Volume 6 • Number 1 • 2020

intersections

East European Journal of Society and Politics

Beyond Recognition

Crises of Politics and Representation

Intersections.

EEJSP

H-1453
Budapest,
PO Box 25.

The current issue was supported by:

Centre for Social Sciences tk

PUBLISHED BY:
Centre for Social Sciences

Zsolt Boda
Director General

intersections.tk.mta.hu

Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics
is an Open Access, double blind peer-reviewed online journal.
When citing an article, please use the article's DOI identifier.

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Intersections. EEJSP
6(1): 4-7.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.726
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Following the identity political turn in the Western hemisphere, the social sciences in the 1990s witnessed a considerable shift of focus to the notion of recognition. Problems of inequality, oppression, injustice, and social struggle have increasingly been conceptualized in the framework of a rising recognition paradigm. As Charles Taylor aptly summarized, '[t]he thesis is that our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *mis*recognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being.' (Taylor, 1992: 25) By raising the problem of the inherent tension between two modes of recognition, between the demand for universal dignity (equality) and particular identity (difference), Taylor aimed to contribute to contemporary North American debates about multiculturalism. However, he did not pay much attention in his analysis to the role of the social, historical and geographical context of the ongoing social struggles he looked at when he linked social struggles driven by the demand for recognition to the modern condition, the transition from collective honour to individual dignity. The same is true for Axel Honneth, the other seminal early theorist of the social (theoretical) relevance of recognition, despite the significant differences between their approaches. When aiming to build a grand critical theory à la Frankfurt School applying an immanently social basis of normativity, Honneth did not focus on the social historical specificities of the shift from the social to the moral grammar of social conflict either.

Since the early 1990s, the recognition paradigm in the social sciences has received various criticisms. From the perspective of this special issue, aiming to contribute to the discussion about recognition theory by focusing on its historical and social embeddedness, the role of Nancy Fraser is central. Not only because she had one of the most influential voices in the critical choir on recognition politics, pointing precisely to the shift from transformative politics to the moral grammar of social struggles, but because of setting the discourse about recognition in a way that for a long time determined further critical questionings. Especially since her famous exchange with Honneth (Fraser and Honneth, 2003), critiques of recognition have tended to, in one way or another, position themselves in the recognition vs. redistribution framework. In this sense, Fraser's theory on injustice proved to be impactful in two aspects. On the one hand, she exclusively differentiates between two distinctive logics of social reality, economics and culture, each having its own principle of justice. Culture is the field in which (in)justice is framed as (mis)recognition, while economy would be the sphere of (un)equal (mal-/re-)distribution. This ontological differentiation rendered the

systematic critique of (post-1970s) capitalism with the concomitant recognition discourse more difficult (Leeb, 2018). Moreover, by conceptualizing the shift of the 1980s in the feminist movement as a transition from redistribution to recognition, Fraser radically limited the critical assessment of the role of early (feminist) social movements with a clear anti-systemic agenda, given that the concept of redistribution as the affirmative remedy for mal-distribution, leaving the basic economic structure intact, is rooted in the liberal welfare state. On the other hand, '[t]he problem with Fraser's dual model of redistribution-recognition is that it accepts the ideal of "mutual recognition", which covers over, rather than exposes, class antagonisms at the heart of capitalist societies' (Leeb, 2018: 552). Fraser's dual model oriented criticism on 'too much' recognition, thus it paradoxically contributed to the legitimacy of the ideal of mutual recognition. By taking these two aspects into account, the articles of this special issue aim to critically approach the recognition paradigm by breaking out from the iron cage of the recognition-redistribution antagonism.

Our point of departure is the growing awareness of the cases when reconciliation, based on the model of mutual recognition, actually fails. When looking at the recurrently arising social conflicts around the unjust distribution of recognition, the promise of reconciliation of the recognition paradigm seems to be less realistic than ever. Presupposing an ideally equal distribution of recognition, the politics of recognition paradigm typically focuses on how parts of society presented as voiceless, groupings of individuals subjected to past or present oppression, are given voice by various sorts of activism. The articles of this special issue seek to explore when and why the actual politics of recognition results in the competition of at least two exclusive, self-totalizing moral universes mutually degrading each other. In the often unfolding victimhood competition each side strives to get its own social suffering publicly recognized by the other, and the position of victimhood functions as the condition of possibility of entering into the field of recognition claims. In this social dynamic, recognition appears not so much as a basic human need but as prestige. The socially hyper-valorized notion of trauma well exemplifies that what is at stake is the redistribution of symbolic resources among those speaking in the name of the victims (Fassin and Rechtman, 2009).

In order to face the lost illusions of reconciliation in those cases, the articles of this special issue aim to critically approach the paradigm of recognition politics in diverse empirical fields, not only feminism but also the housing crisis, memory politics, or restitution. We believe that this diversity, both thematic and geographical, is an apt reflection of the fact that recognition politics has deeply embedded into various domains of our social and political life. The papers of the special issue apply two main perspectives when critically discussing empirical or theoretical questions of recognition: politics and representation. One approaches recognition politics as a crisis of political representation. From this perspective, competitors for equal recognition have more direct experience about each other than about the society at large or the particular social group they claim to represent. The crisis of politics (moralization, extreme polarization, two-sidedness, exclusive competition) has not so much to do with fatal cleavages in the value

system or ideological landscape of society but with the institutional transformation of political representation. As Péter Csigó and Máté Zombory demonstrate in their paper, the recognition politics of European integration resulted not in the historical reconciliation of different regional and local memories, but to a compromised, declarative and unstable moral union in which the humanitarian norms of recognition are easily reappropriated and reversed by the outright enemies of liberal-European values. The paper introduces a theoretical framework in which the failures of recognition politics are addressed as the crisis of political representation. Questions of representation, that is, who can speak in the name of the victims in a legitimate way, are central in Roma memory politics too. Gergely Romsics's case study deals with the occupation of the Roma Holocaust memorial in 2016, Berlin, by activists of Roma not holding German citizenship. Struggles around the event were structured by different principles of political representation that Romsics terms the opposing referentialities of the memorial site: should it represent Roma in the national German framework or every Roma as a (potential) victim of Nazi aggression? The paper argues that governmental action was constitutive in the eventual co-optation of one memory political initiative to the detriment of the other. Questions of representation arise sharply in the continuing debate about prostitution. Noémi Katona studies the conflict between the abolitionist and the sex work movement as a social field in which players strive for the legitimate representation of victimized women, influenced by the actors' position in the global relations of force.

The other critical approach of the special issue has to do with the global ideological-political embeddedness of the recognition paradigm. Cristian Cercel investigates the possible routes of research addressing the apparent historical parallel of the memory boom, one of the main fields of recognition politics, and the rise of neoliberalism. The global neoliberal hegemony is in the focus of the article of Dalma Feró as well, who aims to reconstruct the shift from liberation to the recognition paradigm in Western feminism that she terms as a transition from 'the personal is political' to the 'politics is personal'. Both papers address the crucial question of the radical transformation of politics, usually designated by a prefix such as post-politics. This emphasis on post-1970s developments is counterbalanced by the historical case study of Dustin Stalnaker who explores how early Cold War ideological considerations shaped the ways in which the West German state processed recognition claims of two distinct groups of German veterans of the Spanish Civil War: German antifascists and those who fought in support of the National Socialist regime. Last but not least, Kata Ámon's paper investigates the responses to the post-2008 housing crisis on Europe's two peripheric countries, Spain and Hungary. She proposes to adjust the Fraserian model with Karl Polányi's theory on the double movement, the tension between market extension and social protection. Connected to the topic of the special issue, Zoltán Háberman reviews Jelena Subotić's recent book *Yellow Star, Red Star*, which, going beyond the criticism of relativization, discusses the way geopolitical insecurity and cultural ressentiment influenced post-communist states in appropriating the memory of the Holocaust in order to legitimately represent a different suffering.

Though the picture the cases presented in this special issue provide is far from exhaustive, the diversity it shows hopefully calls for the further reassessment of the recognition paradigm in social theory and practice.

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PÉTER CSIGÓ AND MÁTÉ ZOMBORY *

Respect My Right to Dominate: Recognition Politics and Foundationalist Representation

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 8-26.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.679
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

In this article, we present how the recognition framework of political and historic representation has enabled reactionary political forces, which increasingly recognize its inner contradictions and turn them against the basic principle of universal dignity, with the clear aim of corroding the whole recognition political edifice from the inside out. Taking the field of the symbolic construction of European identity as our main focus, we will reconstruct how the takeover of recognition politics has destabilized political and historic representation in Europe and ended up undermining European integration rather than enhancing it. Following one of the most important theorists of political and historic representation, Frank Ankersmit, we introduce the conceptual distinction between antifoundationalist vs. foundationalist representation in order to account for the series of decisive institutional changes that since the 1970s have contributed to the intersection of two separate fields into 'memory politics' and led to the rise of a new and inherently non-democratic foundationalism, of which recognition politics is one of the main symptoms.

Keywords: *politics of recognition, political representation, historic representation, European enlargement, symbolic violence.*

1. Introduction

In this article, we address a parallel process of decay that we see taking place in the fields of political and historic representation that is related to the takeover of recognition political discourses in both fields. The first process is the degradation of political antagonism to symbolic struggles of mutual delegitimation. Unlike in the social democratic past of the twentieth century, when political actors fought for particular goals inside an institutional system that they all accepted as legitimate, today's competitors play a game of mutual delegitimation: under the flags of liberalism and illiberalism or populism they struggle to settle what should be the only legitimate order for the whole political community (Orsina, 2017: 8). Parallel to this is the decay of historic memory to a symbolic 'victimhood competition' (Chaumont, 1997; Novick, 1999), which makes historic memory the prey of increasingly mythological and moralizing narratives that reduce historical complexity to black-and-white lessons and incite a symbolic struggle of mutual degradation, impeding genuine historical understanding (Todorov, 1995; 2000).

These two processes have been closely interrelated in past decades, as political representation has become 'historicized,' historical representation 'politicized,' and institutional boundaries between the two spheres of social action began to be dismantled (Nora, 2011; Habermas, 1988). The intertwined processes of delegitimation and victimhood competition manifest the takeover of recognition or identity politics in the representation of the conflicts of the present and the past. In the recognition paradigm, all actors use the same codes of self-legitimation and delegitimation: they legitimate themselves as bearers of a universal moral language and delegitimate their opponents for their reluctance to accept this universal moral code, and even worse, for pressing an alternative vision of universalism that serves only to veil their particularistic interests.

In this article, we present how the recognition political framework of political and historic representation has enabled reactionary political forces, which increasingly recognize its inner contradictions and turn them against the basic principle of universal dignity, with the clear aim of corroding the whole recognition political edifice from the inside out. Following Frank Ankersmit, we introduce the conceptual distinction between antifoundationalist vs. foundationalist representation in order to account for the series of decisive institutional changes that since the 1970s have transformed the fields of political and historic representation in parallel, and through the intersection of these fields triggered the rise of 'memory politics,' which we see as a main symptom of today's non-democratic, foundationalist representational régime.

We argue that no natural alliance exists between liberalism and the discourse of recognition, the rise of which is related only indirectly to ideology, as its direct roots lie in a new institutional régime of political representation that emerged in the seventies and eighties and took the place of the former class- (and social cleavage-) based representation régime of post-WWII social democracy. These institutional transformations have allowed the rise of the seemingly universalist but in fact foundationalist and perspectivist discourses that have taken

over the fields of political and historical representation. The foundationalist logic of the post-class representational régime urges actors to justify their action with universalistic moral declarations, which means evading the democratic procedures of will formation, bargaining, and accountability. In the current régime of post-class representation (see Mair, 2002; Ankersmit, 2002), mainstream liberal and progressive radical forms of recognition politics are equally urged to give in to the antidemocratic temptation of arbitrarily declaring their particularistic moral rules as universally valid – and illiberals and extremists are more than happy to join them on this path and fight their struggle against universal dignity on the very recognition political platform that announces it.

We will reconstruct how the takeover of recognition politics has destabilized political and historic representation in Europe and ended up in undermining European integration rather than enhancing it. The tacit memory political agreement between 'integrators' and the 'yet to be integrated' less resembles the genuine reconstruction of a commonly shared European historical identity narrative than a mutually beneficial power deal, in which new members have recognized the old members' hegemony in relation to narrating European identity in a liberal universalist memory political framework, and, by contrast, old members have recognized the special claims of post-communist countries to be respected as victims of the evils of Communism. Symbolic declarations cannot substitute for open negotiations undertaken on explicit terms: the function of such 'foundational' acts is not to establish new ground for the future, but to naturalize established power relations.

2. The symbolic violence inherent in recognition politics

There is a tension around recognition politics that is commonly observed: its protagonists have claimed to act in the name of universal and inclusive principles such as equal dignity and mutual respect. Still, in whichever form these principles have been put into political practice, they have stirred bitter controversy and rebuttal from actors who have felt that the seemingly emancipatory process in fact undermines their own equal recognition, and marginalizes and oppresses them. These ambiguous dynamics urge the parties in the debate to mutually deploy the same liberal principle of equal recognition against each other as was eloquently analyzed by Charles Taylor (1992). Taylor distinguished two modalities of recognition politics, one that stands on the ground of common-sense liberalism and seeks the 'equalization of rights and entitlements' in the name of universal dignity, and one that he called the politics of difference, which – he claimed – 'grows organically out of the politics of universal dignity' (Taylor, 1992: 39), and asks for differential treatment for disadvantaged groups and positive discrimination in the name of the same universal nondiscrimination principle. 'These two modes of politics,' Taylor argues, 'both based on the notion of equal respect, come into conflict': identity groups who do not belong to the rule-setting (individual rights-centered) paradigm of mainstream liberalism regularly complain that the equal treatment being offered under the auspices of liberal universalism

does not in itself guarantee to end their systemic oppression (cf. Samuel, 2013). Controversies, however, have rarely endangered the underlying principle of equal dignity. At the dawn of a liberal global era, even a communitarian like Taylor laid more stress on balance than on conflict: in the end, the debate between liberal mainstreams and their identitarian challengers maintains a common liberal force field, since the parties in the debate differ mostly in terms of the glasses they use to read the same universal Enlightenment principle of equal dignity that each of them seeks to implement.

Today, three decades later, the above-described delicate balance has been upset: the recognition discourse is increasingly deployed against the principle of equal dignity. The politics of recognition has lost so much of its liberal pedigree that it is called by Fukuyama (2020), a core liberal author, the greatest danger to liberal democracy. Recognition politics is increasingly used as a Trojan horse of social oppression in the hands of extreme-right bullies, fascists, and supremacists, who wallow in the joys of using its rhetoric to rip apart its Enlightenment foundations. As early as in the 1990s, research documented how white supremacists sought to highjack the liberal discourse of cultural pluralism with two 'rhetorical strategies: equivalence and reversal. These strategies portray whites as victims of discrimination and as equivalent to racial and ethnic minorities' (Berbrier, 1998: 436). Reversal, of course, is not a problem in itself: the inner tensions of recognition politics have always made certain forms of 'victimhood competition' inevitable. For example, the critique that affirmative action is discriminatory has always implied giving voice to its majoritarian victims; still, this latter voice had to stand on the universalist ground of equal dignity. Today, however, the reversal strategy is increasingly turned against the liberal grounds that Taylor assumed to be commonly shared. A politics of recognition flourishes even after the vanishing of the liberal consensus, and actively contributes to its demolition.

In this article, we are interested in exploring why the inner 'code' of liberal recognition politics makes this discourse so vulnerable to extreme-right reappropriation. There is, of course, the old dilemma that the liberal system is vulnerable because it defends its enemies that seek to destroy it – or, in Taylor's reformulation, 'the principle of equal citizenship has come to be universally accepted. Every position, no matter how reactionary, is now defended under the colors of this principle' (1992: 38). This explanation, however, does not dig deep enough to fully reveal the inner contradictions of recognition politics that we will seek to unravel in more depth. Liberal universalist recognition politics, as we will argue, is not vulnerable simply because it is too tolerant, but, because it entails symbolic violence, it asserts its protagonist's natural right to dominate and uses this aggression against its opponents (Perugini and Gordon, 2015). This aggression, however, can be turned back against it, not only by more radically equalizing identitarians, but also the most reactionary enemies of universal dignity.

Let us illuminate how this works in practice using a speech by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, delivered in the European Parliament the day before the general vote on the so-called Sargentini Report in 2018 October. The Report

provided an overview of the miserable state of rule of law, constitutionalism, and human rights in Hungary, and proposed, for the first time in EU history, to initiate Article 7 (1) of the Treaty on European Union (which defines the procedure that Member States shall follow to sanction a member who breaches fundamental EU values).

Orbán's strategy aims to normalize 'illiberal democracy' as part of the liberal universe. This strategy uses the political weaponry of recognition to create the semblance that it accepts the basic constitutional rulebook of EU polity. Recognition political language allows Orbán to take a legitimate position and delegitimize his adversaries.

> You will denounce the Hungary which has contributed to the history of our great continent of Europe with its work and – when needed – with its blood. You will denounce the Hungary which rose and took up arms against the world's largest army, against the Soviets, which made the highest sacrifice for freedom and democracy (…) I stand here now and defend my homeland, because to Hungarians freedom, democracy, independence and Europe are matters of honour. This is why I say that the report before you is an affront to the honour of Hungary and the Hungarian people. Hungary's decisions are made by the voters in parliamentary elections. What you are claiming is no less than saying that the Hungarian people are not sufficiently capable of being trusted to judge what is in their own interests. You think that you know the needs of the Hungarian people better than the Hungarian people themselves. Therefore I must say to you that this report does not show respect for the Hungarian people. (…) You are assuming a grave responsibility when – for the first time in the history of the European Union – you seek to exclude a people from decision-making in Europe. You would strip Hungary of its right to represent its own interests within the European family that it is a member of. (…) If we truly want unity in diversity, then our differences cannot be cause for the stigmatisation of any country, or for excluding it from the opportunity of engaging in joint decision-making. We would never sink so low as to silence those with whom we disagree. (Orbán, 2018)

By denouncing the Sargentini Report in the name of the victimized Hungarian nation as illegitimate and violating the Treaty, Orbán's speech makes any criticism or corrective intervention based on the very same treaty illegitimate. This, beyond doubt, exercises symbolic violence not only on Orbán's adversaries (specified only as 'you'), but also on the political community itself within which the whole debate emerged. It qualifies a subfield of European politics as undebatable (in this case: Hungarian domestic policy). Orbán uses the seemingly universal tropes of liberal recognition politics to re-declare the old populist principle of sovereignty *vox populi, vox dei*, which was once inherent in early liberal theory (Kis, 2013) and politics, and which today can be rephrased with ease in the language of inverted

recognition politics as a call to respect the speaker's divine (popular) authorization to dominate.

If the illiberal Orbán today constructs himself and his nation as a collective victim-hero, and threatens to upset the table, this is not an outside attack against European principles, but a position that harmonizes with the tacitly accepted framework of the construction of European identity. Orbán exploits the potential of symbolic violence that has been encoded from the beginning in the tacit memory political agreement between European 'integrators' and the 'yet to be integrated', in which the two parties have mutually recognized each other's dominion, and on these grounds declared the unity of the European family and the legitimacy of its institutional order.

3. The tacit political agreement of European integration, and its prerequisites: silencing and entrapment

Since the end of the Cold War, the symbolic construction of the European community has been based on a double reduction of political debate, as this was reduced not only to the construction of a shared historical memory, but also to the question of a choice between two exclusive memory constructions represented as 'constitutive historical legacies' of Europe. In other words, the political debate about the boundaries of the political community that evidently arose with the accession of the EU has been degraded into mimetic victimhood rivalry, which reached its symbolic endpoint with the 2009 EP resolution on 'European conscience and totalitarianism.' The road to the common, pan-European elaboration of the tacit political agreement during the 'long nineties' led from the clash of exclusive universalistic moral worldviews to a reluctant consensus based on the live-and-let-live principle. Before discussing the main features of this process, we first need to look at the historical context in which it took place.

The origins of the political space of EU accession date back to the 1970s, when the emerging, decontextualized global Holocaust consciousness that created a new means of moral universalization (Alexander, 2012; Levy-Sznaider, 2006) overcame the until-then dominant anti-fascist moral universalism. As a result of Cold War tensions regarding the moral significance of WWII, especially the communist campaigns that targeted West Germany (Lemke, 1993; Weinke, 2002), the Western World began presenting the problem of Fascism and genocide as a memory issue which should be dealt with by moral gestures, not criminal law (Zombory, 2020). Following the 1970s, it was commonly shared memory – the 'cult of heritage' (Calligaro, 2015) – that was supposed to create the conditions for collective identity, no longer a consensus of common political, military, etc. interests. In the 'end-of-history' atmosphere of the long 1990s, the discourse of integration, with its narcissism of small differences (Freud, 2002[1929]) between 'constituent historical experiences,' took on an ideological-mythical role and became increasingly detached from historical reality. Suffice to mention that in contemporary European memory culture, WWII appears as a mythic struggle

between liberal democracy and totalitarianism fought by an alliance of victims of a Western Holocaust and Eastern communism.

By the final decades of the Cold War, neoliberal human rights discourses (Whyte, 2009) had linked up with the developing construction of the cosmopolitan memory of the Holocaust, with the latter serving as the moral basis of the former. As the historically unique case of absolute victimization, the memory of the Holocaust has been universalized as the general framework for establishing mutual respect and reconciliation. The humanitarian reason (Fassin, 2012) for cosmopolitan liberalism promised the possibility of restituting human dignity; in reality, awarding publicly acknowledged victim status to any human being on Earth who had been struck by injustice. In the Western political imaginary, there were no longer two ideologies in conflict, but an individualized 'pure' human suffering opposed to any possibility of political or social transformation. When the Iron Curtain fell and the enlargement of the EU became a hot political issue, the discourse of integration was already completely devoid of the possibility of negotiating between conflicting interests. In other words, the discursive framework of integration efficiently silenced the articulation of parties' political interests.

The debate on 'Europeanness' began in such political conditions, leading to the common social construction of the mimetic reversal of recognition norms. In the midst of profound geopolitical restructuring, post-Cold-War Western Europe embraced the preexisting cosmopolitan memory of the Holocaust, and made it the central element of EU integration policy. The EU presidency statement of 31 October 2005 affirmed that '[t]he significance of the Holocaust is universal. But it commands a place of special significance in European remembrance. It is in Europe that the Holocaust took place' (EU, 2005). The 'special significance' of the Holocaust in European memory derives from the fact that the Holocaust – 'the negative core event of the 20th century' (Diner, 2003: 43) – took place on the continent. After the 'cult of heritage,' the third wave of Europeanization (Karlsson, 2010) was based on 'a common European canon of remembrance' 'against the backdrop of the memory of the Holocaust as the constituting, in effect the inaugural event of a commonly shared European memory' (Diner, 2003: 42). It is now the historical lesson of the memory of the Holocaust that is supposed to create solidarity and a sense of belonging for European citizens. The 'founding myth' of Europe rewritten, the core values of 'Europeanness' are promoted through commemorating the Jewish genocide as a unique historical experience in Europe with a universal relevance. The moral order articulated by the commemoration of the Holocaust has become the standard of civilization imposed by Europe's international policy: both in terms of the so-called integration process, and in the vocation of maintaining humankind's universal rights in the world. From the 'Western universal' position, EU enlargement appeared as a process of integration through which the continental civilization could be reunited according to its supposedly universal values. It followed that the norms of European historical consciousness, coming to terms with the past, and the cultivation of Holocaust memory, were imposed as soft membership criteria on associated

countries; as proof of democratic commitment, even of being civilized; that is, being 'European.'

Because of the unequal positions created by the accession process, this universalized moral order could not be debated by the addressees. Democratically elected national representatives were interpellated as members of civilized nations to be, with decades of communist totalitarian domination behind them. The EU conditionality of the universal recognition paradigm meant that the prerequisite of participating in the debate was the adoption of its normative system. Since European political space, especially EU institutions, were closed before the actors of the post-state socialist countries striving to 'return to Europe,' they took up positions in the moral order imposed on them as the universal code of civilization.

Post-communist state efforts to 'come to terms with' their 'totalitarian pasts' were made manifest in various forms of institutionalization, which provided space for and gave credence to political claims. These institutions, be they historical commissions, institutes of remembrance, or memorial museums of communism, served as laboratories in which an Eastern European identity could be elaborated in a legitimate way. Besides adopting European norms of recognition, expressed by Europeanized cosmopolitan Holocaust memory, actors of the 'Eastern specific' presented the memory of communism as their additional 'historical experience.' This Eastern European *differentia specifica*, constructed according to the representational canon of Europeanized cosmopolitan Holocaust memory, was expressed as greater suffering resulting from the 'double occupation' related to WWII. Its specificity in relation to universalist Holocaust memory is not historical but geographical. The nation, characteristically earlier represented as the heroic protagonist in the narrative of historical struggles between the mythic forces of West and East, is now being constructed as an East European community of victims, repressed by both totalitarian regimes but mainly by communism. The legitimate political subject position for the associated countries was the outcome of mimetic victimization. Far from being a local initiative stemming from a specific historical experience, the memory of communism is the result of the localization of norms of historical consciousness imposed during the EU enlargement process.

The symbolic violence inherent in the implicit imposition of a universal moral order was thus challenged by applying the norms of the very same moral order. Since the post-Cold War eastern position of EU enlargement was constructed according to the moral-political rules of the game defined by the integrators, the articulation of historical experiences of state socialism were silenced in the debate. The principles of historical authenticity were defined by the Holocaust-centered norms of European historical consciousness. As a result, the question of communism was not a political one, but a memory issue identically constructed to that of the Holocaust, and could only be raised as the moral need to restore the human dignity of its victims. As a consequence, communism was presented as an essentially and exclusively criminal and terroristic totalitarianism associated with the possible greatest potential of victimization. The only possible way to reverse the symbolic violence was to challenge the universality of the imposed moral order; that is, the uniqueness of the Holocaust. The whole

conceptual and argumentative repertoire of revisionism, also present in the Orbán speech cited above, the reference to the West's double standards, the idea of double victimhood, the calculation of 100 million victims of communism, etc., are all examples of the mechanism of the reversal of symbolic violence elaborated in the nineties.

From the civilizatory European position, actors posed not only as representatives of the victims of the Holocaust but also as defenders of its unique status, stepping up against contemporary perpetrators who would relativize its significance. The West defined the recognition of canonical Holocaust memory as *the* proof of democratic commitment and *the* prerequisite of cultural-political integration. From this perspective, the Eastern cause of criminalizing communism appeared as a systemic threat to the democratic values of the West. By contrast, actors assuming the Eastern European position stood against the 'Western double standard' of recognizing only the suffering of Holocaust victims, while denying the same from the victims of communism whom they self-proclaimed to represent. They revolted against the European system biased by a Westernism disguised as universal.

Since anti-integration voices were silenced on both sides, the game of mutual delegitimation was strictly limited so as not to threaten the game itself. The politics of recognizing communism as a victimizing system destabilized but did not change the conditions of legitimacy: it was acknowledged as a constituent historical legacy of European identity without denying the primary significance of the Holocaust. This tacit political agreement of 'live and let live' was codified in the 2009 EP resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism. With this document, the EU legitimizes the binary political space with its acknowledgement that 'the dominant historical experience of Western Europe was Nazism, and (…) Central and Eastern European countries have experienced both Communism and Nazism,' and speaks of the 'double legacy of dictatorship borne by these countries' (EP, 2009). Though the memory of Communism is recognized as European, the resolution also declares that 'the uniqueness of the Holocaust must nevertheless be acknowledged.' The drive behind the resolution is clearly to unite Europe, which necessitates 'form[ing] a common view of its history,' yet it respects internal differences such as an east-west divide of historical legacies of past suffering. Second, the political repositioning led to the escalation of victimization. The 'common view of history' called for in the resolution has been restricted to the 'tragic past' conceived of as human rights violations. In this view of the past, potential moral judgement can only differentiate between criminalized totalitarian regimes of whatever ideology on the one hand, and the conglomerate of suffering innocent individuals on the other. Although the heroes of the Resistance are mentioned in the resolution, the only memory community this policy permits to construct is the collectivity of victims, the boundaries of which are demarcated by pure human suffering. As the document clearly puts it, 'from the perspective of the victims it is immaterial which regime deprived them of their liberty or tortured or murdered them for whatever reason.'

The tacit memory political agreement attempted to square the circle, as it allowed for the geographical division of an allegedly universal historic memory. This nonaggression pact, in our view, reflects less a genuine process of working through in which parties could genuinely contrast and reconcile their historic experience of conflict and injustice than the mutual interest in silencing these contrasts.

From the integrator viewpoint, the tacit agreement would read as follows: if you let me declare the primacy of the Holocaust and define the victim-perpetrator narrative and the universal equal dignity of all victims as the ultimate moral code (which means you will refuse to return to the dark and barbaric tradition of relativizing the Holocaust, elevating national memory above that of other nations, and questioning equal dignity on racial or national grounds) – then I will invite you to narrate your history in the same universal language. I will give you respect as a victim of Evil, a freedom fighter against Evil, and a historic family member who now 'returns' to its natural community. I will not delegitimize your specific self-representation as a victim of Communism (I don't consider this a relativization of the Holocaust). The same deal, read from the Eastern perspective, goes like this: if we follow the rules of the universal moral order of recognition and don't challenge the uniqueness of the Holocaust, we will be adopted as legitimate political subjects into the European family, not only as collective victims who deserve sympathy, but also as collective heroes who have proved their democratic commitment as they risked their lives against the region's universal Evil. If we respect your (the West's) right to regulate common European historic memory in the framework of the mutual recognition of victimhood and of anti-totalitarian virtue, we expect you to respect our right to position ourselves as double victims of the Communist and the Nazi evil at the same time, and as genuinely democratic nations.

The above tacit agreement may be read along the line of Schimmelfennig's analysis (2001) about the broader EU integration process: here, too, declared cohesion has been enforced in acts of 'silencing' that appeared to be mutually beneficial, but resulted in a common 'entrapment' of accomplices rather than a genuine integration of willing partners. In the discourses about a new Europe, as Traverso ironically stated, 'the West has had a makeover, almost a new virginity. If Nazism and Communism are the bitter enemies of the West, the latter ceases to be their cradle so it can become their victim, with liberalism assuming the role of its redeemer' (Traverso, 2005: 90–91). There is no need to say that the East was just as happy as the West to declare its historic virginity. The tacit memory political pact, in other words, allowed both sides to silence the messy constellation of historical, political, and economic controversies that would threaten the declared narrative of common European identity. The universalist recognition political framework empowered all parties to enact this 'silencing' and thus to commit the symbolic violence they needed to declare their genuine Europeanness.

With their tacit agreement, the integrators and the integrated entrapped themselves in complicit wedlock, as they mutually authorized each other to speak from the position of innocence in every conflictual situation and associate their

opponents with oppressive evil forces. The tacit agreement opened space for aggressive forms of symbolic representation: at the moment, a representative speaks directly from the position of a represented victim whose suffering is unique and experience is unchallengeable, they become protected from any challenge, since potential opponents are automatically catapulted to the side of Evil.

In Eastern Europe, during the decades of liberal hegemony between 1989 and 2008, the above-described mechanism allowed for the silencing of controversy on the grounds of liberal common sense: critics of intense privatization, multinationals, international capital or NATO membership could almost automatically be debunked as anti-European, uncivilized, sympathizers of devilish régimes (nationalist or Communist). By contrast, today when the liberal hegemony is crumbling in each of its constitutive fields, illiberals are taking the lead and exploiting the delegitimating potential and symbolic violence that is inherent in recognition political discourse.

4. Radicalizing reappropriation

On the whole, the anti-totalitarian memory political pact that buttressed the symbolic unification of Europe – by silencing the tensions of the past and the present and declaring an antitotalitarian consensus – has greatly shaped the language in which tensions related to the Union can be discussed and debated. This representational language urges debating parties to use the codes of victim and perpetrator to describe themselves as the victimized, bullied, genuinely democratic representatives of a legitimate European system. The same code allows actors to debunk their opponents as illegitimate, anti-European usurpators with tyrannical inspirations. Debates about Europe have decayed to a mutual delegitimation game, in which all parties can dress their economic and power interests in the clothes of declared victimhood: respect given but not received, displays of genuine democratic legitimacy, and the rejection of tyranny.

This is the result of the reluctant antitotalitarian consensus which, in the short term, seemed to be a win-win platform: Western integrators felt they could enforce their universalist memory discourse, and Easterners also felt they could make hay out of equal recognition as victims of Communism. However, the resulting consensus about a Union made of antitotalitarian victims entrapped all parts into a highly unstable delegitimation game in which the very foundations of the European system are being questioned all the time. This common entrapment turned out once again to be damaging to the once-hegemonic liberal center, the enemies of which have learned to speak the liberal discourse of recognition as their native language – reciting the centuries-old liberal trope of popular self-government, and legitimating with the principle of equal recognition their natural right to autocratic domination in the name of their peoples.

The illiberal reappropriation of recognition political norms is clearly radicalized when the narrative of the country as a collective victim of totalitarianism is expanded to all contemporary political debates, with the logical conclusion that all opponents of the victim-nation must stand on the side of

universal evil. Today, the Hungarian far-right uses the liberal recognition political ground to debunk the liberals of Brussels as a totalitarian evil (either Nazi-like, or Stalinist).

Ironically, the Hungarian extreme right has reappropriated liberal language and learned how to use it to play the Nazi card – this precious symbolic weapon that has traditionally been used by liberals. In a recent interview, the Speaker of the Hungarian parliament compared the contemporary EU to the collapsing Third Reich, and Brussels leadership to the Führerbunker.

> The globalist staff sitting in the Brussels bunker no more believes in victory. They have realized their plan has collapsed, they are losing their positions, they go on the defensive, and yet, or just because of it, they are losing all their good sense and continue the war at any cost, even at the price of destroying the union. They are waiting for the ultimate weapon, the *Wunderwaffe,* which is at this moment Article Seven, that they hope will bring them the ultimate victory. (Szentesi Zöldi, 2020)

This absurd parallel is not solely acting-out, but part of a concerted operation in which government aides and actors play the Nazi card against their opponents. In the weeks during which the above interview was published, the spring of 2020, a government-sponsored online journal falsely called out Donald Tusk concerning his 'Nazi grandfather' (explanation: as President of the European People's Party, Tusk is for expelling Fidesz). Although this is certainly not the first time that the Nazi blame game has been reappropriated by extremists – think of Rush Limbaugh coining the term 'feminazi' in the early 1990s – what is certainly new is that, in our case, illiberal reappropriation is being performed on the seemingly universalist grounds of recognition politics.

Rogers Brubaker has recently explored the convergence of Western European extreme-right parties within a shared civilizational platform against the threat of a totalitarian Islam. Envisioning Europe as a secularized Christian civilization that is based on the value of tolerance and equal dignity, many extreme-right parties perform 'an ostensibly liberal defense of gender equality, gay rights, and freedom of speech' (Brubaker, 2017: 3). Brubaker draws a line between Western and Eastern Europe with good reason: in their biopolitical stance, Western extremists are a suffragette movement, in comparison to the Eastern 'extreme center.' However, on the terrain of memory political and European identity struggles, the Eastern right does not trail behind at all in performing 'illiberal invocations of liberalism' (ibid.). On the contrary: this is a genuine invention of legitimate, Europeanized, universal language with which to perform one's national freedom fight against the totalitarian European Empire.

The tacit memory political pact that established the mutual recognition of victimhood, the memory of Holocaust and Communism, and an anti-totalitarian consensus as the identity political foundations of European unification has created a dysfunctional and highly vulnerable setting. In the European house, liberal and autocratic régimes and forces clash and cooperate with each other in a state of

common 'entrapment,' desperately trying to enforce their own vision of Europeanness and shared fundamental values. The anti-totalitarian consensus and universal respect have never been more than camouflage – and today, illiberal political entrepreneurs are unleashing one part of the silenced controversies in order to universalize their own interests under the liberal auspices of the mutual recognition of free European nations. This symbolic battle explains why the vision of a shared European civilizational heritage is gaining such a firm hold over all the actors, liberal and illiberal, at the very moment when a severely dysfunctional Union is closer to the brink of disintegration than ever in its history.

5. The power of foundationalist representation

Recognition political discourse is neither liberal, nor identitarian, nor autocratic: we interpret it as a 'foundationalist' – and thus, as a potentially anti-democratic and 'speculative' (Csigó, 2016) – form of representation. Twentieth-century representative democracy was based on a democratic corporatist model of political representation in which the essence of political struggle lay in the competition of organized mass-scale social coalitions for the scarce resources of society (Touraine, 1997). These social coalitions were formed around the 'well-founded fiction' of the social class (Bourdieu, 1987) – emergent aesthetic proposals which balanced out the aspirations of members and representatives, proposals that no singular actor had the privilege to declare directly – as they existed mostly in the form of a silent 'inner voice' (Ankersmit, 2002: 133–163) that all interested parts could hear spontaneously emerge from the cacophony of negotiations and conflicts that constitute the mass-scale representation process. This 'inner voice' of democracy, however, has been lost in the transition of the past decades to a new, ('popular,' 'populist' [Mair, 2002], 'plebiscitary' [Ankersmit, 2002]) representational régime. In this régime, political struggles are fought for other stakes and with other means: here, elite actors ('cartel parties' [Katz and Mair, 1995], political personalities, lobbies, corporations, and NGOs) compete via popular campaigns and lobby for the power of unilaterally declaring, in the form of state regulation, a compulsory universal moral and legal order that all actors are expected to respect and comply with. The new régime has been built on the 'foundationalist' assumption that it is possible to represent the fundamental interests of a 'disorganized' society directly, right at the point of state regulation.

While the new representational régime did indeed emerge in parallel with the contraction of mass representative organizations – the old 'corps intermediaires' of social democracy –, on another plane it developed in continuity with the social democratic model of governance. The social democratic Welfare State, as Claus Offe has shown (Offe and Keane, 1985; Offe, 2006; for a review see Lash, 2006), was not simply a corporatist power broker between the best organized central groups in society. The welfare state acted equally as a universal regulator of social life and stepped up in defense of the disorganized peripheries of society. The representatives of the disorganized groups were inevitably elite civil society players whose prime resource did not lie in mass organizations and organized

masses, but in their direct access to the regulatory powers of the protective state from which they hoped for legal and fiscal defense against social oppression and marginalization. The representatives of 'disorganized interest groups' were able to enter politics in the direct vicinity of the state as elite actors themselves, struggling for access to the state's power of legally codifying what they promoted as the universal, morally just order of the whole community. If on the plane of party politics the old mass party model certainly did surrender to 'cartel parties' and political personalities and their technocratic rule, 'disorganized interest groups' and their elite civil representatives survived in the form of social movements and NGOs and struggled to 'manag[e] democracy' (Skocpol, 2003) through codifying the recognition of marginality into law.

