

# Between Memory Sites and Memory Networks

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL  
PERSPECTIVES

Kerstin P. Hofmann  
Reinhard Bernbeck  
Ulrike Sommer  
(eds.)



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HOW DO SOCIETIES REMEMBER their past? And how did they do so before the age of computers, printing, writing? This book takes stock of earlier work on memory in the fields of history and the social sciences. Our collection also takes a new look at how past and present social groups have memorialized events and rendered them durable through materializations: contributors ask how processes and incidents perceived as negative and disruptive are nonetheless constitutive of group identities. Papers also contrast the monumentalizing treatment given to singular events imbued with a hegemonic meaning to more localized, diverse memory places and networks. As case studies show, such memoryscapes invite divergent, multivocal and subversive narratives. Various kinds of these imagined geographies lend themselves to practices of manipulation, preservation and control.

The temporal scope of the volume reaches from the late Neolithic to the recent past, resulting in a long-term and multi-focal perspective that demonstrates how the perception of past events changes, acquires new layers and is molded by different groups at different points in time. As several contributions show, these manipulations of the past do not always produce the anticipated results, however. Attempts at “post-factual history” are countered by the socially distributed, but spatially and materially anchored nature of the very process of memorialization.





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## Preface

This book has been a long time in the making. The set of contributions had its origin in a workshop that took place on the 23rd and 24th of May 2011. One of our main goals was to assess the usefulness of Pierre Nora's concept of "memory sites" or "realms of memory", as the translation of his compendium is titled in English. Beyond Nora's Francocentric case, books about memory sites are a fast-growing type of compendium in historical disciplines. The genre has been extended to a variety of archaeological contexts, including Greek and Roman antiquity. The uncritical broadening of Nora's idea that collective memory is concentrated in a select group of places and topics seemed to us a problem in need of reflection and discussion. Therefore, our suggestion for the workshop included three potential issues involving the relation between memory and place: What is the influence of disputes over the past for the construction of memory sites? What are general implications of the historically and politically controlled condensation of memory in specific sites? And to what extent does the emphasis on such sites encourage commodification of the past?

Many of the original presenters at the workshop wrote papers for this volume, while some others could not do so for a variety of reasons. In addition, we asked several scholars who had not been at the workshop to contribute. In terms of the cases discussed, the book still represents, for the most part, the original framework. However, we had already noticed during the workshop that the topic of memory sites *sensu* Nora was not as crucial to the assembled group as it seemed to us originally. As a consequence, this set of papers is more diverse than we had originally imagined. One aspect of the relationship between archaeology and memory came particularly to the fore: the role of politics and power, an issue that has also been highlighted recently in "critical heritage studies" as well as a "Competing Memories" conference in Amsterdam in October 2013.

During the workshop, Wolfgang Wippermann offered a guided tour to "Dahlem Memory Sites"; a practical, ambulatory addition to our discussions. It revealed the complexities of the academic landscape where the workshop took place. It was a peripheral urban space during the Second World War, when Werner Heisenberg and others worked on the *Uranprojekt* to make atomic energy useable for the Nazi wars, where the *Kaiser Wilhelm Institut für Anthropologie, menschliche Erblehre und Eugenik* analyzed human remains sent by Josef Mengele from Auschwitz to Berlin, but also where Rudi Dutschke is buried, the leader of the Berlin student protests of 1967. The *Topoi* villa of the Freie Universität, where the workshop took place, is itself part of these contaminated mnemoscapes. In the 1920s, Carl Neuberg lived with his family in this house. He was the director of the *Kaiser Wilhelm Institut für Biochemie*. As a Jew, he was lucky to be able to leave for the U.S. shortly after the Nazis came to power in 1933. Following that, SS henchmen used the rooms in which our discussions took place.

As is often the case, memories are loaded both emotionally and ethically. “Negative heritage” and *lieux de discorde* come up repeatedly in this book. These notions are not simply of scholarly interest: unfortunately, conflicts over memory are part and parcel of extremely violent conditions in our present world. Disputes about the archaeological past have become ideological and economic fuel for present armed conflict, particularly in Western Asia. This reaches from careless destruction of Iraqi archaeological sites under the eyes of Western occupation forces to the razing of Palmyrean monuments at the hands of the so-called Islamic State. The innocuous profession of being an archaeologist can become life-threatening in these regions, as the murder of Khaled al As’ad in August 2015 shows. The point is not to bemoan the destruction of monuments from a long gone past. Rather, we are in need of a new and peaceful role for memory and remembering. One step in this direction is an analysis of the multifaceted relations between memory and politics, a field of research in need of much more attention.

Various people and institutions made this book possible. We thank especially Stefan Schreiber, Julia Schönicke, and Blandina Stöhr for assistance during the workshop. Stefanie Gänger, Claudia Näser, Susan Pollock and Felix Wiedemann kindly agreed to be our workshop discussants. Without Gisela Eberhardt, Nadine Riedl and Nicola Gaedicke the volume would never have appeared. We are grateful to the excellence cluster *Topoi* and its directors Michael Meyer and Gerd Grasshoff for financing the event and the labor connected with the resulting book.

Kerstin P. Hofmann, Reinhard Bernbeck and Ulrike Sommer  
Berlin, August 2016

Reinhard Bernbeck, Kerstin P. Hofmann, Ulrike Sommer

## Mapping Memory, Space and Conflict

### Summary

Our introduction to the volume sets the discussion about memory in archaeology into current contexts, establishes our reasons for producing this book and discusses a number of crucial aspects of memory, space, and identity. We provide a brief history of memory studies with a focus on contributions from archaeology and discuss a number of topics that play important roles in the papers. These include the relations between forgetting and remembering, and between space, place and memory. Along with our authors, we emphasize that memory is a matter of practices, not just of mindsets. A further element in our discussions is the interface between memory, duration, and history. All of these issues coalesce in an important background theme, the political nature of various modes of memory.

Keywords: Memory; cultural memory; realms of memory; Pierre Nora; forgetting.

In der Einführung des vorliegenden Sammelbands werden die Diskussionen über Erinnerung in der Archäologie in gegenwärtige Kontexte eingeordnet, unsere Beweggründe für die Herausgabe dieses Buches dargelegt und einige zentrale Aspekte von Erinnerung, Raum und Identität diskutiert. Neben einem kurzen Überblick zur Geschichte der Gedächtnisforschung mit einem Schwerpunkt auf den archäologischen Studien werden eine Reihe von Themen angesprochen, die in den Aufsätzen des vorliegenden Bandes eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Dies betrifft unter anderem das Verhältnis von Vergessen und Erinnern sowie Beziehungen zwischen Raum, Ort und Erinnerung. In Einklang mit unseren AutorInnen betonen wir, dass Erinnerung eine Frage der Praktiken ist, nicht nur der Denkweisen. Ein weiteres Element in unseren Diskussionen ist die Verbindung von Erinnerung, Fortbestehen und Geschichte. All diese Aspekte wirken zusammen bei einem diesen zugrundeliegenden wichtigen Thema: der politischen Natur verschiedener Arten der Erinnerung.

Keywords: Erinnerung; kulturelles Gedächtnis; Erinnerungswelten; Pierre Nora; Vergessen.

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## I Introduction

The 21st century develops into an epoch of the erasure of archaeological sites. This started (in)famously in 2001 with the destruction of the Buddhas in Bamiyan and continued with the looting of the Iraq Museum in 2003, up to the March 2015 destruction of large parts of archaeological sites in northern Iraq: Nimrud, Nineveh and Hatra. Events of August 2015 give us urgent reasons to rethink these relations further: Khaled al-Asad, an archaeologist who worked at Palmyra in Syria, was brutally murdered by ‘Islamic State’ representatives *because* he was an archaeologist. Memory, its material basis and the claims over its interpretation have become life-threatening issues in some corners of the world. The relations between specific places and their potential to evoke memories, between monuments and the histories that surround them, between material traces of the past and the political interests that led to their survival almost take a backseat in the face of murderous hatred against representatives of the archaeological profession. What are the consequences when current destructions are prosecuted as war crimes? How should perpetrators be treated? Is there a need for more international codes to protect ‘world cultural heritage’?

Despite justified condemnations of murderous groups for whom archaeological work is a crime, we should distance ourselves from visceral reactions. We should be careful not to equate iconoclasm simply with Wahhabi Islam, or much older movements such as ancient Mesopotamian defacements,<sup>1</sup> Roman *damnatio memoriae* and Byzantine iconoclasm.<sup>2</sup> Wanton destruction of religious and/or memory sites has a long history in modern Western Europe, on a much grander scale than we witness today: the Nazi pogrom of November 1938 led to the murder of hundreds of people, but it was at the same time a cultural eradication of hitherto seldom seen proportions, leading to the complete destruction of more than 1400 synagogues.

The fascist rampage, but also the more recent acts of cultural destruction are paradoxical events. They are meant to destroy memories by erasing their material anchors, whether of an individual, as in the case of shrines of Islamic saints in present-day Northern Iraq, Syria or Mali, of whole religions, for example in the 1938 November pogroms, or of a specific part of history, as in the cases of Nimrud, Nineveh and Hatra, but also in the Israeli-Palestinian struggle.<sup>3</sup> However, the intentional act of material annihilation often radically intensifies memories connected to a particular site.<sup>4</sup> The valley of Bamiyan was known to only a few people before the dynamiting of the huge Buddha statues. Nowadays, this voided heritage has become world famous exactly because of its destruction. Nimrud and Hatra are even less likely to have been known, but have

1 May 2012.

2 See Brubaker 2012.

3 Abu el Haj 2001.

4 Pollock 2016.

now become symbols of the will to eliminate a specific past. With that awareness of an intended destruction, the knowledge about what was supposed to be wiped out is strongly reinforced. The latter effect is further boosted by the conscious staging of practices of defacement, a theatricality that has become a hallmark of the Islamic State's acts of de-culturation.<sup>5</sup>

The place of the World Trade Center, an otherwise unimaginative modernist high rise, has become a symbol for American defiance, and even the now dismantled *Palace of the Republic* of the German Democratic Republic is often evoked positively in discussions about the current reconstruction of Berlin's 19th century imperial palace. Destruction of culturally and mnemonically important sites mostly magnifies what it is supposed to erase: memory.

Nevertheless, we witness a new quality in the ravaging of places since the turn of the millennium. The attempt of the Taliban and the 'Islamic State' at ruining of ruins, instead of places that are fully integrated into a lifeworld is a new phenomenon. The obliteration of Jewish synagogues, Byzantine church paintings, statues of Lenin,<sup>6</sup> the Palace of the Republic, or the monuments of and for Saddam Hussein were all part of attempts to destroy belief systems anchored in the minds of people who performed affirmative rituals in and around them. These sites all had well-defined ideological functions that had implications for collective memory.

The case of ruins and archaeological sites is more complex. "All we are breaking are stones"<sup>7</sup> was the comment of Mullah Omar when interviewed about the cultural values of the monuments the Taliban had blown up. Generalizing from this statement, one could say that not all cultures are open to the notion of 'heritage', not to speak of 'world heritage'. A belief in a connection between an unchangeable past as a background to present identities is not universal, nor can it perhaps be universalized. Still, the Taliban's actions against the Buddha statues were a contradiction in terms: if it was just stones, then why bother to blow them up at all? Mullah Omar's interpretation of the dynamiting of two statues as accelerating the decay of *meaningless matter* stands in sharp contrast to the Taliban's idea that there was a danger of idol worship inherent in the statues, announced on other occasions as a reason for the violent acts against the already dilapidated figures in Bamiyan.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, the 'Islamic State' seems simply to select the most prominent monuments in order to gain maximal publicity and to rile the West. Indeed, the blown-up Palmyra arch of Septimius Severus, a structure without any religious significance or even depictions of human beings was publicized as 'World heritage' (and thus part of 'our', Western past). This event has gained much more publicity than the annihilation of numerous local Christian, Yazidi or Shi'a shrines that are likely

5 Falser 2010; Shaw 2015.

6 Kramer 1992; Verdery 1999.

7 Siri 2002, 107.

8 Bernbeck 2010.

to be far more important to the inhabitants of the area and, like the Tomb of Jonah in Niniveh, served as memory sites for members of several different religions co-inhabiting the region. In the latter case, it is presumably also this memory of peaceful co-existence that the ‘Islamic State’ seeks to erase.

The present destructions of monumentalized memory have deeper implications. Conflicts over the past, its material remains and the ‘stewards’ of such remains; the ways the past is narrated, preserved and forgotten all have to do with more general aspects of an increasingly globalized “casino capitalism”<sup>9</sup> whose imposed lifeworld leads to a generalized disappearance of durability and unchangeability in human relations, but also in relations between people and their material surroundings. This produces powerful countercurrents, driven not just by fundamentalist religious convictions, but also research agendas in academia, among them identity politics. These issues lie at the origin of our collection of essays as well as the workshop in 2011 in Berlin that has laid the groundwork for it.<sup>10</sup>

This workshop was specifically meant to discuss Pierre Nora’s idea of *lieux de mémoire* and potential problems related to it. At the conference, three general problems with the connection between memory and place were discussed. Firstly, when memory is materially concentrated in a specific place it is normally supposed to provide positive points of identification for a collectivity. However, following Lynn Meskell<sup>11</sup> and Alfredo González-Ruibal<sup>12</sup>, *lieux de mémoire* can have negative connotations as well, they can turn into places of abjection. How do places of commemoration change their significance and value? What are the political parameters that allow or prevent such changes? On a more abstract level, the primary characteristic of places of memory is the crystallization of collective memory in circumscribed places. Secondly, such often monumentalized sites produce a highly uneven landscape of commemoration, one that forces or attempts to force its audiences to perceive specific points as loaded with past meaning while silencing others. How widespread is this topographic imbalance of amnesia and memory? What are the specific ways of remembering (in) a specific place in order to forget another one? And can a similar dynamic be at work along temporal lines, so that temporally specific acts of remembrance serve forgetfulness at other times? The commodification of memory was a third issue we had originally considered relevant. However, this was not much discussed at the workshop and does not play an important role in the papers that follow.

The contributors to this volume, many of whom were participants in the workshop, address notions of memory, geography, spatiality, and identity and the complex set of

9 Harvey 1989, 284–307.

10 <http://www.topoi.org/event/workshop-between-memory-sites-and-memory-networks/> (visited on 15/02/2017).

11 Meskell 2002.

12 González-Ruibal 2008.

power differences that link them. While our initial call for papers was based on a specific interest in scrutinizing the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, we soon realized that discourses on and research traditions concerned with memory vary widely within academia, dependent on language, national and cultural frames.<sup>13</sup> One obvious reason for this ‘state of the art’ is that the memory boom in scholarly circles is closely tied to interests outside of universities. What manifests itself is a widely observable breakdown of walls between politically driven discourses in civil society and supposedly neutral academic research. It is perhaps not astonishing that the field of memory studies is particularly prone to tensions of this kind.<sup>14</sup> Scholars who attempted to uphold the boundaries of the academic ivory tower by declaring history to be strictly separate from memory were unsuccessful.<sup>15</sup> The contributions to this volume illustrate this impossibility rather than defend it.

## 2 Discourses on memories

The memory boom in social, cultural and biological sciences of recent times has led to a tendency to identify ‘memory’ in almost any cultural expression, whether material or not. As both Ruth Van Dyke and Astrid Erll have argued convincingly,<sup>16</sup> its assumed ubiquity has weakened the analytical and theoretical power of memory studies, ending in a situation where phenomena that were hitherto subsumed under notions such as tradition, culture, and even the material world transform into elements of ‘memory’.<sup>17</sup> This raises the question of whether there is a need to define the difference between what counts as memory (or related terms, from commemoration to recalling and forgetting) and other phenomena of social and personal life.

What counts as being *outside* ‘memory’ for an archaeologist? Potentially, anything in and from the past can be studied as part of a process that relates past and present – a diachronic relationship. Maurice Halbwachs set memory and history apart by arguing that in the realm of memory, the present is the dominant side, while historical disciplines

13 For instance, the Latin derived *mémoire* in French and *memory* in English can be pluralized, something that is alien to the German notion of *Gedächtnis*. In the same vein, the difference between *Erinnerung* and *Gedächtnis* cannot be expressed adequately in French or English, while the association between *lieux* and *milieux* remains foreign to German and English – and here we only touch on three Western European languages, with for example Turkish making differences between *anı*, *bellek*, *hatıra*, and *hafıza*.

14 Lindenberger 2014, 389–395.

15 For example Nora 1989; J. Assmann 1997, 77.

16 Van Dyke 2013, 243–245; Erll 2011; see also Rowlands 1993; Berliner 2005.

17 For example, the introduction to an important volume on “memory work” reads partly like a description of Giddens’ concept of ‘structuration’, where the notion of ‘structure’ is replaced with ‘memory’, see Mills and Walker 2008a.

give the past the primary place.<sup>18</sup> At an extreme, such a stance requires a substantial intellectual effort of de-contextualizing a researching self from his or her present concerns, a process that has been theorized by Edmund Husserl in his elaboration of the notion of *epoché* or bracketing. In the present intellectual climate, the very possibility of such an endeavor is severely in doubt in the historical and cultural sciences,<sup>19</sup> including in some postprocessual strands of archaeology. Cornelius Holtorf almost entirely dismisses concerns with the past and prefers to talk about “pastness”, largely as imagination.<sup>20</sup> Such a radical constructivist stance is problematic because of its lack of respect for past subjects: their struggles and desires are judged to be irrelevant.<sup>21</sup>

A second problem stems from attempts at coming to grips with the aforementioned ubiquity of memory. The literature on memories contains a variety of categorizations of specific ‘kinds’ of memory. Below, we name only a few in order to highlight the tremendous variability in definitions. Apparently, discourses are produced as if in splendid isolation, so that parallel attempts at defining specific dimensions, fields of memory, terminological subdivisions by scholars in various linguistically or nationally anchored discourses can be observed.

### 3 Collective memory

One of the most frequently mentioned boundaries is that between individual and collective memory, forcefully argued for by Halbwachs in his attempt at conceptualizing memory as an externalization. Halbwachs tried to distance himself from Sigmund Freud’s deeply influential ideas of what one might call “internalized memory” with processes such as “repression”,<sup>22</sup> which lead to what Freud described as a generalized discontent among individuals in all cultures: the need to repress some pleasures in order to adhere to collective, cultural principles that allow the maintenance of a community.<sup>23</sup> Most scholars in the social sciences follow Halbwachs’ lead and stay far away from Freud’s elaborations on memory.<sup>24</sup> However, some of the readings of Halbwachs’ *mémoire collective* distort his original intent. His idea of collective memory is often understood as

18 Echterhoff and Saar 2002.

19 This is in part a result of 20th century history itself. Saul Friedländer states that a history of the Nazi period, for example, must not be written without losing the feeling of discomposure regarding the dimensions of inhumanity; Friedländer 2007a, 28.

20 Holtorf 2013.

21 On this problem of “diachronic violence”, see Bernbeck 2015, 260–263.

22 Freud 1991 [1915].

23 Freud 1991 [1930]; see also Niethammer 2000, 342–349.

24 But see A. Assmann who argues that cultural reservoirs include “das Repertoire verpaßter Möglichkeiten, alternativer Optionen und ungenutzter Chancen” (a repertory of unrealized possibilities, alternative options and unused chances); A. Assmann 1999, 137.



the product of a reified “group consciousness.”<sup>25</sup> In fact, Halbwachs discusses extensively how groups create, transmit, and change stories about their respective pasts through individual actors’ practices: “the memory of the group realizes and manifests itself in individual memories,”<sup>26</sup> and the concept of group memory is only used in a metaphorical sense. Halbwachs’ *cadres sociaux* in which memory is present can best be translated as social frames that describe the conditions and the social embeddedness of individual memories, the active commemoration as opposed to memory in the form of a reflection of some reality.

Halbwachs maintains that memories originate in a social context and that they are retrieved and changed during interactions among people. Individual remembering thus always happens in interaction with the memories of others.<sup>27</sup> As a consequence, he conceptualizes individual identity as constructed through constant reference and actualization of memories about individual pasts. This actualization of memories changes them:<sup>28</sup> they are embedded in new contexts, similar to the reuse of *spolia* in new buildings. In line with such an idea is Daniel L. Schacter’s description of individual remembering as more selective and constructive than perception, because “our memories are the fragile but powerful products of what we recall from the past, believe about the present, and imagine about the future.”<sup>29</sup> Even as internal acts of recalling, personal memories – in German *Erinnerungen*, in French *souvenirs* – are based on the social or collective framework of the present. The Halbwachsian concept of memory is nowadays criticized not so much because it disregards the role of individual memories but because it grants collective memory a foundational role. Relations where individual memories and collective ones constitute each other are more realistic.

#### 4 Memory as container, memory as contained

Some concepts of memory can be termed ‘structural,’ while others are focused on practices. The former often employ what one might call ‘container models’ of memory. These come in two varieties, memory as *containing* and memory as *contained*.

The container model is at the core of Jan Assmann’s concepts of a “communicative” and a “cultural memory.” He is mainly interested in written traditions and the role

25 For example Fentress and Wickham 1992, 110; Gedi and Elam 1996; Crane 1997, 1373; see also Forty 1999, 2; Mills and Walker 2008a, 5–7.

26 Halbwachs 1992 [1950], 40; compare with Crane 1997.

27 Halbwachs 1992 [1950], 38: “most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs.”

28 Halbwachs 1992 [1950], 47; see also Halbwachs 2003 [1941].

29 Schacter 1996, 308.

	communicative memory	cultural memory
content	experience of history in the framework of individual biographies	mythical history of origins, events of an “absolute past”
form	informal, generated through unreflected practices, quotidian	constructed, high degree of formality, ceremonial communications, feasting
media	living memory in “organic memories”, experiences and hearsay	fixed objectivation, traditional symbolic codification, <i>mis en scène</i> in word, image, dance, etc.
carrier	unspecific, witnesses of a memory community	experts of traditions and memory (scientists, priests, etc.)
temporal structure	80–100 years, a present that moves along with 3–4 generations of memory	absolute past of a mythical time of origins

Tab. 1 The communicative and cultural dimensions of collective memory. After J. Assmann, with modifications after Leipold 2015, 16 Abb. 1; cf. J. Assmann 1988, 13–15; J. Assmann 1997, 56.

past events play in maintaining group identity; he sees memory cultures as literally constructing communities.<sup>30</sup> J. Assmann cites Cicero, who describes barbarous peoples as having no memories and living in and for the moment. For J. Assmann, the ancient Israelites stand as the primordial example of a group that kept its identity in the long run by subjecting themselves to the dictum of ‘observe and remember’. He posits that the existence of an observed ‘past’, different from the present, must necessarily entail a break with tradition that opens the space for constructions, negation, forgetting and repression. Giorgio Agamben elaborates on the full consequences of this: the past as an object explicitly separated from the present becomes a site of accumulation.<sup>31</sup> A problem with such an objectivized conception of memory is that it describes societies in which traditions play a dominant role as ahistoric and incapable of any reflection about their past, echoing historicist prejudices of the 19th century.<sup>32</sup>

J. Assmann’s ideas of memory as a container become fully visible in his interpretation of material culture, which, just as language, functions as one major dimension of memory, albeit a passive one. Material culture frames people, and its endurance enables materiality to transmit meaning across generations. This is another main element in his writings about memory. The difference in diachronic transmission between oral communication and material elements of cultural life, especially textual materials, is used to separate a “communicative” from a “cultural” memory (see Tab. 1).

30 J. Assmann 1997, 30–31.

31 Agamben 2012, 142–148.

functional memory (Funktionsgedächtnis)	stored memory (Speichergedächtnis)
linked to a specific group	without specific social anchoring, universal
links past and present because of an interest in the future	separates past and present for the sake of exploration of the past
selective	non-selective
transmission of identity-related values, oriented towards the production of meaning	search for truth, relativization of norms and values
sacralized	disenchanted

Tab. 2 Differences between functional and stored memory. According to A. Assmann 1999, 133.

In J. Assmann's conceptualization, both kinds of memory envelop societies. Language is thought of as a quasi-independently existing means to communicate, a *langue* without the need for *parole*. Material culture, as image, text, or in other forms, is our daily inescapable framework of life, and as such part of a background of unproblematized and unproblematizable memory. Such a conception of memory produces a strong tendency towards reification, while dynamic relations between people and things are underplayed.

Another conceptual take on externalized memory describes it as *contained*. Aleida Assmann understands memory as a "Speicher, aus dem die Erinnerung auswählt, aktualisiert, sich bedient."<sup>33</sup> The theoretical background is an objectivist, and thereby reductionist information theory. In such cases, book and computer are used as metaphors for memory; the practice of remembering is imagined as an act of reaching into a storage box filled with *mémoires* as bits of information. This 'contained' concept of memory may be applicable to the work of historians and archaeologists, but Andrew Jones criticizes its generalization and projection into the past as unrealistic and reductionist.<sup>34</sup> A. Assmann further distinguishes between a "stored" and a "functional memory". She thus adds another aspect to memory, but one equally instrumental to the storage idea.

A. Assmann's division would be useful if it did not contain strong evolutionary elements that seem highly problematic to us. She contends that memories in purely oral cultures are solely "functional memories"; and thus simply oriented towards the upkeep of collective identities. This implies that such cultures have no possibilities for critique.

32 Sommer 2014.

34 Jones 2007, 6–12.

33 "A storage from which memory selects, updates and serves itself"; A. Assmann 1999, 160 (translation R. B.).

However, ethnographies show that oral traditions are in a constant state of transformation, that they often include multifarious competing strains, some of which stand in tension with each other.<sup>35</sup> Memory can be social or collective only if it is capable of being articulated and transmitted.<sup>36</sup> This implies that social memory depends on communicative practices and is the reason why collective memory is usually more formalized than individual memory: for transmission, conventionalization and simplification are needed.<sup>37</sup> While canonization is often observed for past cultures, it is a bit ironic that exactly that labor is carried out by theoreticians of memory themselves, such as Nora. Instead, the conventionalization of memory is a process that should be investigated as opening a field for contention over various strands of memory, for example the role of “material mnemonics” in everyday life that are not necessarily monumentalized.<sup>38</sup>

## 5 Memory practices

The risk of reification of memory is much less apparent in practice-oriented approaches. Embodiment as an element of social memory may have its roots in the philosophy of Henri Bergson<sup>39</sup> but has been most influentially articulated by Paul Connerton.<sup>40</sup> Starting from the question of the transmission of collective memory, Connerton asserts that incorporated rather than inscribed memory is essential for a tradition’s unbroken survival. This “habit memory”<sup>41</sup> is mainly an embodied one, and performances of commemoration, for instance in formalized rituals, reproduce larger structures. This practice-based approach to collective memory avoids the overdrawn dichotomy between oral and script-based cultures.<sup>42</sup> Barbara Mills and William Walker’s compendium as well as Maria Starzmann and John Roby’s recent volume are good examples of an application of Connerton’s ideas to archaeology.<sup>43</sup> The contributions in these volumes focus on commemorative rituals, on exceptional situations, practices of marginalizing and representing remembrances, but only partly on daily activities.

Not all human practices need to be primarily embodied, however. Personal recall is certainly one neglected element of “memory work”<sup>44</sup> and, as Jones argues, it is a “process of evocation indexed by objects”, in effect “a process distributed between people and objects”<sup>45</sup>. Such acts of recalling can also have the character of a commemoration, an act of ethically imposed remembering. For Jones, memory is neither an external entity

35 For example Confino 1997, 1398–1400; Barth 2002.

36 Cf. Jäger 2004.

37 Fentress and Wickham 1992, 47.

38 Lillios and Tsamis 2010; Choyke 2009.

39 See Rölli 2004.

40 Connerton 1989.

41 Connerton 1989, 23.

42 See also Battaglia 1992.

43 Mills and Walker 2008b; Starzmann and Roby 2016.

44 Mills and Walker 2008b.

45 Jones 2007, 26.

that can be described and analyzed largely without recourse to the specificities of those who remember, nor an internalized phenomenon with performative potentials. Rather, memory itself is fundamentally relational.

The underdetermined nature of memory as a set of relations needs more exploration. Repetitive and evocative practices that we classify as a part of presenting the past are multifarious and variable. It is exactly the openness of such memory relations that makes the subject important. What are the conditions under which individual, internal, and internalized memories are streamlined into entities that support and constitute communities rather than tearing them apart?

These considerations bring us to an important issue in our collection of essays. The contributions address spontaneous evocation as one aspect of memory (Moshenska), but also its reverse – politically engineered memory constructions. Not too long ago, Alon Confino<sup>46</sup> argued against a politicization of memory in academic studies in a discussion of memory in the frame of the 20th century. In our view, explorations of commemorative structures and practices actually underplay their political dimension. At least, this is the case in those areas of archaeology that deal with the ancient past.<sup>47</sup> To reserve the term ‘collective memory’ for large-scale, official commemorative rituals and speak of ‘social memory’ as similar practices on a smaller scale will not do.<sup>48</sup> The insistence on investigating multiple memory strands as opposed to one “kulturelles Großgedächtnis”<sup>49</sup> is not helpful either – at least not as long as relations of power are excluded from the discussion.

Memories are social, and even if formalized, they are always manifold, constantly changing and contested. This political character and connected issues are investigated by the authors in this volume. We have structured the contributions according to the specific types of diachronic power relations analyzed. The first part is concerned with what one might call “the past in the past”:<sup>50</sup> Attempts at identifying modes of remembering, of reconstructing relations between space, identity and (passing) time, of historical changes in these complex relations are heavily dependent on the sources at our disposal. Thus, for historical periods, memory, practices of remembering, but especially the ideological character of these practices can be reconstructed with more confidence than for prehistoric cases, provided that the elitist character of most early writing is taken into account. A second set of papers problematizes our own present understandings of the ‘past in the past’. Contemporary concerns range from critiques of academia to histories of a

46 Confino 1997.

47 The set of interesting papers in Starzmann and Roby 2016 has an activist bent. Notably, almost all of them discuss cases from the 18th to 21st centuries.

48 Mills and Walker 2008a.

49 “Large-scale cultural memory”; Wischermann 2002, 7.

50 Yoffee 2008.

mnemonic discourse. Finally, a third section investigates constructions of memory. Authors variously take affirmative and critical approaches. As one might expect, museums play an important role in these discussions, as do cultural heritage and its preservation. Temporal relations are crosscut by spatial ones. Most contributions discuss in detail the situation of memory in space, distributions and spatial hierarchies of remembering, but also obfuscations and other mechanisms that prevent the concentration of remembering and associated practices in one single location.

## 6 Forgetting and disremembering

Forgetting cannot be exercised intentionally, it happens to us. In contrast, remembering is an act that can be induced through a variety of media.<sup>51</sup> On an individual level, the fundamental imbalance between these two processes is fairly clear. Sybille Krämer mentions Immanuel Kant's famous paradoxical note about his servant, "[t]he name of Lampe must now be entirely forgotten."<sup>52</sup> The commitment to memory of the intent to forget has the opposite result – and, as argued above, this is also true for monuments of externalized memory. Inversely, the explicit externalization of what one wants to remember in the form of a text, a tomb, or a monument is in itself already an act of forgetting, as are mindlessly conducted rituals, for example the laying down of wreaths by politicians at public memorials. In her paper Sommer points out how even monumental prehistoric tombs were closed, masked and forgotten as part of their 'normal' life-cycle. In the case she describes, the acts of building and burial may have been more important than the monument itself, which failed to conveniently rot away, however.

Externalized memory comes close to the 'container' concept discussed above, because it relieves us from the pressure to remember: means of commemoration are roads to forgetfulness. Other means of forgetting belong to the realm of political economy. For instance, declarations of a monument as 'world cultural heritage' are a typical hinge that leads to massive forgetting through commoditization. In our volume, Gabriel Moshenska presents such a case and argues that archaeological excavations as transitory performances can break this mechanism, albeit only momentarily.

Krämer points out another side of forgetfulness. There are practices of willful dis-remembering, her example being the ancient Greek *amnesty* as intentional non-remembrance of the misdeeds of oligarchs in the years 404 to 403 BCE.<sup>53</sup> As Starzmann argues, such "unremembering" needs to be distinguished from forgetting.<sup>54</sup> Intentional oblivion is always a political act. Sommer's and González-Ruibal's contribution to this

51 Cf. Eco 1988.

52 Krämer 2000, 254.

53 Krämer 2000, 254–255.

54 Starzmann 2016, 12–13.

volume highlight the multiple dimensions of such acts of oblivion. Sommer argues that the past can be perceived as dangerous, in her case the barrows in which the dead of older periods were buried. The bodies of the dead themselves were not the main danger but rather the places of their burial. Neutralization happened through new burials, accompanied by symbolically significant material culture items. In González-Ruibal's case, "unremembering" concerns the different roles of perpetrators and victims in the Spanish civil war. They are leveled through memory practices. Memory becomes decentered so that the past of those who strove for justice and equality is rendered indistinguishable from a past of those who built the Spanish concentration camps, committed mass murder and established a dictatorship. The result is a *kulturelles Großgedächtnis*, a large-scale cultural memory that levels all political differences. Not only the memory of past roles of people, memory itself is manipulated to the point of disremembering. Not amnesty but amnesia.

The relation between memory and forgetting has also been conceptualized by positing an imbalance between the two: commemoration of specific events, people, and structures always and necessarily leads to the forgetting of others. This is what Walter Benjamin meant when he said, "there is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."<sup>55</sup> This specific type of forgetting is not a relief from the pressure to remember, but rather a politics of active silencing, so forcefully described by Michel-Rolph Trouillot for Haiti.<sup>56</sup> In our collection, Brian Broadrose elaborates on the complexities of these mnemonic processes and points out the dominant dimension that produces the effect of a zero-sum-game: power and differences of power. As he shows, archaeology, and academics in general, are deeply enmeshed in these practices of forgetting, producing discourses of others' (dis)interest in their own past. He emphasizes the production of a privileged access to the past through the creation of delegitimizing discourses that aim at alternatives. Scholarly attempts at making memory resurface through archaeological excavation can at the same time serve exactly the opposite end. Van Dyke discusses a parallel case from the U.S. Southwest. Joachim Baur's analysis of immigration museums, and particularly of Ellis Island in New York, shifts from verbal discourse to material exhibits and points out that harmonizing, 'romantic' displays of a migratory entry to North America via New York City hands over to oblivion the much more cruel forced migration experiences of African-Americans on slave ships. Overall, Freud's notion of (psychological) repression is closely related to such practices of scholarly, institutional, and social silencing; in these spheres as well, specific kinds of memory are pushed aside and peripheralized. However, they remain hidden and may reappear in unpredictable places under unforeseeable conditions and at random moments.

55 Benjamin 1968, 256.

56 Trouillot 1995.

## 7 Spatializations of memory: networks and sites

Forgetting and disremembering are not only played out in discourses, they also have important spatial and temporal dimensions. One of the main tenets of the workshop that was at the origin of this book was a concern with what one might call ‘spatialized silencing’. In his contribution, Christopher Ten Wolde discusses “human spaces” and notes how he uses pedagogical means to share and create meanings of and in places, revealing their layering and multidimensionality. Proceeding dialectically, we might ask whether there are any places without meanings. For the French historian Nora, the answer is an assured *yes*; his concept of *lieux de mémoire*, memory sites or ‘realms of memory’, is based on the idea that memory coagulates around specific topoi, around places, metaphors, events, and other phenomena. Memory is an empty term, it is in need of specification, and Nora uses the notion of a *lieu* to achieve this historical precision and set it apart from those *milieux de mémoire* which he considers lost to the incisive critique of historians. The centralization of memories in a specific place is an ideological act of consolidation, especially when the content of such memory is negatively related to a collectivity. Modern national collectivities handle a war defeat by relegating its remembrance to a specific place, such as the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C., with the effect that this event can be forgotten elsewhere. The German artist Gunter Demnig’s project of *Stolpersteine* or ‘stumbling stones’ counters such tendencies. He has installed tens of thousands of small metal plaques with names, dates of birth, deportation and murder of Jews and other victims of the Nazi terror in cities across Europe. *Stolpersteine* constitute a dense network of memory that reminds a collectivity of mass murder committed by generations whose last members are still alive. The small metal plaques produce sudden encounters with this past in daily life and at unforeseen locations, they are thus the exact opposite of *lieux de mémoire*.<sup>57</sup>

Our age is not the first to associate memory with space. It is common knowledge that the idea of *loci* in connection with memory is due to Simonides of Keos, as elaborated by Cicero in *De Oratore*. Events and their details can be remembered best through a spatial visualization, so the claim goes. Thus, the function of ‘memory sites’ lies in providing continuity and support for common pasts and a collective identity – in Nora’s opinion firmly attached to the national scale.

But isn’t the highly selective combination of place, identity and memory with the goal of supporting collective identities another dimension of silencing? Several papers discuss, re-work, and criticize Nora’s vision of memory concentration, mainly understanding “*lieu*” in the literal sense of place/space. Van Dyke shows how Chaco Canyon produces a complex set of memories through its inscription in a landscape, an effect that

<sup>57</sup> Jordan 2006, 191–195.



is realized through bodily perceptions. It is ‘visceral’ and thus largely independent from Nora’s discourse-centered histories of localized memory. The narrative dimension of such places is highlighted in Bernd Steinbock’s and Simon Lentzsch’s papers. While Steinbock elaborates on the variability of local memories as a basis of a pyramid of higher-order memories, the apogee of which was a large, unified Athenian narrative, Lentzsch explains why the exaggeration of a disaster can solidify a foundational memory. Both are cases of antique genealogies for truly encompassing cultural memories, the *kulturelle Großgedächtnisse* of ancient Athens and Rome, respectively.

Spatial dimensions are addressed in very different ways by Baur and Ariane Ballmer. Memory is contained doubly in museums such as those described by Baur. Museum authenticity, produced by using original locations and structures, such as Pier 21 in Canada and Ellis Island in the U.S., turns the structures themselves into externalized memory containing objects from an immigrant past. However, this museological strategy still remains exclusionist because of its excision of those who arrived in North America as slaves. Whole landscapes can also ‘contain’ memories, but Ballmer presents a case where many separate and singular acts of deposition of objects produce an unplanned and imperceptible *mnemoscape*. For those living in such a *mnemoscape*, there would have been a general knowledge that it was filled with hidden meanings and that specific people could add continually to that meaning. In some ways, we can compare the resulting relation between past subjects and their environment to what Martin Pollack describes for 20th century central Europe as “contaminated landscapes”, entire regions where one can be sure to walk through spaces of collective past crimes of contempt, torture, and annihilation – but single historical events may often remain unknown.<sup>58</sup>

Spatial authenticity is an important element in Ballmer’s *mnemoscapes*, landscapes of hiding things and perhaps events. A basic argument is the *unrepresentability* of place. The meanings, characteristics, and details of one place cannot be substituted with another. This runs counter to the idea of the museum, a concept that is a materialization of *lieux de mémoire* because it consists of a concentration of things that originally belonged elsewhere. Baur’s critique of immigration museums hinges on this point: the museum building may well be at an authentic site, but its interior pretends to represent other kinds of immigrants whose fates contrast starkly with those on whose history the museum is based. Heidrun Derks uses a lucid discussion of the *lieux de mémoire* to fend off the idea that this could be a useful concept for the Kalkriese Museum, with the burden of 2000 years of changing nationalistic and other discursive constructions around the Roman officer Arminius. While her and Reinhard Bernbeck’s critique of the concept stay close to Nora’s original idea that such *lieux* have their own historiographic dimension, other contributors such as Moshenska clearly view this aspect as unimportant.

