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1 Nora, Pierre (Ed.): Les lieux de mémoire. 3 Vol. Paris: Gallimard 1984-1992 (Bibliothèque illustrée des histoires) [republ. in 3 vol. by Gallimard (Quarto) in 1997].

2 Cf. e.g. Assmann, Jan: Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen. München: Beck 1992; Assmann, Aleida: Arbeit am nationalen Gedächtnis. Eine kurze Geschichte der deutschen Bildungsidee. Frankfurt/M.: Campus 1993; Ricœur, Paul: La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oublié. Paris: Seuil 2000.

3 Cf. Nora, Pierre: The Tidal Wave of Memory. In: Newsletter 72 [Wien: IWM] (2001) and Pomian, Krzysztof: De l'histoire, partie de la mémoire, à la mémoire, objet d'histoire. In: Revue de métaphysique et de moral 1 (1998), pp. 63-110 [republ. in Sur l'histoire. Paris: Gallimard 1999 (Folio), pp. 263-342].

4 den Boer, Pim/ Frijhoff, Willem (Eds.): Lieux de mémoire et identités nationales. Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP 1993.

5 Nora, Pierre: La notion de lieu de mémoire est-elle exportable? In: den Boer/ Frijhoff 1993, pp. 3-10.

6 Nora, Pierre: Between Memory and History. Les Lieux de Mémoire. Transl. by Marc Roudebush. In: Representations 26 (1989), pp. 7-25. Cf. also Nora, Pierre: Zwischen Geschichte und Gedächtnis. Transl. by Wolfgang Kaiser. Berlin: Wagenbach 1990.

7 Nora, Pierre (Ed.): The Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past. Vol. 1: Conflicts and Divisions. Vol. 2: Traditions. Vol. 3: Symbols. English lang. ed. by Lawrence D. Kritzman. New York: Columbia UP 1996-1998. In 1996, the 1st volume won the *French-American Foundation Translation Award*.

8 Cf. Isnenghi, Mario (Ed.): Luoghi della memoria. Vol. 1: Simboli e miti dell'Italia unita. Roma: Laterza 1996; François, Etienne/ Schulze, Hagen (Eds.): Deutsche Erinnerungsorte. 3 Vol. München: C.H. Beck 2001; Csáky, Moritz/ Stachel, Peter (Eds.): Spei-

When in 1992, the Parisian publishing house *Gallimard* finished the publication of the monumental collective work entitled *Lieux de mémoire* (*La République, La Nation, Les France*) managed by Pierre Nora, it was only suspected that one of the most important export products of the decade had been born.¹ At the moment of the publication of the last volume we could see that the seven volumes and the six thousand pages written by some 130 scholars became a monument in itself. The notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ – used here in the original French form – appeared, in the 1993 edition of the most important, linguistically canonized French dictionary, the *Grand Robert de la langue française*, as a classical term. Nobody, including the author, had expected such a large intellectual boom. This past decade since the publication has made it possible for us to see that research on memory has spread quickly not only in France, but all over Europe and also the United States. Aleida Assmann's work entitled *Arbeit am nationalen Gedächtnis*, Jan Assmann's cultural analysis *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* or Paul Ricœur's historical-epistemological experience, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oublié*, and some great collective works on regional memory are considered as a part of this scientific and cultural phenomenon.² It is not accidental that the inventor of the notion himself speaks about a ›tidal wave of memory‹ in reference to his intellectual product, while the originally Polish French historian Krzysztof Pomian thinks that we arrived from history, a *part of memory* to memory, an *object of history*.³ In fact, there are some conceptions that consider memory more valuable than history because the memory's representation based on real experience concerning the ›reality‹ of the past is more authentic.

Instead of discussing this very important and complicated question in detail, I would like to only show that the notion of memory has grown very large during this last decade and in research it resulted in an abusive and inconsequent use of Nora's original conception. It is well known from the works of Reinhart Koselleck and his colleagues that notions have changed over the course of time. It is very special at the same time that a notion starts to live an autonomous life shortly after its birth, leaving its original context. In this paper I would like to present this *symbolic fight* (historical, epistemological, and linguistic) of Pierre Nora's for the preservation of the original connotation and references of the ›lieu de mémoire‹.