It is certainly not a coincidence that in the historic period when the anti-foundationalist system of mass representative democracy surrendered to a new 'populist' or 'plebiscitary' régime, the system of representing historical experiences equally underwent thorough institutional transformation. The institutional walls between political and historical representation have been torn down and, in the new, historicized public space, new actors have appeared on stage (Habermas, 1988; Nora, 2011). In this memory political scene, the focusing of attention on Holocaust victims was structurally homologous to the above-described process, in which the focus of political representation shifted from the mass organized central groups of society to the 'disorganized interest groups' of the periphery and the elite civil representatives campaigning for them.

After WWII, the main political actors of historical memory formed a coalition of those who could claim to be part, in some way or another, of the historic victory over Fascism: resistance fighters, leftists, political prisoners, racial persecutees, intellectuals, everymen who resisted in their private lives. These actors spoke from the position of the central, self-organized makers of history who, after the horrors of the past, chose to serve further as remembering witnesses, adversaries of Fascism, adding their own particular perspective to the common anti-Fascist cause, gathering in national and international associations, witnessing in tribunals, journals, and schools, and forming 'social coalitions.' Even though the Cold War had disrupted the fragile anti-Fascist consensus of the war years by the end of the 1940s (Lagrou, 1999), until the 1970s the representation of historical experiences was institutionally embedded and particular on all sides. This representational regime functioned in an institutional framework in which historical experiences were referred to in relation to particular problems by various institutional players of justice, politics, history, or education.

The systemic change of the institutional field of historical representation, which is often described as a transition from history to memory, can be best analyzed as a shift from witness to victim. In the context of justice, for example, one can observe how the representation of historical experience had been institutionally disembedded by the fourth quarter of the twentieth century. In the post-war period, the witness, testifying typically in the courtroom, represented historical truth from a particular perspective defined by the given case. Arguably, the Eichmann trial constituted a turning point in this regard due to its politics of

witness recruitment based not on the connection to the past deeds of the accused, but to the dramatic demonstration of the Holocaust as a whole (Yablonka, 2004). The new regime of authenticity has been based on the suffering body of the suffering individual victim whose 'biolegitimacy' (Fassin and D'Halluin, 2005) is apparently universally shared.

The shift from the witness to the victim marks a definitive thread in the paradigmatic change of the political representation of history. In the new model, attention is focused on the institutionally disembedded 'testimony' of the victim about a 'lived through' bodily experience. A victim's experience of past injustice is no longer seen as a particular, perspectivist narrative of a witness that is connected to a particular 'case,' and narrated in particular institutional settings for particular reasons (judicial, educational, literary, associational) but the direct demonstration of a universal truth. The peripheral, traumatized, passive, disempowered victim is given voice by an initiated elite representative who asserts in their name a just moral order and a legitimate systemic order for the present-day remembering community (Zombory, 2019).

The traumatic and victimized modality of historic experience in the recognition political framework serves to short-circuit what Ankersmit calls the 'radical brokenness of political reality.' If liberal-universalist (and radical progressivist) versions of recognition politics are in trouble today, this is arguably because they are interlocked with illiberal reactionaries in a common anti-democratic trap in which all actors seek to unilaterally declare the just moral order and evade democratic debate with the properly selected historic narratives that inevitably drift apart from historical reality through universalization. Directly defining the moral foundations of the political community and the legitimate systemic order that follows from these foundations – this is the prime temptation of antidemocratic political representation, liberal or antiliberal, in today's age of recognition. This antidemocratic temptation has been fully served by seemingly universalistic narratives about the historic experience of totalitarianism which have established fake ground for 'universal mutual respect,' but in fact served to veil power games – and illiberals and autocrats have gradually learnt how to win these power games right on the liberal 'homeground' of universal recognition.

6. Conclusion

The illiberal reappropriation of the liberal universalist memory political discourse radicalizes a dynamic that has been present in all recognition political struggles, whereby the individualistic, formal, rights-focused streams of mainstream liberalism have clashed with forces seeking to empower oppressed communities beyond the formal equalization of rights. We have shown how illiberals can exploit this dynamic, turn it against the core liberal principles of equal rights and dignity, and use it to justify the autocracy's natural right to dominate.

The illiberal reappropriation covered in this study unveils the vulnerability of a typical recognition political strategy that seeks to preemptively win political wars by laying down the universal foundations on the ground of which all further

political controversies should be articulated. This strategy, no doubt, entails symbolic violence and declares one's right to domination. In our case, the proponents of this strategy – the Western liberal integrators and many of their Eastern integrationist partners who also sought to preemptively 'civilize' their countries (and forget about the possible colonizing instincts of the West) – may have drawn all parties into engaging with universalist liberal declarations, which may have temporarily silenced controversies. However, today we see these returning in an even more threatening and less controllable (because they are seemingly liberal, legitimate, sellable, convincing) forms.

The more its tropes are used by liberals, progressives, and illiberals alike, the more apparent it becomes that recognition politics is not an ideological formation but a symptom of a broader structural transformation in the institutional system of representation that shapes the articulation of all thinkable ideological positions. The case therefore is not simply that, as Taylor proposed 25 years ago, a 'politics of difference' would 'grow organically out of the politics of universal dignity,' since these two, together with the repressive-illiberal forms of recognition politics that reject universal dignity, have all grown out of a new representational régime that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Recognition politics is part of this broader constellation and its dysfunctions can only be understood in the context of the broader structural ills of representation in contemporary democracy.

We have argued in this paper that no natural alliance exists between liberalism and the discourse of recognition, the rise of which is related only indirectly to ideology, as its direct roots lie in a new institutional régime of political representation that emerged in the seventies and eighties and took the place of the former class- (and social cleavage-) based representation régime of post-WWII social democracy. These institutional transformations have allowed the rise of seemingly universalist, but in fact foundationalist and perspectivist, discourses that took over the fields of political and historical representation. The foundationalist logic of the post-class representational régime urges actors to justify their actions with universalistic moral declarations, which means evading the democratic procedures of will formation, bargaining, and accountability. In the current régime of post-class representation, mainstream liberal and progressive radical forms of recognition politics are equally urged to give in to the antidemocratic temptation of arbitrarily declaring their particularistic moral rules as universally valid – and illiberals and extremists are more than happy to join them on this path and fight their struggle against universal dignity on the very recognition political platform that announces it.

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CRISTIAN CERCEL *

Towards a Disentanglement of the Links between the Memory Boom and the Neoliberal Turn

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 27-42.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.630
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

The memory boom and the related emergence of cosmopolitan victimhood-centred memories, increasingly criticized for depoliticizing the past and thus contributing to the depoliticization of the present, have been simultaneous with the curtailment of the welfare state, the abandonment of the politics of redistribution, the erosion of social and economic rights, and the growth in social and economic inequalities. Yet if the latter are often being considered to be among the reasons leading to the current right-wing populist wave in Europe and elsewhere or at least are seen as entangled therewith, the relevance of the memory boom for these developments has not been properly interrogated.

Against this background, this contribution makes a plea for a critical appreciation of the linkages between the memory boom and the global ascension of neoliberalism. It acknowledges the contemporaneity of the two phenomena, which have been fundamentally informing our present age, roughly since the end of the 1970s, and calls for a critical engagement with their interwoven character. In doing this, it argues that scholarship should pay particular attention to the relationship between past, present, and future that the neoliberal turn in its various shapes and guises implies, as well as to the regimes of temporality that underlie various instantiations of the memory boom. It ends by taking heed of recent theorizations in memory studies and by asking to what extent can they be used in order to have a better grasp of the critical juncture we are currently lying at and to contribute to a radical change of the political status quo. Thus, the article makes some preliminary steps towards disentangling the interconnections between the memory boom and the neoliberal turn, and aims to provide a blueprint for a substantial future research project that should look in depth at these entanglements.[1]

Keywords: *memory, neoliberalism.*

[1] Author's note: I am making a similar argument in an article entitled 'Whither Politics, Whither Memory?', forthcoming in *Modern Languages Open*, doi: https://doi.org/10.3828/mlo.v0i0.334. The two texts borrow from each other.

1. Memory and neoliberalism: Concurrent unfoldings

What links the memory boom and the neoliberal turn? I suggest that in order to make sense of the entanglements between the two one has to look closely at the relationship between past, present, and future. The argument I am offering for consideration is that both the memory boom and the neoliberal turn – particularly in their (Eastern) European instantiations – are to a large extent underpinned by a contraction of temporal political horizons, characterized by the absence of future-oriented politics.

The connections between the two are visible on several levels, including both connections between neoliberalism and the memory boom as a historical phenomenon as well as between neoliberalism and scholarship on memory and memory politics. The analytical vocabulary frequently employed when researching and discussing issues related to historical memory is imbued with expressions which largely appertain to the corporativist-marketizing-neoliberal jargon. Literature speaks for example about the 'management of the past' (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996; Abou Assi, 2010) or about 'memory governance' (Hourcade, 2015: 95), the actors involved in this process of management are seen as 'mnemonic/memory entrepreneurs' (e.g. Levy and Sznaider, 2010: 136; Kubik and Bernhard, 2014: 9, 25; Jelin, 2003; Abou Assi, 2010; Sierp and Wüstenberg, 2015; Neumeyer, 2017) or 'memory stakeholders' (Hourcade, 2015: 93). Furthermore, steered by such entrepreneurs or stakeholders, memories and memory discourses are often understood as being in a state of competition with each other and hence vying for pre-eminence, even if important critical pleas against such interpretative frameworks have also been brought to the fore (Rothberg, 2009). Last but not least, the past framed as memory is marketized and consumed (Brunk, Giesler and Hartmann, 2018). The 'desire for the past' unfolds within 'memory markets' (Huyssen, 2003: 21).

Furthermore, any attempts whatsoever to look at the historical development of the memory boom in relationship with the advent of what is critically called 'neoliberalism' would have to acknowledge the concurrent character of the two phenomena. The global spread of the preoccupation with the past formulated by means of a mnemonic vocabulary and the institutionalization of a neoliberal approach in political and economic policies and practices became salient roughly in the same time span, that is towards the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s (Harvey, 2007: 2; Olick and Robbins, 1998: 107). They subsequently gained in intensity throughout the following decades. Thus, the mnemonic turn and the neoliberal turn were both potentiated by the contemporaneous dissolution of authoritarian regimes all across the globe, i.e. in Latin America, in Eastern Europe (including the bloody dismemberment of Yugoslavia), or in South Africa. Against this background, the apparently uncontested triumph of liberal democracy has been accompanied by an increase in the interest in memory issues and in processes of dealing and coming to terms with the past on the one hand and by the intensified dissemination and

institutionalization of neoliberal ideas and practices in the political and economic realms on the other hand.

In the 1990s, the scope of political transformations appeared to definitively sanction the success of liberal capitalism, which could (at least for a while) free itself from the discourse of crisis and malaise that had been largely underpinning it in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. For liberal observers in need of some reasons to be enthused, history had abruptly and perhaps unexpectedly reached its end. Francis Fukuyama's famous and, with hindsight, much too optimistic dictum, had become common currency in the 1990s (Fukuyama, 1992). However, if history had allegedly come to its end, it seemed that all that remained – on both the public and the private level – was 'to give oneself to the multiple subjectivities of memory' (Niven and Berger, 2014: 5). Thus, over the past three decades, memory and neoliberalism became key elements of hegemonic discourses, practices, and politics.[2]

Public and political claims became increasingly concerned with the past rather than with the present or the future. In Eastern Europe, '[t]he range of memory practices adopted after 1989, especially by elites, was a continental novelty' (Mark, 2010: xiii). In Southern European countries such as Portugal, Spain, or Greece, the breakup with the authoritarian right-wing past furnishes at first glance a slightly distinct image, with the tension between memory, the surfeit of (official) forgetting, and neoliberalism appearing to be configured rather differently. Nonetheless, despite differences, largely all across Europe and even beyond, memory projects, public condemnations of the past, and various transitional justice processes and mechanisms revolved around the articulation of a 'new rights culture', indebted to the human rights paradigm as a 'last utopia' (Huyssen, 2015: 29; Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 5; Moyn, 2012; Grosescu, Baby and Niemeyer, 2019).

The memory boom is intrinsically linked with the growing interest for the memory of the Holocaust. In the footsteps of developments and evolutions occurring already in the 1970s and 1980s, the memory of the Holocaust acquired a global dimension, and with it came a growing focalization on the figures of the victim and of the witness (Novick, 2000; Eder, 2016; Levy and Sznaider, 2006; Chaumont, 2010; Wievorka, 2006). Yet the mnemonic institutionalization as well as the extraterritorialization of the Holocaust therewith related largely imply its depoliticization and decontextualization, its abstractization, its transformation into a moralizing story of perpetrators (and bystanders) against victims, of Good against Evil (Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 4). Along these lines, the Holocaust also turned into something resembling a template – rather imperfect, to say the least – for many other processes of and pleas for dealing with the past, informing human rights thinking and reparation processes (Torpey, 2006: 159). The

[2] In this context, the Latin American case is perhaps particularly interesting, since Chile has been the laboratory of neoliberal governance under the right-wing dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. The end of the dictatorship and the transition to liberal democracy have been on the one hand associated with a salience of memory issues, while on the other hand they did not imply getting rid of neoliberalism as a political and economic project (Poblete, 2015).

institutionalization of the memory of the Holocaust has been and continues to be a multifaceted process, also having straightforward political dimensions at the European level, as well as beyond. The official embrace of the memory of the Shoah was perceived in Eastern European countries as a necessary condition in order to enter the European Union (Judt, 2005: 803; Kucia, 2016). Yet such an embrace was bound to lead to discussions related to these societies' own participation in the Holocaust and to tensions between the memory of the Holocaust and the memory of the Gulag. Furthermore, often distinctly drawing on the memory of the Holocaust, a humanitarian paradigm of human rights – generally centred on political and cultural rights rather than on social and economic rights and largely emphasizing the need for international interventions in humanitarian catastrophic emergencies – as well as a culture of trauma and victimhood emerged, expressed by means of a depoliticized humanitarian vocabulary (Moyn, 2012; 2017: 103–113; Fassin, 2012). The Holocaust provided 'the foundations for a new cosmopolitan memory' (Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 4).

The increasing juridification and legal treatment of the recent and less recent past, taking for example the form of memory laws, is another process characterizing the memory boom (Koposov, 2018; Teitel, 2000). The apparently belated quest to bring WWII perpetrators to justice in the name of human rights and of the imprescriptibility of crimes against humanity, is an important aspect of this process as well (Hartog, 2015: 201). The debates about whether or how to symbolically (by means of gestures, apologies etc.) and legally come to terms with the past and to repair past injustices have clearly gained centre stage over the past three to four decades (Barkan, 2000; Olick, 2007).

Throughout the same period of time with this increasing interest in and relevance of memory, the broad range of processes that are usually bundled together under the umbrella-term 'neoliberalism' have also become part and parcel of economic, social, and political life. Following the electoral successes of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States, the term 'neoliberalism' as such 'increased sharply in usage in the 1980s, and even more so in the 1990s'. At a global level, the term got to be associated with the so-called 'Washington Consensus' (Reinhoudt and Audier, 2018: 4). Concretely, the neoliberal turn has been characterized by the a concerted attack against Keynesianism, translated into the dismantlement of the welfare state and hence of the social consensus (or perhaps compromise) whose backbone was the welfare state, the glorification of privatizations and liberalization of markets as the solution to economic woes, especially against the background of the apparent failure of state socialism in Eastern Europe, and the move towards a financial capitalism.

The increase in social and economic inequalities at both the national and the global levels is associated with the hegemonization of the Thatcherite TINA (There Is No Alternative) dictum. Eastern European countries morphed into the playground of neoliberal shock therapies presented as a necessary and inescapable element of the transition to democracy (Ther, 2016). In this context, an unprecedented transfer of property from public to private ownership took place,

most often legitimized by the idea that the injustices committed by state socialist regimes have to be undone. At the same time, the range of political options at hand greatly narrowed, as no political actors seemed willing to see beyond the political horizon informed by the 'triad of liberalization, deregulation and privatization' (Ther, 2016: 17).

In Western Europe, the social-democratic parties continued to move closer to and eventually to almost appropriate the neoliberal mindset of the centre-right. Such parties played an important role in the dismantlement of the welfare state and in the adoption of entrepreneurship-friendly policies. Thus, the differences between Left and Right got increasingly blurred and irrelevant. Tony Blair's New Labour in the United Kingdom and Gerhard Schröder's Social-Democrats in (unified) Germany are perhaps the best exemplifications of this turn, but in effect no traditional mass Western European left-wing party has escaped the phenomenon. Keynesianism at the level of the nation state and ideas of redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor largely stopped being part of the repertoire of political and economic options at hand. Furthermore, what came instead has not been an illusory transnational Keynesianism, but on the contrary, an accentuated shift towards neoliberal transnational governance. Thus, in Europe, '[s]overeignty shifted decisively to EU's unwieldy and undemocratic institutional frame' (Eley, 2002: 408). Fundamentally, the apparent global success of liberal democracy that Fukuyama's hastily announced 'end of history' assumed meant the consolidation and geographic extension of the neoliberal paradigm shift that had been gaining leverage since the 1980s.

Yet it has to be underlined that neoliberalism as such stands in effect for something qualitatively different and broader than just a set of social and economic policies. It stands for a new type of reason and a new type of production of subjects. Thus, in neoliberalism, subjectivities and social relations are essentially remade according to entrepreneurial patterns. Contemporary neoliberal rationality 'configures human beings exhaustively as market actors, always, only, and everywhere as homo oeconomicus' (Brown, 2015: 31; Foucault, 2008; Bowsher, 2018).

Thus, the linguistic contamination exemplified at the beginning of this introduction reveals itself to be the symptom of a complex interwoven relationship of concurrence between the so-called memory boom and the triumphant march of neoliberalism. This relationship has not been subjected to an in-depth analytical treatment. At this stage, it is also worth emphasizing that the intellectual origins of neoliberalism and of what we would call today memory studies are also traceable to the same period: the interwar, when French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs engaged with the concept of 'collective memory' (Niven and Berger, 2014: 3), while economists such as Walter Eucken or Friedrich Hayek started developing the economic and political theories that are at the basis of contemporary neoliberalism (Biebricher, 2018; Slobodian, 2018). The particular political and social context of the post-World War I era heading towards another catastrophic conflagration was key for both sets of elaborations. Furthermore, at least at the European level, the West German postwar Ordoliberalism has been identified as setting the stage in

the aftermath of the Second World War for the subsequent embrace of neoliberalism in the final decades of the twentieth century (Foucault, 2008). Similarly, the West German preoccupation for dealing or coming to terms with the past, first emerging in intellectual circles in the late 1950s and early 1960s has paved the way for the subsequent institutionalization of coming to terms with the past as a moral and political desideratum. These considerations are to a certain extent speculative, yet it might not be far-fetched to investigate whether some sources of the entangled and concurrent character of the memory boom and the neoliberal turn can perhaps be found in effect in the intellectual history of the two paradigms.

2. Entanglements: Lines of research

The existing literature foraying into the relationship between memory and neoliberalism has proposed different ways of looking at their synchronicity, thus indicating several research avenues that it would be worth pursuing in a more concerted manner in order to disentangle the apparent knots. One line of research emphasized for example that the assimilation of the economy to a mathematical model, typical of the neoliberal logic, presupposes that social groups do not call for redistribution, as such calls would constitute an unwanted and unwarranted intervention in the operations of neoliberalism. In this context, the function of the focalization on memory is that of muffling potential redistributive calls (Koposov, 2018: 57; see also Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006). In a similar vein, another line of research, which looks in depth at the relationship between transitional justice and neoliberalism argued that the memory work that transitional justice implies looks for a technically understood consensus that is supposed to bring societies together, without in any way attempting to interrogate socio-economic power relations, structures of inequality, systemic and structural violence. Thus, 'it sketches out the conditions for a present where the antagonisms wrought by the economic relations of production' are not seen in any way as relevant and hence are not critically addressed (Bowsher, 2018: 104). Furthermore, processes of juridification – underlying the functioning of both transitional justice and neoliberalism – are also an indication of the interwoven character of transitional justice (or memory as transitional justice) and neoliberalism (Bowsher, 2018; see also Bugarič, 2016).

The contemporaneity of the memory boom and of the neoliberal turn has also been accounted for by situating it in the broader context of the dissolution of the post-war consensus, whose cornerstones were economic Keynesianism and an official antifascism at the level of the politics of the past.[3] Seeing the two as tightly

[3] In this context, it is worth quoting from an extensive review of Pierre Nora's famous *Lieux de mémoire* project. The multivolume work was published between 1984 and 1992 in France: 'Surely every aspect of today's "crise identitaire" has been accompanied—indeed, all but occasioned—by foreign developments, from the ending of the "trente glorieuses" (three decades of prosperity and comparative social peace) to the diminution of French sovereignty attendant on integration into the new Europe to, above all, the painful social dislocation brought on by increased Islamic immigration

related, historian Dan Stone (2014) has pointed out how memory politics and socio-economic change are inextricably linked.[4] A great merit of his narrative also lies in the emphasis he places on the far-right's re-emergence in Western Europe in the 1980s, connecting this phenomenon with the challenges undermining the official memories of war and fascism and thus with the re-articulation of memory beyond ossified antifascism. The fall of state socialism in Eastern Europe gave another boost to this reconfiguration (Stone, 2014). However, the more profound answers related to the deep causes and reasons of the synchronic dissolution, empirically documented, of economic Keynesianism and mnemonic antifascism – are not easily extractable from Stone's otherwise highly readable and engaging account. The study does nonetheless indicate that the past and its memory have increasingly turned into a key arena of politics over roughly the past thirty years. It looks almost as if the potential conflicts related to the neoliberalization of the present are predominantly couched in or also in mnemonic terms, as they take the form of conflicts over the past.

Arguments about the orientation towards the past play an important role in other analytic accounts as well, such as the one by John Torpey (2006), where this orientation is placed in connection to the disappearance of future-oriented politics. The global proliferation of reparations politics whose fundamental aim is that of 'making whole what has been smashed', in Torpey's apt formulation, is presented in his work as inextricably linked with or even as a symptom of the 'unmistakable decline of a more explicitly future-oriented politics' (Torpey, 2006: 5). To a large extent, Torpey suggests, contemporary politics looks more often towards the past rather than towards the future and functions almost as if it had a redemptory goal. Transformative future-oriented projects, normally associated with the political left, have stopped being on the political agenda: 'For many people, even those who would unblinkingly regard themselves as progressives, the past has extensively replaced the future as the temporal horizon in which to think about politics' (Torpey, 2006: 18). In a similar vein, even if they do not focus exclusively on memory-related issues, other critical accounts also point out the disappearance of a future redolent of promises, hopes, possibilities, and potentialities, as the temporal horizon of politics, against the background of the bankruptcy of ideologies and of hope-laden utopias, of the decline of the idea of progress (replaced by the cult of the new as a value in itself, no matter how useless or futile), and of the acceleration of politics and society (Taguieff, 2000; Leccardi, 2011; Hassan, 2009; Hartog, 2017).

Yet this cancellation of the future did not bring with itself only an apparent political, social, and cultural focalization on the past and the mobilization for

and the related, profoundly embarrassing, political backlash that is the National Front.' (Englund, 1992: 301)

[4] Historian Enzo Traverso (2016: 10) poignantly summed up one of the main characteristics of the phenomenon, namely the mnemonic turn towards victimhood: 'The memory of the Gulag erased that of revolution, the memory of the Holocaust replaced that of antifascism, and the memory of slavery eclipsed that of anticolonialism: the remembrance of the victims seems unable to coexist with the recollection of their hopes, of their struggles, of their conquests and their defeats.'

acknowledgment of past wrongdoings and for redress of past injustices. It also came together with a reconsideration of the articulation of the relationship between past, present, and future, a reconsideration best captured by what French historian François Hartog called 'presentism'. If the (short) twentieth century stood largely under the aegis of futurism and of future-oriented politics, starting with its last third, the 'present began replacing the future and encroaching further and further until, in recent years, it has seemed to take over entirely. The viewpoint of the present–the perspective of presentism–has established its dominion' (Hartog, 2017: 108). Hartog has argued that 'presentism' and the memory boom are closely linked. The present 'in the very moment of its occurrence, seeks to view itself as already history, already past', self-historicizes itself almost instantly (Hartog, 2017: 114, 193). At the same time, memory is fundamentally about the construction and interpretation of the past 'in and for the present' (Szpunar and Szpunar, 2016: 381).

The never-ending present underlies both the preoccupation for memory and the neoliberal ethos. The two practically reinforce each other (Traverso, 2016; see also Koposov, 2018: 53–57).[5] Hence, one should not fall into the easy trap of regarding presentism and the aforementioned orientation towards the past as contradictory. Presentism is connected with both past and future, is a 'suspended time between an unmasterable past and a denied future, between a "past that won't go away" and a future that cannot be invented or predicted (except in terms of catastrophe)' (Traverso, 2016: 8). The never-ending present is the past being reified, being turned into a commodity or into debt, it is an indebted present without an outward-looking perspective, which makes the future either impossible or simply irrelevant (Traverso, 2016, 8; Hartog, 2015: 193–204; Taguieff, 2000).

3. Past, present and future

The aforementioned explanations and tentative research directions definitely have their merits. Nonetheless, they seem to be speculatively circling around over the crux of the issue. They thus rather loosen and not completely disentangle the knots that appear to inextricably tie the memory boom and the neoliberal turn, as well as other related processes and phenomena. This piece does not aim to undertake such a complete disentanglement, but rather to recognize its necessity and to lay another stone onto a road that in effect still waits to be paved.

It pays off bringing to the foreground questions related to time, temporality, and historicity as they can provide a relevant vantage point from which to address the linkage between the memory boom and the neoliberal turn. The implicit or explicit construction of the relationship between past, present, and future is quintessential for memory discourses and practices. Yet the experience and the social construction of time and hence of the triadic relationship between past, present, and future, is also at the core of the transformations that neoliberalism has

[5] In exchange, in a recent interview, Andreas Huyssen (2018) suggested that memory and neoliberalism stand in mutual opposition: 'If anything, the memory boom of the 1980s and of the 1990s stood in clear opposition to the idealization of an eternal present of global financialization and neoliberalism.'

been producing. The neoliberal turn involves a transformation in thinking of and in constructing time. In this context, it would be both counter-intuitive and fundamentally fallacious to ignore the intense preoccupation with memory – fundamentally a preoccupation with time, on a scale that surpasses previous similar preoccupations – that has been accompanying this turn.

Time in neoliberal capitalism is the fluid time of constant change, indebted to the cult of the new for the sake of newness, it is the time where the future already seems to be swallowed by the never-ending present. It is the time of (hyper)acceleration and (hyper)speed. Industrialism and modernity were themselves marked by acceleration, but this was still an acceleration politically held in check. The temporality they nurtured was forward-looking and indebted to the idea of progress, to the representation of a future in the process of being built. In exchange, the move towards neoliberal capitalism implies an almost unlimited expansion of the speed (and space) of capital, in the name of an abstract market ideal, presented as consensual, yet far from being so (Hassan, 2009). The future got subsumed to the desiderata of the present. Against this background, politics constructs the past instead of the future.

By normatively establishing the primacy of the economic over the political (even if the way this primacy is configured might differ from case to case) and by situating us in a never-ending present, neoliberalism rejects the future as project and hence any potential future-oriented political or social struggle whose underlying aim is that of questioning this pre-eminence (see also Taguieff, 2000). Critical literature on neoliberalism argues that the future inscribed in the neoliberal project is a dystopic future of business markets that have fully transcended politics, of individuals shaped according to and by the markets, and of technocratic governance in which allegedly apolitical expertise is more important than democracy (see also Robinson, 2004). The other potential future that lurks on the horizon is the future as catastrophe – environmental, social, economic, political, civilizational.

The short-termism and the unpredictability of contemporary financial capitalism make neoliberal presentism and the apparent emphasis on the past as memory easier to fathom. In the best case, memory, especially in its institutionalized forms, seems to function as an endeavour to introduce something of a moral character to the former. Liberal cosmopolitan memory discourses as well as the right-wing staunch conservative (antagonistic) memory discourses both share a moralizing dimension, which is meant to bestow legitimacy upon two only apparently contradictory present political and economic projects: globalized neoliberalism and authoritarian right-wing nationalism. However, despite what it might seem at a first superficial glance two projects do not stand so much in opposition. Presentist neoliberalism has shown itself more than apt to develop an anti-democratic symbiosis with past-oriented neoconservatism and various forms of nationalism, tightly linked with de-democratization processes (Harvey, 2007; Brown, 2006). As if mirroring this process, liberal cosmopolitan discourses, with their de-politicizing presuppositions, impulses, and implications, have shown themselves particularly apt to be appropriated, at least in their emphasis on

victimhood, by right-wing antagonistic memory discourses (see also Cento Bull and Hansen, 2016).

The memory of atrocities and particularly the memory of the Holocaust as Europe's negative myth act as legitimizing props for an essentially neoliberal project as the European Union (EU) is (Leggewie, 2008; Traverso, 2016: 15). Hence, (institutionalized) memory appears more often than not to provide a legitimation rather than a contestation of contemporary neoliberalism. Furthermore, the opposition towards the EU as well as towards other instantiations of contemporary neoliberalism might resort to mnemonic tropes, yet generally these tropes are illustrative of strongly conservative political projects, that do not in effect question neoliberalism as such, and its cult of the market, but only, in some cases, its globalized dimension. The temporality implied by such memory discourses imagines the future as a reiteration of an idealized past. This makes the future either impossible or dystopic. The putative future-looking orientation of liberal memory discourses aiming to contribute to the global imposition of a consensual human rights regime in the name of 'Never again' fails to tackle precisely the conditions which appear to lead rather to 'Yet again' (Levy and Sznaider, 2006; 2010). The compassion-oriented moralistic humanitarianism that underlies it is also a substitution of politics (Fassin, 2012). Not only that the search for mnemonic foundations and the attempt to economically and symbolically atone for past wrongdoings are far from being interest-free and are prone to be turned upside down, but they lead to a never-ending loop from the present to the past and the back, in which the future fails to emerge because it has been made impossible. Interpreting past atrocities as human rights/humanitarian crises within the contemporary politics of memory legitimizes contemporary practices of 'humanitarian government', that largely rely on a politics of inequality and of precarious lives (Fassin, 2012). The moral horizon of humanitarian politics, undergirded by cosmopolitan memory discourses and practices, precludes the construction of political solidarities and radical change.

4. Memory, whereto? From politics of memory to memory of politics

Recent scholarship engaging with memory has taken heed of the fact that the current political predicament seems to be linked with an impasse of the mnemonic models in circulation.[6] For example, Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen (2016) have argued in favor of an agonistic mode of remembering. The two scholars drew on Chantal Mouffe's theoretical elaborations regarding the need for an agonistic type of politics, whereas Mouffe (2005) in her turn had reinterpreted Carl Schmitt's conceptualization of the political (2007). Along similar lines, Berthold Molden (2016) developed a mnemonic hegemony theory, conceptually related with the theory of agonistic memory.

[6] The discussion on Mouffe and agonistic memory largely draws on Cercel, 2018: 5-7.

Mouffe, whose work both aforementioned elaborations rely on, even if to different extents, severely criticizes both the 'post-political vision' which informs neoliberal rationalism as well as the belief in a cosmopolitan, partisan-free, consensual order. She pleads for a recognition of the relevance of collective identifications and of the related antagonisms in the configuration of the 'political', understood as 'the very way society is instituted', together with the passions and emotions such identifications entail (Mouffe, 2005: 9). For her, the construction of agonistic spaces is meant to provide legitimate political channels for dissenting and counter-hegemonic voices and for the enunciation of opposing passions and affect. Without such acknowledgments and provisions, Mouffe argues, various nationalist, religious or ethnic forms of identification will eventually hijack and dominate the political. Against this background, Mouffe also emphasizes the need to recognize the hegemonic nature of social orders, and the fact that 'every hegemonic order is susceptible of being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices' (Mouffe, 2005: 18). Hence, her agonistic democracy is constructed as a response to 'the emergence of a new hegemonic project, that of liberal-conservative discourse, which seeks to articulate the neo-liberal defence of the free market economy with the profoundly anti-egalitarian cultural and social traditions of conservatism', and which would also 'legitimize inequalities and restore the hierarchical relations which the struggles of previous decades had destroyed' (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 175–176).

The mnemonic ethos of neoliberal hegemony implies the eternalization of the present order. The engagement with the past functions either as a prop of the latter or simply lacks the critical present- and future-oriented potential to contribute to change. The acts of remembrance and recollection oriented towards a political action in the present with the goal of producing radical change are largely absent, as are political projects with such goals. The left populist movements that have emerged in recent years, such as Podemos in Spain, Syriza in Greece, or France Unbowed, have in effect oscillated between trying to resuscitate the antifascist mnemonic tradition and reinforcing some of the hegemonic tenets of mnemonic cosmopolitanism, yet largely failing to provide a proper counterweight to the appeal of antagonistic memory discourses promoted by contemporary right-wing populist movements.

One way of putting together the aforementioned theoretical elaborations and the recognition that neoliberalism and the memory boom are linked by multiple threads is to argue for a concerted move from the politics of memory to the memory of politics (Lebow, 2006; Edkins, 2003). The politics of memory is both past-oriented and presentist, failing to promote the construction of a future in common. In exchange, the memory of politics could bring back to the foreground former futures, previous ideas of equality and radical democracy and the collective struggles aiming to put them into practice, could remind us that fighting for the future could give legitimacy to the present much more than fighting solely for the past. Such a conceptualization and an understanding of memory is visible in some contemporary mnemonic projects, which for example try to acknowledge for example the value of past left-wing struggles in Latin America in the 1970s, or

which denounce and criminalize the complicity of multinational corporations in wars, dictatorships, or in industrial disasters. Such projects are fundamentally counter-hegemonic at this stage. A counter-hegemonic memory of politics could play a role in the enabling of the construction of a radically democratic future, as it is meant to show us that the current social and political status quo is not inescapable. Contemporary politics of memory, more often than not, makes it inescapable.

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DALMA FERÓ*

The Post-politics of Recognition in Hegemonic Struggles: The Road from the New Left Movements to the Crumbling of Liberal Hegemony

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 43-66.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.563
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

In the history of post-WWII Western emancipation movements, a marked shift took place from a liberation to a recognition paradigm. The latter embodies a distinctly post-political conceptualisation of social justice in its (re)formulation of the political with respect to the personal and with respect to social relations. As a result, recognition politics not only gives way to the fragmentation of justice claims, but also weaponises them against each other, as for instance 'sexual and gender minority' politics have expropriated crucial political arenas from feminist politics. These permutations of recognition politics are not the result of spontaneous, inevitable development, but that of political intervention devised to transform, neutralise, and absorb radical politics. Recognition politics has thus become a basic hegemonic strategy of transformism, consensus-building, and the forging of 'common sense.' Despite the mechanisms deployed to manage its internal contradictions (like the rainbow coalition and intersectionality), reinvigorated criticisms have blamed recognition politics for the crumbling of the current hegemony of liberalism. However, recognition seems to have been so deeply embedded in the social and cultural imagination that apparently neither internal critiques, nor the currently emerging counter-hegemonic projects can shake it off.

Keywords: *ideology, hegemony, post-politics, personal/political, feminism, intersectionality, rainbow coalition.*

1. Introduction: *The politics of recognition politics?*

Since its revival in moral and political philosophies in the 1990s, recognition has been conceptualised in various ways to grasp issues like the 'adequate' recognition of someone's universal human dignity and/or particular merits, and the lack of such recognition due to, for instance, demeaning stereotypes about certain undervalued groups. Recognition and its 'disturbances' (also referred to as misrecognition) have been approached, for instance, as the satisfaction or infringement of a basic (either specifically modern or universal) human need and hence as the universal driving force behind social conflicts (compare Taylor, 1992, and Honneth, 1992), or as struggles over social status inequalities under the specific historical circumstances of the post-socialist age (Fraser, 1995).

The recognition paradigm of justice has received various criticisms, which pointed out, among other things, its inadequacy for grasping (and redressing) the complexities of (unequal) social, let alone economic relations. In fact, recognition issues have been analysed as increasingly displacing and marginalising concerns about economic injustices, since they have been increasingly disembedded from and overrepresented to the detriment of redistribution issues (Fraser, 1995: 68). Another line of critique contends that recognition embodies the same logic as misrecognition if it is supposed to make amends within the same non-reciprocal (power) relationship that enacted misrecognition in the first place, and thus often it is no more than a paternalistic gesture (Fanon, 1986: 169–173). Moreover, recognition advocates frequently presume that the power mechanisms of recognition interact with pre-existing identities, while in fact they are integral to subject formation, and hence they fail to realise that what they consider emancipatory recognition involves the incorporation of power relations into individual subjectivity (McNay, 2008: 2). The centring of recognition as the primary (or only) foundation for justice has thus been critiqued, *inter alia*, as overlooking or even legitimating certain mechanisms of power and thereby coming up short of an adequate analysis of injustices and their causes.

Many of these and other analyses inevitably touch on questions of ideology and politics such as, for instance, the relationship between ideology and subjectivation (e.g. Althusser, 1971; Honneth, 2007). However, what the *specific politics* of recognition politics is, and how its conceptualisation of *the political* (in actual recognition claims) appears and plays out in the wider politico-ideological landscape of hegemonic struggles has received less attention.

This theoretical paper will address these questions in the context of the emergence and recent cracking of liberal hegemony. After outlining my theoretical framework, I will overview the changing tenor of the personal/political relationship in emancipation movements from the emergence of New Left movements to today's post-political recognition politics through the example of Anglo-American feminism, and subsequently explore how these forms of politics were/are embedded in hegemonic projects. As part of this, I will explore in what ways recognition politics contributes to hegemony, and what its inherent contradictions are that have, according to some of its discontents, enabled the rise of the populist right.