58 Pollack 2014.

Not all spatial configurations should be thought of as equal or equally authentic. Bestowing the same degree of importance on all places in a network would be the opposite of Nora's intent. González-Ruibal criticizes the idea that memory is inherent in whole landscapes by pointing out a political dimension: they fit into a neoliberal 'all sites are equal'-ideology. Such a pseudo-democratic attitude allows the leveling of differences in commemorated content. In a commodified *mnemoscape*, perpetrators of war crimes and their victims appear in similar ways, even in the same spot.<sup>59</sup>

Most approaches to the spatial dimension of memory start from the premise that its spatialization is a straightforward process whereby markings are inscribed into a landscape. Ballmer and Bernbeck argue that there are complex alternatives. Instead of anchoring memory explicitly and materially in a real space so that a site can be regularly revisited, Ballmer discusses Bronze Age landscapes in the High Alps that actively created *invisibility*, places whose general presence may have been known but whose exact position remained unclear, disabling revisiting and any establishment of place-anchored rituals of commemoration. Bernbeck argues that there are actively created in-between spaces. Jordanian dolmen resemble Homi Bhabha's "third spaces".<sup>60</sup> The effect of such spaces is similar to that of Ballmer's High Alps example: intentional obfuscation followed by the impossibility of any sense of spatial authenticity prevents the development of ritualistic, repetitive commemorative practices.

## 8 Memory and time, duration and history

We have set memory apart from history because of its firm placement in the present. Memory is concerned with our own condition and functionalizes the past for this purpose. It would be wrong to keep up a stark divide between this definition of memory and history as a more sober activity that is concerned with the past for the past's sake. Lentzsch argues that Roman history was a hyperbolic narrative whose intent was an indirect comparison with ancient Athens. The background is political: Rome's hegemonic relationship with Athens. The problematic nature of a strict division between history and memory is apparent in Van Dyke's chapter on Hopi and Navajo pasts. They may be called 'memory' rather than history from an academic historian's or archaeologist's perspective, but archaeologists may also judge that these two collective memories are not equally close to (or far from) historical accounts. Since archaeologists have their own ideas about the past, Van Dyke shows the wide-ranging consequences of two different, academically produced scenarios ('acculturation' vs. 'refugee') and their concrete consequences for people traditionally associated with the region. This case casts serious doubt

59 A case in point is Berlin's *Neue Wache*.

60 Bhabha 1994.

on the reliability of history's own basis for judgment, on the presumed greater objectivity of history when compared to the subjectivity of memory. In Broadrose's account, these deeply ideological, twisted characteristics of academic scholarship come to the fore more clearly than in any other paper of our volume. Neither history nor memory can lay any claim to truthfulness. Both Van Dyke's and Broadrose's papers also implicitly raise the issue of linear chronology as a scientific measure for today's world. Since history is more and more enmeshed in public debate, the standard of rights to a territory derived from chronological rather than mnemonic anteriority can simply not be upheld as legitimate.

A politics of time pervades Bernbeck's account of the temporal dimension of his interpretation of *Third Spaces*. The archaeological phenomenon he describes defies clear chronological positioning despite decades of research. In this case, material monumentality does not serve to anchor specific memories – it serves to mark an absence. Archaeological efforts to interpret megaliths as places of ancestor veneration fit Michel de Certeau's description of memory: "Like those birds that lay their eggs only in other species' nests, memory produces in a place that does not belong to it. It receives its form and its implantation from external circumstances, even if it furnishes the content (the missing detail)."<sup>61</sup>

Time is not only addressed or criticized in this volume as a linear dimension of past-present-future. Some contributions conceptualize duration and temporal speed as essential elements of memory. Ten Wolde sees in archaeology the guardian of "lasting meaning", of *longue durée* itself. He sets it into an age where hyperfast change brings with it a longing for views of an unchanging world.<sup>62</sup> Moshenska points out that this durative characteristic of archaeology lends itself all too well to a commodification of the past. The precondition for the socio-cultural production of the tourist as a figure complete with a specific habitus is based on a globalized, alienated monumentality and its need for packaging.

Not all materiality encloses a *longue durée* and monumental scale, however. Daniel Miller made the important observation that there is a basic temporal relationship between things and human life.<sup>63</sup> When shorter than human life, he calls things "transient" and sets them apart from those with "longevity" (longer than human lives)<sup>64</sup> and "equivalence" (more or less the same duration). Here, duration is not measured as absolute, linear time. Rather, one may speak of a 'relational duration'. Ballmer's landscape of invisibilities is a good example for past people's manipulation of relational duration: they shortened the longevity of bronze objects through specific depositional practices.

61 De Certeau 1984, 86.

62 Han 2009.

63 Miller 1994, 409–414.

64 For example, as "temporal surplus" of things: Pollock and Bernbeck 2010.

On the other hand, Baur's immigration museums transform transient, quotidian objects into things with a long-term duration. The case of Museum and Park Kalkriese is even more complex. The narratives surrounding the site provide fertile ground for monumentalizing associations by a large public. The importance of the 2000-year-old battle where Quinctilius Varus lost his life has been so intensely and frequently reworked discursively and politically that the museum must try to de-monumentalize a site that was not monumental in the first place. Derks describes some of the ingenious means to do so: depicting one and the same event in two radically different ways, one focusing on the moment of fear, the other on organizational issues, reduces the temporal framing of the battle to a bloody slaughter in a forest, rather than the foundational day of a nation.

## 9 Conflicts over memory

A further point of this volume is that collective memories cannot simply be understood as a unified and uncontested sphere of social life, the aforementioned *kulturelles Großgedächtnis*. Memory "is as much a result of conscious manipulation as unconscious absorption and it is always mediated".<sup>65</sup> The assumption that good history produces a unified, coherent narrative is a further important difference to traditional understandings of memory, which is multifarious. However, postmodern historiography also accepts multiple versions of one and the same narrative, even in highly disputed cases such as the Holocaust.<sup>66</sup> We have already mentioned Derks' description of the Kalkriese museum which presents several versions of the same battle.

Memory is not only diverse and disputed in the present, as Steinbock shows for the case of ancient Athens. But while the Athenians' disputes over memory were readily solved – if we believe the documentation available –, social and especially religious memories are often fought over, even violently. Particularly problematic are sites with religious or ideological connotations. Ayodhya in northern India is a well-known case, similar to the complexity and religiously-politically charged topography of Jerusalem. In both cases, archaeologists have been and are deeply implied in cruel and bloody conflicts.<sup>67</sup> For Greece, Yannis Hamilakis has devoted an entire book to sharp conflicts over social memories and the associated abuse of archaeology.<sup>68</sup>

Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper has discussed this phenomenon as an amendment to Nora's *lieux de mémoire* and calls places associated with memory conflict *lieux de discorde*,<sup>69</sup>

65 Kansteiner 2002, 180.

66 Friedländer 2007a; Friedländer 2007b.

67 See among others, Bernbeck and Pollock 2004, 344–349.

68 Hamilakis 2007.

69 „Sites of dispute“, *Orte des Dissens.* – Dolff-Bonekämper 2002, 247; Dolff-Bonekämper 2003.

a term picked up explicitly in the contributions by Van Dyke and Moshenska. Perspectives on the kinds of contestation over memory vary widely. Some authors such as Baur and Van Dyke talk about commemorative disputes as outsiders who observe them from a distance. Others, for instance Moshenska and González-Ruibal, want to use archaeology to instigate such disputes in the first place, but for different reasons. One is the use of archaeology as a discipline that can provoke the consciousness of mnemonic differences by excavating problematic sites such as a fighter plane in the middle of London (Moshenska), another the exposure of places of war, violence, and injustice that a culture of reconciliation tries to level and cover up (González-Ruibal). Broadrose writes from the position of a minority whose sharply different ways of remembering, whose whole lifeways are largely suppressed. In most of these cases, memory is imbued with a deeply political dimension of repression. Dolf-Bonekämper speaks of the “discord value” (*Streitwert*)<sup>70</sup> of landscapes and monuments. This sounds as if some concrete places have a higher, others a lower potential for fruitful disputes. However, such an approach to conflicts over memory presumes what we might call a level playing field of memories. This is a somewhat unrealistic scenario, and it is entirely untenable when considering the situation in Syria and northern Iraq at the time this volume goes to press.

Memory politics sharply divide people, and people mobilize memory politics to create social rifts. We as archaeologists cannot but be drawn into these games. However, we have the task to develop a disciplinary activism that tries to get us out of this situation. The time between the original workshop and the publication of this volume has brought with it a dramatic increase in violence and destruction of commemorative sites and monuments, with devastating consequences for the civilians living in their vicinity. May the future hold better, more peaceful prospects for people who engage with memory and archaeology.

70 Dolf-Bonekämper 2010, 33–34.

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## The Appropriation or the Destruction of Memory? Bell Beaker ‘Re-Use’ of Older Sites

### Summary

In Western and West-Central Europe, it is common to find sherds of Bell-Beakers in the uppermost layers of megalithic monuments, sometimes accompanied by bones of a corresponding age. This ‘re-use’ is not restricted to burial-context. Henges and stone circles can contain so-called ‘coves’ from the Bell Beaker period. This points to a changed use of the structure. The most famous example is Stonehenge. I interpret this as a deliberate attempt by a new elite to erase power-mechanisms of previous generations. The effort put into these acts shows that these structures were perceived as a real threat to the new order. This case study illustrates the difficulty of distinguishing between different ways of using the past, between the use and the intended destruction of memories.

Keywords: Bell Beaker; megalith; memory; burial customs.

In Westeuropa und West-Mitteleuropa findet man in den obersten Schichten megalithischer Monumente oftmals Scherben von Glockenbechern, die manchmal von Knochen derselben Epoche begleitet sind. Diese ‚Wiederverwendung‘ älterer Monumente ist nicht auf Begräbniskontexte beschränkt. Henges und Steinkreise können so genannte ‚Coves‘ aus der Glockenbecher-Zeit enthalten, was auf eine veränderte Nutzung der Anlagen hindeutet. Das bekannteste Beispiel hierfür ist Stonehenge. Ich interpretiere das als einen bewussten Versuch einer neuen Elite, Machtmechanismen früherer Generationen auszulöschen. Die Bemühungen, die sich in diesen Umwidmungspraktiken niederschlagen, zeigen, dass diese Strukturen als eine tatsächliche Bedrohung für die neue Ordnung wahrgenommen wurden. Meine Fallstudie illustriert die Schwierigkeit, zwischen unterschiedlichen Umgangsweisen mit der Vergangenheit zu unterscheiden; zwischen dem Gebrauch und der beabsichtigten Zerstörung von materiellen Erinnerungen.

Keywords: Glockenbecher; Megalithen; Gedächtnis; Bestattungssitten.

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## I The transmission of memory

In order to understand possible prehistoric memory places, I am going to look at the transmission of memory in present and past contexts first, to then discuss how memories can be linked to places and monuments.

In modern societies, memory tends to be a personal and family affair, while written sources contain the 'official' record of the past, be it of national history, deeds of property or tax records. Often, only facts that have been documented in writing have legal value. Jan Assmann even claims that cultural memory is dependent on writing.<sup>1</sup> But, as Plato famously claimed in his seventh letter, writing weakens the individual memory. Both historical and ethnographic sources provide evidence for memory specialists who preserved epic cycles, religious lore and genealogy, such as the Greek and Irish bards, or the Griots in Western Africa. Many written texts contain traces of oral transmission, for example parts of the *Old Testament*,<sup>2</sup> the *Ilias*,<sup>3</sup> the Irish *Táin Bó Cúailnge*,<sup>4</sup> or *Beowulf*.<sup>5</sup> Rhymes and other types of formalised speech (*oratio astricta*) help to remember a text literally. There can also be a close social control on the integrity of a text.<sup>6</sup> The Indian *Vedic* texts, keeping the archaic language and even language differences,<sup>7</sup> demonstrate that an oral transmission of sacred texts over several hundred years is possible, even if the traditional dating (1200 BC to 600 BC) is based on circular reasoning and migration myths strengthened by colonial archaeology.<sup>8</sup> The *Rajastani epics* have also been transmitted orally over long time-periods.<sup>9</sup> Some West African genealogies<sup>10</sup> and Medieval Irish genealogies<sup>11</sup> cover several hundred years, to name but two further examples. Even longer oral transmissions have been claimed, reaching back several thousand years,<sup>12</sup> which is impossible to prove and rather unlikely. Caught up in legal (and moral) disputes about landrights and cultural properties of local native populations,<sup>13</sup> there has been a tendency to overrate the time-span that shared memory can survive.

There is thus a difference between a remembrance of the common past that is available to everybody, via conversation, narration, songs, gestures (religious cult, dance), pictures, emotions and empathy (performance), and specific accounts of the past told by memory specialist who addresses a specific privileged audience and may even own certain accounts of the past. However, the boundaries are diffuse. Old persons tend to turn into memory specialists quasi automatically, and privileged forms of remembrance tend to filter down to a more general audience, if in a changed and often reduced form.

1 Assmann 1992.

2 Culley 1963.

3 Janko 1990.

4 Fisher 2003, 115.

5 Magoun 1953, 446–467.

6 C. R. Cooper 2007, ix–x.

7 See Carpenter 1992 for the sociopolitical context.

8 Kazanas 1999; Trautman 1997.

9 J. D. Smith 1991.

10 Miller 1980; Vansina 1985; Henige 2009.

11 Nagy 1986; Ross 1998.

12 Mayor 2005; Mayor 2007.

13 See Henige 2009 for a rather partisan overview.

The choice of events to be remembered is also restricted. Bards and other memory specialists are normally maintained by rulers and powerful families. Their job is the transmission of genealogies and genealogical stories. Priests are trained to remember rites and narratives of religious significance, which may also contain some historical accounts. Again, these memories are linked to power structures, and some events may be ‘forgotten’ on purpose. Therefore, as Sansom emphasizes, the political and social role of memories and social transmissions has always to be taken into account.<sup>14</sup> Both memory and forgetting can produce social cohesion.<sup>15</sup> While the role of memory has received a lot of attention recently, the role of forgetting is mainly studied in psychology.<sup>16</sup>

## 2 *Lieux de mémoire*

Memories can be linked to persons and families, but also to artefacts, like heirlooms, armor (as in the *Ilias*) or specific weapons. Specific places, whether natural or manmade, often act as mnemonic devices: they can recall shared memories, normally about what is supposed to have happened there.<sup>17</sup> Myths give meaning to the landscape. In turn, the physical presence of the landscape proves the truth of the myth.<sup>18</sup> The role of specific places in the narrations about the Australian dream-time is well known,<sup>19</sup> and Malinowski described how local myths are grounded in the physical geography of the Trobriand Islands.<sup>20</sup>

Oral history is also often connected to very specific places in the landscape, and stories explaining the names of certain places can be an important part of it. In the *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, an Irish epic first known from an 11th century manuscript about a war between the kingdoms of Connacht and Ulster, the last part of the epic is given to descriptions of how specific, if rather uninteresting events led to places receiving a certain name. This could only have been of interest to local people.

There is good evidence for the use of natural features as ritual places.<sup>21</sup> Presumably, many will also have featured in myths. Most prehistoric rock carvings seem rather generalized, with the same items and scenes appearing over and over again, but there are examples of compositions that seem to portray an actual event or a narrative, for example, the skiing scene on the rock carving of Nova Zalavruga in the Vyg area of arctic Russia.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, the carving may be located where it is because of the physical quali-

14 Sansom 2006, 153.

15 Renan 1882.

16 But see Forty and Küchler 1999; Connerton 2009; J. Cooper 2010.

17 Harwood 1976; Connerton 1989.

18 Malinowski 1922, 330.

19 Elkin 1964.

20 Malinowski 1922.

21 Bradley 2000; Tilley 1994.

22 Janik, Roughley, and Szczęsna 2007, fig. 4.

ties of the rock,<sup>23</sup> without any link to the specific location. In a somewhat similar vein, Assyrian and Urartian kings created rock inscription to celebrate their victories. While it is generally believed that they are near the actual location of the conquered countries, this does not always seem to be the case. The use of generalized monuments to recall episodes of the national past – with war memorials as the most prominent examples – seems linked to state societies. While they have a fixed location, they are better treated as artefacts, as their location is linked to their function (maximal visibility), and not to a location that is meaningful in the narrative they commemorate.

A change of territory, whether by migration or forced relocation will also presumably affect the transmission of memories linked to a specific place. The Wasco, a tribe of the Chinook had been forcibly settled in the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon in 1855.<sup>24</sup> As recorded in 1919 by Edward Sapir, the Wasco Coyote-circle (trickster tales) was located in the valley of the Columbia River and connected to very specific locations and even individual rock formations. In the version told in the early 1980s by Lucinda Smith, who was born on the reservation and never had the chance to visit these locations, the specific topographic links were missing.<sup>25</sup> How this affects the effect of the stories on the listeners can only be speculated on, but they will probably become further removed from daily practice and loose local color and vividness. They are doubly de-contextualized – both parts of the traditional cultural context, the formalized context in which they were told and the tangible topographic contexts have been removed. Also, visual clues for remembering these stories every time specific locales are visited in the course of everyday activities (males still go to the Columbia River valley for logging)<sup>26</sup> are gone, which is bound to influence the survival of these stories in the oral sphere. The Eastern African Luapula tell specific tales only when they pass the specific point in the landscape these are connected to.<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, there is good evidence of experienced storytellers linking ‘free-floating’ stories to local places in order to make them more accessible to the audience.<sup>28</sup> Antii-Arne’s King in the Mountain<sup>29</sup> – the king who sleeps in a remote place and will return to save his country in its time of need – can reside in the Kyffhäuser, Alderly Edge, Eildon Hill, in the Etna, Blaník, the Untersberg or in the castle of Kronenburg.<sup>30</sup> Either the motif is far older than the person in question and the significance of the respective mountain, as has been claimed for other motifs,<sup>31</sup> or, more likely, the story has migrated from one mountain to the next. For diasporic communities, real places can become the

23 Janik, Roughley, and Szczęśna 2007, 308; Kelskog 2010.

24 <https://warmsprings-nsn.gov/history/> (visited on 31/05/2017).

25 Moore 2013, 18.

26 Moore 2013, 18.

27 Harwood 1976, 792.

28 Moore 2013, 29.

29 Aarne and Thompson 1961, motif 766.

30 Andersen 1845; Rohde 1880, 159.

31 Watkins 1995.

primary focus of collective memory, at the same time changing into a more or less mythical place, removed from any personal experience. The role of Jerusalem for the Jewish diaspora, from the Babylonian captivity (Psalm 137) to modern times, when ‘Next Year in Jerusalem’ is declared at the end of the Passover Seder can provide an example here. While in some contexts, the focus is on places, in others it can be on eponymous heroes and genealogies (the Catalogue of Ships in the *Iliad*) or on the rules and prescriptions that define a group (Leviticus, Numeri). Often, all three are interrelated, as is evidenced by the *Old Testament*, where said rules and prescriptions are linked to persons and places.

### 3 The perception of age

There are different types of knowledge about the past:

1. Personal memory, which has a very limited temporal reach;
2. Intergenerationally transmitted narratives and histories, whether formalized and homogenized in some way or not;
3. The simple knowledge about the age of a monument or artefact. This can often be no more than the realization that its origin lies beyond the present people’s recollection. The Saxon prehistorian Benjamin Preusker actually used the lack of popular traditions to argue for a great age of a monument, as its origin had been totally forgotten, in contrast to other structures which were linked to dwarves, which he saw as former inhabitants of the country who had shrunk in memory.<sup>32</sup> Often, artefacts were not even recognized as such, for example the ‘growing’ pots of the Lusatian culture,<sup>33</sup> or prehistoric obsidian tools in Kerinci, Sumatra that simply fell from the sky in the locals’ opinion.<sup>34</sup>
4. Grimm and Preusker interpreted the links of prehistoric monuments to imaginary peoples like dwarves, giants or wild women (*Waldweiblein*) as genuine folk memory. Alternatively, these attributions could be attempts to explain enigmatic prehistoric structures and finds. Thus, giants were seen as the builders of megaliths,<sup>35</sup> Roman hypocausts, obviously too low for normal humans to live in as the abodes of dwarves, who also were believed to inhabit the pots in cemeteries of the Lusatian culture in Eastern Germany,<sup>36</sup> while the devil was responsible for numerous standing stones. Alternatively, monuments could be ascribed to great figures from

32 Preusker 1841; Sommer 2004.

33 Sklenář 1983.

34 Own observation, 2006.

35 Picardt 1660.

36 Preusker 1841.

the more recent past, like Julius Caesar or King Arthur.<sup>37</sup> Antiquarians would ascribe prehistoric remains to past tribes or peoples known from tradition, like the Romans, Chatti, Danes or Huns, and it seems probable that prehistoric populations would have done the same.

There are different ways of dealing with physical relics of the past as well: they can be completely ignored or not be recognized as such, they could be used for mundane purposes (mummies as medicine, ‘elfshot’ to treat backpain, thunderbolts to prevent lightning striking), or they could be made part of a group’s past and used to enhance present authority. Thus, ruins and barrows could be become places to avoid because they were considered to be the abodes of demons and witches,<sup>38</sup> or because it brings on bad luck to disturb the ancestors.<sup>39</sup> In other instances, traces of the past were systematically destroyed. The best-known practice is probably the Roman practice of *abolitio nominis* (*damnatio memoriae*): the name and the image of the condemned person would be systematically deleted, any reference to the person avoided. Archaeologically, the practice is attested by defaced coins, destroyed faces of reliefs and statues, and defaced inscriptions. However, while the name or face was destroyed, the lacuna remains. The attempt at the destruction of memory thus only draws attention to it and makes it a self-defeating exercise.

More widespread destruction is rare, but is attested for early Christianity, when heathen temples and images were systematically erased. During the French revolution, pictures of saints were smashed and royal graves desecrated. In 1966, during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, a campaign against the Four Old Things (*sìjiù*), Old Customs, Old Culture, Old Habits, and Old Ideas, was declared, which led to the public destruction of historic artefacts. The destruction of the Bamiyan Statues in Afghanistan by the Taliban has been widely publicized. In 2014, IS has documented their destruction of museums, archaeological collections and archaeological sites, for example in Hatra and Mossul (Iraq). In the latter case, religious motifs were cited: “We were ordered by our prophet to take down idols and destroy them”<sup>40</sup> – however, an anti-Western impetus seems more likely.

We do have evidence for prehistoric acts of destruction, for example the burning of houses in Vinča tells<sup>41</sup> and in Bronze Age Denmark.<sup>42</sup> Other structures also show evidence of deliberate burning, for example Early and Middle Neolithic timber structures in Scotland.<sup>43</sup> A systematic mass-plundering of graves can also indicate an attempt to destroy certain cultural traditions. The early Bronze Age cemetery of Franzhausen, for

37 Paphitis (unpublished).

38 Picardt 1660; Colgrave 1956.

39 Kalazich 2012.

40 Jones 2015.

41 Stevanović 1997.

42 Rasmussen 2007.

43 Noble 2006.



example, showed evidence of violent and probably simultaneous plundering, maybe by incoming groups,<sup>44</sup> and the systematic plundering of Merovingian graves has been linked to Christianization. In most of these cases, it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between an act of closure as part of the normal biography of a structure – the deliberate “building of memory” in a flashbulb event<sup>45</sup> – and attempts to annihilate the past altogether.

A quick forgetting of the past is possible, as is, for example, illustrated by the Assyrian Empire (see below). However, why this will happen in one case and not in another does not seem wholly clear. None of the violent attempts at destroying the past described here and in the introduction seem particularly successful, but of course we will not know about the successful ones. The “Angel of History”<sup>46</sup> turns his back on us. A process of appropriation, where churches are changed into mosques or vice versa, or sacred buildings profaned, but kept in use, may be a more successful way of changing and thus slowly appropriating memory, than attempts to blow them up or bulldoze them.

#### 4 Visible traces of the past

There are numerous instances of prehistoric re-use of past artefacts and features (see below). They can be used to mask a break, establish continuity and thus maintain a specific social order, or to emphasize a rupture and thus demonstrate the superiority of a new dynasty or religious order. The main question is how these different kinds of appropriation can be distinguished from each other.

Tell settlements will form highly prominent landmarks especially in flat landscapes.<sup>47</sup> Flat settlements can be visible as low mounds,<sup>48</sup> as changes in vegetation or as an accumulation of stones, depending on the building material. Remains of waterlogged settlements (‘pile-dwellings’) are visible as underwater pile-fields even today. Barrows, megaliths, *kjökkenmøddiger* and fortifications often remain visible, especially if the latter have been burned, as the famous vitrified forts of Lusatia and Scotland. Other traces of human activity have also attracted attention, for example the late Neolithic mines on Ross Island in Ireland, which were locally described as Danes’ mines.<sup>49</sup>

Visible ancient buildings and monuments could serve, for example, as spatial markers. There are numerous examples of prehistoric monuments, especially barrows used in the descriptions of field boundaries. The Aston Cursus (Derbyshire) influenced the layout of a Romano-British field-system.<sup>50</sup> Howard Williams has described the widespread

44 C. Neugebauer and J.-W. Neugebauer 1997.

45 C. Neugebauer and J.-W. Neugebauer 1997, 70.

46 Benjamin 1968.

47 Chapman 1997.

48 Bradley and Williams 1998, 44–45; Bradley 2002.

49 O’Brien 2004.

50 Loveday 2007, 21. – See ([http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob\\_id=1211265&sort=4&](http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=1211265&sort=4&)

re-use of older barrows for burial. He claims that the Anglo-Saxon elite used these places to establish a link with a mythical past and the re-used monuments would have become “the embodiment of an idealized community of ancestors linked to the distant past and the supernatural.”<sup>51</sup>

The interpretations of these traces and monuments are not always stable or fulfil their intended function, however. Herodotus describes the widespread rock carvings of the Egyptian King Sesostris, found from the Phasis on the Black Sea to Syria (*Histories Book II*), which he claimed to have personally observed in Palestine. This account would seem to conflate Assyrian, Urartian and late Hittite monuments, attributing them to a mythical Egyptian king. In 2014 I was told by the local Kurds that the rock carvings in the Birkleyn caves (so-called *Tigris tunnel*) depicted Iskandar (Alexander the Great), not Salmanasser III.<sup>52</sup> The tell of Nineveh was interpreted as the monumental grave of Ninus by Diodorus, probably following an account by Ctesias, and the 5th century Armenian Historian Moses of Chorene attributed the castle at Van and the Menua canal between Yukarı Kaymaz and Van to the same mythical queen.<sup>53</sup> This illustrates how fast the memory even of powerful empires could be lost once written records were abandoned – sometimes maybe because they were consciously rejected.

Re-use or a re-interpretation is not restricted to monuments, but it is more difficult to identify when artefacts, especially tools and everyday objects are concerned. Prehistoric artefacts sometimes turn up in the ‘wrong’ context, but often several different interpretations are possible. The curation as memorabilia has been suggested by Woodward,<sup>54</sup> Sheridan and Davis<sup>55</sup> and Frieman<sup>56</sup> for jet and amber necklaces of the British Early Bronze Age, and indeed this phenomenon may be far more frequent than we suspect, as our dating methods are not normally fine enough to trace this kind of behavior. For example, von Richthofen has used wear traces to show how worn Iron Age fibulae were used in the burials of children who presumably did not yet own these dress items.<sup>57</sup> In this case, the chronological difference between different grave gifts is too slight to show up in normal stylistic analyses.

In other cases, artefacts were probably kept as curiosities, for example Bronze Age items in Merovingian graves.<sup>58</sup> Even fossils like sea urchins were collected this way.<sup>59</sup> In the case of the Anglo-Saxon re-use of Roman dress items, both a conscious appropriation of past remnants and the use of ‘second-hand goods’ has been considered.<sup>60</sup> A Neolithic shaft-hole axe found in the exceedingly rich Early Bronze Age burial of Leubingen has

search=all&criteria=barrow%20trent&rational=q&recordsperpage=10#aD, visited on 15/02/2017).

51 Williams 1998, 96.

52 Radner 2009.

53 Lauer 1869.

54 Woodward 2002.

55 Sheridan and Davis 2002.

56 Frieman 2012.

57 Von Richthofen 1998.

58 Jockenhövel 2007.

59 Stevenson 1967; Demnard and Neraudeau 2001.

60 Eckhart and Williams 2003; White 1988.

been interpreted by Strahm as “an age old symbol of rule”, indicating that the authority of the ruler buried here was derived from distant ancestors.<sup>61</sup> Eight other Neolithic stone axes have been found in other rich graves of the Unetice culture.<sup>62</sup> The Middle Paleolithic hand axes from the Roman temple at Ivy Chimneys, Witham, Essex, were probably brought there for religious reasons, maybe connected to the cult of Jupiter or a related native god.<sup>63</sup> An Iron Age burial found in Cologne above a Roman drain is evidence for the pious reburial of human relics disturbed in the course of building works: in this case, the relics were recognized as such, but treated in the same way as an accidentally disturbed Roman burial.

## 5 Case study: finds of Bell Beakers in older structures

As has been illustrated by the above, it can be quite difficult to interpret the re-use of past structures and objects, even with the help of oral or written sources. There is an enormous degree of ambiguity – not only can meaning change through time, but it can also fundamentally vary for members of different contemporaneous groups. As a rule, prehistoric re-use has been interpreted as affirmative – the past and its remains are seen to have been used to establish continuity and to bestow authority. As the examples in this volume demonstrate, societies also have to cope with negative events, and certain events of the past can be ignored, denied, or even erased as well as celebrated. Is there any way to distinguish between different ways of appropriating, negating or attempting to destroy the past by prehistoric groups?

In the following, I will look at one special case, the so-called re-use of earlier Neolithic structures during the Bell Beaker period of the terminal Neolithic (in Central European terminology), that is, the period between roughly 2600 to 1880 BC. In this period, the re-use, especially of older graves, is very frequent in Western Europe – Bell Beakers are common in the upper layers of collective tombs wherever their distribution overlaps megalithic traditions. Additionally, there is quite a lot of evidence for the ‘closing’ and blocking of monuments in a Bell Beaker context. While it has been argued that the re-use of previous monuments indicates a desire to create continuity or to link to the previous inhabitants or rulers of a country, I would claim that in this case we can observe a conscious attempt to break the connection to the past or even to obliterate the past altogether.

There is a long tradition of viewing the producers of Bell Beakers as a people, colonising Western and parts of Central Europe in search of Copper ore.<sup>64</sup> However,

61 Strahm 2010, 168.

62 Strahm 2010, 168.

63 Turner and Wymer 1987.

64 Childe 1940.

it is clear that the Bell Beaker “phenomenon”<sup>65</sup> does not meet the definition of an archaeological culture. While there is a set of items found across the whole distribution – mainly Bell Beakers, wristguards, certain types of arrowheads, copper daggers and buttons with a v-shaped hole – other elements of material culture, like non-beaker pottery (*Begleitkeramik*), houses, and even burial customs, continue previous local traditions. Most authors would agree that Bell Beakers and the accompanying items mark some kind of elite that is not necessarily linked to an ethnic group. However, the idea of an incoming “Beaker people”<sup>66</sup> has fundamentally influenced the way how Beaker pottery found in older structures has been interpreted. Often, a continuation of use, that is, an unbroken tradition either within the same archaeological culture or over several successive archaeological cultures was differentiated from *re-use*, which implies chronological lacuna or a change of population or cultural tradition. The choice between the two was often not so much based on a detailed analysis of chronology or stratigraphy, but on general assumptions about cultural development. In Britain, for example, the Peterborough tradition was seen as a seamless continuation of the Early Neolithic Windmill Hill culture, while the “Beaker Folk”<sup>67</sup> were foreigners, missionaries,<sup>68</sup> copper miners or invaders from the continent<sup>69</sup>. In Northern Europe, the Funnelbeaker culture (*Trichterbecherkultur*, short TBK) was interpreted as the native Neolithic population, while the bearers of the Globular Amphora (short GAK) and Corded Ware cultures came in from the East and the bearers of the Bell Beaker culture immigrated from the West.<sup>70</sup> The whole question of re-use could thus be an artefact wholly created by a purely ethnic interpretation of material culture. While Middle Neolithic populations simply continued ancestral traditions when burying their dead in Early Neolithic Megaliths (there is evidence for the systematic clearing out of human remains from several North-European megalithic monuments), the people using Bell Beakers are described as “squatters in collective tombs,”<sup>71</sup> and the removal of the bones of previous occupants is described as an act of occupation.<sup>72</sup> In the following I will therefore try to unravel the various phases of use of megalithic monuments, mainly, but not exclusively on the British Isles, in order to understand how changes of use are related to different types of material culture (‘archaeological cultures’). The picture that emerges is far more complicated than originally assumed, but does, in my opinion, support the claim of a special treatment of past monuments associated with the Bell Beakers and specific burials containing Bell Beakers.

65 Lanting and Waals 1976.

66 Harrison 1989.

67 Harrison 1989.

68 Childe 1940.

69 Piggot 1954.

70 For the history of this interpretation, see Hakelberg 2001.

71 Chambon 2004, 71.

72 Houot and Gallay 1992.

In British literature, the makers of Bell Beakers are often credited with the introduction of single burial indicative of a society that emphasizes individuality in favor of the group.<sup>73</sup> However, in the western half of the distribution of Bell Beakers, from Spain and Morocco to Ireland, Western Scotland and Switzerland, Bell Beakers are normally associated with communal burials. They are mainly found in structures associated with previous ceramic styles, both megalithic graves and hypogees.<sup>74</sup> In France and Spain, older structures are often re-opened ('broken into' for use). Only in Ireland is there a specific form of megalithic grave specifically associated with Bell Beakers, the so-called wedge-tombs.<sup>75</sup> Stone cists were used for Bell Beaker burial in Switzerland, France, the British Isles and in all of the Eastern part of the Bell Beaker distribution, provided there were suitable stones. In other areas, there is frequent evidence for rectangular wooden coffins, normally only preserved as discolorations in the ground.

## 6 The use of chambered megalithic tombs

In order to understand Beaker 're-use' and the blocking of megalithic tombs, it is first necessary to understand their regular use. In the acidic soils where the glacial boulders suitable for building megalithic tombs mainly occur in Western Europe, bone preservation is normally not very good. Thus, the kind and sequence of use of those tombs is difficult to elucidate. Fortunately, there have been a number of detailed excavations and re-analyses of previously excavated graves in recent years.

One important question is whether the tombs were left open after the deposition of a body. If at all preserved, the bones of individual skeletons are often widely dispersed.<sup>76</sup> This disarray could be caused either by scavenging animals or by making space for newer additions, as was the case in the Central German mortuary houses.<sup>77</sup> Skulls are often found near the walls of the tombs,<sup>78</sup> which led to the theory of burial of corpses leaning against the walls.<sup>79</sup> Alternatively, they could have been moved there when depositing new bodies, as is often observed in Medieval churches. However, skeletons are often incomplete, and sometimes show signs of animal gnawing, which may indicate scavengers entering open tombs. The human bones from the Cotswold-Severn Tomb of Adlestrop Barrow in Gloucestershire have been extensively gnawed,<sup>80</sup> for example. In contrast, Tim Darvill cites the rarity of animal gnawing at the grave at Rodmarton as evidence for

73 Barrett 1993.

74 Lemerrier 2002, 172.

75 Waddell 2010.

76 Piggott 1958, 236; Whittle and Wysocki 1998;

Wysocki and Whittle 2000.

77 Feustel 1972.

78 Piggott 1958, 236; Saville 1990; Schirning 1979; M. Smith and Brickley 2004; Thomas 1991, 148–151.

79 Sebire 2007.

80 M. Smith 2006, tab. 1.

temporary blocking.<sup>81</sup> As an alternative explanation for the state of the skeletons, the excarnation of bodies outside the Megalithic tombs has been proposed, for example, at Isbister on Orkney.<sup>82</sup> There is some evidence for excarnation platforms,<sup>83</sup> and definite indications of weathering have been observed on the bones from Le Breos Cwm chambered tomb in South Wales.<sup>84</sup> The lack of smaller bones, for example of fingers and toes that can sometimes be observed can be caused both by excarnation, attrition and loss from animal gnawing.<sup>85</sup> Coldrum in Kent supplied evidence for deliberate dismemberment.<sup>86</sup> There are also claims that specific bones were removed on purpose<sup>87</sup> or that older bones were added to a funerary assemblage.

The detailed excavation of the Cotswold-Severn Tomb of Hazleton North indicates that the dead were deposited as complete bodies.<sup>88</sup> As the tomb started to fill up, older burials were pushed aside and eventually ended up in a very tumbled state, with almost no articulated bones left. In Hazleton North, the skeletons in both chambers were less articulated than those in the passage, with the north passage providing clear evidence for ‘successive interment’ and a completely articulated burial directly at the entrance.<sup>89</sup> A re-analysis of the West Kennet human bones seems to indicate a similar sequence there.<sup>90</sup> While the Orkney tombs generally contain a high number of burials, in others the number of individuals interred was much lower, and, as the recent data produced by Bayliss and Whittle show, often the actual period of use was shorter than expected.<sup>91</sup> All the people buried in the primary context at West Kennet could have died at the same time<sup>92</sup> or at least during a fifty-year timespan.<sup>93</sup> This would change our view of a tomb serving as the burial place of a community over several centuries. Instead, it could be a monument commemorating a special, probably traumatic event, maybe mass mortality because of an epidemic or warfare, which was quickly closed up afterwards.<sup>94</sup> As there are no data for the actual construction of the tomb at West Kennet, it cannot be proven that the burials inside were the first or only inhabitants of the tomb, however.<sup>95</sup>

All in all, there seems to be a wide range of burial procedures and the observations in a single grave can probably not be generalized. The *Mauerkammergräber* and mortuary houses of the North-European TBK can have quite extended periods of use, 300 years in the case of Odagsen in the Leine valley.<sup>96</sup> The burial of ‘vintage objects’ has been

81 Darvill 2004, 174.

82 Hedges 1983; Hedges 1984.

83 Scott 1992; M. Smith 2006, 671.

84 Whittle and Wysocki 1998.

85 M. Smith 2006, 679.

86 Wysocki, Griffiths, et al. 2013.

87 Piggott 1962, 68; Thomas and Whittle 1986; Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007; Ashbee 1970.

88 Saville 1990.

89 Saville 1990, 250.

90 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007, 88.

91 Bayliss and Whittle 2007.

92 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007, 94.

93 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007, 96–97.

94 Scarre 2010.

95 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007, 96.

96 Rinne 2002.

suspected,<sup>97</sup> but there are also examples of forced entry into these structures, which indicate that their use may have spanned several cultural periods.

The Dutch *Hunebedden* show evidence of an organized placement of the dead bodies, including fixtures for draining the secretions of rotting corpses by a paved central depression on the floor.<sup>98</sup> There is evidence for a two-, sometimes multi-layered build-up of bodies.<sup>99</sup>

As in the North German mortuary houses discussed below, in all graves of the TBK Westgroup and in most of the Altmark Group passage graves as well as Nenndorf, Ldkr. Harburg Rade<sup>100</sup> and in Mecklenburg,<sup>101</sup> there is evidence for the use of fire after one layer of burials was completed. This can be manifest as burnt granite, flint or a baked clay floor. Whether this was an attempt to simply remove dead bodies or other accumulated materials or was connected to rituals of closure and cleansing – Jürgen Hoika has proposed that the cracking of burnt flint may have been used to chase away the ghosts of the dead<sup>102</sup> – is difficult to decide. Numerous Irish passage graves show evidence for the systematic use of fire, which may be related to similar rites. In addition, remains of cremated bodies are frequently found in British and Irish megalithic graves, both in passage graves and later structures like the Early Bronze Age Clava tombs.<sup>103</sup> The mortuary houses of the TBK, more specifically of the Bernburg tradition, normally have a better bone preservation than the megalithic structures further north. They are also bigger and seem to contain more dead bodies than the average dolmen.<sup>104</sup> In these wooden structures, for example in Nordhausen<sup>105</sup> and Schönstedt,<sup>106</sup> a rather systematic ordering of bodies in rows is in evidence, with older burials more disturbed than more recent ones. Sometimes, there are several layers of burials, as in Odagsen,<sup>107</sup> where, again, each layer shows evidence of burning.

