with the fall of Nero. During the Empire, several authors adopted a practice of stoic opposition to the emperors. Tacitus made no effort to appease or gratify the emperors in his work, but he did attempt to pursue the truth of his histories. He employed an asymmetric style and emphasized the variation of narrative. Tacitus began to publish his works following the long, terror filled reign of the Emperor Domitian. It seems that Emperor Domitian's tyrannical reign affected Tacitus' style of writing in many ways; specifically, his descriptions of the emperors. The *Annales* of Tacitus is a revealing cross-section of Roman politics, and it represents a significant example of Roman historiography.¹⁰

Cassius Dio Cocceianus was a Greco-Roman historian, senator, politician, and personal friend of several emperors. In 217-218 CE Emperor Macrinus made Dio the Governor of Pergamon and Smyrna, and later a consul. During the reign of Severus Alexander, Dio became the proconsul of African, Pannonian, and Dalmatian provinces. His extensive Roman history is written in Greek and is the 'most recent' source considered for this article, in addition to its consideration as one of the most important historical sources for the study of the Roman Empire. Dio's personal relationships with rulers and the widely enjoyed political freedom characteristic of the time period he wrote in, naturally affected his descriptions of past monarchs.¹¹

Marcus Velleius Paterculus was a Roman soldier, senator, and historian. His history of Rome was published in 30 AD during the reign of the emperor Tiberius. Having followed Tiberius on military campaigns, Velleius wrote significant eyewitness and contemporary descriptions of Tiberius' rise to power. Velleius wrote his work with a monarchical tone that was probably influenced by the wishes of the emperor himself. It is particularly this tone that distinguishes Velleius from authors before and after him. His style differs in many respects from that of the histories written in the era following the death of Tiberius. Interestingly, Velleius enjoyed very little notice from subsequent Roman authors; for example, Tacitus does not mention Velleius as a source for any of his work, which

⁹ Robert Graves (trans.), 'Foreword', *Suetonius: The Twelve Caesars*, Hamondsworth, Penguin Books, 1957, p. 7.

¹⁰ Ronald Mellor, *Tacitus*, London and New York, Routledge, 1993, pp. 6-10.

¹¹ Fergus Millar, *Study of Cassius Dio*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 5-28.

may be due to the fact that Tacitus did not appreciate the historiography of the first century CE because it was blatantly flattering to the emperor and described autocracy as an ideal system of government.¹²

Each ancient Roman historian differs in his approach to the subject of Roman history; these differences are most evident in their expressions and methods. This distinction is partly explained by the diverse and varied political atmosphere in the Empire during each authors' active career. Velleius was bound to a style that flattered most of the actions undertaken by the high ranking political figures of his time and their policies. Velleius certainly benefitted from the description of the political elite in a positive way; criticism could have been a fatal choice. Tacitus and Suetonius' works were published in the beginning of 2nd century CE, when the freedom of speech was wider. The years of 96-180 CE were known as the age of the Five Good Emperors, Nerva (96–98), Trajan (98–117), Hadrian (117–138), Antoninus Pius (138–161), and Marcus Aurelius (161–180), who presided over the most majestic days of the Roman Empire. For the historian active during this time, there was the possibility to be more critical of the history of Empire. Past emperors were not to be glorified, but offered as examples; a typical starting point of Roman historiography, which was to educate. English historian Edward Gibbons, in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, states that the age of the Five Good Emperors offered an unusual contrast to the reigns of previous rulers. These Five Good Emperors were benevolent and their policy was comparatively moderate.¹³ This time period offered an opportunity for historians to bring out criticism and unfavorable impressions in their works.

The Era of Tiberius

The reign of Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus lasted from 14 to 37 AD and is a particularly important one for the Principate, since it was the first occasion when the powers designed for Augustus alone were exercised by somebody else. In contrast to glorious Augustus, "Tiberius emerges from the sources as an enigmatic and darkly complex figure, intelligent and cunning, but given to bouts of severe depression and dark moods that had a great impact on his political career as well as his personal relationships".¹⁴ His reign abounds in contradictions. Tiberius went down into history as a tyrant, and even modern apologists have detected in his Principate a centralizing tendency that was by no means to the advantage of the Senate.¹⁵ Despite his intelligence, Tiberius came under the influence of unscrupulous men who ensured that his posthumous reputation would be unfavorable. Despite his vast military experience, he oversaw the conquest of no new regions for the Empire. He showed reluctance in running the state, retiring entirely from Rome and living out his last years in isolation on the island

¹² E. Cowan, *Velleius Paterculus: Making History*, Swansea, Classical Press of Wales, 2011, 'Introduction'.

¹³ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Cincinnati, J. A. James, 1844, pp. 1, 49, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/731/731-h/731-h.htm#link2HCH0001>.

¹⁴ Garret G. Fagan, 'Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)', 2007, http://homepages.rpi.edu/~holmes/Hobbies/Genealogy2/ps31/ps31_490.htm

¹⁵ Barbara Levick, *Tiberius the Politician*, New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 61.

of Capreae (Capri) in the gulf of Naples from 26 AD until his death. Despite his administrative abilities, Tiberius' reign represents, as it were, the adolescence of the Principate as an institution.¹⁶

A further element of the enigma of Tiberius was the fact that, despite such sentiments, his reign did not in fact mark any kind of reversion to the practices of the old Republic. On the contrary, it eventually represented a descent into tyranny, in which Tiberius came under the influence of the prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Lucius Aelius Sejanus, who persuaded Tiberius to live out a bitter and frustrated retirement in isolation. According to Tacitus, some felt that Augustus had adopted Tiberius as his successor either because there was no satisfactory alternative or so that a poor successor would shed a particularly favorable light on his own memory. Tiberius' reserved nature concealed haughtiness and arrogance, perhaps even a tendency for cruelty and perversion.¹⁷ In this sense, the reign of Tiberius ended the Augustan illusion of the "Restored Republic", referencing the future of the Principate, which, according to the historians, was both promising and terrifying.

Augustus' Boots

By describing the Tiberian era as one of tyranny and despotism, the authors reveal their own attitudes and approaches to the Emperor. An image, here the image of Tiberius, is longer-lasting and more durable than an opinion or attitude. These images are simplifications of the reality that they describe. These images depict reality, but is not in itself real by comparison with the object that they represent. It is real enough if we think of it as an object of study or as a factor influencing various decisions.¹⁸

The life of Tiberius, and the subsequent image of him as passed down by the ancient historians, was intentionally crafted to demonstrate the varying interests of these different historians. Several descriptions of Tiberius in the works of Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius, Tacitus and Dio Cassius suggest that the handed down image of Tiberius reflects the authors' motives to present the ruler as a certain type from the beginning of his life; specifically, the image was affected by what the authors considered good governance. An education in politics was closely associated, and an important component of, the writing of history in ancient Rome. The authors seem to have paid considerable attention to the manner in which Tiberius was chosen as heir to Augustus. Additionally, they were very concerned with the character of Tiberius prior to his succession to the title of Emperor. Character was seen as an important factor in the life of an Emperor; in order to avoid bad rulers, it was important that any example of an unfavorable nature be documented extensively before the start of his time as Emperor.¹⁹

¹⁶ Fagan, 'Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)'.