2. Ideology, hegemony and (post-)politics in a Gramscian theoretical framework

The advantage of a Gramscian theoretical framework in approaching such cross-cutting questions like recognition is that it does not collapse either the economic, social, political, or cultural level of the 'relation of forces' under any of the other levels. For Gramsci, the material forces of production provide the basis for the formation of social classes, whose collective political consciousness moves from individual mechanical cooperation to organisation based on solidarity and finally to full-fledged ideologies that confront each other (Gramsci, 1979: 180–181). The prevailing ideology propagates itself throughout society, presenting itself as a universal answer to the questions around which political struggles are waged, forging an intellectual and moral unity around economic and political aims, and thereby creating the hegemony of a social group over subordinate groups (ibid., 181).

Ideology in this understanding is not the covering of truth with lies, but the mechanism with which the hegemonic group forges the consent of the groups over which it asserts its hegemony; for in Gramsci's conception, hegemony differs from domination in that the former rests largely on consent while occasionally also resorting to coercion, while the latter relies predominantly on coercion. Thus, to establish hegemony, the leading group has to make concessions to the subordinate groups, creating an equilibrium in which its own interests prevail with this limitation (ibid., 161, 182). Ideological struggles are waged and won in civil society (the level of the superstructure that is frequently considered 'private'), which thus becomes an entrenchment of hegemonic ideology (ibid., 12, 235). Thus, unlike the situation in 1917 Russia, where civil society was not developed, the extensive civil society of modern Western societies functions as a buffer zone against the immediate seizure and sustenance of (state) power; for this reason, in such societies the strategy of frontal attack ('war of manoeuvre') cannot succeed, but instead, the ideological foundations of an alternative hegemonic bloc have to be laid first ('war of position') (ibid., 235–239). Hegemonic endeavours, for this reason, are always directed to changing the culture that society's norms, rationality and self-interpretation are grounded in (Kiss, 2018: 232–241). If a hegemonic project succeeds, its conceptions of 'life and man' sediments itself even in the diffuse, uncoordinated, unreflected aspects of thought and sentience – in other words, they become 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1979: 326–331).

Neo-Gramscian approaches, mostly following Cox (1981; 1983), have theorised hegemonic projects on a global scale led by a group of countries or, in an era of intensifying transnationalisation, increasingly by (a certain fraction of) the transnational capitalist class. The hegemonic bloc also encompasses an array of politicians, bureaucrats, intellectuals, media workers and a layer of mostly middle-class locales (Robinson, 2005: 565), with international organisations playing a central role in administering its mechanisms (Cox, 1983: 171–173).

This hegemonic warfare is strikingly played out today as the current Western cultural hegemony is cracking before our eyes. The current hegemony as an unfolding project predates the end of the Cold War, yet it was the demise of the

Soviet Union that has heralded a unipolar capitalist world order with what some have called the uncontested hegemony of liberalism (Mouffe, 2005: 9–10). One of the central cultural principles of liberal hegemony is a universalist view of the human as an autonomous individual existing prior to (and unformed by) social relations, self-interested, and instrumentally rational (Rupert, 1995: 660), which construes social and economic problems as individual ones. The other central ideological underpinning of the current hegemony is the mainstream liberal conception of politics as rational consensus-based decision-making rather than the arena where antagonistic forces struggle with each other (Mouffe, 2005: 10–11), which stigmatises discontents as irrational and immoral. However, this post-political denial of rationally unresolvable conflicts and the propelling of politics into the moral register only exacerbates conflicts (ibid., 2–5). The unwritten thought censorship of anything challenging the liberal consensus (Žižek, 2002: 544–545) thus made it easier to channel growing discontent into a counter-hegemonic bloc. After early, arguably ideologically incoherent and undefined attempts at contestation following from the internal contradictions and tensions of liberal capitalism (Rupert, 1997: 105), liberal hegemony started to be seriously challenged in the Euro-Atlantic area in the 2010s, with right-wing populism on the rise and alternative historical blocs emerging first in the semi-peripheries and then in the core as well.

In the following, I will examine how recognition politics fits into this landscape, beginning with an overview of the major shifts in Anglo-American emancipatory politics since the 1960s, choosing feminist (later transmuted as gender) politics as an example. My purpose is not to provide a historical overview of feminist politics, recognition politics, or radical politics (all of which, of course, predate this era), but to explore how the contentions between the different conceptions of the political in emancipatory politics are part of a larger hegemonic struggle.

3. From the personal is political to the political is personal, from liberatory politics to post-politics

New Left theory and movements unfolding in the 1950s and 1960s were characterised by a remarkable focus on the key role of ideology in maintaining repressive social structures (Kiss, 2018: 45). One of the central questions of different traditions such as Critical Theory and American black and feminist liberation movements was how individual experiences and identities are (partially) produced by ideology. In the mainstream emancipation claims of today, many of these key insights about the relationship between the personal and the political have changed beyond recognition. In the following, I will highlight a major shift in Western emancipation movements through the example of Anglo-American feminist organising and theorising.

'The personal is political' is perhaps the most well-known slogan of second-wave feminism, highlighting its focus on issues considered to be personal. This catchphrase has been used in slightly different, albeit connected senses ever since. It emerged from women's experience of organising in New Left and other

liberation movements, where men who dominated the movements did not take sex-based subordination seriously, impelling women to have discussions separately from men. This is also revealed in the first written use of the slogan, a 1969 memo entitled The Personal is Political written by Carol Hanisch. The memo, whose title and content are both greatly indebted to collective feminist thinking (Hanisch, 2006), addressed a general nervousness of men in these movements about the burgeoning women's liberation movement. Many of the men and women in the New Left political group that Hanisch participated in criticised women's consciousness-raising groups as 'navel gazing' and 'therapy.' Women were typically ridiculed for bringing their 'personal,' especially 'body issues,' into the public arena, which were seen as individual problems only pertaining to the people involved. The idea of 'the personal is political' contested such separation of political and personal issues.

Consciousness raising, as Hanisch argued in her memo, was not about coming together for support or to solve 'personal problems.' By sharing 'personal' stories, women could recognise that many of their experiences in the spheres of sexuality, relationships, family, and reproduction were far from unique – they were actually rather widespread among women. Consciousness raising often, as in Hanisch's example, fuelled both an analysis of the political origin of 'women's problems' and political action aimed at changing the political arrangement instead of trying to find individual solutions to political problems. The personal is political thus originally meant the criticism of the ideological separation of the private and the public sphere, highlighting the political nature of the separation itself as well as of the issues deemed to be private and personal. This also involved an analysis of the individual personal experience as having been formed in a political environment.

Similar arguments were put forward in the Redstocking Manifesto the same year (Redstockings, 1969), interpreting the man-woman relationship as a class relationship, and conflicts between individual men and women as class conflicts that should be solved collectively. While the manifesto describes women's suffering as a political condition, it also states that the Redstockings regard their personal experience and their feelings about that experience as the basis for an analysis of women's common situation. Experience as a key concept connecting the personal with the social and the political has a complex, dual status here and in many second-wave feminist accounts: it is both the starting point of analysis given that existing knowledge is permeated with patriarchal ideology, and also in need of analysis given that it is rooted in women's oppression.[1]

[1] Scott (1991: 787) was partly right in the early 1990s when she claimed that much of Anglo-American feminist theorising used experience as a foundational concept, but she played down the fact that many feminist critiques did not take experience at face value, but rather as a politically constructed phenomenon to be analysed and transformed itself (see e.g. Sarachild, 1975; Women's Liberation Workshop, 1969). Scott suggested an approach that was exactly the opposite of what she simplistically attributed to earlier feminist analysis, and was not any less reductive from a theoretical and methodological perspective: that experience should not be the origin of explanation, but that which should be explained (Scott, 1991: 797). See Alcoff (1997) for a detailed criticism of Scott and a feminist phenomenological approach to experience.

Feminist approaches, especially since the 1980s, raised questions about the consequences of this circular interdependence of the personal and the political for feminist politics: if 'woman' is (partly) constructed by patriarchal power relations, how can the feminist movement contest these power relations by relying on this identity as its very basis? Some of the responses, however, subverted the political critique of the women's liberation movement. Probably the most noted contribution to this question in academic feminism is the early work of Judith Butler (1990). This postmodernist-influenced approach forecloses the political as it conflates the politically constructed and contingent with the fictitious by claiming that there is only performance without 'identity' (i.e. women)[2] and by relativising the political materiality of reproductive biology. It also paralyses political action by liquidating the subject of feminism (i.e. women as agents and matters of politics) in arguing that the category of woman should not be the foundation of feminist politics (e.g. Butler, 1990: 3–33). Even though some of these claims are toned down or revised in Butler's subsequent work (e.g. Butler, 1992), some feminists have critiqued this approach not unjustly as undermining or reversing the idea of the personal is political.[3] One of the more rewarding approaches to this basic question influenced by postmodernist (and postcolonialist) theories is Spivak's strategic essentialism, which strives to carve out a representative essentialist position in which to do politics, while remembering the pitfalls of this strategy (Spivak and Harasym, 1990: 45). In other words, feminists entering the political arena can assert identities as constructed and provisional rather than fixed and metaphysically true.[4] While the idea that women do not share an eternal, pre-political essence is not new in feminist politics, the focus of postmodernist approaches is increasingly on the subject, as opposed to the women's liberation paradigm's main interest in the political.

There were certainly other, often interlocking trajectories that arrested the feminist critique of the complex personal/political interrelation. Out of several developments in the personalisation of the political, anchored in the increasingly prevalent discourses of psychology and human rights,[5] I highlight the ones that are the most central in today's gender discourse as paradigmatic examples of wider tendencies of individualising, minoritising and victimhood-focused perspectives in emancipatory politics.

Probably the most far-reaching turning point in the changing feminist politicisation of the personal was the so-called feminist sex wars, a fierce series of debates and clashes in the American and British feminist scene in the late 1970s and early 1980s (see e.g. Ferguson, 1984, and Dines and Jensen, 2008, for a summary). The dissension flared up around questions of sexuality and its

[2] Identity here does not refer to self-identification, as opposed to its most widespread use in contemporary gender discourse.

[3] That 'the personal is political' has been reversed in mainstream (academic) feminism is a frequently made claim in certain non-mainstream feminisms, see e.g. Bell and Klein (1996). Postmodernism was also subject to intense debates between feminists in the 1990s.

[4] This is the inversion of Hekman's definition of identity politics (Hekman, 1999: 4).

[5] On the role of the rationalised language of psychology and the moralised language of human rights in the exercise of political power in liberal democracies and global relations, see e.g. Rose (1996) and Mutua (2002), respectively.

relationship to power. There had been serious debates about some of these questions among feminists before, yet what had an important role in sparking the sex wars was the legal strategy developed by two anti-pornography feminists, Dworkin and MacKinnon, of enabling women to start civil suits against pornographers to curb a burgeoning industry that they analysed as being based on and actively nourishing patriarchal power structures.[6] Among the feminists opposing the legalist anti-pornography strategy, some were critical of the porn industry but rejected what they interpreted as censorship, while others even celebrated the allegedly transgressive and beneficial potential of practices like sado-masochism and pornography (see e.g. Califia, 1994). Both the anti-porn and pro-porn ('pro-sex') camps included many lesbians, but many in the latter group started to speak less for women than for 'sexual/erotic minorities' like homosexuals and sado-masochists and of sexuality as external and resistant to rather than enmeshed in power relations (see e.g. Duggan and Hunter, 2006 for a 'pro-sex' rendition of the events and actors).

This 'pro-sex' politics was heralded in academia by Gayle Rubin's Thinking Sex (1984). In this momentous piece, Rubin famously claims that sexuality in Western societies has been structured in a repressive and punitive framework, leading to a sexual oppression that is distinct from other oppressions but whose logic is similar to that of racism (Rubin, 1984: 267–284). Certain 'erotic non-conformists' or 'dissenters,' as the argument goes, have been persecuted by right-wing anti-sex 'morality crusaders' throughout history in waves of panic (such as the AIDS panic), including today's 'anti-porn fascists.' Rubin's main claim is that sexuality and gender are distinct arenas of social practice with their own hierarchies and therefore they should be separated analytically; sexuality thus should not be considered as the territory of feminist analysis but of an autonomous theory and politics of sexuality yet to be developed (ibid., 308–309). The article indeed has a lasting legacy: it was instrumental in the consolidation of gay and lesbian studies and in the later foundation of sexuality studies as a distinct research area with a distinct research matter.[7]

As opposed to the radical feminist critique of sexuality as a main site of the reproduction, eroticisation and naturalisation of various (including gendered and racial) power relations through acts of submission, humiliation, and violence (e.g.

[6] There were certainly many other ideological and strategic issues at stake in the sex wars, including legalism, censorship, victimhood or liberation centredness, agency, and industrial lobbies. These are, however, more distantly related to my topic and therefore not addressed here.

[7] It is more than ironic that Rubin's call for sexuality studies, an important event in the history of inciting discourses of sexuality, actually cites and vastly misreads Foucault as a theorist of the social constructedness of sexuality. Foucault analysed how the idea of sexuality appeared in a specific historical time to produce knowledge about the vitality of the population, and how the different strategies that penetrate and control everyday pleasure have produced rather than repressed polymorphous sexualities. Rubin's programmatic text is, in my analysis, another event in the deployment of the biopolitical apparatus of sexuality, which conspicuously employs a rhetoric that Foucault referred to as the repressive hypothesis (Foucault, 1978: 1–13) The evocation of repressed sexuality and the imminent threat of the 'prudish,' 'right-wing' anti-porn activists also appeared in many other 'pro-sex' polemics in the sex wars (and since then), as for instance in Califia's writings (1994).

Lorde, 1982), the 'pro-sex' approach suggests that this very critique contributes to the demonization and persecution of repressed sexual practices like sado-masochism. What this reterritorialisation of sexuality by 'pro-sex' advocates means is that the analysis of a vast array of power relations is banned from the territory of sexuality. Although Rubin declares that sexuality is political and that it is not completely divorced from gender and other relations of power, what her description of sexuality suggests is that sexuality is political to the extent that it is oppressed by politics, not that it is engendered by and infused with politics (at least not the sexuality of 'erotic non-conformists'). With this shift in mainstream American feminism, the analysis of the political nature of sexual desires and practices is confined, and the politicality of the personal is proscribed in the name of 'sexual minorities.'[8]

The analysis of power relations was pushed back even further in the name of newer minorities. With the emergence of transgender activism in the late 1980s, the concept of 'gender identity' (i.e. the inner feeling about oneself as a man, woman, or something else) became a more and more dominant idea about gender (Feró, 2019: 173–174). Today's mainstream (though not only) conception of gender identity in transgender activism is that it is inborn (Brubaker, 2016: 36), therefore it is unrelated to the materiality of the body and to gender norms (i.e. the sex-specific social expectations, unwritten rules, and sanctions, which are instrumental in reproducing the hierarchical relationship between men and women). What the idea of an innate gender identity entails – and what mainstream transgender activists demand to be recognised – is a transcendental feminine or masculine essence in our innermost selves. This radically diverts from the idea of the personal is political as formulated by the women's liberation movement, which analyses personal subjectivity (including our personal feelings about ourselves) as having been formed in relation to the social, cultural, and political environment (including gender norms). There is thus a necessarily antagonistic relationship between mainstream transgender activism and critical theories (including system-critical feminism). As transgender activism has become the cutting-edge human rights issue (Feró and Bajusz, 2018: 181), the critical analysis of gender identity as having been formed in relation to gender norms has been increasingly excommunicated and stigmatised as the questioning of transgender identity and experience, and as such, as transphobic hatred.[9] In other words, while the women's liberation movement attempted to highlight the political nature of the personal, newly emerging minorities attempted to withdraw crucial parts of the personal from feminist political analysis by claiming it to be their own private territory.

[8] There had been various streams of gay and lesbian (or homophile) politics before, some of which did not consider gayness or lesbianism as an inborn characteristic, but rather as a radical potentiality to liberate sexuality for all, or as a basis of female solidarity and resistance (Jagose, 1997: 30–57).

[9] See Allen et al. (2018) for a philosophical discussion of claims made by a transgender scholar that gender-critical feminist views on gender count as "propaganda" because they do not accept transgender identity and experience as evidence in themselves without any further analysis. See Csányi (2017) for the summary of a debate in Hungarian online media following a leftist feminist discussion of experience as politically constructed rather than flowing from some inner gender essence, with one response conflating leftist feminist analysis with the right-wing populist government's natalist rhetoric.

Even as approaches influenced primarily by postmodern theories on the one hand and trends oriented mostly by questions of sexual and gender minorities on the other are based on rather different and conflicting theoretical presuppositions, there are significant commonalities between them. They each pioneer an extreme conception of human subjectivity that is influenced by different psy-discourses (Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and post-war American psychology-sexology),[10] while they do not centre theories of the political.[11] Besides, even though these two conceptions of the subject contradict each other in many respects, these two gender approaches have converged at certain points. For instance, Judith Butler oriented herself early towards the 'pro-sex' side of the sex wars (see Bracewell, 2016: 23), and in spite of her continued suspicion of 'identities' in her later work, she asserted the importance of recognising and validating transgender and intersexual identities, and reaffirmed the (partial) territorialisation of gender from feminist analysis by these newly emerging claimants (Butler, 2004: 1–16). At the same time, Butler's work has informed the idea that gender is a spectrum with countless 'non-binary' gender identities, combining a concept of gender as unfixed and 'fluid' as theorised in gender performativity with a concept of gender as a personal and innate characteristic as postulated by gender minority discourse. Even though these two currents might seem to be substantially diverging, they are also often mixed in contemporary gender discourses, especially in activism.

The above-mentioned events in Anglo-American feminist analysis suggest that although the relationship of the personal and the political never had a unitary interpretation in feminist analysis, a significant shift in its conceptualisation has taken place since the emergence of the women's liberation movement. This also meant a change in the predominant conceptualisation of justice. The women's liberation paradigm did not frame its aims in terms of recognition and did not expect recognition from existing social institutions but struggled to be liberated from them. Moreover, it typically did not analyse women as a subordinated status group but more as an exploited sex class, positing an antagonistic relationship that cannot be overcome by recognition. The mainstream gender paradigm of today, on the other hand, is markedly characterised by a recognitive logic within the existing social system. Mainstream feminism and especially sexual and gender minority activism are struggling for the social and legal recognition of their misrecognised identities and experiences, which they presume to exist prior to (mis)recognition (Fraser, 2005: 298–299; Jagose, 1996: 61). This recognition model does not presuppose antagonisms in questions of (in)justice, but rather attempts to solve

[10] As accounts of the inner life and conduct of humans through which individuals come to understand and act upon themselves, such psy-influenced theories of the subject advance techniques of governing the self that feed into techniques of governing others in liberal political settings (Rose, 1996). These gender discourses are therefore at the forefront of progressing governing techniques.

[11] Their attempts at theorising the political are typically extensions of their theories of subjectivity (possibly supplemented with reflections on the content, terrain, strategies or any other facet of actual or envisioned politics) rather than theorisations of the driving forces and workings of the political. See such attempts in e.g. Butler and Scott (1992).

social problems within the same structure through technical means (like, for instance, visibility and representation).

Between these two paradigms there is a fundamental discrepancy: one construes social struggles as morally motivated, allowing for the possibility of social resolution, the other as springing from clashing antagonistic interests or incongruent values (Honneth, 1992: 145–151). The recognition paradigm of justice is thus distinctly post-political in that it negates politics on two interrelated levels: it denies the antagonisms inherent in capitalist social relations (and hence contemporary emancipation politics) as well as the political nature of (some aspects of) the personal. Accordingly, the current hegemony of recognitive justice not only has marginalised redistribution claims, as its most popular critique states, but it has also solidified a post-political conception of social justice struggles as resolvable moral conflicts as opposed to radical political challenges that tend(ed) to understand them as antagonistic political conflicts.

This major change in the dominant forms of emancipatory politics, in short, can be described as a conversion from the critique of to the convergence with hegemonic ideology. With this I do not mean to suggest that emancipatory politics were ever uniform with respect to their relationship to hegemonic ideology.[12] There has certainly been a diversity of feminist activisms since the 1960s until these days, yet a marked shift can be clearly observed. This striking rearrangement from feminist ideology critique that grew out of New Left movements to today's hegemonic recognition politics can be understood through the immense power of the capitalist system to absorb and neutralise critiques for its survival (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 27). Of course, such absorption is typically not a spontaneous process, but a result of political intervention. In the next section I will look at how recognition politics has emerged and fared with respect to hegemonic struggles.

4. The unrecognised contradiction of recognition politics and its symptom management

The omnipresence and continuous fragmentation of identities and recognition claims in late capitalism has been commonly voiced in social sciences. The ubiquity of identity claims has been interpreted, among other ways, in the context of globalisation's simultaneous globalising and individualising pressures, the more transitory and elusive nature of contemporary power relations, and consumerism selling life-styles and brands of identity (Bauman, 2001a; 2001b; Braidotti, 2005–2006). As for the motivations of corporate, NGO or individual actors to recognise or represent identity-based claims, the economic benefits of non-discriminatory employment (and marketing), 'diversity' as a newer form of symbolic capital, and consequently recognition as a new currency in certain social settings are among the notable ones (Watkins, 2018; Nagle, 2017).

[12] As, for instance, many feminists continued to contest the reversals of the idea of the personal is political, yet these critiques have been gradually forced out of the mainstream both in academia and the media.

Besides the interweaving social, economic, technological and cultural aspects, there are political and ideological factors contributing to the ubiquity of recognition claims that are worth examining in the context of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic endeavours. First, it is essential to look at how these forms of politics emerged. Not long after the radical liberation movements started to unfold, philanthropic foundations like the Ford Foundation started to shovel billions of dollars into projects and groups (including black and women's rights organisations and many more) whose visions matched their own, establishing a well-resourced institutional basis hidden behind the façade of self-organised services and informational networks (Watkins, 2018: 21–24). As a result, a wide array of NGOs and lobby groups featuring an anti-discrimination paradigm of emancipation were set up, which socialised with the political elite rather than their supposed constituency – this way absorbing a large number of cadres from liberation movements and engaging their energies with bureaucratic tasks rather than militant organising (ibid.). This anti-discrimination model, based on the logic of legal and social recognition, did much to entrench the recognition paradigm in the common sense conception of social justice. There were other points of intervention as well, most notably academic knowledge production. Both black studies and women's studies (later renamed gender studies) were institutionalised under the tutelage of the Ford Foundation, which also actively influenced the later development of these fields, including encouraging critical thinking within acceptable limits (Roelofs, 2003: 44; Watkins, 2018: 24–26).[13]

McGeorge Bundy, who played a salient role in this strategy as the president of the Ford Foundation for over a decade throughout the 1960s and 1970s, explicitly stated that this intervention was aimed at preventing organisations from radicalisation and served to make the world safe for capitalism (Roelofs, 2003: 125; Watkins, 2018: 22).[14] This intervention in both the political and the academic fields sufficed to absorb and domesticate actors and endeavours antagonistic to the ruling elites into hegemonic political structures — a process that Gramsci calls 'transformism' (Gramsci, 1979: 58). Enormous amounts were spent to fundamentally shape the social and cultural imagination with respect to social conflicts and possible alternatives (or the lack thereof), effectively marginalising and sidelining the radical challenges to the prevailing economic, political and social system. Today's mainstream emancipatory politics, thus, is not the result of a spontaneous and inevitable institutionalisation and moderation of earlier radical politics as the mainstream historical narrative would have it, but that of carefully crafted political work.

The transformism of radical challenges is also strongly related to another important requisite of hegemony, namely the forging of consent (Gramsci, 1979: 181–182). The mainstreaming of recognition politics through the neutralisation of liberation movements not only managed to incorporate the active figures of the

[13] For a detailed account of how foundations de-radicalised women's studies, see Proietto (1999).

[14] Besides such statements, the timing and direction of funding also suggests that elite patronage has been typically a response to the challenge of grassroots movements rather than motivated by conscience: in the case of black organising, funding was primarily reactive and directed at moderate organisations (Jenkins and Eckert, 1986: 827).

antagonistic forces, but also widened the consensus by addressing members of their social groups. From this perspective, bigger social groups are more worth recognising, as the bigger the specific group is, the more people can be included in the consensus.

This, of course, might clash with other political, economic and social considerations, as the fragmentation of identity claims attests. There might be an internal logic to the splintering of identity claims based on a group's purportedly shared problems, as certain members of the group always feel excluded because of internal differences within the group, as did many black women from both black and women's movements. However, this dismemberment was not as logical and necessary a development as it might seem from today's compulsory intersectionality paradigm. As the establishment of identity-based politics itself, the further fragmentation of identities serves the hegemonic logic as it further fragments the (potentially) dissenting base and the scope of problems addressed. It thus should not come as a surprise that the focus on minority women, especially black women, and the intersection or interconnection of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality that have come to dominate gender studies since the 1990s, is to a considerable extent indebted to the Ford Foundation's programme to mainstream minority women's studies since the mid-1980s (Chamberlain, 1994: 222–223; Hill, 1990: 24–38; Goss, 2007: 1186–1187). Thereupon, in the early 1990s, philanthropic organisations, including the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation started to increase their funding for sexuality research, which was an important factor (besides the breakout of AIDS epidemic in the 1980s) in legitimating sexuality studies as an academic research area (Aggleton, Parker and Thomas, 2015: 3–4). The mainstream approaches of gender studies and activism since the 1990s, which are frequently presented as superseding former, allegedly essentialist versions of feminist analysis, were thus supported by philanthropic donors at a time when legalist radical feminism started to question something as foundational in the economic and social structure as patriarchal sexuality.

Besides its role in transformism and consensus-making, recognition politics also contrives to sediment the mainstream liberal conceptions of the human, society, and politics as 'common sense.' The most mainstream form of recognition politics is based on a concept of the human as an autonomous, self-enclosed individual whose values, predilections, and choices are independent of its social, cultural, political and economic context, as exemplified by some contemporary 'feminisms' calling for a recognition of women's choices rather than scrutinising them in relation to their wider context (see Budgeon, 2015: 307). Furthermore, mainstream recognition politics assumes a conception of social problems as a matter of old-fashioned stereotypes (rather than following from antagonisms, for instance), and of their political redress as a matter of learning tolerance. There are, of course, significant differences between various recognition politics as to how extreme they are in both these respects. For instance, the problems faced by women and American blacks are more difficult to reduce to the recognition paradigm because they are deeply embedded in redistributive matters, whereas the problems faced by 'sexual and gender minorities' are more distantly related to

redistributive questions and can easily be presented merely as a matter of individual tolerance, interpreted as moral and intellectual advancement (see Feró and Bajusz, 2018: 180–182). Besides, 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity' (in their mainstream conception) presume a fully autonomous, inborn mental or psychic domain as the basis of their recognition claim that is unparalleled in black and women's rights claims. The recognition politics of 'sexual and gender minorities' is thus closest to the ideal type of the hegemonic conception of the human, society, and politics, so it is not surprising that they have become so central in discourses about social justice.

The history of Anglo-American feminist and gender-based politics suggests that the transformism of radical dissent has been a continuous process of rolling out the hegemonic logic of fragmentation and then the mainstreaming of the most atomising recognition claims. This not only fractured the dissenting base into various minority women camps, but even weaponised newer and newer 'minority' claims against the bigger dissenting groups. This suggests that there is an internal conflict in hegemonic mechanisms: the requirement to forge and extend the consensus contradicts the pressure to mainstream forms of politics that embody hegemonic logic to the fullest, which, however, not only include very few additional people in the consensus, but also alienate or exclude others from it.

The current state of recognition struggles suggest that the latter aspect of hegemonic mechanisms became so dominant (maybe even self-propelling) that it started to undermine the consensus in two ways. First, by trumping many concessions that were previously granted to other claimants. For instance, while radical feminists have for long argued that queer and LGBT politics threaten women's liberation (see e.g. Jeffreys, 2003; 2014; Sweeney, 2004), the conflictual relationship between women's and LGBT activism has become more obvious to many women as transgender politics became extremely central, which effectively radicalised more and more of them.[15] The logic of weaponising recognition claims against each other means that the most favoured recognition claims do not stop at colliding with just one other rights-claiming group, as for instance transgender recognition politics even started to hurt some gay and transsexual interests.[16] Second, as the ideas of the completely autonomous individual, limitless self-determination, and tolerance as a non-conflictual solution for all social issues are brought to their logical conclusion, the values underlying 'common sense' become more and more transparent and contested. There is some irony in the fact that this self-liquidating logic follows from the internal antagonisms of liberal recognition

[15] For instance, the 2016 initiative to modify the Gender Recognition Act in the UK to grant legal gender recognition on the basis of self-identification only, besides other issues like the exponential rise in child referrals to gender clinics, the growing censorship, stigmatisation, and retribution of gender-critical voices, including in the Labour Party, etc, drew many women (as well as numerous men) to the gender-critical side. See Cooper (2019) for a summary of the debate and a naïve argument for 'interconnected coexistence.'

[16] See the initiative by some gays and lesbians to drop the T from LGBT https://www.change.org/p/human-rights-campaign-glaad-lambda-legal-the-advocate-out-magazine-huffpost-gay-voices-drop-the-t, or a letter by transsexuals protesting against the transgender activist push to amend the Gender Recognition Act https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/transsexuals-tell-msps-that-act-changes-could-have-horrific-impact-on-women-1-4912495

politics, which in turn follow from the inherent political antagonisms that recognition politics are meant to handle.

Of course, certain political strategies have been developed to manage these problems. One strategy of forging consensus with fragmented identity groups is the rainbow coalition. This concept, not surprisingly, has also been transformed through the past decades: the original Rainbow Coalition was an autonomous alliance spanning racial, ethnic and class lines founded in Chicago in 1968 by some young Black Panthers and other radical group members to fight, among other issues, for a classless society, and against divisive ethnic tensions, police brutality, and the Democratic mayor's urban renewal policies that destroyed poor neighbourhoods (Williams, 2013: 126–130). The concept was later appropriated for forging actual political constituencies, ranging from those of Jesse Jackson, the first African-American mayor of Chicago to Barack Obama, the first African-American president of the United States (ibid., 13–14). In the meantime, it was incorporated by recognition politics. In a paradigmatic reconceptualisation, the traditional coalition is contrasted with the rainbow coalition, wherein the former's members work together along shared interests while agreeing not to bring up differences, while the latter's programme is not based on some 'principles of unity,' but rather on the affirmation and support of each constituting oppressed group's experiences and claims (Young, 1990: 188–189). In this conception, there are no inevitable conflicts between different identity groups, and if conflicts should arise, public discussion and fair decision-making can solve or handle them (ibid.). Once a code word for class struggle (Williams, 2013: 128), the rainbow coalition has become a post-political tactic of handling fragmented recognition politics.

Another conceptual device mitigating the contradictions of recognition politics is intersectionality, a quintessential expression in gender studies and 'progressive' activism that is meant to address the interaction of different axes of social relations like gender, race, sexuality, and so forth.[17] As we have seen, intersectionality was to a large extent fostered by the Ford Foundation's social engineering. While this concept is definitely useful in the legal context in which it was originally formulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), the problem that it was used to address emerged precisely from the Ford Foundation's own anti-discrimination approach of disaggregating social problems into discrete obstacles faced by disjunct groups (Watkins, 2018: 27). Since then, intersectionality has been divorced from this legal context to be championed as a concept of universal validity for all social formations. By today, intersectionality has become a rather vague buzzword in classrooms and activism, most frequently used as a prescription for diversity, representing people or identities of different types (Gordon, 2016: 346–354). It has served to manufacture a(n allegedly) unified platform not only between splintered and shifting identities, but between different theoretical and political approaches as well (Davis, 2008: 71–76). Intersectionality is thus meant to not only manage the fragmentation of an identitarian base, but also to outsmart its conflicts as well: it is typically conjured as a consensus-creating signifier, a

[17] Exactly because of its ubiquity, intersectionality is employed in vastly different conceptions and theoretical frames, and it has been critiqued in feminist theory from different perspectives.

promise of transcending 'divisions' while eluding the question of power relations to institutionalise an all-inclusive liberal agenda (Carbin and Edenheim, 2014: 233–241). It is, at the same time, often used as a rhetorical weapon in vicious fights over conflicting claims in online and offline activism (Gordon, 2016: 350). In spite of extensive black, postcolonial, and leftist feminist criticisms of its recent use (see e.g. Salem, 2016 for an overview), intersectionality has remained a shorthand for up-to-date and progressive in mainstream gender discourse. Not questioning that there is a huge amount of valuable scholarship working with intersectionality, this concept is, in its most dominant deployment, a post-political tool of settling conflicts in a way that it converges with hegemonic logic under the guise of a universal, objective, and all-purpose toolkit of bridging 'divisions.' In essence, intersectionality and the rainbow coalition with their utopian promise of an un-conflicting base are post-political symptom management techniques for keeping the contradictions of recognition politics under control, remaining within its logic, of course.

5. Recognition politics and the rise and fall of hegemonic projects

As recognition politics became such a central strategic element of the hegemony of liberalism, it is not surprising that severe blows to the hegemony, especially the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States in 2016, reinvigorated struggles over the role of recognition with respect to liberal hegemonic endeavours. Among the wide range of contributions, many liberals have argued for a return to classical liberalism and the abandonment of fallen identity/recognition liberalism, deemed as a leftist current in liberalism and a major cause of rising right-wing populism (see e.g. Lilla, 2016; 2017; Fukuyama, 2018; *The Economist*, 2018). Francis Fukuyama, for instance, who predicted the end of ideology and the final triumph and universalisation of liberal democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union (1989: 4), now argues that his prophecy was not fulfilled because liberal democracy could not fully solve a problem that has grown to become its biggest enemy: the part of the soul that craves for recognition (Fukuyama, 2018: xi–xii). Responses to such arguments have included assertions that Democratic politics must be identity politics and there is no other form of politics at all — in the vein of the Thatcherian post-political 'there is no alternative' (Goldberg, 2016; Yglesias, 2016). Of course, debates between similar positions are not new (compare Taylor, 1992, and Habermas, 1994), but after Trump's presidential election the stake of the debate became the future of the hegemony.

Another foray of hegemonic rearguard struggles has attempted to reformulate the role of recognition in the ailing hegemony in relation to the role of redistribution. Economy-focused criticisms of the obscuring of redistribution issues by recognition issues, postulated since the ascendency of recognition, are now voiced with a new force by some liberal and left-leaning intellectuals in liberal establishment media (e.g. Pearce, 2016; G. Fraser, 2016; Klein, 2016). Calling for a combination of diversity with redistribution – also referred to as 'intersectional left' politics – these critiques have, in effect, argued for including more people in the consensus by recognising problems of the redistributive sort. Some new

political endeavours appearing in this volatile situation have even critiqued certain elements of recognition politics. For instance, the *Feminism for the 99%* manifesto argues that certain aspects of so-called progressive recognition-based issues have converged with the needs of capital under neoliberal capitalism (Arruzza, Bhattacharya and Fraser, 2019: 34–38). The basic assumption is that these forms of recognition politics give unsatisfactory responses to misrecognition problems because they omit something from the political plane (by obscuring the structural conditions fuelling misrecognition problems), not that they add something to it (by restructuring structural conditions; i.e. by transforming dissent, manufacturing consent, and forging 'common sense'). The project thus aims to adjust to each other recognition and redistribution struggles (by adding an economic perspective to cultural claims and vice versa), and thereby unite existing and future movements into a broad-based global insurgency by overcoming divisions of culture, race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, and gender cultivated by capital among the 99 per cent of society (ibid., 56–57).

Such approaches are built on the idea explicated in Nancy Fraser's theories that the basic difference between claims formulated in terms of Marx's economic writings on the one hand and in terms of recognition on the other is that the former revolve around economic, while the latter around cultural issues. Honneth has rightly pointed out contra Fraser that the crucial difference between the two paradigms is that one construes social struggles as unresolvable interest- or ideology-based conflicts, the other as resolvable moral conflicts (Honneth, 2003: 127–128). These two matters are, of course, not unrelated: as there are finite resources, their redistribution is the arena of social struggles that is most self-evidently connected to clashing interests (although there do exist moralised renditions of redistributive wrongs). While Fraser's analysis points to an important aspect of a historical shift in social justice struggles, it misses the post-political reconceptualisation of emancipation struggles that has made the sidelining of certain streams in these struggles possible. Her dual model of justice thus tries to combine and balance recognition and class struggle (even though not by simply adding them together), theorising them as endeavours to redress the inseparable cultural and economic realms of injustice, rather than as two contradicting paradigms of justice based on incompatible conceptions of social relations under capitalism.[18] The currently hegemonic recognition claims, as I have argued, have been taking shape as underpinnings of the 'intellectual and moral unity' of ascending liberal hegemony and as a remedy to counteract the antagonism-based grammar of liberatory politics, which questioned exactly this unity. Attempting to combine elements from these two is hence fraught with contradictions. Lacking an adequate theorisation of conflicts, and as such, politics and ideology, the proposal of *Feminism for the 99%* fails to comprehend political conflicts between different claims in its desired alliance. Its approach remains trapped within the post-political imagination of liberal hegemony in spite of its radical anti-capitalist rhetoric, and

[18] This problem is not solved (or is maybe even aggravated) by adding a third, political axis to the model, as in Fraser's later work. The most influential debates on recognition between feminist academics (most of all, Judith Butler, Iris Marion Young, and Fraser herself) also do not touch on the crucial questions of the political.

eventually ends up embracing and amending central strategic elements of hegemonic ideology.[19]

Despite the renewed debates, recognition politics has not been dethroned as the current hegemony's main strategy even as the hegemony is crumbling. Recognition politics has apparently been so deeply incorporated into the cultural hegemony of liberalism that very few can imagine a different strategy. Meanwhile, as some critiques of recognition politics have rightly pointed out, the emerging right-wing counter-hegemonic bloc also relies on recognition politics, which demands the recognition of identities not valorised by progressive politics, such as white, heterosexual, and man (Fukuyama, 2018: 91–92; Lilla, 2016). Recognition politics might even have become an essential foundation of hegemony: the success or failure of any hegemonic project seems to greatly depend on how many people feel they are reflected in it.

6. Conclusion

Contemporary recognition politics is characteristically post-political. As we have seen through the history of Anglo-American feminist politics since the 1960s, the women's liberation movement that has grown out of New Left movements started to question the ideological division of the private/public and highlighted the political constructedness of the personal. Several later streams of gender activism and theory undermined this dynamic conception, some even reversing the women's liberation movement's critique of ideology best summarised in the slogan 'the personal is political.' Some approaches, such as the conceptualisation of (part of) sexuality and gender as the untouchable inner essence of sexual and gender minorities, have tended to re-privatise and re-personalise what the ideology critique of liberation movements uncovered as political.