There are numerous reports about the more or less systematic removal of bones from tombs.<sup>108</sup> In Serrahn, Grave 2 in Mecklenburg an assemblage of disarticulated bones, including several skulls was found in front of the blocked extended dolmen, while the interior contained the more or less articulated skeletons of at least four people.<sup>109</sup>

While this observation cannot be uncritically transferred to the British material, it indicates that dead bodies seem to lose their importance as time goes by, they decay and personal memory of the person fades, and had to make space for more recent interred

97 Rinne 2002.

98 Bakker 1992, 29.

99 Bakker 1992, 47.

100 Bakker 1992, 47.

101 Schuldt 1972.

102 Bakker 1992, 29.

103 Bradley 2005.

104 E. Heege and A. Heege 1989.

105 Herrmann 1989.

106 Feustel 1972.

107 E. Heege and A. Heege 1989; Rinne 2002.

108 Piggott 1958.

109 Schuldt 1972, fig. 47.

corpses. It thus remains difficult to determine whether a particular act of ‘cleaning out’ is a part of the ‘normal ritual’ or an appropriation of a structure by later people(s).

## 7 Infilling and blocking

For a long time, West Kennet Long Barrow (Wiltshire) was one of the best excavated megalithic tombs in Britain, and the sequence observed there was used as a template to understand the use of megalithic monuments in England in general, especially after the re-analysis by Julian Thomas and Alistair Whittle.<sup>110</sup> The tomb was built during the early Neolithic and associated with Western Carinated Pottery, or, as Stuart Piggott called it, “Windmill Hill ware”. The forecourt of the Cotswolds-Severn tomb was blocked by a number of massive sarsens while Peterborough pottery was in use,<sup>111</sup> but only a few sherds were left behind, and no indication of any ceremonies could be observed. The whole tomb was then filled up to the very roof with what Piggott describes as chalk rubble, interspersed “with many seams and patches (up to a foot or so in thickness) of rubble stained brown and black with charcoal dust”,<sup>112</sup> containing “soil and rubbish [...] scraped up from the floors of settlement-sites, or perhaps from temporary camping-places connected in some way with the funeral ritual”.<sup>113</sup> As the fill contains Peterborough (mainly Ebbsfleet and Mortlake styles but also some Fengate Ware), Grooved Ware and Bell Beaker sherds, this labor-intensive act of deposition has to be dated in the Final Neolithic (in continental terminology) or later. Western Carinated sherds were missing in the fill. Piggott’s observation of “[t]he greater part of a fine Bell-Beaker carefully placed upside down in an angle of the north-west chamber at a high level”<sup>114</sup> would suggest that the infilling should be linked to the users of Bell Beakers, as large sherds in general and of Bell Beakers in particular are rarely part of settlement refuse proper. The fill was completely unstratified:

[F]ragments of the same vessel may be scattered between two or more chambers, and [...] many pots survive only as a group of sherds none of which join. In other words, the pots were not broken in the tomb as a part of funerary ritual, but were brought there as already scattered potsherds.<sup>115</sup>

A series of 31 <sup>14</sup>C-dates analyzed by Bayliss et al. revealed that the primary fill of the tomb was introduced between 3670 to 3640 BC, while, after a hiatus of more than a hundred years,<sup>116</sup> seven dates from the secondary fill span the period between 3620/3240

110 Thomas and Whittle 1986.

111 Piggott 1958, 238, 241.

112 Piggott 1958, 236.

113 Piggott 1958, 230.

114 Piggott 1958, 239.

115 Piggott 1958, 239.

116 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007.



and 2500 to 2335 cal. BC, roughly a thousand years. The authors follow the model of a gradual infill, probably through the roof,<sup>117</sup> already proposed by Thomas and Whittle in 1986, stating that the sequence of dates follows the stratigraphy of the chamber. The articulated goat skeleton that provided the final date could actually be contemporary with the Beaker of Wessex-Middle Rhine type excavated by Piggott. It is impossible to assess this claim without going into a detailed study of the monument's stratigraphy, but as the authors themselves admit, the dates are not numerous enough to be certain about this claim. However, it seems certain that the monument was backfilled at a time it was already disintegrating.<sup>118</sup>

Numerous megalithic graves were blocked at the end of their use-life. Examples are known from Brittany, on the British Isles, in Northern Germany and Scandinavia. This entailed the closure of entrances and passages by dry-stone walling or the insertion of massive stone slabs. The latter were sometimes made up of smashed remains of ornamented stone slabs, as in the eastern passage of Petit Mont, Arzon, Morbihan,<sup>119</sup> which calls to mind the destruction of carved slabs for the construction of the megalithic graves of Gavrinis and Table des Marchands in the Gulf of Morbihan.<sup>120</sup> Not all long barrows and megalithic monuments were blocked – Piggott points to Lanhill in Wiltshire<sup>121</sup> as a counter-example. The existence of a temporary blocking is difficult to prove, however. If the blocking is completely removed for a new burial, normally no archaeologically visible trace will remain. Only Ascott-under-Wychwood has provided some evidence for temporary blockings and their repeated removal,<sup>122</sup> even if the interpretation has been doubted.<sup>123</sup>

There are several ways the access to the dead inside a megalithic tomb could be restricted or prevented:

1. Construction of the chamber itself
2. Construction of the mound
3. Infilling of chamber and passage
4. Blocking of passage and entrance by stones.

Additionally, a limitation of access could be caused by the total or partial collapse of the structure itself. In Hazleton North, a collapse of orthostats blocked the north passage and the access to the chamber.<sup>124</sup>

117 Case 1995.

118 Bayliss, Whittle, and Wysocki 2007, 97.

119 Lecornec 1994.

120 Cassen 2009; Patton 1993.

121 Keiller et al. 1938, 242.

122 Benson and Whittle 2007, 329.

123 Saville 2007.

124 Saville 1990, 91.

### 1. Construction of the chamber

The ingress to all simple dolmens is blocked by the mound or cairn, the only access would be provided by lifting the capstone.<sup>125</sup> While the chambers were normally used for single burials, there is evidence for occasional multiple burials,<sup>126</sup> but without a program of detailed dating it is impossible to tell whether the deceased were interred simultaneously or not. Earthen long barrows or ‘chamberless long barrows’ preserve no evidence of how the access was managed, but were presumably also closed structures.

### 2. Construction of the mound

In several Breton mounds, the entrance to the chambers is either blocked by the original mound, or by an extension of the mound. In Ile Carn, Ploudalmézeau, Finistère, for example, the entrances to the short passage graves were first blocked, then covered by a large cairn.<sup>127</sup> In contrast, in Barnenez, one of the largest Breton cairns, the passages of the original passage graves were elongated to ensure that access was still possible after the enlargement of the original mound. A number of the Welsh Clyde tombs contain structures that were left without access when the long-mound received its final shape, for example Ty Isaf, Pipton and Tinkinswood.<sup>128</sup> In this case, it is difficult to decide if this is a deliberate blocking or part of the normal live-cycle of the mound.

### 3. Infilling of chamber and passage

Infilling was observed in West Kennet (see above). There is also some indication that the south chamber and passage of Hazleton-North were deliberately filled in, but the excavator regards the evidence as “not wholly conclusive.”<sup>129</sup> Often, a removal of capstones and filling in of the passages in prehistoric times is difficult to differentiate from later collapse.

### 4. Blocking of passage and entrance by stones

The blocking of entrances for Cotswold-Severn tombs was already discussed above. It is quite common (Tab. 1).

French Late Neolithic gallery graves sometimes have so-called spirit-holes (*Seelenlöcher*) in the frontal slab. The allée couverte of Bois-Couturier (Guiry-en-Vexin) is one of the rare examples where the ‘plug’ for the hole has been preserved.<sup>130</sup> Further examples

125 Schuldt 1972; Kirsch 1994.

126 Schirning 1979.

127 Patton 1993, fig. 7.3.

128 Lynch 1969.

129 Saville 1990, 88.

130 Arnette and Peek 1965.

	Blocking	incl. possible blocking	n
Chamber blocked	72.73 %	77.27 %	22
Passage blocked	56.25 %	75.00 %	16

Tab. 1 Blocking of Cotswold-Severn tombs.

were found in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, Epône (Trou-aux-Anglais), Arronville (Seine-et-Oise) and Flavacourt Vaudancourt (Oise).<sup>131</sup> These are obviously special cases, where a constant access (or egress) was envisaged. However, the opening is normally too small for the comfortable handling of a corpse. We have no indication if this was the rule, or how frequent it was.

The north chamber of Hazleton North, blocked off by a collapsing orthostat and thus representing a potential 'frozen' picture of a tomb in use, has a clear zone free of bones in front of the inner edge of the chamber proper.<sup>132</sup> This may indicate some form of organic barrier, or an entirely above-ground blocking slab that had been removed or even smashed. As pairs of bones could be fitted across this boundary,<sup>133</sup> the barrier may have already been removed by the time the chamber became inaccessible. On the other hand, megalithic graves in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern sometimes contained compartments, with low slabs defining distinct areas of burial, that were only around 10 cm high.<sup>134</sup> This illustrates that spatial boundaries or barriers to the movement of bones and artefacts need not always have been barriers to the movement of the living.

Long-mounds with stone chambers like the one at West Kennet are a type specific to southwestern Britain, namely the area between the Gower Peninsula in Wales and the Severn estuary<sup>135</sup> and the North Wessex Downs in Wiltshire and southern Oxfordshire.<sup>136</sup> A number of these tombs have been explored in modern excavations and published in great detail, among them Hazleton North,<sup>137</sup> Gwernvale and Ascott-under-Wychwood.<sup>138</sup> All three provided detailed evidence of the blocking of chambers. The blocking is not always easy to date, unless pottery or organic remains can be securely linked to the event. In Gwernvale (Pembrokeshire), the burial activity is linked to carinated bowls and plain hemispherical bowls of the British Early Neolithic. The blocking occurred in the Middle Neolithic and is connected to the deposition of Peterborough pottery.<sup>139</sup> Not only the actual entrances to the chambers are blocked, but the forecourt is as well. The longcairn of Hazleton North contained two lateral passages with single

131 Arnette and Peek 1965.

132 Saville 1990, 113.

133 Saville 1990, 117–125.

134 Schuldt 1972.

135 Darvill 1982, 5.

136 Darvill 2004, 9.

137 Saville 1990.

138 Benson and Whittle 2007.

139 Lynch 1969; Britnell 1980.

chambers at the end. Both chambers and passages contained burials. The orthostats in the North passage had collapsed at some point, blocking the access to the north chamber, which was closed off by a “blocking slab” in the passage.<sup>140</sup> The orthostat had snapped off at the base,<sup>141</sup> presumably from natural causes. It is thus probable that the blocking slab 366 is a temporary blocking preserved in situ. The bone distribution<sup>142</sup> extends from the chamber into the passage, but does not reach the blocking slab. Burials continued in the north passage. As there are very few grave goods, the dating depends entirely on <sup>14</sup>C dates, which indicate the period of one or two generations in the 37th century BC for the use of the tomb.<sup>143</sup> The forecourt is also blocked off in several Welsh Clyde-Tombs. In the case of Parc le Breos Cwm and Tinkinswood, graves with axial layout, this prevents access to the central chamber. In Ty Isaf, Capel Garmon, Pipton and Gwernvale however, the forecourt has been blocked although the chambers themselves were accessed by lateral passages, which are also blocked.<sup>144</sup> This would indicate that the real location of the entrance had already been forgotten and the monument long fallen out of use when the blocking took place.

At Belas Knap, Gloucestershire, the forecourt was infilled and some parts of the exterior drystone wall may have been pulled down intentionally as well. Tim Darvill interprets this as an attempt to change the burial mound from manmade-structures into a naturally looking mound, in other words, to destroy even the memory about the existence of the megalith.<sup>145</sup> Indeed, he calls his chapter on the abandonment of the structures “Blocking barrows and breaking traditions”.<sup>146</sup> In this area, both Peterborough and Grooved Ware are linked to the blocking of entrances and forecourts.

In sum, it seems that megalithic graves could be blocked by drystone walls during use, immediately after use and later, in Middle Neolithic times. The evidence for infilling is more uneven, but the practice seems to be at least partly linked to the Final Neolithic Bell Beaker complex. To the best of my knowledge, no systematic study of blocking has been conducted in other areas of northwestern Europe, although the practice is certainly known here, for example in D41-Emmen in the western TBK area.<sup>147</sup>

## 8 Bell Beakers in megalithic tombs

Unfortunately, the majority of megalithic graves have been emptied without proper observation of the contents, which makes any attempt at quantification extremely prob-

140 Saville 1990, 91.

141 Saville 1990, 92.

142 Saville 1990, fig. 113.

143 Meadows, Barclay, and Bayliss 2007.

144 Britnell 1980; Lynch 1969, fig. 2.7.

145 Darvill 2004, 173.

146 Darvill 2004.

147 Bakker 1992, 59.

	blocking	incl. possible blocking	n
all graves	4.17 %	7.42 %	431
excavated graves	13.18 %	21.71 %	129

Tab. 2 Frequency of blocking and infilling in Scotland.

lematic. In the following, I will look at the situation in Scotland in a little more detail. Scotland, especially the Scottish highlands, have a much better preservation of monuments than, for example, Germany or the Netherlands because of the low population density after the 18th centuries' clearance and the lack of industrial development.<sup>148</sup> Graves were protected by local superstition, much as in Ireland, where they were seen as the abode of the Sidhe. Henshall reports how "uncanny happenings" were observed after a farmer removed skulls from the chamber in Torlinn on Aran.<sup>149</sup> In addition, diverse catalogues by Audrey Henshall and associates provide an exhaustive and easily accessible database.<sup>150</sup> While the Scottish data cannot be generalized over the whole distribution of Bell Beakers, or even its Western part, it gives some idea of the magnitude of the phenomenon.

Beakers are frequent finds in Scottish megalithic graves. The megalithic grave at Clettraval (North Uist, outer Hebrides) illustrates such a re-use of an early Neolithic structure. Blocking is also frequent, but normally only noticed when modern excavations have taken place (Tab. 2).

The cairns of most megalithic graves in the area have been robbed (Tab. 3). When perusing Henshall's catalogues, a constant re-use of stones becomes visible. Stones are in fact highly mobile, migrating from cleared fields to cairns, chamber-tombs and pre-historic houses, on to Iron Age houses and Brochs, then into modern roads, fences and farmhouses, and, with the collapse of these houses back to the fields. Orthostats can serve as convenient door-lintels and fence posts. Only in exceptional circumstances can their life cycle be mapped, however.

Of the 509 monuments of potentially Early Neolithic type (doubtful structures and Clava cairns were excluded), only 121 (23.8 %) still contained finds. Of the mounds with datable artefacts, 30 contained artefacts from the early Neolithic, five finds that could be assigned to the Middle or late Neolithic, 16 to the Beaker Period, 15 to the Bronze Age, the same number to the Iron Age or Early Medieval period, and six contained Medieval or modern finds. The dating is based on Henshall's illustrations and descriptions, and

148 Schirning 1979, 12; Bakker 1992, 1.

149 Henshall 1974, ARN 15.

150 Henshall 1963; Henshall 1974; Davidson and Henshall 1989; Davidson and Henshall 1991; Henshall and Ritchie 1995; Henshall and Ritchie 2001.

Degree of robbing	n	%
none	13	6.07
slight	39	18.22
middle	42	19.63
severe	86	40.19
nearly or totally destroyed	34	15.89
sum	214	

Tab. 3 Robbing of cairns of Scottish megalithic graves.

	EN	MN	BB	BA	IA/EMA	MA/Mod
EN	18	1	8	9	2	2
MN		2	0	0	2	1
BB			6	2	2	1
BA				11	0	0
IA/EMA					9	0
MA/Mod						4

Tab. 4 Finds in megalithic structures of potentially Early Neolithic date, abbreviations: EN=Early Neolithic, MN=Middle Neolithic, BB=Bell Beaker period, BA=Bronze Age, IA=Iron Age, EMA=Early Middle Ages, MA=Middle Ages, Mod=Modern times.

probably suffers from overconfidence. Still, it provides a general picture. Tab. 4 provides a breakdown by period and shows that several episodes of re-use were possible.

There are also finds of Bronze Age food vessels, collared urns and items connected to the Wessex-horizon, such as jet spacers and beads. The Iron Age sees a mainly domestic use, which is also possible in Norse times and the early Middle Ages in general. No preference of specific cairn types can be claimed with any certainty, as the numbers are generally low (Tab. 5).

The distribution of Beaker-type artefacts in relation to grave types indicates an avoidance of the late Neolithic Hebridean tombs (Tab. 6). There are also no Bargrennan-type tombs with Beaker-type finds, but their general number is low in the sample. Other than that, it seems no selection was made according to grave type – but of course, the past perception of graves may be different from the archaeologist’s. There may be a preference for earlier Neolithic tomb types, but better data would be needed to test this supposition.

As no catalogue or database exists that covers the whole distribution area of Bell Beakers, a systematic comparison with other areas would be a major undertaking. In

Form of mound	all	with BB	% BB
long	118	7	5.93
round/square	155	5	3.23
oval	18	3	16.67
horned	38	1	2.63
heel-shaped	24	1	4.17
type indeterminate	102	4	3.92
all (includes rare types not listed here)	450	19	4.22

Tab. 5 Form of mound in relation to finds, BB=Bell Beaker artefacts or cists.

Type	all graves	with BB	% BB
Bargrennan	11	0	0.00
Passage Grave	29	2	6.90
Clyde	77	5	6.49
Orkney-Cromarty	145	5	3.45
Hebridean	28	0	0.00
Other	2	0	0.00
unknown/unclassified	131	7	5.34

Subtypes OC	% of subtype		
OC Bookan Type	5	1	20.00
OC Camster	33	1	3.03
OC polygonal	39	2	5.13
OC rectangular	10	0	0.00
OC stalled	1	0	0.00

Tab. 6 Type of chamber in relation to finds, BB=Bell Beaker artefacts or cists, OC=Orkney-Cromarty.

Lower Saxony (Germany) about half of all megalithic graves of TBK type contain finds of Bell Beakers or Corded Ware, often both.<sup>151</sup> Later additions are common in other

151 Tempel 1979, 121.

Type of grave	number
einfacher Dolmen	1
erweiterter Dolmen	12
Großdolmen	27
Ganggrab	19
Steinkiste	4
Langhügel	1
Megalithgrab	8
Grab	1

Tab. 7 Later Neolithic materials in TBK-megalithic graves, Mecklenburg.

areas of northern Germany as well.<sup>152</sup> In southern France, Bell Beaker burials are found predominantly in dolmen, but there are strong differences between different styles.<sup>153</sup>

In the East, this re-use of older structures is common in other cultural traditions that are often interpreted as intrusive as well, namely by the Globular Amphorae (GAK) and Corded Ware (CW) cultures. In Mecklenburg, many TBK graves contain GAK-vessels, Corded Ware vessels are also common.<sup>154</sup> In the Western TBK area, all three groups can be observed as well (Tab. 7). “Although we often accuse Bell Beaker people of being squatters in collective tombs, we have to admit that they did not initiate that habit.”<sup>155</sup>

Out of 76 known and 37 excavated graves of the Western TBK,<sup>156</sup> eight contain later finds, four of them between one and seven Bell Beakers (Tab. 8).

In Ostenwalde, Ldkr. Emsland, Germany, the basic fill of the extended dolmen contained predominantly TBK sherds, but also some *Tiefstich* and several early Corded Ware vessels, as well as seven cremation burials interpreted as ‘later burials’ (*Nachbestattungen*). This basal layer was covered by a 40 cm thick layer of stones, which also contained *Tiefstich*-sherds. The upper layer contained later Corded Ware, Bell Beakers of several types and a *Riesenbecher*. Access for the later burials was presumably gained by digging away the original barrow, the drystone fill between the orthostats providing the material for the stone layer.<sup>157</sup> This sequence runs partly counter to the accepted sequence of cultures in the area, but it also does not show the expected clear division between burials from different archaeological cultures.

Several interpretations of this re-use of older graves have been advanced. Often, it is seen as expediency or laziness, as re-use required less effort than erecting a new building.

152 Laux 1979.

153 Lemerrier 2002.

154 Jacobs 1991, 17.

155 Chambon 2004, 71.

156 Bakker 1992, 1.

157 Tempel 1979.



Nr	Site	TBK	GAK	EGK	BB
D21	Bronneger	Brindley 1–3 Brindley 2–5		late	2 pot beaker
D28	Buinen	x		3 herringbone beakers	x
D26	Drouwenveld	Brindley 2–7		2 amphorae, 2 battle-axes	no
835	Ostenwalde 1	x		4 vessels	6–7 Beakers
958	Kleinenkneten	x		no	no
686	Oldendorf 4	x	x	7 Graves	no
684	Oldendorf 2	x		2 Graves	no
807	Sieben Steinhäuser B	x		1	Riesenbecher?

Tab. 8 Finds from TBKWest Graves, TBK= Funnelbeaker culture, GAK=Globular Amphorae, EGK=Single Grave Culture, BB=Bell Beaker.

While this is certainly true, the examples of El Alto de la Tejera<sup>158</sup> and Ostenwalde show that the effort involved was still considerable: the mound had to be partly dug away and heavy capstones lifted. Digging a single grave would presumably involve less labor, but the advantage would increase with the number of subsequent burials. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to assess the number of secondary burials. In addition, the skeletons associated with beakers tend to be relatively complete, which again would indicate some kind of blocking.

As already mentioned, Alain Gally has interpreted the sequence of use in Sion Petit Chasseur in Wallis, Switzerland, as the aggressive defacement of tombs by an invading somatically different ethnic group.<sup>159</sup> These graves have been excavated and published in great detail, and they are very well preserved. Dolmen MVI had been cleared of bones, a stela of Remedello type broken, replaced by a Bell Beaker-type stela. A change from trapezoid dolmens with communal burial to smaller stone cists accompanied this change. There is also evidence of the removal of skulls. Gally interpreted the event as an upheaval organised by incoming Bell Beaker people, who practiced a different religion, centered on the veneration of the sun. He believed these incoming people cleared out the skulls of the previous population on purpose and inserted the bodies of their own dead instead. In other scenarios, local ‘megalithic’ people take over the material culture

158 Fernandez Moreno and Jimeno Martinez 1992.

159 Gally 2004.

of the invading Bell-Beaker group but continue to bury their dead in the graves of their ancestors.<sup>160</sup>

## 9 Beakers in other structures

The re-use of structures in the Bell Beaker period is not, however, restricted to tombs. Henges like Avebury, Mount Pleasant,<sup>161</sup> and the Castlerigg Stonecircle in Cumbria received additions in the form of ‘coves,’ high, box-like stone structures of unknown function. Similarly, Stonehenge was totally changed by the addition of the monumental sarsen trilithons and the bluestone horseshoe.<sup>162</sup> This indicates that (some) sites of previous ritual importance maintained their special status, but probably with a changed emphasis. As most monuments were not static in the preceding periods, it is of course easy to over-emphasize the importance of these changes. As henges are uniquely British monuments, no comparison with the continent is possible.

The Down Farm Shaft, a natural solution pipe in the chalk of the South Downs that opened up in the late Palaeolithic and was the location of deliberate deposition from the Mesolithic onwards, was filled in and blocked by a thick Beaker deposit.<sup>163</sup> There is also evidence that mining shafts of early Neolithic date were closed and Bell Beakers deposited there, although we have to rely on data from excavations by John Pull in the 1930s, which are not entirely clear.<sup>164</sup> Maybe even the curious buried stone circle in Trebbichau, Sachsen-Anhalt<sup>165</sup> as well as the buried stone row at Beltz-Kerdruellan (Morbihan)<sup>166</sup> can be linked to these attempts to obliterate past monuments, but this is sheer speculation without any good evidence for dating yet.

The infilling of the West Kennet long barrow with Middle Neolithic settlement material is echoed by a Beaker Barrow at Woodhouse End in Cheshire that contains large amounts of Peterborough sherds (Ebbsfleet and Mortlake styles). It has been interpreted as the accidental use of earlier domestic refuse,<sup>167</sup> but both could also be interpreted as a conscious attempt not only to obliterate traces of the past, but also to symbolically control them by an association with a dead body and the pottery vessel that marked a special social status, namely, the Bell Beaker.

160 Tempel 1979.

161 Wainwright 1979.

162 Darvill 2008.

163 Allen and Green 1998; Green and Allen 1997, fig. 3.

164 Russel 2002.

165 Homann 2015.

166 <http://www.inrap.fr/les-menhirs-de-belz-9102> (visited on 15/02/2017).

167 Mullin 2001, 533.

## 10 The function of graves

Graves can be places of commemoration and communication with the dead, and that is their main function in the modern Western world. They are also places of change: they transform a dead body into dead bones or let it disappear altogether – modern cemeteries are preferentially located on soils that are not conducive to bone preservation.<sup>168</sup> They provide a place to deal with traumatic personal loss and help to change this loss into less threatening or disruptive memories, and they can change a dead person into an ancestor.<sup>169</sup>

Visibility may be one of the ways to differentiate between places of commemoration and places of change. Different types of megalithic tombs and other communal graves tend to inhabit very different places in the landscape, with passage tombs often being highly visible, while, for example, portal dolmens and *Mauerkammergräber* often lurk in hidden locations. A generalizing account is difficult and probably misleading here. In general, a memorial is destined to be visible forever, while a place of transformation can, and maybe should be shut down once it has fulfilled its remediating function.

The concept of ancestor has been much misused in archaeology recently, not only in a generalizing, but also in an exoticizing way.<sup>170</sup> The idea of a dead near relative looking down benevolently from heaven on the acts of the bereaved or watching out for them in other ways is common to many central European cultures, particularly as a way for children to deal with bereavement.<sup>171</sup> It would be useful to separate this concept of a dead relative watching out for his or her progeny from the concept of ancestor as the founder of a noble lineage, and the 19th century idea of ancestor worship in ‘primitive’ societies,<sup>172</sup> but this is a task beyond this essay. For present purposes, I am going to differentiate between personal, family and communal ancestors. Personal ancestors are close relatives looking over their descendants for a limited period, probably until a new social state has been achieved (marriage, transition from childhood to adulthood etc.). A family ancestor would correspond to a founder of a family or an eponymous hero, that is, a named personage with a remembered history at the root of a family tree. Communal ancestors are taken to be persons of influence, normally of advanced age that will help to maintain the power of the tribal elders after they have passed away. In this case, it is less the personality of the deceased than his or her power that persists beyond death.

As a first approximation, Early Neolithic tombs can be seen as open systems that transform the bodies of the dead into communal ancestors (Fig. 1). A dead body enters a tomb, where, in due course, it is transformed into an ancestor residing somewhere

168 Sabel 2007.

169 Chapman 1994.

170 Whitley 2002.

171 For example, in *Cinderella* or the *Goose Girl* in the Grimms’ fairy tales.

172 Fortes 1964; Tyler 1981.

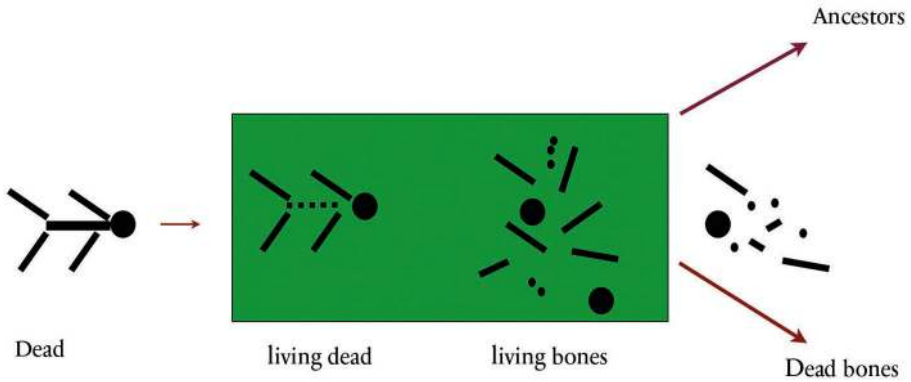


Fig. 1 Megalithic tombs as machines to create ancestors.

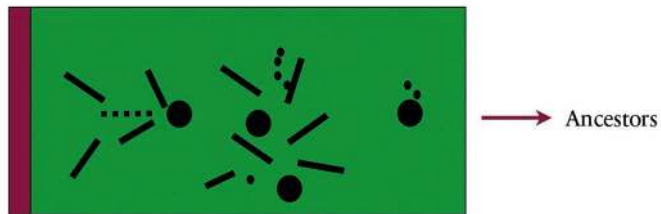


Fig. 2 Neolithic Blocking a megalithic tomb: shutting down the machine, but maintaining the mechanism. Dark red bar: blocking.

beyond the tomb, and dead bones that can be discarded once their ‘essence’ has passed on.

Blocking the entrances of a tomb means that no new bodies can enter, the *machine* is shut down (Fig. 2). Blocking will limit the number of ancestors and thus assure that the present ancestors remain in living memory and are not slowly forgotten in favor of newer entities (telescoping of genealogies).<sup>173</sup> Blocking is therefore possibly linked to practices of dominance.

The single flat Bell Beaker graves in the eastern part of the distribution area (like Corded Ware Graves), in contrast, were destined for a single person and closed (back-filled) after burial. They were clearly not intended to create ancestors in the way me-

173 Miller 1979.

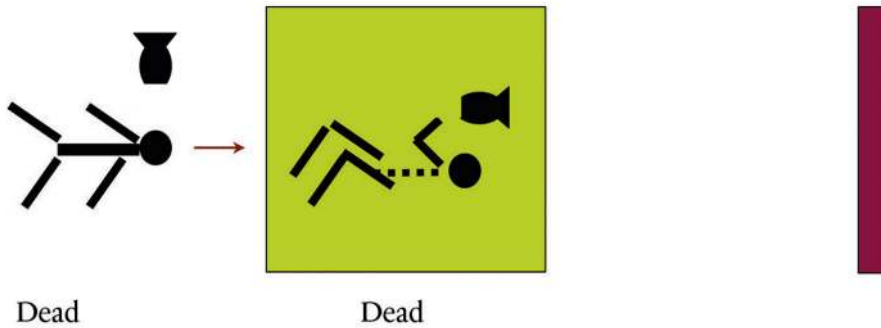


Fig. 3 Bell beaker burial.

galithic tombs did (Fig. 3). A different religious ideology is to be presumed, with different ideas about the afterlife, and different social structures as well. Ownership of bell beakers, bows, copper daggers and possibly also special clothing<sup>174</sup> marked the members of a ruling class. The Bell Beaker and its contents almost certainly held a special symbolic meaning as well as announcing group membership.<sup>175</sup>

The bid for social domination by this new group was not only to rule the living, but also to neutralize the dead of previous dominant groups. As the bones of bodies that have been dead for a longer period were not treated with any special veneration, the power did presumably not reside in the bones as such, but rather the places that had transformed them and still held them. Once an ancestor has come into being, her or his actual bones cease to matter. The way to achieve ascendancy is thus not to simply get rid of the bones, but to control the place where the transformation into this powerful status takes place. Introducing a burial accompanied by the emblematic Bell Beaker and related artefacts into an older barrow may have been seen as a way to destroy the machine, to close the way out of the grave into whatever special place the ancestors normally resided (Fig. 4). In the case of the Welsh long barrows, the exceptional care taken to close every possible or suspected access underlines the importance of that act – and at the same time, the chronological distance. Whoever put the blocking in place had some understanding of the structure, but was not entirely familiar with the setup. Mullin also reports cases of Beaker burials in natural hills, for example at Feltwell in Norfolk,<sup>176</sup> and of the deposition of special food vessels in a similar situation in Hill Close in Cheshire. While Mullin links this to an attempt at forgetting, “wiping the slate clean and allowing new associations to be forged, or invented,”<sup>177</sup> one could also interpret it as the active attempt to destroy the past that takes no chances, and tries to dominate each possible

174 Harris and Hofmann 2014.

176 Mullin 2001, 356.

175 Sherratt 1997; Rojo-Guerra et al. 2006.

177 Mullin 2001, 357.

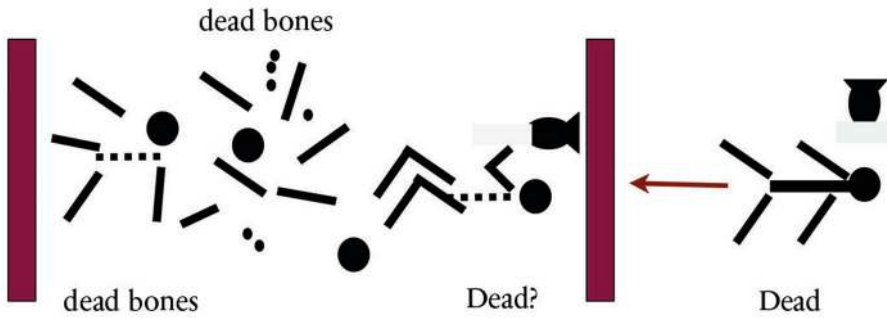


Fig. 4 The machine destroyed: Blocking of a megalith with a Bell Beaker burial.

manifestation. If we accept that passages underground may be seen as connections to another, ‘nether’ world,<sup>178</sup> megalithic graves that presented a passage under the earth were blocked as well as any other opening into the depth, like the Down Farm Shaft and Early Neolithic flint mines. The mortuary houses of Northern Europe are far less visible than megalithic mounds, so any re-use of them also indicates an amazing local knowledge and familiarity with the practices taking place inside of them and their meaning. As Darvill puts it in the context of the Cotswold-Severn tombs,

preventing admittance to the inner concealed areas of a long barrow implies the existence of an abstract knowledge about the contents of barrows generally, and realization of deliberate attempts to hide, mask or to restrict that knowledge at particular sites.<sup>179</sup>

Darvill supposes that the blocking of the barrows presents an attempt to “prevent the spirits of the ancestors leaving the sanctuary of their ‘house of the dead.’”<sup>180</sup> In contrast, I would see the blockings introduced in Bell Beaker times as an attempt to protect the living against the dead.

In many other cultures, barrows are perceived as dangerous places. The pagan Anglo-Saxons, for example, saw them as the abode of monsters,<sup>181</sup> as illustrated by *Beowulf* and the *Life of St. Guthlac*. The people using Bell Beakers knew of the old traditions of burial and their meaning, and consciously opposed it by putting in their own dead, maybe as a guardian against any entity trying to creep back to the world of the living. If my interpretation of the Bell Beaker ‘re-use’ of older structures is correct, this would represent an attempt not to dominate, but to destroy all manifestations of a certain past and to neutralize its power. Far from being seen as imposing and desirable localities, the old

178 Whitehouse 2001.

179 Darvill 2004, 173.

180 Darvill 2004, 173.

181 Williams 1998, 91.

megaliths would have been remembered as dangerous places that needed to be blocked and guarded – by a different kind of dead person, accompanied by a very specific type of material culture. Only then could its memory be erased.

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## Ritual Practice and Topographic Context. Considerations on the Spatial Forms of Memory in the Central Alps During the Late Bronze Age

### Summary

This paper deals with the spatial parameters of two characteristic ritual practices of the Bronze Age in the Central Alps: the deposition of single bronze artifacts, and the activities at *Brandopferplätze* (sites for burnt offerings). I propose two (for some time coexistent) modes for the spatial dimension of cultural memory. While the first one relates to a geographically flexible 'landscape', essentially defined by the natural environment, the second one features locations of territorial significance. Considering the economic and social change in the Central Alpine region, I consequently postulate a trend towards a detachment of the cultural memory from the unaltered, natural terrain in favour of an increased collective use of ceremonial sites controlled by elites.

Keywords: Late Bronze Age; Swiss Alps; *Brandopferplatz*; ritual landscape; depositionscape; cultural memory; mythical geography.

Der vorliegende Aufsatz behandelt die räumlichen Parameter zweier charakteristischer ritueller Praxen der zentralalpiner Bronzezeit: der Objektdeponierung und der Aktivitäten auf Brandopferplätzen. In Bezug auf die räumliche Dimension des kulturellen Gedächtnisses schlage ich zwei (zeitweise koexistierende) Modi vor. Einer bezieht sich auf eine geografisch flexible ‚Landschaft‘, in der die exakte Koordinate bei der Platzwahl des Rituals weniger bedeutend ist als die naturräumliche Qualität. Der andere bezieht sich auf territorial bedeutsame Stellen im Gelände. Vor dem Hintergrund der wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen im zentralen Alpenraum postuliere ich eine Loslösung des kulturellen Gedächtnisses vom natürlichen Gelände zu Gunsten kollektiv genutzter und elitär kontrollierter Zeremonialorte.

Keywords: Spätbronzezeit; Schweizer Alpen; Brandopferplatz; Ritualandschaft; *depositionscape*; kulturelles Gedächtnis; mythische Geographie.

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## 1 Introduction

Although concepts relating to memory places, memory landscapes etc. are increasingly the subject of discussion in the field of prehistoric archaeology, it must be said that the concepts tend to be applied in an insufficiently nuanced manner. When such concepts are applied to archaeological material, the focus is mainly on burial monuments, whose role is thought to be that of a memorial or a memory place; in some cases burial monuments are even understood collectively as memory landscapes or elements thereof.<sup>1</sup>

This paper aims to take a detailed look at the *topographic context* of two different ritual practices from the Bronze Age and to interpret them in respect of their mnemonic role, drawing on data from the Alpine Rhine valley in the south-eastern part of Switzerland to do so.

The Alpine Rhine valley stretches from the Vorderrhein source northeast of the St. Gotthard Pass right down to Lake Constance and includes the area along the Hinterrhein (Fig. 1).

In addition to the Alpine foothills in the north, which consist of more open terrain, the southern section of the area being studied is characterized mainly by its typical Alpine geomorphology, with mountains as high as 3500 m above sea level and a complex system of valleys with different microclimates. The Central Alps offer several possibilities for crossing between the southern and northern Alpine regions of Europe. There is evidence for transalpine contacts as early as the 2nd millennium BC, and archaeological finds from passes bear witness to the fact that the Alps were occasionally crossed during the Bronze Age.<sup>2</sup> Although the Central Alps were visited and even exploited economically before the Bronze Age, and some temporary camp sites and longer-term settlements are known from the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, it is only from the Middle Bronze Age from the 2nd half of the 2nd millennium BC on that there is clear evidence, that

1 E.g. Bourgeois 2013, 16, 201–202.

2 Transalpine contacts: Primas 1977; Fischer 2003, 114–115; see also Pauli 1992. – Pass finds: Wyss 1971, 130.

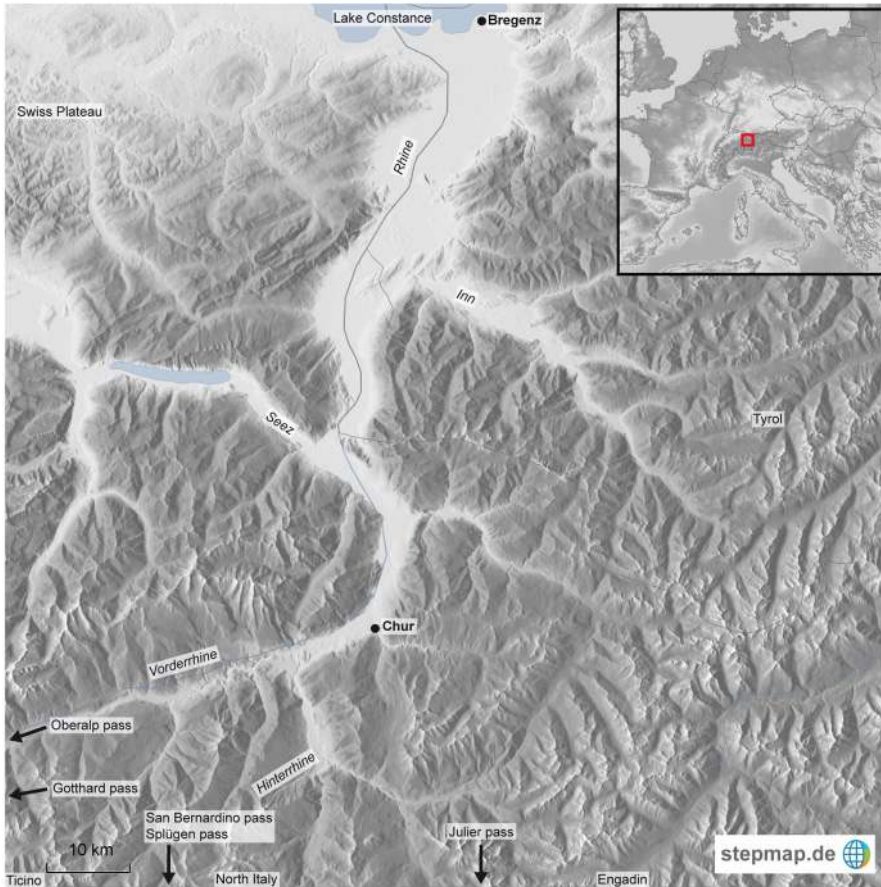


Fig. 1 Topographic model of the Alpine Rhine valley.

human populations laid more permanent claim on the area.<sup>3</sup> The Bronze Age ‘colonization’ process opened up new living space and additional lands: permanent settlements and cultivation developed up to an altitude of 1500 m, and forestry and pastoral farming was practiced even in regions of the High Alps of elevations above 2000 m. Moreover, traces of Bronze Age ritual activities have also been found in the Central Alps. Two of these practices, i.e. the deliberate depositing of bronze artifacts and collective ceremonial performances on *Brandopferplätze* will be discussed in the following.