In 1992 – shortly after the publication of the last volume that produced a pseudo-intellectual scandal with its title *Les France* (the plural of *la France*) – Dutch historians, who had a cordial relation with the Parisian *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, organized a seminar on the *Lieux de mémoire*.⁴ They invited, of course, Pierre Nora and Jacques Le Goff, too. The title of the opening lecture, delivered by Nora, was *Is the Notion of the ›Lieu de Mémoire‹ Exportable?*⁵ Here, I would like to reconstruct the structure of this lecture because, on the one hand, it can be a good lesson for us, the scholars of East Central European memory research, and, on the other hand, because it was this lecture in which he explained perfectly clearly the ›hidden structure‹ of *Lieux de mémoire*.

The first segment of his symbolic fight has a linguistic element. It is well known that under the upsurge of intellectual interest caused by the publication of the first volume (*La République*), some translations were prepared from the French historian's texts. Some examples: first, the opening essay entitled *Between Memory and History* was translated by Marc Roudebush in the periodical *Representations*, and one year later, thanks to the *Wagenbach* Publishing House of Berlin a selection of texts was published in Germany.⁶ (Also containing the famous opening essay.) Some years later, in the second half of the 1990's Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman published *Lieux de mémoire* in the United States, too.⁷ By way of the linguistic question we can add some examples, too: Mario Isnenghi applied Nora's idea in the Italian scene under the title *Luoghi delle memoria*, Etienne François and Hagen Schulze in the German as *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, and at the same time, in a book edited by Moritz Csáky and Peter Stachel a special adaptation entitled *Speicher des Gedächtnisses* appeared in our region, too.⁸ As the translator of the Hungarian version of Nora's *Between Memory and History*, I can remark that the original French text is an amazingly literary and very refined text, in which the notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹, positioned in the centre, received a composite and special meaning.⁹

cher des Gedächtnisses. Bibliotheken, Museen, Archive. Teil 1 u. 2. Wien: Passagen 2000/01 (Passagen Orte des Gedächtnisses). We have to note that the Austrian approach changed the original conception radically. Whereas it is true that its outset was inspired by Nora, Csáky and Stachel turned their interest to the material forms (archives, museums, etc.) of the memory, thus the transformation of the notion into a »store of memory« was adequate and necessary.

9 Cf. Nora, Pierre: Emlékezet és történelem között. A helyek problematikája. Transl. by Zsolt K. Horváth. In: Aetas 3 (1999), pp. 142-157.

10 Nora 1989, p. 25.

11 Yates, Frances A.: The Art of Memory. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1966.

12 Cf. den Boer, Pim: Lieux de mémoire et l'identité de l'Europe. In: den Boer/Frijhoff 1993, pp. 11-29 and Judt, Tony: A la recherche du temps perdu. In: The New York Review of Books December 3 (1998), pp. 51-58; Hartog, François: Temps et Histoire. ›Comment écrire l'histoire de France‹. In: Annales H.S.S. 6 (1995), pp. 1219-1236. On Nora's reception, cf. K. Horváth, Zsolt: Az eltűnt emlékezet nyomában. Pierre Nora és a történeti emlékezetkutatás francia látkepe [A la recherche de la mémoire perdue. Pierre Nora and the French Panorama of Historical Memory Research]. In: Aetas 3 (1999), pp. 132-141.

13 Cf. Chartier, Roger: Histoire intellectuelle, histoire des mentalités. In: Au bord de la falaise. L'histoire entre certitudes et inquiétude. Paris: Albin Michel 1998, pp. 27-66.

14 Nora 1993, p. 4.

15 Cf. K. Horváth, Zsolt: Elképzelt múlt, felidézett jövő. Három séta az örökség erdejében [Imaging the Past, Remembering the Future. Three Walks in the Wood of the Notion of Heritage]. In: Múltunk 3 (2000), pp. 178-200.

16 Cf. Fourastié, Jean: Les trente glorieuses ou la Révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975. Paris: Flammarion 1979 (Pluriel).

17 Nora, Pierre: L'ère de la commémoration. In: Lieux de mémoire. Les France 3: De l'archive à l'emblème. Paris: Gallimard 1992 (Bibliothèque illustrée des histoires), p. 995ff.

On the publication of the first English translation Nora added some philological remarks to the text. He gave thanks to the translator for preserving the French form of the notion and thus avoiding the use of the evident English equivalent ›memory place‹.¹⁰ It is well known that the intellectual roots of the French ›lieu de mémoire‹ can be recognized in Cicero's and Quintilian's ›loci memoriae‹, and it is renewed by *The Art of Memory* of Frances A. Yates published in 1966,¹¹ but – as Nora argues – the French version is far from its predecessors. Nora's essay, the very often cited and well known *Between Memory and History. Les Lieux de Mémoire*, explains exactly this meaningful difference, so I would not like to repeat his arguments. Whereas Nora places his invention into a triple system of (material, symbolic, and functional), criteria, as some of his critics pointed out, it is very plastic and disputable.¹² However, if we translate the notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ as a cognitive instrument of memory research and adjust it to the conceptions of a language or a country, we can be confronted with the fact that the original sense, intention and aim of the notion disappear quickly.