As opposed to many critiques of contemporary recognition politics whose analysis considers solely recent economic, social, and technological changes and presume that ideology critique has magically adjusted to the late capitalist *Zeitgeist*, I have argued that this shift took place through hegemonic recuperation that actively shaped rather than merely adjusted to late capitalist norms. Recognition politics emerged as the dominant form of emancipatory politics through the political intervention of the transformism of radical politics, marginalising and stigmatising some forms of politics while supporting and fashioning others. Recognition politics, besides neutralising challenges to the prevailing hegemony, has also become a crucial mechanism for forging hegemonic consensus and for sedimenting certain views about social justice and human nature as common sense.

[19] At the level of party politics, Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom and Bernie Sanders in the United States attempted to (re)introduce the language of class struggle in a political scene dominated by recognition politics, several elements of which they also kept. This 'intersectional left' strategy, however, does not seem to be successful at the current moment: the Corbyn-led Labour Party lost in the 2019 general elections to the Tories, and Sanders dropped out of the 2020 Democratic presidential race.

Although recognition politics proved to be an effective mechanism for absorbing and neutralising leftist systemic critique, it is not devoid of contradictions. Through the constant fragmentation and weaponisation of identity groups against each other, recognition politics continuously shrinks hegemonic consensus. It is therefore not surprising that after the most serious blow to liberal hegemony to date, namely Donald Trump's election to the White House, arguments against recognition politics reinvigorated on the liberal side. Meanwhile, many leftist critiques leave the essence of recognition politics unchallenged as they stay captives of an unexamined economism that assumes that ideology is hiding something, namely economic structure, from our view rather than actively adding something to and changing it by forging consensus and sedimenting common sense. They thereby typically downplay the role of civil society actors (including academics, intellectuals, media workers and civil activists) to centre the economic elite (or Capital itself) as the decisive agentive force behind hegemonic struggles, interpreting cultural formations as consequences of capital's working, rather than as the most important form of warfare in the struggles. In accordance with this, such analyses often prefer to interrogate neoliberalism (a more recent, radicalised version of liberal rationality), rather than liberal hegemony (the restriction of our common sense to the different versions of liberalisms, as described in Žižek, 2008: 2). Such enterprises end up becoming entangled in the post-political rationality of liberal hegemony. It seems that the logic of recognition politics has been so deeply embedded in the social and cultural imagination that even some (avowedly) anti-capitalist endeavours are trapped in it, while the emerging right-wing counter-hegemonic bloc is also founded on it—on the recognition of the identities not recognised by liberal hegemony. Currently, it seems very difficult to even imagine any hegemonic project without recognition politics.

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German Veterans of the Spanish Civil War and the Struggle for Recognition in West Germany

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 68-83.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.616
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

This paper challenges the recognition paradigm through a historical case study that shows recognition struggles to be ideologically embedded and their success subordinated to, and thus contingent upon, the political priorities of recognition-granting authorities. To this end, the paper explores how Cold War ideological considerations shaped the ways in which the West German state processed recognition claims made upon it by two distinct groups of German veterans of the Spanish Civil War: German antifascists who fought as non-state actors in defense of the Spanish Republic and other Germans who fought in support of the Nationalist rebels at the behest of the National Socialist regime. Showing that the West German state's ostensible commitment to recognition of historical injustice in connection with the National Socialist past was subordinated to the aim of self-legitimation in the Cold War present, the paper calls for a broader sociopolitical contextualization of recognition struggles.

Keywords: *recognition, legitimation, Spanish Civil War, Cold War, totalitarianism, antifascism.*

1. Introduction

The decades since the collapse of state socialism have witnessed the redistributive projects for which societies of this kind had long offered a moral impetus become increasingly eclipsed throughout the world by projects of recognition. Optimistic commentators on this phenomenon identify in this shift no cause for concern, interpreting the redistributive projects of yore as a subcategory of the social dynamic that is now satisfied by a more generalized human need for recognition (Honneth, 2003). Some have interpreted this shift towards recognition and away from redistribution as an outcome associated with the growing hegemony of neoliberalism, which can better accommodate the former than the latter (Fraser, 2003). Still others have proposed that projects concerned with recognition are no mere feature of the neoliberal order but actually play a crucial role in endowing it with the moral legitimacy that it would otherwise lose as a consequence of its abandonment of redistribution (Michaels, 2007). This more critical perspective concerning neoliberal recognition dynamics raises questions about the nature of the relationship between the project of recognition and its legitimating function for the sociopolitical systems by which recognition is conferred. For instance, to what extent is the conferral of recognition contingent upon a convergence of interest between the recognizing authority and the recognized? What would a symbiotic connection of this kind imply about the role that recognition can play in mediating the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in a given society? Are such dynamics unique to the neoliberal order in which they have been identified, or are they indicative of a property more fundamental to recognition dynamics? In short, what is the nature of the relationship between recognition and legitimation?

To answer these questions, it is useful to explore the dynamics of recognition outside the historical context in which these observations originated. Aiming to establish properties that are not peculiar to the neoliberal age, this paper investigates recognition dynamics through a historical case study in the context of the Cold War. Focusing on West Germany in particular, it explores the response of the West German state to a variety of recognition claims made upon it by Germans who fought in the Spanish Civil War between 1936 and 1939. Namely, it compares the response of the West German state to claims made upon it by Germans who fought on opposing sides of the conflict: German antifascists who fought in defense of the Spanish Republic, as non-state actors, in units such as the International Brigades; and other Germans who fought in support of the Nationalist rebels at the behest of the National Socialist regime. The nature of the claims made upon the West German state by these two groups were in many ways qualitatively distinct and thus difficult to compare on their own terms. However, because the West German state's response to the claims of each group rested upon its official view and value judgments concerning each group's role in a common historical event, the recognition paradigm offers an ideal metric by which to evaluate the political dimensions of the recognition struggles in which the two groups became engaged. Juxtaposing the outcomes of these struggles for

recognition, this paper sheds light on the politics of recognition in Cold War West Germany.

This paper begins by offering a brief historical overview of German involvement in the Spanish Civil War. It then sketches the renewed significance acquired by this history in Germany during the Cold War and considers two forms of recognition claims that were made upon the West German state in this context, exploring the role that Cold War-era political considerations played in shaping the outcomes of these recognition struggles. Finally, the paper draws on insights derived from the sociology of knowledge to show the embeddedness of these particular, localized struggles within the broader conceptual struggles of the Cold War. Taken together, the paper demonstrates that the West German state subordinated its ostensible commitment to recognition of historical injustice in connection with the National Socialist past to the aim of self-legitimation in the Cold War present. It proposes, for this reason, that recognition struggles must be evaluated more broadly to account for their function within the totality of the sociopolitical systems in which they unfold.

2. Germany, Germans, and the Spanish Civil War

In the summer of 1936, the Second Spanish Republic became the first geopolitical casualty of the triumph of National Socialism in Germany. Though the Spanish Civil War was a product of deep divisions that were organic to Spanish society, Germany played a role in this conflict that was, from the very first weeks, fundamental. Namely, the National Socialist regime created the conditions of possibility for what initially appeared likely to prove an abortive coup attempt by Spanish generals to transform into a full-fledged civil war that ravaged Spain and its people for nearly three years. Moreover, it was precisely fascist intervention in Spain, initiated by Nazi Germany and its partner, Fascist Italy, that inspired a remarkable display of international solidarity with the Spanish Republic throughout the world, thereby expanding the geographic scope of the conflict. Often relying on logistical support from various party organizations, such as the Communist International, tens of thousands of foreign volunteers ventured to Spain in defiance of home governments that had almost invariably adopted a policy of non-intervention in the face of this overt display of fascist aggression. In this sense, the internationalization of this nominally civil conflict in Spain derived in large part from the foreign policy machinations of Germany's National Socialist regime. The regime's declared aim of extirpating the forces of 'Bolshevism' in Spain corresponded to the project that it had launched already in Germany, through its all-out assault against the Communist Party of Germany and other domestic forces of political internationalism upon its rise to power.[1] Perhaps unsurprisingly, in view of these circumstances, thousands of German antifascists,

[1] Struggle against an imagined 'Judeo-Bolshevik' menace was not only a defining feature of National Socialist ideology but also a central feature of contemporary anti-communist politics more generally. See Hanebrink (2018).

including many who arrived from lives in exile, numbered among the multitudes of foreign volunteers who descended on the Iberian Peninsula after 1936, in the hope of counteracting the influence of fascist military intervention.

The largest contingent of German combatants to fight in Spain was the Condor Legion, which was deployed there by the National Socialist regime itself. This unit was comprised of members of the regular German military who agreed to involve themselves in what was an unknown mission, for most, at the conflict's outset. While the veil of secrecy that surrounded the mission prior to these soldiers' embarkation for Spain makes their motivations difficult to evaluate, a wide range of factors have been proposed, including the prospect of adventure, the opportunity to earn a supplemental income, and especially the sense that participation was not truly voluntary (Schüler-Springorum, 2010: 105–111). However, soon after their departure from Germany, they were informed of the deeply ideological nature of the project in which they had become engaged: to confront and defeat the forces of 'Bolshevism' that the National Socialist regime understood to be threatening Spain. Over the course of the ensuing conflict, some 19,000 Germans were to pass through the ranks of the Condor Legion in the service of this cause. Though most widely remembered for its notorious role in the destruction of the Basque city of Guernica on April 26, 1937, the unit also played a constant and essential role in the conflict by providing vital air support to the rebel Nationalist war effort under the leadership of Francisco Franco, which ultimately emerged victorious. Suffering a casualty ratio of less than one per cent in the course of combat operations (Schüler-Springorum, 2008: 224), the Condor Legion fared quite well in this famously brutal conflict that took a devastating toll on its Spanish participants. Through the combat experience that they gained in Spain, the German soldiers of the Condor Legion became a great asset to the ambitions of Nazi Germany following the regime's instigation of the Second World War, which erupted less than six months later. The utility with which this combat experience endowed them was to prove less auspicious for the former Condor Legionnaires themselves; fewer than one-fifth of the unit's pilots are estimated to have survived this second, general conflagration that ultimately led to the downfall of both Germany and its National Socialist regime (Schüler-Springorum, 2008: 233).

In stark contrast with their adversaries of the Condor Legion, most German antifascists who ventured to Spain to fight in defense of the Spanish Republic between 1936 and 1938 arrived there in connection with an enduring plight that had begun years earlier, in the immediate wake of the 1933 triumph of National Socialism in Germany. Henceforth referred to as 'Spain-fighters' (based on the contemporary German designation, Spanienkämpfer), these German socialists, anarchists, and — above all — communists who joined antifascist military units in Spain had generally experienced considerable persecution at the hands of the National Socialist regime, including arrest, various forms of physical harm, and extended periods of extra-legal confinement in concentration camps. Beginning in 1933, many of those affected had fled into exile or embarked on a life underground as a means of escaping the long arm of the German secret police, or Gestapo, often continuing their antifascist political struggle thereafter by nonconventional means.

With the aid of their exiled party organizations, some 3,000 German antifascists made their way to Spain following the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War to fight in defense of the beleaguered Spanish Republic. On the basis of imperfect records, it is estimated that roughly one quarter to one third of the Spain-fighters were killed over the course of the conflict (Uhl, 2004: 53–57). Those who remained in Spain upon the collapse of the Spanish Republican war effort were forced to flee across Spain's northern border, into France, where French authorities confined hundreds of them to internment camps. Some managed to dodge or escape French captivity, and certain of these, in turn, joined either the French Resistance or the Allied war effort during the Second World War. However, hundreds of others were recaptured by the National Socialist regime in the wake of its occupation of France. Regarding their activities in Spain as a continuation of the political activity for which it had already taken action against many of them in 1933, the National Socialist regime consigned virtually all of the so-called 'Red Spain-fighters' that it captured to various prisons and concentration camps, where most languished until the collapse of the National Socialist regime (Mühlen, 1983: 299–307).

By the time of the National Socialist regime's collapse in 1945, the Spanish Civil War had been rendered a distant memory for its German combatants, whose experiences in the intervening years tended to be no less and oftentimes even more harrowing than those connected with Spain. The majority of veteran Spain-fighters who retained an ongoing commitment to politics after 1945 made an effort to settle in the Soviet zone of occupation that was later to become East Germany. There, many became enthusiastic supporters of, and sometimes even prominent players in, the establishment of a socialist state (McLellan, 2004: 43–56). For veterans of the Condor Legion and even for many other antifascist veterans, returning home – to whichever zone of occupation where that home happened to be – held the highest priority. Gradually, antifascist veterans who had been fortunate enough to evade recapture by the National Socialist regime returned to Germany from various lands of exile or upon their release by the Allied military units to which they had attached themselves during the Second World War. For many veterans of the Condor Legion, return was possible only after release from prisoner of war camps. In a postwar world in which the future would be determined by narratives connecting the past to the present, the legacy of Spanish Civil War was to retain far more significance for the fates of German veterans of the conflict than most could have predicted at that time.

3. The legacy of the Spanish Civil War in Cold War West Germany

3.1 Spain as a symbol in Cold War Germany

In the context of the Cold War, postwar Germany's division into two ideologically hostile states imbued its idiosyncratic past, in connection with the Spanish Civil War, with lasting and highly contentious symbolic value. Naturally, this circumstance proved highly consequential in shaping the postwar fates of German

veterans of the conflict. Following the founding of the East German and West German states in 1949, the two states became engaged concurrently, as competing successor states of a defeated Germany, in the pursuit of legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. The distinct approaches that the two German states pursued to this end informed memory of the German past in relation to Spain in a manner that was to have direct implications for the Germans who had fought there. The East German state endeavored to cultivate a triumphal attitude towards the German past by appropriating the legacy of the German antifascist resistance. As a result, the legacy of German antifascist resistance in Spain became a vital source of pride in East Germany, winning the Spain-fighters considerable prestige in East German society (Uhl, 2004: 330–498; McLellan, 73–95). By contrast, West Germany adopted an outwardly repentant posture towards the past and sought to build legitimacy on the world stage through various forms of public atonement, which tended to be concerned with victimhood to a far greater extent than resistance. However, because National Socialist crimes in Spain had not been perpetrated against the government of Francisco Franco that had since established dominion there, the Spanish legacy amounted to a mostly unusable past for West Germany and was thus scarcely thematized in the West German public sphere.[2] Consequently, the West German state's posture with respect to this facet of the national past found expression chiefly through obscure channels—above all through the legal stances that it adopted towards West German citizens who had fought there.

3.2 The Spain-fighters

During the early stages of postwar transition, staunch opponents of National Socialism, including many of its surviving victims, were recognized by occupying forces as reliably hostile to the vanquished regime, facilitating their entry into provisional positions of authority within emerging institutions throughout occupied Germany. In the Western zones of occupation, these authorities oversaw the implementation of a variety of reparations initiatives consistent with what has since become known as transitional justice. Because successful reparations initiatives combine symbolic recognition of victimhood with indemnification recognizing its concrete material impacts, this project demanded that the emerging social order in what later became West Germany not only reassess former boundaries of inclusion and exclusion but also provide material compensation that might place former victims on more equal footing with their fellow citizens (Verdeja, 2006). To this end, the authority exercised during the immediate postwar years by former victims of the National Socialist regime contributed to the writing of reparations guidelines that were attuned to, and thus capable of recognizing, the recently lived realities of a wide variety of victim demographics within German society.

[2] Especially during the 1950s, West German diplomacy toward the regime of Francisco Franco actually manifested in limited forms of memory cultivation in connection with the Condor Legion. See Lehman (2006).

German antifascists who had ventured to Spain after 1936 numbered among the categories of political victims of National Socialism that were deemed eligible for reparations in this context. Indeed, early postwar guidelines published in a 1947 edition of the *Manual of Reparations* identified the Spain-fighters explicitly as a category of persons who were persecuted under National Socialism. In response to the question, 'Who can be recognized as a person persecuted by fascism?' the manual divided persecuted persons into what were termed 'Victims of Fascism' and 'Activists against Fascism,' and it included among the latter group 'the Spain-fighters who fought in the International Brigades'.[3] In addition to being identified by this clause, the Spain-fighters also satisfied more general standards of the activist classification, which extended also to 'all antifascists who went into political emigration to escape the grip of the Gestapo, and, from there, continued to engage demonstrably in struggle against the Hitler regime alongside resistance groups.' Pointing to the causal connections between political circumstances in Germany and those in Spain, legal appraisals of this kind reflected a concrete awareness, on the part of personnel within the West German reparations bureaucracy, of the particular challenges and hardships that antifascists who became Spain-fighters had faced under the National Socialist regime.

While early reparations law offered grounds for optimism that transitional justice might be achieved, the intensification of the Cold War at the close of the decade had significant ramifications for the evolution of reparations law in West Germany. This heightening of East-West tensions, as well as the growing paranoia that accompanied it, precipitated a reassessment within relevant West German institutions concerning the political qualities that were appropriate in persons tasked with the writing of reparations law. This politically motivated reassessment led to the purging of communists, such as the esteemed Jewish lawyer Marcel Frenkel, who edited the *Manual of Reparations*, from the legal bureaucracy that oversaw the administration of reparations law (Spernol, 2009). In Frenkel's case, this affair was facilitated by the ongoing circulation of antisemitic tropes in West German society, suggesting a link between Jews and communism. By eliminating personnel who were deemed unreliable on the basis of the very qualities for which they had been persecuted under National Socialism, conditions arose for transitional justice efforts to be subverted and, instead, yield transitional *injustice* (Loyle and Davenport, 2016: 133–134). That is, such restriction of access to participation in legal opinion-making not only drastically decreased the likelihood of positive legal outcomes for applicants but also had the effect of effacing the record of certain forms of National Socialist crimes.

Amid these Cold War conditions, the homogenization of personnel and political views within those state institutions responsible for the administration of reparations law proved highly consequential for the fortunes of the Spain-fighters. With sympathetic and knowledgeable commentators like Marcel Frenkel removed

[3] While early reparations guidelines varied among the various Western zones of occupation, all zonal guidelines in which the Spain-fighters were mentioned explicitly identified them as a category of persons persecuted under National Socialism. Here, see 'Anerkennungsfragen: Richtlinien vom 8.11.1947' (Frenkel et al., 1950: vol. 8, II, 2).

from the ranks of the West German reparations bureaucracy, reparations guidelines were gradually revised in accordance with the legal perspectives of the unsympathetic and even hostile bureaucrats who replaced them. As early as 1949, new reparations guidelines began to be published that contradicted earlier appraisals theretofore recognizing the persecution of the Spain-fighters at the hands of the National Socialist regime. These new appraisals rejected the notion of a causal connection between political phenomena in Germany and those in Spain, despite their involvement of a common set of actors. One new guideline focusing on physical injuries sustained by Spain-fighters during their time in Spain now stipulated that 'Spain-fighters who suffered physical harm in the struggle against Franco [...] have no claim to restitution because their injuries are not a consequence of National Socialist persecution measures' (Wilden and Klückmann, 1950: 26). By the following year, new and contrary guidance printed in the formerly sympathetic *Manual of Reparations* now rejected the legitimacy of their claims by attempting to disaggregate their struggle in Spain from the wider struggle against National Socialism. It read: 'The Spain-fighters are not active participants in an effort to eliminate the National Socialist regime but rather [...] participants in the fight against fascist rule in Spain' (Frenkel et al., 1950: vol. 19, V, 1). Later guidelines continued to elaborate on these inauspicious reappraisals, endeavoring through inscrutable logic to disentangle the German and Spanish pasts. One particularly puzzling legal opinion conceded that that German members of the International Brigades were later persecuted as political opponents by the National Socialist regime, but it nonetheless maintained that 'Participation in the Spanish Civil War itself was, by contrast, no struggle against National Socialism as such, but rather a struggle for the existence of the Spanish Republic' (van Dam and Loos, 1957: 56). The National Socialist regime's past prosecution of the Spain-fighters for the crime of 'preparation for high treason' — a category of offense directed unambiguously at the government form in Germany — went virtually unacknowledged by these emerging legal opinions. Instead, West German justice officials substituted their own, discrepant standard for that of the National Socialist regime, which had recognized the Spain-fighters as resisters and persecuted them on that basis.[4] By failing to acknowledge how National Socialist repressive measures had targeted the Spain-fighters as a group, the West German state effectively revoked the symbolic recognition that had once been conferred upon this group by early postwar reparations guidelines (Verdeja, 2006: 455). Naturally, this change in the criteria for recognition was accompanied by the evaporation of any material obligation towards the Spain-fighters by the West German state. It was under these adverse legal circumstances that hundreds of veteran Spain-fighters were to submit applications for reparations during the early postwar decades. While some veteran Spain-fighters challenged unsatisfactory application outcomes by engaging in appeals that sometimes lasted decades, virtually all were denied reparations linked in any direct way to their antifascist struggle in Spain.

[4] Legal theorist Carl Schmitt rejected the possibility of any such third-party evaluation. See Schmitt (1976: 27).

Even as the West German state disqualified the period of the Spain-fighters' participation in the Spanish Civil War from eligibility for reparations, it also exploited knowledge of many Spain-fighters' past and often enduring sympathies for communism to their lasting detriment. During the early 1950s, this presumed affiliation inspired the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) to surveil many former Spain-fighters, whom it — like the National Socialist regime before it — tended to refer to as 'Red Spain-fighters' (NW 490 Nr. 141). This suspected and oftentimes actual political affiliation became especially significant in connection with the ongoing efforts of many Spain-fighters to secure reparations following the passage of the Federal Supplementary Law (Bundesergänzungsgesetz) in 1953, which made eligibility for reparations for all applicants contingent upon their noninvolvement in communist political activity. These restrictions, which were implemented at the instigation of anti-communist elements within West German society, applied retroactively to anyone who was deemed to have conducted themselves in a manner hostile to the 'free democratic basic order' after the passage of the Basic Law in May of 1949 (Spernol, 2014). The West German Ministry of Justice aimed, in this way, to deny reparations to anyone whom it regarded as an 'adherent of a totalitarian system.' Under suspicion of continued communist activity, the Spain-fighters were also surveilled at a local level — sometimes in direct connection with legal proceedings associated with their pursuit of reparations. The Cold War lens through which the West German state looked upon the Spain-fighters thus encouraged authorities to punish the very citizens who appealed to the state in search of justice. In this way, the Nazi-era exclusion of the Spain-fighters was effectively perpetuated in West Germany in a novel form.

3.3 The Condor Legion

Unlike the German veterans of the Spanish Civil War's antifascist military units, those veterans of the Condor Legion who were fortunate enough to survive the Second World War and settle in West Germany possessed no claim whatsoever to victim status there. After all, in stark contrast with the former group, the veterans of the Condor Legion numbered among the perpetrators rather than the victims of National Socialist crimes. And yet, it was precisely in connection with their role as agents of National Socialist geopolitical ambitions that veterans of the Condor Legion shared in the pensions that were guaranteed to all civil servants of the former Nazi state by the 1949 Basic Law — a benefit extending to all professional soldiers who had not been too thoroughly compromised through their military service under National Socialism (Diehl, 1993: 141–162). In fact, veterans of the Condor Legion also received an additional pension benefit for the time of their deployment to Spain (Pross, 1998: 45–46). In this sense, the very German soldiers who had participated in National Socialist militarism and foreign aggression at the earliest stage enjoyed the greatest benefits of all.

In view of these favorable circumstances, the recognition claims that veterans of the Condor Legion made upon the West German state were based not

on victimhood associated with the National Socialist era but rather with a different form of victimhood of distinctly postwar provenance. Namely, these claims were made by veteran Condor Legionnaires who had settled in the Soviet zone of occupation that later became East Germany. Over the course of the 1950s, numerous such veterans applied for asylum as political refugees in West Germany and also submitted applications to gain the pension benefits that West German citizenship afforded Germans of their professional background. In their applications, these veterans expressed concern for their safety in East Germany in connection with their personal histories as former combatants of the Condor Legion in Spain. Responses to these applications by the West German state offer further insight into the political dimensions of recognition struggles waged in Cold War West Germany.

Whatever their basis in reality, the claims of the veteran Condor Legionnaires were premised on deeply ideological assumptions that perverted justice in their very claim to seek it. In most cases, it was not due to historical membership in the Condor Legion itself that applicants sought asylum in West Germany but rather on the basis of fears associated with their failure to disclose this facet or their biographies when prompted to do so by zonal authorities at an earlier stage in the aftermath of the Second World War. The decision to withhold this information in the first place necessarily derived from some combination of the subjective desire to escape justice for crimes committed under National Socialism and the subjective view that authorities in the Soviet zone of occupation were not legitimate arbiters of justice. Indeed, some applicants — seemingly content to live in East Germany as long as any reckoning could be avoided — appear to have been inspired to seek asylum only after efforts at their recruitment by the East German state into the German People's Police, which they feared might prompt a more thorough investigation into their political biographies and thereby expose their nondisclosures. In effect, by concealing information concerning their roles under National Socialism, these veteran Condor Legionnaires transformed their complicity in National Socialist crimes into an ostensible form of victimhood in the Cold War present, which they in turn endeavored to construe as evidence of totalitarian repression.

Much like the asylum claims themselves, state recognition of the victimhood of veterans of the Condor Legion appears to have rested quite heavily on ideological considerations. Indeed, certain of the West German bureaucrats who processed the claims of the veteran Condor Legionnaires framed their appraisals in distinctly ideological terms. Betraying the persistence of anti-communist sentiment in West German society, the West German official processing the asylum claim of one veteran described his past in terms that might have been used by the National Socialist regime itself: 'In the years 1937 and 1938, he belonged to the Condor Legion, which was deployed to overpower Bolshevism in Spain' (NW 130 Nr. 127, Hoffmann, 1). Adoption of such blatant tropes from National Socialist discourse was supplemented by various biases connected more directly with the Cold War present. For instance, another West German official justified an applicant's attempt to conceal his past from East German authorities on grounds that he might

otherwise have been 'subject to sociopolitical vilification due to his participation in the Spanish Civil War,' elsewhere deeming the applicant's deception appropriate 'in view of the political outlook and methods of the Soviet zone' (NW 130 Nr. 127, Höhno, 3–4). Because the authority of the East German state was regarded as illegitimate by asylum-seekers and the West German state alike, shows of resistance to that authority acquired a paradoxical air of legitimacy.

Nor did the realization by West German authorities that the claims of certain veterans of the Condor Legion were dubious or even false deter the state from recognizing the applicants in question. Even after the allegations of repression by one veteran were determined to be spurious, West German authorities still chose to grant him asylum on 'grounds of discretion' (NW 130 Nr. 128, Lupp, Report on Rationale for Flight, 5). Moreover, applicants who encountered skepticism from West German authorities could appeal for support from anti-communist organizations such as the Combat Group against Inhumanity, which was funded by the American Central Intelligence Agency and thus did not hesitate to substantiate allegations of iniquity by East German authorities (NW 130 Nr. 127, Hoffmann, 3). Such corroborations seemingly encouraged West German bureaucrats to reconsider their prior reluctance to recognize applicants whose claims they had deemed invalid. Indeed, one such bureaucrat reasoned that, while persecution was not demonstrable, it was nevertheless 'thinkable,' or it could be 'assumed with probability bordering on certainty' (NW 130 Nr. 127, Hoffmann, 4). The establishment of such subjective evaluative criteria effectively empowered these alleged victims of East German state repression to recognize themselves as such, thereby securing both the asylum and the pension benefits that such recognition entailed. The recognition granted to the veteran Condor Legionnaires by the West German state thus functioned to integrate these former agents of the National Socialist regime into West German society even as the state's non-recognition of their antifascist counterparts perpetuated the ongoing exclusion of former resisters.

By all indications, the recognition conferred by the West German state upon veterans of the Condor Legion in this context derived far more from the common ideological hostility by the state and applicants towards the East German state than from any basis in historical reality. Indeed, in addition to the inconsistencies acknowledged in the application materials, existing scholarship documents no systematic persecution of German veterans of the Condor Legion in East Germany — including with respect to veterans known by authorities to have falsely denied their membership in the unit (Schüler-Springorum, 2010: 238–240). For the veterans of the Condor Legion, like the veteran Spain-fighters, Cold War considerations had thus tilted the scales of justice. However, for the veterans of the Condor Legion, unlike the veteran Spain-fighters, it had done so to their distinct advantage.

4. Recognition as legitimation in Cold War West Germany

As the preceding discussion has demonstrated, knowledge produced in West Germany concerning the German veterans of the Spanish Civil War tended to conform to the perceived exigencies of the Cold War and West Germany's particular coordinates within it. In this sense, knowledge about the past was produced in a manner consistent with the principles of what sociologists of knowledge have termed a 'symbolic universe.' Theoretical constructions devised to refer to a mode of legitimation serving to 'integrate different provinces of meaning and encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality,' symbolic universes 'operate to legitimate individual biography and the institutional order' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 95–97). These properties of a symbolic universe explain the need for a convergence of interest between those seeking recognition and the recognition-conferring authority. In West Germany, such considerations encouraged the state to prioritize the struggle against communism in the present over its avowed aim of atoning for the National Socialist past. The state's inability to reconcile these tasks led to its selective and outwardly contradictory recognition of victimhood in connection with German veterans of the Spanish Civil War. Though this particular recognition struggle concerned only a relatively small number of West German citizens and thus never held more than a marginal place in the grander context of the Cold War, its foundational ties to the wider symbolic universe of the Cold War West suggest that it may nevertheless be understood as a microcosm of this grander struggle, simultaneously shaping that struggle and shaped by it through dialectical interaction.

To appreciate the legitimating function of the West German state's response to these recognition struggles, it is useful to consider these struggles' connections to key conceptual tools through which the Cold War was waged (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 107–109). To this end, considering their relevance to the concepts of *totalitarianism* and *antifascism* is particularly instructive, as these concepts were fundamental to the legitimation struggles of the Cold War (Rabinbach, 2009: 7–25; 2006: 111–112). These struggle concepts were of vital significance in this context not only for their political content but also for their immanent temporality. Namely, both concepts linked the National Socialist past with the Cold War present in much the same way as did the recognition struggles in question. In early Cold War West Germany, totalitarianism became part and parcel of the 'conceptual machinery of [symbolic] universe-maintenance' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 108), in that it assumed from 'Bolshevism' the mantle of interwar and wartime anti-communism (Traverso, 2017: 101; Hanebrink, 2018: 200–236). The concept relativized fascist crimes by linking them with communist ones while also evoking the horrific crimes of the fascist past as a moral burden of the communist foe in the Cold War present. Offering anti-communists a powerful discursive cudgel with which to attack the communist East, the concept quickly acquired a sacred place within the symbolic universe of the Cold War West. Moreover, the concept of totalitarianism effectively negated the concept of antifascism, which had acquired a similarly sacred status in the symbolic universe of the Cold War East. Specifically, through its inherent allegation of an underlying synergy between fascism and communism, the concept of totalitarianism cast

doubt on the proposition that communism could truly be antifascist. In this way, validation of either the concept of totalitarianism or the concept of antifascism necessarily came at the expense of the other. Because these concepts played a vitally important role in the respective discursive arsenals of the opposing Cold War orders and were thus connected with the legitimacy of those orders as a whole, the stakes of recognition struggles of relevance to them transcended the stakes of the struggles themselves.

With these considerations in mind, the outwardly paradoxical outcomes of the recognition struggles waged by veteran Spain-fighters in West Germany seem likely to have been a foregone conclusion. Unlike East Germany, West Germany had little to gain and much to lose from an honest reckoning with the details of German antifascist resistance in the Spanish Civil War. For this reason, acknowledgment of this historical phenomenon, which its East German adversary then touted as evidence of its superiority, would have constituted an unthinkable concession on the part of the West German state. The chicanery in which West German bureaucrats engaged to avoid recognizing the claims of the Spain-fighters thus reflected the harm that such recognition threatened to do in connection with contemporary legitimation struggles. Because the Spain-fighters comprised a distinct legal category of Germans whose pasts could be cited to validate the notion of communist antifascism, thus endangering the conceptual integrity of totalitarianism, the West German state endeavored to reappraise this history and thereby render it invalid.[5] Once key personnel hindering this project had been expelled from the bureaucracy involved in the writing and implementation of reparations law, it became possible for the West German state not only to deny the veteran Spain-fighters recognition of their role in resisting National Socialism but also – in connection with the state's explicit exclusion of communists from eligibility for reparations – to reimagine these onetime antifascist resisters as aspiring perpetrators of totalitarian crimes in the context of the Cold War.

At the same time, the West German state's recognition of asylum claims by veterans of the Condor Legion rested on a priori assumptions of totalitarian repression. Allegations of East German persecution by veteran Condor Legionnaires satisfied narratives about the German past that then prevailed in West Germany. Namely, by sidestepping the matter of German guilt in connection with the National Socialist past, the allegations shifted attention to Germany's own victimhood at the hands of a foe by which Germans were defeated in the Second World War and suffered ongoing humiliation in the Cold War present: the Soviet Union (Moeller, 2003). While the defeat of National Socialism had precluded the continuation of armed struggle against the former 'Bolshevik menace,' this prior enmity had found a new lease on life in both the ideological confrontation associated with the Cold War as well as the perceived geopolitical threat stemming from Soviet hegemony over East Germany. These considerations facilitated the

[5] Berger and Luckmann refer to such maneuvers as 'nihilation,' which they describe as a negative form of legitimation. See Berger and Luckmann (1967: 114–116).

recasting of veterans of the Condor Legion from historical perpetrators of National Socialist crimes into victims of totalitarian repression in the Cold War present.

As a consequence of the dynamics considered here, the recognition that the West German state conferred upon German veterans of the Spanish Civil War might be most appropriately described as *misrecognition*. The seemingly distorted outcomes yielded by these recognition struggles resulted from the fact that recognition was conferred in these instances not chiefly to satisfy either the needs of recognition claimants or any objective standard of justice but above all to legitimate the West German state — the recognition-granting authority. Excluding from the emerging social order those Germans who had been victimized by the National Socialist regime even as they included those Germans who had participated in its crimes, these instances of misrecognition reproduced fascist-era political fault lines in the post-fascist epoch.

5. Conclusion

To be sure, the recognition dynamics unfolding in Germany in connection with the Spanish past were in no way unique to West Germany. The abundant recognition that the East German state conferred upon its own veteran Spain-fighters, as prominent antifascist resisters, has been documented extensively by historians (Uhl, 2004; McLellan, 2004; Krammer, 2004). And yet, in spite of outward appearances to the contrary, the East German state's recognition of these antifascist resisters shared with the West German state's non-recognition of them the common goal of self-legitimation in the highly competitive dual moral economy of Cold War politics.

Further substantiating the findings of the research into the neoliberal recognition dynamics that inspired this line of inquiry, this historical case study of recognition dynamics in the context of the Cold War evidences the existence of a symbiotic relationship between bottom-up struggles for recognition and top-down projects of legitimation. Demonstrating a recognition-granting authority's acquiescence to demands made upon it to be contingent on a convergence of interest between the recognizer and the recognized, this paper has shown recognition struggles to be ideologically embedded and — as such — to operate firmly within the realm of the political. When examined in this broader context, recognition struggles can be found to have an instrumental, as opposed to meliorative, function within a sociopolitical system that has lamentably little to do with either justice or inclusivity.

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GERGELY ROMSICS *

The Meaning of Occupation: The Ambiguous Productivity of the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism in Berlin

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 84-114.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.632
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract[1]

The paper analyzes the mnemonic and political context of the occupation of the Roma Holocaust memorial in Berlin in May 2016, carried out by groups demanding the right to remain in the country for non-citizen Roma. Observing the actor strategies apparent in this event, as well as the governmental logics organizing memorialization, it argues that the pervasive contemporary phenomenon of 'politics of recognition' needs to be interpreted as a providing merely a frame for struggles for political agency. Normative symbolic clashes taking place in this frame require a more fine-grained analysis to establish whether certain mnemonic practices inhibit or empower the social groups they reference. The concepts the paper advances as better explaining the outcome of memory struggles are referentiality and productivity. These signify attempts to (re)organize the semantic spaces of memory, and, if successful, allow for political agency to operate in the reconstituted mnemonic landscape. Governmentalities, however, will frequently attempt to deny such reconstitutions of 'settled' memory, in which case any politics of recognition remains a hollow shell without the potential to re-orient societal and political practices in the present. In the case of the occupation, the memory conflict highlighted how the past may be use to challenge accepted boundaries and the practice of boundary-making in society, while also highlighting the importance of social and political coalitions to advance change.

Keywords: *housing policy, double movement, recognition, redistribution.*

[1] This paper is based on research conducted in the framework of the project *Roma and Resistance during the Holocaust and in its Aftermath* organized by Tom Lantos Institute, Budapest. TLI's generous support enabled sustained comparative research on German and Hungarian contexts of Roma Holocaust memory, published in an eponymous collection of working papers. I thank Anna-Mária Bíró, Evelyn Verhas, Anna-Lujza Szász and Angéla Kóczé, as well as Slawomir Kapralski for comments on my research report for the project, parts of which I adapted for this study. I also thank Balázs Majtényi for his remarks during the public debate of my theses on this subject matter at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the two anonymous reviewers and Máté Zombory for their help in finalizing the text.

1. Introduction: Memory work and meaning-creation

The occupation of the space around the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism on May 22, 2016 represented multiple conflicts over interpreting the past-present nexus, specifically the relationship between current governmental practices and ethical imperatives derived from historical knowledge. It was carried out by protesters seeking the suspension of forced returns to countries of origin (notably Kosovo and Macedonia) that had been reclassified as 'safe' by German authorities. The event highlighted the multidirectionality of the memory of genocide, inscribing disparate histories and present practices of violence into the representation of its most tragic instance (Rothberg, 2010). Specifically, the Roma Holocaust was repositioned in the act of occupation as a normative origo for just, inclusive reactions to events from the recent past (ranging from anti-Roma attitudes, structural and occasional physical violence in former socialist countries to post-war atrocities in Kosovo), and as generating a moral imperative for German and European solidarity with Roma everywhere on the continent. The move also sought to de-legitimize the tacit bureaucratic refusal, inherent in the reclassification of countries of origin, to acknowledge that legacies of exclusion still render life precarious for Roma communities in many places. In so doing, it attempted to radically broaden the representational productivity or 'meaning-making potential' of the monument (Meyer and Whitmore, 2020).