¹⁷ David Shotter, *Tiberius Caesar*, London and New York, Taylor & Francis, 1992, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ Fält, 'Introduction', p. 8.

¹⁹ Pitcher, *Writing Ancient History*, p. 96.

Velleius' work portrays a favorable position concerning Tiberius, and appears to characterize Tiberius in a promising manner. In Velleius' history, Tiberius' actions are not criticized; on the contrary, Tiberius' actions, decisions, and policies are rationalized as beneficial to the entirety of the Roman Empire. Velleius even goes so far as to conclude that Tiberius was Augustus' favorite.²⁰ The purpose of this conclusion derives primarily from the fact that Velleius was attempting to ingratiate himself the Imperial Court with his work; creating a positive image was part of the official propaganda that had been cultivated and used throughout the Augustan era. Its purpose was to convince the people that the Emperor's position was reserved for the most suitable person. Velleius' description represents the typical manner of describing "official" reality; actions that received a high amount of criticism were generally ignored. Since it was possible to spread different texts among the literate elite of the Roman Empire, insinuating a certain point of view was likely to benefit the author himself. The image of Tiberius created by Velleius may not have been criticized publicly, but it is probable that not everyone in Rome agreed with this positive portrayal. Velleius' history was published in 30 CE when the anti-Tiberian opposition was at its strongest. Those in opposition to the Emperor were more than likely vocal with their criticism of Tiberius. Velleius was motivated to write overwhelmingly encouraging descriptions of the emperors by his election to the post of Praetor prior to the death of Augustus.²¹

Other ancient historians, however, tend to portray Tiberius much less positively. According to Suetonius, Tacitus, and Dio Cassius, it seems that Tiberius was not Augustus' favorite, nor his first choice. Indeed, machinations regarding the path of his succession were viewed suspiciously, and as happening without the knowledge of Augustus himself. In Tacitus' *Annales*, Tiberius refuses to accept the imperial titles so as to conceal his cruel and sinister character behind a humble demeanor.²² This refusal, and apparent ruse, is referred to as *recusatio imperii*.²³ In *Annales*, Tacitus condemns Tiberius' rhetoric about sharing power with the senate as a bad policy that would no longer be successful. His description of Tiberius demonstrates just how pessimistic Tacitus was about the succession of emperors following Augustus. According to Tacitus, Tiberius' negative image was based

²⁰ Velleius Paterculus, Marcus (Vell.), *Historia Romana. Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, Frederick W. Shipley (trans.), London, Heinemann, 1924, 2.102.3; 2.103.1-2 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/velleius_paterculus/home.html.

²¹ Frederick W. Shipley, 'Introduction', in Velleius Paterculus, Marcus (Vell.), *Historia Romana. Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, London, Heinemann, Frederick W. Shipley (trans.), 1924, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/velleius_paterculus/home.html.

²² Publius Cornelius Tacitus, *Annales*, Alfred John Church & William Jackson Brodribb (trans.) <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Tacitus/home.html>, 1.12.1-5.

²³ Asko Timonen, *Roman Historians' Scenes of Imperial Violence from Commodus to Philippos Arabs*, Turku, University of Turku, 2000, pp. 223-227.

on his plan to leave public life and engage in activities that he was inclined to undertake because of his evil character.²⁴

According to Dio Cassius, Tiberius' rhetoric about the administrative co-operation between the Emperor and the Senate is a sign of his uncertainty and fear he felt of his general Germanicus. Tiberius' fear of Germanicus is one of the main features that appears in the ancient descriptions of Tiberius' character; Dio describes him as intentionally flattering the people and the Senate, something that Dio seems to think future rulers should avoid. Suetonius' recounting of Tiberius' use of *recusatio imperii* is more sinister. He describes Tiberius's rise to power as a political game in which Tiberius tried to get the Senate to beg him to accept the imperial titles.²⁵ Such behavior is similarly noted in the biographies of other emperors, usually associated with either genuine sincerity or political machination. In the case of Tiberius, his use of *recusatio imperii* is perceived as the latter, and provides evidence for his being a bad ruler.²⁶

Additionally, Suetonius, like Tacitus and Dio, interprets Tiberius' character as gloomy and somber; characteristics that were particularly important in antiquity in determining a person's nature.²⁷ Perhaps the most important factor that allowed for such a critical point of view of the Emperor was the less hostile political climate during the time when these authors were active; Suetonius and Tacitus, especially, were publishing during a more liberal political moment. Since the life of Tiberius could certainly serve as an example of despotism to the audience, especially politicians, the histories specifically indicate the qualities that should be expected of future rulers. Although the beginning of Tiberius' reign was fairly quiet and lacking in any major political disasters or scandals, following an examination of the histories, it is apparent that they intentionally depict an image of Tiberius that remains the same from his youth until his death. The impression on the reader was that if he could allow the political unrest and isolation that characterized the end of his reign, then he most certainly demonstrated such poor leadership early in his youth, long before he advanced to the throne.

What kind of character then should an emperor possess? A Greek writer, Theophrastus, provides a model as to the criteria by which Greco-Roman leaders were judged. A successor to Aristotle in the Peripatetic school, Theophrastus is known for his, *ἠθικαὶ χαρακτῆρες*, a collection of thirty short character-sketches of individuals

²⁴ AJ Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*, London, Croom Helm, 1988, p. 186.

²⁵ Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus [Suetonius, Tib.], *De Vita Caesarum*, Loeb Classical Library, 1913.,

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Suetonius/12Caesars/Tiberius*.html#1,

24.2.

²⁶ Timonen, *Roman Historians' Scenes of Imperial Violence from Commodus to Philippus Arabs*, p. 227.

²⁷ Suetonius, Tib., 11.1.

who walked the streets of Athens in the late fourth century BCE. He outlines 'character types' from a moral standpoint, character types that form an invaluable picture of life in the Greco-Roman world, such as the Coward, the Thankless Man, and the Vicious Man. Like Theophrastus, Roman authors emphasized a 'basic nature' to explain the different characteristics of their historical figures. As a result, it is possible to explain the deeds of a historical figure by referencing his character; the figure's character traits are essential to the image of them that is to be immortalized in history.