Preserving the original references of the French notion with the form ›Gedächtnisorte‹, the first German translation-interpretation by Wolfgang Kaiser avoids the use of a foreign word in a German context, while some years later the Austrian solution was ›Speicher des Gedächtnisses‹. At the same time, in Italy, Mario Isnenghi translated it mechanically as ›luoghi della memoria‹, but in the United States Arthur Goldhammer, after the big scientific and artistic, or even generally cultural boom of the memory discourse, interprets practically *the same notion* as ›realms of memory‹. This last example especially enlarges the original meaning of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ because his first meaning is a synonym of kingdom, empire, etc. When Nora participated in the preparation of the American edition, it seems that he gave up the principle that the concept is untranslatable, which he had preserved so hard previously. According to Roger Chartier, the translation of notions connoted evidently its transformation, its adjustment to the cultural and linguistic system of the country and all that result in the unreliability of historical thinking and discipline.¹³ While, from the viewpoint of editors and leaders of research it is logical to avoid the use of a foreign compound on the first page of a book or research proposal, Chartier's remark seems very important. Was Nora afraid of this phenomenon when he said: ›Neither English, nor German, nor Spanish can give an exact equivalent.‹?¹⁴ Let us try to reconstruct this conception made at the same time as the sentence just cited concerning the ›lieu de mémoire‹ as an especially French notion organized around three things:

The first one is, on the one hand, the decadence of the pragmatic political Gaulle-ism and, on the other hand, its counterpoint, the birth of the political myth of Charles de Gaulle. His retirement in 1969 and his death one year later resulted in the destruction of the official memory of the Second World War and the Résistance, and thus, more and more, the memory of the Vichy-period became the most important element of discourse. Marcel Ophüls' movie *Le chagrin et la pitié [Pain and Pity]* released in 1971 shocked the French public because it contradicted what was known about the Vichy-government's activity. Moreover, one year later, a book by the American historian Robert O. Paxton was published about the same period and subject, and it became clear that the *official history* of collaboration and the *unofficial memory* of witnesses must be set apart.¹⁵

Secondly, the year 1974 resulted in significant economic decline, or rather, a crisis in France. This is important because after the ›trente années glorieuses‹ as the economist Jean Fourastié called this 30 amazing years of economic growth,¹⁶ for the scholars researching the French economy and society it was time to draw a balance. They concluded that the structure of post-war France changed radically during this 30 years. While in 1946 the proportion of the agricultural workers was 50%, in the year of the crisis it was reduced to 10%. Briefly, the explanation to this is following: in the 1950's and 1960's the agricultural modernization eliminated the traditional way of life of the peasants and the change of economic structure resulted in the migration of younger generations into the big cities. In Nora's thought this is a very important element of change because with the end of peasantry and thus with the decadence of a traditional memory community the collective consciousness was transformed in three decades.¹⁷

The third thing is the so-called Solzhenitsin-affair that changed the conception of leftist intellectuals about history. The *Seuil* Publishing House of Paris published in 1974 the *Gulag Archipelago* by the Russian writer that was practically unknown at this time in France. This today well-known book shocked the leftist intellectuals, and beyond that we can say that the ideas about a scientifically designed future were destroyed in view of the real knowledge of this counter-›utopia‹ of the Soviet forced labour camps. The faith in the historical Reason, the



18 Cf. Aron, Raymond: *Trois essais sur l'âge industriel*. Paris: Plon 1966 and Furet, François: *Les intellectuels français et le structuralisme*. In: *L'atelier de l'histoire*. Paris: Flammarion 1987 (Champs), pp. 37-52.

19 Nora, Pierre: *La ruée vers le passé*. In: *Magazine littéraire*, Hors série (1996), pp. 68-69.

20 Cf. Joutard, Philippe: *Une passion française: l'histoire*. In: Burguière, André / Revel, Jacques (Eds.): *Histoire de la France. Les formes de la culture*. Paris: Seuil 1993, p. 511.

21 Nora, Pierre: *Présentation*. In: *Lieux de mémoire. La République*. Paris: Gallimard 1984 (Bibliothèque illustrée des histoires), p. 7.