Certain difficulties with regard to reliability are associated with the two source categories central to this paper – artifact depositions on the one hand and *Brandopferplätze*

3 Primas 1998; Della Casa 2000, 84–87; Rageth 2010.

on the other – particularly in connection with to the state of research, the quality of information, and the lack of archaeological contexts. The lack of written sources for the period of interest, as well as the limited knowledge about aspects concerning the social organization, the ideology and the mythology etc. of the populations at issue complicate the task of providing differentiated discussion of topics such as cultural memory or mental landscapes even further. Nevertheless, the evident relationship between the source categories under discussion here and their specific topographic context does make it possible to formulate a number of important and comprehensible observations.

## 2 Deposition topography

The archaeological source category known as ‘depositions’ relates to objects intentionally placed on the ground, buried in the soil, put into rock crevices or sunk in rivers, lakes or swamps. Depositions are sometimes found in the context of settlements and burials, but many are found in isolation, e.g. in natural, unaltered environments that feature no other man-made structures. These objects deposited typically take the form of a single or several bronze artifacts – costume elements, weapons, instruments and/or tools – though raw materials in the form of ingots can also be deposited. Depositions are considered characteristic for the European Bronze Age between around 2200 and 800 BC; they occur in significant numbers all over Europe throughout the Bronze Age. There has been controversial debate about the function of object depositions among archaeologists for decades, with interpretations ranging from temporary deposits (which were never retrieved) or material storage (so-called foundry or trader hoards) to loss, right through to sacrificial offerings and votive gifts. The fact that Bronze Age object depositions are often found in the absence of any additional archaeological context makes their interpretation even more difficult in most cases. An attempt to arrive at a single, standard explanation for all depositions would hardly be appropriate, since it must be assumed that that the intentions and motives behind their establishment varied. Nevertheless, researchers have stressed on multiple occasions that, from a methodological point of view, a holistic treatment and assessment can definitely be useful for a general understanding of the phenomenon, or may even be imperative.<sup>4</sup>

Last but not least, the object depositions show certain regularities in terms of the choice of artifact categories, or the depositions’ locations. These suggest that there was more to their creation than random, simple and individually motivated acts (such as would be the case with hiding places, for instance). In this regard, Svend Hansen identifies a social “consensus” underlying the depositing of objects, which he subsequently

4 Von Brunn 1968, 230, 263; Hansen 1991, 179–181; Hansen 2002, 95.

qualifies as a *social practice*.<sup>5</sup> If one accepts the notion that depositions are a consequence of a social practice as defined by Pierre Bourdieu, then they provide important indications of the predominant collective social dispositions (in the sense of a *habitus*), as well as of the social structure in general.<sup>6</sup> Not only the actual execution of the act, but above all the material involved in each specific case, i.e. the bronze artifacts, and, as will be argued later, the related topography as well, point to the performatory aspect of the acts of depositing.<sup>7</sup> The obvious staging of the depositional acts by means of a specific spatial setting, for example, and in addition their spatial differentiation from the daily life indicates their ritual character.<sup>8</sup>

The focus below is on what are called ‘single finds’ which are understood to represent intentional depositions of one single item.<sup>9</sup> When finds occur in isolation, without an archaeological context, one naturally has to ask oneself whether they really are deliberately deposited objects rather than artifacts that someone lost, or which were at some point displaced from settlement or burial sites. When it is not an ensemble of finds comprising multiple artifacts, but individual bronze artifacts in isolation, located at great remove from other archaeological structures, the question becomes even more acute. Though, as has already been stated above, differing reasons and motivations may have played a part in the origins of single finds,<sup>10</sup> a holistic consideration of the source category is nevertheless required methodologically, if one is to arrive at an interpretation of the phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> As I will show, the temporal, spatial and formal criteria of these single finds do exhibit regularities.

A large number of single finds from the Bronze Age have been discovered in the Alpine Rhine valley (Fig. 2), including 163 objects that can be geo-referenced (i.e. for which a topographic context is known).<sup>12</sup> These latter objects consist mainly of dress

5 Hansen 2005b, 297; see also Hansen 2005a; Fontijn 2002, 275–277; Vandkilde 1998.

6 Bourdieu 1972; see also von Ballmer 2010, 121–124.

7 Ballmer 2010, 125.

8 Bell 1992, 90–91.

9 Definition and terminology: Bergmann 1970, 13; Horst 1977, 168.

10 Cf. Neubauer and Stöllner 1994, 101.

11 Von Brunn 1968, 230, 263; Hansen 1991, 179–181; Hansen 2002, 95.

12 The context of many single finds is not known because in many cases they were not discovered by professionals. Furthermore, the possibility of (mainly naturally caused) displacement processes must be kept in mind. Single finds without other accompanying anthropogenic structures, in particular, raise the question of whether the archaeological site of the discovery coincides with the original de-

position location. However, a critical analysis with the source category of the single finds as an overall phenomenon requires the provisional *a priori* assumption (in the sense of a momentary working hypothesis) that the single finds were left at the site of their discovery or in the close vicinity thereof (and that their location was not the result of displacement from other contexts in the course of time). Moreover, the corresponding geo-factors must be assessed with a certain flexibility when analysing the finds’ topography: an axe blade from the close vicinity of a water spring could certainly have a topographic connection to that spring, even if it was not left/found in the spring itself. In the end, what is important here are the topographical *trends* and *tendencies*, which, of course, must be assessed in a critical appraisal of the source and interpreted accordingly.

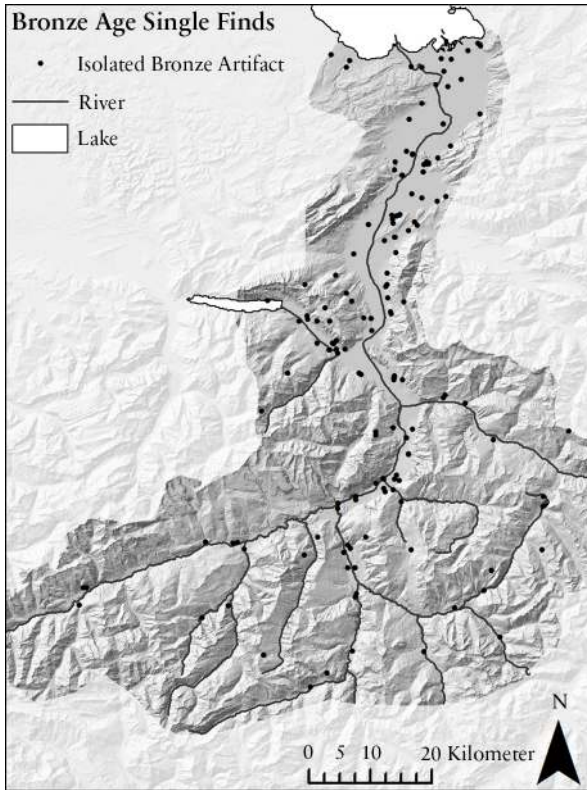


Fig. 2 Distribution map of the Bronze Age single finds within the study area.

pins (n = 38; 23.3 %), axes (n = 38; 23.3 %), daggers (n = 23; 14.1 %), spears (n = 18; 11.0 %), swords (n = 16; 9.8 %) and knives (n = 15; 9.2 %). The pins originate mainly from the flood plain of the section of the Rhine between the Inner Alps and Lake Constance, and not from the inner alpine area. Further types of artifacts (n = 15; 9.2 %), e.g. other costume elements, tools, such as sickles or chisels, and also raw materials in the form of ingots, are clearly underrepresented and form an exception in the range of Central Alpine Bronze Age single finds. In the area being studied, the phenomenon of single finds manifests itself with a clear five-fold increase in the relevant evidence starting in the Middle Bronze Age, with the numerical peak clearly coming in the Late Bronze Age.

The single finds discussed here are distinctive by virtue of their find situations in high altitudes, making them part of the Alpine phenomenon of what are called 'high-altitude finds' (*Höhenfunde*).<sup>13</sup> The selection of artifact categories represented by the

13 Wyss 1971; Wyss 1996; Neubauer and Stöllner 1994.

high-altitude finds in the Central Alps, which appears structured and hence deliberate, and their correspondence with those represented by contemporaneous river finds prompted Wolfgang Neubauer and Thomas Stöllner to connect the isolated bronze artifacts with intentional depositions.<sup>14</sup> The two authors have also been able to identify what appears to be a specific treatment of the end-winged axes in the eastern Alpine/northern Italian traditional form<sup>15</sup> of the phases Hallstatt B3 and Hallstatt C (i.e. the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age around 800 BC). In the Southern and Eastern Alps, as well as in Northern Italy, axes of this shape can be found predominantly in multi-piece depositions and burial contexts. During the same period, the same axe type is absent in burials in the Central Alpine region between the Grisons, Trentino and Southern Tyrol, but instead occurs in increased numbers in the form of single finds.<sup>16</sup>

A further starting point for arriving at an understanding of depositions is their spatial setting. Early discussions already pointed to a possible relationship between deposition sites and distinctive characteristics of the natural topography. Many bronze artifacts seem to have been discovered in the context of mountain tops, hill spurs, rock faces and gorges, others in watery places such as springs, rivers and confluences, lakes, swamps, etc.<sup>17</sup> Topographically distinctive situations, in particular, are deemed to have a special significance in respect of the presence of bronze artifacts, which is why they are sometimes referred to as “natural sanctuaries”.<sup>18</sup> Based on his research on Bronze Age depositions in the southern Netherlands, David Fontijn has proposed the concept of a ‘sacrificial landscape’ as an alternative to Richard Bradley’s idea of “sacred (natural) places”.<sup>19</sup> Such landscapes would lack actual sanctuaries or defined places of cult worship (as presented by R. Bradley). Instead, the sacrificial landscape would be characterized by a collective understanding of the (imaginary) landscape, in which places and zones would be associated with different meanings and, accordingly, be treated differently.<sup>20</sup>

A recent study on the topography of Bronze Age single finds in the Alpine Rhine valley has indeed brought to light corresponding regularities.<sup>21</sup> The repeated deposit of material at one site over a certain period during the Bronze Age is not known for this region. It turns out that the topographic pattern of the depositions of single artifacts

14 Neubauer and Stöllner 1994, 116–118; Wyss 1971, 132.

15 Hallstatt type and Hallein type acc. to Mayer 1977, 167–180; Group VIII acc. to Lunz 1974, 39–40.

16 Neubauer and Stöllner 1994, 116; see also Stöllner 2002, 574. – From the Grisons, the axe from Davos Drusatschaalp can be listed as an example of this: Hauri 1891; Zürcher 1982, 24 no. 43.

17 Menke 1982, 49–78; Kubach 1985; Winghart 1986; Schauer 1996; Wyss 1996.

18 Schauer 1996, 381; see also Torbrügge 1993, 568, and others.

19 Bradley 2000.

20 Fontijn 2002, 259–272.

21 Ballmer 2015.

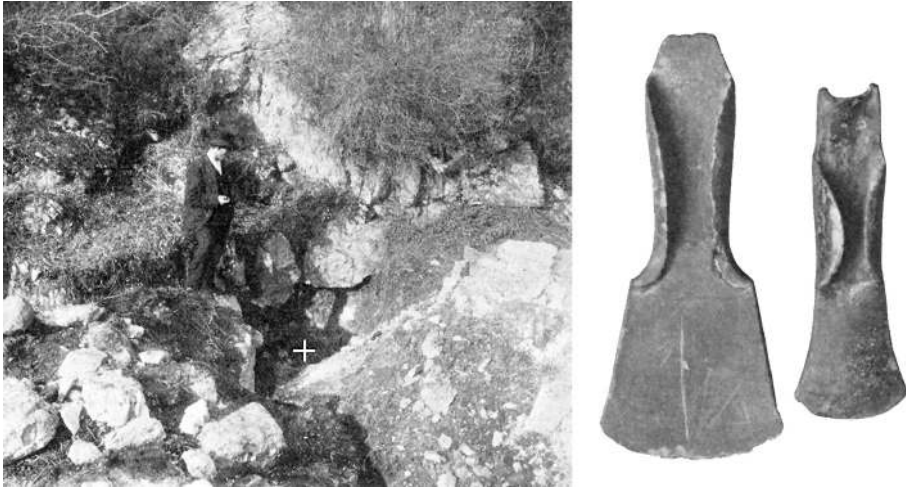


Fig. 3 Two Late Bronze Age axe blades and their particular finding spot at a source above the village of Rueun (canton of Grisons, Switzerland), as seen at the time of the discovery at the beginning of the 19th century.

manifests itself less in spatial concentrations or clusters,<sup>22</sup> but rather in a statistical frequency of the *topographical features and qualities*, when one looks at the finds in general.<sup>23</sup> These features and qualities include riverine alluvial plains, passes, springs, special sections of routes, such as junctions, or the entrances to gorges (Fig. 3). This means that topographical conditions and characteristics rank above geographical coordinates in the hierarchy, i.e. that topography-related social activities in the area being studied hinged more on overall qualities of the natural environment and less on fixed locations.

In the area of interest, man-made markings that are visible on the surface and indicate the locations at which material was deposited are not known. Although one could point to preservation conditions as an explanation for this observation, most of the locations in question reveal traces of only one depositional act, a circumstance which supports the thesis that the sites were visited only once and suggests that a repeated visit to the site may never have been intended, and that there may have been no need for a visible marking of the spot. Therefore, the sites of depositions can hardly be said to have fulfilled the function of a memory or memorial site *sensu stricto*. Unlike burial monuments, for example, which served as a prominent reminder of a (deceased) person or even a generation, and at the same time implicated moments from the cultural memory, it would appear that there was no necessity for deposition locations to be recognized by others after their use. Instead, they apparently served to remind the person(s) performing the

22 See also Fontijn 2012, 63.

23 The relation to these topographical qualities becomes apparent primarily when the total number of single finds are taken into consideration.



depositional act of elements from the cultural memory *at the moment of the deposition itself*. These deposition sites are thus not memory places in the narrower sense of that term.<sup>24</sup> Despite the deliberate selection of the topographic setting of the depositions, an actual *localization*, such as one might have envisaged had there been evidence of repeated depositional acts performed at one and the same place, is lacking.<sup>25</sup> And importantly, the deposition sites lack a key characteristic of memory places: their “invisibility”;<sup>26</sup> owing to the lack of any anthropogenic marking of the site, means that the site does not exhort anyone to remember something after the depositional act has taken place.

The comparison with a commemorative landscape, as defined by Maurice Halbwachs, does not seem promising either. In his pioneering work “La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre sainte” from 1941, the French sociologist discusses the Christian topography and its creation: the fictive map of the Old Testament was transferred onto the real topography of Palestine with the intention of creating a real setting for biblical events. In consequence, the logic of this topography works not with respect to individual sites or monuments, but crucially over a relational network of several reference points.<sup>27</sup> The Egyptologist Jan Assmann stresses that under the principle of the commemorative landscape the emphasis is not so much on the individual memorials, but more on the landscape, which “as a whole is elevated to the rank of a sign, i.e. rendered semiotic.”<sup>28</sup> The Bronze Age deposition topography, which features distinct natural-environmental qualities, does indeed seem to relate to something like the overall landscape rather than defining itself via individual places. The principle of an underlying network, as described in M. Halbwachs’ ‘topographie légendaire’, cannot really be transferred to the present facts in this case, however. The lack of sites used repeatedly to deposit bronze artifacts, i.e. actual reference points, or to put it differently, the continual abandonment of deposition sites or the continual addition of new deposition sites, leads to an absence of the above-mentioned necessary relational reference system in the sense of an actual map.

Apparently, therefore, the practice of deposition does not reproduce a ‘landscape’ in the sense of a network of localities resulting in a plane with defined boundaries, as would be the case with an administrative or political territory, for instance.

24 In an earlier paper (Ballmer 2016), I compared the deposition sites with Pierre Nora’s *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1984). To a certain degree, this reference may apply to places which experience depositions repeatedly, but – after thorough consideration, and in respect of the present case – by no means does it apply to the large number of sites which were typically visited only once for the deposition.

25 As noted above, cases of repeated depositional activities at one and the same location are lacking in

the area being studied. In cases where artifacts were repeatedly deposited at the same location over a certain period, man-made visible markings could have existed and, of course, collective knowledge about this site must have existed.

26 Cf. Fontijn 2007.

27 Halbwachs 1941; Assmann 2007, 40, 60; Dünne 2011, 97.

28 Assmann 2007, 60.

This therefore raises the question as to the character of the space to which the depositions of bronze artifacts discussed here relate. The understanding of landscape provided by the ethnologist Arjun Appadurai might provide a promising approach here. Starting from today's globalized conditions, A. Appadurai uses the suffix “-scape” to designate landscapes which are *not* defined via places or territories, but form a de- or trans-territorial unit with flexible contours which is defined first and foremost by the individual representatives of a specific community. It is particularly important to note that these representatives can indeed be mobile and separate in space. Through their joint identity a kind of ‘imagined world’ is formed, which, in terms of absolute geography, is neither bounded nor interconnected – i.e. a *scape*.<sup>29</sup> A. Appadurai defines, for example, the concept of the “ethnoscape”, a space of a specific ethnic group, whose representatives, though scattered across the globe, nevertheless share a common ethnic identity, or elements thereof, and thus form a meta-geographical landscape.<sup>30</sup>

The connection to the Bronze Age deposition topography lies in the geographic flexibility of the Appadurain *scape*: a *scape* does not depend on geo-referenced points, but is instead characterized by relatively flexible points within a space. Thus the single artifacts deposited form a kind of ‘depositionscape’. This refers not to the territory of a community with absolute reference points located therein, but initially to the natural environment as such. The ‘depositionscape’, as a concept, is in this case held together by a collective idea of the natural environment in which qualitative topographical units form the crucial determinants regardless of their absolute location.

How can this ‘collective idea’ be described more specifically? I would like to propose taking the mythical geography as the decisive parameter, i.e. the different settings in the prevailing mythology with locations in the Underworld or the realm of the Gods. Similar to the case of M. Halbwachs’ “topographie légendaire” (cf. *supra*), this mythological topography is conceptually transferred to the physical topography – although in the Bronze Age context this transfer takes place in a quite different way: not only is the mythical topography projected onto a terrain that is left more or less in its natural state, but this projection of the mythical map is not geo-referenced in absolute terms. Instead, it is more a kind of flexible projection, in which settings and spheres from the mythology are associated with specific features and qualities of the natural environment. Kristian Kristiansen and Thomas B. Larsson quite rightly describe the connection between the unaltered, natural landscape and the cosmological order as a “major characteristic of Bronze Age religion.”<sup>31</sup> Though it is true that details of the Bronze Age cosmology remain unknown, a number of indications can be used to compile a sketch of the idea of

29 Appadurai 1990, 296–297, 301.

30 Appadurai 1990, 297.

31 Kristiansen and Larsson 2005, 354–356.

the world held by the people at that time. Using the Nebra sky disk as his basis, Harald Meller points out that, towards the end of the Early Bronze Age, the world image may have already corresponded to a three-dimensional model in which a celestial dome vaults over the flat disk of the Earth.<sup>32</sup> This idea is represented in a very abstract form in the wheel cross symbol often used in the Bronze Age. As a cross-sectional view of the world, the horizontal line represents the flat Earth, while the upper semicircle depicts the daily course of the Sun and the bottom semicircle corresponds to its nightly course. The perpendicular line can be interpreted as a kind of central *axis mundi*, conceptually linking the different levels with one another.<sup>33</sup> This interpretation of the wheel cross symbol is based on the recurrent elements of the Bronze Age mythology and the associated iconography in particular. In this iconography, a vehicle (a wagon, a ship or sometimes also an animal) carries the Sun through the Upper-, Middle- and Underworld.<sup>34</sup> This iconography, which is known particularly from the Nordic regions,<sup>35</sup> finds only implicit analogies in the Alpine region. The iconographic program of the so-called ‘bird-sun-bark’ (*Vogelsonnenbarke*), which turns up during the Late Bronze Age in and around the Alpine region also refers to the myth of the eternal journey of the Sun.<sup>36</sup>

The (sparse) sources on this topic indicate that the idea of the surrounding physical world corresponds in its fundamental concept with the map of the mythical cosmos. The notion of a 1:1 projection of the vertical cosmological model onto the real-life horizontal terrain for the Bronze Age situation can be ruled out nearly completely. Taking up the observations stated above, I believe it is more likely that specific features and qualities of the unaltered, natural environment were understood and used as ‘contact points’ of one kind or another, points at which the everyday world and the mythical cosmos ‘met’. For example, as can be inferred from the Bronze Age world image, water connects the different levels of the mythical cosmos (such as the Under-, Middle-, and Upperworld).<sup>37</sup> Via the medium of the natural environment, not only does the mythical cosmos as such become ‘real’ during the ritual, but the supernatural realms also become physically accessible, and thus the performed ritual becomes effective.<sup>38</sup> In 1909, Arnold van Gennep was the first to point out the role of topographic transition zones within “rites de passage”.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, transitional situations of the natural landscape, as spatial and magically important intersections between two topographic areas or imaginary worlds, form suitable, effective frameworks and stages for the passage rites carried out there.

32 Meller 2010, 64.

33 Kaul 2005, 145–146.

34 Kaul 2003; Kaul 2005, 138; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005, 294–296.

35 For example Kaul 2004; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005, 294–316; Kristiansen 2010.

36 Kaul 2003; Kaul 2004; Wirth 2006.

37 See also Torbrügge 1970–1971; Torbrügge 1993.

38 Bradley 2000, 28–32; cf. Bell 1997, 157.

39 Van Gennep 1909, 19–27, 275–276.

In the Bronze Age, waters constitute only one topographic quality from among a whole series of preferred deposition milieux. Mountain passes and gorges also appear to have been favored places for object depositions. These environmental features and qualities have a *liminal moment* in common, in both a physical topographic as well as in a symbolic sense. On the one hand, they are transition/boundary situations in the natural landscape; on the other hand, they are ambiguous by virtue of being perceived simultaneously both as a practically or even economically important environment, and as a risky one. This practical and symbolic ambivalence of a topographic quality definitely lends itself to be understood as a conceptual interface to another (imaginary) world.<sup>40</sup>

In summary, the discussion above leads to the following finding about the topographic memory culture: depositional practice, as ceremonial rituals, relate to a *scape*-like space concept. The common topographic parameter of the depositional practice, which defines the *scape*, consists of the mythical geography and, in particular, the localities of contact with the mythical cosmos in general, as well as those with the otherworldly, supernatural realms in particular. The cultural memory (i.e. the mythology) is thus not tied to precise coordinates, but seems to be ‘shifting’ between specific natural environmental milieux.

Depositions, as a specific kind of topographically relevant performance reduces significantly in scale in the Iron Age,<sup>41</sup> thus in numerical terms the Alpine high-altitude finds from the Iron Age correspond to approx. a quarter of those for the Bronze Age.<sup>42</sup>

### 3 *Brandopferplätze* as topographic reference points

*Brandopferplätze* (literally: sites for burnt offerings) can be found from the end of the Middle Bronze Age, and especially from the Late Bronze Age. They represent a typical Alpine phenomenon.<sup>43</sup> These sites are defined by a number of different characteristics, the most important ones being an exposed or otherwise distinctive topographical situation, the presence of significant quantities of burnt animal bones, and often massive layers of charcoal, as well as special incineration places (Fig. 4).<sup>44</sup> The main activities deduced from the archaeological record involve primarily bloody animal sacrifices and plant-based food, which were apparently burnt both during and after the ceremonies. In addition, there are indications of collective consumption, or ‘cult meals.’<sup>45</sup> The offering of bronze artifacts plays only a relatively minor role on the Bronze Age *Brandopferplätze*,

40 Bradley 2000, 27; Fontijn 2002, 266–267; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005, 355–356; Brück 2011, 390.

41 The deliberate deposition of weapons (notably swords) in rivers during the later Iron Age, i.e. the

Latène period, seems to follow a different logic and should be understood as a separate phenomenon.

42 Stöllner 2002, 572–573; cf. Egg 2002, 974.

43 Steiner 2010, 642.

44 Krämer 1966; Weiss 1997; Steiner 2010, 341–342.

45 Steiner 2010, 504–514.

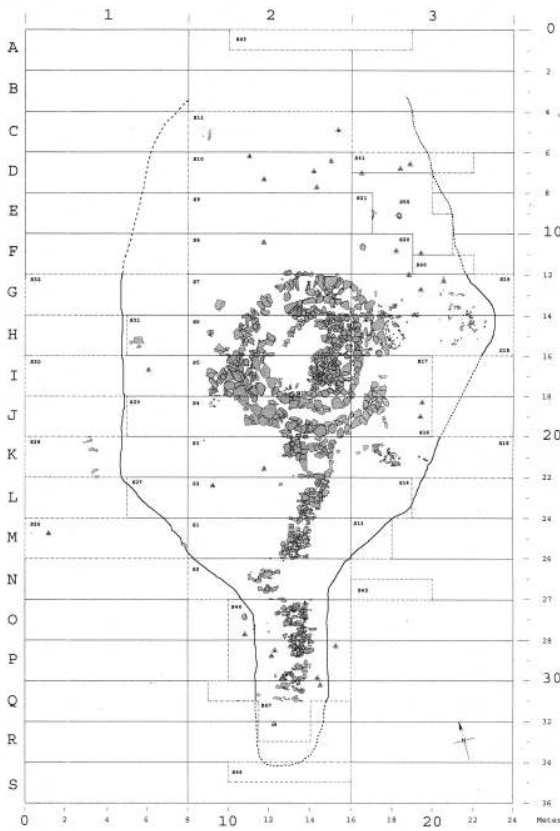


Fig. 4 The *Brandopferplatz* of Feldkirch Altenstadt Grütze (Vorarlberg, Austria) in the archaeological record: plan showing the stone structures (shaded in gray) as well as horizontal extension of an ash layer (indicated by the black line) containing an impressive amount of ceramic shards and animal bones. The site was established and frequented in two main phases around the 11th century BC.

however.<sup>46</sup> The question of whether Bronze Age *Brandopferplätze* can qualify theoretically as sanctuaries in the theological sense<sup>47</sup> is not the subject of this paper. This matter was last discussed in detail by Hubert Steiner.<sup>48</sup> Their designation as ‘ritual sites’ is based on the apparent continuity of use: it is obvious that practices were carried out at these places repeatedly. The said practices are furthermore lifted out of or distinguished from daily life by means of their intentional staging. The religious studies scholar Catherine Bell identifies this strategy as the “ritualization” of social practices, which results in the practices appearing to be more important, more legitimate, more powerful and more effective.<sup>49</sup>

46 Steiner 2010, 342, 630–634, 642.

47 E.g. Colpe 1970.

48 Steiner 2010, 340–342.

49 Bell 1992, 74, 90. – *Brandopferplätze* are not spatially remote from the settlements in every case, but can also border them or in some cases even be integrated into them, Steiner 2010, 341, 476–499.



Fig. 5 Topographic model showing the situation of the mentioned *Brandopferplätze*. 1: Feldkirch Blasenberg Göggelewald; 2: Feldkirch Altenstadt Grütze; 3: Balzers Gutenberg Glinzgelibüchel; 4: Fläsch Luzisteig Prasax.

In the area being studied, the archaeological record of the sites at Feldkirch Blasenberg Göggelewald<sup>50</sup>, Feldkirch Altenstadt Grütze<sup>51</sup> (both in Vorarlberg, Austria), Balzers Gutenberg Glinzgelibüchel<sup>52</sup> (Principality of Liechtenstein) and Fläsch Luzisteig Prasax<sup>53</sup> (canton of Grisons, Switzerland) provides indications of their use as *Brandopferplätze* during the Late Bronze Age (Fig. 5).

H. Steiner makes a general statement that exposed situations located on the edge of a valley between two sections of a landscape are favored sites for the set up of *Brandopferplätze*, and he therefore assesses them as “important structural elements of a cultural landscape.”<sup>54</sup> This topographic characteristic also definitely applies in the area being studied: while the two Vorarlberg *Brandopferplätze* from the sites of Feldkirch Blasenberg Göggelewald and Feldkirch Altenstadt Grütze are associated with the junction of the Rhine valley and the Ill valley, that of Balzers Gutenberg Glinzgelibüchel is situated at the ‘gateway’ to the Inner Alps. Moreover, the Late Bronze Age settlement of

50 Heeb 2012, 371, no. 298.

51 Vonbank 1955, 122–123; Vonbank 1963; Weiss 1997, 169, no. 33; Leitner 2002; Heeb 2006.

52 Gleischer, Nothdurfter, and Schubert 2002, 225, no. 30.

53 Jahrb. SGUF 86, 2003, 220–221; Berger 2009.

54 Steiner 2010, 485, 492–493.

Wartau Gretschins Herrenfeld<sup>55</sup> (canton of St. Gallen) is situated within sight on the opposite bank of the Rhine and therefore might also belong to the territory associated with this *Brandopferplatz*. The *Brandopferplatz* of Balzers Gutenberg Glinzgelibüchel definitely also relates to the stretch between the Alvier massif in the west and the Fläscherberg or Rätikon in the east where the Rhine valley narrows – i.e. the transition to the Inner Alps, and the access to the St. Luzisteig pass. It marks the southern end of the valley section, or the limit between the section around Balzers and the region bordering to the south. Together with the Late Bronze Age *Brandopferplatz* of Fläsch Luzisteig Prasax, situated at the southern end of the Fläscherberg, it could also mark the geographically important transit route section between the Rhine valley south of Lake Constance and the Inner Alps.

Against the background of similar observations in the contiguous regions, it can be assumed that the *Brandopferplätze* serve, among other things, as territorial reference points. Not only do they relate to topographically important intersections, they also often appear to relate to a regional catchment area that includes several settlements.<sup>56</sup> This is one reason why an interpretation of them as gathering centers for several settlement communities seems plausible.

When one attempts to apply the notion of a topographic memory culture here, a completely different picture emerges than that presented by the artifact depositions. In the case of the *Brandopferplätze*, although the practices, carried out repeatedly and over a longer period, are properly localized and although the site selected to establish the place must be seen as having a close relationship with the topography, the coordinates where the practices are carried out are specified by a definite site, which can be recognized as such and does not have to be determined, recognized and identified by the actors themselves.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, it is likely that the status of the ceremonial place and also that of the performances carried out there benefit from the topographically outstanding situation. As has been noted above, a transitional topography might contribute to the effectiveness of a ritual.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, from a spatial point of view, the performed activities relate primarily to the site itself and not to the whole topography, the territory or the natural environment. The topographic relation between the practices and the *Brandopferplätze* thus always is somehow indirect – in any case much less direct than that of the depositional practice.

55 Jahrb. SGU 44, 1954/55, 73–74; Primas et al. 2004, 20–26.

56 Steiner 2010, 642.

57 The site selection for the establishment of a *Brandopferplatz*, any other social gathering place or proto-sanctuary is nevertheless based on a collective deci-

sion of the group(s) concerned. The places where the *Brandopferplätze* were set up were also probably selected on the basis of their already implied symbolic meaning (which is mainly comprehensible for the exposed, topographically prominent sites).

58 Van Gennep 1909, 24, 27; cf. Bell 1997, 157.

The establishment and use of the *Brandopferplätze* as a typically Alpine form of ceremonial site will continue into the Roman imperial period.<sup>59</sup> In the area being studied, actual sanctuaries taking the form of architectural structures can be found only with the nascent Roman influence.<sup>60</sup>

#### 4 Object depositions and *Brandopferplätze* and their mnemonic potential

“The most original medium of mnemonics is spatialization,”<sup>61</sup> writes J. Assmann. Since it has been shown that the deposition of Bronze artifacts as well as the activities on the *Brandopferplätze* can be understood as ritualized practices with clear topographic references, the question of their mnemonic potential now arises. The ritual deposition of artifacts and the various ceremonial activities on the *Brandopferplätze* reproduce the cultural memory<sup>62</sup> (or components thereof), making them part of the active memory process.<sup>63</sup>

As has been shown, the two source categories are characterized by distinctive, albeit completely differing, topographical contexts. This observation initially leads to the conclusion that they refer to different spatial concepts. While in the case of the depositions, we are confronted with a reproduction of the mythological cosmos in the form of a ‘scape’, it is likely that *Brandopferplätze* reflect mainly actual territorial relationships. In the chronological comparison, the practice of object deposition in the Central Alps declines drastically around the beginning of the Iron Age, while the custom of executing collective ceremonial rituals, including the burning of offerings, on specially defined sites increases noticeably from the end of the Bronze Age and establishes itself as a prevalent practice in the following period. Although the two ritual practices were carried out in parallel and appear to have complemented each other without being directly connected to one another, the observations about their topography might point to a shifting in the understanding of the natural environment from a *memoryscape* to an actual *memorylandscape*.

Against the background of the discussion above, it is certainly interesting to mention the Late Bronze Age trend towards a structural differentiation and centralization in the settlement landscape: from around the 11th century BC onwards (i.e. in the Late Bronze Age, respectively in the phase Hallstatt B), so-called ‘clustered settlements’<sup>64</sup> start

59 Steiner 2010, 647–656.

60 The Jupiter temple from the Julierpass in the canton of Grisons can be listed as an example for this, Koenig 1979.

61 Assmann 2007, 59.

62 Assmann 2007, 56–59.

63 C. Bell points out that these processes can definitely proceed instinctively, Bell 1997, 78–83, 167.

64 Primas 2008, 41.



to occur in the Grisons area, as well as in the Rhine valley south of Lake Constance. These are characterized by their size, their convenient location in terms of traffic routes, and their elaborate fortification works.<sup>65</sup> The trend towards settlement agglomeration essentially continues in the Iron Age and attains a special importance then.<sup>66</sup>

Also worthy of consideration are the actors behind the practices discussed here. Single artifact depositions are associated mainly with individual persons (possibly along with associated persons).<sup>67</sup> In the relevant literature, hunters, herders, ore prospectors, and possibly traders or sumpter-like operators, as well as travelers, are assumed, on the basis of the topographical find context and the range of artifact categories, to be the persons responsible for the Alpine high-altitude finds.<sup>68</sup> In contrast, the preserved remains on the *Brandopferplätze* appear to testify to larger-scale ceremonies involving numerous participants ('ritual communities') – whose numbers one can easily imagine to have included the individuals behind the single object depositions as well – and specifically involved the presence of a corresponding ruling 'establishment' as well.<sup>69</sup> With the increase in the demand for raw materials and resources, the formation of social elites, and the associated increase in organizational complexity<sup>70</sup> from the second half of the Bronze Age onwards, it seems reasonable to expect not only an institutionalization of the power relationships and the spatial circumstances, but also an increasing institutionalization of the collective memory. Although ritual practices carried out by individuals in the unaltered natural landscape still occur towards the end of the Late Bronze Age and in the Early Iron Age (and far beyond as well), the natural topography no longer appears to form an equally important determinant here (at any rate, traces suggesting such a role are rarely to be found today)<sup>71</sup>.

With regard to the form of memory, communicative memory plays a far greater role in the selection of the deposition sites than it does in the frequenting of a *Brandopferplatz*: if one accepts that individual (albeit socially structured) initiatives are behind the single

65 E.g. Montlingerberg (Primas 1977; Steinhauser-Zimmermann 1989, 69–70, 73); Flums Gräpplang (Neubauer 1994); Berschis St. Georg (Jahrb. SGU 25, 1933, 89; von Uslar 1991, 112 no. 1U3; Fischer 2003, 112). – All sites are situated in the canton of St. Gallen, Switzerland.

66 Extremely rich and proto-urban settlements in the style of so-called 'princely residences' do not materialize in the Central Alps, however, cf. Pauli 1992, 613–614.

67 For example Kossack 2002, 313.

68 For example Wyss 1971, 138; Wyss 1978, 142–144; Mayer 1980, 181; Neubauer 1994, 118.

69 Steiner 2010, 504–514, 598–599.

70 For example Clausen 1998, 318–319; Kristiansen and Larsson 2005, 218, 224; Primas 2008, 197–201; Steiner 2010, 611–615. No such noticeable trend towards social structuring of the kind that existed in this period in the areas directly to the north and south can be detected, Steiner 2010, 608. Here, the structuring becomes manifest through settlement archaeology, with researchers making inferences about social hierarchies on the basis of spatial and functional hierarchies, cf. Primas 2008, 39–46.

71 Th. Stöllner rightly points out that, theoretically, one must always expect that organic materials may have also been deliberately deposited, Stöllner 2002, 582. These have not been preserved however.

object depositions, the active tradition of the custom of depositing artifacts, and particularly of the relevant topography, must have been an essential part of the “communicative memory” culture<sup>72</sup> (whereas cosmology, as the determining structure, always remains the content of *cultural memory!*). The deposition of artifacts at unaltered, natural locations requires a form of knowledge which was obviously widely known and accessible to practically everyone. The awareness of the mythical geography can be seen as part of Bronze Age socialization or *habitus*. At this moment of shared knowledge about the natural environment, it was obviously possible for anyone to make contact with the different realms of the mythical cosmos. This points to an individual rite with an ‘equal right’ of access for all. With the institutionalization and specialization of the ritual practices and the corresponding locations, cultural memory gains significantly in importance, which is not least expressed in a distinct participation structure: J. Assmann writes that “everyone is equally competent”,<sup>73</sup> with respect to communicative memory, while in the cultural memory culture knowledge is tied to specialists who possess it, because “cultural memory, unlike communicative, is a matter of institutionalized mnemonics”.<sup>74</sup> Participants of a collective ritual ceremony do not necessarily require either mythical, or real geographic knowledge, as they follow an authorized master of ceremonies within a controlled context. For the spatial memory of a society, this means a shift toward a physically and mentally organized, institutionalized and hierarchized landscape and away from a natural and cultural space with a more egalitarian concept: a space in which cultural memory did not depend on a territory and could be called up by practically every appropriately socialized person (Fig. 6).