Dio Cassius, for example, expresses that Tiberius "thought it bad policy for the sovereign to reveal his thoughts; this was often the cause, he said, of great failures, whereas by the opposite course far more and greater successes were attained".²⁸ In this way, Dio attempts a logical organization of his history. For him, it was necessary to depict the unreasonable events of Tiberius lifetime to ensure that the history would be better understood. It was crucial that the reader understand the historical narrative and for events to be explained, because more than anything, Dio's history is a guide to politics for new senators.²⁹ For this reason, most of Tiberius' actions are illuminated by the description of his character. Out of the many moral types illustrated by Theophrastus, the most prominent is Dissembling, which means that a person is attempting to appear as something he is not by saying things he does not mean and by acting contrary to his words.³⁰

Tacitus records that Tiberius' character varied based on the tenor of the time; meaning that as a civilian he pretended to be virtuous, and while his mother Livia Augusta was still alive, he concealed his vices. Only after the death of his mother did he succumb to his true nature; one of a cruel tyrant.³¹ Similarly, Suetonius records that Tiberius appeared to want to share his power with the Senate, but that this expressed desire was disingenuous and was merely a trick employed by Tiberius to flatter the senators and the people.³² According to Theophrastus, flattery was a dishonorable and profit-making act, and whoever employed this tactic was a sycophant ready to do anything to benefit himself.³³

Most the sources record that Tiberius shunned political and public life, and retreated to the island of Capreae as a result of his poor character. From Capreae, Tiberius ruled the Empire from 24 until 37 CE, never returning

²⁸ Dio Cassius Cocceianus [Cass. Dio], *Romaika. Dio's Roman History*, Earnest Cary (trans.),

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/home.html, 57.1.3.

²⁹ David S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay, AD 180–395*, New York, Routledge, 2004, pp. 68-69.

³⁰ Theophrastus [Thphr. Char.], *The Characters of Theophrastus*, J.M. Edmonds (trans.), Cambridge, Harvard University Press. London, 1953, 1.5-6.

³¹ Tacitus, *Ann.*, 6.51.2.

³² Sueton, *Tib.*, 25.2.

³³ Thphr. *Char.*, 2.1-2.

to Rome. It was probably a great surprise to the Senate, as well as the historians recording his reign, that the Emperor voluntarily abdicated his position. Tacitus, for example, provides several possible motives for Tiberius' retreat, prominent among them being his apparent desire to conceal his cruelty and sensual inclinations.³⁴ This character type, dubbed 'Patron of Rascals', was one that maliciously friended individuals of questionable morality, mainly criminals, because he wanted to be in the company of people that were similar to himself.³⁵

Because the histories written after the Tiberian era tend to depict the beginning of the Empire from an educational point of view, tyranny was not to be underemphasized. The Emperors who implemented autocratic policies were depicted as bad and self-serving. The descriptions of the Emperors in histories are subjective and based on constructed images; a practice that is representative of propaganda that sought to disgrace political enemies. In propaganda, like in the histories, depictions of enemies, foreign nations, or political opponents reflect the deep national feelings and beliefs of the society producing it; this is why these images are difficult to erase.³⁶ Images of the enemy are skillfully built on selective history; most recently, this is reflected in the Balkan wars of the 1990s.

Perhaps the most scathing enemy depictions are of an Archenemy. An Archenemy's background does not even need to be told or explained to the audience by the historian because these details are commonly known among the people and have most likely been handed down from previous generations. They are, however, also very distant things.³⁷ Per this tradition, the ancient Roman historians used the negatively charged character traits of Tiberius to depict him as an Archenemy; a *tristissimus hominum*, the gloomiest of all men.³⁸

A Warning Example from the Past

Research concerning the historical use of images informs us more about the creator, or examiner, of an image than it does about the subject of the image. The research concerning the motivation of ancient historians begins with the notion that people's perceptions of other people and cultures are dependent on their relative experiences; experiences that are influenced by time, location, personal background, education, personality, and the political circumstances and power struggles that prevail at the time. This forms the hypothetical starting

³⁴ Tacitus Ann., 4.57.2.

³⁵ Thphr. Char., 29.1-3.

³⁶ Sinikka Wunsch, 'Image Research and the Enemy Image: the Soviet Union in Finnish newspapers during the Winter War (November 30, 1939-March 13, 1940)', in Alenius, Kari, Fält, Olavi K., and Jalagin, Seija (eds.), *Looking at the Other: Historical Study of Images in Theory and Practice*, Oulu, Oulu University Press, 2002, p. 75.

³⁷ Wunsch, 'Image Research and the Enemy Image', p. 75.

³⁸ Gaius Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historia. Volume III*, H. Rackham (trans), The Loeb Classical Library, 1940, XXVIII.5.23.

point for analysing historical images and sources. Thus, these historical images can be defined as the subjective conclusions of the author based on their beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and preferences.³⁹

In 26 CE, Tiberius retired from Rome to Villa Iovis on the island of Capreae, where he remained until the end of his life. Tiberius' reasons for his retreat from Rome, and ultimately public life, remained unclear to his contemporaries and subsequent generations. As such, records of the Emperor's final years are full of speculation and rumor, usually ill intentioned. Retirement from politics was not unusual; members of the Roman aristocracy often withdrew to the coast of the Bay of Naples. So why was Tiberius' retirement any different? Augustus, for example, had numerous villas on the island of Capreae. According to Tacitus, Sejanus, the chief of the Praetorian Guard, urged Tiberius to leave, increasing his own political influence.⁴⁰ Conversely, Velleius reports that Sejanus was the perfect ally for the Emperor.⁴¹ Tiberius himself, reportedly was concerned for his reputation; he was known as cruel and sexually licentious. In Roman public life, such a reputation was perhaps typical of a reclusive and timid person. While Tiberius had this reputation before he moved to Capreae, his image is nonetheless affected by his relocation to the island.⁴²

In spite of his isolation, Tiberius was still capable of managing the affairs of the Roman Empire from a distance. Regardless of his political astuteness, his withdrawal remained harmful to his image according to historians. Any energy Tiberius had previously expended to manage the Empire began to be channeled to more malevolent deeds encouraged by Sejanus. Detailed information regarding Tiberius' early years on Capreae has been lost, but after 31 CE, when Sejanus' fraud came to light, Tiberius seems to have been frustrated and disappointed. He began to mistrust anyone who had been involved with Sejanus. Tiberius' suspicions led to his malicious use of *Maiestas* proceedings; these proceedings resulted in multiple indictments against a number of senators which resulted in their suicides. The *Maiestas* proceedings decreased the esteem in which the Emperor was held so much so that after his death at the age of 78 in 37 CE, the public attempted to erase his memory.⁴³ Suetonius reports that, upon his death, the people demanded "*Tiberium in Tiberim!*", Tiberius to Tiber.⁴⁴

Maiestas laws, or treason laws, tainted the administrative policy of the Tiberian era, and played a prominent role in many of the works of Roman historians. Legislation concerning the Empire was in its infancy during the time of Augustus and was still evolving during the reign of Tiberius. The administration of justice, from the

³⁹ Fält, 'Introduction', p. 10.