22 Nora 1993, p. 6-7.

23 den Boer 1993, p. 15.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

25 Cf. e.g. Espagne, Michel / Werner, Michael (Eds.): *Transferts. Les relations interculturelles dans l'espace Franco-Allemand (XVIIIe et XIXe siècle)*. Paris: *Recherches sur les Civilisations* 1988; Espagne, Michel / Middell, Katharina / Middell, Matthias (Eds.): *Archiv und Gedächtnis: Studien zur interkulturellen Überlieferung*. Leipzig: Universitätsverl. 2000 (Deutsch-französische Kulturbibliothek 13).

image of the Marxist-Leninist designable future and the counter-historical consciousness of France in the 1970's dissipated. Raymond Aron and François Furet called this phenomenon the »end of ideologies.«¹⁸

According to Nora, the constellation of these three elements in time and in space resulted in a passion for searching the past, called in French the »la ruée vers le passé« [»fever of the past«].¹⁹ History had gone bankrupt both *in concreto* (untruth about Vichy) and *in abstracto* (the image of future in Marxism), thus the French society wanted to return to traditions, but the above-mentioned radical transformation of society did not make it possible anymore. According to another French historian, Philippe Joutard, this phenomenon explains the triumph of the rural theme in this period: the autobiography of a Breton peasant called Pierre-Jakez Hélias, or the success of the historical bestseller by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie entitled *Montaillou*, which sold 2 million copies.²⁰ When, in the second half of the 1970's, Pierre Nora created the notion of ›lieu de mémoire‹ during his seminar at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, this mental, historical, ideological and sociological context cannot be ignored.²¹

Beyond these three elements, concerning the revival of memory and France, Nora emphasized two more things. He said that, on the one hand, it was neither the economy, the society, the culture nor a special language through which the »Hexagon« kept its identity, but through the always powerful State [*État*] that is present everywhere in this country. France, this »nation-mémoire«, is a *stato-centré* [*state-centralized*] country (which has an idea focused on the state). On the other hand, in the maintenance of this identity – as opposed to Germany – historians have played a very important role. From Froissart to Commines, from La Popelinière to Michelet, from Lavissee, the »evangelist of the Republic« to Augustin Thierry, from Seignobos to Braudel's *Identité de la France*, historians are authors of great identity narratives. If we place these principles behind *Lieux de mémoire*, the three parts, *La République*, *La Nation*, *Les France*, immediately find their meaning. The first part discussing the Republic's system of symbols embodies the state-memory [*mémoire-État*], including also the royalist memory; it is the nation-memory [*mémoire-Nation*] which is associable with the second volume; and in the third part, the multicultural, multicoloured France in plural [*les France*] fixes its identity to heritage-memory [*mémoire-patrimoine*]. These are the three elements of a very special, French »régime mémoriel« of Pierre Nora which have a strong local implantation, thus, in Nora's thoughts, it is not possible to export the original sense of ›lieu de mémoire‹ to foreign countries, cultures and histories.²²

In the above-mentioned Dutch-French conference, Pim den Boer asked:

Why is the ›lieu de mémoire‹ different from its predecessors in Antiquity or the notion of Yates? [...] When in Greece and Rome, the ›lieu de mémoire‹ helps the speakers, in France it is a form of the republican synthesis graven in the citizens. In Antiquity, it is a neutral tool of professional memory, in the Third Republic it is a column of the historical consciousness serving politics. In Antiquity, the ›lieu de mémoire‹ helped visualization, while in France indoctrination.²³

If a Frenchman asks: is the notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ exportable, then – says den Boer – »we, the Dutch, who are different, would like to know as pragmatic and realist merchants that this notion reproduced in France has good quality or not.«²⁴ The answer is well known: the scientific and cultural triumph of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ in the world has approved its legitimacy, the work of Pierre Nora and his colleagues is of good quality.

In one important point, the opinion of den Boer and Nora is practically the same: the ›lieu de mémoire‹ as a cognitive instrument of the symbolic and historical thoughts is not for export and adaptation into regional identities, languages and histories. In opposition to that kind of use they proposed, ten years ago, the elaboration of a common European system of symbols. In Paris, at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, a project called *Cultural Transfer* led by Michael Werner and Christophe Prochasson²⁵ has some similar elements, thus the original proposition, but at least the idea, seems to be realized.