These two different modes of topographic memory obviously co-existed for some time,<sup>75</sup> and since the concepts associated with them do not necessarily compete with one another, they would not have interfered with each other. Why the individual rituals with topographic context ultimately cease to be an archaeologically detectable phenomenon is difficult to explain. Based on the current state of research, it may be possible that a change in religious thinking is involved: either the mythological geography no longer has such a strong connection to the physical terrain, or the mythological realm can no longer be reached by individuals with the aid of the physical natural environment. The increased occurrence of *Brandopferplätze* towards the end of the Bronze Age coincides with a simultaneous increase in density and hierarchization of the settlement network, accompanied by a more pronounced social structure and the extension of the

72 Assmann 2007, 48–56.

73 Assmann 2007, 53.

74 Assmann 2007, 52.

75 The almost regularly occurring multi-artifact and single depositions in the immediate vicinity of *Brandopferplätze* constitute a special phenomenon not discussed here. For details see: Steiner 2010, 523–535, in particular 523, 526.

	Single artifact depositions in unaltered natural environments	Ceremonial gathering places ( <i>Brandopferplätze</i> ) featuring a prominent topographic setting	Settlement patterns
Development trends from the Late Bronze Age towards the Early Iron Age, ascertainable in the archaeological record from the Central Alps	Trend: Decrease of practice	Trend: Emergence and establishment of sites, incl. related practices	Trend: Agglomeration, hierarchization, centralization, territorial control
Underlying space/memory concepts	Space/memory concept: Memory scape featuring geographically flexible reference points within the unaltered natural environment. Scape, spatial knowledge, and hence collective cultural memory, is 'equally' accessible by everyone.	Space/memory concept: Memory landscape featuring ceremonial gathering places with fixed coordinates. Physical space, spatial knowledge, and hence collective cultural memory, is more controlled, specialized and institutionalized.	

Fig. 6 Development trends in selected archaeological sources indicating a shift in space/memory concepts.

economic network.<sup>76</sup> There seems to be a tendency for the control of collective memory to go hand in hand with the control of the physical topography by elites. The fact that evidence of the object depositional practice with topographic reference declines significantly during the Early Iron Age and after the Hallstatt period at the latest is lacking completely,<sup>77</sup> might point to a changing understanding of space, in which the landscape tends to be more structured, hierarchized and institutionalized by humans. In such a landscape, the immediate connection between mythology and natural landscape becomes less important, and cultural memory is newly concentrated on distinct, marked sites. The elites now control space through the strategic placement of large settlements and check points, resulting in actual territories. A logical consequence of this new feature is the nascent, specific manifestation of ceremonial gathering places or proto-sanctuaries in which material symbolism (which was previously sought in the unaltered, natural terrain) reappears as a construction in the architectonic syntax – as Trevor Watkins puts it: “they could materialize their social institutions, frame their perceptions and form the arena within which social and other relations were played out.”<sup>78</sup>

As has been shown, spatialization, as mnemonics, can function not only with the aid of memory places or networks of memory places, but apparently also through flexible, meta-geographic reference points within *scapes* as well. Finally, following on from

76 Steiner 2010, 642.

78 Watkins 2004, 105.

77 Van Gennep 1909, 19–27, 275–276.

this, the following hypothesis can be formulated: the *depositionscape* reflects a quasi-egalitarian form of memory, while the permanently established ceremonial places, such as *Brandopferlätze*, form the framework of a memory form which tends to be specialized, institutionalized and monopolized by elites. The deposition of single artifacts at natural, unaltered locations thus testifies impressively to a genuine form of spatialized memory during the Bronze Age.

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swisstopo. 3 Jecklin 1912, 190 Fig. 2; 191, Fig. 3. 4 Heeb 2006, 176 Fig. 1. 5–6 Ariane Ballmer.

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# The Multipolarity of Athenian Social Memory: Polis, Tribes and Demes as Interdependent Memory Communities

## Summary

In their analysis of the Athenians' shared image of their past as an essential element of Athenian collective identity, scholars have largely focused on polis-wide commemorative activities such as the Athenian public funeral oration for the war dead. Taking the inherent multipolarity of social memory into account, this paper examines the collective memories of two types of Athenian sub-groups, namely demes and tribes, and explores how their shared memories and the 'official' Athenian polis tradition mutually influenced and sustained each other in 5th- and 4th-century Athenian public discourse.

Keywords: Social memory; collective memory; Classical Athens; collective identity; demes; tribes; polis tradition; funeral oration.

Im Zentrum der Analyse des Geschichtsbilds der Athener als integralem Element ihrer kollektiven Identität standen bisher vornehmlich die polisweiten Formen des öffentlichen Gedenkens, wie z. B. die öffentliche Leichenrede für die gefallenen Athener. Ausgehend von der dem kollektiven Gedächtnis inhärenten Multipolarität widmet sich dieser Beitrag den in den Demen und Phylen gepflegten Erinnerungen und untersucht, wie diese und die ‚offizielle‘ athenische Polistradition sich im öffentlichen Diskurs der Athener im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr. gegenseitig beeinflussten und stützten.

Keywords: Soziales Gedächtnis; kollektives Gedächtnis; klassisches Athen; kollektive Identität; Demen; Phylen; Polistradition; Leichenrede.

The translations of Greek into English are my own but sometimes draw freely on standard published translations. In transliterating Greek names and places I have generally maintained Greek forms (Kleisthenes instead of Cleisthenes or Clisthenes), but for Greek authors, the more familiar Latinized forms have been retained (Aeschylus rather than Aischy-

los). For ancient authors and their works, I used the abbreviations recommended by *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*<sup>3</sup> (Oxford 1996).

## 1 Athenian social memory

Those men [i.e. the Athenian ancestors] single-handedly twice repelled, on land and sea, the army advancing from all of Asia, and at their personal risks established themselves as the authors of the common salvation for all the Greeks.

— Demosthenes 60.10

With these words, the orator Demosthenes sums up the Athenians' accomplishments at the Battle of Marathon (490 BC) and during Xerxes' invasion of Greece (480–479 BC) in his public funeral speech for the fallen at Chaironeia in 338 BC. Modern readers familiar with the Greco-Persian Wars through Herodotus' historiographical account will readily point out gross historical distortions. Neither at Marathon nor at Salamis, Artemision and Plataiai did the Athenians fight "single-handedly" against the Persians: at Marathon they were aided by roughly one thousand loyal Plataians and during Xerxes' invasion the Athenians fought alongside thirty other Greek *poleis* in an alliance led by Sparta. In light of such passages, Classicists have long faulted Demosthenes and his fellow orators for their "truly astonishing ignorance [...] of the history of their city"<sup>1</sup> or for their deliberate historical falsification and manipulation of their audience.<sup>2</sup> Demosthenes' statement may be of little use to historians of the Persian Wars, but it is invaluable to scholars of Athenian social memory since it provides a glimpse into how Athenians saw themselves and the history of their city.

Social or collective memory – "the shared remembrances of group experience"<sup>3</sup> – is a powerful force in every community. By offering people a shared image of their past, it creates feelings of identity and belonging, explains the present and provides a vision of the future.<sup>4</sup> Social memory keeps alive defining moments of the past, victories and

1 Jacoby 1954, i.95.

2 Cf. Perlman 1961; Nouhaud 1982; Harding 1987; Worthington 1994. For a critique of various previous approaches to the Attic orators' use of the past, see Steinbock 2012, 38–43.

3 Alcock 2002, i. For a more detailed discussion of the concept of social memory, cf. Steinbock 2012, 7–19.

4 Maurice Halbwachs, a student of the French sociologist Émile Durkheim and murdered in Buchenwald 1945, was the first to establish memory as a social category. For his concept of 'collective memory'; see Halbwachs 1925; Halbwachs 1941; Halbwachs 1950 (posthumously published and first translated into

defeats, inner conflicts and outside aggression. These memories often cluster around heroic or traumatic events – like the Persian Wars – and have a profound impact on the group’s sense of itself and the world that surrounds it.<sup>5</sup> Over time, the particular historical circumstances of such foundational events fade away and they become symbols of the collective character of the remembering communities. As a result, collective memories usually do not stand up to the scrutiny of professional historians, as we have seen in Demosthenes’ case. They are often simplistic, contain fictitious elements and show signs of distortions. But they are real to the remembering community, since they conform to the view the community has of itself.<sup>6</sup> What people remember about the past shapes their collective identity and determines their friends and enemies.<sup>7</sup> For these reasons, social memory is also known as ‘myth’, ‘meaningful history’, ‘usable past’, ‘imagined and remembered history’, ‘cultural memory’, ‘believed history’ or ‘intentionale Geschichte’.<sup>8</sup>

Following the rise of memory studies in other disciplines in the 1980s, Classicists too have begun to explore how the ancient Greeks remembered their past and what role this past played in their lives. Classical Athens – thanks to the relative wealth of sources and the enduring interest in the world’s first democracy – has stood at the heart of this endeavor. Drawing primarily on the Athenian funeral orations and other forms of polis-wide commemorative activities,<sup>9</sup> Nicole Loraux, Rosalind Thomas and Hans-Joachim Gehrke were among the first to investigate the complex relationship between Athenian ideology and collective memory.<sup>10</sup> They have shown convincingly that the Persian War experience fundamentally altered the Athenians’ view of themselves. After

English in 1980). To avoid suspicions of social determinism inherent in Halbwachs’ work, most scholars in the field today prefer the term ‘social memory’ to Halbwachs’ ‘collective memory’. While emphasizing the dynamic and communicative aspects of the concept, I will, for the sake of variation, use both terms interchangeably. By now, the body of scholarship on social memory has become enormous. For a concise introduction, see Alcock 2002, 1–35. Fentress and Wickham 1992, Misztal 2003 and Erll and Nünning 2008 offer comprehensive treatments of the concept.

- 5 Cf. the concept of the ‘imagined community’, pioneered by B. Anderson 1991.
- 6 Loraux 1986, 171; Thomas 1989, 206; Fentress and Wickham 1992, 25–26. For the relationship between history and memory, see A. Assmann 2001.
- 7 Prager 2001, 2223–2224.
- 8 Cf. A. Assmann 2001, 6824; Fentress and Wickham 1992, 25 define social memory as an “expression of collective experience: social memory identifies a group, giving it a sense of its past and defining its

aspiration for the future”. Similarly, Misztal 2003, 158. Gehrke 1994 introduced the term ‘intentionale Geschichte’ to describe this very phenomenon. According to Gehrke 2001, 286 it denotes “that which a society knows and holds for true about its past, [which] is of fundamental significance for the *imaginaire*, for the way a society interprets and understands itself, and therefore for its inner coherence and ultimately its collective identity”. Closely related are Jan Assmann’s ‘kulturelles Gedächtnis’ and Pierre Nora’s concept of *lieux de mémoire* as physical and symbolic places of memory. Cf. J. Assmann 1995; Nora 1996.

- 9 Cf. Gehrke 2001, 301–302.
- 10 Cf. Loraux 1986, 132–171; Thomas 1989, 196–237; Gehrke 1994; Gehrke 2001; Gehrke 2003. Following Ober 1989, 38 I use the term ‘ideology’ in its wider sense to denote a community’s mental framework, which is acquired by the members of a community through socialization and consists of “assumptions, opinions and principles which are common to the great majority of those members”.

their glorious victory at Marathon and their decisive contribution to the victories at Salamis and Plataiai ten years later, the Athenians began to see themselves as undisputed leaders of the Greeks, as champions of Greek liberty against both barbarian invaders and Greek oppressors.<sup>11</sup> This shared memory of the Persian Wars became a “cornerstone of their identity;” it justified Athens’ hegemony in Greece and had “prescriptive force for future conduct.”<sup>12</sup>

## 2 Multipolarity of social memory

Not everybody accepts the validity of the concept of social memory. Some critics even deny its existence. Concerned about the possibility that social memory could become a new form of the old essentialist categories (collective, people, *Volk*, etc.), they object that remembering is an individual mental act: “Just as a nation cannot eat or dance, it cannot speak or remember,”<sup>13</sup> wrote Amos Funkenstein.

This is a legitimate criticism to which scholars of social memory must reply.<sup>14</sup> One way of dissolving fears of social memory as a new essentialist category is to appreciate fully “the dialectical tensions between personal memory and the social construction of the past.”<sup>15</sup> Since social memory is based on the multitude of people that do the remembering, scholars of social memory ought to take the results of cognitive psychology and neuroscientific research on individual memory into account.<sup>16</sup> Remembering is always a personal act, in which memories are routed into consciousness and “organized into patterns so that they make some kind of continuing sense in an ever-changing present.”<sup>17</sup> Since a group’s collective memory consists of the individual memory of its members, the dynamic and presentist nature of individual memory must apply to the group’s collective memories as well. Social memory is nevertheless different from the sum total of personal thoughts about the past.<sup>18</sup> It does have a truly social dimension in that it only comes into existence when people *talk* about the memories they consider important enough to share with others. As a result, both *social relevance* and *communication* are crucial elements of this concept. Moreover, for a memory to be shared it first needs to

11 The symbolic meaning of Marathon, where they fought (almost) alone against the Persians on behalf of the other Greeks, was thereby extended to Xerxes’ invasion as well, as Dem. 60. 10 (cited above) shows. Cf. Thomas 1989, 224–226.

12 Gehrke 2001, 302.

13 Funkenstein 1993, 4.

14 For a more detailed discussion of this problem and possible solutions, see Funkenstein 1993, 4–10; Al-

cock 2002, 15–16; Misztal 2003, 7–15; Steinbock 2012, 8–13.

15 Misztal 2003, 54.

16 Thomas 1989, 11–13; Baddeley 1989; Fentress and Wickham 1992, 1–40; Misztal 2003, 9–12; Manier and Hirst 2008.

17 Young 1988, 97–98. Schacter 2001, 146 calls this phenomenon ‘hindsight’ bias: “we reconstruct the past to make it consistent with what we know in the present.”

18 Cf. Zerubavel 1997, 96.

be articulated and thus depends on the conventions of language and other common cultural forms.<sup>19</sup>

Another way of avoiding the danger of reifying a unified collective group mind – this is the path taken in this chapter – is to emphasize the persistence of numerous ‘memory communities’ which are at work at any given time.<sup>20</sup> Every social group derives its group identity – at least partially – from its traditions and is thus able to foster its own collective memory.<sup>21</sup> Since large communities consist of numerous subgroups – for example, regional and local communities, socio-economic classes, ethnic and religious groups, etc. – there exist various concurrent and possibly competing memories at all times and individuals can partake in several of them simultaneously.<sup>22</sup> In a free society, a broadly accepted image of the past needs to be negotiated carefully, lest competing social memories and group identities function as centrifugal forces and endanger the cohesion of the community as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

Building on the seminal work of Loraux, Thomas and Gehrke, Classicists have made great strides over the last decade to immerse themselves in the interdisciplinary discourse of memory studies and to do full justice to the multipolar and dynamic nature of Athenian social memory.<sup>24</sup> The goal of this paper is to contribute to this enterprise by investigating the social memories of two types of subgroups in Classical Athens, the demes and tribes, and explore how their memories and the ‘official’ polis tradition<sup>25</sup> mutually influenced and sustained each other.<sup>26</sup> In this context, three questions in particular are worth asking: 1. Were there any distinct deme and tribal identities in Classical Athens? 2. Did these demes and tribes foster shared images of their own past, which were particularly meaningful to their own members? 3. If they did, how did these social memories relate to the collective memory of the Athenian polis as a whole?

19 Fentress and Wickham 1992, 47; A. Assmann 2001, 6822; Misztal 2003, 6, 11.

20 See Burke 1989, 107; Alcock 2002, 15. Some scholars prefer the alternative term ‘mnemonic community’; cf. Zerubavel 1996; Prager 2001, 2224; Misztal 2003, 15–19.

21 J. Assmann 1995, 127, 130. Wischermann 2002, 7 makes the excellent suggestion to divert scholarly attention from the “kulturellen Großgedächtnis” towards the great number of competing visions of the past in any given society.

22 The American Civil War offers a good example of competing ethnic and regional memory communities. Cf. Blight 2002.

23 For the necessity of such a “Minimalkonsens in Sachen der eigenen Geschichte” in a democracy, see Winkler 2004.

24 See, in particular, Alcock 2002, 36–98; Wolpert 2002; G. Anderson 2003, 121–218; Forsdyke 2005, 259–267; Jung 2006; Grethlein 2010; Foxhall, Gehrke, and Luraghi 2010; Stein-Hölkeskamp and Hölkeskamp 2010; Haake and Jung 2011; Marincola, Llewellyn-Jones, and Maciver 2012; Arrington 2010; Arrington 2011; Low 2010; Low 2012; Shear 2011; Shear 2013; Steinbock 2012; Osmers 2013.

25 Thomas 1989, 200, 208. For a discussion of this term, see below.

26 There were, of course, many more subgroups in Classical Athens (families, phratries, religious associations, sympotic groups, women, slaves, metics, etc.). I decided to focus on demes and tribes, since the shared memories of their (male) members are slightly better documented in the historic record than the rest.

### 3 Demes and tribes

After the ousting of the tyrant Hippias, two Athenian aristocrats, Isagoras and Kleisthenes, fought for political power in Athens in 508/507 BC. Kleisthenes won this struggle by partnering with the common people and instituting a series of socio-political reforms that would lay the foundation for Athenian democracy.<sup>27</sup> He radically reorganized the Athenian citizenry by creating ten new Athenian tribes (*phylai*) in place of the four old Ionian ones.<sup>28</sup> For the creation of these new tribes, Kleisthenes constituted 139 demes or local units, which were based on the old villages and neighborhoods, and divided each of the three regions of Attica (city, coast and hinterland) by demes into ten equal parts, called trittyes. Since the demes varied greatly in size, a trittys could comprise one single large deme or up to nine small demes.<sup>29</sup> To ensure that regional interests were equally represented in each tribe, three different trittyes were assigned to each tribe, one trittys from the city, one from the coast and one from the hinterland of Attica (Fig. 1).

These demes and tribes became the political and social infrastructure of Classical Athens.<sup>30</sup> The demes were self-governing local units and functioned as the “political substratum”<sup>31</sup> of the Athenian polis. Each deme kept a register of their own membership (*lexiarchikon grammateion*), which served – in lieu of a central register of all Athenians – as proof of Athenian citizenship. Deme membership was hereditary once it had been established by registration in the deme of residence in 508/507 BC.

Despite their artificial composition, the ten tribes were immensely important social and political units, on an intermediate level between the deme and the polis. The tribes served as the basis for the political and military organization of the Athenian polis. Every year each tribe sent fifty representative to the Council of Five Hundred (*boule*), where each tribe’s council members served in turn as a steering committee for one tenth of the year.<sup>32</sup> The Athenian army consisted of ten tribal regiments (*taxeis*), each under the command of a tribal officer (*taxiarch*).<sup>33</sup>

27 For Kleisthenes’ reforms, cf. Hdt. 5. 66, 69; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 21; Whitehead 1986, 3–38; Ostwald 1988; Bleicken 1994, 153–160, 447–450; Parker 1996, 102–104; G. Anderson 2003, 34–42; Ober 2008, 139–143.

28 Ostwald 1988, 310. The term ‘tribe’ (*phyle*) is here not used as sociopolitical type of non-state social organizations; cf. G. Anderson 2003, 124.

29 Cf. Whitehead 1986, 22.

30 There is very little evidence that the *trittyes* constituted independent social groups like the demes and tribes. They seem to have served predominantly as a mechanism for the socio-political reorganization of Attica. Cf. Bleicken 1994, 160; Parker 1996, 103.

31 Ostwald 1988, 310.

32 Parker 1996, 117. For the number of council members allotted to each deme, see Whitehead 1986, 266–270, 369–373.

33 Burckhardt 1996, 21–22.



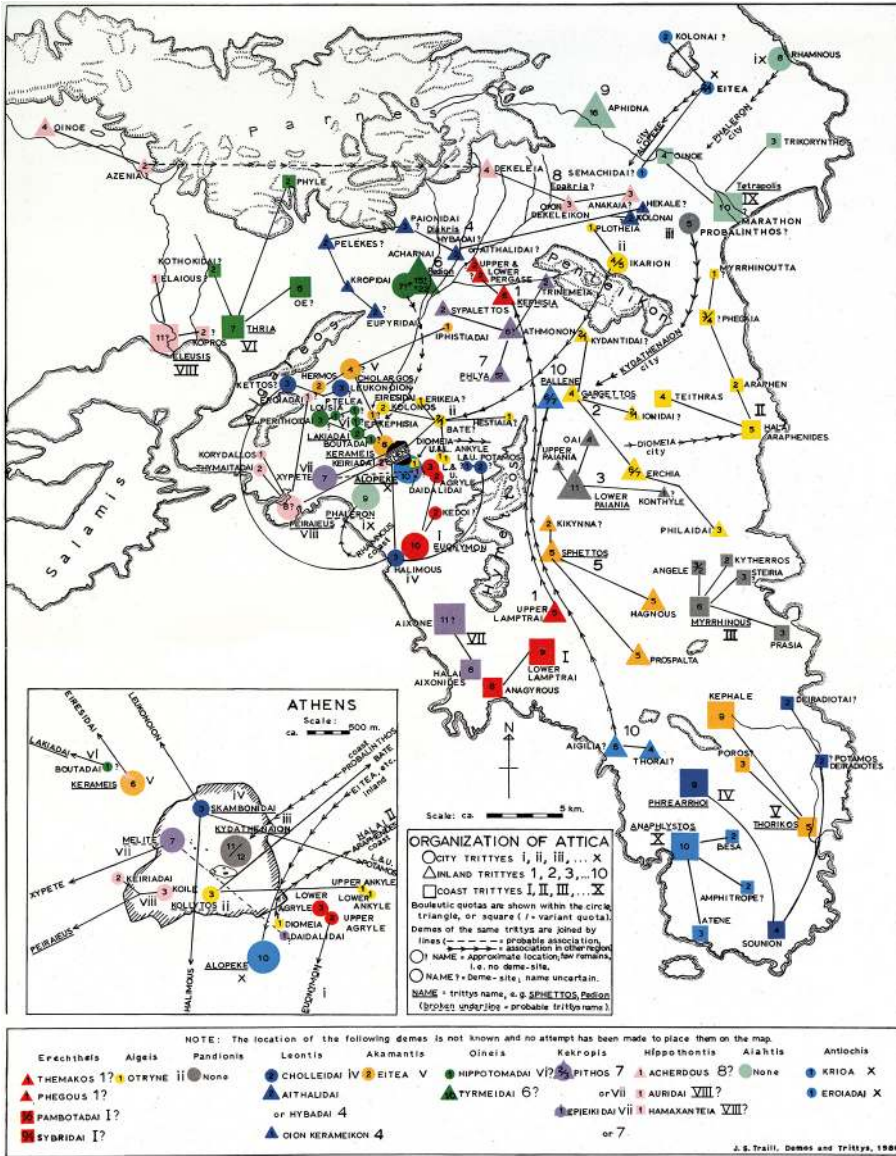


Fig. 1 The system of demes, trittyes and tribes after 508/507 BC.

#### 4 Deme and tribal identity and collective memory

After Kleisthenes' reforms, each Athenian was simultaneously a member of the polis, his tribe and his deme.<sup>34</sup> But to what extent did Athenians in the 5th and 4th centuries develop a particular deme and tribal identity in addition to their collective identity as Athenians?<sup>35</sup> It will become apparent that the strong feelings of identity and belonging, which the demes and tribes fostered through numerous communal activities, stemmed largely from the members' shared sense of their deme and tribal history. This comprised not only the recent history, but also the distant past of their respective mythical ancestors.<sup>36</sup> For, Greeks considered stories which we would classify as myths (i.e., as unhistorical and fictitious) as integral elements of their own history. They aided them in understanding where they had come from and who they were, and thus fulfill the same social function as collective memories of more recent historical events.<sup>37</sup>

Given their relatively small sizes, the demes represented face-to-face communities, in which individuals were all fairly well acquainted.<sup>38</sup> Although they did not exist as administrative units before Kleisthenes' reforms, many of them continued "most of the practices and narratives of the old village[s]".<sup>39</sup> Especially people in the rural demes tended to their local "shrines which had always been theirs, inherited from their fathers from the old political order".<sup>40</sup> The heroes and heroines worshiped at these ancient shrines generally had a story attached to them. As Emily Kearns has argued persuasively, the hero served "as focal point for a group consciousness [...], [and the] development of myth and saga, of narrative traditions concerning the hero, is intimately related to this

34 In addition, each male [!] Athenian also belonged to various other subgroups: his own family, his age-set, his phratry (another old fictive kinship group), possibly a *genos* (distinguished priestly family) or other voluntary organizations, such as a sympotic group or local and private religious associations. For the role of family memory, see Thomas 1989, 95–154 and Steinbock 2013. For *gene*, local and private religious associations, see Kearns 1989, 64–79 and Parker 1996, 284–342. For phratries, see Lambert 1993. For age-sets in Athens, see Steinbock 2011. For a brief survey of Athenian subgroups (including demes and tribes) and their collective memories, see Steinbock 2012, 70–84.

35 G. Anderson 2003 argues persuasively that regional identities were predominant in Attica up to the end of the 6th century and that Athenians developed a polis-wide identity as Athenians primarily as a *result* of Kleisthenes' reforms.

36 In predominantly oral societies, collective memories typically cluster around both the very distant

past and the last 100 years of living memory. For the resulting 'hourglass effect' and 'floating gap,' see Vansina 1985 and Thomas 2001, 198–199.

37 In diplomatic discourse, for instance, arguments drawn from the mythical and the recent past were often used side by side; cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6. 3. 4–6; Aeschin. 2. 31–33; Arist. *Rh.* 1396a 12–14; Gehrke 2001, 286, 297–306; Grethlein 2007, 363; Harding 2008, 3; Steinbock 2012, 26–28.

38 The same cannot be said for Athens as a whole; cf. Thuc. 8. 66. 3 and Whitehead 1986, 69. Based on the estimated figure of 50 000 Athenian male citizens in 431 BC (cf. G. Anderson 2003, 2) and the fixed deme quotas for bouleutic representation, the largest deme Acharnai consisted of about 2200 men (Thuc. 2.20.4 speaks of 3000) and the smallest demes of about 100 men. cf. Whitehead 1986, 369–373, 397–399.

39 Kearns 1989, 92.

40 Thuc. 2. 16. 2; cf. the sacred calendar of the deme Thorikos (*SEG* 33. 147); Whitehead 1986, 194–199.

function”.<sup>41</sup> There is no universal explanation for the origins of Greek hero cults, but scholars largely agree that the rise of Greek epic played an important role in their development.<sup>42</sup> People in the Geometric period regarded the old, more magnificent Mycenaean tombs with awe and veneration and, inspired by the spread of epic, honored their inhabitants as people from another age. This could lead either to the identification of tombs and other places of worship with well-known epic heroes or to the association of minor local heroes with figures from the epic cycles, which further stimulated the development of local myths.<sup>43</sup> Some of the local heroes and heroines, worshiped in the Attic demes, such as Hekale, Aphidnos, Dekelos, Marathos and Phaleros, were connected to the great hero Theseus and thus belong to this category.<sup>44</sup> In light of the grandiose civic and religious buildings in the city center (i.e. in the Agora and on the Acropolis) it is easy to forget that the landmarks and shrines dedicated to these local heroes and heroines all around Attica functioned as small, local *lieux de mémoire* and thus were an integral element of the Athenians’ material framework, their *cadre matériel*, where their collective memories could dwell.<sup>45</sup>

Many demes like Kephalos or Thorikos had an eponymous hero (ἥρωας ἐπώνυμος), whereas others, named after their localities like Ramnous, had a mythical founder-hero (ἥρωας ἀρχηγέτης).<sup>46</sup> Some of the demes boasted longstanding cults of these heroes. In other cases, an eponymous hero may have been created by mere conjecture.<sup>47</sup> Yet even in these later cases, once the eponymous hero was established, he assumed special significance, since he was “capable of answering for the deme the most fundamental question of all – How did the area come into being?”<sup>48</sup>

The importance of deme identity is most obvious in the Athenians’ use of the *demotikon* (the deme name) rather than the *patronymikon* (the father’s name) in public life.<sup>49</sup> The orator Demosthenes, for instance, was known in the assembly as Δημοσθένης Παιανιεύς (Demosthenes the Paianier) and his opponent Aeschines from the deme

41 Kearns 1989, 103.

42 In some cases, cult worship clearly predates the spread of epic in the 8th century. For a lucid discussion of the various origins of Attic hero cults, see Kearns 1989, 103–110, 129–137.

43 Kearns 1989, 129–130; cf. Coldstream 1976.

44 Cf. Kearns 1989, 94–96, 121, 151, 154, 157–158, 183, 203. The local heroes Aphidnos, Dekelos and Marathos were connected with the unflattering account of Theseus’ rape of the maiden Helen, whereas Phaleros and Hekale aided him in his fight against the Amazons and the Marathonian bull respectively. Cf. Harding 2008, 56, 67–70.

45 The concept of the *cadre matériel* as physical setting for collective memories was first proposed by Halb-

wachs 1925; Halbwachs 1941; Halbwachs 1980 and further developed by Nora 1996 into the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, which includes both real and imagined places. Cf. Alcock 2002, 23–32; Jung 2006, 15.

46 Cf. Whitehead 1986, 208–211; Kearns 1989, 92–100; Parker 2005, 71.

47 Cults are attested for the eponymous heroes of Anagyrous, Diomeia, Hekale, Ikarion, Kerameis, Kolonos, Lakiadai, Marathon, Phaleron, Thorikos. The deme Ramnous sacrificed to a founder hero (*IG II<sup>2</sup> 2849*). For a list of all eponymous deme heroes mentioned in literary source, see Whitehead 1986, 210 n. 199, and Kearns 1989, 101–102.

48 Kearns 1989, 100.

49 Cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 20. 4–5; Whitehead 1986, 17.

Kothokidai as Αισχύλης Κοθωκίδος.<sup>50</sup> That the use of the *demotikon* was not merely a constitutional convention but an expression of the strong emotional bond a demesman felt with his relatives and neighbors is suggested by the numerous shared activities that forged the demes into close-knit communities. The demesmen (*demotai*) held regular assemblies to vote in new members, elect the deme's officials, debate about its finances or handle any other of its ordinary business.<sup>51</sup> They also met regularly to sacrifice and hold communal meals at their local shrines.<sup>52</sup> The sacred calendar of Thorikos,<sup>53</sup> for instance, prescribed that about sixty sacrifices per year be performed by this particular deme.<sup>54</sup> In light of the central role the deme and its numerous local cults played in an Athenian's life, it is not surprising that Thucydides remarked about the inhabitants of the rural demes, who were forced by the invading Peloponnesian army in 431 BC to leave their homes and shrines and move into the city, that it was "nothing less for each of them than abandoning his own polis."<sup>55</sup>

Although the ten Kleisthenic tribes, consisting of a city, a coastal and an inland tritty (Fig. 1), were entirely artificial constructs, they resembled the demes in their association with eponymous heroes and were thus "deeply embedded in traditional religious assumptions."<sup>56</sup> Upon Kleisthenes' request, the oracle of Delphi chose ten heroes from a list of one hundred Attic heroes, who would give the tribes their names.<sup>57</sup> The ten successful candidates made a remarkably distinguished group of four Attic kings (Kekrops, Erechtheus, Pandion, Aigeus), a kinglike figure (Leos), a son of Theseus and Herakles respectively (Akamas and Antiochos), a culture hero (Oineus), one hero from Eleusis (Hippothon) and a famous Homeric hero from Salamis (Aias).<sup>58</sup> They were, for the most part, renowned figures of Attic lore and cult, who either symbolized links to Attica's border regions (Eleusis, Salamis) or were famous for their efforts to unify Attica in the mythical past. They were thus ideally suited to "lend an appealing glamor to the pan-Attic character" of the ten newly created tribes, which was of paramount importance since each tribe comprised Athenian citizens from three different regions of Attica (Fig. 1).<sup>59</sup> At the same time, these ten heroes, each with his own stories, were

50 See the snide remark in Dem. 18. 180 with Yunis 2001, 212. The use of the *demotikon* is also evident in Athenian inscriptions. See, e.g., Rhodes and Osborne 2003, 41–42 (= *JG II*<sup>2</sup> 1): "Resolved by the council and the people. Pandionis was the prytany; Agyrrhios of Kollytos (Αγύρριος Κ[ολλυτ]εύς) was secretary; Euklides was archon; Kallias of Oa (Καλλίας Ὀαθεν) was chairman. Kephisophon proposed." For the linguistic formation and the uses of the *demotikon*, see Whitehead 1986, 70–75.

51 Cf. Whitehead 1986, 86–130; Parker 1996, 114–116.

52 Parker 1996, 114–16.

53 *SEG* 33. 147.

54 Whitehead 1986, 194–199.

55 Thuc. 2. 16. 2. A similar sentiment is expressed by Dikaiopolis, the main character of Aristophanes' comedy *Acharnians*, who – being cooped up in the city of Athens in 425 BC – longs for his native rural deme Acharnai (*Ar. Ach.* 33). Cf. Hornblower 1991, 269; Osborne 1985, 19; Parker 1987, 137; Whitehead 2001, 605.

56 Parker 1996, 118.

57 *Arist. Ath. Pol.* 21. 6.

58 Kron 1976, 29–32; Kearns 1989, 80–81; Parker 1996, 118; G. Anderson 2003, 127–128.

59 G. Anderson 2003, 129; cf. Kearns 1989, 87–90.

precisely what differentiated the artificially created tribes from one another and made it possible for the new tribesmen (*phyletai*) to develop a distinct tribal identity.<sup>60</sup>

The creation of the ten new tribes and the selection of ten suitable eponymous heroes seem to be the result of the type of active memory politics, envisioned by the ‘invention of tradition’ approach.<sup>61</sup> Yet how does one explain the apparently ready acceptance by the people of Attica of this type of massive social engineering? One reason might be that the newly created tribes held their gatherings not at new, purpose-built precincts, but “simply took over existing cults and shrines of the heroes concerned and reused them for their own purposes.”<sup>62</sup> This hypothesis can also explain both the relatively uneven distribution of the ‘new’ tribal sanctuaries (some were even located in demes outside the tribal territory) and the surprising fact that, in some cases, the cult of the eponymous hero was left with the priestly family under whose charge it had traditionally been, even if they did not belong to the hero’s tribe.<sup>63</sup> These preexisting local shrines became the political and religious “centre for the whole tribe”<sup>64</sup> and played a vital role in the formation of tribal identity.

The tribal sanctuary was the site where the *phyletai* gathered to hold regular political meetings, honored deserving members, elected their own officials, sent their fifty representatives to the Council of Five Hundred and, most importantly, tended to the cult of their respective tribal hero.<sup>65</sup> Through participation in these religious ceremonies at the hero’s sacred site, the members of the tribe developed a particular attachment to their eponymous hero and learned about his mythology in prayers, rituals and hymns.<sup>66</sup> These ritual activities conveyed not only semantic knowledge about the hero’s deeds, but most likely also resulted in what Connerton termed ‘incorporated memories’ of great emotional intensity.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the *phyletai* were reminded of the stories of their tribal

60 G. Anderson 2003, 127.

61 For the ‘invention of tradition’ approach, see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.

62 G. Anderson 2003, 130.

63 Parker 1996, 118–119. For the location of these pre-existing shrines, see G. Anderson 2003, 130–131 with n. 18.

64 Kearns 1989, 80.

65 For tribal sacrifice to Erechtheus, see *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1165. 6; Parker 1996, 104. In addition, the eponymous hero probably received a special sacrifice by his tribe at larger state festivals with which he was connected, as is attested for Pandion at the polis-wide Pandia festival (*IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1140). Cf. Kearns 1989, 81; G. Anderson 2003, 130, 251 n. 15.

66 That prayers, rituals and hymns could convey a hero’s mythology is evident from Paus. 1. 3. 3 and

Pl. *Leg.* 887d; cf. Buxton 1994, 21–26, and Wiseman 2007, 71–73. Dithyrambic songs, which tribal choruses performed at various festivals, also conveyed heroic mythology, as Bacchylides’ ode 18 confirms. This dithyramb features an exchange between the chorus leader and King Aigeus about the heroic exploits of his yet unknown son Theseus; cf. Merklbach 1973.

67 The past is preserved, not only in semantic memory, but also through non-textual performances and commemorative rituals; cf. Steinbock 2012, 9 n. 30, 65. For such ‘incorporated memories’, which involve “performative ceremonies which generate bodily sensory and emotional experiences, resulting in habitual memory being sedimented in the body” (Hamilakis 1998, 117), see Connerton 1989; Alcock 2002, 28.

hero, not only in his own sanctuary, but also in the sanctuaries of those heroes and heroines closely connected to him.<sup>68</sup> A collective cult and statue group for the ten eponymous tribal heroes in the Agora as well as their possible depiction on the Parthenon frieze further perpetuated the memory of their heroic deeds.<sup>69</sup>

Thanks to all these measures, the eponymous heroes became the focal points of tribal identity.<sup>70</sup> They were known as ἀρχηγέται, “a term of potent ambiguity that unites the idea of origin (*arche*) and leadership (*hegeomai*)”<sup>71</sup> and could thus readily be envisioned as mythical ancestors of the respective tribesmen. The members of the tribe Leontis could, for instance, be called Leontidai, that is, literally the descendants of Leos. The Athenians simply transferred the old paradigm of the four fictive kinship groups of the Ionian tribes to the new Kleisthenic ones.<sup>72</sup> The *phyletai* were not only encouraged to regard their eponymous hero as mythical ancestor, but to view him as a role model and emulate his example. The foundation for this identification and emulation was already laid during the ephebate, the training period of young recruits, which began with a tour to the city’s shrines and likely included lessons about their eponyms’ mythology.<sup>73</sup> A passage in Demosthenes’ funeral oration for the Athenians slain in the battle of Chaironeia in 338 BC proves that the *phyletai*’s shared memories of the heroic deeds of their respective *archegetes* and his family members were a vital element of their distinct tribal identity and an inspiration for their own devotion to the city.<sup>74</sup> Demosthenes called these stories “the things which had prepared each of them, by tribes, to be valiant men”<sup>75</sup> The members of the tribe Erechtheis, for instance, were willing to give their own lives for their country, knowing that their eponym Erechtheus, for the salvation of this land, had sacrificed his own daughters.<sup>76</sup> The Aigeidai wanted to rather die than lose

68 The cult for the Hyakinthidai, the daughters of Erechtheus, for instance, inevitably evoked the memory of both their self-sacrifice for the salvation of the city and their father’s war against the invader Eumolpos. For their cult and mythology, see Eur. fr. 370. 63–97; Kannicht 2004; Dem. 60. 27; Lycurg. 98–101; Kearns 1989, 59–63, 201–202; Steinbock 2011, 301–302.

69 The identification of the ten figures in the east frieze of the Parthenon on the Acropolis is still controversial, though; cf. Parker 1996, 120. The statue group of the ten eponymous tribal heroes in the center of the Agora was heavily frequented, since it featured notice boards with important announcements. For cult and statue group, see Jones 1999, 153–154; G. Anderson 2003, 251 n. 14.

70 Kearns 1989, 103.

71 Parker 1996, 120. Cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 21. 6.

72 Cf. Dem. 58.18; Parker 1996, 120–121; G. Anderson 2003, 128.

73 For the tour of the shrines, see Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 42. 3; Mikalson 1995, 42; Parker 1996, 255. For the role of tribal and age-set heroes in the ideological instruction of Athenian ephebes, see Steinbock 2011. The ephebate as we know it from Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 42 and a series of ephebic inscriptions is beyond doubt a Lycurgan institution, but the ephebate existed in some form before the reform of 335 BC, as Reinmuth 1971, 23–38, and Burckhardt 1996, 29–33, have shown.

