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From oral testimony to deposition. Two modalities for assumption the past

In actual Romanian community, as in all former communist communities, there are lots of debates regarding the communist past, not only to reveal it but also to assume, even if one supposes the other. The importance of this assuming reveals significances that give other direction to all discourses about the communist past.

On these conditions oral history has a kind of „publicity” that goes in front of the academic part of historical discourses, becoming political, ethical in the process of assuming the communist past. Oral testimony as present deposition in a justicial process produces tensions between historians of present time and „memory of pain”.

The associations history-justice and testimony-deposition can produce a „successful assumption of the past”, as P. Ricoeur stated, when negation and also the feeling of trust in new rules could permit a fruitful separation from the past. Justice as negation and history as assumption of the past are absolutely necessary.

The duty of testify is the highest and most complete form of assumption as impartation, reconciliation, expiation.

Ethics and Memory

What kind of memory do the younger generations need to understand the current history in Romania? It is obvious that for the Internet generation, emotional memory would make little sense. Informational memory, however, would appeal to them, and, since it could be invested with ethical, moral overtones, it could be deployed for therapeutically rather than justifier purposes. Last but not least, perhaps a genuinely true memory to recommend to the younger generations is resistance memory, which could become a support for the ethical memory. This is not a mechanism or strategy of *captatio benevolentiae*; young generations, not only in Romania but all across Eastern Europe, need such a clue and a key to understanding the recent history of their countries.

Memoria și istoria orală Experiența Centrului KARTA din Polonia

Există mai multe modalități prin care putem avea acces la trecut sau ni-l putem apropia. Metoda cea mai legitimată este cea academică, împreună cu toate tehnicile specifice prin care narațiunile istorice devin științifice.

Dar există și o altă metodă de a apropia trecutul recent de prezent. Este vorba despre istoria orală. Lucrarea noastră își propune să indice modalități de a înțelege că practicarea istoriei orale ca știință intersectează benefic latura academică a istoriei și a științelor sociale, prin apelul la tehnica interviului. Interviurile nu sunt doar metode de a reconstitui evenimente externe, ci și mărturii de ordin personal, reconstruiri ale irepetabilului, ale experiențelor individuale unice. Astfel, în locul unui demers de a afla „adevărul” despre trecut, istoricii oraliști se concentrează înspre ce își amintesc intervievații și mai ales cum se face apel la memorie în scopul reconstruirii propriului trecut. Sunt premisele de la care se pleacă în cercetările individuale și proiectele de cercetare ale Centrului Karta din Polonia

Life-story as a method for reconstruction the Self

Every life-story includes a history of childhood, fascinating for the listener. Anytime when we are confronted with the life-story of a person, we are at the point to interrogate ourselves. So, the first step to understand ourselves and the Other is to know more about others' childhood.

The goal of the research was studying the patterns of education in the families of Banat, during three generations. The first one includes subjects born during interwar, the second belongs to 50's and the third to 70's and 80's. Thus, it has to be mentioned the eclecticism of the groups.

Three conclusions have to be drawn from the research: for the first generation, an important pattern is the intercultural education; the children were encouraged to learn foreign languages. Interviews with the second generation put to light a „double” strategy in education: for instance, within the family they listen forbidden radio broadcasts (as „Europa Liberă”), but in the same time, children were forced to hide this activity and to deny it. As for the third generation, it is evident that grandparents had the most important part in educating children, being in most of the cases a kind of substitute for the parents. These are only few examples regarding models of educating children in the families of Banat.

Memory of fear and sufference in the camp. Testimonies of the Shoah survivors

Fear was regarded as a complex and paradoxical feeling not only by specialists in medical sciences but also by specialists in social sciences.

This study aims to analyse aspects of fear in the testimonies of the Shoah survivors. It is about *common* fear (generated by the threat and danger) and also about *pathological* fear (generated by the post-traumatic stress).

The research is based on some testimonies of the survivors of the Nazi camp: Edith Fülöp, Eva Kondás, Iudith Varodi, Marta și Robert Marmor. Our study is structured on four sections: „The feeling of insecurity and fear before deportation”, „Sufference, fear and dehumanizing”, „Hope and surviving”, „The consequences of the camp: trauma of survival”.