I would not like to follow the arguments of Nora and his partners in the debate, but return to East-Central-Europe. We can see that Nora's or den Boer's prophecy was not correct, in fact, instead of a common, European system of symbols, only smaller, local analyses were made and became general in Europe. Moreover, the notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ started to have local implications. Is it problematic to move away from the original intention and program of the



26 Cf. Stachel, Peter: An Austrian Place of Memory. The *Heldenplatz* in Vienna as a Historic Symbol and a Political Metaphor. In: Csáky, Moritz / Mannová, Elena (Eds.): *Collective Identities. Central Europe in Modern Times*. Bratislava: Academic Electronic Pr. 1999, pp. 159-178 [author's italics].

27 Radnóti, Sándor: Mi a Terror Háza? [What is the House of Terror?]. In: *Élet és Irodalom* 47/4 (2003), p. 15. A slightly adapted version with notes and a brief English abstract appeared later in *Magyar Múzeumok* 2 (2003), pp. 6-9. For a more detailed, descriptive approach, cf. Csillag, Gábor: »Little House of Terror«. The Premises and Practices of the »House of Terror« Museum, Budapest. In: *Transversal* 1 (2002), pp. 18-46 and Pittaway, Mark: The »House of Terror« and Hungary's Politics of Memory. In: *Austrian Studies Newsletter* 1 (Winter 2003), p. 16-17.

28 Koselleck, Reinhart: *Kriegerdenkmale als Identitätsstiftungen der Überlebenden*. In: Marquard, Odo / Stierle, Karlheinz (Eds.): *Identität*. München: Fink 1979 (Poetik u. Hermeneutik 8), pp. 255-276. Cf. also Prost, Antoine: *Les monuments aux morts. Culte républicain? Culte civique? Culte patriotique?* In: Nora, Pierre (Ed.): *Les lieux de mémoire. La République*. Paris: Gallimard 1984 (Quarto), pp. 199-223.

29 Cf. Comtamine, Philippe: *Mourir pour la patrie*. In: Nora, Pierre (Ed.): *Les lieux de mémoire. La Nation*. Paris: Gallimard 1997 (Quarto), pp. 1673-1698.

›lieu de mémoire‹? Or, can we separate the text from the author? In a post-modern age, I think, it is correct, logical, and scientifically appropriate. Is it right to translate the French notion into German, English, Italian or Spanish? Of course, but not any epistemological premises. I preserved the French to demonstrate Nora's view, to show the way from idea to cultural triumph, but, at the same time local usage, translations can be also correct and reasonable. Certainly, a great, common, European classification of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ representing a European identity, if it exists, can be suitable, an inventory of conflicts and cooperation, wars and peaces can be appropriate to emphasize the fact: we live together in Europe. However, I think that it would be possible only after regional, local analyses, after the production of some symbolic maps of ›lieu de mémoire‹. Local analyses do not alter the original implications of our notion, but enrich its meanings. Researchers on social and human sciences in Austria make their collective, symbolic maps concerning memory, and certainly, it has a lot in common with Hungary. Hungary, however, has some particular memories, an amazing inventory of ›lieu de mémoire‹, but beyond some very important individual and/or theoretical experiences, unfortunately, in this country, there is no collective, organized discourse on it. Where are the Hungarian ›lieux de mémoire‹, which I will now translate in the next, so where are the Hungarian ›emlékezet helyei‹? Beyond these important individual experiences, it must, I think, be a common task to elaborate it.

Finally, let us see an example concerning the recent historical symbolization of Hungary. According to Peter Stachel, while the original French research project, *Les lieux de mémoire*, represents the consciousness of the state-cultural identity of the French nation, »the Austrian monuments or groups of monuments provide exemplary evidence of the *collective traumas* and breaks of identity, which this country and its inhabitants have experienced in abundance.«²⁶ What about Hungary? What is the situation with the historicity of the notion and significance of the Hungarian memory? Can we separate different phases of the Hungarian self-representation attached to the public memory uses like in France and in Austria? In connection with the conception of the ›trauma‹ as self-representation of the 20th-century identity of Austria proposed by Stachel, I would like to sketch its Hungarian relevancies.