⁴⁰ Cass. Dio, 58.3.1-2.

⁴¹ Vell., 2.127.4.

⁴² Shotter, *Tiberius Caesar*, pp. 59-61.

⁴³ Shotter, *Tiberius Caesar*, pp. 61-65.

⁴⁴ Suetonius, Tib. 75.1.

Principate's perspective, was continued as it had during the Republic, the sovereignty of the Senate in representing the Roman people was maintained. Conversely, the "Restored Republic" was based on a system of absolute monarchy, where all the power rested with a single person, ensuring that the Emperor had sole legislative rights. German historian Theodor Mommsen argues that the *principate* was a kind of diarchy, where power was divided between the monarch and the Senate.

The historians seem to have taken liberties with the proceedings of the *Maiestas* trials when they constructed the image of Tiberius. The trials were related in the form of anecdotes, especially in Suetonius, as it proved an effective way to relate events. Metaphor was also used. The majority of the metaphors concerning the life of Tiberius appear in the works of Suetonius; a style typical of the historian. Anecdotes, when yoked to metaphors, combine historical events; in this case, the *Maiestas* trials. One of the more remarkable anecdotes related by Suetonius appears in the relation of the trial of Mallonia. According to Suetonius, Mallonia refused intercourse with Tiberius; as a result, Tiberius accused her of treason. Following the trial, Mallonia cursed "the old goat was licking the ewe" and killed herself.⁴⁵

By relating this anecdote, Suetonius emphasizes the cruelty and arrogance of Tiberius' reign. The tone and word choice of the anecdote is also intentionally crafted by Suetonius; the Greek name Mallonia is not only the name of a female victim, but is a derivative of the Greek word *μαλλός*, which means a flock of wool. Mallonia then could be translated something like woolly. Metaphorically, a female sheep is refusing to have intercourse with an old goat.⁴⁶ "Goat" refers to the island of Capreae, which gets its name from the Latin word *caper* (masc.)/*capra* (fem.), meaning goat. Roman satirical epigrams were popular and combined politics, literature, and poetry. I think that it would not be at all impossible that a contemporary of Suetonius, perhaps a poet who specialized in epigrams, was responsible for the quote by Mallonia.

The foreboding tone of the works of Suetonius, Tacitus, and Dio, is characteristic of their desire to educate future citizens and leaders by depicting Tiberius as a stereotypical tyrant. The unfavorable features of a stereotype are often the most visible, carrying the cultural attitudes of the time in which the stereotype was produced. Theories concerning the historical image suggest that the audience paid closer attention to features of an image that reinforced previously held aspects of stereotypes, supporting the goals, attitudes, beliefs, and preferences of the audience. As a result of the prominence of the stereotype, we can discern a great deal about the creator

⁴⁵ Suetonius, Tib.. 45.1.

⁴⁶ Edward Champlin, 'Tiberian Neologisms', Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics, Princeton University, 2007, <http://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/pdfs/champlin/090601.pdf>, p. 24.

of the image based by looking at the life experiences of its creator.⁴⁷ The permanence of images is further emphasized by the fact that we are inclined to accept messages which lend support to existing stereotypes. Furthermore, an important feature of cultural research is that the images we form of things or people foreign to us tend to be unfavorable.⁴⁸ With respect to this, the image of Tiberius was destined to be that of a tyrant, *persona non grata*, in history; an image partly based on his malicious handling of the *Maiestas* trials.⁴⁹

Conclusions

My aim in this article has been to determine how the ancient historians described the life and character of Tiberius in their works. I have analyzed the images by comparing the sources that describe the life of Tiberius with each other and by taking into account the characteristics and the background of each source. These sources contain a variety of methods related to the creation of Tiberius' image, depending on how much the biography reflects the general trends of Roman historiography. Since Roman historiography was a continuation of political conflicts and moral discourse, the writers of history must be interpreted in the context of Roman society. The image of Tiberius was affected primarily by the author himself. It did not come as a surprise that the descriptions changed depending on the time of each author's active career and his compliance with historical tradition.

An image was formed by history's relationship with science in antiquity. The study of the past is of no value in itself, but is significant in so far as it remains relevant for contemporary and future sciences.⁵⁰ Historiography was not considered a science, because it examined the fluid nature often seen in the recording of history. The study of the writing of history was held to investigate a changing historical tradition, because it was associated with beliefs and observation. Historiography in antiquity was primarily literature, but it included qualities of research, and it was important for the lessons to be preserved for posterity. The past was considered to be strictly bound by time; specifically interested in understanding human activities. As such, historiography was seen to illuminate the human condition and traditions.

The sources examined in this paper represent two Roman historiographical traditions. Tacitus distinctively writes in the annalistic tradition, a collection of events having taken place throughout a particular year. Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius and Dio Cassius, in addition to Tacitus, represent the Roman tradition of recording political

⁴⁷ Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt, Russel Spears, *Stereotypes as Explanations: The formation of meaningful beliefs about social groups*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 1-15.

⁴⁸ Fält, 'Introduction', p. 8.

⁴⁹ Steven H. Rutledge, *Imperial Inquisitions. Prosecutors and informants from Tiberius to Domitian*, London, Routledge, 2001, pp. 93-94

⁵⁰ Tamsyn S. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics, and Medicine under the Roman Empire*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1995, pp. 9-10.

history, or history organized around political events and figures. Roman historiography was principally political; it was motivated by the author's self-interest, and it was intended to influence domestic political affairs. The quest for truth in the recording of historical events was heavily influenced by an author's self-interest, creating a heavy bias in the work. The work of Velleius Paterculus, in particular, is heavily marked with patriotic sentiment, which is reflected in his representation of Tiberius. The purpose of this sentiment was to typify the imperial cult expressed in the literature of the early imperial period. The authors themselves benefitted from high social positions, which explains their motivation for portraying the Emperor so unfavorably, since this type of depiction was in the interests of their social class.