The logic underlying the occupation subverted the sovereign boundary-drawing between society at large on the one hand and those denied full membership in it. The latter group, composed of those to be sent back to their countries of origin and those who can stay (for now) without being admitted to the political community, represents an excess of society that is managed through government agencies largely out of the public eye. The occupation pursued the political and present-oriented aim of rendering visible these routinized and undiscussed processes of bureaucratic control that constitute the political economy of 'the right to stay,' or *Bleiberecht*. The action rested on the assumption that if it is accepted that the perpetrator legacies of the genocide against Roma impose a duty on majority society to welcome and protect present-day Roma facing discrimination at home, agency and political visibility can no longer be denied to the groups of asylum-seekers. Refusing these would mean violating the normative framework prescribing the abjuration of singling out and persecuting or denying opportunities to vulnerable ethnic and racial minorities. Rooted in the collective decision to 'face history,' first and foremost of the genocidal practices of National Socialism, this framework has been widely accepted as foundational to both German and a pan-European identity (Herf, 1997; Art, 2006; Olick, 2016; Wittlinger and Boothroyd, 2010: 489–502). The refusal to offer shelter constitutes, if the case of asylum-seekers is allowed to be interpreted under the aegis of Holocaust memory, a re-enactment of the trope of the 'camp' through the sustained relegation of asylum-seeking Roma to the limbo between residence permit and expulsion (Edkins, 2000).

The event-like and agent-driven character of the occupation of the memorial grounds underlines the fit between the case and the theoretical toolbox offered by contemporary streams of memory studies. In interpreting the occupation and the conundrum of opinions around it, this paper adopts a dynamic position which treats mnemonic practices as representing ongoing (re)negotiations of meaning, with multiple referent objects in the past and in the present alike. In doing so, it aligns itself with criticism levelled against more traditional frameworks of interpreting collective memory. According to this criticism, earlier studies, modelled on the sociological approach introduced by Maurice Halbwachs, had a structural bias, focusing on the 'contents' of memory and avoiding the issue of how memory performs its role in society (Halbwachs, 1997: 96–160). As a result of this, the once revolutionary Halbwachsian understanding does not provide sufficient tools to investigate agencies that shape and contest memorialization.

The shift away from memory towards remembrance represents moving the focus from the exploration of the 'contents' of memory towards its 'makers' and 'uses'; that is, the *process* of memory. Through this shift, memory has come to be seen as performative, constituted as the sum of mnemonic practices (Olick and Robbins, 1998). These practices represent instances of communicative/symbolic action embodied in re-enactment and commemoration (Fentress and Wickham, 1992; Winter et al., 2010; Gutman et al., 2010). While Halbwachsian memory has been 'understood as denoting an object,' remembrance designates 'a process' that may be investigated in an interaction-focused framework, where participants create narratives to shape 'social realities' (Bottici, 2010: 342). As Jeffrey Olick summarized the essence of this change of perspective, memory has come to be seen as a 'construct' that references itself and practices in the present, rather than the past (Olick, 2007).

Beyond the emphasis on memory as a process referencing conditions in the present, the occupation also highlighted the entangled character of remembering the European past. In fact, much of Roma memory work in Europe fits into what are described as emergent post-national communities of remembrance, conditioned by '[g]lobalized communication and time-space compression, post-coloniality, transnational capitalism, large-scale migration, and regional integration.' In the case of the Roma, the main focus falls on the intersection of intra-community remembering and the transnational memory culture of the Holocaust. The latter corresponds to the structuring of Roma memory, since these communities share the characteristic that 'the national […] cease[s] to be the inevitable or preeminent scale for […] collective remembrance' (de Cesari and Rigney, 2014: 2). In the case at hand, it was a transnational group – with family and kin spread across several countries – that sought to establish the local relevance of its mnemonic practices by re-interpreting a key place of *transnational* memory (a reminder of genocidal persecution targeting Sinti and Roma) constructed within the framework of a *national* politics of history (German attempts at facing history). As such, the case provides also an opportunity for the 'investigation of transnational memory linkages on the European level, comprising the analysis of cross-border social relationships of non-state and other actors' (Sierp and Wüstenberg, 2015: 323).

The action channels of the event analyzed here highlight the work undertaken by agents of remembering who are also creating meaning in the undertaking. The notion of post-memory emphasizes the work-like, dynamic aspect of remembering by subsequent generations and is rooted in the acknowledgement that through transmitted (familiar, cultural) memory we remember that which we have not lived through. Memory work involves, therefore, rounding out, interpreting, ordering that which was passed on in fragments as a result of trauma or forced silencing. As Marianne Hirsch argued: '[p]ost-memory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall, but by imaginative investment, projection and creation' (Hirsch, 2012: 4–5).

In the specific instance of occupying the memorial, a pre-existing memory construct – connecting the universality of the Holocaust with the diachronic continuum of structural aggression against marginalized Roma – was mobilized and also added to in the process being 'performed' in the act of occupation. The central component of Roma post-memory, definitively formulated during the post-1989 wave of deterritorialized identity building, is the emphasis on the Roma Holocaust representing the symbolic culmination of persecution and discrimination faced by members of the minority both before and after World War II, which operates as a metonymy of persistent oppression (Hancock, 1997; Gheorghe, 1991). The 'imaginative investment' of the original referent object was carried out during eruptions of a kind of insurrectionary knowledge, created by Roma activists during the preceding decades and sufficiently disseminated to operate as a unifying cognitive frame for participants. As Michel Foucault argued, disciplinary power-knowledges can be challenged by agents of

> an insurrection of subjugated knowledges […] referring to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systemization. […] Subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematizing theory and which criticism […] has been able to reveal. (Foucault, 1980: 81–82)

The definition offers a very precise fit for the event of the occupation of the memorial grounds. The actors set themselves the goal of recasting ongoing expulsions and bureaucratic uncertainty over them as inacceptable for the broader political community because these bear resemblance to past violence which has become canonized in public memory as the 'Other' of the European self. Yet the canonical variant remains mute with regard to the present. In the process of occupation, the participants restored the productivity of canonical memory by linking it with contemporary, personal experience and subjective knowledges about supposedly 'safe countries' and the persistent precariousness of Roma life.

As the above paragraph suggests, productivity can imply challenging prevailing norms and institutions that legitimize and promote certain relationships of referentiality, while muting and marginalizing others. It therefore also means restoring a greater degree of polyvalence to the memorial object. The success of

the attempt hinges on the ability of agents of change and reinterpretation, of 'norm entrepreneurs' of memory, to create (or imbue new meaning into) objects and discourses that become disseminators of these meanings (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Finstad, 1998; Bratberg, 2011: 19). The new meaning – i.e. having the memory of Sinti and Roma Holocaust victims brought to bear on the ongoing expulsions affecting Roma mainly from the Western Balkans – clashed with the tacit practice of (p)reserving the memory of genocide for referencing in the present the responsibility of non-Roma majorities and governments to ensure compensation for victims and offer a place in their respective national societies for Roma. The latter frame has characterized mainstream German Sinti and Roma memory work and the resulting government-sanctioned institutionalization of Roma Holocaust remembrance for decades. With the occupation, a long controversy about the insufficient character of such recognition, which had come under increased scrutiny from dissenting organizations promoting deterritorialized Roma nationhood and rights, once more burst into the open.

The following sections investigate and contextualize the occupation, focusing on the challenge it represented to the prevailing governmentality – understood as the milieu of actors deploying relevant knowledges to administer aspects of social organization, or 'in the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing human behavior' (Foucault, 1997: 82). This includes both the know-hows and capabilities of government agencies and civil society actors who, in this case, had successfully constructed a niche for themselves during earlier decades of gradual progress towards recognition of German minority Sinti and Roma as victims of the Holocaust and citizens of the new Germany. Beyond the tension between a politics of recognition conducted in the name of a minority and one referencing a deterritorialized, nascent Roma nation (an opposition discussed below), the event and its contexts demonstrate the problematic linkage between recognition and political agency in general. Governmentality works towards denying such agency to non-coopted actors that threaten the discursive stability of memory, along with its relevance for organizing and managing society. The action carried out by asylum-seekers, activists, and allies targeted this intersection of canonical memory and present-day political contestations. While its effects remained limited, it generated an exchange that highlighted the struggles to determine the referentiality of memory. Viewed as a complex event where the various aspects may be disentangled through tracing the multiple streams of social debate converging around the occupation, the case ultimately permits an analysis of how governmentality limits the productivity of mnemonic practices in a politics of the present, meaning the extent to which such practices are allowed to (re-)configure norms of governmental action and social life. Such analysis investigates the settings in which multidirectional memory operates, highlighting how this multidirectionality, far from being fixed, represents successive rounds of negotiating and contesting meanings. Remembering as a social process is neither neutral, nor does it ever escape politics – the question that arises is rather how political and social actors struggle over configuring the memory-present nexus.

In the context of the above nexus, the shift towards the recognition of victims as a main goal of memory entrepreneurs and a frequent outcome of memory work has been highlighted across diverse disciplines as a prominent trend of the past decades (Chaumont, 1997; De Guissmé and Licata, 2017; Zombory, 2019: 12–17). The history of Roma Holocaust remembrance demonstrates that the demand for the recognition of victim status did in fact configure activism from the very beginning, predating the formal emergence of politics of recognition (*Anerkennungspolitik*) in the Federal Republic and the world at large. However, recognition can also figure as a depoliticizing move by governmentalities promising what Maria Mälksoo defined as 'ontological security' to the memory community while stripping it of direct interpretive power over political challenges impacting members of the community in the present. Registering the acknowledgment of historical suffering is therefore insufficient for assessing the social meaning of recognition in the present – in other words, the productivity and referentiality of memory.

Moving beyond the generalizations that impede disentangling the operations of power-knowledge, this paper focuses on modalities of recognition rather than the binary dilemma of what acknowledgment or the lack of such signifies in the context of memory politics. This is all the more necessary, as recognition of victimhood has become a prevailing mode of 'settling' and 'synthesizing' contested and conflictual interpretations of the past, especially of past violence. (Nadler and Shnabel, 2008; Kelman, 2008) The analysis that follows argues that 'recognition' is best seen as an empty signifier that only acquires social meaning as agents of memory clash over and circumscribe its symbolic productivity. It is depoliticized if governmentality preserves what has been recognized (past suffering caused by wrongdoing) decoupled from a political vision for the present and the future. At the same time, if norm entrepreneurs achieve the institutionalization of the linkage between a politics of the present and what is remembered, recognition can function as the source of disruptive knowledges that empower agents of change. This bifurcated analytic constitutes a warning about how in the era of a putatively universal right to remember, governmentalities can nevertheless advance preferred modes of memorializing to the detriment of other modes and the groups promoting these alternatives. While a rich repository of disruptive, even insurrectionary and often group-specific knowledges, memory needs to be questioned as mnemonic practice and social event to highlight the struggle over meaning-making in the socio-political setting of the present.

2. Elusive synergies of a Europeanized Roma memory and Holocaust remembrance

The event of the occupation fits into the ongoing pan-European undertaking to construct a non-homogenized, transnational Roma identity on the basis of shared historical experience. Such identity establishes a common historical dimension amongst groups, but also preserves regional and local differences between diverse communities. Roma remembering represents an excess of national memory, as

Roma themselves are an excess of national society, and unifying their mnemonic practices into cross-border 'national and ethnic memories […] in the age of globalization' would synergize with the emergent cosmopolitan memory culture theorized by Levy and Sznaider. The post-Westphalian character of the latter would be able to accommodate the Roma excess of national memories, while connecting the geographically bounded frameworks in the process (Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 3; Hirsch, 2012: 20–22; Feindt et al., 2014). This conception of nation-building with mnemonic practices constituting a core dimension of identity reaches back to the early 1990s, when leading activists of Roma nation-building, such as Andrzej Mirga and Nicolae Gheorghe, embarked on marking out the place and status of the Roma Holocaust within a global remembrance culture and the symbolic universe of a de-territorialized Roma nation (Gheorghe, 1991; Gheorge and Mirga, 1997; Kapralski, 1997; Gheorghe and Rostas, 2015; van Baar, 2010; 2015; Reading, 2012).

The Roma post-memory of the Holocaust, as originally conceptualized by Gheorghe and Mirga, would synergize with an emergent European politics of memory by virtue of its non-territorial character, simultaneously post-national and emancipatory. It points to a common symbolic core in the experiences of geographically and politically distant, yet culturally connected groups, multidirectionally interpreting many local pasts and presents through the universal signifier that Holocaust memory has become (Conrad, 2003: 86; Rothberg, 2009). In its fully developed form, it would have the potential to function as a 'rhizomatic network of temporality and cultural reference' that exists in a mutually constitutive relationship with Holocaust memory at large (Rothberg, 2010: 7).

In the struggle for emancipating Roma memory, this mutually constitutive relationship is of paramount significance. The historical representation of the exclusionary aspect of Europe is centered on the Holocaust, which is the anchor of the future continental 'memory community': it constitutes 'the first circle' of European remembering (Assmann, 2013: 32–35, Leggewie and Land, 2011: 23–24). Work on this foundational trope of historical identity is ongoing, in part because its remaining 'hot' memory – memory in a living, dialogical relationship with the present and representations of the self – is seen as an important symbolic exercise (Rigney, 2014: 343; Bottici, 2010: 345; Turai, 2009: 99; Tyszka, 2010). Keeping the memory of the Holocaust 'at work' sustains 'the potential to challenge basic assumptions – about the sovereign law of nation-states […] and to create a cosmopolitanized public and political space that reinforces moral interdependencies' (Sznaider, 2012: 61). Such mnemonic practice synergizes with preventing a retreat of 'Europe' into its White/Western historical identity, and counteracts (if not always successfully) exclusionary practices rooted in essentialized images of the self. The resulting liberation of memory from being constructed as a national, or otherwise homogeneous narrative holds out the possibility of Roma co-appearing in histories alongside the respective majorities, as well as claiming separate visibility in other instances. A history that may be read as existing within *and* across state borders should be one in which European and

Roma memory can be accommodated, representing parallel challenges to the national scale of remembering.

The nation- or transnational community-building discourse about Roma pasts points towards three naturally interconnected referent objects. One denotes the historical experience and the unifying potential of memory that shared experience and subsequent memory work generates – this makes up its intra-community dimension. It also refers to the Roma struggle to be included and represented in European cultures of remembrance. This constitutes the universal dimension of the Roma Holocaust. Finally, the Roma Holocaust as a trope of public remembering has also been deployed to challenge practices of marginalization and repression in the past and in the present. This may be termed the diachronic and emancipatory dimension, through which the Holocaust operates as the metaphorical condensation or synecdoche of a common aspect of centuries of otherwise divergent regional Roma histories (Kapralski, 1997: 277; Reading, 2012: 121–140). It imbues Holocaust memory with a universal message about exclusion suffered by the Roma and re-interprets that history as prefiguring or echoing the Holocaust in instances of persecution and marginalization.

Community of experience is crucial in conceptualizing nationhood, no matter how atypical, in the absence of a shared territory, language, religion, and a century-spanning shared historical situation (Kapralski, 1997: 277–278). As Gheorghe and Mirga argued, for the first time in history, a transcontinental Roma elite existed in the 1990s, but it originated from and sought legitimacy to represent divergent and geographically disparate groups (Gheorghe and Mirga, 1997). In the case of these Roma elites, translating across region-specific traditions of the past and identity, as well as navigating the intersections of Roma and cosmopolitan European traditions have had to be undertaken to sustain a project of identity construction (Fosztó, 2003: 119). The centrality of the Roma Holocaust in this project was reinforced from both directions: the need to construct common platforms for a fragmented identity conglomerate ('the Roma') and the opportunity of finding an interface for the emergent identity politics with mainstream European structures of memory and collective identity (Hancock, 1991; Mirga and Gheorghe, 1992).

The second universal, and symbolic, aspect of the memory of the Holocaust is rooted in the understanding of persecution by the Nazis as racially motivated and genocidal in character. This layer repositions the Roma, excluded and discriminated against in European societies, as universal signifiers of human suffering. In doing so, it defines a place for Roma in mainstream memory and challenges contemporary racist discourses that sustain the conceptualization of Roma as alien and as an excess (of Europe or the nation), a characteristic of structural racism, and of governmentalities that consign Roma to marginal niches in society.

The universal character of Roma suffering in the Holocaust ties in with the final, emancipatory dimension of Holocaust remembrance. The latter raises, even more directly, the question to what extent majority and governmental practices today are still sustaining logics of exclusion driven to their extreme in the

genocidal actions of the Holocaust. In practice, what is at stake is whether the traditional discourse about the 'asocial' Gypsy is accorded legitimacy within majority society. This discourse is organized around the image of the vagrant that represents 'a "social problem" requiring "rehabilitation" and "reintegration", who can – and must – be brought back into the fold of "society"' (Liégeois and Gheorghe, 1995: 12–13; Crowe, 1995: 236–238). By virtue of its emancipatory dimension, Holocaust memory may be deployed to delegitimize current policing discourse directed against Roma, revealing its racism and Nazi genealogy through highlighting the shared logic of othering underpinning both. In reverse, governmentalities that sustain exclusion seek to divest Holocaust memory from its emancipatory aspect, refusing to acknowledge continuities in marginalizing and repressive practices. For this reason, this dimension emerges as the most contested and most productive one at the intersections of majority and minority politics. This productivity explains at least in part why Holocaust memory has been central in the 'transition toward becoming an ethnically mobilized group, having a common stance and interests,' while also functioning as a rhetorical resource in the civil rights struggle (Mirga and Gheorghe, 1992).

Despite the paramount importance of Holocaust memory for Roma identity politics, the difference between the ways in which both Jewish and Roma suffering possesses universal significance is noted by most Roma activists and experts. The early contribution of Kenrick and Puxon to this question, a discursive origo for interpreting the Roma Holocaust, accomplished canonizing the difference and interpreting the specificity of persecution (Kenrick and Puxon, 1972: 183–184). Further elaborations of their thesis represent the majority opinion today. This interpretation argues that in the case of the Roma, decentered violence emerged out of the confluence of Nazi political will and ideology, often divergent decisions of Reich-level and regional functionaries, governmental decisions taken in allied or occupied countries, and the local, often 'grassroots level' willingness (both of occupiers and collaborators) to perpetrate the crimes (Margalit, 2002: 47–48; Barany, 2002: 103; Szász, 2015: 9–11; Armillei et al., 2016: 111).

Since the beginnings of this transnational politics of identity/memory in the years following the fall of communism, examples of homologous mnemonic practices have emerged across Europe. The memory of the dispersed, decentered character of the genocide is re-enacted, inter alia, by an annual caravan revisiting memorial sites in Poland (Vermeersch, 2008; Tarnów Regional Museum, 2015). A synthesizing framing of the chains of events has become permanently inscribed into the master text of the Auschwitz site through the opening of a Roma exhibition there, juxtaposed as a simultaneously national and transnational place of memory to the state-sponsored exhibitions (van Baar, 2010a). Mnemonic practices, both governmental and civil society-driven, have taken shape across EU Member States around the anniversary of the liquidation of the *Zigeunerlager* in Auschwitz on 2 August, 1944. More recently, commemorations emphasizing Roma resistance to genocide and thus reaffirming the collective political agency of the subaltern have become institutionalized as well (Brooks, 2015: 53). The idea of the Roma Holocaust as a signifier that can and should be translated into local contexts

has also increasingly found its way into education, primarily through school projects on local history. Education that includes history of the genocide of the Roma is most advanced in Germany, but multiple reports of parallel efforts are available from other European states as well (Diercks, 2012).

The above suggest a natural 'fit' between emergent Roma and European mnemonic practices and frameworks. But the more this initially largely self-constituting memory becomes embedded in European and self-reflexive national frameworks, the more it becomes co-configured and potentially even colonized by various nationally or supranationally constituted networks of governmentality. Friction abounds, inter alia in cases where discursive and regulatory efforts to organize representations institutionalizes Roma as victims, while claiming authority to also mark out what victim status means for majority and minority relations. This threatens and challenges grassroots agency, which becomes locked in a struggle with the dominant logic of remembering over the right to use memory according to its experiences and synergies between knowledges about the past and about the present. Manifestations of insurrectionary knowledges therefore take place in a semiotically thicker and thicker environment in which control over historical discourse is slipping away from those who carry the legacy of historical experience.

This problematic has been discussed repeatedly in a European context, where increased awareness of past wrongs has seamlessly co-existed with a lack of an emancipatory-integrative mechanism for Roma citizens or residents of the EU (Anghel, 2015; Agarin, 2014). A further pointed example of the clash of grassroots actors and dominant mnemonic frameworks is provided by the memory struggles around the Roma Holocaust Memorial, including the two-decade long, conflict-ridden process leading to its construction and unveiling. The occupation itself may be interpreted as an eruption of knowledges that have been largely marginalized in this singularly drawn-out process, mounting a desperate attempt to reclaim control over the symbolic representation of the collective self and its history, as well as the meaning of the representation. Those represented find themselves in a situation of dis-identity by a politics of recognition that ensures commemoration and confers on Roma a victim status characterized by a non sequitur of political rights and agency. Such recognition severs linkages between the focal point of memory – the Holocaust – and those who carry its post-memory. Viewed in this light, the 'mnemonic rebels' of May 22 mounted an attempt to restore the contiguity of past and present by assuming control over meaning and re-establishing the validity of the warning embodied in the memorial for contemporary practices rendering Roma lives precarious once more.

3. Recognition in and by the nation: Roma minority politics in Germany

Demonstrating the friction between Roma remembering and governmentality conferring victim status and compensation, the status of the Memorial has remained ambiguous. In theory, it could operate in a manner similar to the

Auschwitz exhibition, disseminating a transnational frame of the Roma Holocaust in Berlin, with the city understood as a symbolic locus of a dual, European, and German effort at mastering the past (van Baar, 2010; 2010a). While in theory this function is accepted by all stakeholders, the occupation and the responses it produced highlight the unsettled question concerning the productivity of the site. By extension, this peculiarity also throws novel light on German memory work about the Roma Holocaust and Sinti/Roma rights in general, often considered paradigmatic in relevant literature (Fosztó, 2003: 115).

The explanation for this paradigmatic position is the product of several, mutually reinforcing observations about mnemonic practices and the way these are embedded into politics and society in Germany. German national politics of identity and memory explore with greater commitment practices of facing the past than is the case in most, if not all other societies with perpetrator legacies (Art, 2006). After a long history of administrative discrimination spanning the better part of the first century of modern Germany, the Federal Republic also saw the emergence of the first well-organized, efficient Sinti and Roma civil rights movement in the 1970s (Matras, 1998; Gress, 2015). All of the above do not render the situation of Sinti and Roma unproblematic in Germany, yet efforts there undeniably represent a case where the environment was relatively advantageous for constructing both an intercommunity narrative about the past and a specifically Sinti and Roma memory in tandem. Enmeshed in processes of constructing such narratives, governmentality operates not against all forms of civil society and norm entrepreneurship, as in countries where minority mnemonic cultures are framed more as competitors, but in a far more nimble and adaptable manner, seeking to reinforce and co-opt some agents of change and fence off others.

The history of anti-Roma discrimination in Germany represents an instance of bourgeois biopolitics, where the adjective *bourgeois* signifies that the disciplinary aspect of this biopolitics was directed at those who were construed as threatening the decent morals and lifestyles of the 'average German.' This has included the policing of individuals defined as asocial in the early twentieth century and, through that practice, of the nomadic *différend* in general (Kenrick, 2010: 97; Hubert, 1999: 60–62). These early twentieth-century practices prepared the ground for radical persecution by creating vulnerable bodies assumed to be always already outside the law and later revealed themselves highly resilient, surviving into post-1945 democracies (Hancock, 2009: 87–88; Milton, 1995: 29–52).

After 1945, in the Western, democratic half that became the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, Sinti and Roma not only faced continued discrimination, but remained unrecognized as a victim group. Numerous former perpetrators (usually from the Security Service [SD] or the criminal police [*KriPo*] which had handled Roma affairs) served on (Mallmann and Paul, 2004; Knesebeck, 2011: 33–34; Margalit, 2003: 56 and 91). The period was one of political invisibility for Roma, whose communities remained largely abandoned to the operations of administrative authorities (Zimmermann, 1996: 381; Margalit, 2002: 56; Knesebeck, 2011: 96–97, 233–234). Formal discourse showed continuities as well: substituting

vagrants for *Zigeuner*, the argument of 'asocial' behavior both predated Nazism and escaped being linked to Nazi ideology, remaining in received usage until the 1960s (Gress, 2015: 49; Hedemann, 2007: 12–13; Margalit, 2002: 59–70).

An opening to bringing Roma rights into the public eye was created after the student movements of the late 1960s created the discourse of not closing the book on, but instead radically questioning the past. When in 1973 Anton Lehmann was shot by the police in Heidelberg, the newly (re)formed Association of German Sinti organized demonstrations, engaged in dialogue with other NGOs, and eventually with national political parties. The precursor association had been founded by brothers Oskar and Vinzenz Rose as the Association of Persecuted People of non-Jewish Confession (*Verband der Verfolgten nichtjüdischen Glaubens*) in 1956 (Liégeois, 1994: 252). Their association was originally aimed at securing restitution, mainly for Sinti who were not recognized at the time as a victim group. The West German state had turned down numerous reparation claims on the grounds that internment, sterilization, and other violent interventions by the Third Reich state machinery were based on public security or health considerations, sharply distinguished from genocidal intent (Fings, 2016: 92–97). In contrast to this focus, the core message of the younger generation who turned 'activists' during the 1970s became the precariousness of Roma/Sinti lives in democratic Germany. As lawyer Romani Rose became more and more involved in the work of the association, it underwent a process of professionalization and emerged as a full-fledged NGO with special expertise and familiarity regarding the administrative and legal environment relevant to its work (Fings, 2016: 102–103; Leggewie and Lang, 2010: 197). What did not change was the embeddedness of the activist discourse in the concept of German citizenship. Sinti active in the Association defined themselves as German, but different from ethnic Germans – a minority. While in the 1970s, the first international movement behind the international congresses of Roma in 1971 and 1978 (renamed the International Romani Union) promoted the emergent concept of a separate, de-territorialized nationhood, many Sinti in Germany resented the idea of excluding themselves from a successful society (Margalit, 2002: 199–200; Gress, 2015: 51; Fosztó, 2003: 110–117).

The emergence of a standardized German Sinti and Roma discourse about the Holocaust occurred between 1979 and 1982. In the years immediately preceding this, the Association built close contacts with a New Left and strongly anti-fascist organization, the Society for Threatened Peoples. Its leader, Tilman Zülch, became an important ally, who accepted the Roma claim of being forgotten victims of the Holocaust at a time when the realization that Jehovah's witnesses, gays, and other communities had also been targeted by Nazi persecution was gaining currency in society. Zülch was able to present Rose to Social Democratic and Green politicians, who subscribed to the need to revise German thinking about how victims of the Holocaust were conceptualized (Margalit, 2002: 160–179; Gress, 2015: 49).

Simultaneously to the opening up of channels of communication towards political actors with clout, the movement launched a large-scale campaign on a wave of renewed German interest in coming to terms with the legacy of the

Holocaust (Matras, 1998: 54; Knesebeck, 2011: 231–232). The Association's chosen strategy was to link human rights violations today with the genocide committed by the Nazis. In the increasingly sensitized German media environment, the very respectable liberal weekly *Die Zeit* (December 7, 1979) afforded coverage to the movement and presented its slogan 'gassed in Auschwitz, still persecuted today' in print, as did *Der Spiegel* in October 1979 (Gress, 2015: 57). The Association's memorial demonstration at the Bergen Belsen concentration camp in 1979, as well as the hunger strike of twelve Sinti in Dachau in 1980, broke the media barrier for good. These efforts mediatized the struggle for recognition the Sinti and Roma communities of Germany engaged in (Seybold and Staats, 2012: 158–163; Lewy, 2001: 227; Hedemann, 2007: 70–74).

In 1982, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma was formed; an instance of institutional resource pooling that was dominated by the leadership of the Association with input from the Society for Threatened Peoples, which also had a key Sinto activist/official (Fritz Greussing). Romani Rose became the president of the Central Council. When the Council was granted a visit to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, he recognized the crimes committed against Sinti and Roma as genocide, an acknowledgement later repeated by his successor, Helmut Kohl. These statements and a meeting with President of the Federal Republic Karl Carstens gradually elevated the standing of the Central Council to that of an NGO with a recognized voice in national politics. The years 1979–1982 brought the nationalization and politicization of the movement and saw the application of a combined memory policy and civil rights campaign model (Knesebeck, 2011: 232).

Recognition and a sense of agency were the two most important dividends of the campaign. Recent research by Sebastian Lotto-Kusche has reconstructed the discursive aspect of the 'storming' of the *Kanzleramt* by activists: archival evidence shows that the terminology 'Sinti and Roma' was unknown to federal civil servants, to the point of requiring the superscript *Zigeuner* on some documents as late as 1980. The movement accomplished an instance of successful norm entrepreneurship. It introduced a marginalized problem, legitimized its presentation as an issue requiring political intervention and proposed a discourse for framing it, which was largely accepted (Lotto-Kusche, 2016). This finding is further reinforced through the partially quantitative evaluation of Roma issues appearing in the *Bundestag*, analyzed by Gabi Meyer. Her data bear out both the success of the mobilization and the amount of work that needed to be done after the breakthrough in visibility and participation: from 1949 to 1970, there is minimal attention to any Roma issue, while from 1970 to 1985 there is a slow trend, especially towards the second half of the period, of Roma breaking the barrier of political discussion, at least in terms of figuring on the agenda (Meyer, 2012: 233–290).

A key element in the continuing efforts of the *Zentralrat* remained the mutual co-opting of and by political partners. German Sinti and Roma calls for reparations had been endorsed by the Greens and some Social Democrats. While in opposition, in 1985 the Greens presented a comprehensive handling of the 'forgotten victims,' a draft bill on 'the regulation of the appropriate care for all

victims of national socialist persecution in the timeframe 1933–1945.' The Social Democrats, less ambitiously, called for an amendment to existing regulation. The parties managed to prod the conservative government into a review of compensation policies, and a broader debate, in which the Sinti and the Roma were both on the agenda and given opportunity for participation, could commence. The first tangible outcome of presence on the national political agenda was funding received for a cultural and historical center, which has been operating under the Central Council's supervision since 1987 (Knesebeck, 2011: 222–223).

Despite pre-unification progress, the integration of Roma memory into canonical German remembrance occurred in 1993–1997. Recognition as a national minority, President Roman Herzog's landmark anniversary address on the day of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1997 (juxtaposing Jewish and Sinti and Roma victims), and the beginning of the state-sponsored memorialization in public spaces all took place in this period (the first was the Buchenwald memorial, inaugurated in 1995) (Meyer, 2012: 276–291). The two decades since the canonization of a 'Roma aspect' in official German remembering have witnessed the dissemination of knowledge transferred by Sinti, Roma and allies to local and federal governmental agencies as well as majority NGOs through community initiatives, cultural production, and education. Roma mnemonic practices about the Holocaust could also draw on existing models of engaging with perpetrator legacies. These include a culture of local history research and a self-reflexive mode of cultural production. Imprints of this engagement are easy to locate, ranging from study projects (a regional survey is offered f.i. in the individual pieces found in Diercks, 2012) to theatrical productions (among them *Das Verschlingen*, the German equivalent of Porrajmos, at *Galerie Kai Dikhas* in Berlin) and exhibitions in symbolic locations, including the German Police Academy (*Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei*), the school of the organization once responsible for many of the decentred killings and the post-war refuge of several war criminals who had ordered the mass executions (Bak, 2014; Dierecks, 2012; Krahl and Meichsner, 2016).

The peculiarity of this evolution has been the sustained dominance of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma as a partner of the government (a provider of key resources, both material and ideational). The achievements accordingly reflect the position and priorities of the organization, with the emphasis on an intra-German understanding between minority and majority, the main transnational aspect of which is to provide blueprints for the successful emancipation and protection of Roma minorities especially in former socialist countries. This implies solidarity, but also a markedly 'Westphalian' commitment that assigns Roma issues to national politics first and foremost. When the original plans for a Memorial to be built in a Berlin suburb – in Marzahn, where Sinti and Roma living in and around Berlin had been concentrated by Nazis prior to deportation – were first proposed, by virtue of the emphasis on local and regional histories, these concepts reflected a similar focus on the intra-, rather than the transnational challenges of mastering history. It was at first the desire for a more central location commensurate with the recognition of the community's suffering

that set off a process of negotiations to relocate the Memorial to downtown Berlin, integrated into the symbolic geography of contrition constructed by other monuments there (Berg, 2010). By virtue of its importance, however, the Memorial also became a locus of contestation against the hegemonial logic of remembrance by other Sinti and Roma groups seeking more explicit expression of the transnational dimension of the genocide and the resulting ethico-political constellation in the present.

The success of a specific grass-roots movement created, therefore, an ambiguous situation. The early and sustained instance of politics of recognition conducted with the aim of ensuring compensation and according collective political agency (in the form of institutionalizing national minority status) did make the German case 'paradigmatic.' At the same time, the reformed governmentality, moving from policing to acknowledgement, extended recognition exclusively within the multitude of citizens, decoupling German Sinti and Roma from the broader, transnational patchwork of communities. (Importantly, this occurred not despite resistance from, but through the integration and relative empowerment of the activist group driving the shift.) The boundary between Roma and non-Roma was not eliminated, but relocated and mapped onto the citizen/migrant divide. A peculiar aspect of this shift has been the inclusion of all Roma as victims, an outcome of the universal responsibility for facing the past assumed by the German state. As a result, recognition itself has not been contested in the German setting. It is the meaning of victimhood in the present and the right to define this meaning that has repeatedly triggered resistance against the translation of a memory that is simultaneously transnational and local/dispersed into a national *grand récit* that acknowledges victimhood in the same movement as denying citizenship and political agency.

4. Competing politics of recognition

Despite their seeming linearity, 'unpacking' the policy processes of the decades leading up to the unveiling of the Memorial reveals subsequent rounds of contestations about meaning-making through commemoration. A simple narrative would describe a straightforward dynamic of Roma activism and an increasingly receptive political class progressing through stages of recognition and towards the integration of minority perspectives into national mnemonic culture. None of these terms, however, is unambiguous, nor does the linear story enable a discussion of all Roma stakeholders in the movements towards recognition. To begin with, the demarcation of the political subject: the status of national minority, was granted to 'German Sinti and Roma.' Belonging to the community was defined in an extremely narrow manner, excluding Roma guest workers as well as the increasing number of asylum seekers residing in Germany, sometimes for decades. This is the narrowest possible framing of Sinti and Roma identity (Sinti being identified as having lived in Germany since the late Middle Ages). Restitution and formal inclusion in German memory politics (through the engagement of the *Zentralrat* in

federal as well as regional projects and funding to its cultural center) has been extended to this group.

In the face of this trend, alternative Roma identities have constituted and organized themselves in Germany, such as the Rom and Cinti Union (RCU), a Hamburg-based organization which is not a member of the Central Council, as well as the Sinti Alliance. These tend to represent a broader identity platform rooted in transnational solidarity and form a minority in Sinti and Roma communities of citizens. In public action, they are found allied to and speaking also for Roma residing in the country without citizenship or residence permits and in overt or latent resistance to granting minority status based on citizenship. Their positions converge around the concept of a deterritorialized nation existing in stateless solidarity with members, and as minorities in the individual home countries with which the German state needs to build a special ethical relationship as a consequence of historical crimes (Kawczynski, 1997: 25–26). This approach converges with broader European trends, especially those fostered by a transnational Roma elite embedded in intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The convergence can be traced through individual careers, as well: the Union's founding president, Rudko Kawczynski, went on to become President of the Council of Europe partner organization the European Roma and Traveller Forum.

These organizations consider the suffering of all Sinti and Roma during the Holocaust as indivisible (Knesebeck, 2011: 223). From this, it follows that the German state – having assumed responsibility for the perpetratorship – carries a certain moral burden towards all Roma (as it does towards Jews). While the *Zentralrat*'s political agenda focuses on Sinti and Roma citizens and their integration, as well as upward social mobility, in the latter case the plight of Roma in Europe at large serves as the framework for the present-day political agenda. During his tenure as president of RCU, Kawczynski argued that Germany 'had a 'historical responsibility' to welcome the Roma' (Barany, 2002: 251).

Accordingly, the RCU has advocated strongly for migrant Roma from the East and criticized the Central Council on numerous occasions. Kawczynski articulated this position as early as the fall of Soviet-style dictatorships around 1989, when westward Roma migration, as a potential threat to society, first appeared in German mainstream media (Sternsdorff, 1989). In this perspective, the historical responsibility of the German state extended to all Roma, a practical consequence of which should have been prohibiting the expulsion of asylum-seeking Roma from the East. Divergent interpretations of German responsibility underpinned the debate over expulsion between the Central Council and Kawczynski's organization in the early 1990s. The RCU effectively accused the Central Council of enabling racist and anti-Roma policies, contributing to the re-emergence of practices and mind-sets from the era of the Holocaust (Spiegel, 1992).

The difference between the two campaign slogans precisely captures this cleavage. During its first major human rights campaign at the end of the 1970s – as a norm-entrepreneurial, anti-status quo movement – the Association of German Sinti and Roma provocatively chose the slogan 'gassed in Auschwitz, persecuted

today.' In 1992, the RCU sponsored the exhibition '1939–1989: gassed – persecuted – expelled,' extending the normative framework to asylum seekers. At the same time, Hugo Franz, a Central Council spokesperson, publicly announced their acceptance of various repatriation measures, most importantly the German-Romanian agreement on the repatriation of up to 50,000 Roma holding Romanian citizenship (Spiegel, 1992). In terms of the emphasis on action by Roma for Roma and the positioning of Holocaust memory as a source of a shared transnational identity, as well as the positing of a moral imperative for majority society *vis-à-vis* all Roma, Kawczynski's platform appears as representative of transnational Roma nation-building and self-empowerment (van Baar, 2010; Kapralski, 2013).

The same logic can be seen periodically reappearing when the nexus of Roma and German memory is activated by administrative or political choices on the part of the government. Following the decision in 1992 to repatriate Roma to Romania and re-classify the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a safe country, the occupation of another symbolic location occurred. Jasar Demirov of the Roma Union of Southern Germany (*Roma-Union Süddeutschland*) co-organized protests in spring 1993 in Dachau, telling the leading German daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* that the Republic's expulsion policy re-enacted the practices of the concentration camp ('Once gassed, expulsed today'), and argued that the victims of the former camp could offer protection to the threatened lives today. In a clear move to enlist the universally acknowledged warnings of the past, he re-iterated the logic of the 1992 exhibition and challenged the Central Council's position, which proposed tackling threats to Roma in the countries of origin (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1993).