For example, in his analyses about a recent, possible, new Hungarian ›lieu de mémoire‹ called the *House of Terror*, which officially presents and commemorates victims and injuries of two dictatorships – introduced by the *Arrow Cross Party* and then the *Communist Party* – in Hungary, the art philosopher Sándor Radnóti writes that this building

[...] is a *traumatic place*, and, because there are some witnesses still living, this is a *place of communicative memory*. [...] History is not so funny. Generally, it is burdened with awful sufferings, and we remember the places of bloody, moreover mortal events, that are [...] not able to help the identification with the winners or the losers. In any case, the commemorative places (and monuments) suggest this kind of identification; they imply that the victim, in the sense of any historical telos, is not for nothing.²⁷

By the way of the *House of Terror*, this simplifying and exclusively tragic conception of the ›history‹ and this timeless reading of the notion of ›victim‹ is very typically in the memory discourse in Hungary. Why, in this kind of perception, is the historicity of the notions not discussed? Why are the victim and the exclusively tragic view of history understood evidently? Of course, I would not like at all deny the human dignity of the person tortured by this period of the past, but in the case of the social and moreover of political uses of the past, the situation is more problematic.

Discussing the historicity of the monuments, Reinhart Koselleck describes its different types; in his conception, monuments received their special meanings after the French Revolution and moreover the wars of Bonaparte, when *heroic monuments* were raised for preserving the memory of dead soldiers. Before the 18th century, their names were indicated only on the heroic, but never on mortal monuments, but after this »turning point«, their presence received a (1) functional and a (2) democratic purpose.²⁸ Its function means mainly the fact that the survivors began to give a significance of the death inscribing on monuments: »dead for the country«, »fallen in the field of honor« or »dead not vainly«, etc.²⁹ In the case of a human being, death is only a singular event, a biological fact, but in the view of a community, death became, an *exemplary act* and, more and more, according to Rousseau, a *religion civile*. The democrati-



30 Sinkó, Katalin: A nemzeti emlékmű és a nemzeti tudat változásai [The National Monument and the Change of National Consciousness]. In: Kovács, Ákos (Ed.): Monumentumok az első háborúból. Budapest: Corvina 1991, pp. 9-45 and Kovács, Ákos: Emeljünk emlékszobrot hőseinknek! [Let us Raise A Commemorative Statue to our Heroes!]. In: Kovács 1991, pp. 104-124.

31 Ibid., p. 109f., p. 116f.

32 Cf. Koselleck, Reinhart: Diskontinuität der Erinnerung. In: Deutsche Philosophie 2 (1999), pp. 213-222.

33 Cf. Judt, Tony: The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Post-war Europe. In: Daedalus (Fall 1992), pp. 83-118 and Roussio, Henry: L'épuration en France: une histoire inachevée. In: Vingtième Siècle 33 (1992), pp. 78-106.

34 In this context, cf. the decree of the Hungarian Parliament about the Memorial Day of the Victims of Communisms: 58/2000 (VI. 16.) számú Országgyűlési Határozat ›A kommunista diktatúrák áldozatainak emléknapjáról. Magyar Közlöny 58 (June 16, 2000), pp. 33-60.

35 For the birth of this concept, cf. Sinkó, Katalin: A megsértett Hungária [The Injured Hungária]. In: Hofer, Tamás (Ed.): Magyarok Kelet és Nyugat közt. A nemzettudat változó jelképei. Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum – Balassi Kiadó 1996, pp. 267-282. And – by the way of the *House of Terror* – for the recent uses: Frazon, Zsófia / K. Horváth, Zsolt: A megsértett Magyarország. A Terror Háza mint tárgybemutató, emlékmű és politikai rítus [The Injured Hungary. The House of Terror as presentation of object, monument, and political rite]. In: Regio 4 (2002), pp. 303-347.

36 Cf. Rényi, András: A dekonstruált kegyelet. Jovánovics György 1956-os emlék/műve és a posztmodern szobrálás [The Deconstructed Piety. The Monument of 1956 of György Jovánovics and the Post-modern Sculpture]. In: Rényi, András: A testek világlása. Hermeneutikai tanulmányok. Budapest: Kijárát Kiadó 1999, pp. 173-217.

zation of the monuments constitutes the process that the names of dead soldiers appeared on a part of them.

In Hungary, according to Katalin Sinkó and Ákos Kovács, the conjuncture of the raising of monuments related to two events: in an organized order, to the celebrations of the ›Millennium‹ of 1896 and, spontaneously, to World War I.³⁰ In this second case, the process was quickly abused by the political field and thus, in 1915, helping the war propaganda of the government, the *National Committee Preserving the Memory of Heroes* was founded and later, in the beginning of 1917, the Hungarian Assembly passed the Act for ›preserving the memory of the heroes fighting for the country in this war‹ (Act Nr. 8 in the year 1917). In 1924, on the basis of Act No. 8 of this year, the Assembly officially founded the *Memorial Day of the Heroes*.³¹

We can accept the fact that World War I was also traumatic, the loss of the fathers and brothers fallen in the battlefield was even more painful than some twenty years later. It is evident that World War II was bloodier and thus more awful than the first, but the augmentation of the number of the dead (soldiers and civilians, too) does not explain *eo ipso* the radical change of the notion of ›victim‹. Why did the survivors and the families of the killed soldiers commemorate the *heroes*, and not the *victims*, after 1918? Why are these monuments raised for the *memory of the heroes* following World War I, and not those of the *victims*? This demands and implies a historical anthropological view of this notion.