74 Dem. 60. 27–31; Kearns 1989, 86–87; Parker 1996, 251–252; G. Anderson 2003, 128.

75 Dem. 60. 27: ἃ δὲ κατὰ φυλάς παρεσκεύασ’ ἐκάστους εὐρώστους εἶναι, ταῦτ’ ἦδη λέξω.

76 Dem. 60. 27.

the equality (*isegoria*), which King Aigeus' son Theseus had first established.<sup>77</sup> The Akamantidai faced every danger to save their parents, recalling how Akamas had sailed to Troy to save his mother Aithra.<sup>78</sup> Demosthenes' assertion that the members of each tribe *knew, remembered, did not forget*, etc. the deeds of their eponymous hero and his family members suggests that these paradigmatic stories had been told often beforehand and played a vital role for the *phyletai*'s sense of their tribe's history.<sup>79</sup>

The collective memories of demes and tribes encompassed not only the heroic deeds of their mythical heroes, but also shared memories of the more recent past. The tribes proudly remembered the victories their dithyrambic choruses and athletic teams had achieved at various festivals; they were memorialized through dedications and in the official victory list.<sup>80</sup> Distinct tribal memories also resulted from the military sphere, since the Athenian army was organized by tribes. At least by the age of Lycurgus, the ephebes of each tribe served together under their own tribal officer, called *sophonistes*. In recognition of their exemplary service or an athletic victory in one of the ephebic competitions, they and their officers were often honored by their tribe or the deme where they had been stationed.<sup>81</sup> These honorary inscription served Athenians as material reminders of the experiences they had shared with their *phyletai* during their ephebate. Since the Athenian army consisted of ten tribal regiments, which made up the hoplite phalanx, battles could be experienced and remembered differently by soldiers of different tribes, as a passage from Mantitheus' scrutiny hearing from around 390 BC shows. This prospective councilor tried to convince the current councilors of the bravery he displayed in the battle of Corinth in 394 BC, when his "tribe suffered the heaviest losses."<sup>82</sup> How many casualties each tribe suffered was indeed a matter of public record, since the Athenians memorialized each tribe's particular sacrifices. At the end of each campaigning season, the Athenians buried the fallen in the public cemetery (*demosion sema*) in the Kerameikos and erected casualty lists over their tombs. The names of the fallen were listed by tribe, and headings indicated where they had lost their lives.<sup>83</sup> These casualty lists could thus serve Athenians as permanent reminders of fellow tribesmen they had

77 Dem. 60. 28.

78 Dem. 60. 29.

79 Cf. Dem. 60. 27–31: ἦδεσαν πάντες Ἐρεχθεΐδαι [...] οὐκ ἠγνόουν Αἰγεΐδαι [...] παρελήφεσαν Πανδιονίδαι [...] ἠκηκόεσαν Λεωντίδαι [...] ἐμέμνηντ' Ἀκαμαντίδαι [...] οὐκ ἐλάυθανεν Οἰνεΐδας [...] ἦδεσαν Κεκροπίδαι [...] ἐμέμνηνθ' Ἴπποθωντίδαι [...] οὐκ ἐλάυθανεν Αἰαντίδας [...] οὐκ ἠμνημόρουν Ἀντιοχίδαι [...]; Steinbock 2011, 300–311; Shear 2013, 523.

80 Tribal competitions were held at the Greater and Lesser Panathenaia, the Hephaisteia, the Prometheia and the Theseia; cf. Parker 1996, 103 n. 5. For ded-

icatory inscriptions, set up by the victorious *choregoi* and commemorating the victory of their tribal chorus, see, e.g., *IG I<sup>3</sup>* 958, 961 and Wilson 2000, 214–216. For the official list of Dionysiac victories (including the tribal dithyrambic competitions), see *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 2318.

81 Cf. Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 42; Reinmuth 1971 n. 2, 3, 9, 10; Burckhardt 1996, 63–71.

82 Lys. 16. 15. Cf. Pritchett 1985, 179.

83 For Athenian public funeral monuments and their significance, see Low 2010; Low 2012; Arrington 2010; Arrington 2011.

lost in a particular military campaign.<sup>84</sup> Wars could also be remembered differently by individual demes, especially when they involved the invasion of Attica. It is certainly no coincidence that Aristophanes featured *demotai* from Acharnai as the most fervent opponents of peace with Sparta in his comedy *Acharnians*. Unlike the city demes, this large rural deme had severely suffered under the Peloponnesian invasions during the early years of the Peloponnesian War. It had demanded most vigorously (though in vain) in 431 BC that the Athenian army march out and defend their homes against the attackers.<sup>85</sup> A few years later, Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, remembering how the Spartans had destroyed their vines,<sup>86</sup> showed the most intense hostility toward Sparta and the prospect of peace.<sup>87</sup>

## 5 Deme and tribal memory and the 'official' Athenian polis tradition

Which role did these shared deme and tribal memories play in relation to the polis-wide version of the Athenian past found in the public funeral orations and other forms of polis-wide commemorations?<sup>88</sup> After a brief discussion of the role of the Athenian funeral orations in manifesting and transmitting an official polis tradition, I will analyze a few examples that illustrate the complex interdependence between this Athenian master narrative and deme and tribal memories.

The public funeral oration (*logos epitaphios*) for the Athenian war dead of each year was of paramount importance for the formation of the Athenians' view of themselves and of their city's past. Instituted soon after the Persian Wars, the epitaphios was infused with democratic and hegemonic ideology, which was projected back into the mythical past and colored the perception and memory of later events. Judging from the few extant examples,<sup>89</sup> these speeches were rather conventional and celebrated the manifestation of timeless Athenian excellence (*ἀρετή*) from the mythical origins of the city to

84 The casualties per tribe could vary, as *IG I<sup>3</sup> 1162* (from the 440s BC) shows; during that year's campaigning season, the tribe Kekropis had suffered eleven casualties, Leontis, on the other hand, only four.

85 Cf. Thuc. 2. 19. 2–20. 5; 2. 21. 3; Hornblower 1991, 273–275.

86 Ar. *Ach.* 182–184, 229–233.

87 Sommerstein 1980, 33.

88 For this shared version of the Athenian past, see the brief sketch of Loraux' *Athènes imaginaire*, Thomas'

'official' polis tradition and Gehrke's 'intentionale Geschichte' at the beginning of this chapter.

89 The extant funeral speeches comprise Thucydides 2. 35–46 (Perikles for the dead of 431 BC); Lysias 2 (Corinthian War); Demosthenes 60 (Chaironeia; 338 BC); Hyperides' *Epitaphios* (Lamian War; 322 BC). The parodistic funeral speech in Plato's *Menexenus* 236d4–249c8 and Isocrates' *Panegyricus*, which employs many epitaphic themes, are also useful for the reconstruction of the genre. Cf. Shear 2013, 511–512.



the most recent campaign in which the heroes of the day had lost their lives.<sup>90</sup> These funeral speeches emphasized the Athenians' autochthonous origins, their innate sense of justice, their democratic constitution and their role as altruistic defenders of Greek liberty against both barbarian invaders and Greek oppressors.<sup>91</sup>

To us, this self-congratulatory version of Athenian history might seem chauvinistic and full of historical distortions.<sup>92</sup> And yet, the same ideals, examples and justifications appear elsewhere in Athenian public discourse, which suggests that "most Athenians believed in them passionately."<sup>93</sup> The history, presented in the epitaphios, was "true for the Athenians, in that it conform[ed] to the idea that they wish[ed] to have of themselves."<sup>94</sup> To appreciate properly the powerful impact of the epitaphios on the formation of Athenian social memory, we have to consider the social and religious context of this speech.<sup>95</sup> It was delivered by a man "chosen by the city, of proven intelligence and high esteem"<sup>96</sup> as the culmination of the public funeral ceremony for the Athenian war dead in the state cemetery (*demosion sema*).<sup>97</sup> Due to this solemn ritual context, this patriotic version of the past was highly emotionally charged and deeply affected the Athenian psyche, as an ironic remark by Plato's Sokrates about his elated feelings reveals.<sup>98</sup> Moreover, the funeral orations presented Athens' past regularly and in a coherent form in rough chronological order.<sup>99</sup> Its past and recent accomplishments were normative, and their praise fulfilled a didactic function.<sup>100</sup> For these reasons, Rosalind Thomas has called the epitaphic version of Athenian history the 'official' polis tradition,<sup>101</sup> and others have used the term 'master narrative of Athenian history' for the depiction of the past found in the funeral orations and in other Athenian "forums for collective deliberation and self-representation (the assembly, courts, theater, civic rituals and festivals)."<sup>102</sup>

90 For the retrojection of Athens' hegemonic ideology into the mythic past, see Gehrke 2001, 302; Gotte-land 2001, 129; Mills 1997, 58; Thomas 1989, 207–208; Harding 2008, 66. For the 'coloring' of later episodes, see, e.g., Lys. 2. 49–53 with Thomas 1989, 227–229; Todd 2007, 249–253.

91 For the Athenian funeral oration, see Walters 1980; Loraux 1986; Thomas 1989, 196–237; Parker 1996, 131–141; Mills 1997, 58–78; Clarke 2008, 309–313; Grethlein 2010, 105–125; Steinbock 2012, 49–58; Shear 2013.

92 For distortions, see for example the commentary by Todd 2007 on Lysias' epitaphios.

93 Thomas 1989, 206; cf. Strasburger 1958.

94 Loraux 1986, 171. See also Gehrke 2003, 22, and Thomas 1989, 237, who rightly emphasizes that these "'distortions' would be encouraged or reinforced by certain ideals, and [that] again the line be-

tween deliberately misleading propaganda and wishful thinking might be blurred". For the rejection of the anachronistic term 'propaganda,' see Thomas 1989, 206 n. 39, and Steinbock 2012, 40.

95 Steinbock 2012, 50–51.

96 Thuc. 2. 34. 6.

97 For the *demosion sema*, see Arrington 2010.

98 For the funeral ceremony, see Thuc. 2. 34; Loraux 1986, 15–76; Low 2010, 341–350. For the psychological impact of this speech, see Pl. *Menex.* 234c–235c; Thomas 1989, 211; Parker 1996, 137; Wickkiser 1999.

99 Cf. Clarke 2008, 312.

100 Loraux 1986, 144; Clarke 2008, 308.

101 Thomas 1989, 200, 208.

102 Forsdyke 2005, 242. Similarly, Steinbock 2012, 20. 49.

In light of both the inherent multipolarity of social memory and the vigorous deme and tribal memories in Athens it is important to stress that the terms ‘official polis tradition’ and ‘Athenian master narrative’ do not denote a fixed, officially authorized narrative. Even in the epitaphios with its strong generic conventions, individual orators were still able to “select, omit, and add details to introduce a semblance of originality.”<sup>103</sup> But since all of the epitaphic accounts (as well as others drawing on this genre) are highly ideological narratives with much argumentative and emotional weight, they can indeed be regarded as prevalent versions of the past, which justifies the use of the terms ‘official polis tradition’ and ‘Athenian master narrative.’<sup>104</sup> These terms denote the sum of the converging, polis-wide narratives of the Athenian past that conveyed the Athenian self-image and were imbued with democratic and hegemonic ideology, derived from the Persian War experience.<sup>105</sup>

Athenians encountered elements of this Athenian master narrative in many places: in the Panathenaia and other polis-wide religious festivals, in works of art and monumental buildings, on the tragic stage and in the assembly and law courts.<sup>106</sup> Yet the Athenian epitaphios was surely its purest expression, since its *raison d’être* was the celebration of the timeless Athenian ἀρετή from the city’s origins to the present. The episodes extolled in this *Tatenkatalog* typically also included four paradigmatic myths, which can be viewed as mythical prefiguration of Athens’ victory over the Persians and its current role as altruistic hegemon.<sup>107</sup> As champions of Greek liberty the Athenians repelled the barbarian invasions of the man-hating Amazons and of Eumolpos’ Thracian hordes and checked the hubris of the Thebans and Eurystheus by aiding the suppliant Adrastus and the Herakleidai, respectively.<sup>108</sup>

We do not know who first introduced these mythical paradigms into the epitaphios (they are first attested in a diplomatic debate in Herodotus)<sup>109</sup>, but it seems clear that they were not invented wholesale in the post Persian War period. In our sources, we can grasp traces of pre-existing local myths and cults in Attica, on which poets and orators could draw. They give us a glimpse of the dynamic interplay between local cults and

103 Thomas 1989, 200.

104 The analysis of the orators’ use of the past in assembly and law courts shows that it was much easier for an orator to draw effectively on the lessons of the Athenian funeral orations than to argue against them. See, for instance, Steinbock 2012, 149–154, on Dem. 14. 33–34 and Steinbock 2013, 81–98, on Aeschin. 2. 74–79.

105 While acknowledging the multiplicity of oral traditions in Athens, Thomas 1989, 197–200 similarly sees the underlying democratic and hegemonic ideals as constitutive elements of the ‘official’ polis tra-

dition: “the epitaphios forms a coherent expression of Athenian official ‘ideology’” (200).

106 Cf. Castriota 1992; Steinbock 2012, 58–69, 84–99.

107 Thomas 1989, 207–208; Gehrke 2001, 302; Steinbock 2012, 54–56.

108 For the Amazons, see Lys. 2. 4–6; Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Isoc. 4. 68–70; Dem. 60. 8. For Eumolpos’ Thracians, see Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Isoc. 4. 68–70; Dem. 60. 8. For Adrastus, see Lys. 2.7–10; Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Isoc. 4. 54–55, 58; Dem. 60. 8. For the Herakleidai, see Lys. 2.11–16; Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Isoc. 4. 54, 56–60; Dem. 60. 8.

109 Hdt. 9. 27.

traditions and the Athenian master narrative of the funeral orations and the tragic stage. I will focus here on the paradigmatic myth of the Athenian intervention for the fallen Argives, but the other three myths underwent similar transformations.<sup>110</sup>

According to the epitaphic version of this myth, the Thebans refused to grant burial to the fallen Argives who had attacked Thebes under Adrastus' command to oust Oidipous' son Eteokles and win the throne for his brother Polyneikes. Adrastus, the sole survivor of the Seven against Thebes, escaped to Athens and supplicated the Athenians to aid him in recovering the bodies of his dead comrades. To uphold the Greek norm of proper burial, the Athenians selflessly intervened, defeated the hubristic Thebans in battle and buried the dead Argives in Eleusis.<sup>111</sup> The Athenians thus acted, as always in the funeral orations, as just defenders of the oppressed and as altruistic hegemon.

Where did this story come from? The myth of the Seven against Thebes was already known to Homer and was treated in detail in the seventh-century epic *Thebaid*, but in these poems, there is no trace of any Athenian involvement.<sup>112</sup> The epic story of Adrastus' flight from the battlefield on his divine horse Areion<sup>113</sup> provided the hook for various local communities in Attica and Boiotia to connect themselves to the epic world of heroes in the Archaic period.<sup>114</sup> This gave rise to the creation of various cults and diverse and competing local traditions. In Eleusis, the discovery of awe-inspiring Bronze Age tombs led to the establishment of a heroön in the Geometric period, as Mylonas' excavation has shown.<sup>115</sup> Possibly already at that time, their inhabitants were identified as the fallen leaders of the Seven and a local myth explained their burial in Eleusis:<sup>116</sup> on his way back to Argos, it might be supposed, Adrastus naturally came by Eleusis, and a local hero may have aided him in recovering the bodies and buried them in Eleusis (Fig. 2).<sup>117</sup>

Eleutherai, a town situated on the road from Thebes to Eleusis and Argos, also displayed heroic tombs. By the end of the 5th century, these were identified as the graves of the ordinary soldiers of the seven contingents,<sup>118</sup> but originally they probably constituted a true rival claim to Eleusis.<sup>119</sup> The 1st-century BC geographer Strabo mentions

110 For a detailed analysis of the constitutive elements and formative influences of this myth, see Steinbock 2012, 155–196. For transformations of the Amazon myth, cf. Gotteland 2001, 131–161; Harding 2008, 64–67. For Eumolpos, see Parker 1987.

111 Cf. Lys. 2. 7–10; Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Isoc. 4. 54–55, 58; Dem. 60. 8.

112 For the Seven against Thebes in Homer, see Janko 1992, 163. For the *Thebaid*, see Huxley 1969, 41–49; Davies 1989, 22–23.

113 *Thebaid* fr. 6a, 6c Davies.

114 For Adrastus' story in local myths and cults, see Steinbock 2012, 159–169.

115 These Middle Helladic tombs were surrounded by a *peribolos* wall at the end of the 8th century, which indicates that from that time on, these graves were seen as belonging together; they were still known to the traveler Pausanias in the Roman period. Cf. Paus. 1.39.2; Mylonas 1975, ii. 153–154, 262–264, fig. 145; Kearns 1989, 130–131.

116 Cf. Janko 1992, 163.

117 Jacoby 1954, i. 444.

118 Eur. *Supp.* 754–759; Plut. *Theb.* 29. 4.

119 Jacoby 1954, i. 443; Mills 1997, 231.



Fig. 2 Map of Attica and environs.

that a Boiotian village near the Attic border was called Harma (Chariot), either after the chariot of Amphiaraios, the seer of the Seven, or after that of Adrastos.<sup>120</sup> According to the latter myth, Adrastos – after the crash of his chariot in Harma – “saved himself on Areion,”<sup>121</sup> just as in the epic *Thebaid*.<sup>122</sup> Strabo mentions another Harma across the border in the vicinity of the Attic deme of Phyle.<sup>123</sup> The people living near this chariot-shaped mountain top also sought a connection to Adrastos’ chariot, but, in their version, the horse Areion apparently played no role: “Adrastos was saved by the villagers,”<sup>124</sup> who might have escorted him to their king, as Jacoby suggests.<sup>125</sup> Another place in Attica, Kolonos Hippios (Horsehill),<sup>126</sup> located two kilometers north of Athens on the road to Thebes, was also connected to Adrastos’ flight. There was “an altar to Poseidon Hippios

120 Strab. 9. 2. 11.

121 Strab. 9. 2. 11.

122 *Thebaid* fr. 6a Davies.

123 Strab. 9. 2. 11.

124 Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 113. For this reference to the Attic Harma, see Jacoby 1954, i. 442–443, ii. 349–350; Harding 2008, 71.

125 Jacoby 1954, i. 443.

126 This is the place, where Oidipous requested asylum in Attica. Cf. Paus. 1. 10. 4 and Soph. *OC*.

and Athena Hippias and a heroön to Peirithoos and Theseus, Oidipous and Adrastos.”<sup>127</sup> According to an aetiological myth, Kolonos Hippios was the place where Adrastos, presumably still in possession of his chariot, “halted his horses at Kolonos and addressed them as Poseidon and Athena.”<sup>128</sup>

These diverse stories of Adrastos’ flight became undoubtedly an important element of the collective memory and identity of Eleusis, Eleutherai, the Attic Harma and Kolonos, respectively. This is most evident in the case of the inhabitants of the Attic Harma. Their ancestors’ alleged help to Adrastos was, at least by the time of Philochorus, even officially recognized by Argos in form of a grant of equal rights of citizenship (*isopoliteia*) for all those villagers who wished to settle in Adrastos’ home city.<sup>129</sup>

We have seen so far how the epic story of Adrastos’ escape from Thebes<sup>130</sup> led various communities in the Archaic period to ‘write’ themselves into the world of epic heroes.<sup>131</sup> Our earliest testimony for the fully formed myth of an Athenian intervention for the fallen Argives is Aeschylus’ tragedy *Eleusinians* (c. 475–467 BC). Thanks to Plutarch,<sup>132</sup> the outline of this lost tragedy can be reconstructed as follows:<sup>133</sup> Adrastos and the Athenian king Theseus were the main characters of the play, the chorus consisted of Eleusinian men (hence the title Ἐλευσίνιοι) and the *dramatis locus* was Eleusis. In the opening scene, Adrastos encounters the chorus of Eleusinian men, who send for Theseus, their king. Adrastos reports about the fate of the Seven and supplicates Theseus and the Eleusinians to aid him in the recovery of the fallen. The second part of the play likely contained a messenger report about Theseus’ successful negotiations with Thebes and the third part featured the burial of the Seven in Eleusis.

Aeschylus’ *Eleusinians* illustrates several important points concerning the dynamic relationship between local traditions and the polis-wide versions of this myth known from the tragic stage and the funeral orations. First, considering the fact that social memories (and in particular those about the mythical past) constantly change to accommodate and reflect recent experiences of the remembering communities, it is not surprising that the stories surrounding the burial of the Seven continuously developed further. By the time of the *Eleusinians*’ production (c. 475–467 BC), the Athenian king Theseus had become the main hero of this myth and Adrastos’ ritual supplication was

127 Paus. I. 30. 4.

128 *Etym. m. s.v.* Ἰνμιά. Addressing Areion as Poseidon makes good sense considering that this divine horse had allegedly been fathered by Poseidon. For Areion’s pedigree, see Paus. 8.25.5–10. That Adrastos drove a two-horse chariot during this campaign is also mentioned by Antimachos of Kolophon, a contemporary of Plato, in his epic poem *Thebaid* (fr. 31 Matthews). The horses’ names in this *Thebaid* are Καίρως and Ἀπίου.

129 Philochorus *FGHHist* 328 F 113; Harding 2008, 70–71.

130 *Thebaid* fr. 6a, 6c Davies.

131 It is impossible to determine when each of these local traditions originated; some may be as old as the initial Eleusinian story of the burial of the Seven, others may only have developed in response to the inclusion of this myth in the epitaphic tradition. Cf. Steinbock 2012, 163 n. 32.

132 Plut. *Thes.* 29. 4–5.

133 Jacoby 1954, i. 448; Mette 1963, 40–41.

an essential element of this story. It is unknown when Theseus became associated with the tombs of the Seven in Eleusis,<sup>134</sup> but several clues point to the last decade of the 6th century, when Theseus began to rival the Dorian Herakles as prototypical Athenian hero.<sup>135</sup> New mythical episodes depict him as a civilizing force and as true benefactor of Attica, whose territorial integrity he ensures and defends. Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* conveys both of these elements. Theseus obtained the bodies of the fallen Argives from the Thebans "though persuasion and by making a truce";<sup>136</sup> this truce was, according to Philochorus, "the first truce ever made for the recovery of corpses";<sup>137</sup> which makes Theseus the πρῶτος εὐρήτης, the first inventor, of this important cultural institution. Theseus' burial of the bodies in Eleusis shows unmistakably that this disputed border region is now firmly under the Athenian king's jurisdiction and thus an integral element of Attica. The central role Adrastus' supplication of Theseus played in this story might reflect the Athenians' historical experience of the Plataians' supplication of Athens for aid against their overbearing Theban neighbors 519 BC.<sup>138</sup>

Second, unlike the extant funeral orations,<sup>139</sup> Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* features a peaceful resolution. In their attempt to reconstruct the chronological development of this myth, past scholars considered Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* as the *terminus post quem* for the introduction of the bellicose variant.<sup>140</sup> Today, scholars are more cautious and emphasize that the development of a myth is not a linear process. Especially in a predominantly oral society like 5th-century Athens different, even contradictory versions could be circulating simultaneously, particularly if they belong to different contexts.<sup>141</sup> It is quite possible, therefore, that one of the local myths discussed above already contained the bellicose version, which an epitaphic orator used to express the Athenians' renewed hatred against Thebes, following their failed incursion into Boiotia in the early 450s.<sup>142</sup>

Third, Aeschylus' *Eleusinians* illustrate how local traditions and the Athenian polis tradition mutually influenced and sustained each other. Local traditions were the underpinning of the versions familiar to us from the funeral orations and the tragic stage. Poets and orators generally did not create mythical stories *ex nibilo*; they often drew on local traditions familiar to them. This is evident in the case of the Eleusinian poet Aeschylus, who crafted the plot of his tragedy around the graves of the Seven in his

134 Considering the fact that Theseus was a minor figure in epic poetry and not native to Eleusis, it is doubtful, that he was from early on associated with the burial of the Seven. Cf. Jacoby 1954, i. 444.

135 For the transformation of Theseus from a swash-buckling hero, involved in brigandage and rape of women, to the archetypical Athenian national hero, see Harding 2008, 52–53, with further literature.

136 Plut. *Thes.* 29. 4–5.

137 Philochorus *FGHist* 328 F112.

138 Hdt. 6. 108. For a detailed discussion of Theseus and the supplication aspect of this myth, see Steinbock 2012, 169–186.

139 Cf. Lys. 2.8–10; Isoc. 4.58; Pl. *Menex.* 239b; Dem. 60. 8. Also many other oratorical allusions have the Athenians secure the burial of the Seven by defeating the Thebans in battle; cf. Hdt. 9. 27. 3; Xen. *Hell.* 6. 5. 47; Isoc. 14. 53; Isoc. 10. 31.

140 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1899, 196.

141 Thomas 1989, 250; Walters 1980, 12–13, with n. 26.

142 Cf. Loraux 1986, 67–69.

own home deme of Eleusis. By bringing his *Eleusinians* on the tragic stage, Aeschylus helped spreading a local tradition to the entire polis community.<sup>143</sup> By the time this myth was included in the epitaphios the story of the burial in Eleusis seems to have become the main version.<sup>144</sup> This ‘official’ story could, in turn, also affect and change local traditions. The tombs at Eleutherai, which were in all likelihood initially associated with the Seven themselves, were by the 420s connected to the common soldiers of the seven contingents.<sup>145</sup> This shows how these two competing local traditions were harmonized, once the Eleusinian version had become the predominant one thanks to Aeschylus’ *Eleusinians* and the Athenian funeral orations.<sup>146</sup>

Fourth, Plutarch’s mentioning of the difference in Theseus’ method of recovery in Aeschylus’ *Eleusinians* and Euripides’ *Suppliants*<sup>147</sup> also highlights the great malleability of the Athenians’ memory of their mythical past. Since Athenians were used to the existence of countless local variants, the authors of the funeral orations, the poets and politicians could add, emphasize, downplay or suppress certain elements of the story, depending on needs and attitudes of the present. Euripides’ *Suppliants* dwelled heavily on Thebes’ shameful refusal to return the bodies for burial and thus reflected the Athenians’ recent experience with Thebes after the battle of Delion in 424 BC.<sup>148</sup> In 339 BC, on the other hand, we see how the orator Isocrates was very careful not to sabotage the recent Athenian-Theban rapprochement: he spared Thebes’ honor by alluding to Aeschylus’ version and featuring a diplomatic resolution in his latest retelling of this story.<sup>149</sup>

Finally, the local cults and traditions also helped anchor the polis-wide tragic and epitaphic versions of this myth in the every-day experience of individual Athenians. The mention of Adrastus’ arrival in Athens and the burials in Eleusis and Eleutherai must have resonated particularly with those Athenians who cherished the stories connected to Eleusis, Eleutherai, Harma and Kolonos Hippios within their own local community.<sup>150</sup>

143 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1899, 199. It is uncertain how familiar Athenians were with this myth before Aeschylus’ production of the *Eleusinians*. Theseus’ aid for Adrastus might already have been included in the late 6th century *Theseid*; cf. Mills 1997, 232. But Aeschylus’ tragedy certainly increased the Athenians’ familiarity with this story.

144 The burial in Eleusis is mentioned explicitly by Herodotus’ Athenians (Hdt. 9. 27. 3) and in Lysias’ epitaphios (Lys. 2. 10). In Euripides’ *Suppliants*, the ashes of the Seven were returned to Argos (Eur. *Supp.* 1185–1188). But Euripides carefully anchored this innovation within the well-known tradition: the heroön of the Seven in Eleusis now marked the place if not of their inhumation at least of their cremation (Eur. *Supp.* 1207–1212).

145 Eur. *Supp.* 754–759.

146 Cf. Steinbock 2012, 164.

147 Plut. *Thes.* 29. 4–5.

148 Bowie 1997, 51; Steinbock 2012, 191–193.

149 Isoc. 12.168–7; cf. Steinbock 2012, 201–210.

150 Steinbock 2012, 165. President Bill Clinton’s historical allusion to the Alamo at the dedication of the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania on September 10, 2011, constitutes a modern parallel: the heroic defense of the Alamo against a vastly superior Mexican army in 1836 is certainly widely known throughout the U.S., but it has a special resonance for Texans, who see in this battle the origin of their state. Cf. <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/main/clinton-foundation->

This, of course, applies to other collective deme and tribal memories as well. Aeschylus' younger competitor Sophocles set his last tragedy, the *Oedipus Coloneus*, in his own deme Kolonos. Whiteman is right to suggest that "a fleeting smile may have passed across the faces of some of the rural demesmen in the audience,"<sup>151</sup> when they heard in the opening scene that the *demotai* of Kolonos would decide whether Oedipus may stay in the shrine of their eponymous hero.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, the members of the tribe Erechtheis probably felt particularly proud of their *archegetes* Erechtheus and his daughters each time they heard in the funeral oration the paradigmatic myth of the repulsion of Eumolpos' invasion.<sup>153</sup>

The same complex dynamic between group and polis memory was at play concerning the memory of more recent historical events. All 52 Athenian casualties in the decisive Persian War battle of Plataiai, for instance, belonged to the tribe Aiantis. The high death toll was attributed to the exceptional bravery of its soldiers.<sup>154</sup> The account by the 4th-century Attidographer Cleidemus indicates that more than three generations later, the Battle of Plataiai still played a crucial role in the collective memory of the members of this tribe: it was the privilege of the Aiantidai to provide the annual thank offering to the Sphragithic nymphs on behalf of the whole polis.<sup>155</sup> In doing so, the Aiantidai commemorated both the Athenian victory at Plataiai and their own tribal ancestors' extraordinary contribution to this glorious achievement. It is not farfetched to assume that they felt particularly proud each time the battle of Plataiai was mentioned in Athenian public discourse. Thanks to this annual sacrifice Athenians of the other nine tribes were, in turn, regularly reminded of Aiantis' particular role in this battle.

As one would expect, local and polis-wide collective memories did not always mutually influence and support each other; at times, they could also be in conflict. The demesmen of Dekeleia, for instance, remembered the aid which their eponymous hero Dekelos provided to the Dioskouroi at the time of Theseus' rape of Helen. Dekelos was angry about Theseus' hubris (*ἀχθόμενον τῇ Θησέος ὕβρι*) and revealed to the Dioskouroi their sister's whereabouts. As a result, the Spartans, grateful for Dekelos' aid to their two state gods, spared Dekeleia during their invasions of Attica in the Archidamian War.<sup>156</sup> This shows that a deme could cherish an identity distinct from (and in this case even somewhat in opposition to) the Athenian polis identity and that these deme memories could become highly politically relevant. That individual demes could draw on their collective memory to express their own identities and political concerns is also

blog.html/2012/09/11/remembering-9/11 (visited on 15/02/2017).

151 Whitehead 1986, 47.

152 Soph. *OC* 77–80.

153 This is true, even though Erechtheus (like Theseus) is usually not mentioned by name in the epitaphios due to generic conventions; but see Dem. 60. 27 and Shear 2013, 523.

154 Cleidemus *FGHist* 323 F 22 = Plut. *Arist.* 19.6.

155 Cf. Parker 1996, 103; Harding 2008, 105–106.

156 Hdt. 9. 73. Titakos, presumably the eponymous hero of the small hamlet of Titakidai also stood up to the national Athenian hero Theseus and betrayed the town Aphidna to the Dioskouroi (Hdt. 9. 73); cf. Kearns 1989, 118, 154, 200; Flower and Marincola 2002, 236–239.



evident in the case of Acharnai. The Acharnians, faced with the destruction of their property through the Spartan invasion in 431 BC, lobbied vigorously for active resistance against the attackers.<sup>157</sup> In Thucydides' account, the Acharnians are represented "as fully aware of their numerical and psychological influence in the polis."<sup>158</sup> They probably drew on their longstanding tradition of stern patriotism and belligerence, attested in our sources<sup>159</sup> to galvanize their political resolve against Perikles' strategy of deliberately ceding the Attic countryside to the Peloponnesian invaders.<sup>160</sup>

In conclusion, drawing on polis-wide commemorative activities such as the Athenian funeral ceremonies, Classicists have made a strong case over the last three decades that the Athenians' shared image of their past was an essential element of their collective identity. Yet some critics, fearful of the return of old essentialist categories, are still skeptical about 'social memory' as a valid analytical concept. To dissipate fears of reifying a monolithic group mind, this contribution takes the inherent multipolarity of social memory into account and examines the dynamic relationship between the Athenian 'official' polis tradition and the shared memories of two types of Athenian subgroups, the demes and tribes.

Epigraphic, archaeological and literary evidence shows that Athenians in the 5th and 4th centuries developed particular deme and tribal identities in addition to their collective identity as Athenians. The local deme and tribal sanctuaries were thereby of particular importance. At these places, the demes and tribes fostered their identities as distinct memory communities through numerous communal activities. Their strong feelings of identity and belonging stemmed to a considerable extent from the members' shared sense of their deme and tribal history, which comprised not only the recent history, but also the distant past of their mythical ancestors.

The analysis of various local myths and cults related to the paradigmatic Athenian myth of the burial of the fallen Argives illustrates the dynamic relationship between local traditions and the polis-wide versions of myths known from the tragic stage and the funeral orations. The former were the underpinnings of the latter, contributed to the great malleability of Athenian social memory and grounded the 'official' polis tradition in the everyday experience of individual Athenians. The deme and tribal memories and the Athenian master narrative thus mutually influenced and sustained each other, but sometimes they could also be in conflict. That demes could cherish identities, distinct from and to some extent even in opposition to, the common polis identity is suggested by the examples of Dekeleia and Acharnai, whose group memories became politically relevant during the Peloponnesian War.

157 Thuc. 2. 21. 3.

158 Whitehead 1986, 399.

159 Pind. *Nem.* 2. 16–17; *Ar. Ach.* 178–185, 204–236, 280–365, 665–675.

160 Cf. Steinbock 2012, 71.

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Simon Lentzsch

## Geese and Gauls – the Capitol in the Social Memory of the ‘Gallic Disaster’

### Summary

This paper examines some aspects of the ‘Gallic Disaster’ in Roman memory culture, especially the role of the capitol. The capitol as a symbol of Roman resistance against foreign enemies and her dominance over the Mediterranean is the result of a longer development of cultural traditions and included a stylization after Greek accounts of the Persian capture of Athens. It can be shown that the sight of the Capitol stimulated the invention of different versions of the course of events during the siege, the use of historical *exempla* in speeches, and the development of ritual processions. As a result, the capitol was integrated in the memorial landscape of the city, and the ‘Gallic disaster’ was remembered as an important part of the history of the religious and political center of Rome.

Keywords: Roman Republic; Battle of the Allia; Gauls; ‘Gallic Disaster’; Rome; Capitol; Roman memory culture.

Diese Studie widmet sich einigen Aspekten des ‚Gallischen Desasters‘ in der römischen Erinnerungskultur, insbesondere der Rolle des Kapitols. Das Kapitol als Symbol des römischen Widerstands und der Vorherrschaft im mediterranen Raum ist das Ergebnis einer Traditionsentwicklung, die u.a. eine Stilisierung nach griechischen Berichten über die persische Eroberung Athens in sich aufgenommen hat. Es kann gezeigt werden, dass der Anblick des Kapitols diverse Versionen über den Verlauf der Belagerung, den Gebrauch historischer *exempla* sowie die Entwicklung ritueller Prozessionen förderte. Als Ergebnis war das Kapitol in die Erinnerungslandschaft der Stadt integriert und das ‚Gallische Desaster‘ wurde als bedeutendes Geschichtsereignis des religiösen und politischen Zentrums Rom erinnert.

Keywords: Römische Republik; Schlacht an der Allia; Gallier; ‚Gallische Katastrophe‘; Rom; Kapitol; römische Erinnerungskultur.

## 1 A great fire and a strange procession – two testimonies from the Imperial era

In the fall of the year AD 69, the civil war between the new emperor-designate T. Flavius Vespasianus and his opponent Vitellius reached the capital of the Roman Empire. In the fierce fighting between the two sides, not even the Capitoline Hill – the political and religious center of the Roman world – was spared. It was there that, according to Roman tradition, the last king of the city, Tarquinius Superbus, had once built the temple of Iupiter Optimus Maximus, as a sign that Rome's power was under the protection of this powerful deity.<sup>1</sup>

But now not even Iupiter's greatest and most important temple was spared. In the course of the heavy fighting in the capital, fire was thrown onto the roofs of the buildings of the Capitoline Hill – Tacitus (ca. AD 56–120) could not decide whether this was done by the besiegers or the besieged – and ultimately spread to the temple itself.<sup>2</sup> The historian does not leave his readers in any doubt about the gravity of this offence:

Id facinus post conditam urbem luctuosissimum foedissimumque rei publicae populi Romani accidit, nullo externo hoste, propitiis, si per mores nostros liceret, deis, sedem Iovis Optimi Maximi auspicato a maioribus pignus imperii conditam, quam non Porsenna dedita urbe neque Galli capta temerare potuissent, furore principum excindi.<sup>3</sup>

Evidently, Tacitus had to reach far back into the glorious and mostly successful history of the Romans to find events that seemed to him – at least almost – as dreadful as the destruction of the temple in the year of the four emperors. The attempt of the Etruscan king Lars Porsenna to capture the city of Rome dates back to the very beginning of the Republic and the capture of Rome by the Gauls to somewhere in the beginning of the fourth century.<sup>4</sup>

1 For the course of events in AD 69, see Flaig 1992, 240–410. – Cf. Rea 2007, 44–63, on the Capitoline “as the physical marker of the seat of Roman power” (61).

2 Tac. *Hist.* 3.71.

3 Tac. *Hist.* 3.72: “This was the saddest and most shameful crime that the Roman state had ever suffered since its foundation. Rome had no foreign foe; the gods were ready to be propitious if our characters had allowed; and yet the home of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, founded after due auspices by our ancestors as a pledge of empire, which neither Porsenna, when the city gave itself up to him, nor the Gauls when they captured it, could violate – this

was the shrine that the mad fury of emperors destroyed!” (Translation by Clifford Moore). See Wiseman 1978 for this passage, esp. 171–172.

4 Unless otherwise specified, all dates refer to years BC. On Porsenna's attempt see Cornell 1995, 217–218; Forsythe 2005, 148–149. Porsenna can probably be seen as a historical figure, although the endeavors in the later tradition to disguise the fact that he did occupy Rome makes it very difficult to reconstruct the course of events. See Liv. 2.9.1–13.4; Val. Max. 3.3.1; Flor. *Epit.* 1.10; Mart. 1.21; Plut. *Poplic.* 17, who all present the Roman defense as successful. Pliny the Elder also seems to support the version known to Tacitus (Plin. *Nat.* 34.139). A fragment

Tacitus was not the only one in imperial Rome who remembered the so-called Gallic disaster. The Greek scholar Plutarch (ca. AD 46–120) describes a strange procession which took place in Rome presumably every year: “And even to this day, in memory of these events, there are borne in solemn procession a dog impaled on a stake, but a goose perched in state upon a costly coverlet in a litter.”<sup>5</sup>

Both authors are referring to an event that happened nearly half a millennium before their own times: the ‘Gallic disaster,’ when Celtic warriors occupied the city of Rome at the beginning of the fourth century BC.

In this contribution, I want to discuss some aspects of the complex and, as the two quotations cited above testify, enduring afterlife of this event in the Roman ‘social memory’ or ‘Geschichtskultur’ – two concepts which are relatively similar.<sup>6</sup> I will focus on the role and the image of the Capitol in the course of the Gallic disaster.

## 2 Tradition and history – the Gauls and the sack of Rome

The fact that at some point in the early fourth century a group of Celtic warriors captured the city of Rome is undisputed.<sup>7</sup> The exact date<sup>8</sup> of the occupation and the detailed course of events are, however, not easy to reconstruct, so for the purpose of this article

of Cassius Hemina (apud Non. p. 408 L) indicates a relatively early appearance of the more famous stories, which better suited to the way most Romans wanted to see their past. See Beck and Walter 2005, 261–262.