It is similarly important to unpack the other side of the equation – national politics. German memory culture, with some fits and starts, has moved towards increasing recognition of victims and acceptance of responsibility, both material and moral, over the course of the past half-century (Herf, 1997; Olick, 2016). At the same time, national political leaders have control over the legal and administrative aspects of memory politics in the country, which, in a way, is reflected in the empowerment of the Central Council. By preferentializing and accepting as the only partner a distinctly national organization, they provided resources and legitimacy to the actor within the broader Roma NGO universe that refused to position anywhere near the top of its agenda the twin questions of German responsibility for non-citizen Roma victims and the rights of migrant Roma in Germany (and elsewhere) today. German mainstream political culture and the Central Council could cooperate on the basis of conferring mutual legitimacy on each other, with the effect of downgrading the voices propagating for an alternative approach.

The final determination of the Central Council's position, emphasizing the bond of citizenship as the source of responsibility for states, did not become unequivocal until the crisis brought on by an influx of Roma asylum-seekers around 1989. With regard to Roma citizens of other states, the Central Council sees itself as a disseminator of best practices and as an advocate promoting inclusive and compensatory policies in other states. It has developed a culture of

transnational commemoration and national activism, which harmonizes with the German governmentality structuring identity politics in the country. The message of empowering Roma in their native countries can appear in a symbiotic relationship with discourses of population management that frame repatriation as a desirable instrument and outcome for the German state (Rose, 2005; Heuss, 2013; End, 2015: 2 and 13).

In contrast to the success of early Sinti and Roma norm entrepreneurs, advocates of recognizing the standing of European Roma in Germany as a former perpetrator country have managed to build a mutually reinforcing relationship only with *Die Linke* (The Left), a hard left-wing party uniting reformed East German communists and New Marxists. The position of the party is peripheral despite its popularity in some federated states. Importantly, it does not have the influence on legislation and official politics of memory that the Social Democrats possessed around 1980 and after. Despite decade-long cooperation against repatriation measures, Roma and *Die Linke* have had little success in 'mainstreaming' their interpretation on the memory-civil rights nexus (Pau, 2012; Groth, 2017).

In sum, Holocaust memory in Germany revealed itself in the past three decades of increasing institutionalization as a common platform where Roma organizations with divergent identity politics could meet, but also come into conflict. The domestic/minority politics focus of the Central Council has been paradigmatic, providing blueprints for the first generation of civil rights activists in former socialist countries, while succeeding in a process of institutional consolidation that has not been matched in other societies. The dynamics of the German case, however, were co-determined by the political choices of the national political elite. Successes resulted when normative pressures could be brought to bear on the political class and a winning coalition of Sinti/Roma and majority representatives could be assembled. Domestic norm shifts (the discovery of the 'forgotten victims' in the 1970s) had an important facilitating impact (Margalit, 2002: 160–179). When these scope conditions for normative chance and institutionalization were missing, a second wave of norm entrepreneurship, seeking to similarly mainstream mnemonic practices referencing European Roma at large, met with little success, and has left the question of solidarity with asylum-seeking Roma in Germany unresolved.

The dynamics of Roma memory politics were condensed into the difficult process of creating a memorial to Roma victims of the Holocaust in Berlin. Resistance to the original Marzahn site united all NGOs, until the government acquiesced to having the memorial in symbolic proximity to that of Jewish victims. The inauguration of the work was stalled for years, however, to the point that Israeli architect Dani Karavan, who was 62 years old when he received the commission, doubted if he would see his design realized in his lifetime. He was 82 by the time the inauguration happened. Part of the delay, after an acceptable location and funding were secured by the government, resulted from the unresolved dichotomy of thinking about Sinti and Roma both within the NGO ecosystem and in majority society. Seeking to avoid controversy, majority

politicians wanted to see an a priori consensus regarding the memorial, the planned inscription of which (*Zigeuner*) was found to be reflective of past racist practices especially by the Central Council and Romani Rose. The proposed term 'Sinti and Roma' proved unacceptable from the transnational perspective espoused by the Rom and Cinti Union and the Sinti Alliance (Berg, 2010; Dowling, 2011; Bunjes, 2011; Kuhla, 2017). The debate lasted throughout the second half of the aughts.

In the end, a poem by Santino Spinella, entitled *Auschwitz* was deemed acceptable as the main inscription by all organizations making their voices heard. *Zigeuner* is referenced on the memorial grounds only as the term used by the Nazis, in a strictly historical statement to which examples of Romani groups from all over Europe are added in the commentary. The text, however, lists Sinti and Roma specifically as well, which is standard reference to the minority holding German citizenship. It thereby creates ambiguity, reflecting the unresolved identity politics with which Roma remembrance remains imbued in Germany (Bunjes, 2011; Kuhla, 2017). As in previous decades, the country-specific identity of the main activist organization, the *Zentralrat,* did not imply lack of *international* solidarity: in a statement given at the inauguration, Rose defined the memorial as representing the success of the struggle in Germany, specifying its meaning in the present as a warning that abroad – in Hungary, the Czech Republic, France, Montenegro, etc. – violence and exclusion against Roma are still widespread. At the same time, the Rom and Cinti Union's long-time president, Rudko Kawczynski, has continued to focus on German politics, referencing a *transnational* ethics and Roma solidarity, in directing attention to the exploitation of migrant Roma workers by a governmentality that retains, but does not legalize them.

The radically 'open text' – in terms of the spatial composition – of the Memorial was conceived by Dani Karavan as fostering reflection rather than prescribing meaning. It does not resist the divergent considerations of its relevance for the present, while representing both politics of recognition: an intra-German one acknowledging the political agency of victims, and a transnational-cosmopolitan one that, however, denies agency to those co-commemorated by it. Potentially, however, it could just as well reference a transnational subject acknowledged as possessing a voice in negotiating the future lives of non-citizen Roma.

5. The occupation of the Memorial

The divergent interpretations about the functions of the Roma Holocaust memorial symbolically placed across the memorial for Jewish victims in Berlin have continued to animate mnemonic practices. The previous sections of this paper sought to highlight how these divergent readings emerged and what sustains them in stark opposition to each other. As in 1992-1993, it was the recategorization of countries of origin in late 2015 and the expected rise in forced repatriations in 2016 that triggered a chain of protests (Die Welt, 2016). The administrative move was especially contested since violence suffered by Roma during and in the aftermath

of the war in Kosovo had been the worst since 1989, and finding Kosovo on the list of safe countries of origin represented a direct challenge to the experience and communal memory of many asylum seekers. Coordinated actions against the planned repatriations were ongoing since April 2016. While undoubtedly the apogee of these protests, the occupation was not pre-planned, but rather occurred as the quasi-spontaneous choice of potentially affected Roma and their allies (Bundes Roma Verband, 2016).

The occupation demonstrated the symbolic potential of such a location for present-oriented, transnational political action (EPD, 2016). In moving to the memorial, the majority's responsibility was evoked by the protesters for a past crime. At the same time, they also conjured up the memory of Roma agency and the ability to resist – increasingly commemorated on 16 May across Europe, a few days prior to the occupation. The demonstration of the ability to resist was both retroactive (seeing ourselves as more than victims) and oriented towards the present, seeking to engage/restore the productivity of the site for the transnational Roma minority in a political arena of paramount significance for them.

The occupation ended after negotiations with the police and continued as a series of events at Marzahn and elsewhere, with a permanent demonstration running for ten days next to the Memorial. Mainstream German media, however, did not report on the other events. The Central Council of German Sinti and Roma condemned the instrumentalization of the memorial site, which the organization's press release interpreted as purely commemorative in character (Zentralrat, 2016). The *Zentralrat* did express opposition to the increasing stringency of both asylum regulations and the way they are observed in practice, but essentially held on to the identity politics compromise that had emerged by the late 1990s. It emphasized the tribulations of Roma in especially the Western Balkans, but in terms of political actions it suggested targeting their living conditions in their native countries. In doing so, it acknowledged the reality and ethical validity of the problem that Roma are being forcibly repatriated to unsafe countries of origin, challenging the bureaucratic reclassification. At the same time, in keeping with its position stated authoritatively on the occasion of the opening of the Memorial, it did not recognize a de-territorialized Roma nation as the referent object of the site and continued to define the communities as separate minorities of titular nations (Dokumentations- und Kulturzentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma, 2012: 8). This discourse reinforces the limited platform of 'solidarity in Westphalia'; i.e. where states (territorially bounded governmentalities) still control and administer populations. Such governmentalities may (and should) integrate a moral commitment to observe universal human rights into their logics of managing populations, but cannot be made responsible for the fates of individuals exposed to harm in territories administered by other sovereignties (Heuss, 2016).

The policing which removed demonstrators from the memorial grounds was re-enacted with a few days' delay in the discourses about Roma political agency and its right to interpret and even instrumentalize its past. The foundation managing the Holocaust memorials in Berlin stated unequivocally that 'the Memorial for the Sinti and Roma of Europe murdered under National Socialism is a

place for remembering the up to 500,000 victims of genocide and no place for political protest' (Stiftung Denkmal, 2016). With this move, a key operator organization, possessing specialist competence and embedded in the network of the prevailing governmentality, reiterated the separation of remembrance and recognition as victims from the political struggle of these victims and their descendants. The move denied the inherent politicalness of managing a memorial, contrasting recognition through remembering with the pursuit of specific policy goals. At the same time, the call to de-politicize the symbolic universe is itself a political move, since it is aimed, ultimately, at denying a symbolic resource to proponents of a norm shift. It is through such situations and procedures of supervision and control, according and denying legitimacy to political claims or promoting depoliticization as ethically superior that the adaptive and fluid operations of governmentality reveal themselves as appropriating and governing the memory of others. Ultimately, these operations invert recognition itself, since they limit its validity to discussions of the past exclusively rendering the recognized subject an extension of history into the present.

6. Conclusions: Agency and reconfiguring politics of recognition

The German case is usually considered 'paradigmatic' in histories of Roma civil rights movements because of the perceived linear progress achieved through successive campaigns and through persuasion and co-optation directed at the political classes of the country. Yet co-optation also operates the other way: through governmentality that seeks to accommodate, but also discipline and control populations – in this case, German and non-German Roma. In practice and in the specific German situation, this has included the drawing and sustaining of a delineation between two groups defined on the one hand as a German minority and as 'alien' Roma on the other. Since interpreting what the memory of the Roma Holocaust means in German society today has a direct bearing on configurations of citizenship, residence, and solidarity, mnemonic practices can challenge these imposed boundaries, as it happened in the act of occupying the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism.

In this respect as well, the Roma Holocaust represents entangled memory where a transnational horizon of historical experience and its corollary, universalist ethics, meet national horizons configured around emancipation in the pre-existing political community. The two both reinforce each other – with regard to the largely uncontested recommendation that countries with large Roma populations should be encouraged to pursue policies of emancipation and recognition – but also clash over whether transnational solidarity rooted in Holocaust memory or nationally focused minority agendas should function as the primary frame-orienting political decisions. In articulations of these positions, victim status and political agency also vie for relative prominence. Governmentality navigates this entangled memory, seeking to control it through concessions and boundary-drawing. It is not the Sinti and the Roma minority, symbolically accommodated in German society, but the de-territorialized Roma

nation that appears here as the uncontrollable 'excess' of memory that resists normalization and exile from the *lieu de mémoire* through which governmentality would confer 'universal' victim status while limiting the group's political agency to define the present from the vantage point of the commemorated past. Transnational Roma solidarity and solidarity with the Roma embodies criticism from the outside (of the political community and of the Westphalian order), resisting the reduction of mnemonic practices to frameworks defined by geographically bounded histories. Altogether, the multi-layered conflict transforms Holocaust remembrance, and the Memorial in particular, into a 'knot' where opportunities for action reside tangled up with the imprints of boundaries that determine access to and use of civic rights, including the right to stay, in the present. Occupation of the grounds is, inter alia, a struggle for preserving the normative productivity of this transnational excess.

Evaluating the undertaking itself, the scope of the symbolic act of occupation appears as a rare instrument of mainstream visibility. Without ready access to mainstream media and in political alliance with a single, institutionally marginal, if politically not insignificant party, the interest representation of Roma in Germany has not been nearly as successful in engineering a second paradigm shift in thinking about the nexus of Roma rights and German memory as the first generation activists of the 1970s had been. Compared to the virtual mainstream invisibility before and after the event, challenging prevailing categorizations of symbolic sites and bringing Holocaust memory to bear on current practices of exclusion in the act of occupation has worked as a strategy. Yet the larger question concerning the success of restoring a broader and permanent productivity to the site, of extending its referentiality to redefine the moral imperative of Holocaust memory, has to be answered in the negative. This also signifies the failure, at least up to the present day, of attempts to position it as a guarantee of political agency and public voice for the broader group (*all Roma* murdered in Nazi-controlled Europe) recognized as one of its referent objects and as victims. Momentary visibility in memory struggles does not compare to the longer processes of institutionalization, the outcome of acknowledgement as partners, by the federal government. Against the insurrectionary knowledges of transnational Roma and allies, governmentality musters far greater resources and ultimately controls those symbolic locations which would be instrumental in creating new meanings through novel mnemonic practices. A permanent disruption is likely to be possible only through broader social and political coalitions, which, in a setting where new fears of migration and old prejudices against 'asocial elements' reinforce each other proves difficult to outline. This negates neither the pioneering and very real achievements of Sinti and Roma rights movements in Germany, nor the groundbreaking integration of Roma memory into national frameworks. It serves, however, as a reminder about the operations of governmental power-knowledges that use, inter alia, memory and mnemonic practices to blot out disruptive knowledges and precarious lives from the cognitive maps and self-images of democratic societies.

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KATALIN AMON *

Struggles for Recognition and Redistributive Policies: A Polanyian Analysis of Post-crisis Housing Policies in Europe's Periphery

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 115-138.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.535
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

The policy area of housing is associated with a set of contradictory claims over its subject and scope. This includes tension between a market-based understanding of housing, a social-rights-based approach, and a traditionalist approach (as patrimony). Debates about housing intensified after the financial crisis of 2008, especially on Europe's periphery. The present research focuses on Hungary and Spain, two countries with diverging housing paths after the crisis, in which crisis management and housing debates resulted in a number of housing policy changes. The paper is based on a critical frame analysis of interview data and policy documents about these two sets of policies. It combines Karl Polanyi's double movement theory with Nancy Fraser's perspectival dualism to trace recognition and redistribution frames in housing policy discourses in an investigation of the dynamics that led to policy changes. It argues that market expansion and social protection, the two movements in Polanyi's theory, should not be understood as forces that always clash with each other, but as a set of recognition and redistribution claims that mutually enable or limit each other as they are mediated through policy-making.

Keywords: *housing policy, double movement, recognition, redistribution.*

Housing is a site of social struggle, and policy changes reflect the dynamics of this struggle. This includes ideational struggles over housing as property, asset, patrimony, or social right, and material struggles related to housing deprivation, homelessness, and indebtedness. The financial crisis of 2008 became a problematizing moment (Bacchi, 2009); a moment when the reframing of housing and housing struggles occurred. The crisis was a result of housing financialization processes that opened up political space for different understandings of housing and the crisis itself.

Crisis management and the contestation of existing housing policies together led to a number of policy changes in Hungary and Spain (Bohle, 2014; 2017; Colau and Alemany, 2014; Csizmady and Hegedüs, 2016; De Weerdt and Garcia, 2015; Habitat for Humanity, 2017; 2018) – two countries on Europe's periphery that were severely affected by the crisis, and ones in which pre-crisis policies were contested by various political actors.

Most studies about housing policy change (Aalbers, 2008; 2017; Kemeny, 1992; Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2009; Lowe, 2011; Bohle, 2014; 2018; Bohle and Seabrooke, 2019) understand housing struggle as a form of redistributive struggle, and concentrate either on the financialization of housing (housing increasingly understood as an asset and collateral in financial transactions), or the institutional responses of redistribution to financialization. However, studies about Spanish housing policy changes after the financial crisis of 2008 (Colau and Alemany, 2014; De Weerdt and Garcia, 2015) often focus on the role of recognition struggles in these changes. Namely, how the housing movement and the Platform for Mortgage Victims (PAH) empowered mortgage debtors to participate in activism and mobilize for the right to housing by reframing mortgage debt as systemic injustice rather than individual failure. This framing involved a struggle for recognition, as it removed the social stigma of indebtedness and offered recognition to the indebted.

The aim of this paper is to propose an analytical framework that explains how both struggles of recognition and redistribution contributed to housing policy change. For this, it is crucial to understand the dynamics of the former struggles. Therefore, the paper analyzes them through a Polanyian (1962) lens: understanding housing policies as mediators of the tension between market expansion (movement) and social protection (countermovement), and, as such, as reflections of the dynamics between movement and countermovement. It argues that housing struggle can be understood by focusing on both the processes of market expansion and its political contestation at the same time.

The paper's analytical framework combines Polanyi's theory of double movement (1962) with Fraser's (2003) perspectival dualist analysis of recognition and redistribution, which is then used to investigate the dynamics between market expansion and social protection.

Thus, the aim of the paper is threefold. First, it proposes an analytical framework that combines Polanyi's (1962) double movement theory with Fraser's analysis (2003) to analyze how claims of recognition and redistribution influence the dynamics of market expansion and social protection in housing, and thus the

dynamics of housing struggle. While the paper does not specifically engage with debates about recognition/redistribution and identity politics, both its theoretical and empirical sections support Fraser's (2003) argument that recognition and redistribution are co-constitutive, and it is at the specific dynamics between the two where the analytical focus should be directed.

Second, the paper aims to explain how the various claims of recognition and redistribution in the double movement led to housing policy changes on Europe's periphery. The literature on housing and housing financialization primarily focuses on housing as a site of redistributive struggle (Aalbers, 2008; Fernandez and Aalbers, 2016; Aalbers, 2017; Pósfai and Nagy, 2017). While the variety of residential capitalism (VORC) frameworks (Kemeny, 1992; Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2009; Lowe, 2011) include some ideational/cultural factors in their analysis of housing policies, these studies do not systematically analyze them, and do not understand them as claims of recognition. Due to the lack of focus, these perspectives do not explain why Hungary and Spain, two countries on Europe's periphery that are defined as familialist housing regimes due to the significant role of family and private property in housing access, diverged so much from their pre-crisis understanding of housing. The empirical findings of this paper show that both claims of recognition and redistribution played a decisive role in these changes.

Third, the paper offers empirical insights into housing policies from on Europe's periphery that were influenced by forces of social protection that sought to depart from the paradigm of housing financialization through a variety of frames of recognition and social protection. Hungary followed a path of reframing housing based on familialism and nationalism, while Spain reframed it as housing rights. The analysis of these two paths through a Polanyian lens offers insight into the complex dynamics that exist between market expansion and various forms of social protection.

The contribution of the paper is, first, an introduction to the concept of recognition in both Polanyi's (1962) theory and the housing literature, and second, the use of an analytical framework based on these concepts that helps investigate the dynamics of housing struggles in Hungary and Spain without solely focusing on the redistributive or recognition perspective. By concentrating on both dynamics, it is possible to explain how double movement dynamics contributed to policy changes.

1. The double movement and Fraser's perspectival dualism

As I argued above, housing is a site of social struggle. This struggle is reflected in the different conceptualizations of housing. Housing is, on the one hand, a form of private property, and, due to processes of financialization, increasingly considered an asset (Aalbers, 2008; Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2009; Lowe, 2011; Fernandez and Aalbers; 2016). However, housing is also the basis of participation in social and political life and patrimonial systems, as it is passed on from generation to

generation (Schwartz and Seabrooke, 2009; Lowe, 2011). Housing policies in capitalist societies are both the result and the reflection of these different notions.

Redistributive practices and principles in the case of housing therefore reflect Polanyi's (1962) concept of a double movement: the tension between the forces of market expansion (housing privatization, then financialization) and the forces of social protection (social policies aimed at the decommodification of housing, or the protection of specific social groups affected by the negative consequences of market expansion).

In The Great Transformation Polanyi (1962) argues that capitalist societies operate through this double movement. Market expansion is a force of commodification based on 'veritable faith in man's secular salvation through a self-regulating market' (Polanyi, 1962: 135), while social protection is a defense mechanism that occurs because 'leaving the fate of soil and people to the market would be tantamount to annihilating them' (Polanyi, 1962: 131).

Both of these forces have material and ideational elements. Market expansion involves not only a process of commodification, but also the dissemination of a particular theory (economic liberalism). Social protection is not merely the contestation of these ideas, because social problems themselves are not merely economic: 'a social calamity is primarily a cultural not an economic phenomenon that can be measured by income figures or population statistics' (Polanyi, 1962: 157). To put it simply, the struggle described by Polanyi is social: it is not purely economic or political, but a struggle that encompasses the entirety of society.

Polanyi argued for a holistic perspective in the social sciences that captures the complexity of the double movement and takes into consideration specific local and historical contexts. The dislocation caused by market expansion varies based on the context, as do responses to it. The changes that market expansion consists of challenge society as a whole, but the '"response" comes through groups, sections, and classes' (Polanyi, 1962: 152). According to Polanyi, social protection, no matter its form, is always a response to a real need for protection from market expansion. However, some forms of social protection set into motion harmful forces. In Polanyi's (1962) case study about the Nazi regime, he calls the specific regime that emerged from the need for protection a degenerative force. Thus, social protection is not a normative term: it does not necessarily mean a progressive force, but rather a set of responses that emerge from needs as a result of change.

In Polanyi's view, however fragmented the force of social protection may be, claims to social protection always enter into conflict with the forces of market expansion, and the site where this tension is relieved is the political sphere – namely, political institutions. This is why this paper focuses on policy change. Although Polanyi does not specify public policies as a phenomenon through which the double movement can be traced, he draws attention to the importance of political institutions as mediating forces of the tension between market expansion and social protection.

Apart from the idea of holism and the importance of the political sphere, Polanyi nevertheless offers little guidance about how to carry out holistic analysis that could trace the double movement. Yet conceptual guidance is important, especially in cases when the forces of social protection co-constitute a degenerative, anti-democratic force. I argue that this conceptual gap can be bridged by incorporating Fraser's (2003) perspectival dualism and her notions of recognition and redistribution into Polanyi's theory. In one of her feminist analyses of capitalism in the neoliberal era, Fraser (2013a) argued for a modified version of the Polanyian framework. She suggested adding another 'force' of social struggle to the theory and rephrasing it as triple movement. The struggle that – according to Fraser (2013b: 230) – mediates between the forces of market expansion and social protection is emancipation, which 'aims to overcome forms of subjection rooted in "society".' Fraser argues for including emancipation in the framework on the basis that Polanyi, in her view, tended to romanticize the societal forces in which the market was embedded and the forces of social protection without taking into consideration the fact that the market is not the only locus of domination in society. While it is true that Polanyi did not systematically engage with all structures of domination, neither did he romanticize either social protection or society in general, and nor did he conceptualize social protection on a normative basis (see the case of Nazi Germany above).

The problem of systemic engagement rather lies in the fact that Polanyi did not offer a conceptual framework with which to analyze the societal elements of market expansion and social protection, and the processes that are set into motion once these elements clash. Fraser assumes that it is emancipation that mediates between the two, but, as argued above, not all processes of social protection have an emancipatory goal or the potential to overcome preexisting forms of injustice. Some may well be forces that represent sectoral, societal interests rather than groups suffering from any form of injustice.

I rather rely on Fraser's theory (2003) to conceptually refine the movement and the countermovement: to enable us to consider its elements and the tensions and clashes between the latter elements. Fraser's perspectival dualism is rooted in similar dissatisfaction to that which drove Polanyi's holistic approach; namely, dissatisfaction with theoretical approaches that focus solely on the material/economic or the cultural/ideational angle of the social struggle. Fraser argues that social struggle cannot be solely derived from claims for redistribution or recognition. Redistribution is not an epiphenomenon of recognition, and neither is recognition a derivative of redistribution. Fraser considers recognition and redistribution to be normative paradigms (philosophically) and families of claims (politically) of two different kinds that are co-constitutional. The redistribution paradigm 'focuses on injustices it defines as socio-economic and presumes to be rooted in the economic structure of society' (Fraser, 2003: 13). The recognition paradigm 'targets injustices it understands as cultural, which it presumes to be rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication' (ibid.). Consequently, the former paradigms offer different remedies for injustices.

According to Fraser, social struggles cannot be reduced to either recognition or redistribution.

If the same logic is applied to Polanyi's theory, and the market is understood as a force embedded in society, the clash between movement and countermovement can be defined as a clash between claims of recognition and redistribution of various kinds. Market expansion does not solely involve a wave of redistributive claims that result in redistributive policies, but is rather a force with elements of redistribution and recognition claims that results in policies that are the products of these claims, and which may clash with the claims for recognition and redistribution of the countermovement.

While redistributive claims in market expansion and social protection have been widely analyzed in housing studies, it is more difficult to integrate claims of recognition into housing analysis. The empirical findings of this paper suggest that the recognition claims Fraser and Honneth (2003) focus on in their theoretical debate about recognition and redistribution are distinct from the ones that appear in housing discourses. Fraser (2003) conceptualizes recognition as a process through which Weberian status groups subjected to cultural injustices interpret their own situation, or whose cultural injustices are thematized by other actors.

Such recognition claims have not been at the center of the housing frames under analysis. Recognition has become detached from status groups, and has often been linked to solidified principles or structures such as private property, market autonomy, or individualism – which thus became recognized instead of the status groups Fraser's theory focuses on. These principles and market (as a structure) appeared as social ideals to be recognized. They became not simply actors or principles that guaranteed the equal distribution of resources, but separate entities to be respected. Such claims could not be subsumed as redistributive, but nor do they fit perfectly with Fraser's definition of status groups. In this framework, however, I understand them as social ideals that are systematically referred to in the same manner as status groups in such political contexts.

To explain the dynamics of market expansion and social protection as redistributive and recognition struggles, it is crucial to focus on policy making as a force of mediation and representation. According to Polanyi, political institutions mediate the double movement. Polanyi understands political institutions as having a controversial role: they introduce measures of intervention (policies) in order to establish the free market, and others to defend society from the deleterious impact of the free marketeer. Fraser (2013a) also highlights the importance of the political, but she does not simply refer to this as a mediating force, but a source of injustice on its own. There are two kinds of injustices attached to the political: a formal way of denying certain groups access to the political (electoral laws, for example), and framing, through which specific social groups are misrepresented or silenced. In this paper, I understand policies both as mediating forces and sites of injustice, even though one definition focuses on its dynamic element and the other on its more static one. I bridge this difference by making a distinction between the processes of market expansion and social protection, and the struggles of various

redistributive and recognition claims within these processes, and understand them as different units in my analysis. Since the paper is more concerned with the dynamics of justice claims within the double movement and policy change, its primary focus is the dynamics of change, but in order to understand such dynamics, one has to decipher them and focus on the recognition and redistributive claims present in these processes.

2. Methods

2.1 Claims as frames: Critical frame analysis

As mentioned above, Fraser (2013a) refers to framing as a form of (in)justice within the political sphere. For her, framing is of great importance in (mis)constructing status groups. Her definition of framing is in line with how critical policy analysis focuses on frames when analyzing representations of policy problems and the power dynamics these influence, as it understands the policy frame as 'an organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful policy problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly enclosed' (Verloo, 2005: 20).

Since the scope of this paper is policy changes, I define claims of recognition and redistribution as policy frames and conduct critical frame analysis (Verloo, 2005; Krizsan et al., 2012). However, unlike Fraser (2013a) I do not refer to framing as a separate form of injustice, but, similarly to Verloo, as an organizing principle that includes redistributive and recognition frames as well. Thus, while I consider frames as being of crucial importance in understanding policy change, I do not depart from Fraser's (2003) perspectival dualism, meaning her focus on recognition and redistributive struggles, as critical frame analysis is (per se) aimed at unmasking misrepresentation and silence within policy struggles. Thus, framing struggles do not remain hidden in relation to recognition and redistributive claims.

While 'policy frame' as a concept encompasses all types of frames in policymaking, I concentrate on policy frames of redistribution and recognition. In this manner, I am able to trace the power dynamics between market expansion and social protection by explaining the dynamics between frames of recognition and redistribution within both processes. These concepts, and critical frame analysis as a method, encompass enough specificity regarding market expansion and social protection, as well as redistribution and recognition, to permit the application of the analytical framework I have outlined above. In addition, they leave space for frames of recognition and redistribution that are not necessarily progressive or emancipatory by avoiding treating them as normative categories.

I used critical frame analysis as a two-step process. First, I investigated what types of policy frames of recognition and redistribution appear in the data, and linked these to either the process of market expansion or social protection. Second, I analyzed the dynamics between market expansion and social protection claims: the interactions (or, sometimes, the lack thereof) between the following four categories: (1) market expansion recognition frames; (2) market expansion

redistribution frames; (3) social protection recognition frames; (4) social protection redistribution frames.

It is important to emphasize that the study does not aim to compare two country contexts, but rather to identify and analyze the shared mechanisms leading to housing policy changes on Europe's periphery.

2.2 Data

This study is based on critical frame analysis of 40 semi-structured interviews conducted with MPs and city council member advocates in relation to housing problems, as well as housing activists and housing research policy experts in Barcelona, Budapest, and Madrid between November, 2016 and October, 2019. The larger proportion of interviews (n=28) were conducted in Barcelona and Madrid, since it was more difficult to reach out to the policy actors in Hungary (government officials) who had designed the housing policy changes in Hungary. Thus, I complemented the Hungarian interview data with a selection of policy-focused documents and political speeches related to housing policy changes in the period between 2010 and 2016.

3. Context: Housing policies on Europe's periphery

The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the context and policy changes as well as theories about peripheral housing regimes and the specific country context of the housing policy changes

3.1 Why Europe's periphery?

One of the most influential theoretical strands of housing literature, the Variety of Residential Capitalism framework (Kemeny, 1992; Schwartz and Seabrook, 2009; Lowe, 2011), classifies the Southern and Eastern European housing regimes as familialist states: i.e. regimes in which housing is primarily a patrimony, and where the dominance of home ownership is maintained through the inheritance of housing property. While the VORC framework focuses on shared patterns in these countries, it uses familialism as a common element. However, it is questionable whether familialism is a concept that can explain housing policies, and whether the approach can be applied in the same way in all peripheral contexts. For example, Hungary's familialist housing policies, which involve offering a discount – the Family Home-Making Discount (FHMD; CSOK in Hungarian) – to families if they have, or agree to have, a certain number of children (Habitat for Humanity, 2016; 2018), would not be possible in other contexts.

It is thus more fruitful to concentrate on these countries' shared geopolitical position, since these states depend on the economies and investment, including financial investment, of core Western European countries (Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011; Fernandez and Aalbers, 2016; Aalbers, 2017; Bohle, 2014; 2017; Pósfai and Nagy, 2017). This dependence has multiple layers: economically and financially,

these countries depend on such investment and are prone to external shocks. However, this dependence also translates into political constraints in the form of sensitivity to political decisions made in core countries, particularly in crisis situations in which policy measures aimed at tackling recession are decided by creditor countries or international organizations. The dependence also has a cultural component: such core countries are perceived as examples to which peripheral ones should and could converge and achieve the same level of development (Melegh, 2005; Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011). Thus, it is a cultural belief that following the advice and the path of core countries is key to creating a prosperous society.

3.2 Why Spain and Hungary?

While all peripheral countries share certain characteristics, for the purpose of my research I was interested in cases in which there was a variety of post-crisis housing policy changes. Among these countries, two extreme cases (Seawright and Gerring, 2008) emerged that represent two ends of a spectrum in terms of the direction of policy changes. Both countries have similar housing structures and characteristics to other countries in dependent positions, thus, in this regard, there is nothing unusual about them. What makes them more unique is that the housing sector of both countries was severely hit by the financial crisis (García, 2010; Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011; Bohle, 2014). In addition, several new housing policies were implemented after the crisis. Both countries introduced social protection measures that curtailed existing forms of market expansion, and forms of social protection that resulted in the transformation of their housing and housing finance policies.

Hungary and Spain are also extreme cases in relation to each other. Social protection has taken extremely divergent forms in these two housing regimes. On the one hand, Hungary introduced new governmental policies constructed on nationalist and familialist grounds (Bohle, 2014; Habitat for Humanity, 2016; 2018). These policies include the prohibition of mortgage lending in foreign currencies, nationalization of the bank sector, moratoria and other measures to help mortgage debtors, the establishment of a state-level housing agency, the introduction of a variety of home-ownership subsidies for families with children, along with curtailing funding for the system of shelters and criminalizing homelessness as a form of 'social help.'

On the other hand, social protection in Spain was introduced as a form of self-defense against the financialization of housing, the anti-democratic entanglement of politics with financial interests, the violation of consumer rights, and the right to housing (García, 2010; Colau and Alemany, 2014; De Weerdt and García, 2015). The changes included a moratorium on evictions in the case of mortgage debtors, the introduction of dación en pago (fully discharging all mortgage-related debt in exchange for mortgaged real estate), stricter consumer protection laws against financial institutions, rental protection for tenants, policies enabling the nationalization of financial institutions' real estate in the case of long periods of vacancy in Catalonia and mediation services between financial

institutions and mortgage debtors in many regions and local authorities. The majority of these changes were accepted by regional parliaments and local authorities, and some by congress. All the policies resulted from the pressure social movements put on national and regional governments, or were due to actors from social movement becoming members of local councils. Thus, the two extreme cases provide an opportunity to analyze a wider variety of frames and processes.

Since there were a large number of new housing policies after 2008, I have narrowed down the scope of analysis to two types of policy changes: policies that directly responded to the consequences of the financial crisis of 2008, and policies targeted at housing support following 2013. See Table 1 for an overview of the policies that were analyzed in the paper. (These policies were identified as the most relevant ones by my interviewees.)

Table 1: Relevant housing policy changes in Hungary and Spain after 2008

	Spain	Hungary
Housing policies related to the management of the mortgage crisis	• Establishment of FROB (a government agency for overseeing financial institutions) in 2009 • Establishment of Sareb (a semi-private 'bad bank' for cleaning up toxic assets from the financial market) in 2009 • Measures for mitigating the impact of the financial crisis (Laws 6/2012, 27/2012, 1/2013, 1/2015) and mortgage market regulation (Royal Decree 716/2009) • Code of good bank practices in 2012 • Law 1/2013 on protection of mortgage owners • Modification of the Law on Civil Procedures (Law 5/2018) (eviction procedures)	• Bajnai package (one-year action plan by the crisis-management government) in 2009 • Code of good bank practices in 2009 • Prohibition of mortgage lending in foreign currency in 2010 • New laws on protection of foreign-currency mortgage debtors in 2011–2015 • Establishment of the National Asset Management Agency in 2011 • Establishment of the Ócsa housing project for mortgage debtors in 2011

	Spain	Hungary
Housing support from 2014	• Catalonian laws (24/2015 and 4/2016) in defense of right to housing (including special taxes on and possible expropriation of bank property by the state in cases of long-term vacancy) • Plan for the Right to Housing 2016–2025 in Barcelona • Modification of the General Metropolitan Plan in Barcelona 2018 • New law on urban tenancy in 2019 (Royal Decree 7/2019)	• Establishment of the Family Home-Making Discount and its expansion 2014–2019 • Establishment of National Home-Making Societies in 2016 • Reduced VAT on construction from 2015

As the table shows, two sets of policies can be identified: the first are policies that followed the outbreak of the crisis that were aimed at both stabilizing the economy and providing relief to mortgage debtors. Another set of policies was accepted after 2014, but these were no longer addressed at mitigating the impact of the crisis, but offered alternative forms of housing support in addition to the pre-crisis housing policies. In Spain, these policies were implemented due to the pressure of social movements, while in Hungary they involved government action. The next section is a more detailed analysis of these changes and the claims that were made in relation to these policies.

4. Recognition and redistributive frames in housing discussions at the periphery

In this section, I concentrate on recognition and redistributive frames; more precisely, on how these are linked to market expansion and social protection. Throughout the analysis I identified six types of frames that mediated discussions about housing. Frame types included issues of recognition or redistribution that were both central in the construction of market expansion and social protection frames, even though these issues arose in different ways. The following section thus explains which main issues (types of frames) the market expansion and social protection frames were centered on, and how these issues were framed depending on their aim (market expansion or social protection).

4.1 Frames of recognition: Responsibility, authority, status groups

As I mentioned earlier, recognition frames in the case of housing were not only centered on status groups, but also on social ideals, reflecting the autonomy of the latter. These were organized using three types of frames: responsibility, autonomy, and protected groups (groups deemed in need of support). Table 2 provides an overview of the frames.

Table 2: Recognition frames in housing discussions in Hungary and Spain, 2008–2019

Types of recognition frames	Market expansion	Social protection
Responsibility	Voluntarism and private property	Exploitation, inequality, and housing as public good
Autonomy	Market	Nationalism, regionalism, and municipalism
Protected groups	Prudent households	Familialism and social justice

The main tension between the recognition frames of market expansion and social protection is found in where they assign responsibility. Market expansion frames emphasize individual responsibility. This appears as the idea that mortgage debtors are those actors who should bear the financial burden of the debt they took out because they had voluntarily entered into contracts in order to acquire private property, no matter how difficult it was to foresee the risk of this. Even though the interviewees who underlined the importance of individual responsibility did not deny that one who is indebted is in a more vulnerable position than one who provides a loan, they did not see this imbalance as exploitative or unequal, per se. The actors who framed mortgages in this way were mainly (the former) employees of government agencies or ministries responsible for economic policies. The latter presented individual responsibility in these frames as a principle that must be respected, but also as a type of moral imperative: this was based on the idea that people should suffer the consequences of their own individual decisions to some extent.

This recognition frame directly conflicted with the frames of market and state responsibility, particularly in the discussions of mortgage relief in Hungary and Spain. Social protection frames of exploitation were most dominant in terms of placing the emphasis on the fact that the banking sector had profited from the lack of information about risk, and built exploitative relationships with their clients and/or with the peripheral states that were more dependent on foreign banks. While the concept of the periphery and its disadvantaged geopolitical position also arose in the Spanish crisis discourses (Lopez and Rodriguez, 2011), it was more relevant in the Hungarian case. In Spain, the concept of territorial exploitation was presented in the context of gentrification: international development companies who take over the city were frequently referred to as 'vultures' in the interviews. First, exploitation by banks and the support of this by governments is one of the reasons why social protection was justified for those who had suffered its

consequences. Second, in the Platform of Mortgage Victims' campaign for datio in solutum in Spain, rejections of individual responsibility were more strategically employed: the latter not only entailed the shaming of banks for their exploitative practices, but also the rejection of the stigmatization of mortgage debtors, and their presentation as victims of exploitation rather than individuals responsible for their own debt (Colau and Alemany, 2014; De Weerdt and García, 2015).