According also to Koselleck, before and shortly after World War I, monuments and memorial days were raised for the heroes, and, if the soldier's name was indicated on a monument as that of a *victim*, it meant a *sacrifice* (e.g. ›died for the country‹), but World War II constitutes a radical discontinuity of this view. The notion of ›victim‹ began to mean a passive suffering from an aggressive action.³² In a moral aspect vulgarised by politics, this semantic change of notion enlarged its connotation amazingly; after 1945, everybody became the victim of the Nazism³³ and, according this same logic, following 1989, this kind of retrospective moralizing was extended to the victims of communism, too.³⁴ The keeping silent, the transformation of the past in view of the personal interest – which are the characteristics of the uses of collective memory – can result in some interpretative conflicts: if everybody is a victim, who were the executioners?

This long, but maybe not useless digression can show that, generally speaking, the raising of a monument is not a neutral act, a simply moral action of the survivors, but, on the one hand, implies an official identity and legitimacy-making and, on the other hand, its symbolization is historically determined. In fact, the post-war situation concerning the problem of memory is more complicated in Hungary, because, beyond the war, there was also a Revolution in Hungary, the memory of which – the destiny of Imre Nagy and his team, the real activities of the revolutionists and their fate after the tortures and executions after 1956 and the number of executed – was officially suppressed for a long time and was only revealed in public at the moment of the transition of 1989/1990. What is the correlation of the so-called passive and semantically extended *victims* of communism and the active *heroes* of the Revolution of 1956? What are the situation and the function of these competitive conceptions concerning the self-representation of Hungary by the way of memory?

In his article cited above, Sándor Radnóti takes the evident fact that the recent past is full of awful human sufferings and, consequently, the *House of Terror* – as a new Hungarian place of memory – is ready to fill the role of the ›traumatic place‹ suggested by Aleida Assmann. I would not, I repeat, deny the moral respect of the person tortured or killed by the communist area, but this abusive function and enlarged notion of ›victim‹, its confusion with the ›sacrifice‹, and the exclusive view of history focused on the sufferings continue or maintain the *representation of the suffering nation* created mainly between the two wars, after the peace of Trianon.³⁵ It is true that a significant part of our collective memory constitutes trauma and identity breaks, nevertheless the preference and maintenance of the suffering self-representation is surprising and with it, at the same time and more and more, the exclusive character of the tragic conception of the Hungarian past.

Where is the monument of heroes and sacrificed persons of the Hungarian revolution of 1956 situated in Budapest? And where is the monument of victims of communism called *House of Terror* in this same town? While the first one is located in the periphery of Budapest, in the plot number 301 of the Rákoskeresztúr cemetery, and in it this *œuvre macabre*³⁶ made by the well-known new avant-garde sculptor György Jovánovics, are some miles far from the entrance of the cemetery, the second one is in the centre of the city of Budapest, on the Andrassy



37 Cf. Nora's conception: »Que manque cette intention de mémoire, et les lieux de mémoire sont des lieux d'histoire.« Nora, Pierre: *Entre mémoire et histoire. La problématique des lieux*. In: Nora 1984, p. xxxv.

38 Concerning the confrontation of the political (ab)uses and the personal mourning of people executed after the Revolution, a recent interview with Aliz Halda, companion of Miklós Gimes in 1956, is very enlightening: »Everything transformed into a protocol ceremony, with soldiers, orchestra, measured steps and official floral tribute. During one or two years, notabilities arriving [in Hungary] paid their respects in plot no. 301; the Swedish King and his wife came here, Vaclav Havel and others, too. I was, of course, touched by these events, but they made me nervous, too.« Rádai, Eszter: *Szövetkezni a jóra*. Interjú Halda Alizzal [To ally for the good. An interview with Aliz Halda]. In: *Élet és Irodalom* 43 (2003), p. 7.