- 5 Plut. *fort. Rom.* 12. Also attested in Aelian *nat.* 12.30; Serv. *Aen.* 8.625; Lyd. *Mens.* 4.114. See von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 216–217, who thinks not only that Plutarch was the earliest source to attest to the procession but also that it was not even invented until the imperial era.
- 6 For the concept of ‘social memory’ see Burke 1991; Fentress and Wickham 1992, 47–48; Erl 2005, 44–45, 52–55. For ‘Geschichtskultur’ see now Rösen 2008. See also the study of Walter 2004; he describes several aspects of the Roman ‘Geschichtskultur’ in particular, with a trenchant description of the concept: “Geschichtskultur’ umfaßt das synchrone und diachrone soziale Gedächtnis eines Kollektivs. Im Sinne von ‘gruppenbezogen’ ist das Attribut ‘sozial’ hier geeigneter als das in der Literatur überwiegend verwendete Attribut ‘kollektiv’, weil in letzterem strenggenommen eine holistische Implikation liegt und die Möglichkeit segmentärer oder konkurrierender Gruppengedächtnisse – etwa eines der Plebs

beziehungsweise der Popularen – ausgeschlossen wird” (Walter 2004, 20). Cf. Confino 1997, 1399–1402. For approaches similar to the one of this article, see von Ungern-Sternberg 2000; Williams 2001, 140–184; Rosenberger 2003; Richardson 2012, 116–152. Cf. also Walter 2004, 386–396, for the development of the legend of Camillus as an aspect which is closely connected with the Gallic disaster in several points. Cf. further Beck 2006 who examines the battle of Cannae as another famous defeat in Roman history and Kath 2004 who attempts to take a broader point of view as she wants to examine Roman defeats in Roman political culture in general, but gives no detailed interpretation of the respective sources.

- 7 See for example Ogilvie 1965, 719–720: “The fact of the occupation is indisputable and has left its mark archaeologically [...] but the extent of it is less certain.” Cornell 1995, 314: “That it happened is certain.” This view is also supported by scholars who examine the history of early Rome in a very critical way: Kolb 2002, 140–141; Forsythe 2005, 252–253.
- 8 For the date see Beloch 1926, 313–314; Baudy 1991, 16–18; Cornell 1995, 314, 399–402; Rosenberger 2003, 47.

it seems best to take a minimalistic point of view.<sup>9</sup> A group of Celtic warriors, perhaps mercenaries enlisted by the Greek tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse for his war against Italian Greeks in southern Italy, marched southwards from the Po valley to reach their new employer. On their way, they crossed the Apennines and reached the Tiber valley, where they defeated a Roman army at the river Allia. Then they occupied Rome. It may be that the Gauls just carried away whatever they wanted as loot, but it also seems possible, and perhaps more likely, that the Romans paid a ransom to make the Gauls leave quickly, in order to prevent further destruction in their city.<sup>10</sup> It appears that later the Gallic mercenaries (or some portion of them), having successfully besieged Rhegium, were defeated somewhere in central Italy – there are various and seemingly non-Roman traditions about such a battle and the recovery of gold from the Gauls.<sup>11</sup>

Obviously, the effects of this defeat of the Romans, who were on their way to military success and expansion on the Italian peninsula, could not have been as severe as the often exaggerated accounts in ancient traditions suggest, because it was only a few decades later that Rome achieved hegemony in Middle Italy.<sup>12</sup> But modern scholars agree about the profound and enduring effect that it had on the social memory of the Romans in the

- 9 Cf. for the following Ogilvie 1965, 699–752; Cornell 1995, 313–318; Heuß 1998, 23–24; Williams 2001, 142–150; Kolb 2002, 140–141; Forsythe 2005, 251–259 and now Richardson 2012, 123–130. Important sources are Diod. 14.113–116; Liv. 5.32.6–49.7; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 13.6–12; Plut. *Cam.* 14–32. Further references are collected at Schwegler 1872, 234–275 in his full discussion of the ancient evidence. Mommsen 1878 also provides an in-depth discussion of them.
- 10 This reconstruction would at least explain the absence of any evidence in the archaeological record which would indicate a large amount of destruction in the city for this period. On this point see, for example Horsfall 1987, 70; Cornell 1995, 318; Kolb 2002, 140–141; Rosenberger 2003, 47–48. However, Richardson 2012, 129 thinks that it is more plausible that no money or gold was paid and that the Gauls simply took whatever they wanted as their loot away with them.
- 11 In Livy's account, M. Furius Camillus defeats the Gauls and recovers the gold from them (Liv. 5.49.1–7). Plutarch agrees with Livy on this point (Plut. *Cam.* 29). Diodor also has Camillus as the hero who saves the day, but while the result is the same, in his account the dictator defeats the Gauls not while they are still in Rome but on a later occasion (Diod. 14.117.5). Strabo (Strab. 5.2.3) notes that the people of Caere recovered the gold, and Sueton offers another version where a certain Livius Drusus, as a *propraetor*, kills an enemy leader called Drausus and, on that occasion, recovers the gold that had once been paid to the Senones (Suet. *Tib.* 3.2). It should be noted that Polybius does not mention any recovery of the ransom at all: in his account the Gauls leave Rome and Latium undefeated (Pol. 2.18.3). For these variant traditions and further references see Mommsen 1878, 534–535, 539–541; Ogilvie 1965, 736; Sordi 1984, 88–89; Cornell 1995, 317; von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 217–218; Williams 2001, 143; Walter 2004, 386–387; Forsythe 2005, 255–256; Richardson 2012, 127–128.
- 12 Beloch 1926, 311–320 supports the view of Livy and other ancient authors. But see only Cornell 1995, 318; Oakley 1997, 344–347; Heuß 1998, 23; Forsythe 2005, 258–259; Kolb 2002, 140–141. See also Hölkeskamp 2011 [1987], 39, who points out that the Gallic disaster resulted in an increase in economic and social pressure on the plebs and so might be seen as an important factor in the struggle of the orders. Cf. Cornell 1995, 330 on this, he supports the view that the Gallic sack would have been a difficult setback especially for Romans living as peasants “on the margins of subsistence”. See also Heuß 1998, 23–24.

time of the Republic and even later.<sup>13</sup> When one traces the Gallic disaster through the complex and sometimes anarchic Roman memory culture, a intricate amalgam of Greek influences, Italian oral tradition and written records, Roman tradition, historiography and literature, aetiologies and other ways of thinking about the past influenced by early and later experiences soon reveals itself.<sup>14</sup>

If one takes a closer look at the tradition concerning the sack of Rome, it is evident that the battle at the Allia itself is usually not central in the accounts in most sources. Most of the various fragments and references that can be connected to the Gallic disaster belong to events that – allegedly – took place in the city of Rome and here again a great part is in one or more ways related to the Capitol.<sup>15</sup>

Among the surviving sources, Livy (59 BC–AD 17) gives the most complete account of the course of events which led to the occupation by the Gauls. In it, the Capitol first comes into focus when the battle at the Allia has been lost and a portion of the surviving Romans seek refuge in their city.<sup>16</sup> There, the Romans come to the conclusion that there is not sufficient space for all of them on the Capitol and especially in the *arx*. So they decide that only men of military age should be allowed to seek refuge there,

13 Kremer 1994, 11, 62–63, 68; Cornell 1995, 318: “The sack was a severe psychological blow, ...” and see also Cornell 1995, 325; Heuß 1998, 23: “Der Tag an der Allia [...] schuf jenes Trauma, welches die Römer hinfort in eine mörderische Angst vor jedem nordländischen Angriff versetzte”; Grünewald 2001, 286–287; Williams 2001, 140–141; Kolb 2002, 140–141: “Um so schwerer verheilten offensichtlich die psychischen Verletzungen der Katastrophe an der Allia, wie die ständige Verwendung dieses Vorfalles als Menetekel in der römischen Literatur bezeugt”; Walter 2004, 206–207; Forsythe 2005, 253; Kath 2004, 160–161.

14 Cf. Horsfall 1987, 63; Williams 2001, 148–150. See also von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 207, n. 5.

15 On the Capitol during the Gallic disaster, see Schwegler 1872, 254–269; Mommsen 1878, 528–535, and Ogilvie 1965, 730–741, all with extensive references to the sources. See more recently Wiseman 1979; Horsfall 1987; von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 213–217; Williams 2001, 150–184, and Richardson 2012, 121–123, 127–129, 132–134. Another place associated, at least in later times, with the time of the sack of Rome by the Gauls is for example the shrine erected in honor of a warning voice which gave the Romans the – unfortunately unheeded – advice to (re-)construct the walls of their city to prevent its occupation (Cic. *Div.* 1.101,

2.69 and the quotation of Varro in Gell. 16.17.2). According to the tradition, this voice was deified as *Aius Locutius* and in a – surely later – version (Plut. *Cam.* 30.3) it was no other than Camillus who set up the shrine (Cf. only von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 208–209, and Aronen 1993, 29, for further references). The sources also mention a place called the *Busta Gallica*, where the corpses of the fallen Gauls were allegedly burnt and buried after the retaking of the city, which is probably an *aition* invented later. See CIL I<sup>2</sup> 809; Varro *ling.* 5.157 and also Liv. 5.48.1–3 and 22.14.11, in which Livy again mentions this place but unfortunately gives no exact (“media in urbe”) location for it. Cf. also Sil. 8.642. For scholarly discussion see Ogilvie 1965, 737; Coarelli 1993; von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 217. Another example of what is surely a tradition invented later is a place called *Doliola*, where according to *one* version some sacred objects were hidden from the Gauls: Liv. 5.40.7–8; Plut. *Cam.* 20.7–8. In another version these objects were buried after the death of king Numa Pompilius (Varro *ling.* 5.157). For further references see again Ogilvie 1965, 723–724; Coarelli 1995 and von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 211. Once again, the variety may indicate later inventions conceived to find explanations for the forgotten origins of names, places or customs.

16 Liv. 5.39.9–13.

along with their wives and children – of course in order to defend the heart of the city. While the *flamen* and the priestesses of Vesta are asked to bring the *sacra publica* to a more secure place, a great number of plebeians leave their houses and make their way to the Ianiculum.<sup>17</sup> But by far the greatest sacrifice is made by the elder senators, who simply wait in the *atria* of their homes, where they will be killed by the Gauls.<sup>18</sup>

While reading these passages in Livy, one may ask oneself why the Romans gave up the larger part of their city, leaving it to be looted by the enemy. Modern scholars have a relatively easy explanation for this problem: the walls and fortifications of the city, which would later surrounded Rome, had simply not yet been built to an extent that could serve as protection from even a relatively small group of Celtic warriors.<sup>19</sup> Some ancient historians present another more surprising answer: the Romans apparently just failed to close the gates, which allowed the Gauls to enter the city without any fighting.<sup>20</sup> It seems very clear that the construction of what is known as the Servian Wall was more likely a reaction to the Gallic disaster than a fortification erected under the glorious reign of King Servius Tullius (6th century).<sup>21</sup> In fact, Livy himself mentions some decisions made by the Romans to fortify the city with stronger walls only a couple of years after the Gallic occupation.<sup>22</sup> But apparently the parts of the tradition which wanted to ascribe this achievement to King Servius were very strong and in some way convincing, and not only for Livy.<sup>23</sup> Thus another explanation had to be found, leading to the strange story of the open gates – in Livy's account, the Gauls, at any rate, are apparently surprised at this failure on the part of the Romans.<sup>24</sup>

As mentioned above, Livy and other authors report that a group of Romans fortified the area on the Capitoline Hill, while the Gauls, having taken the rest of the city, killed whomever they found, looted the temples and houses and then burnt down the whole city.<sup>25</sup> These accounts are inconsistent and not very reliable in several points – cf., for example the strange case of the open gates. Based on the results of archaeological excavations conducted a few decades ago, it is now certain that ancient accounts of the huge destruction caused by the great 'Gallic fire' are extremely exaggerated – the Gauls did not burnt down the city of Rome at any point in the fourth century.<sup>26</sup> Therefore the prominent position of the Capitol as the last and successfully defended stronghold in

17 Liv. 5.40.5.

18 Liv. 5.39.13, 5.41.1–10.

19 See for example Ogilvie 1965, 719: Rome's "defences at this time amounted to a ditch and turf-wall which were inadequate to withstand a resolute assault"; Alföldi 1963, 322, 356; Cornell 1995, 200; Kolb 2002, 97–101, esp. 100; Forsythe 2005, 107, 259, and now Richardson 2012, 131–132.

20 Liv. 5.39.2, 5.41.4; Plut. *Cam.* 22. Cf. Mommsen 1878, 527; Ogilvie 1965, 720. Diod. 14.115 has a

detail different to Livy: the walls and gates are undefended but the Gauls have to break the gates.

21 Cf. the annotations given above (n. 19).

22 Liv. 6.32.1, 7.20.9. Cf. Oakley 1997, 636.

23 Liv. 1.44.3; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 4.13.5, 9.68.1.

24 Liv. 5.39.2.

25 Liv. 5.41.10–42.8; Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 13.12.2. Note that Diod. 14.115.6 reports that some houses on the Palatine were not destroyed also. Cf. Mommsen 1878, 527–528.

26 See above n. 7.

the destroyed city seems to be even more stylized than it already appeared at first sight. So two questions arise: why were the accounts of the Gallic disaster so ‘expanded’ and why was the extent of the destruction so exaggerated?<sup>27</sup> How did the Capitol come to have the prominent position it takes in these traditions?

### 3 A great exemplum – Athens and Rome

Some parallels to another famous occupation of a ‘civilized’ city by a ‘barbarian’ army were revealed early on in the scholarly discussion about the account of the Gallic disaster. At issue is Herodotus’ (ca. 485–424) account of how the Persian troops of Xerxes conquered the city of Athens in 480 BC.<sup>28</sup> The Athenians also abandon the major part of their city to the enemy, and only a very small number of defenders remain on the Acropolis in order to protect the temple of Athena – obviously, at least in the eyes of Themistocles, badly misinterpreting the famous advice of the Delphic oracle to seek shelter behind a wooden wall, which in Themistocles’ interpretation meant to go aboard the ships and fight against the Persian fleet.<sup>29</sup>

Apparently there are some differences between the two accounts, and we will come back to one major difference soon. Nevertheless, the fact that there are parallels between these two accounts can scarcely be dismissed, even though their number and exact form is still open to debate.<sup>30</sup> Here we may perhaps find a key to give *one* possible answer to the first question asked above. For both sides, Gauls and Romans, the historical event itself was in fact not very remarkable at first.<sup>31</sup> But recasting the apparently not very spectacular episode in the style of a central part of the Greek tradition of the greatest fight against a barbarian army ever fought offered an opportunity to raise this part of the Roman history to another level.<sup>32</sup> Of course, the enemies in the Greek case were the Persians and here they were Gauls, but at least both were barbarians in Greek eyes

27 Cf. Ernst Badian’s famous article “The Expansion of the past” (Badian 1966, 11).

28 See already Niebuhr 1846, 381: “[D]ie Erzählung ist sehr schön und erinnert an die von der Einnahme der Akropolis von Athen durch die Perser”; Soltau 1909, 80, 113–114; Ogilvie 1965, 720. Cf. more recently Sordi 1984, 86–88; Horsfall 1987, 72–73; Williams 2001, 152–155; Rosenberger 2003, 47; Richardson 2012, 130–138.

29 Hdt. 7.141.3. Cf. Richardson 2012, 130–131.

30 And given the fact that in any way the account of Herodotus was much older than even the oldest attempts of Fabius Pictor and his successors but also of works from historians from the *Magna Graecia* who knew about the sack of Rome and wanted to

put it in their works, it is of course clear which example influenced the other. See Vattuone 2007 for some candidates among the western Greek historians. They recognized Rome early in the history of the Republic and it seems that they integrated it in their accounts.

31 Cf. Urban 2004, 686; Walter 2004, 387 (“das Scharmützel von 387”).

32 Cf. Richardson 2012, 133: “Nonetheless, this tradition [which greatly exaggerates the degree of destruction], unlikely as it is, exists and it does so in all probability because the tradition of the Gallic sack of Rome was heavily based upon the tradition of the Persian sack of Athens.”

and so in some way the events seemed to be comparable.<sup>33</sup> Connections between Romans and Greeks and influences of Greek culture in Italy and Rome can be traced to a very early date in the history of the Roman Republic and in fact as far back as the regal period.<sup>34</sup> And it seems, too, that some Romans of an early stage did seek ways to present themselves to Greek eyes not only as non-barbarians but also as somehow standing on the same level as that of the evidently highly cultured Greek world they were confronted with every day. The stories of the Trojan descent of the Romans, which can be found in the earliest records, are only one part of this intercultural communication – the stylization of the story of the Gallic disaster may just be another.<sup>35</sup> There are many other examples for the way that early Roman history was modeled after Greek traditions and/or ways of thinking and interpreting earlier times.<sup>36</sup>

We do not know whose idea it was initially to recast the story of the Gallic sack of Rome in the style of Herodotus' account of the Persian capture of Athens. The earliest preserved account about the defense of the Capitol can be found in Polybius' (born before 199/died after 120) summary of the wars the Romans fought against the Gauls in Italy in the generations before the Second Punic War.<sup>37</sup> Q. Fabius Pictor (born ca. 270) is held by most scholars to be Polybius' source of information about this period.<sup>38</sup> It is not clear from the extant fragments, if presenting the Gallic disaster in the style of the account of the fall of the Acropolis was already part of Pictor's work.<sup>39</sup> Even if this could be proven, however, it would still be perfectly possible that the story's inventor was someone other than Pictor or indeed any other Roman historian, such as a Greek historian from *Magna Graecia*.<sup>40</sup>

In any case, it is clear that such a stylization could only have been carried out in this medium of 'historiography,' which Fabius Pictor, as the first Roman historian, took over,

33 Cf. Dihle 1994.

34 Wiseman 1989, 131–133; Wiseman 2007, 67–73; Purcell 2003; Walter 2004, 72–73; Beck and Walter 2005, 22–24.

35 See the works cited in annotation 34 and for the alleged descent from Troy see Galinsky 1969; Wiseman 1974; Gruen 1992, 6–51 and Hölkeskamp 2004 [1999], 201–203.

36 See only the examples in Forsythe 2005, *passim* and the references in Richardson 2012, 138, n. 113.

37 Pol. 2.18.3. A fragment of Cassius Hemina also suggests that the story of the defense was accepted, as it mentions the sacrifice made by Fabius Dorsuo: F 22 FRH 6 (= App. *Celt. fr.* 6 = F 19 Peter = F 23 Santini). But most scholars tend towards a dating of

Hemina that is later than that for Polybius (cf. Beck and Walter 2005, 242 with further references).

38 Mommsen 1878, 516; Walbank 1957, 184; Sordi 1984, 83, *passim*; Williams 2001, 150. Cf. Schwegler 1872, 234 who thinks that Fabius Pictor is probably an early source for the account of Diodor and maybe also for Polybius.

39 For Sordi 1984, 87, however, the case is clear: "Fabio aveva dunque modellato su Erodoto il suo racconto della catastrofe gallica". But cf. Williams 2001, 152–154 who is skeptical about this idea. He prefers to see not so much a "direct, literary borrowing or translation of motifs from the Greek to the Roman context" but similarities which are caused by "the similarity of the situation and of the Romans' later reflections upon their history" (154).

40 As Richardson 2012, 137 assumes.



in an adapted form, from the Greek world.<sup>41</sup> It is certainly true that in general we have to include “changes in Roman conceptions, religious and historical” in our interpretation, and in fact “there was clearly much more to the creation of early Roman history than the succession of early historians and annalists from Fabius Pictor onwards.”<sup>42</sup> To study and explore the ‘social memory’ or ‘Geschichtskultur’ of Roman societies means exactly this.<sup>43</sup> But it is, nonetheless, indisputable that such stylization requires a form and a medium that allows the drawing of parallels, the integration of details in a broader context of interpretation and the development of new concepts in working with history.<sup>44</sup>

If this form of tradition was invented to contribute to the attempt to present the Romans to a Greek public as their equals in their long and arduous history of fighting against the barbarians of the north and as being – at least nearly – on the same cultural level, then this would fit with what we know about Pictor, his aims and the historical and socio-cultural background of the time in which he lived and wrote his text.<sup>45</sup> It seems clear that one of the reasons that Fabius began his project was to give a Greek reading public what he viewed as a suitable impression of Roman culture and history.<sup>46</sup>

Whoever the first person to write the account of the Gallic disaster in this specific way, which reminds readers of the capture of Athens, may have been: it is not necessary to claim that this inventor had the intentions described above. It is absolutely possible, and perhaps more probable, that some historian was simply searching for a model for how to tell the tale of this Roman disaster and found it in Herodotus, without any political intentions. But once set against background of the famous fight of Athens in the Persian war, the sack of Rome had to take on greater dimensions and once established and transmitted, this kind of account could also serve to integrate the Romans in this longstanding and prominent narrative about the fight of the few civilized nations against a world of barbarians. The Romans had the same sort of enemy to face, they, too, had to suffer a huge defeat. And just as the Greeks at Salamis and Plataiai finally defeated the Persians, the Romans also finally forced the Gauls to withdraw. Their city did not fall to a foreign enemy again, at any rate not until late antiquity.

41 For the opportunities to present history in this medium, which cannot be realized in other forms of a respective ‘Geschichtskultur’, see Walter 2001, esp. 256, and Walter 2004, 214–220, for the Roman case. Cf. Erll 2004 for an outline of the topic (“Medien des kollektiven Gedächtnisses”).

42 Williams 2001, 157.

43 See only the wide range of media and *modi* which Walter 2004 has collected.

44 Cf. for example Erll 2004, 4–6; Walter 2001; Walter 2004, 214–217. See also Timpe 1988, 274.

45 For Fabius Pictor and his aims see Badian 1966, 2–6; Timpe 1972; Oakley 1997, 22–23; Walter 2004, 229–255; Beck 2003; Beck and Walter 2005, 55–61; Wiseman 2007, 74–75 (all with further references). See also above n. 34.

46 See for example Wiseman 2007, 74. But it must be noted that it is highly probable that Fabius did not write his work for only *one* group of readers, but for – at least – *two*: Romans and Greeks, especially those of Middle and Southern Italy (Beck and Walter 2005, 58–59).

Of course, the complexity of these processes of intercultural contact is described in a very simple way here. Moreover, it should also be noted that this stylization is only *one* aspect of the presence and development of the Gallic disaster in the Roman ‘Geschichtskultur.’ It can therefore only serve as *one* explanation of why the tradition of the Gallic disaster was broadened in so many ways.

For my present purpose, however, it may be enough that we are allowed to say that at least some Romans (and Greeks!) apparently liked the idea so much that they stylized the story of the raid by a few Gallic mercenaries, who were able to force the Romans to pay a ransom, in a way that made the defeat seemed much greater than it really was.<sup>47</sup> We will soon come back to this point, but first we will look at a detail which amounts to a significant difference between the accounts of these two events – a difference which might appear inconsistent with the interpretation given here: the Acropolis was taken by the enemy, but the Capitol was not taken by the Gauls.<sup>48</sup>

#### 4 ‘The fall of the Capitol?’

An interpretation offered by Nicholas Horsfall about one detail in the accounts of the two events may provide one explanation.<sup>49</sup> According to Herodotus, it was “said by the Athenians that a great snake lives in their temple, to guard the acropolis; in proof whereof they do ever duly set out a honey-cake as a monthly offering for it; this cake had ever before been consumed, but was now left untouched.”<sup>50</sup> The Athenians took this as another bad omen, which supported the interpretation of the oracle given by Themistocles. But in Rome the geese on the Capitol were spared, despite the famine among the defenders during the Gauls’ siege of the hill.<sup>51</sup> So this part of the story may be seen as a “calculated antithesis” (Horsfall): in Rome *pietas* was preserved and the gods did not abandon the city – in this respect the Romans did not just keep level with the Athenians but surpassed them.<sup>52</sup> It should be noted, however, that there are some difficulties with Horsfall’s argument: Plutarch does not mention that the geese were fed but in fact mentions that they were hungry.<sup>53</sup>

47 Cf. the references quoted above (n. 28). It is not necessary to point out here that one of the most prominent individuals among the Greeks who saw the Roman not as barbarians and aimed to spread this message in the Greek world was Polybius. See Williams 2001, 161–165, and cf. Walbank 1967, 176: “P. himself never calls the Romans barbarians”

48 Cf. Sordi 1984, 87–88; Williams 2001, 152–154, thinks that this difference indicates that it is improbable that Fabius used Herodotus account in this way.

49 Horsfall 1987, 72.

50 Herod. 8.41 (translation: A. D. Godley).

51 Liv. 5.47.4.

52 Horsfall 1987, 72.

53 Plut. *Cam.* 27.2–3. Cf. Richardson 2012, 135, n. 104.

Be that as it may, even if one wants to follow Horsfall here this detail, rather than being the origin of the tradition of the successfully defended Capitol, is perhaps more appropriately viewed as an embellishment added when this tradition became widespread.

It should be mentioned, however, that some scholars support the view that a, perhaps older but certainly different tradition existed in Roman literature, according to which the Capitol also fell to the Gauls – similar to the Acropolis in Athens. Otto Skutsch collected some pieces of evidence supporting this view, which included a few fragmentary lines by the Roman poet Q. Ennius (ca. 239–169) that are central for his line of argument: “qua Galli furtim noctu summa arcis adorti moenia concubia uigilesque repente cruentant.”<sup>54</sup>

In Skutsch’s view, which met with both agreement and disagreement by others scholars, this fragment, taken together with other evidence, proves that another version existed, in which the Capitol falls to the Gauls like the rest of the city.<sup>55</sup> But the arguments that were brought against this interpretation cannot just be set aside: it seems possible that in these verses Ennius was describing a scene in which the Gauls slaughtered

54 Enn. *Ann.* 227–228; Skutsch 1985, 405 (“And at that bedding down time of night [noctu concubia] the Gauls stole over the citadel’s topmost walls and suddenly bloodied the watch”). This fragment was preserved from Macrobius (*Macr.* 1.4.17) and the relevant passage is: “Ennius enim – nisi cui uidetur inter nostrae aetatis politiones munditias respuendus – noctu concubia dixit his uersibus: ‘qua Galli furtim noctu summa arcis adorti moenia concubia uigilesque repente cruentant.’ [...] et hoc posuit in *Annalium* septimo, ...” (“For Ennius – unless one thinks he fails the test of elegance in our refined age – used the phrase noctu concubia in these verses: ‘And at that bedding down time of night [noctu concubia] the Gauls stole over the citadel’s topmost walls and suddenly bloodied the watch: [...] This was in Book 7 of the *Annals*, ...’; translation by Robert A. Kaster). The position of this fragment in the seventh book might seem strange at first, because in this part of the *Annales* Ennius was describing the period of the first two Punic Wars, or rather the years between them and not the fourth century with the Gallic catastrophe (Cf. Walter 2004, 267–

268, with further references). But this objection can easily be dealt with if we assume that these lines were a part of a retrospective view of the events of the Gallic disaster in the seventh book. This is an explanation that can be supported by some lines in Polybius as well as in Silius Italicus, in which Gauls who look back on those events are described (*Pol.* 2.22.4, 2.23.7; *Sil.* 6.555–559). See Skutsch 1953, 77, with further references and Ribbeck 1856, 276–277, who already considered this idea. Of course, it should be noted that Theodor Mommsen questioned whether these lines really refer to the Gallic disaster (Mommsen 1879, 298, n. 3), and it is at least possible that his doubts were justified.

55 Skutsch 1953; Skutsch 1978; Skutsch 1985, 405–408. See also Horsfall 1987; Perl 2007 and further Sordi 1984, 88, who supports Skutsch’s view. Cf. Cornell 1986, 247–248; Cornell 1995, 317, and Forsythe 2005, 254, who are skeptical about this point. Cf. also Ogilvie 1965, 720; von Ungern-Sternberg 2000, 215; Williams 2001, 144–145; Walter 2004, 269, who think that no clear decision could be made.

a few guardians, after which the Romans (under the command of Manlius?) expelled them.<sup>56</sup> So the existence of this ‘deviant’ tradition is still open to doubt.<sup>57</sup>

However, if there was such a tradition about the fall of the Capitol, the parallel to the fall of the Athenian Acropolis would fit in another detail.<sup>58</sup> What we can say with certainty is that in one, far more widespread, tradition the Gauls failed to take the Capitol because the geese cackled and Manlius repelled the barbarians.<sup>59</sup> If one wishes to follow Skutsch, then one might assume that at some point in Roman history a change occurred in the tradition about the Gallic sack: from the ‘Fall of the Capitol’ to its successful defense.<sup>60</sup> That, it should be noted, would not necessarily mean that such an alternative version represented the *true* course of events.<sup>61</sup> One reason for such a change may be that the Romans in the time of the ‘Imperial Republic’, having achieved hegemony in the Mediterranean, did not want to remember that once even the heart of their city was conquered. But if this is so, it is not easy to explain why Ennius should have promoted the older (?) and now unfashionable version.

## 5 ‘The head of the world’

Whether or not one wishes to follow Skutsch’s arguments, the fact remains that a tradition took shape in which the Capitol stood at the center of a series of patriotic stories.<sup>62</sup>

It now appears that the fragments of Fabius’ work preserve another important story pointing to the important role that was apparently ascribed to the Capitol from the late third century onwards in Roman historical thought – the discovery of the so-called *caput Oli* allegedly during the construction work on the temple of Jupiter Optimus Max-

56 Cornell 1986, 248: “These lines do not say that the Gauls massacred the garrison, but rather that they killed the *vigiles*, a very different matter. [...] In Livy the sentries were asleep; in Ennius they were surprised (while sleeping?) and dispatched.” According to Cornell 1986, 248, the passages in later texts like those in the *Punica* of Silius, which seem to indicate that the Capitol was taken “could be explained by the fact that in the canonical version the Roman garrison was eventually starved into submission and forced to hand over a large payment of gold to make the Gauls withdraw” or have to be seen as “rhetorical exaggeration” (for example in Lucan. 5.27).

57 Cf. Cornell 1986, 248; Walter 2004, 269, n. 255.

58 Cf. Richardson 2012, 132–133, n. 90.

59 Schwegler 1872, 256–258, collects the evidence for this version. See below n. 69.

60 Williams 2001, 145. The parallel existence of different versions in Roman social memory would be perfectly possible. Cf. Sordi 1984, 88; Williams 2001, 142; Richardson 2012, 128.

61 Although Perl 2007 seems to assume that. But cf. Williams 2001, 145.

62 Cf. above n. 7. See also Walbank 1957, 185 (“Later legends elaborated the defence of the Capitol [...]; but perhaps no serious attempt was made against it”).

imus.<sup>63</sup> The quotation from Fabius is preserved in the work of Arnobius (around AD 300), but it is Livy who gives a full account and an adequate interpretation:

caput humanum integra facie aperientibus fundamenta templi dicitur apparuisse. Quae visa species haud per ambages arcem eam imperii caputque rerum fore portendebat, idque ita cecinere vates, quique in urbe errant quosque ad eam rem consultandam ex Etruria acciverant.<sup>64</sup>

*Caput rerum* – the head of the world: the origins of this story might be older but this interpretation seems better suited to a time when Rome was challenged by setbacks and defeats that needed to be countered by a narrative that promised a victory. After the wars against Pyrrhus (281–275) and the Carthaginians (264–241; 218–202), the Romans started to realize the new opportunities of expansion of various kinds which followed this victory.<sup>65</sup> The Romans had not yet reached their *imperium sine fine* at this time, and they were probably still far from having the developed form of the ideology of domination of the world, which is attested for the age of Augustus.<sup>66</sup> But if a tradition according to which the Capitol itself had fallen to a ‘horde of barbarians’ did exist, it would now seem inappropriate to say the least. And of course it is tempting to point to the way the Capitol and Rome itself were seen after Rome’s victories against Carthage and the Hellenistic kingdoms of the east to explain the supposed alteration of such a variant tradition if it did exist.<sup>67</sup> But as has been said above, this is possible but not verifiable.

63 F 16 FRH 1 (= Arnob. 6,7 = F 12 Peter = F 11 Jacoby). See also Liv. 1.55.5, 5.54.7; Valerius Antias F 14 FRH 15 (= F 13 Peter); Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 4.59–61; Plin. *Nat.* 28.15. See for example Ogilvie 1965, 211–212; Sordi 1984, 84–85; Cornell 1995, 145 (“A tradition that is at least as old as Fabius Pictor..”); Williams 2001, 157; Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001], 138; Hölkeskamp 2006, 480. Note however that Chassignet 1996, 83, doubts that the fragment really belongs to Pictor.

64 Liv. 1.55.5–6: “A human head, its features intact, was found, so it is said, by the men who were digging for the foundations of the temple. This appearance plainly foreshadowed that here was to be the citadel

of the empire and the head of the world, and such was the interpretation of the soothsayers, both those who were in the City and those who were called in from Etruria to consider the matter” (translation by G. P. Goold).

65 See for example Ogilvie 1965, 183, 211–212; Sordi 1984, 91; Williams 2001, 156–157, and Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001], 137, all with further references.

66 Verg. *Aen.* 1.279. See Galinsky 1996, 210–211; Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001], 140–141; Hölkeskamp 2006, 480–481.

67 Cf. only Williams 2001, 152–153; Richardson 2012, 132–133, n. 90.

## 6 Topography and historiography

In Roman historiographical accounts we can find a series of examples describing the Capitol as the last refuge and stronghold during the Gallic disaster.<sup>68</sup> Apparently this image stimulated various versions.

As mentioned above, in a widely spread version, perhaps the most famous one, it was M. Manlius Capitolinus who successfully defended the Capitol when the Gauls made their most dangerous attempt to end the siege by a nightly attack.<sup>69</sup> It is not clear when this story was first created. Some scholars want to date its origins to the middle of the fourth century; many take the position that it was created as an aetiological story to explain the cognomen Capitolinus.<sup>70</sup> For the present purpose it is not necessary to discuss these considerations in detail, though they do offer many interesting insights into the tradition of early Rome. What is more interesting for this analysis is the way the topography of the Capitoline Hill seemed to inspire some inhabitants of Rome to develop and change the account of the Gallic disaster.

In Livy, Diodor and Plutarch, a young Roman named Pontius Cominius climbs up the hill from the side where the Tiber passes the Capitol to bring messages from the Romans who have fled to Veii and/or to bring Furius Camillus a message from Rome asking him come back to the city as *dictator*.<sup>71</sup> The Gauls find Cominius' footprints and follow them up the hill, "near the shrine of Carmentis", where they are then beaten by

- 68 See only Walter 2004, 229–334, for the Roman historiographical tradition from the third to the first century.
- 69 Liv. 5.47; Diod. 14.116; Plut. *Cam.* 27; Zon. 7.23. See Schwegler 1872, 256, n. 5, for further references. Cf. a discussion of the evidence Mommsen 1878, 532–533; Ogilvie 1965, 734–735; Wiseman 1979; Sordi 1984, 88–89.
- 70 Ogilvie 1965, 734, is optimistic about the authenticity of the episode ("authentic stuff of history"). Cornell 1995, 317, is more skeptical. Horsfall 1987, 74; Forsythe 2005, 256; Richardson 2012, 120–121, place the origin of the story in the year 345, because Livy reports for that year that a certain Cn. Manlius Capitolinus was *magister equitum* of the dictator L. Furius Camillus. Both men had vowed a temple for Iuno Moneta on the *arx*. It is not unlikely that their names were preserved in a dedicatory inscription and that perhaps "later popular tradition might have wrongly construed these names as referring to the great Camillus and the infamous demagogue M. Manlius Capitolinus" (Forsythe 2005, 256) and

so also confused the tradition about the Gallic disaster. Perhaps this linkage could serve as another explanation for the prominence of the Capitol and the geese in Iuno's temple in the tradition about the Gallic occupation. It should be noted, in this connection, that Schwegler 1872, 258–260, thinks that elements of the story were invented to explain some old religious rites in which geese and the sacrifice of dogs played an important role and whose original meaning had been forgotten. But this notion is rejected by Horsfall 1987, 75: "Schwegler's suggestion that the story explains the origin of the rituals is not mandatory". Flower 2006, 48–50, sees the story as an attempt to explain the *cognomen* Capitolinus. So we do not know when and for what reasons this story was invented or how it was developed in the early tradition, but it was in any case an old element of the tradition. See also the close reading of the career of Manlius Capitolinus in Jaeger 1997, 57–93.

- 71 Ogilvie 1965, 732, proposes that the worries about the legality of the election are to be attributed to C. Licinius Macer.

Manlius and the other guardians who come to his aid.<sup>72</sup> In the account of the trial of Manlius after his alleged attempt to become a tyrant in the sixth and seventh books, though, Livy gives some information that does not fit his account of the Gauls’ attempt in the fifth book. Here the Gauls climbed the hill by way of the Tarpeian Rock on the south-east flank.<sup>73</sup> Peter Wiseman and Stephen Oakley have suggested a convincing explanation for this confusion.<sup>74</sup> The wish of some annalists to change and develop the story of Manlius in order to make it more sensational may have led to the version in which Manlius is flung from the Tarpeian Rock. From that version, it was a short step to the idea that it would seem even more dramatic to change the location of the Gallic attack: now Manlius was executed on the place of his great and heroic deed “and the same spot served to commemorate extraordinary fame and the extremity of punishment, as experienced by the self-same man.”<sup>75</sup> So in this episode the demands of both a dramatic arrangement of the story and a didactic function of historiography, came together.

## 7 Rhetoric and internal enemies

It is absolutely possible, and in my opinion also probable, that the story, or rather the stories of Manlius, the geese and the siege of the Capitol, were preserved and discussed outside of the realm of historiography as well and known to others besides experts such as Livy and his predecessors. But unfortunately it is only barely possible to verify any kind of daily, informal talk about history for the republican period in general.<sup>76</sup> Still, a few traces pointing to a somewhat broader knowledge of the Gallic disaster do exist. For example, Cicero (106–43) referred to this event in the defense of his client M. Fonteius, the former *propraetor* of Gallia Narbonensis, before the *quaestio repetundarum*, probably in the year 69. Fonteius was accused of extortion by his former subjects. Cicero, who puts forth multiple arguments to defend Fonteius, attacks the Gallic provincials with a reference to the apparently widely known siege of the Capitol by the Gauls:

Hae sunt nationes, quae quondam tam longe ab suis sedibus Delphos usque ad Apolinem Pythium atque ad oraculum orbis terrae vexandum ac spoliandum profectae sunt. Ab isdem gentibus sanctis et in testimonio religiosis obsessum Capitolium est atque ille Iuppiter, cuius nomine mairos nostri vinctam testimoniorum fidem esse voluerunt.<sup>77</sup>

72 Liv. 5.46.8; Diod. 14.116; Plut. *Cam.* 25. See Ogilvie 1965, 732 for a short discussion.

73 Liv. 6.20.12, 6.17.4, 7.10.3.

74 See for the following Wiseman 1979 and Oakley 1997, 490–492. Cf. Jaeger 1997, 74–87.

75 Liv. 6.20.12: “locusque idem in uno homine et eximiae gloriae monumentum et poenae ultimae fuit.” (translation by G. P. Goold).