Thus, the claim to individual responsibility in relation to market expansion clashed with the promotion of social protection as represented in two frames: the idea that the crisis was the financial sector and the supporting governments' responsibility, and the rejection of debtor stigma associated with the claim that the related debt was solely the responsibility of the individual. In some social protection frames, respect for individual responsibility as a principle was questioned by claims for frames of market and state responsibility, partly on the basis that mortgage debtors are a culturally disadvantaged status group that bears the shame for their debt, and partly on the basis of autonomy, which will be discussed below.

In Polanyi's theory (1962), market expansion is rooted in the freedom of the market. In market expansion frames, the autonomy of the market, like individual responsibility, was taken for granted as a guiding principle that had to be respected. In the social protection discourses, counterclaims of autonomy played a central role in tackling both these frames. Autonomy-based frames were not concerned with the equity of housing governance from a redistributive perspective, but the right of nation-states, regions, and municipalities to make their own decisions about housing.

In Hungary, these types of frames were linked to ideas about the autonomy of the nation in relation to dealing with the consequences of the crisis, as well as to the introduction of regulatory measures related to housing finance, among other areas (this was considered a form of opposition to international frameworks that imposed conditions on the country). In Spain, regionalist and municipalist claims operated from a different perspective. Catalan policies aimed at the introduction of measures involving enforcing the right to housing (which was already part of the constitution) were embedded in discourse about the region's autonomy in relation to implementing social protection measures during a housing crisis, as opposed to the government's policies that promoted market expansion. In addition to this, in an interview with a member of a Catalan independence party the promotion of housing rights was framed as an issue of Catalan regional identity, which was associated with openness and an emphasis on equality and social justice. However, the interviewee also emphasized that he did not consider this a nationalist argument, because such sensitivity to social justice was rather rooted in the history of the region, and was also true for people who were not originally Catalans, but live in Catalunya. About the link between housing policies and independence, the former said that 'independence will not simply be a change in the identity card, or a change in the passport, but an instrument for creating public policies so that citizens can live with dignity.' Thus, these autonomy frames were embedded in self-identification (i.e. the interviewee as a member of a progressive region), but

also emerged in the claim that regions should have the right to introduce protective measures, even if this ran counter to the policies of the central government.

The same discourse can be traced in the case of municipal autonomy. Many of the interviewees who were members of the housing rights movement in Spain and Hungary expressed disenchantment with the possibility of influencing housing policies on the national scale. The former framed autonomy as turning to local politics, local identities, and local housing policies; the level at which politics can truly address people's needs in the form of political strategies for promoting universal access to housing, not achieving regional independence.

Both market expansion and social protection frames referred to protected groups in the discussions. In the market expansion frames, again promoted by people engaging in economic policymaking, the social groups whose access to mortgages and even to mortgage relief was seen as desirable were claimed to be households with a stable income. This idea was partly framed in terms of redistribution, but was also linked to the individual responsibility frame because it assumes that mortgage lending itself should be protected from households taking out loans in an irresponsible way. In Hungary, one of the post-crisis goals of post-crisis economic policy was to boost mortgage lending by prudent households (Hungarian National Bank, 2019; Government of Hungary, 2019) – the moral antithesis of 'irresponsible mortgage debtors' – thereby avoiding the risk of another subprime crisis.

Social protection recognition frames nonetheless diverged or were even conflicted in relation to protected groups. In Spain, social protection discourses were centered on the recognition of the housing needs of people without secure housing and recognition of the right to housing. Housing was explicitly made a social justice issue by social movements and the parties that originated in the movement. In Hungary, there were two sets of claims for social protection. First, the government framed housing or 'home-making' as a means of starting a family or supporting families with children. Familialism is the normative basis of their housing policies, and this familialism is often linked to nationalism, involving the growth of the nation, because such policies are designed to increase birth rates. In a speech at the Third Demographic Forum, Viktor Orbán, the Hungarian Prime Minister, referred to childbirth as a way 'to biologically reproduce the national community' (Miniszterelnok.hu, 2019). Second, the housing movement focused on people living in housing poverty and advocated for social protection based on the housing needs of those who were discriminated against by lawmakers (Udvarhelyi, 2014). Thus, it was not the family as an ideal that was recognized and supported in these discourses, but, similarly to the Spanish social protection discourse, the idea that housing status is the basis of the subject position of specific social groups.

4.2 Frames of redistribution: Stability, intervention and housing governance

Redistributive discourses concerning housing policies were centered on three types of frames: stability, intervention, and housing governance. Market expansion frames focused on financial stability as a means of enabling economic growth through helping the market to free itself from toxic assets (in Spain) and the expansion of mortgages and other types of loans for households with a stable income and providing subsidies for the construction industry (in Hungary) – no matter whether related to crisis management or after-crisis policies. Table 3 gives an overview of the frames.

Table 3: Types of redistribution frames in housing discussions in Hungary and Spain, 2008–2019

Types of redistribution frames	Market expansion	Social protection
Stability	Financial: economic growth	Social: demographic goals, housing needs
Intervention	Voluntary forms of cooperation between the market and the state	Restrictive measures against market actors; subsidies; social housing
Housing governance	Decentralization	Centralization

Redistributive social protection frames focused on social stability, although recognition frames about protected groups had an impact on how this social stability was framed. On the one hand, housing-rights groups in Spain and Hungary, as well as the political actors who had been members of these social movements, employed a very universalistic notion of access to housing, which according to them, should be understood as a right. The scope involved putting an end to the housing crisis, which was framed as a social crisis in all the interviews with social movement members. On the other hand, the Hungarian government framed housing as a tool for resolving a different type of social crisis and promoting social stability: the demographic crisis (see the quote from Viktor Orbán above). Discussions about demographic decline emphasized its negative consequences on society, and the fact that people who needed housing subsidies to start a family should be provided with the opportunity to access them.

The other two types of redistributive frames were more focused on intervention and governance; namely, on how intervention in housing and housing finance should occur, and whose role it was to introduce those policies. Since these frames are more interconnected than others, I do not discuss them separately, but in relation to each other. Market-expansion claims of intervention and governance by the same economic policy experts mentioned above focused on voluntary forms of cooperation between the market and the state regarding crisis management and the provision of housing subsidies in a decentralized manner. As one of the Hungarian interviewees who had worked for a government agency responsible for the supervision of financial institutions put it, there is a need for social housing, and there are viable models for social housing constructions, but 'it

cannot be expected that banks will make donations.' He then suggested that local authorities should create social housing programs with subsidies through which banks could be incentivized to invest in social housing. Decentralization, thus, also means that the internal logic of housing capitalism remains intact.

Interestingly, all social-protection-related redistributive claims in Hungary and Spain about intervention and housing governance emphasized the role of the central state in intervening in market processes and taking action in relation to housing policies to some extent. Even the actors who argued for limited housing support on a local scale agreed with the regulations concerning mortgage lending (regulation that enables the state to seize empty housing units owned by market actors to create social housing) and the regulation of rental contracts and rental prices. These initiatives clearly run counter to the social ideal of granting autonomy to market expansion as they refer to imposing or suggesting interventions related to the market.

Second, the social-protection-related redistributive frames promoted by political actors (MPs, local council members, and public administration employees and civil actors in Spain, and policy experts, civil and political actors in Hungary) argued for centralized housing policies, but there was significant divergence within the frames about which kinds of policies should be created by the central government. Social-protection-focused frames of housing governance and intervention slightly contradicted autonomy frames in Spain: all social-protection actors who argued for housing subsidies and social housing also argued for state-level policies, and, more importantly, an increase in the budget for housing. However, due to their disenchantment with state politics, they also promoted decentralized, local, and regional housing policies. A leftwing MP whom I interviewed compared being a member of the parliament to entering a casino, 'a dark place where light never enters,' referring to the fact that parliament is an elite club entangled with the financial lobby, and a political space in which change is practically impossible. In spite of this, a local council member from the same political party emphasized that 'housing must be given central space at all levels of administration; local, regional, and central, with a considerable budget.' Many interviewees who worked in housing policy or housing research pointed out that the most important expectation from the central state, on which all regional and local housing policies depended, was the provision of an adequate state budget. Thus, centralization in the Spanish context meant that the state should have a leading role in financing housing. The disenchantment with state politics nonetheless resulted in relevant housing policy changes occurring almost exclusively at the local and regional scale, a fact that also illustrates the tension between the housing-governance-related redistributive frame of centralization and the autonomy-related recognition frames of municipalism and regionalism.

In Hungary, housing policy experts and civil actors argued for an increase in, and the centralization of, state subsidies. All interviewees, regardless of their position, also expressed disenchantment with state-level politics, including the extremely centralized manner in which all types of policies were created. However, those who argued for housing policy change (housing activists,

researchers, and homeless care-providers) thought that the government should create housing policies for poor and low-income people, but with the meaningful participation of experts and civil actors. Thus, it was not the issues of centralization and decentralization that caused tension for the actors who advocated for social protection in the area of housing, but the issue of protected groups: the government had introduced housing subsidies aimed at tackling the demographic crisis instead of providing support for low-income groups, which the policy experts and civil actors in the interviews would have expected. All housing experts and civil actors criticized the government for its housing policies based on two redistributive claims. First, that the latter excluded low-income people from housing subsidy schemes, and, second, that they defined no upper limits in terms of income or the size of the housing units, thus, as one of the housing experts said, the government had not 'prevented luxury use.' Thus, while the government framed social stability as a means of stopping the demographic decline and pronatalism, housing experts, and activists as well as care employees for the homeless, framed the former in relation to housing access and housing-related inequalities.

Overall, redistributive frames tended to be directed at action and concrete forms of intervention, while recognition frames were typically directed at social ideals. Interestingly, both the redistributive claims of market expansion and social protection conflicted with some of the recognition frames presented by the same actors. There were two main contradictions. While in terms of recognition, market expansion frames were concerned with responsibility, redistributive frames emphasized voluntary cooperation and the use of market tools in a decentralized manner in housing. Social-protection-type claims of intervention and housing governance conflicted with autonomy frames in Spain, and frames of protected groups in Hungary. In the next section, I provide a more thorough analysis of such dynamics between recognition and redistributive frames, and then between market expansion and social protection.

5. The dynamics of market expansion, social protection, and housing policy change

In the previous section, I outlined what types of recognition and redistributive frames involving market expansion and social protection were constructed in relation to housing. In addition, I mapped out where certain frames of market expansion conflicted with those of social protection, and I also identified tensions within frames of social protection. In this section, my aim is to increase understanding of how these tensions turn into mechanisms of change. Namely, how the dynamics of the double movement contribute to housing policy change. Based on the analysis, I mapped out three main mechanisms: clashes, mutual enablement, and limitations. In this section, I explain how these mechanisms operate, and illustrate each one of them with a policy case to show how they were reflected in housing policy changes.

5.1 Clash

Clashes may be the most obvious dynamic between frames of market expansion and social protection. By clashes, I understand a form of political dynamics involving frames that openly and directly clash with each other, leading to policy consequences. Clashes do not necessarily occur between market expansion and social protection, but may exist in relation to the dynamics related to social protection. However, clashes within social protection did not contribute to housing policy change in the policy cases outlined in Section 2.

Catalonia's laws (24/2015 and 4/2016) in defense of the right to housing illustrate how clashes between market expansion and social protection frames can result in policy change. These laws resulted from a clash between frames of responsibility. The related regional laws were preceded by state laws that introduced the opportunity of dación en pago, or datio in solutum, as mentioned above, and the legal expectation that financial institutions should offer social housing to clients. While this was a significant achievement of the Platform of Mortgage Victims and its allies and a political result of the popular legislative initiative (ILP) to change mortgage laws (De Weerdt and García, 2015), the legal changes did not regulate who and what percentage of mortgage debtors could benefit from these opportunities. Most housing activists whom I interviewed expressed disappointment about these legal changes. I will expand on these arguments in the next section, but to understand the clashes that led to Catalunya's housing rights laws, it is important to focus on the fact that, after these legal changes, housing activists directed their efforts at making legal changes that would involve legally enforcing the right to housing, instead of offering individual help on a voluntary basis. According to the interviews, these housing rights laws were accepted so as to create social housing stock by enabling the use of empty housing units owned by developers and financial institutions, and thus increasing access to social housing. Government actors responsible for financial policies rather saw these laws as breaching the right to private property. Thus, the Catalan laws were a result not just of disappointment with previous changes, but a direct clash between market expansion and social protection frames of responsibility, whereby the recognition of private property and voluntary help clashed with the recognition of housing as a social right and public good.

As I explained in Section 4, clashes also occurred within the frames of social protection. For example, in terms of social protection in Hungary, the familialist and the egalitarian frames of recognition clashed. However, these clashes were not reflected in government housing policies, which were influenced more by the mutual enablement of market expansion and social protection frames. In Section 4, I also highlighted the tension between the redistributive frame of centralization – the push for state-level housing policies – with the autonomy frame because of political disenchantment with state-level politics. However, this tension was not represented as a clash between social protection frames by interviewees, but rather as a limitation caused by the market expansion frame of decentralization: a distinct mechanism I will expand on at the end of this section.

5.2 Limitation

I mentioned above that Catalan housing policies were accepted after the disappointing results of the ILP for housing rights activists, who had expected more radical policy changes. The Spanish mortgage-relief policies hence illustrate how market expansion frames can limit frames of social protection by introducing a voluntary element in terms of a change towards understanding housing as an issue of social justice. These policy changes stemmed from the recognition of failed mortgage debts as the responsibility of financial institutions instead of that of individuals, and offered protective measures for debtors based on those recognition claims and the redistributive frames of social protection.

For example, mediation services between financial institutions and debtors were also part of these changes, and were usually offered by organizations through contracts with local and regional authorities. One of the interviewees who worked at such an NGO explained that obtaining access to mortgage relief was completely voluntary, and depended on individual agreements with banks. She explained that banks that participated in such schemes usually signed a contract with the NGO that prohibited the disclosure of the financial institution's name. In her view, such banks did not want to make it publicly known that they had participated in negotiation with debtors to avoid future claims, which illustrates how the voluntary frame limited the social protection frames of recognition and redistribution and resulted in 'limited' mortgage policy change.

The market expansion frame of decentralization created limits to the redistributive claims made by actors demanding social protection in Spain. Even though housing experts and activists expressed that their goal was to achieve changes on the state level too, the decentralized frame about housing (namely, that housing was primarily the responsibility of regional and local authorities, as emphasized by financial agency actors) prevented such changes. This was mentioned as an important limitation by all interviewees, because without an adequate state budget it was not possible to create social housing. However, there were recognition-related responses to this limitation that resulted in policy change through mutual enablement.

5.3 Mutual enablement

Market expansion and social protection frames did not necessarily clash, but could also enable each other and, through this, affect the acceptance of housing policies. The modification of the General Metropolitan Plan in Barcelona in 2018 illustrates such a dynamic. As mentioned above, decentralization created significant limitations on local- and regional-level policies. However, these limitations were responded to by a municipalist strategy that was rooted in recognition of the democratic potential of local-level politics, as well as a desire to expand the boundaries of the latter. Policy efforts were concentrated on the local scale to create social housing. The modification mentioned above was a result of exactly this: it forced developers to offer 30 per cent of newly built housing units as social

housing, which was mentioned as one of the most important post-crisis policy achievements by local housing experts.

In Hungary, the most important policy changes resulted from mutual enablement. An example of such a case is the Family Home-Making Discount (CSOK in Hungarian) which was primarily framed as a familialist policy tool and linked to the recognition frame of familialism and the redistributive frame of social stability as demographic stability (Kopp Mária Institute for Demographic Growth and the Family, 2018; Habitat, 2018; Elek and Szikra, 2018).

However, the approach is also very much in line with the recognition frame of the prudent household as a protected group, and as stability framed as financial stability. The context of this mutual enablement or reinforcement is that the crisis highlighted the risk of subprime lending and Forex mortgages, and therefore mortgage expansion frames changed: instead of undermining these risks, they aimed at promoting financial stability by offering mortgages to households with a stable income (Hungarian National Bank, 2019; Government of Hungary, 2019). Thus, the view of market expansion after 2015 consisted of a mix of recognition claims ('prudent' households as a target for mortgage lending) and redistributive claims (on financial stability).

As one of the housing experts from Hungary pointed out, the conditions of access to the Family Home-Making Discount have become softer in terms of 'upper' limits, meaning that the incentive has become increasingly accessible to financially stable households. Thus, even though its framing by the government is primarily based on recognition claims, these are mutually enabled by frames of market expansion. Very similar arguments were made by housing researchers and activists about the Hungarian mortgage relief policies that preceded the Family Home-Making Discount.

Table 4 gives an overview of these mechanisms of change, as well as their results.

Table 4: Overview of analysis

Mechanism	Double movement	Frames mobilized	Policy change
Clash	Market expansion – social protection	Responsibility, intervention	Right to housing laws in Catalonia
	Social protection – social protection	Responsibility and protected groups	–
Limitation	Market expansion – social protection	Responsibility, intervention	Mortgage relief policies in Spain

Mechanism	Double movement	Frames mobilized	Policy change
	Social protection – social protection	Housing governance, intervention, responsibility	–
Mutual enablement	Market expansion – social protection	Decentralization and autonomy	Mortgage relief policies and Family-Home Making Discount in Hungary
	Social protection – social protection	Protected groups and autonomy	Modification of the General Metropolitan Plan in Barcelona in 2018

6. Conclusions

This paper, which complements Polanyi's (1962) double movement theory with Fraser's (2003) concept of recognition and redistribution, has offered empirical insight into the claims that shape housing policies in two countries on Europe's periphery, Hungary and Spain. Instead of solely focusing on financialization, or on other forms of market expansion, it analyzed policies that reflect the dynamics between market expansion and social protection. The aim of the paper was not to compare the two country contexts, but to offer insights into the shared mechanisms and double-movement dynamics on Europe's periphery, as well as their contribution to housing policy change.

The paper first argued that both processes include recognition and redistributive frames. Instead of the recognition of status groups, these processes entailed recognition claims that were centered on social ideals or principles such as individual responsibility and market autonomy, as opposed to the recognition claims of status groups or other principles. It was not only the recognition and redistribution frames of market expansion and social protection that were found to conflict with each other, but I also identified tension within social protection frames. In the second part of the paper, I identified three mechanisms that contributed to the housing policy changes in these countries: clash, limitation, and mutual enablement. The analysis shows that recognition claims had an impact in all cases of policy change, and that this impact could be very diverse. The double movement dynamics were much more complex than simple clashes between actors or the frames of market expansion and social protection, and policy changes were often derailed or enabled in unexpected ways.

This analytical framework thus offers insights about double movement dynamics by offering a conceptual tool, which combined with Critical Frame Analysis enables the tracing of these dynamics, as well as the policy changes they result in. It also shows that describing housing regimes in Europe's periphery as familial ignores the fact that familialism might not be a relevant factor in housing policy change in these countries, and it is more fruitful to focus on mechanisms of change to understand the transformation of these housing regimes.

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Political Representation and Spokespersons in the Prostitution vs. Sex Work Debate: Reflections on the Hungarian Discourse in a Global Context

Intersections.EEJSP
6(1): 139-163.
DOI: 10.17356/ieejsp.v6i1.631
http://intersections.tk.mta.hu

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Abstract

A binary debate has developed internationally between abolitionists and sex workers' rights (SWR) activists: this involves the so-called 'sex wars', which dominate the scholarship and activism regarding commercial sex worldwide. While abolitionists aim to eliminate prostitution, which they see as a manifestation of patriarchy and violence against women, SWR activists aim to recognize sex work as work, and to fight for better working conditions in the sex industry. Both movements have become institutionalized, and various local NGOs and international networks have been established to advocate for these political aims. These organizations try to influence national and international legislation regarding the selling of sex by building powerful alliances. The financial support of donors is also dependent on how compatible these movements are with neoliberal power relations. Furthermore, the development and political influence of local abolitionist or sex worker movements also depends on countries' positions in the global economy.

The paper analyses the political representation and the role of spokespersons within the prostitution/sex work debate and also reflects on the advocacy work of Hungarian organizations active in this field since 1989. It discusses the evolution of a politics of recognition in the struggle related to commercial sex, and how transnational power dynamics on a global scale have affected Hungarian movements and civil society organizations since the era of state socialism.

Keywords: *prostitution, sex work, politics of recognition, spokespersons, feminist movements.*

1. Introduction

In 2015 I participated in an international conference on prostitution policies in Vienna with other researchers affiliated with a leftist German political foundation. The first keynote speech started with the happy acknowledgement that 'we' (the conference participants) finally do not need to start arguing again that sex work needs to be recognized as work. A week later I attended a Hungarian conference on leftist feminism, where the common sense approach to commercial sex was exclusively deemed to be an abolitionist one, and where I listened to talks on the serious harm that pornography and prostitution cause for society. At both conferences, scholars and activists considered their own position to be the vulnerable, minority position, and highlighted how suppressed they were by the powerful other opposing position in the same debate. While the pro-sex-work activists claimed that prostitution laws had shifted generally towards the Swedish model in Europe, abolitionists felt marginalized due to the growth of the sex industry and the changed preference of international NGOs and donors for supporting sex worker organizations.

Conducting various research projects on prostitution and trafficking for my PhD and facing diverse and difficult empirical realities during my field work over the last decade have represented a great professional and personal challenge. However, entering into the academic field of prostitution research and getting to know the political and discursive contexts in Germany, Hungary, and internationally was also a very specific experience in itself that is worth analyzing. I would like to contribute with this article to the inquiry into the structure of the political and academic field of prostitution/sex work research, which intersects with different movements and organizations that shape the public debate and national and international policy making on prostitution.

In this article I look at the development of the abolitionist and sex workers' rights movements and their successes and challenges. I point out the role of different state, market, and civil society actors therein, and refer to the aim of and potential for addressing structural critique in these approaches. My analysis addresses wider neoliberalization tendencies, changing political representation, and a prevalence of identity politics and a politics of recognition in social struggles.

All in all, I aim to show that these international struggles are shaped by global socio-economic and power dynamics, and that local organizations need to negotiate between local political challenges and environments and the requirements and influences of powerful international alliances, which are more influential in shaping international policy making. Therefore, I show that the Hungarian political struggles related to addressing prostitution are strongly defined by the country's changing political environment since the democratization process of the 1990s until the emergence of the 'illiberal' Orbán regime following 2010 on the one hand, but are influenced by relationships with international alliances in core countries on the other. In the following I summarize the evolution of a politics of recognition and the role of spokespersons, focusing on the feminist

movements in the USA by highlighting their global influence. Afterwards, I briefly analyze these issues in the context of the prostitution debate and feminist organizing around commercial sex. Finally, I look at the work of Hungarian organizations in this field.

Throughout the article I use both the terms prostitution and sex work. I always apply the terms in accordance with the standpoint and terminology of the activist, author, or movement I refer to. When I refer to both standpoints, I apply both terminologies and add a slash symbol (/) between them.

2. The rise of a politics of recognition and the infrastructure of political representation in second-wave US feminism

The transformation of political representation in democracies and socio-economic contexts strongly defines the trajectory and potential of social movements and organizing. The transformation of democratic political systems has been thoroughly analyzed in political science. Literature on populism in the last decades has flourished, including that which has paid special attention to political development and the illiberal state in Hungary. Fukuyama analyzed in his book Identity how social struggles and party politics changed in line with the crisis of capitalism in the twenty-first century. He claims that 'twentieth century politics had been organized along a left-right spectrum defined by economic issues, the left wanting more equality and the right demanding greater freedom' (Fukuyama, 2018: 6–7). However, in the twenty-first century politics in many regions has become more defined by questions of identity: the left focusing less on broad economic inequality and promoting more the interests of particular groups perceived as marginalized; and the right aiming to protect traditional national identity connected to race and ethnicity. These political processes are shaped by the crisis of neoliberal capitalism and Western hegemony, which has led to different political developments in various locations along the global accumulation chain.

Nancy Fraser (1995; 2003; 2015) analyzed social justice struggles, focusing on the evolution of identity politics in the feminist movement. She highlighted the shift from a 'politics of redistribution' to a 'politics of recognition.' Fraser analyzed the ambiguous legacy of second-wave US feminism, which evolved with other revolutionary movements in the atmosphere of the 1960s. Despite the originally radical ideas of women's liberation from male domination which essentially structures everyday life, work, and women's position in capitalism, feminist struggles shifted away from economic issues towards cultural aims, focusing on recognition issues based on identity politics, instead of providing a systemic critique of the neoliberal global order.

But why did the collusion between feminism and neoliberalism proceed? Fraser (2015) also raised this question in order to explore the potential and challenges of current, anti-neoliberal feminist struggles. She analyzed the shift towards a politics of recognition within the socio-economic and political landscape of the 1960s. Drawing on Polanyi's (1944) idea of the 'double movement' of his

time as a two-sided battle between social protectionists and free market fundamentalists, Fraser described the 1960s as a triple movement of marketization, social protectionism, and empowerment (Fraser, 2015: 711). Fraser claims that emancipatory movements in the 1960s that undertook a fundamental critique of traditional authority and the paternalist state of the time found themselves on the same side as neoliberal actors in the other struggle between protection and marketization. Feminism has become capitalism's handmaiden, and the 'dream of women's emancipation is harnessed to the engine of capital accumulation' (Fraser, 2015: 709), since the ideas of different women's groups involving fighting for their dignity actively contribute to the capitalist 'spirit' of the time. However, Fraser's analysis of feminism's collusion with neoliberalism and its global export has been criticized for being 'West' or 'Global North' centered. Scholars from East-Central Europe also claim that local activism follows a more complex dynamic (Korolczuk, 2016), as I also inquire into Hungarian activism that addresses prostitution.

Analysis of the infrastructure of political representation and the role of the various actors who shape the political landscape is also essential for understanding the shift towards a politics of recognition in social movements, and in feminism especially. Csigó (2016) describes this shift in political representation as a transition from 'party-based representative democracy' to 'mediatized populist democracy' in which, instead of class-based political organizations, populist politics address the 'people,' which approach fits better an individualized, pluralist society. This increased mediatized representation opens up various questions regarding how spokespersons in politics are related to the groups and people they represent (Fáber, 2013). In professionalized, bureaucratized politics in mass democracies there is potential conflict between represented groups and their spokespersons. As Bourdieu explains, this involves a circular relationship in which a group appoints a spokesperson, and the spokesperson then creates the group through performative acts (Bourdieu, 2001, cited by Fáber, 2013). Moreover, spokespersons commonly move among different social groups and settings in their performative acts of representation when they represent marginalized groups in the language of intellectuals. Therefore, spokespersons who speak in the name of others have symbolic power.

Concerning the ambiguous legacy of second-wave feminism in the USA and feminist struggles globally, it is also crucial to look at who defined what feminism should be about, and how women's issues were represented. The second wave of feminism in the USA involved various groups and organizations. Struggles for the political representation of women and fights for legitimacy appeared among feminists based on distinctions in ethnic and social background. The political representation of all women by specific, dominantly white, middle-class feminist groups was strongly questioned by black feminist scholars (Hill-Collins, 1990). Generalizations concerning the universal experiences of women were criticized due to the multiple layers of inequality women may experience (Crenshaw, 1991). Susan Watkins (2018) points out the differences between radical, anti-systemic groups like the women's liberation movement, and more neoliberalism compatible liberal feminisms that focus on anti-discrimination and women's inclusion in the

labor market. She shows that such feminist ideas and groups became influential after 'feminism begun its long march through the institutions' in the USA (Watkins, 2018: 14), a process which went hand in hand with state and market interests in obtaining economic benefits through women's employment.

The anti-discrimination model focused mainly on the rights of groups who defined themselves through shared experiences of suffering, oppression, and marginalization, like people of color and women. The focus on the fight for recognition is manifest in the use of universalistic human-rights language that is centered on individual rights and treats gender inequality rather as a cultural issue while it conceals the global economic order (Kováts, 2019). This tendency – focusing on rights and legal solutions instead of providing a structural critique – has been much more suitable for the influential actors and donors who support these movements, like the Ford Foundation. Consequently, the anti-discrimination model became influential in the feminist movement by the 1980s when US feminism gained more global power and influence through international women's congresses (Watkins, 2018).

3. International sex workers' rights and abolitionist movements

Prostitution and pornography have been central issues for feminists, especially since the 1970s, although different standpoints and movements evolved around the issue of commercial sex. The so-called 'sex wars' debate first evolved between various groups of feminists in the USA, but due to the globalization of feminist movements, networks, alliances, and international campaigns, it influenced discourses regarding the topic worldwide. While NGOs and other organizations working on prostitution/sex work also compete for financial resources, the main battlefield concerns how they influence national and international policies. The successes or failures of these movements can be measured by their efficiency in relation to policy making in various countries.

The feminist movement has always aimed to affect international politics and policies on prostitution, as manifested in international conventions and treaties on women's rights and prostitution policies. International conventions, ratified by nation states, pose certain obligations for governments; therefore international advocacy targeting various stakeholders is highly important for feminist movements. In the following I briefly summarize the history and the main arguments of these movements, then introduce issues related to political representation.

3.1 The abolitionist movement in the USA and Western Europe

The feminist abolitionist movement dates back to the 1860s and the advocacy and lobbying of Josephine Butler, who was one of the first activists to claim that prostitution damages women's rights and men are to blame for this (Bindel, 2017). Radical feminists, like Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon (1988; 1997), Kathleen Barry (1979; 1995), and Carol Pateman (1988), had a predominant role in

putting prostitution on the feminist agenda. Their activism is continued by important abolitionist feminists today, like Julie Bindel, Melissa Farley, and Sheila Jeffreys. MacKinnon (1989) approached sexuality as the root cause of inequality in patriarchy through which gender relations are created and expressed. She saw rape, prostitution, and pornography as examples of the objectification of women. Anti-porn activism evolved in the 1980s, including important new organizations and networks like Women Against Pornography, which held its first meeting in 1985.

The work of radical feminists problematizes the demand side of prostitution and its roots in neoliberal patriarchy. Pateman (1988) argues in The Sexual Contract that women sell themselves, and claims that prostitution is a specific form of self-commodification. Similarly, Jeffreys (2009) focused on prostitution as a form of sex slavery and argued that it is one of the foundations of women's oppression. Thus, 'radical feminists ascribe a particular value to sex, which is then used to argue against its commodification' (Scoular, 2004: 345). The abolitionist feminist movement aims to eliminate the entire sex industry, since the commodification of sexuality involves harm to human dignity and the oppression of women. Proponents question the existence of voluntary prostitution and point out the connection between prostitution and human trafficking.

Following the work of early abolitionists and their international lobbying activities throughout the twentieth century, the anti-trafficking movement and related policies have been a primary focus of interest for abolitionist feminists. The anti-trafficking movement has been successful in negotiating on the international level, and several conventions have been held to combat trafficking which addressed prostitution as a form of exploitation and violence against women and called for an end to it. The anti-trafficking movement is supported by various organizations and international[1] associations such as the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), the latter which was set up in 1988 as the first global feminist organization.

3.2 The sex-worker movement in the USA and Western-Europe

In opposition to the abolitionist movement, the Coyote ('Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics') sex workers' rights organization was founded in 1973. Carol Leigh and others initiated a 'sex-positive' movement, as they called it. They approached prostitution as a form of work that should be destigmatized and acknowledged. The First Congress of Whores, a campaign organized by sex workers, was an important event as it played a role in forming the sex worker movement. In Europe, the sex worker movement was highly influential in some Western European countries. The symbol of the birth of the sex worker movement in

[1] The International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic of Women of Full Age (1933), the Convention on Suppression of all Forms of Trafficking in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949), and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979).

Europe was when women involved in prostitution occupied the Church of St. Nizier in 1973 in Lyon, France, in order to demonstrate against police action. This also stimulated the development of several other sex worker organizations from all over Europe, including Hydra in Germany, the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP), and others (ICRSE, 2015: 5).

As Ekman explains, the SWR movement created the cultural image of the 'whore,' which represents pleasure and joy in life, and which contributed to the social acceptance and success of the movement. The 'sex-positive' narrative, which includes associations of freedom and empowerment, was communicated in opposition to the 'feminist' narrative, which was portrayed negatively (Ekman, 2013: 34–41). Cultural images which build on socio-economic relations play a crucial role not only in political representation, but also in political transformations. Drawing on Weber's idea of Calvinism being capitalism's 'spirit,' Fraser suggests that the 'elective affinity' between feminism and neoliberalism lies in the critique of traditional authority (Fraser, 2015: 710). While abolitionists advocated against patriarchal social order, the SWR movement campaigned for the liberation of sexuality from all forms of control. Thereby, they aligned themselves with neoliberal ideas of freedom.

US-based advocacy networks, like the International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights (ICPR), founded in the 1980s, and the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP), founded in 1998, have played a crucial role in the internationalization of the sex worker movement and its further progress in Europe. The ICRSE (International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe) was founded in 2004, and is active in developing key advocacy tools for sex worker organizations. A second network that supports the sex workers' movement at the regional level is the Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN), which was founded in 2006. SWAN brings together sex worker organizations from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia and provides mentoring, advocacy tools, and support in 'harsh legal and social environments' (ICRSE, 2015: 9).

Sex work activists claim that human trafficking, coercion, and exploitation in the sex industry can be better tackled if the whole industry is legalized, because this provides more space for state control, more opportunities for victims to access legal aid, and better working conditions in prostitution. The aim of these organizations has been to advocate for sex workers' rights: 'struggle for the decriminalization of sex work, freedom from oppression and discrimination, and the protection of sex workers' human rights, including their right to health, their right to work and their right to organize' (ICRSE, 2015: 5). This approach refers to liberal concepts of 'choice' and 'consent' (Limoncelli, 2009). The use of human-rights language and the focus on individual and group rights reflects a politics of recognition and a neoliberal approach that neglects structural constraints (Kováts, 2019). Furthermore, the promotion of commercial sex conceals male demand for paid sex and its correlation with patriarchal hierarchy and has further implications for women's sexual objectification.

However, activist groups, scholars, and organizations that promote the decriminalization of sex work are heterogeneous in their aims and argumentation. There are several leftist, Marxist groups in the SWR movement who approach sex work from a labor perspective and primarily aim to fight exploitation, defining capitalism as the main source of harm in the sex industry, not patriarchy. This approach, and the focus on capitalism and how it shapes prostitution, emerged in early socialist feminist thinking – e.g. in the work of Kollontai (1921). In the academic discourse, this neoliberalism-critical but not abolitionist approach is represented by scholars like Julia O'Connell Davidson (2014) and Elizabeth Bernstein (2007; 2010; 2014), who analyze the sex industry through a lens of broader global inequalities and commodification. Leftist organizations and trade unions are divided concerning the workers in the sex industry, while several trade union initiatives and federations worldwide support the decriminalization of sex work since they claim it 'keeps women safe' in the short term (Pritchard, 2010). However, evidence from criminological research projects contradicts this claim by showing that the exploitation and number of victims of trafficking has actually risen in districts where prostitution is legal (Huismann and Kleemans, 2014). Ekman depicts the rise of the unionism of 'sex workers' in the early twenty-first century as a misleading campaign, since the members and supporters of these trade unions (such as the British International Union for Sex Workers), are actually not the women involved in prostitution. Ekman (2013: 59–64) claims that trade unions represent and defend the interests of those who profit from the industry; the pimps, brothel owners, etc.; not those of workers. However, although Ekman cites various concrete cases involving illegitimate spokespersons, such as privileged middle-class men speaking in the name of all 'sex workers' and trade unions, her analysis rather builds on scandalous examples, not on a thorough analysis of trade union membership and international activity.

3.3 Dilemmas of political representation: Who can speak for victims of prostitution / sex workers?

In the polarized debate about prostitution it is also strongly questioned who can represent those who work in/are victims of prostitution. The debate around political representation started at the very early phase of the anti-pornography and sex worker rights movement. Abolitionists argue that prostitution is harmful to women individually, and to women as a class of people (Pateman, 1988), therefore they claim to act on behalf of all women when fighting against prostitution. They consider all women in prostitution to be victims: of the users of prostitution, pimps, procurers, brothel owners; thus, of all those who profit from and commonly exploit those working in prostitution. The writings and activism of radical feminist activists in the 1980s, when they started to address prostitution as a severe form of women's oppression, represent prostitution as a women's issue generally. In contrast to this approach, the sex worker movement emerged as a critical reaction to the abolitionist movement, and claimed that radical feminists cannot represent those working in the sex business. Their main claim is that only sex workers can

and should represent sex workers, thus they started to refer to the 'nothing about us without us' principle. 'Nothing about us without us' has been the main motto of various social movements since the 1960s (like the disability movement, see also Charlton, 1998), and sex worker organizations have also used it as their slogan for self-organizing (ICRSE, 2015).

This motto refers to the demand of an identity-based, oppressed group to be recognized and participate in the discourse and policymaking that affects them. Furthermore, by using this motto organizations and networks can claim that they represent and speak for all people involved in sex work. The former thus not only refers to the inclusion of sex workers in policy making as a general principle, thus the individuals that are concerned, but actually advocates for the inclusion of sex worker organizations in decision making. Thus, the approach 'nothing about us without us' builds on the assumption that such organizations are the legitimate spokespersons for all of those involved in the sex industry. However, in reality participation in these movements and organizations is strongly dependent on social and cultural capital. Still, the internal hierarchy of the political representation of sex workers within such organizations is rarely addressed. Additionally, class background and social inequalities are typically talked about only by leftist, Marxist, SWR organizations. Generally, marginalization in legal terms is much more in the spotlight in the public appearances of the movement, as well as the participation of different identity-based groups such as LGBTQ sex workers, migrants, and Roma sex workers.

Abolitionist feminist activists like Julie Bindel and Ekis Ekman strongly question who and what underlying interests such organizations represent in their lobbying. Bindel (2017) argues that sex worker organizations are supported and led by people who profit from prostitution, thus by those who exploit and hurt victims. Similarly, self-organized victims of prostitution and trafficking, like members of SAGE in the USA or SPACE in Ireland, strongly criticize the sex worker approach and the way that members of sex worker organizations claim to represent women's experiences in prostitution.