39 Cf. Kovács, Éva: *Az ironikus és a cinikus: a kommunizmus emlékeztetőiről* [The Ironical and the Cynical: on the Memories of the Communism]. In: *Élet és Irodalom* 35 (2003), p. 8.

40 Apor, Péter: *Immortalitas imperator: a Munkásmozgalmi Panteon születése* [Immortalitas imperator: the Birth of the Pantheon of the Labour Movement]. In: *Aetas* 2-3 (2002), pp. 179-205.

41 The best known victim of the Rákosi-regime, László Rajk, executed in 1949, was placed here until 1989, the date of the funeral of János Kádár. The younger László Rajk, a well-known architect and politician of the Hungarian democratic opposition during this time, removed and re-buried the mortal remains of his father in another plot (nearby Count Mihály Károlyi), because János Kádár – otherwise the godfather of the younger Rajk – was one of the leading persons in the trial against the elder Rajk. The old place of the grave of László Rajk in the main passage of the Pantheon is actually empty. Cf. Hajdu Tibor: *Kádár János Rajk Lászlóról* [János Kádár on László Rajk]. In: *Rubicon* 7/8 (2000), p. 34 and Rév, István: *Parallel Autopsies*. In: *Representations* 49 (Winter 1995), pp. 15-39.

avenue, some hundred meters away from the one of the busiest junctions of the town, called Octogon. It is well known in memory research that mnemotechnical reproduction and fixation of the matter will be better and deeper when the repetitive character creates the impulse more often in the receptive person. The *House of Terror* is not a traumatic, commemorative place, but an object of the political uses of the past, whose *telos* is the maintenance of the representation of the nation of sufferings caused by communism. Moreover, at the time of its inauguration, in February 2002, in the beginning of the political election campaign, its political allusion to the Hungarian left could not be ignored. In this kind of analysis it is easy to import a good memorial notion like ›trauma‹ and adapt it for a discussable building like to *House of Terror*. Nevertheless the extension of the analysis to the historical, memorial, symbolic and political contexts modifies its meaning deeply.

At the beginning of this article I have showed why the notion of the ›lieu de mémoire‹ is literally not adaptable; its integration implies the transformation of its linguistic, cultural and historical connotations to the given context, and I have argued that the mechanical adjustability of a well-known idea can result some radical mistakes in the interpretation. I would not deny at all the profit that we can gain from these great conceptions, but – by way of the future Hungarian »emlékezet helyei« – I repeat, beyond the very suitable adaptation, *we must invent together its notions, criteria and interpretative frames*. But defining their formulate is not so easy. Unlike the French example, the most important difference that the Hungarian »emlékezet helyei« are used by political and/or civil communities. It implies that the definition by Nora cannot be able to define these sites: it is not only a simple intention of the remembering,³⁷ but the physical presence, visit in a political term of ›identity‹.

The *House of Terror* is often served for commemorative actions by the Hungarian right-wing movements. Each year, on October 23, plot 301 and the *œuvre macabre* erected by Jovánovics is the place of the official commemoration of the Hungarian government.³⁸ The third place in connection with socialism is the so-called *Statue Park*, situated outside of Budapest, a simple tourist site. This kind of de-contextualisation of the famous statues representing the so-called heroes, martyrs, figures and symbols of the labour and communist movement is an ironical re-interpretation of this period.³⁹ In fact, it is used mainly by foreign tourists, but by Hungarian visitors (mostly by students groups), too. The most unvisited among these Hungarian »emlékezet helyei« relating to socialism is the fourth one, the Pantheon of the Labour Movement inaugurated in 1959.⁴⁰ This Pantheon was the official site of the prominent persons of the post-56 regime during the Kádár era and included the communist victims of the Stalinist-area led by Mátyás Rákosi.⁴¹ (All representative leading people of Stalinist period are excluded from the Pantheon.) But, the site situated in the »National Tomb Garden« on the Fiume street is used mostly by simple older people who would like to preserve the calm and placid memory of the Kádár regime. Flowers and floral tributes – with an inscription for example »Thanks for the tranquil and peaceful years. Inhabitants of Zala County« – witness the presence and maintenance of the memory of Kádár.

The predominance of the political intention bound to these four sites as well as this kind of self-representation and identification of social actors through the relation to the socialist past make the re-thinking and re-definition of the criteria absolutely necessary. Before the importation and the use of inadequately interpreted notions inspired by P. Nora or by A. Assmann, the special juncture of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* effect after 1989 and the »tidal wave of memory« urge the introduction of a microscopic, contextual approach into the Hungarian scene.