Histories and biographies concerning Tiberius are typical of Roman historiography; particularly the biographers of Roman Emperors, such as Tiberius, focus on the psychological state of their subject. Tacitus and Dio Cassius attempt to identify the events in his background that may have motivated Tiberius to act so tyrannically. By presenting the possible sources of his cruelty, they were able to strengthen their arguments that negatively characterized Tiberius' reign. To this end, the most outstanding and vague events of his life were filled with exaggeration and rhetoric. Suetonius, on the other hand, broadly highlighted the possible ethical basis and consequences of Tiberius' misdeeds. To do this convincingly, he presents both the good and bad actions of the Emperor, but ultimately the bad outnumber the good and the image of Tiberius is negatively colored. It seems that Tiberius' pessimistic and brutal image is generally derived from Suetonius' biography of him. At the same time, Suetonius' description of Tiberius exposes one of the typical deficiencies of Roman historiography: research. Since Roman historiography was written to appeal to a specific audience while also being biographical in nature, the authors reviewed historical events very narrowly. The tendency to preserve individuality in writing is apparent in the types of images we have of Tiberius, images that highlight the personal motives of the authors.

I noticed that the different sources were used a lot, but their representativeness is not seen as relevant. This means that each source was equal, and no distribution of primary or secondary sources was reported. This was typical of the Roman historians. A one-sided and uncritical approach from narrative sources produced a certain type of image in each biography. Tiberius' image transformed from one historian to another, described more analytically at time went on. Velleius Paterculus wrote his history during the Tiberian era, and the image it conveys is uncritical, often overlooking and omitting the more unpleasant details of this time, following in the tradition of Augustan propaganda. Suetonius and Tacitus published their works around the same time as each other, nearly one hundred years after the death of Tiberius, but they differ in style and presentation. On the one hand, both authors describe Tiberius as a tyrant and a didactic example of a bad Emperor. The Tiberius

of their histories' gloomy character and unsuitability for the throne were influenced by the authors' aversions to tyranny. Suetonius' Tiberius is characterized as being inclined to misdeeds and cover-ups. The author drops anecdotes thematically throughout the biography and uses sources uncritically.

The historian who most critically portrays the reign of Tiberius is Dio Cassius, who published his history nearly two hundred years after the death of Tiberius. Dio modelled his work after Thucydides, a renowned ancient Greek historian. Thucydides' influence is apparent in Dio's attempt to analyze the sources and to maintain clarity and logic in his work. Dio's Tiberius is depicted as possessing an intentional air of maliciousness. This depiction indicates Dio's greater inclination to scrutinize his sources. The sharpening of the image is part of a broader transformation that took place in Roman society from the Julio-Claudian dynasty until the end of the Severan dynasty. Changes in Roman society are reflected in the writing of Roman history in many ways; excluding the characteristically Augustan depiction by Velleius Paterculus. The works of Tacitus and Suetonius may be viewed as explaining how the aristocracy of the traditional Roman Republic survived during the Nerva-Antonine dynasty compared to the danger and degradation they endured during the reign of Tiberius.

Since the subjugation of Rome by Augustus, Roman society was seen as deteriorating, following the philosophy of Hesiodos. Since Tiberius was seen as a particularly bad Emperor, and the mere idea of a *Principate* was vehemently opposed, his reign has been separated from that of Augustus. Despite the evolution of historiography after the death of the Emperor, the image of Tiberius remained negative charge. This reveals that, didactically, Roman political society required examples of both good and bad Emperors, as well as good and bad examples of monarchy in general as a means to function. The need was met by through the works of the historians featured in this piece.

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Setting the Record Straight: The Implications of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* for Cultural Remembrance

JEREMY STÖHS

Introduction

For a scholar of English and History such as myself, Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* is intriguing for a number of reasons. Not only can it be analyzed for its groundbreaking literary style of post-modernism but also for its historical and cultural significance. Moreover, I have rarely found an author who deals with an event of the Second World War in such an intriguing way as Vonnegut does. Yet, however skillfully and stirringly he might have depicted his recollections of the Allied bombing of the German city of Dresden, what has left me most unsettled is the fact that Vonnegut creates an inaccurate picture of historical events. This is owed to the fact that he relied on a single source to substantiate his accounts, namely David Irving's book, *The Destruction of Dresden*.

Irving's book was first published in 1963 and brought the bombing back into the minds of the public after it had been marginalized in the years following the war. In the preface of his book, Irving concludes that over 135,000 people were killed in the firebombing, more than in the firebombing of Tokyo and the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima; thus constituting the deadliest aerial-attack in history. Irving describes his effort to write his book as follows:

I have tried to reconstruct the attack, minute by minute, throughout the fourteen hours and ten minutes of the triple blow which is estimated authoritatively to have killed more than 135,000 of the population of a city swollen to twice its peacetime size by a massive influx of refugees from the East, Allied and Russian prisoners of war, and thousands of forced labourers.¹

Irving has since been widely criticized for "inflating the number of dead as a means of engaging in 'moral equivalency'", adding to the notion that this attack had been not only unethical but also an act of terror and wanton murder of innocent civilians.²

¹ David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden*, London, Macmillan, 1985, 'Preface' (n.p.).

² Deborah Lipstadt, 'Kurt Vonnegut: Using David Irving's Fabrications to Rewrite the History of the Bombing of Dresden?', *Deborah Lipstadt's Blog*, 17 Apr. 2007, [<http://lipstadt.blogspot.de/2007/04/kurt-vonnegut-and-david-irving-in.html>] (Accessed 7 Feb. 2014).

As *Slaughterhouse-Five* rose to global fame, being translated into many different languages, it has by now “come to occupy a fairly comfortable position in the canon of post-war literature” as an “icon of sixties pop culture.”³ Moreover, the novel reached a much wider audience than any disciplined investigation by a historian ever could. By referring to Irving as his primary source, and writing an international bestseller, Vonnegut therefore “unwittingly helped perpetrate an untruth.”⁴ The novel and Irving’s book still remain influential references for many historical events and subsequently have far-reaching implications regarding popular historical opinion. As Mark Spencer Mills puts it, “[Vonnegut’s] book actually becomes part of the historical archive and part of our collective national memory of the bombing of Dresden.”⁵ These aspects will be explored in the further course of this article.

In the first chapter, I will summarize how Vonnegut depicts the bombing of Dresden and will comment on several important passages from the book. Secondly, I will outline the historical background of the bombing, referring to the most current research on the aerial campaign, and draw comparisons between it and David Irving’s book, *The Destruction of Dresden*. By critically reflecting on both Irving’s publication as well as Vonnegut’s decision to use it as his primary source of information, a number of questions arise which will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. For example: In which historical and cultural context does *Slaughterhouse-Five* have to be analyzed? Why was *The Destruction of Dresden* the preferred source at the time of Vonnegut’s writing? To what extent might Vonnegut’s traumatic experience in Dresden impeded his ability to undertake a more thorough investigation regarding the bombing – or was Irving’s book in fact the most credible source? In my final chapter I will address the problem of authenticity and what implications the success of *Slaughterhouse-Five* has for the sphere of “cultural remembrance.”⁶

In my analysis, I will use the two primary sources, *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *The Destruction of Dresden*, as well as secondary literature from different fields of academia. I believe this to be essential when dealing with a book as complex as *Slaughterhouse-Five*. I have selected a number of articles and theses from the areas of military history, cultural studies, and literary studies to support my conclusion.