As a conclusion, it is not exaggerated to state that the life of the survivors remains a permanent confrontation to one's own past and the survival itself becomes sometimes a real trauma.

1945 in Maramureș: The memory of place between history and narration

This oral history study continues to *tell* a story told by the old inhabitants of a village nearby the border to Ukraine. According to this story, after their returning from deportation, in 1945, a group of jews were killed by „bandits” nearby the border, in a place named Copilașu. As a revenge, the jews from Sighetu Marmăției promised to kill a 250 local Ukrainians for every jew killed before. This statement determined the intervention of Militia.

According to the facts, some questions are still unsolved: Who were the „bandits”? How were the jews gathered in the village? How did they know they were shot in Copilașu? Etc. Anyway, it was a very difficult period of time according to the border and to the regime and the story needs to be verified and researched for the present answers are not sufficient. Still, it *is* a testimony about the oppression nearby the border in the N-W part of Romania.

The combatants' vocabulary in the war of Afghanistan (1979-1989) between communication and identity

During the process of communication between the Soviet combatants it was used a conventional language, called *afghan lexicon*. This military idiom generated syncretisms: terms from army, literature, jail, Afghan words were mixed to specific mother tongue, generating an alternative language naming a symbolic reality known only by the combatants. Other forms of language, even the pejorative one coexisted.

Russian language, the main mean of communication in the Soviet army was doubled by the mother tongues of the combatants. Thus, a universe of cancellation was built up. Even the process of studying the native language of the antagonists occurred in specific situations.

Ion Xenofontov

Miths and symbols in collective memory regarding resistance against communism

Regarding this theme we used interviews with witnesses and adherents to the groups against communism formed nearby Huedin: „Capota-Dejeu”, „Teodor Şuşman”, „Cross and Sword” located in the the archive of the Oral History Institute of Cluj-Napoca.

The temptation for studying miths and symbols is justified by their o ccuring i n history, as suring c ontinuity and a r ich social experience.

This theme becomes necessary i n order to be aware o f t he threat o f e stablishing false m yths i nto historiography i n order to give the impression of resistance even where it was no resistance at all. The miths of Hero, Savior and American Savior are some of the most a ppealed m yths i n historiography a nd a lso t he symbols of mountain, f orest as sacred s paces a re u sually r ecalled i n t he testimonies.

**City celebration in collective memory.
The celebration of the Revolution of Blaj (1900-2000)**

Our study tries to analyze the space of Blaj as an intersection of epochs and mentalities, having in mind the moment of 1848. The first significance of Blaj is altered by the communist festivism, instead of the joy, happiness and true patriotism before communist regime.

The interviewers recalled the atmosphere of patriotic feelings before communism period and, sadly, also the false sentiments after communists *took away* the celebration.

The Image of Majority in the Collective Memory of the Czechs from Banat. Dimensions of Cohabitation

Our aim is to reveal the modalities of referring to the *Other*, the Romanian, from the local Czechs („pemi” in Banat county) point of view, taking into consideration multiple perspectives: way of living, language, symbols, marriage, music etc. We also tried to answer to a difficult question: are there some personal opinions regarding the Romanians or some patterns applied in the family and community regarding the majority of the population, the Romanians? Our research states that there is rather a “moving portrait” according to generation, gender, habitat, projects, life stories etc.

Qualifications “good”/“bad”, “diligent”/“lazy”, “civilized”/“rude” although “condemned” by rural laws (that impose only description not evaluations) are present in the discourses we were confronted with.

Our research aimed to identify the type of the discourse that reconstructs the image of the Romanian: the story-teller has a fluency or needs moments to “choose” words, he/she feels happy to tell the story or he/she hesitates, the memories are “selected” or not etc. The “Other” is a reality person or community who is referred to appealing to imaginary. What we obtain is its image/representation, simultaneously anchored in reality and imagination, minimizing or maximizing its significance according to the point of view the interviewee is talking to. In any way, the banality about the Romanians/“pemi” is refused for the representations are full of symbols and significances.