Standing against Global Exploitation (SAGE) was founded in 1992 in San Francisco as a resource and counseling center for women in prostitution. Its founder, Norma Hotaling, designed a program to address clients, thus the demand side of prostitution, which later became known as John Schools (Bindel, 2017: 49). SPACE (Survivor of Prostitution Abuse Calling for Enlightenment) is also a survivor-led organization, formed in 2012 in Ireland with the aim of changing attitudes towards prostitution, fighting for recognition as a sexual-exploitation/human-rights organization, and promoting the Nordic model. SPACE has become an international organization led by women who were victims of the sex trade. Rachel Moran is an abolitionist activist at SPACE, and author of the book Paid for: My journey through prostitution (2013), which has been very influential in the abolitionist movement.

Based on their own victimhood and survival stories, abolitionist organizations perceive the members of these organizations as the acknowledged spokespersons of people involved in prostitution, as the title of a Hungarian public

event in 2019, The Reality of Prostitution, which hosted Rachel Moran and other members of SPACE, also shows. Reference to 'the' reality implies that the experiences of the panel discussants who spoke about prostitution represent the experiences of all. Thereby, victim-led organizations are engaging in the same fight for legitimacy in the prostitution debate, as they claim to be the reliable spokespersons for people, primarily women, involved in prostitution.

The binary debate between the two opposite standpoints and social movements and the fight to be 'the' legitimate spokesperson commonly results in a rather essentialist interpretation and representation of prostitution. Although this effect was criticized as early as in the 1980s by Ferguson (1984), and later on by Limoncelli (2009) and Bernstein (2010), essentialist argumentations still often appear in public and academic discourses that neglect broader structural analyses of the complex power and socioeconomic relations within the sex industry.

3.4 Battlefields: policy making, financial resources, and powerful alliances

The main political goal of these social movements is to influence policymaking. Representatives of sex worker and abolitionist organizations operate in various political arenas, aiming to influence national and international prostitution policies. Organizations in Europe are also engaged in advocacy at the European-Union level, and global abolitionist and sex worker networks also actively lobby UN organizations.

Advocacy and lobbying include a variety of activities and strategies: not only aimed at obtaining political influence, but funding is needed for the survival of these movements and organizations. Consequently, they need to institutionalize and operate as established NGOs, as they rely on the funding systems of states or international donors that require this institutional format. These international donors are therefore key players in the political battlefield of prostitution policies.

Abolitionists in the USA received more grants and financial resources during the administration of President Bush for funding campaigns, research projects, and lobbying (Watkins, 2018). Nongovernmental organizations have become important actors in anti-trafficking efforts and commonly overtake duties of state by providing social services for victims. One result of this increased activism against trafficking was the introduction of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000 in the USA, while another is the current introduction of the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA) and Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) passed under President Trump. However, the individuals involved in prostitution remain criminalized in most federal states, which shows the limited power of the movement.

In the 1980s and 1990s the sex worker movement became stronger, in line with the development of the gay and LGBTQ movement. The upsurge of both movements was also connected to the rising fear of HIV and AIDS, and the increase in effort to combat these diseases. Many activities and projects led by LGBTQ and sex worker movements have been and are now financed by the anti-HIV funds of national governments, the EU, and wealthy foundations (Ekman,

2013: 54–58). The first regional advocacy network of sex worker organizations in Europe was also based on an anti-HIV platform and funding: the TAMPEP International Foundation (European Network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion among Migrant Sex Workers) was launched in 1993 to support migrant sex workers in Western Europe to access health services and HIV/STI prevention programs, thus to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/STI transmission (ICRSE, 2015: 9).

Ekman points out that 'as a result of the sudden increase in HIV/AIDS funding, the story of the sex worker started gaining serious ground' (2013: 58), encouraging powerful international organizations to speak out in favor of the decriminalization of the sex industry. Large international organizations such as various UN bodies (UNAIDS, UN Women, etc.), the European Commission, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and Amnesty International (AI), are influential actors in international policy making, and are therefore important targets of both movements. The WHO, the ILO, and AI promote harm reduction, and, in line with SWR activists, support the decriminalization model. 'Harm reduction' is a strategy of SWR organizations that primarily focuses on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases; thus, in practice, it manifests most commonly in the distribution of condoms. Ekman (2013: 55–57) criticizes the fact that organizations like TAMPEP promote and practice harm reduction and thereby keep exploited, trafficked women 'safely' in prostitution. However, since human rights organizations that focus on LGBTQ, women's or migrants' rights have also joined the network, SWR organizations seem to have been successful at lobbying, as the increasing number of supporters and member organizations of ICRSE in recent years also shows. Such large international organizations are not only helpful in terms of supporting the lobbying and advocacy of these groups, but are also important providers of funding. The Open Society Foundation became one of the main funding organizations of the SWR movement, similarly to Mama Cash, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and the Red Umbrella Fund, which is especially dedicated to providing financial resources for SWR organizations.[2]

However, prostitution is still a strongly debated issue at the EU level and in its policymaking. The ICRSE prepared the document Declaration on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe, which is based on human rights treaties, and presented the Sex Workers Rights Manifesto to the European Parliament in 2005, in which the main demands of the movement were summarized. The latest publicly well-known discussion about prostitution policies was based on a draft resolution by MEP Mary Honeyball in 2014, which advocated for a resolution by the European Parliament that stresses that prostitution violates human dignity and should be tackled and not accepted. The resolution encourages states to introduce the Nordic model.[3] The ICRSE developed the 'Honeyball No' campaign as a reaction to this, which was signed by numerous organizations, including AIDS Action Europe, the

[2] https://www.redumbrellafund.org/nothing-us-without-us-reversing-power-dynamics-philanthropy/

[3] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20140221IPR36644/punish-the-client-not-the-prostitute

TAMPEP International Foundation, and some individuals (Lehmann et al., 2014). The non-binding resolution was finally adopted in 2014, but European Union institutions and politicians are still strongly divided between the two opposing approaches with their large lobby groups.

International networks have also been key players in the global sex worker movements with regard to influencing prostitution policies at the national level. The sex worker movement and lobbying has been very influential in Germany; the political activism of the latter resulted in the introduction of the liberal Prostitution Law in 2002, which legalizes prostitution as a form of work, as well as some forms of facilitating prostitution. The law was modified in 2016 when the Prostitution 'Schutz' Law was introduced, which includes some restrictions on how sex can be sold (i.e. compulsory condom use). In the Netherlands, prostitution was legalized in 2000 and liberal prostitution policies were introduced. In New Zealand a decriminalization model was introduced in 2003 based on NSWP's advocacy, which differs from the German and Dutch legislation in that it is less controlled and regulated by the state.

However, abolitionist and pro-sex work feminist movements have had different effects in terms of influencing prostitution policies in various European countries. In Sweden, the women's rights movement has been strong since the 1960s. This addresses prostitution as an issue of gender inequality and a form of oppression of women within the patriarchy. In 1999, at the same time as a law against sexual harassment, a prostitution law was introduced that criminalizes those who purchase sexual services and decriminalizes those who sell sex, while also earmarking funding for exit services. This kind of prostitution policy, known also as the Nordic model, has been influential in Europe since then, and similar legislation has been introduced in Norway, France, and Ireland.

4. Feminist struggles in Hungary

4.1 The infrastructure of political representation and the development of feminist struggles in Hungary

The development of social movements and political struggles is shaped by the locality of the movement and its position in the global economy. The integration of different localities of the world system strongly defines what political concepts like democracy, left, right, or neoliberal actually mean in particular socio-political contexts, and how these are linked to broader structural order (Gagyi, 2017: 75). Therefore, when thinking about the crisis of democracies, neoliberalism, and the effects of the global economic crisis, how these phenomena affect social groups and political projects depending on their position in the core, semi-periphery, or periphery it. As Samir Amin also highlighted, the accumulation of social-political rights in Western democracies has engendered dictatorships on the periphery that execute the demands of the world market (Amin, 1991, cited by Gagyi, 2017: 67).

The evolution of social struggles in Hungary is also strongly defined by the country's semi-peripheral position and its historical development. The

democratization processes in the 1990s also meant an increase in political participation and growth in the number of civil society organizations. The conception of 'civil society' was imported from the West, and its meaning also included criticism of state socialism (Barna et al., 2018: 252), thus it became a powerful and popular concept in the 1990s. While in 1995 there were approximately 43,000 civic groups registered in Hungary (ca. 40 of them were explicitly women's groups), their number had grown to 53,000 by 2001 (Fábián 2009: 38, based on data from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office). NGOs in the 1990s were highly unstable because they overwhelmingly relied on international funds such as those from the Open Society Institute, which gave financial support to various cultural, educational, and human rights initiatives, including women's and domestic violence shelter groups (Open Society Institute, 2002, cited by Fábián, 2009: 37). This changed in the 2000s when forms of financial support radically changed, and NGOs started to fluctuate less dramatically since they became reliant primarily on state support instead of private funding (Fábián, 2009: 38).

Funding and institutionalization have a great impact on the infrastructure of political representation and on who can represent specific causes, and how. Gagyi and Pulay (2017) argued civil society organizations in Romania and Hungary mainly include middle-class people who aim to represent marginalized groups and thereby attempt to build symbolic capital. The tendency for mainly middle-class people to be the acknowledged spokespersons of marginalized groups is also defined by the socio-economic transformation after state socialism. Gagyi (2018) interprets the fight for legitimacy and symbolic capital as a strategy of intellectuals in post-socialist countries to secure their shrinking social status in neoliberal socio-economic transformation on the semi-periphery.

Due to the globalization of the feminist movement since the 1980s, US feminist groups have strongly influenced not only the infrastructure of political representation, but also the content of women's issues in other regions. Global hierarchies in knowledge production also play a role in how ideas and political aims 'travel,' and thus in how feminist movements in core countries impact feminisms on the semi-periphery and periphery through their 'epistemic dominance' (Gagyi, 2017) and through concrete material dependencies. As Watkins (2018: 38) explains, '[c]ulturally, international feminist influence generally flowed from core to peripheries, but it was adapted, appropriated and sometimes bowdlerized along the way'. She shows that US mainstream feminism became hegemonic globally through its dominant role in the international Women's Congresses in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Consequently, in the 1990s a more neoliberalism-conformable agenda was transmitted to feminists on a global scale which ignored the structural and political differences which result from the semi-peripheral position of countries in the global accumulation regime (Barna et al., 2018). The dependence on such international donors who promote legal advocacy of women's rights and fighting against discrimination left less space for a more radical, system-critical movement.

This also strongly impacted the development of Hungarian feminism after state socialism. 'The material dependency on the core and symbolic subordination

defined the inner structure and epistemological framework of the East-Central-European and Hungarian feminism' (Barna et al., 2018: 252). In the 1990s, feminist activists and 'educators' from the USA and Western Europe came to Hungary to teach members of the feminist groups (Barna et al., 2018: 252). Between the 1990s and 2000s, women's groups increasingly cooperated with various international organizations, and 'women's activism [...] changed from broad themes and loose organizations to small, often professionalized, and, most noticeably, globally interconnected groups frequently focused on a single or narrow set of issues' (Fábián, 2009: 1).

Financial dependency and the epistemic influence of international donors initiated NGO-ization within the feminist landscape in other countries in East-Central Europe as well. '[...] NGO-ization should be seen not just as a trend towards [the] professionalization and institutionalization of social action, which changes [the] organizational logic of civil society groups, but as a complex process which stems from and results in profound de-politicization of civic and social activism' (Roy, 2014, cited by Korolczuk, 2016: 34). Dependency on donors limits the capability of NGOs to make political claims and also resist neoliberal market logic. The project-based operation of NGOs also reduces their flexibility in relation to reacting to urgent political issues and their potential to offer more system-critical projects and activities. However, the cooptation of NGOs is not equivalent to simple adaptation to states' or international donors' interests, but there is space for NGO representatives and activists to reflect on and critically engage with these tendencies (Ana, 2018). 'On the one hand, they develop their own internal critique of hegemonic "Western" feminism; and on the other, they attempt to formulate their own geographically, historically, and culturally grounded and diverse feminist concerns and strategies' (Fábián, 2009: 78). While the effects of the active engagement of international donors and Western organizations in the Hungarian feminist scene was critically questioned in the 1990s (Adamik et al., 1996), in the 2000s such reflective, critical voices rarely appeared in the debate (Barna et al., 2018: 254).

In the first years of its existence, the primary goal of progressive grassroots women's activism was to lobby against the criminalization of abortion. Later, after Hungary's accession to the EU in 2004, women's groups used the political moment to advocate for the criminalization of domestic violence (Fábián, 2009). In the early 1990s, several feminist organizations were established. The Feminist Network was one of the most important of these. Its main aims were to encourage the political representation of women and gender equality, to strengthen consciousness about women's issues in Hungarian society, and to fight violence against women. One of their first projects was a campaign against the tightening of the abortion law (Antoni, 2015). Another important, newly established feminist grassroots organization was MONA (Hungarian Women's Association), which was founded in 1992 and was originally initiated to support women after state socialism. Its activities included advocacy work, service provision (including training and legal

aid), and conducting research into women's issues.[4] NaNE Women's Rights Association was established in 1994 and is still one of the most important feminist NGOs in Hungary. Its main goal is to fight violence against women and children on various levels. NANE provides services to victims, but the organization is also engaged in fighting violence against women on a community and broader social level by providing training, organizing campaigns, lobbying, and writing policy recommendations.

The challenges, successes and internal conflicts of the feminist landscape are connected to the specific political environment in which these groups need to negotiate, which is shaped by the country's socio-economic position and the crisis of global accumulation processes. After the economic crisis of 2009 in East-Central Europe, it was mainly right-wing forces that gained political power and sought to question Western liberal hegemony (Barna et al., 2018: 255). The anti-genderism sentiments that emerged at this time were also a reaction to this hegemony. Grzebalska, Kováts and Pető (2017) describe anti-genderism as a form of symbolic glue, since it is used by populist politicians, and also the right-wing Hungarian government, to 'mobilize against (neo)liberal democracy.' They interpret it as a reaction to the evolution of a politics of recognition in feminism; and while there is intense debate about the meaning of gender among 'progressive' actors, in the right-wing narrative gender has become associated with the cultural colonization of the West (Korolczuk and Graff, 2018: 797–798, cited by Feró, 2019: 169). The anti-gender movement on the populist right in Hungary responds to an extreme understanding of gender as being 'independent of bodily reality; that is, the gender one identifies with' (Kováts, 2019a: 64). It is also a reaction to the Hungarian liberal media discourse on gender-related issues, which is influenced by a politics of recognition and mostly interprets gender as an identity-based, not a structural category (Kováts, 2019b).

Thus, anti-gender ideology affects the potential and work of women's groups and feminist activism in Hungary by framing all women's issues as 'gender' issues, and interpreting them as liberal ideological constructions. This tendency has become especially manifest, for example, in the Hungarian government's non-ratification of the Istanbul convention because of its association with 'gender ideology.' This crucially important political case highlights what obstacles feminist organizations need to tackle when addressing violence against women and other important causes in their political advocacy.

4.2 Abolitionist and SWR activism in Hungary

Women's groups in the 1990s were already addressing the harm in prostitution from an abolitionist point of view. The journal of the Feminist Network, *Nőszemély*, published various articles about prostitution, including an open letter by Mária Adamik to the mayor of Budapest in which she opposed the legalization of prostitution and problematized the male demand for sexual services (Adamik,

[4] https://nokert.hu/sites/default/files/csatolmanyok/noszemely_3_1993_aprilis_3._szam_0.pdf

1996). Adamik's letter addressed the mayor's support for the government's intention of withdrawing from the New York Convention and legalizing the sex industry. Despite the opposition of feminist activists, a new prostitution law was introduced in 1999 in Hungary that followed a legalization model and prescribed that municipalities should designate zones where street-based prostitution is legal.

The introduction of the new law was followed by an increase in the advocacy work of abolitionist feminist activists. The Prostitution-free Hungary movement was initiated in 2003 by nine private persons and involved, besides various public statements and publications criticizing the new law, launching a public campaign in 2006 called 'Keresd a férfit!' (Look for the man!). Members called on political decision makers and the Hungarian parliament to change the law, strongly criticizing the male demand that drives commercial sex, and claiming that the new law primarily suited the interests of the (male) political and economic elite.[5] They further suggested that the law was initiated in support of the organized criminal groups that manage the prostitution scene in Budapest, which were also closely related to this elite. They advocated the introduction of the Swedish model, which criminalizes the purchase of sexual services.[6]

The change in the law and the strong advocacy work of Hungarian feminist organizations initiated active public discourse around the issue of prostitution. Abolitionist feminist organizations were not only active in advocacy work, targeting decision makers, but contributed to research on prostitution and human trafficking and provided services for victims. MONA has actively collaborated in projects with feminist organizations fighting against prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Hungary and has published reports containing legal and social analyses of commercial sexual exploitation and victim assistance (Betlen et al., 2010; Betlen, 2013). NANE is also committed to the abolitionist approach and has been engaged in providing assistance to victims of prostitution and trafficking.

The sex workers' rights movement is represented by much fewer organizations in Hungarian civil society. The most important actor advocating for sex workers' rights is SZEXE (Szexmunkások Érdekvédelmi Egyesülete, the Association of Hungarian Sex Workers), which was established in 2003. Their activities include research projects, creating publications, providing social services for Hungarian sex workers, various advocacy activities, and holding public events. Their main aim is the decriminalization of sex work. In Hungary, therefore, they mainly advocate for the designation of so-called tolerance zones by municipalities, which has largely not taken place despite the prostitution law of 1999. SZEXE is a member of several international organizations, such as the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP), SWAN, and ICRSE; and in Hungary they cooperate with liberal NGOs such as the Civil Liberty Union, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the Hungarian Civil Aids Forum, and LGBT organizations such as Transvanilla. In addition to SZEXE, there are a few other NGO representatives active in the field of

[5] https://nlc.hu/forum/?fid=441&topicid=79901&bw=1&page=1&step=1
[6] https://cdn.atria.nl/epublications/fragen/prostitution-free-hungary.pdf

HIV prevention, human rights, and LGBTQI issues who advocate for the decriminalization of sex work.

4.3 The role of funding in shaping advocacy concerning prostitution and sex work in Hungary

All organizations engaged in advocacy and service provision related to prostitution and sex work operate in a primarily project-based way, therefore they rely on donors. Donors include private foundations, states, and suprastate actors, like the EU and international organizations. All these actors are targeted by international advocacy networks of global abolitionist and SWR organizations, as I have highlighted before. Therefore, the international battlefield of these networks impacts the survival, range of activities, and effectiveness of local Hungarian organizations.

Matolcsi (2006) analyzed the effects of international discourses on trafficking for sexual exploitation on the work of Hungarian NGOs and highlighted that the relevant actors' stances on prostitution have a great impact on what funds are available to them. Funds for anti-trafficking activities, which include those for victim assistance and awareness raising, are important sources for organizations working on prostitution. While some funds were available to organizations regardless of their stance on prostitution, others clearly targeted NGOs that represented the donor's values. The US government, for example, explicitly supported abolitionist aims and was one of NANE's important donors for several years (Matolcsi, 2006). At the same time, the EU had a rather ambiguous position – as I have highlighted before – and provided funding both to SZEXE and NANE. As a result of the successful international advocacy work of the SWR network, wealthy international foundations like the Open Society Foundations[7] and Mama Cash increasingly took the side of decriminalization. SZEXE has been also a beneficiary[8] of this tendency.

The Hungarian state has also been an important actor, not only in terms of legislation, but also concerning funding. As mentioned before, in the 2000s Hungarian NGOs increasingly relied on state funds that provided them with more stability. However, in the specific field of prostitution and trafficking the state was rather absent, and mostly ignored the increasingly relevant issue – as members of the relevant NGOs reported, according to Matolcsi. While abolitionist activists attributed the lack of funding to the state's opposing views about prostitution, SZEXE's relation to the government was also reported to be poor (Matolcsi, 2006: 40). While it cannot be confirmed why the different governments did not provide funding for anti-trafficking- and prostitution-related activities, their ignoring the issue suggests that the state simply did not perceive prostituted women and victims of trafficking as a social group in need of support.

[7] https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org
[8] https://www.mamacash.org/en/who-we-are

4.4 Goals of political representation and advocacy in the Hungarian prostitution debate

While both international abolitionist and SWR movements have a significant impact on Hungarian organizations and activism through their financial and ideological connections, the local political context and the semi-peripheral position of Hungary also define the development and potential for political representation. Hungarian debates partly react to international developments and political issues, and partly target issues in the local context that directly affect Hungarian women in prostitution.

The change of law in 1999 was a highly important political event that was followed by an increase in the advocacy work of abolitionist organizations. However, it cannot be simply interpreted as the state taking the side of the SWR movement, because in practice people involved in prostitution are largely criminalized, which contradicts both sides' political aims. Therefore, the primary advocacy activity of SZEXE targets police harassment and fights for the designation of tolerance zones by municipalities, thus for the implementation of the regulation of 1999. Abolitionists, on the other hand, still advocate for the introduction of the Swedish model and draw attention to the current regulation's non-compliance with the New York Convention; at the same time, they also push for better victim protection. While Hungarian state actors, including the government and also municipalities generally, have not seemed to be responsive to any of these political claims, recently published legal changes and a new national strategy suggest a shift in support for the political causes of abolitionist feminist organizations, since they include more support for victims of trafficking and measures for preventing child prostitution and trafficking.[9]

4.4.1 Debate about Amnesty International's initiative regarding the decriminalization of sex work

The stance on prostitution of important international organizations has also been widely discussed by the relevant organizations in Hungary. However, their activities in this regard are less relevant in terms of pressuring international actors directly, while their statements and analyses rather serve to shape public discourse in Hungary.

In 2015 a debate evolved on the blog *Kettős Mérce* around an Amnesty International (AI) initiative promoting the total decriminalization of prostitution, which reflected the international development of the sex worker movement in terms of AI becoming an important ally. This decision of Amnesty International was strongly debated and criticized by abolitionists internationally, but it also provoked statements within the Hungarian scene. While Sárosi (2015) and Fedorkó

[9] The protocol of the meeting on the new national strategy (2020-2023) is available here: https://www.parlament.hu/documents/10181/87979/NR20200309_elfogadott.pdf/c7e50997-9b8b-dcfc-6273-9587f6f8669b?version=1.0&t=1583760863558&download=true

(2015) welcomed the initiative as it served to uphold the rights of sex workers, members of abolitionist NGOs like NANE and Patent strongly criticized it (Dés, 2015; Nógrádi, 2015).

The blog posts were very much in line with the approaches of international SWR and abolitionist activists and scholars, with some additional reflections on the Hungarian situation, which also showed the embeddedness of both organizations in international SWR or abolitionist networks. The debate was less concerned with identifying what this AI initiative means for Hungarian women in prostitution/sex work, but served rather to introduce the related developments and debate from their perspective to the Hungarian leftist scene – the primary readers of *Kettős Mérce*. Therefore, the political work of these organizations in this case focused primarily on informing and shaping Hungarian public discourse and the representation of prostitution and sex work, but not on effectively influencing political decision making.

4.4.2 Discourse about political representation in prostitution/sex work in Hungary

The issue of political representation and who may be considered a legitimate spokesperson in relation to prostitution was an important element of the debate. While SWR activists put forward arguments based on the 'nothing about us without us' principle, their legitimacy was strongly questioned by abolitionist feminists. Nógrádi (2015) says it is 'seriously debated whether sex worker alliances are legitimate representatives of prostitutes' interests. In these organizations there are commonly pimps, who are former prostitutes, or simply pimps, and persons exploiting prostitutes.' She also addressed the fact that while middle-class, educated women are often members of these organizations, it is actually marginalized, poor women who are not members of, nor are represented by these networks who overwhelmingly work in prostitution. Furthermore, she shared her suspicion about the industry and the donors behind it who welcome these organizations and legitimize their work, as the activity of the latter merges the interest of pimps and the women involved in prostitution in the discourse. Her argumentation strongly reflects the analysis of the UK-based abolitionist activist and public intellectual Julie Bindel, who has also addressed the involvement of pimps in SWR (Bindel, 2017). While the actual existence of personal and financial relations between SWR activists and the pimps who exploit women in prostitution have not been proven, members of feminist organizations commonly claim that SZEXE is involved in 'pimping' (see also Matolcsi, 2006).

5. Conclusions

Any explanation of what difficulties the abolitionist feminist/sex workers' rights movement face, and what defines their achievements must be manifold. In this article I have highlighted the evolution of these social movements in the USA, Western Europe, and in Hungary. The development of feminist movements is defined by the rise of global neoliberalism, which incorporated the originally

radical movements of the 1960s in the USA. At the same time, this neoliberalism-conforming feminism became highly influential on a global scale, shaping feminist organizing after the era of state socialism in Hungary through financial donations and epistemic dominance. It also affected what themes and issues local feminist organizations addressed, although they also focused on local political processes.

Concerning the field of prostitution, the sex workers' rights and the abolitionist movements have been variously successful at influencing political actors and building alliances internationally. The SWR movement has successfully built on neoliberal ideas of freedom, choice, and consent, and has obtained increasing political support from international organizations such as the ILO and AI. At the same time, the EU is still strongly divided regarding this question, and various EU member states have introduced the Swedish model, which is propagated by abolitionist feminists.

The powerful networks, donors, and alliances of abolitionist and SWR organizations also have a strong influence in Hungary. Organizations on both sides are active in terms of service provision for victims of prostitution and trafficking/sex workers. Their advocacy work on the national level primarily involves changes in, or the implementation of, prostitution-related policies, although debates about prostitution and sex work have been strongly marginalized in the Hungarian political and public discourse. Feminist and SWR organizations are actively raising awareness about the issues by highlighting their perspective about such topics, and also report about internationally relevant events in this field, such as the AI initiative of 2015.

The current political context of the Orbán regime and its anti-gender policies generally impacts how gender equality and women's issues can be represented in Hungary. While the recent legal changes concerning human trafficking may be a sign of a more sensitive state response to victims of trafficking and prostitution, the political landscape suggests that feminist activism still faces a variety of challenges.

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Book Review

Subotić, Jelena (2019) Yellow Star, Red Star. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 264 pages.

Jelena Subotić's Yellow Star, Red Star is an important book for all those who want to understand the changing memory narratives, politics, and strategies of the East-European Holocaust after the regime changes of the 1990s. There are indeed similarities among the forms of Holocaust memory characteristic of this region alone, typical patterns that repeat uniformly. With similar trends in the history and fate of the European countries stuck between the East and the West, it follows that their remembrance strategies show parallels.

Subotić has written about the narratives of the Holocaust and manipulation of memory in the context of the so-called 'post-communist' countries of Eastern Europe. Analogous events occurred in the East-European countries occupied by the Soviet Union after the collapse of the regime. We can name the desire to join the European Union and NATO among them, as well as the transformations of historical memory and forgetting. The construction of Holocaust remembrance, memory politics and strategies took completely different courses in the western world, in Israel and in the Soviet Union, or the East European, Balkan and Baltic countries belonging to its sphere of interests.

The book consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 presents the theoretical argument about state response to various ontological insecurities it faces in the aftermath of a great political transformation – the end of communism – and links this framework to the issue of political memory and Holocaust remembrance. The chapter introduces the notion of memory appropriation and describes various strategies of the post-communist states changing the European Union's approach to the memory of the Holocaust. Chapters 2 and 3 explore Holocaust remembrance in the former Yugoslavia by focusing on the two deeply interlinked narratives in Serbia and Croatia. Serbia's Holocaust remembrance narrative is centered on Croatia's mass murder of ethnic Serbs. Chapter 4 gives an overview of the Holocaust in the Baltic states and explains the post-communist strategies of 'double genocide' which conflates the Holocaust and the Soviet occupation.

Subotić presents her research through illustrative examples, not ignoring her personal involvement either. She synthesizes theories and reframes the ideological backgrounds to post-regime-change Holocaust narratives. The main focus of her writing is to understand whose interests are served in post-communist countries by the trivialization, relativization and comparison of the Holocaust with the crimes of communism. What are the common traits to be observed in the nationalist, conservative, and anti-communist Holocaust narratives of Eastern Europe? Well known and less known examples of Holocaust relativization in the region demonstrate the points made, with distorting remembrance-policy issues in Serbia and Croatia discussed predominantly, grounded in personal experience.

Examples form the Baltics are also presented. Put simply, the new relativizing narrative is manipulative in presenting the crimes of the communist regime as greater, or at least of equal significance to the horrors committed during the Holocaust. This allows the criminal role of followers of the nationalist and conservative ideologies in the Holocaust to be ejected from the core of the discourse. Attention is diverted from the Holocaust onto the crimes of communism.

In post-communist countries, prior to the change of regimes all that could be spoken of were the 'victims of fascism' and the 'communist resistance', the word Jew was painstakingly avoided. The manipulation of the memory of the Holocaust, its distorted exploitation for various purposes continues into our day.

Jelena Subotić is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at Georgia State University working on international relations, memory politics, human rights, international ethics, especially as an expert analyst of the situation in the Western Balkans. She was a CNN and BBC expert on the Yugoslav wars. In her book she treats the questions of cultural appropriation, that is, the expropriation of memory, within the discourse of the social sciences. The concept denotes how various cultural and social symbols, memories, and their representations are expropriated for some hoped-for political or other gains, a better position in terms of social status. In the context of this book, appropriation does not signify borrowing, or even expropriation of a narrative, but rather the manipulation, distortion of memory, its transformation to meet personal interests.

Not only does Subotić acknowledge being personally affected by her subject but she weaves her family history into the work that is much to the advantage of the book. The text does not turn too intimate or bring about too much pathos with the conjuring of the personal family history. The author's motivations can be sensed from the beginning, as they provide a deep stratum within the book that offers relevant answers to real questions in place of dry scientific pretentions. At the same time, she builds on research, facts, and the impact of the book comes from the alloy of her evidence-based approach with her personal family history. Her family history is very complex, and this complexity characterizes the whole book. She writes about the conflicting personality of her grandfather who collaborated with the Nazis to a certain degree, but also rescued lives. He was the captain of the Belgrade Police during Nazi occupation. The Gestapo tortured him, but after Tito's rise to power during communism he was also imprisoned and tortured. In fact, Subotić came to understand who her grandfather really was while working on the book. She also completes the reconstruction of her traumas and memories in the course of writing it. She shows by these means too that the subject has an affect to this day. All that occurred seven or eight decades ago has still not been processed or uncovered. She also took a good deal of her father's traumas on, after he survived a Croatian Ustasha concentration camp. Though her grandfather saved many communists, the family did not sympathize with the Tito regime. It is one of the great virtues of the volume that it does not simplify the human fates scarred by the cataclysms of history. A victim often became a persecutor, and vice versa even in these times.

The book also strives to give a sense of the scientific theoretical background of memory politics by analyzing the memorial sites and policies of three larger geographical regions. The most essential theoretical background to her book comes from Michael Rothberg's competitive memory theory (Rothberg, 2009), as well as Jeffrey Alexander's analysis of the usually insensitive attitude of traumatized social groups to the traumas of others (Alexander et al., 2004). Culturally traumatized groups are often unable to acknowledge another likewise traumatized group, and moreover shift responsibility for it to others. The following three main areas or case studies are the focus of her study: Serbia, Croatia, and Lithuania with of course, Vilnius at its heart. She also mentions the curious memory politics link between Hungary and Poland. Each of her examples demonstrates how the history of the Holocaust is used, instrumentalized for political purposes, in contradiction to the experiences of the survivors and Jewish victims. She cites examples of symbolic, or sometimes markedly direct manifestations that offend the memory of victims or are insensitive and untrue to them. The Jewish victims were not memorialized in Tito's Yugoslavia, or in any of the other East European communist countries. The ethnic or religious background of the partisans, their origins were irrelevant to them. Only the anti-fascist heroes were glorified.

The book also presents the brutality of the holocaust as case studies from Croatia, Serbia, and Lithuania.

The deportation of Jews began in September 1941, after the German and Italian occupation of the Yugoslav Kingdom, and its subdivision with the establishment of the Independent Croatian State. 70 concentration, extermination and transit camps were built across the territory of the country. The Jews collected here were transported to Auschwitz. One of the most brutal camps run by the Croatians was the Sisak children's camp, where unaccompanied children were starved to death and raped.

In 1941, the Germans decided to establish the 'Semlin Judenlager' in Serbia, on the bank of the River Sava. It was a forced labor camp at first, but from 8 October they took women and children there as well. By May 1942 the Serbian Jews had all been wiped out. Survivors were mainly partisans, and also a few people in hiding. The extermination of Serbian Jews was the first modern, methodical system set up to murder in Europe. The first systematic, industrial scale genocide took place in Belgrade. Only in July of 2014 did they decide, on the proposal of the local Jewish Congregation, to make the 10th of May a Holocaust Memorial Day, as it was on this day in 1942 that the last groups of Jewish women and children were transported from Staro Sajmište in gas trucks. The captives of the Sajmište camp were commanded to get in the truck in 1942, then to leave for the forest at the other end of the city. This was one of the first experiments at killing Jews by diverting the fumes from the exhausts into the sealed back of the truck, with calculations even detailing how much time was needed for them to suffocate. The people of Belgrade looked the other way, but everyone knew what was happening. Subotić was shocked that an untended urban space had come about on the site of the genocide: including car mechanics bodegas, a garbage

dump, squares overgrown with weed. It illustrates perfectly how grotesquely the memory of the innocent people murdered there is kept, and the upsetting injustice of it, which is typical of the whole post-communist region to this day. The first modern systematic race-based human massacre of Europe may have happened under the eyes of the citizens of Belgrade. Subotić relates Hungarian and Polish examples as well, where the lack of memorial places or their warped form can be observed. She also analyzes the representations made by politicians, museums, intellectuals, and artists. An example of the latter is the Hungarian prime minister's cynical inclusion of Horthy among the great statesmen. These are the same mechanisms, distorted memory politics with the purpose of political gain.

Subotić discusses the Lithuanian situation in depth. She introduces a vast array of historical material, embracing the Holocaust history of Lithuania and Vilnius all the way up to the current memory politics of Holocaust representation. The comprehensive, serious research has led to a successful intricate analysis of the Lithuanian situation. This is one of the most thorough, most complex parts of the volume. The author gives an illustrative historical analysis of the historical memory of the Holocaust in Vilnius, or Vilna in Hebrew-Yiddish usage. Jewish community life was huge in Lithuania. Vilnius was traditionally compared to Jerusalem in Jewish folklore, as the Orthodox Jewish community living in this region before the Holocaust had achieved extraordinary results in religious scholarship. Between the two World Wars, Lithuania had been an independent country, though Vilnius belonged to Poland. However, in 1940 the three Baltic countries became parts of the Soviet sphere of interest. The Germans overran the Jewish population of Vilnius numbering 60 thousand in 1941. The Lithuanian police began to arrest Jews immediately, to be summarily massacred in the nearby Ponary forest by machine guns. Soon, nearly 20 thousand persons had been murdered by gunfire, and buried in mass graves by Lithuanians encouraged by Germans. Of the approximately 250 thousand Jews that lived in Lithuania, over 90 per cent fell victim to the Holocaust. The Lithuanian Jewish community currently numbers around 3,500 persons. Since gaining independence, every government of Lithuania has preferred to play down the horrors perpetrated by the local collaborators of the Nazis. They have also tried to obscure the fact that every strata of society participated in the extermination of the Jews. It is no coincidence then, that proportionally, the Lithuanian Holocaust felled the most victims, a fact never noted in remembrances. A row of Lithuanian governments has put an equal-to-sign between communist and Nazi crimes, trying to blur the line between totalitarian regimes. It is fully apparent that successive Lithuanian governments have not given up on rewriting the history of the Lithuanian Holocaust. In her detailed analysis, Subotić goes through the symbolic narratives of the more important memorial places, memorials and museums one-by-one, plus the reader is offered a broad range of factual information. The book concludes that apart from acknowledging the explicit fact of the Jews having been murdered, it is not accepted that Jewish life and culture could be an integral part of Lithuanian identity. Moreover, Lithuanians do not accept their own culpability in the Holocaust. They shift all responsibility to the Nazis. The Holocaust is not a part of

the Lithuanian national identity and image. The way they construe their identity, their own victimhood at the hands of the Soviets is placed at the forefront and in the center.

Similar processes are unfolding in the rest of the post-communist countries. Under the influence of the European Union, and in an attempt to meet the conditions required for accession, the official remembrance of the Holocaust is merely a sham. The memory politics of the post-communist countries did not come about organically, but under duress from the European Union. It serves not to present the horror of the Holocaust, but rather to turn it into a tourist attraction. There is more of an effort by these countries to identify with their own suffering under Soviet rule and present the Holocaust as an illustration of their own traumas. It is not a matter of Holocaust denial, just of its utilization to emphasize their own suffering.

It remains a question whether the effect the European Union had on Eastern Europe was one way, or if Eastern Europe has also had an effect on the EU? The question may be raised, has East European memory politics succeeded in convincing Western Europe that communism and Nazism were similarly horrible regimes? According to Subotić, equating the two totalitarian regimes represents an ideological struggle on the part of post-communist nations to trivialize their role in the Holocaust. For example, the children's camp established by the above mentioned Croatian Ustasha is a symbol of the memory politics chosen by independent Croatia as it makes its way into the EU, memorializing their brutal Nazi collaborator regime. The response in Subotić's point of view is, in fact, a lack of coming to terms, of forgetting, a rejection of memory-solidarity.

Subotić tries to understand her own traumas on an individual and collective level but does not stop there. The work's deeper meaning is revealed within its ethical and moral subtext. She tries to process the sufferings and traumas of individuals, various social groups, and societies or nations. So, through her analysis we can come closer to an understanding and acceptance of our own and others' sufferings. In this book she proposes that if we do not accept each other, do not confront and understand each other's crimes and traumas, we will only continue to suffer. For if we only shift blame, distort, and perhaps expropriate our stories, there will be no understanding or resolution born of it, and our traumas will live on. Acceptance of our own traumas and those of others is Subotić's ethical message. This is the context in which all that the book has to say gains meaning. Yellow Star, Red Star is a scientifically well-grounded work recommended as a seminal volume, a must read for those with an interest in Serbian, Croatian, and Lithuanian history. It is a systematic, well-structured reading on the strategies and narrative of post-communist regimes for their Holocaust memory politics.

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Máté Zombory is sociologist and associate professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, ELTE. He is author of *Maps of Remembrance: Space, Belonging, and the Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe* (2012) and *Traumatársadalom. Az emlékezetpolitika történeti-szociológiai kritikája* (2019). His research interests include victimhood competition in European memory politics, the role of the Cold War in the history of memory, early post-war Holocaust documentation, the memory culture of antifascist humanism, and the anticommunism of the currently predominant memory regime in European politics.