³ Ann Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less: What a Novelist Made of the Bombing of Dresden’, *History and Theory*, Theme Issue 47, 2009, p. 8.

⁴ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 11.

⁵ Mark Spencer Mills, ‘Interrogating History or Making History? Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*, DeLillo’s *Libra*, and the Shaping of Collective Memory’, MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 2006, p. 36.

⁶ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 6.

A Novel and a Historic Source

There is an ongoing debate on how to differentiate between various forms of written history. Ann Rigney, for example, argues that fictional work is neither historiographical, nor claims to be, and therefore has to be analyzed from a different perspective than a historical work.⁷ Furthermore, she states that unlike historians who operate within a disciplined academic field using “recognized methods and modes of argumentation that help produce authoritative accounts of past events”, writers like Vonnegut underlie a different set of rules: “[W]hile artists and writers shape views of the past too, they usually do so while often flouting the rules of evidence and pursuing goals that are not only epistemological, but aesthetic or moralistic.”⁸

Before going into detail concerning the depiction of historical events in *Slaughterhouse-Five*, I want to juxtapose Rigney’s arguments regarding Vonnegut’s role as an author to my following analysis and concluding statements. In her assessment, she extenuates the effect that “failed history” has on the reader by referring to the book’s first sentence:

[E]ven if the concept of “failed history” [in other words creating and perpetuating a flawed perception of historical events] were applicable in some sense, it still fails to account for the degree and nature of the novel’s success. So rather than use Vonnegut’s inaccuracies as a prelude to dismissing him, I propose to use the (ir)relevance of numbers as a springboard for considering historical fiction as a distinctive medium in the ongoing production of collective remembrance. Vonnegut’s mistake regarding the number of victims is enough to discredit the novel as a source of historical knowledge in the traditional sense. But the novel was not received by its many fans as a work of history (even if it was perceived as being about a real event in the past). Nor was it ever intended to be taken seriously as history, as the opening lines make clear: “All this happened, more or less.”⁹

In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut unwittingly commits the error of replacing 30,000 or so victims with about 130,000 and hence eliding the very considerable distinction between these two figures. But at a certain point, we may conclude from his novel that numbers say nothing at all beyond “more or less”.¹⁰

The phrase “so it goes” gained proverbial fame in the United States which was suffering a cultural and political crisis of the highest magnitude when the novel was published in 1969. At the height of the Vietnam War and a period of drastic change within America’s civil society, *Slaughterhouse-Five* struck a chord with those who felt that the United States had been moving in the wrong direction for far too long. By 1968, ‘Operation Rolling Thunder’, a bombing campaign against the Viet Kong, had proven indecisive and even the

⁷ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 6.

⁸ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 6

⁹ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 11.

¹⁰ Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, New York, Random House, 1969, p. 24.

largest bombing in history at Khe Sang had only led to further repudiation among many Americans.¹¹ Vonnegut's first-hand experience backed by Irving's 'history' resulted more than twenty English-language editions of *Slaughterhouse Five* and over 800,000 copies sold in the U.S. within one year.¹²

Already in his opening chapter, Vonnegut tries to convey to the reader the magnitude of the bombing: "I really did go back to Dresden with Guggenheim money [...] in 1967. It looked a lot like Dayton, Ohio, more open spaces than Dayton has. There must be tons of human bone meal in the ground".¹³ Shortly after, speaking in his own voice, the author tells us that "[e]ven then I was supposedly writing a book about Dresden. It wasn't a famous air raid back then in America. Not many Americans knew how much worse it had been than Hiroshima".¹⁴ He adds other ostensible "historical facts", such as that the Nazis had produced soap and candles from the fat of the people killed in the concentration camps:

I happened to tell a University Professor at a cocktail party about the raid as I had seen it, about the book I would write. [...] And he told me about the concentration camps, and about how the Germans had made soap and candles out the fat of dead Jews and so on. All I could say was, "I know, I know, I know".¹⁵

When the protagonist of the story, Billy Pilgrim, is brought to a POW camp in Germany a similar scene unfolds:

Only the candles and the soap were of German origin. They had a ghostly, opalescent similarity. The British had no way of knowing it, but the candles and the soap were made from the fat of rendered Jews and Gypsies and fairies and communists, and other enemies of the State. So it goes.¹⁶

Adding to the description of the main theme of this novel, the bombing of Dresden, Vonnegut leaves no room for doubt that he believes the strike to be the worst atrocity of the war, even if the passages are narrated through the fictional characters of *Slaughterhouse-Five*: "And Billy had seen the greatest massacre in European history, which was the fire-bombing of Dresden. So it goes; "Nothing happened that night. It was the next night that about one hundred and thirty thousand people in Dresden would die. So it goes"; "Americans have finally heard about Dresden,' said Rumfoord, twenty-three years after the raid. 'A lot of them know now how much worse it was than Hiroshima [...].'"¹⁷

¹¹A number of books have been published providing in-depth analysis of the US air campaign in Southeast Asia: René J Francillon, *Vietnam; The War In The Air*, New York, Arch Cape Press, 1987. For *Operation Rolling Thunder* see: John Morrocco, *The Vietnam Experience, Thunder From Above, Air War, 1961-1968*, Boston, Boston Publishing Company, 1984. See also: James Clay Thompson, *Rolling Thunder, Understanding Policy and Program Failure*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

¹² Rigney, 'All This Happened, More or Less', p. 8

¹³ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 1.

¹⁴ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 10.

¹⁵ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 10.

¹⁶ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 96.

¹⁷ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, pp. 101, 165, 191.

What is more, Vonnegut would also go on to claim that the Allies lacked any militarily and strategically justifiable reasons for bombing Dresden.¹⁸ This assumption has been refuted by more recent historical publications. However, these insights into the strategic utility and execution of the air-raids have not yet been able to displace the public opinion that Dresden was a victim of morally abhorrent terror-bombing.

History Strikes Back

David Irving has to be given credit for bringing the Dresden bombing into the consciousness of the general public as well as eliciting a discussion among scholars regarding the actual events of February 1945. As Rigney correctly points out, Vonnegut's decision to use Irving's *Destruction of Dresden* "[was] not [an] unreasonable choice at the time for a non-specialist, given the paucity of other books on the subject and the considerable splash that Irving's book had made in the media."¹⁹ In fact, even a leading military figure like Air Marshal Sir Robert (Deputy Air Officer Commanding under Sir Arthur "Bombing" Harris during the Second World War) took Irving's findings at face value when, in the foreword of the book he notes that "135,000 people died as the result of an air attack with conventional weapons."²⁰ Rigney adds that by the time Vonnegut wrote his novel in 1969, Irving had not yet become a *persona non grata* and discredited historian for his denial of the Holocaust and anti-Semitic views. Therefore, she concludes that Vonnegut cannot be blamed for using Irving as his primary reference.²¹ However, in the years following Irving's publication, other historians started to expressed doubts regarding Irving's sources and views.

Already as early as 1955, some of the German documents that Irving later used in his publications had been proven to be forged. In a letter to *The Times* in 1966, Irving admitted having used these sources and thus having misled his readers:

The bombing of Dresden in 1945 has in recent years been adduced by some people as evidence that conventional bombing can be more devastating than nuclear attacks, and others have sought to draw false lessons from this. My own share of the blame for this is large: in my 1963 book *The Destruction of Dresden* I stated that estimates of the casualties in that city varied between 35,000 and over 200,000.

Two years ago I procured from a private east German source what purported to be extracts from the Police President's report, quoting the final death-roll as "a quarter of a million"; the other statistics it contained were accurate, but it is now obvious that the death-roll statistic was falsified, probably in 1945.²²

¹⁸ Vonnegut qtd. in William R. Allen, 'Slaughterhouse-Five', *Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five*, New York, Infobase Publishing, 2009, p. 4.

¹⁹ Rigney, 'All This Happened, More or Less', p. 10.

²⁰ Robert Saundby 'Foreword' in, Irving, David, *The Destruction of Dresden*, London, Macmillan, 1985, n.p.

²¹ Rigney, 'All This Happened, More or Less', p. 11.

²² David Irving, 'Letter', *The Times*, 7 July 1966, p. 13.

Therefore, by the time Vonnegut was about to have *Slaughterhouse-Five* printed (1969) the author of his selected source had already corrected the number of deaths by a staggering 100,000.

In short, the report [from the *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer Elbe* which was responsible for civil defense measures in Dresden] shows that the Dresden casualties were on much the same scale as in the heaviest Hamburg raids in 1943. [...] His figures are very much lower than those I quoted. The crucial passage reads: "Casualties: by 10th March, 1945, 18,375 dead, 2,212 seriously injured, and 13,918 slightly injured had been registered, with 350,000 homeless and permanently evacuated." The total death-roll, "primarily women and children," was expected to reach 25,000.²³

Surprisingly, Irving did not make any changes to the subsequent editions of his book, although many publications in the following years would contradict both Irving's general findings as well as many of Vonnegut's depictions in *Slaughterhouse-Five*. In 1977, for example, Götz Bergander, a German historian, published *Dresden im Luftkrieg*, and went on to provide ample evidence that not only was Irving's death toll far too high, but also that „Irving's blood-curdling tales of phosphorous bombs and murderous sweeps by Allied fighter aircraft [were] both fantasies."²⁴ Interestingly, Vonnegut also describes these attacks as if they had actually occurred:

American fighter planes came in under the smoke to see if anything was moving. They saw Billy and the rest moving down there. The planes sprayed them with machine-gun bullets, but the bullets missed. Then they saw some other people moving down by the riverside and they shot at them. They hit some of them. So it goes.²⁵

By the turn of the millennium, a number of scholars had collected nearly all available historical evidence concerning the bombing of Dresden. Publications such as Richard Evans' *Lying about Hitler* (2002), Frederick Taylor's *Dresden* (2005), and Tami Davis Biddle's *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (2004), have provided much insight into the events of February 1945.

As I have mentioned previously, different forms of literature can be analyzed from various perspectives. Historiography and the field of academic writing are based on inherently distinct features in comparison to fictional writing, even if the latter is based on historical events. While *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a helpful example of how this "distinctiveness of artistic writing [acts] as mediator of historical understanding," I believe that Vonnegut's book nonetheless has had far too much influence on the formation of public opinion and cultural remembrance to merely dismiss the issue of historical accountability on the ground of academic tradition.²⁶ In

²³ Irving, 'Letter', p. 13.

²⁴ Bradley F. Smith, 'Rev. of *Dresden im Luftkrieg* by Götz Bergander', *The American Historical Review* 83(2), 1978, p. 471.

²⁵ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 180.

²⁶ Rigney, 'All This Happened, More or Less', p. 7.

the following chapter, I will go on to point out what impact this novel has had on cultural remembrance and why Vonnegut can be criticized for not having reacted to this development.

Perpetuating Myths

In the process of finding articles and books regarding my topic, I came across a publication that is exemplary for the problem regarding historicity in fictional literature. In *Blooms Modern Critical Interpretations: Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five*, published in 2009, the editor Harold Bloom includes an article by the American author, William Rodney Allen. Based on an article from 1991, Allen makes the following questionable statement:

The story of Dresden was a hard one for an American to tell for a simple reason: it was designed by the Allies to kill as many German civilians as possible, and it was staggeringly successful in achieving that aim. Because the government rebuffed his attempts shortly after the war to obtain information about the Dresden bombing, saying only that it was classified, it took Vonnegut years to realize the scale of the destruction of life on the night of February 13, 1945. What he eventually learned was that, by the most conservative estimates, 135,000 people died in the raid – far more than were killed by either of the atomic bombs the United States dropped later that year on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.²⁷

Allen goes on to quote Vonnegut, who explained in an interview that:

[W]hen we went into the war, we felt our Government was a respecter of life, careful about not injuring civilian and that sort of thing. Well, Dresden had no tactical value; it was a city of civilians. Yet the Allies bombed it until it burned and melted. And then they lied about it. All that was startling to us.²⁸

Allen, therefore, comes to the conclusion that Vonnegut did not, after all, overdramatize the bombing of Dresden.²⁹

Keeping in mind what has been previously discussed, namely that historians had begun to question the number of casualties of the bombing of Dresden in 1955, and that by the mid-1970s there was considerable debate regarding the allegations of terror-bombing, fighter planes strafing the civilian population, phosphor bombs and the strategic value of Dresden in general, it is inconceivable to me how a scholar in 1991 can make such blatant remarks, not to mention how such an article can be published in an anthology in 2009. The only possible explanation can be that both the accounts of *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *The Destruction of Dresden* have been so heavily imprinted in the historical memory of those outside the field of military history, that they remain an omnipresent membrane of thought that cannot be penetrated by historical fact. As Taylor states, both books create the idea that the bombing was “the unforgivable thing that our fathers did in the name of freedom and humanity.”³⁰

²⁷ Allen, 'Slaughterhouse-Five', pp. 3-4.

²⁸ Vonnegut qtd. in Allen, 'Slaughterhouse-Five', p. 4.

²⁹ Allen, 'Slaughterhouse-Five', p. 4.

³⁰ Frederick Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday February 13, 1945*, London, Bloomsbury, 2005, p. 11.

Many scholars, of course, argue that Vonnegut is not to blame for this development as he opens his story with a disclaimer, reminding the reader that “[a]ll this happened, more or less. The war parts, anyway, are [only] pretty much true.”³¹ Contrary to Rigney, who argues that the novel was never intended to be taken seriously as history,³² I would, however, agree with Mill’s hypothesis that “[i]n asserting the facticity of the war sections of the novel, Vonnegut suggest that he wants the reader to take his novel seriously, as a sincere and accurate depiction of what really happened in Dresden.”³³

Historians will always try to combat what they believe to be a blurring of facts and figures, while scholars in the field of literature and cultural studies will usually try to find answers concerning the artistic and moral elements of a piece of literature. However, despite this discrepancy, a case can be made that every scholar has to critically engage with the most current sources on the topic instead of simply parroting alleged historical ‘facts’ that a post-modernist fictional novel has put forward, regardless of whether it was written by an eye witness or not.

More importantly, Kurt Vonnegut can be criticized for utilizing Irving’s book as he did. It would have been an easy task to add an introduction to the later editions of his book in which he could correct his inaccurate depiction of events. This would have had little negative effect on the book’s success nor impaired the reading experience. Rather, it would have prevented the emergence of a distorted picture of the bombing campaign. In how far the war-trauma had impeded further discussion or research on Vonnegut’s part is debatable – and purely speculative within this context as I have not found any source in which Vonnegut is asked, or comments on, why he never set the record straight. Even if such a source exists, the fact that it is not readily available speaks for a general disinterest in setting the record straight, given the status the novel enjoys.

Conclusion

Slaughterhouse-Five has rightfully established itself as one of the most influential novels of the post-modern period. It addresses many important aspects in such unprecedented fashion that the author is able to render his traumatic experiences in a poignant and gripping way. His book is used in school and university classrooms to discuss moral issues, such as war and death, and literary features, like narratology, literary genre, and the process of writing as a method of dealing with trauma. Almost everybody working with *Slaughterhouse-Five* will read Sir Rupert Sandby’s introduction, Vonnegut’s description, and the references to David Irving. They

³¹ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 1; emphasis my own.

³² Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 11.

³³ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 28.

then might go on to write papers and discuss the varied issues regarding the book, finding articles such as the one by William Rodney Allen, and will reiterate what Vonnegut and Irving promulgated. They will find cliff notes with brief descriptions of the book – lacking any reference to sources – such as:

[t]he bombing of Dresden began February 13, 1945, and lasted through April 17 — a period of two months — yet even today, it remains one of the most controversial military decisions in modern warfare. Why this premier cultural city was devastated during World War II continues to be clouded in mystery.³⁴

And the ever-present and self-perpetuating statement:

“The number of persons killed during the two-month bombing of Dresden is impossible to pinpoint precisely. Estimated casualties range from 35,000 up to 135,000, a disparity due in part to the chaotic nature of all wartime bombings.”³⁵

Finally, they will submit their findings and add to the already prevalent misconceptions of the events.

Given the fact that there is no such thing as ‘historical truth,’ one could agree with Rigney that “at a certain point, we may conclude from this novel that numbers say nothing at all beyond ‘more or less.’ The message Vonnegut brings home through his naïve, understated narrative is that every collateral victim may be one too many.”³⁶

Ultimately, however, an author such as Vonnegut also has an obligation towards the greater public in not feeding them historical myths, particularly as he enjoys so much credibility for being an eyewitness.

Furthermore, we must ask ourselves: Can following discrepancies between the narrative and the currently most detailed findings of the actual events be relegated to a position of only relative importance? 100,000 fewer people were killed than Vonnegut claims. So it goes. Dresden was by no means a city without any strategic value, only filled with civilians. So it goes. Fighter aircraft did not swoop down, and open fire on fleeing civilians in Dresden. So it goes. And there never was soap and candles made from the fat of Jews in POW camps.³⁷ So it goes.

³⁴ <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/slaughterhousefive/critical-essays/understanding-the-bombing-of-dresden>.

³⁵ <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/slaughterhousefive/critical-essays/understanding-the-bombing-of-dresden>.

³⁶ Rigney, ‘All This Happened, More or Less’, p. 24.

³⁷ Regarding the wide-spread belief that soap and candles were made from the fat of killed Jews the German Wikipedia site dealing with *Slaughterhouse-Five* also provides following statement and a link to a Conference of the *German Studies Association* in Washington D.C in 2004, which discussed how this urban myth still elicits wide-spread discussions:

“Nach heutigem Wissen war der Spruch zu einem Gefangenen, ihn zu Seife zu verarbeiten, vor allem ein gängiger Topos in der ordinären, nicht gleichberechtigten Kommunikation der Wachmänner bzw. -frauen mit ihren Opfern, eine aggressive Todesdrohung. Eine ähnliche, noch kürzere Drohung dieser Art war ein nach oben ausgestreckter Zeigefinger, der den aufsteigenden Rauch aus den Krematorien symbolisierte“, [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schlachthof_5_oder_Der_Kinderkreuzzug].

“Die Historiker in aller Welt sind sich darin einig, dass die Liste der NS-Gräueltaten lang genug ist, dass man ihr nichts hinzuzufügen braucht, es auch nicht darf, wenn man seine Glaubwürdigkeit nicht verlieren möchte. Sie haben die Seifenlegende längst in die Fußnoten der Geschichte verbannt, aber nicht von der Tagesordnung absetzen können. Sie wird sich noch lange in der öffentlichen Meinung halten, und die Deutschen werden mit ihr leben müssen. Vermutlich noch sehr lange“, Joachim Neander, “Seife aus Judenfett“ – Zur Wirkungsgeschichte einer *urban legend*: Vortrag auf der 28. Konferenz der German Studies Association, Washington D.C., Oktober 2004

[<http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/dachau/legends/NeanderSoap049.htm>]

A page would have sufficed to set the record straight, to change the general misperception of the bombing, to do away with some of the myths surrounding the war. This would not have had a detrimental effect on the message Vonnegut wanted to convey. It would, however, have spared historians, scholars, and teachers the painstaking effort of trying to insert a kernel of truth into the almost impermeable sphere of cultural remembrance in what was **not** “the greatest massacre in European history.”³⁸

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³⁸ Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, p. 101