76 Walter 2004, 70–71, with further references.

77 Cic. *Font.* 30: “These are the tribes which in old days set forth upon a far journey from their homes and

On another occasion Cicero came forward with another reference to the Gallic siege of the Capitol, or rather the Gallic attempts to capture it: in his third Philippic, in December 44, Cicero attacks M. Antonius, who had summoned the Senate, by emphasizing that this enemy of the people had been climbing up the Capitoline Hill along the very same route the Gauls had once taken: “adesse in Capitolio iussit; quod in templum ipse nescio qua per Gallorum cuniculum ascendit.”<sup>78</sup> Cicero would not have chosen these examples if he had not assumed that his audience would understand them.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, he very probably anticipated that jurors in the process against Fonteius, as well as senators, would not only understand his allusions to the Gallic disaster but would also share his interpretation of them. It is not difficult to imagine what this interpretation consisted of. But we do not know what exactly came into the minds of Cicero’s listeners and/or readers as they listened to his speech or read it later. We do not know how deep their knowledge about the Gallic disaster was. Probably the degree of knowledge was highly variable: ranging from those who knew little more than that at some time, long ago in the early years of the Republic, some Gauls, presumably coming from the north, took all of Rome, except for the Capitol, to those who had perhaps read contemporary or even older works by historians and were familiar with their account in some level of detail. But one should not be overly optimistic about the size of the latter group. Cicero himself was no professional historian.<sup>80</sup> Rather he got his knowledge about historical *exempla* of more distant times from his rhetorical education.<sup>81</sup> So it does not seem far-fetched to assume that *exempla* like the two cited here were also used by other orators from time to time and were as a result familiar at least to those who usually listened to the speeches of orators in the senate, in the courts or in the forum.<sup>82</sup>

These *exempla* functioned as a kind of narrative shorthand, which implies that they were elements of the popular knowledge about the past.<sup>83</sup> The pairing of Gauls/Capitol

came to the oracle of the Pythian Apollo at Delphi, the resort of the whole world, to harry and to despoil. It was these same tribes of upright and punctilious oath-regarders who beset the Capitol and the temple of that Jove with whose name our ancestors chose to seal their plighted troth.” (translation by N. H. Watts). Cf. Kremer 1994, 83–104; Bücher 2006, 181.

- 78 Cic. *Phil.* 3.20: “He ordered that it take place on the Capitol and himself made his way up to the temple through some Gauls’ tunnel.” (translation by D. R. Shackleton Bailey). Cf. Bücher 2006, 182, 253; See Cic. *Caec.* 88, where Cicero also mentions this *cuniculum*.
- 79 Cf. Kremer 1994, 104. For the use of *exempla* in Cicero’s speeches see Bücher 2006, for example 155 (*exempla* need “den Hintergrund und das Umfeld

einer allgemein geteilten Kenntnis, eines allgemein verbreiteten Verständnisses von Geschichte, das Reaktionen [...] berechenbar macht”). Cf. Hölkeskamp 2014, 67.

- 80 Walter 2004, 361–373; Bücher 2006, 141–147. Cicero intensified his historical studies only when he was in exile.
- 81 Bücher 2006, 52–74. Cf. Bücher 2006, 146: “Aus der Geschichte braucht der Redner Cicero pointierte Stichwörter, eine Botschaft, die er an den Mann bringen will, aber keine ausführlichen Darstellungen von Ereignissen.”
- 82 It should be admitted, though, that Cicero did not give these two speeches in the *forum*.
- 83 Rösen 2008, 19–20: “Diese narrativen Abkürzungen oder Ultrakurzgeschichten gehören zum festen Inventar jeder Kommunikation, und zwar auf allen



may have worked as an example of such shorthand that was easy to remember – last but not least because of the visual presence of the Capitol in the ‘memory landscape’ of the city itself and the prominent position of the Capitol within this landscape.<sup>84</sup> In Greek and Roman literature, this pairing lasted well up to the imperial era. Hence the passage from Tacitus which was quoted at the beginning of this article is only one of a series of examples.<sup>85</sup>

## 8 A strange procession and Rome’s ‘memory landscape’

“Any group”, Jan Assmann notes in *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, “that wants to consolidate itself will make an effort to find and establish a base for itself, not only to provide a setting for its interactions but also to symbolize its identity and to provide points of reverence for its memories. Memory needs places and tends towards spatialization.”<sup>86</sup>

In Rome the Capitol was such a place. It was not only one of the centers of the political and religious life of the Republic, it was also a space that contained various ‘Erinnerungs- und Gedächtnisorte’ that reminded the city’s inhabitants about its founding as well as about their own glorious history.<sup>87</sup> We do not know which stories and episodes from this long history an average Roman would have remembered as he or she walked to or around the *Forum Romanum* or the Capitol. As in the now famous anecdote in Maurice Halbwachs’ *On Collective Memory* about the various memories that came to a stroller’s mind on his walk through London, a range of different memories would certainly also have come to the mind of a Roman stroller walking through the area of the Capitol.<sup>88</sup> Perhaps he or she would have known stories about the building of the great temple for Jupiter, about Tarpeia or Manlius Capitolinus or about the Gallic siege of the hill many generations ago from various sources, perhaps even have been familiar with

Ebenen – von der alltäglichen Rede bis zur hochstilisierten Interpretation menschlicher Lebensumstände. [...] Sie signalisieren historische Erinnerungen, die so in die Umgangssprache eingelagert sind, daß sie nicht als ausgeführte Geschichten auftreten müssen, um verstanden zu werden.”

84 See Hölkeskamp 2004 [1996]; Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001]; Hölkeskamp 2006, 488; Hölkeskamp 2012, esp. 386–387, 406–407; Cf. Walter 2004, 131–188, for an overview of the ‘memory landscape’ of the city of Rome. The Capitol can certainly be called a Roman *lieu de mémoire* (see Walter 2004, 160–161). A short introduction into the concept is given by Nora 1998, 11–42. See Hölkeskamp and Stein-

Hölkeskamp 2011, esp. 41–42, for problems and opportunities of transferring Nora’s concept to the Roman world.

85 See for example Verg. *Aen.* 8.652–662; Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.188; Tac. *Ann.* 11.23.3–4.

86 Assmann 2011 [1992], 25; cf. Hölkeskamp 2006, 481–482.

87 Beck 2005, 79: “Zumeist waren in diesen Räumen auch Erinnerungs- und Gedächtnisorte gelegen, die die *memoria* an die Gründung der Stadt wachhielten und von ihrer ruhmreichen Geschichte zeugten.” Cf. Jaeger 1997, 4–5, 56; Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001], 144–147; Hölkeskamp 2006, 488–490; Rea 2007, 44–63.

88 Halbwachs 1967 [1950], 2–3.

more than one version thereof. The visibility of the places where these stories took place in such a prominent area of the city could then serve to bring back the memories of these stories to a stroller's mind. Of course the more someone knew about the city's past the more that person would recognize during his walk. And many powerful and rich individuals tried to draw their fellow citizens' attention to specific parts of Roman history, which could serve to enhance the glory of their own family. They erected statues and monuments, not only but especially, in the central areas of the Forum and the Capitol intended to remind the community about successes in wars and battles fought for the *res publica*.<sup>89</sup> This 'memorial landscape' of the city was interconnected not only through stories told and transmitted in media like oral tradition, poetry or historiography but also through rituals. Some of the various *pompae* that were familiar to the inhabitants of Rome led through these areas.<sup>90</sup> The route of the triumphal procession led the participants over the Forum to the Capitol and past various monuments and temples that were erected in direct connection of earlier triumphs. So the city's history was connected in a way to the latest event. Another procession, the *pompa circensis*, celebrated the religious and social unity as well as the hierarchy of the Roman society.<sup>91</sup> According to the Roman tradition, this procession was inaugurated at the beginning of the 5th century. From this time on, its route (from the Capitol to the Circus Maximus) and its elements allegedly remained unchanged, which could serve to show the continuity and permanence of the republic. Thus the Capitol was involved in more than one procession that celebrated the recent or more distant history of the city and its community.

It would be interesting to know in this regard along what path the strange procession described by Plutarch and mentioned at the beginning of this contribution proceeded.<sup>92</sup> It does not seem completely unlikely that the route of this procession included some of the places in the city that were connected to the historical memory of the Gallic disaster. Given the fact that the useless dogs as well as the praised geese were connected with the Capitol it is possible, although on the basis of our preserved sources not attestable, that they marched from, to or around the Capitol, which would thus be included in another way in the 'memorial landscape' of the city. If Jürgen von Ungern-Sternberg is right to think that Plutarch is the earliest source attesting to this procession and that it was not even invented before the imperial era, this would be an interesting aspect that shows in another way that the social memory of the 'Gallic disaster' was still vital in Plutarch's time.

89 See for example Hölkeskamp 2004 [2001], 148–157; Hölkeskamp 2006, 485–487; Walter 2004, 139–143.

90 For the various *pompae* see for example Hölkeskamp 2006, 483–485; Hölkeskamp 2008; Walter 2004, 89–

108 (for the *pompa funebris*); Itgenshorst 2005 (for the *pompa triumphalis*).

91 Beck 2005, 90–96 with further references.

92 See above n. 5.

Even if this was the case, this would have been only one procession among the various *pompae* that were familiar to the inhabitants of the city of Rome. And the *pompa triumphalis* was not the only one among them to offer the Romans far more glamour and spectacle than the impaled dog and the praised goose described by Plutarch. This procession and the other evidence which was discussed in this contribution certainly do not transform the most successful state of the ancient world into one with a ‘culture of defeat.’

It has been possible to show, though, that the Romans, in addition to all their glorious victories, were reminded from time to time of one of the darkest chapters of their history and that the place which they themselves valued as the center and head of their world, the Capitol, played an important role in this memory.

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Heidrun Derks

## The Varus Battle in the Year 9 CE – or How to Escape the ‘Memory’ Trap

### Summary

In 9 CE, after almost 30 years of struggle in *Germania*, the Roman Empire suffered a tragic defeat. It resulted in the loss of the 17th, 18th and 19th legion and became known as *clades variana*, later as *Varus Battle*, *Battle of the Teutoburg Forest* or as *Hermannsschlacht*. Over the centuries the event acquired special significance due to its particular historical circumstances, the historical re-interpretations since the 16th century and the excavations at Kalkriese, which finally led to the erection of a museum on site. Thus the Varus Battle may fulfill many of the criteria for a *lieu de mémoire*, but a closer look reveals some constraints concerning the applicability and appropriateness of this theoretical concept for the event in question.

Keywords: Roman history; Varus Battle; Augustus; Arminius; battle field archaeology; Kalkriese.

Im Jahr 9 n. Chr., nach beinahe 30 Kriegsjahren in *Germania*, erlitt das Römische Reich eine tragische Niederlage. Die verlustreiche Schlacht wurde als *clades variana*, *Schlacht im Teutoburger Wald* oder *Hermannsschlacht* bekannt. Im Verlauf der Jahrhunderte erfuhr das Ereignis aufgrund seiner besonderen historischen Konstellationen, der Neuinterpretationen seit dem 16. Jhd. sowie der Ausgrabungen in Kalkriese besondere Bedeutung, die zur Errichtung eines Museums am Ort führte. So erfüllt die Varus-Schlacht zwar viele Kriterien für einen *lieu de mémoire*, das Konzept weist jedoch einige Einschränkungen hinsichtlich seiner Anwendbarkeit und Angemessenheit für das genannte Ereignis auf.

Keywords: Römische Geschichte; Varusschlacht; Augustus; Arminius; Schlachtfeldarchäologie; Kalkriese.

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In 9 CE, after almost 30 years of struggle for Germania, the Roman Empire suffered a tragic defeat against Germanic warriors. The unexpected battle resulted in the loss of three Roman legions, probably more than 10 000 men. The so called Varus Battle, 9 CE, was of course not the only defeat in the history of the Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless it has acquired a special significance – not specifically due to the event as such, its particular circumstances, participants or consequences, but rather to developments that occurred far later: the historical re-interpretations of the battle undertaken more than a millennium later, the excavations at Kalkriese, which began in 1989, and the influence of the museum that was subsequently erected on the site. At first glance, it appears that the Varus Battle may fulfill many of the criteria for a *lieu de mémoire*. For that reason, some of the compendia of such sites published to date have accorded it this status, though without discussing the applicability and appropriateness of this theoretical concept for the event in question. However, as several arguments can be put forward against this ‘labeling’ the *lieu de mémoire* concept does not currently play a role in the external presentation of the museum in Kalkriese, nor in its marketing approach or corporate image.

This paper provides an overview of the event itself, its historical context and developments that followed it, as well as a general survey of relevant archaeological research and the main findings thereof. It also discusses the reasons for our conceptual approach and our reluctance to consider or promote the Varus Battle and Kalkriese as *lieux de mémoire*.

## 1 History and context

With the conquest of Gaul in the middle of the first century BCE, the Romans reached the Rhine and Julius Caesar declared the Rhine to be an ethnic and a political frontier between Celtic and Germanic peoples and not just a natural border (Fig. 1). Given this pronouncement and from a political and military point of view, there seemed little sense in attempting a further invasion. Thus the Lower Rhine was declared to be the new northern frontier of the Roman Empire.<sup>2</sup> In the political chaos of the following

1 The event went down in history as ‘clades variana’, the defeat of Varus, or as in the inscription on the gravestone of Marcus Caelius, the only known epigraphic evidence, as ‘bellum Varianum’, the war of Varus (Wiegels 2006, 503; Wiegels 2007, 12–13). In the 16th century CE, the event began to be popularly known as the ‘Schlacht im Teutoburger Wald’ (Battle of the Teutoburg Forest) or ‘Her-mannschlacht’. Since the discovery of Kalkriese the

term ‘Varusschlacht’, previously used only occasionally, has gained overall acceptance.

2 Through this sequence of events, Caesar created an ethnic-geographic division that had little to do with reality but did serve two purposes. First, it justified his military ambitions and strategies. Second, with the introduction of the term ‘Germanic’ he grouped together the various tribes beyond the Rhine and by doing so constructed a new (very dangerous) ethnic



Fig. 1 Distribution of roman military camps and settlement between Rhine, Donau and Elbe of Augustan (orange), Tiberian (red) or Augustan/Tiberian time (no colour).

decades, the new section of the empire's border was largely forgotten. After the seizure of power by Gaius Octavius, thereafter Emperor Augustus, and several military incidents, in particular the defeat of Lollius in 16 BCE, the frontier was fortified and troops from Gaul were moved to the Lower Rhine border to stop the frequent raids by Germanic tribesmen into Gaul. From 12 BCE onwards, the previously unknown territory between the Rhine, North Sea and Elbe was extensively explored, first by Nero Claudius Drusus (38–9 BCE) and, after his death, by his brother Tiberius (42 BCE–37 CE), who later succeeded Augustus on the imperial throne. What may have started as exploration, soon turned into military campaigns and conquest.<sup>3</sup>

power, located between the already familiar Celts and Scythians. With his description of the Germanic tribes, he deliberately constructed a scenario of intimidation, referring to the very well-known 'furore teutonico' and thus nourishing the Romans' deeply rooted fear of the peoples of the north, originally

engendered by the invasion and the battles against Cimbri and Teutons in Noreia 113 BCE, Aquae Sextiae 102 BCE and Vercellae 101 BCE (Dreyer 2009, 11–12; Pohl 2000, 51–56; Trzaska-Richter 1991, 78–80; Wolters 2008, 30–32).

In 7 CE, after several further conflicts and insurrections,<sup>4</sup> the Romans thought they had broken the resistance and started the administrative process intended to transform the conquered lands into a Roman province. The man in charge was Publius Quin(c)tilius Varus (47/46 BCE–9CE), an experienced statesman and a relative and close confidant of Emperor Augustus. Among his first measures was the establishment of an administration, the introduction of a legal system and the imposition of taxes and duties. As the politician and historian Cassius Dio (163–229 CE) pointed out in his Roman History,<sup>5</sup> these measures were not welcomed with enthusiasm everywhere. In 9 CE, while on their way back from the Weser to their winter-camp somewhere along the Rhine, Varus and his legions fell into the fatal trap.

According to written accounts, the Varus Battle was an insurrection led by Arminius, the son of a noble Germanic family from the Cherusci, a tribe which had early on established an allegiance with the Romans. Relatively little is known of Arminius' biography, but according to the information that is available,<sup>6</sup> Arminius was probably educated in Rome and pursued a career in the Roman army. He acquired Roman citizenship and the civil rights it conferred and received military honors before returning to Germania. There, he met Publius Quin(c)tilius Varus, and the two became close friends. However, in the autumn of 9 CE, Arminius and his followers, probably men from his auxiliary troops, supported by warriors from other Germanic tribes,<sup>7</sup> lured Varus and his legions in an ambush. After several days of fighting, most of the Roman soldiers were killed. Varus committed suicide.<sup>8</sup> The 17th, 18th and 19th legions were lost. It was one of the Roman Army's least expected defeats, but it marked neither an end nor a turning point.<sup>9</sup> The Romans did not give up their attempts to conquer the land between the Rhine and the Elbe until 16 CE, after having carried out revenge campaigns and several

3 For more details on Roman policies and military strategy in 'Germania' examined from archaeological and historical perspectives, see Deininger 2000; Kehne 2002; Kühlborn 2007; Moosbauer 2009; Welwei 1999; Wiegels 2007; Wiegels 2009; Wolters 2000; Wolters 2008.

4 The most important event in this phase is the so-called *immensum bellum*, which, in 4 CE, led to a new military intervention. According to Velleius Paterculus (Vell. 2.104–105), Tiberius subjugated the Bructeri and the Cherusci, while other tribes accepted new treaties. In this context Tiberius again reached the rivers Weser and Elbe and Velleius Paterculus stated "nihil erat iam in germania, quod vinci posset, praetor gentem Marcomannorum" – there was nothing more in Germania to conquer apart from the Marcomanni (Vell. 2.108.1).

5 Cass. Dio 56.18.3.

6 Kehne 2009, 104; Timpe 1973, 8; Wolters 2008, 93–94.

7 Timpe 1970, 49, 108–109; Timpe 2012, 641–642; for a critical comment on this see Kehne 2009, 105.

8 The reconstruction of the course of events is the focus of much historical research and has, together with the search for the location of the battle, led to a wealth of hotly debated alternative proposals (the latest being that of Timpe 2012, 625–626, 640–641).

9 According to the latest research, the battle should be considered more as an 'operational mishap' than either an historical turning point or a striking break, as it was seen by local historians and patriots in the 19th and early 20th century, and as even historians like Theodor Mommsen described it (Wiegels 2007, 9).

battles involving heavy losses fought by eight legions.<sup>10</sup> The Roman troops were then ordered back to the Rhine, and their military commander, Germanicus, was recalled to Rome.<sup>11</sup>

Tacitus' *Germania* and other Roman sources tell us that many different Germanic tribes of differing size and cultural complexity inhabited the land between the Rhine, the North Sea, the Elbe and the Baltic.<sup>12</sup> However, the archaeological record does not bear this out. The archaeological material from this area is fairly homogenous and shows only few differences, which allow a rough distinction among three cultural zones or archaeological groups: Rhein-Weser Germanen, Elbgermanen, Nordseeküsten Germanen.<sup>13</sup>

The Germanic tribes did not leave any written records. All information about their names, location, size, political order, social structure, customs and manners comes from

- 10 Two military districts on the left bank of the Rhine were defined and each of them equipped with four legions. In 82 and 90 CE, these districts were turned into the provinces 'Germania inferior' and 'Germania superior'. But in the first chapter of his *Germania* (Tac. *Germ.* 1.1) Tacitus stresses that the actual Germania is located outside these provinces, north of the Danube and beyond the Rhine. His text was published in 98 CE, shortly after Domitian's death (see above).
- 11 In subsequent years, however, events did occasionally result in Roman military interventions, as for example in 39 CE, when the Romans undertook a foray against the Chauci that resulted in the recovery of the last of the three lost legion eagles and its return to Rome. Under Claudius troops were moved from the Rhine (Strasbourg, Mainz, Neuss) to Britannia. The continuous raids from the Chauci, riots among the Cattans and the revolt by the Batavians in the following decades lead to an invasion of Roman troops. In 81 CE, right at the beginning of his reign, Emperor Domitian threw himself into an attack against the Cattans, not for territorial reasons but solely in order to reinforce the legitimacy of his power. The celebrations and honors upon his return were lavish: he was awarded a triumph (83 CE) and the honorary name Germanicus, and coins reading 'Germania capta' were issued. Only in the establishment of 'Germania superior' and 'Germania inferior' in conjunction with the reduction of the troops along the Rhine was there a clear signal that the claim to power on 'Germania Magna' had finally been abandoned.

- 12 Since the term 'German' itself has been retained in English up to the present day while the terms 'deutsch' and 'Deutschland' have not found their way into the English language, I will refer to the contemporaries of the Romans as 'Germanic', and to the inhabitants of today's Germany as 'Germans'. The term 'deutsch' probably derived from 'theodisk' or 'diutisc' and originally referred to the language of the common people as opposed to the Latin spoken by the elites. During the Middle Ages the word underwent some changes, becoming 'düdesch', 'teutsch' or 'tiuschen'. 'Theodisk' is still preserved today in the Italian word 'Tedesco'. In the 10th/11th century, the term began to be used to refer to the people who spoke the language and gradually began to take on a territorial meaning as well, as expressed in "tiuschen landen" (Schwabenspiegel 1274/75), das "heilig Riche in dutzchen Lande" (Memorandum der Kurfürsten 1452) or "des heiligen Römischen richs in tutschen landen" (Mainzer Erzbischof 1342). The plural form (German lands) remained in use into the 16th century CE and far beyond. It was not until the German Federal Act was signed in 1815 that the plural form disappeared completely and 'Deutschland' became the official name of the country. From the 15th century CE onwards the idea of the 'Reich' was connected with the 'German nation', as in 'Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation' – Holy Roman Empire of [the] German Nation. Accordingly, the word *Nation* did not at this time refer to ethnic groups, language, political principalities or a state-like institution but to a geographical context (all citations in Busse 1994).

13 Pohl 2000, 19–20.

Roman authors like Tacitus and others. For obvious reasons, their descriptions cannot be taken as documentary evidence. Instead they offer a well-composed blend of facts and fiction, clichés and *topoi*.<sup>14</sup> Several historical sources contain references to the Varus Battle.<sup>15</sup> Most of them were written long after the event though, and their authors probably made use of earlier sources,<sup>16</sup> since lost. This may be a partial explanation for some of the discrepancies and contradictions in the different accounts. Writing on history was more or less understood as storytelling and was thus influenced by many factors. Or to put it in the terms of Quintilian's recommendations, these texts should be written as "poems without rhyme" and should serve "the memory of posterity and the fame of the gifted storyteller".<sup>17</sup>

Despite all that, the antique sources contain valuable information without which a reconstruction of the attempted Roman conquest of Germania under Augustus, and later Tiberius, would not be possible.<sup>18</sup> The most detailed and, according to widely accepted recent research, most reliable account of the event is provided by the Greek author Cassius Dio.<sup>19</sup>

## 2 Defeat, triumph and memory

A comparison of the literary sources with official statements reveals some remarkable differences. The later authors did not mince words, calling the battle a defeat and thus "a spade a spade". Actual politics instead had turned the 'Germania-Project' into a story of continuous successes. Accordingly Drusus already received triumphal insignia and was honored for his actions in *Germania* by the Roman Senate with the cognomen Germanicus. Tiberius was celebrated as conqueror of Germania as well, and Augustus also let posterity know: "Germaniam pacavi" – I pacified Germania.<sup>20</sup> By this time the Varus Battle was long over and the whole political situation in Germania ambiguous to a de-

14 Pohl 2000; Trzaska-Richter 1991; Wolfram 1997.

15 Among the most important are Velleius Paterculus (20/19 BCE–30 CE) *Historia Romana*; Cassius Dio Cocceianus (ca. 164–229 CE) *Ρωμαϊκή ἱστορία*; Publius Cornelius Tacitus (ca. 55–133 CE) *Annals*; Lucius Annaeus Florus (end of the 1st–middle of the 2nd century) *Epitoma de Tito Livio*; Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus (ca. 70–150 CE) *De Vita Caesarum/Divus Augustus*; for more details see Lehmann 1990.

16 Gaius Plinius Secundus (23/24–79 CE) *Bella Germaniae*, Historien; Aufidius Bassus (1st Century CE)

*Libri belli Germanici* oder *Bellum Germanicum, Historiae*.

17 Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.31.

18 One has to follow Timpe 2012, 637 who argued that the written records on the Varus Battle are not only crucial for our understanding of the archaeological record, but rather without these lively, contradictory and dramatic descriptions the archaeological excavations between the Rhine, Lippe and Weser would never have gained such widespread interest and attention far beyond academic circles.

19 Kehne 2009, 105; Manuwald 2007, 430–431; Timpe 2012, 627–628; Wolters 2008, 102–103.

20 R. Gest. div. Aug. 26.1–2.

gree rarely seen before.<sup>21</sup> Even Germanicus, whose military campaigns had demanded higher losses than those 20 years earlier, received a triumph. In inscriptions like the *Tabula Siarensis* his victories were praised as was his recovery of the legion eagles, although one of them was still missing and in Germanic hands.<sup>22</sup> The lush honors Tacitus described<sup>23</sup> were perhaps intended to hide the truth of how little had been achieved.<sup>24</sup> Tacitus remarked laconically “bellumque, quia conficere prohibitus erat, pro confecto acciebatur” – because Germanicus had been prevented from finishing the war, it was considered to be finished.<sup>25</sup>

The three lost legions were never reconstituted. Whether the yawning gap was understood in terms of admonishment, commemoration or a mixture of both is not known. Publius Quin(c)tilius Varus, or rather, his head, which had been cut off by Arminius and sent to Marbod, arrived after this detour in Rome. There he received a solemn burial in the family vault, without any signs of disrespect.<sup>26</sup> The political careers of family members were not affected by his defeat. Only after the treason trials got underway in 26 CE was open season declared. From then on Varus was no longer seen as having been unfortunate as a commander but, instead, as having borne sole responsibility for this disaster. Velleius Paterculus was the first to draw the caricature of the inept commander<sup>27</sup> and others followed his lead.<sup>28</sup> The Roman authors had found a scapegoat. It was therefore not necessary to pursue the critical question of the actual causes of the defeat in detail.

The rediscovery of the third of the lost legion eagles (39 CE) and the later attack against the tribe of the Cattans (81 CE) by Domitian were also included in this propaganda strategy. Again triumphs were celebrated and the slogan ‘Germania capta’ was spread about, leading Tacitus to the laconic comment: “Tam diu Germania vincitur [...]” – so long have we been conquering Germania.<sup>29</sup> For Rome the Varus’ battlefield was no place of memory, not even a place for pietas or commemoration as demonstrated by the critical reactions to Germanicus’ funeral activities, 15 CE.<sup>30</sup> Although military defeats associated with the loss of legions’ eagles led to historical and political traumas, as for example the defeats against Cimbri and Teutons, Hannibal or the Parthians, they never became subject of commemoration, exhortation or warning.<sup>31</sup>

21 It should be noted that the first version of his report, which was probably written in 2 BCE, was later revised. Thus it remains unclear why the version published in 14 CE did not mention the Varus Battle. Either the event was not considered to be important enough as people may still have believed that the situation would soon be under control. Or including anything that might tarnish the report of the emperor was something to be avoided by all means.

22 Wiegels 2006, 516.

23 Tac. *Ann.* 2.41.

24 Wolters 2008, 134.

25 Tac. *Ann.* 2.26.41.

26 Vell. 2.119.5.

27 Vell. 2.119.3.

28 Timpe 1970, 124; Wolters 2008, 146–147.

29 Tac. *Germ.* 37.

30 Tac. *Ann.* 1.62.2.

31 Wiegels 2006, 515.

Whether and how Germanic peoples may have preserved the memory of the victory is difficult to answer. Only from Tacitus do we learn what might have happened after the victory. In the context of Germanicus' visit to the battlefield, Tacitus mentions the places of executions and the altars on which the imprisoned Romans had been slaughtered.<sup>32</sup> Later he writes "caniturque adhuc barbaras apud gentes" – still today (in the 2nd century CE) the barbarian peoples sing about their victory.<sup>33</sup> How long this practice was continued is unknown as whether the site became a sacral place of commemoration. But recent research findings in this context may now shed new light on this subject. Thus the spatial distribution of finds at the site of Kalkriese is now interpreted as evidence for ritual festivities and the erection of *tropaea*, the ritual display of spoils of war, very well known from the Roman victory celebrations and depicted on various Roman coins.<sup>34</sup> There appears to be no evidence however of the long-term use of the battle site as a sacred place after the battle was over and the booty had been divided up.

### 3 The rediscovery of the Varus Battle

Though not completely forgotten over the course of the centuries, the Varus Battle did slip out of view.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless the antique texts were repeatedly copied and preserved in monastic libraries. The main texts dealing with the Varus Battle were rediscovered in the 16th century.<sup>36</sup> These texts opened up a new perspective on the ancient past and on

32 Tac. *Ann.* 1.61.1.

33 Tac. *Ann.* 2.88.3.

34 Rost and Wilbers-Rost 2012, 52.

35 The few medieval texts that deal with the Varus Battle did not obtain widespread attention. These include the *Chronica sive Historia* (1143–1146) by Otto von Freising, with its chapter *Excerptum ex Gallica historia*, which drew on various ancient sources, including for example Cicero, Caesar, Sallust, Sueton and Orosius and medieval texts, supplemented by exercise of the author's own imagination, in which he located the Varus Battle in Augsburg. In this regional context the text gained some patriotic attention and was cited in other early chronicles, i.e. by Sigismund Meisterlin (1522), Adilbert (1516) or Konrad Peutinger (1520), with the result that the localisation of the Varus Battle in Augsburg had its supporters even in the 16th century until the pressure exerted by new facts provided by historical sources published in the intervening period became too great (Wiegels 2006, 519).

36 I.e. Tacitus *Annals* I–IV (1509 Kloster Corvey, printed 1515), Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*

(1515 Kloster Murbach, printed 1517), Cassius Dio, *Ρωμαϊκή ἱστορία* (1548 printed in Paris), Florus, *Epitoma de Tito Livio* (printed circa 1471), Sueton, *De Vita Caesarum* (printed 1520). Tacitus' *Germania* was already rediscovered in 1455 Fulda and printed in 1472 in Bologna and 1473 in Nürnberg. The *Germania* did not deal with the Varus Battle, but it opened up the way for new perceptions of the Germanic tribes that went in two directions – one dealing with a generally new recognition of the Germanic peoples as brave and fierce in character; the second, inspired by the mentioning of Tuiscon, constructed genealogical sequences linking the origins of the Germanic peoples with the Old Testament – Noah, the Japhites and the Tower of Babel (i.e. Schedelsche Weltchronik 1493, Giovanni Nanni, better known as Annus Viterbo 1498/1552, Franciscus Irenicus 1518, Burkhard Waldis 1543). The three ancestors mentioned by Tacitus (Tac. *Germ.* 3) now became the link between Noah and Charles the Great. From the 17th century CE especially the work of Nanni as well as the Old Testament were no longer con-



the history of Romans and of Germanic people. The Germanic people came to be seen no longer as uncivilized vanquished hordes, but as pure, brave and virtuous victors, who had defeated the ‘superpower of antiquity’ – the Roman Empire. One sentence in particular was to have special consequences: “Liberator hau(d) dubie Germaniae et qui non primordial populi Romani, sicut alii reges ducesques, sed florentissimum imperium la-cessierit;”<sup>37</sup> wrote Tacitus thereby laying the foundation for the emerging admiration of Arminius. Neither the point that *Germania* had existed as a country only in the imagination of the Romans, nor the fact that Roman *Germania* had nothing to do with the territory that appeared on maps in the 16th century as the ‘Holy Roman Empire of German Nation’ could dissuade the contemporaries in the following centuries to declare Arminius the liberator of ‘the German Lands’.

A look at the 16th century map shows how this misapprehension could have arisen: the ‘Holy Roman Empire of German Nation’ was composed of more than 300 independent entities – kingdoms, principalities, duchies, earldoms, counties and free cities. Due to a lack of central power, any threat from outside, or any disagreement between neighboring entities, could turn into conflict, develop into conflagration and thus become life threatening. But the greatest nuisance of the time lay in the relationship with Rome, and specifically in the taxes levied by the Catholic Church and the extravagance of the papacy. Complaints on these issues set out in the *Gravamina Germanicae Nationis* (Grievances of the German Nation) 1496, were rejected with the argument that they ought to be grateful: in the view of Enneo Silvio Piccolomini, the later Pope Pius II. First the Romans and then the Catholic Church had brought civilization and wealth to the German countries, otherwise the Germans would still live in the depths of barbarism.<sup>38</sup> There was little to be said against this. At the time, the German negotiators of the *Grievances* were not yet familiar with the new historical sources that Piccolomini was referring to. At the Imperial Diet of 1454 in Frankfurt, Piccolomini, in need of military allies in his fight against the Turks, changed his strategy and praised the unwavering fighting courage and bravery of the Germans, as documented in the historical records by the defeats of Lollius and Varus. Thus Enneo Silvio Piccolomini was the first to introduce the use of historical records into political discourse and to demonstrate that one could use them to support any argument.

As soon as the first copies of the antique sources became available to a broader audience, this potential was recognized by humanists and proponents of reformation as well. They were the first to discover in these texts a radiant past, a glorious hero and brave

sidered as reliable historical sources (Hutter 2000; Hutter 2009, 164–165).

37 Tac. *Ann.* 2.88.2. – “He [Arminius] was undoubtedly the liberator of Germania and had challenged the

Roman people not at the start but at the peak of their power” (translation H. D.).

38 On Piccolomini and the ongoing controversy see Krebs 2005, 118–156; Münkler, Grünberger, and Mayer 1998, 167, 169, 236, 243; Doyé 2001, 588.

ancestors, all that described by Roman authors. The testimony of the ancient sources did strengthen the general self-confidence, and it supplied the political discourse with new arguments: Arminius had appeased and united the squabbling Germanic tribes. Their superior courage and bravery had enabled the Germanic peoples to triumph over their enemy. Hence, unity had provided them with the strength to defeat the enemy and to gain freedom. That was the first lesson to be learned from these records, and it fit in perfectly with the troubles of the time, when lack of unity was seen as the source of most political problems.

#### 4 Arminius – as spokesman, advocate and hero

From this point on, Arminius stood at the forefront of the gallery of heroic ancestors. He also became a spokesman in political appeals. This is illustrated by a letter, dated 11 September 1520, written in Latin and sent by Ulrich von Hutten to Frederic the Wise of Sachsen,<sup>39</sup> which was immediately translated and circulated as a handbill. Referring to Arminius “der allunüberwindlichst und starkmütigst Held [...] der nit allein sein Ort, Gebiet und Vaterland, sonder die gantzen teutschen Nation von den Händen der Römer [...] erlöset und wieder in Freiheit gesetzt;”<sup>40</sup> Hutten called on the German princes and elites to join in the fight against the “weichen, zarten Pfaffen und weibischen Bischöfen” – soft, weak clerics and effeminate bishops.<sup>41</sup> Of course, one ought not to overestimate the impact of these initiatives: few people could read at the time. But with these statements Arminius second career as a figurehead and advocate for the cause of political solidarity and unity began.<sup>42</sup> His proponents did not stop merely at imagining Arminius as an ancestor: to demonstrate the close relationship, he was even given a German name

39 With his *Arminius Dialogues*, written in 1520 and first published in 1529 after his death, Ulrich von Hutten created a literary monument to Arminius. The Dialogues were written in the tradition of the “Dialogues of the Dead” – “dialogi mortuorum” – by the Greek author Lukian from Samosata. In a fictional dialogue in the underworld with Alexander the Great, Scipio and Hannibal, Arminius presents himself as an equal in every respect. Hutten praises him as one of the greatest generals in history and as one of the greatest heroes in antiquity. Ulrich von Hutten thus provided the arguments for the later enthusiasm for Arminius (Roloff 1995, 211–212).

40 “The most invincible, brave-hearted hero [...] who liberated not only his town, region and country but

the whole German nation from the hands of the Romans and gave it its freedom” (translation H. D.).

41 Roloff 1995, 214.

42 There were also some critical voices. Spalatin (1484–1545), a humanist and friend of Martin Luther, accused Arminius in his work *Von dem theuern Deutschen Fürsten Arminio* (1535) of being cunning, of having “broken faith, peace and truth” and rebelled against authority. But Spalatin also praises his military power and eventually finishes by honoring “the liberator”. Spalatin thus presents himself as good Lutheran, who deems rebellion against authority to be a violation against the order and the rules of God (Kösters 2009, 70–71; Ridé 1995, 242–243).



Fig. 2 Ambrosius Holbein (1494–1519), Detail from cover illustration 1517.

– Hermann<sup>43</sup> which increased in popularity in the late 18th and especially the 19th century.

As written texts only reached a few intellectuals, printed illustrations were of great importance in conveying the message to the illiterate, who, until the 19th century, made up the majority of the population. One of the first artists to take up the story of Arminius was Ambrosius Holbein, who, in 1517, presented an image of Arminius dressed like a lansquenet of the 16th century confronting Varus and the House of Habsburg (Fig. 2). Other illustrators, like Jost Amman or Hans Brosamer, showed Arminius holding the severed head of Varus in his hands, a reference to the biblical David and a story that was well known, even among uneducated people.<sup>44</sup>

## 5 Arminius – between politics and entertainment

With the Reformation and an increasing number of religiously motivated conflicts, the centuries to come were marked by even greater political fragmentation. The wars of the

43 The circumstances that gave rise to the name Hermann remain obscure. The earliest uses of the name are found in the literary works of Althamer (1536) and Aventin, actually Johannes Turmair, who mentioned a “Hertzog Ermann auß dem Hertzogthumb jetzt Braunschweig” – Duke Hermann from the duchy now Braunschweig – in his *Chronica*, written from 1524 to 1534 (Kösters 2009, 61, 71). Another trail leads to the humanistic circles around Martin Luther. In one of his speeches (1536/1542), Luther speaks of the victorious Cherusci *Hermannus*

(Münkler, Grünberger, and Mayer 1998, 298, see also Ridé 1977, 873–874, 877–878). Also attributed to Luther is the exegesis of the 82nd Psalm (1530), which says that the name Hermann is derived from a translation of the Latin ‘dux belli’ into German, ‘Heer-Mann’, man of the army (Ridé 1995, 240).

44 With this motif the topic was again connected with the Old Testament and thus the ‘Stammväter-Debatte’ (see ref. 12), which had already begun (Hutter 2009, 168, 170).

17th century clearly illustrated the political deficiencies of the time, which were further exacerbated by the strict divisions among the aristocracy, citizens and peasants and impeded social and commercial development. Princes ruled with absolute power over their lesser subjects and any idea of citizens' rights, such as those written into the French constitution after the revolution, remained remote until well into the 19th century. But Arminius was not only used by intellectuals to promote their political ideas and hopes. Starting in the late 17th century, artists and writers discovered the topic and created fictional stories, novels, stage works and entertaining literature, with political messages occasionally hidden between the lines.

One early example is Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein who, in his almost unreadable 3000 page novel *Groszmüthiger Feldherr Arminius...*,<sup>45</sup> (1689/1690) appealed to the principalities to abandon their obstinacy, to overcome religious and internal political controversies and to show a sense of responsibility for their subjects and their country. The background for this daring and bizarre epic were the political conditions of the time: the great wars against the Turks, the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, the constantly threatened western border, the attacks of Louis XIV, the occupation of Strasbourg in 1681 and so forth. To cope with all that, Leopold I of Habsburg, whom Arminius represents in the novel, needed recognition and support. Lohenstein was not asking the principalities to submit, he did not question the system as a whole, he was asking only for a voluntary recognition of the sovereign. The book's illustrator, Johann Jacob von Sandrart (1655–1698), translated the sometimes hidden messages of the author into succinct pictures (Fig. 3).

In the 18th century, new ideas came up, inspired by the emerging philosophy of the Enlightenment and aimed at overcoming feudalism, and these were directed toward the German nobility. Their extravagance, in particular, as expressed in the imitation of French lifestyle, fashion, art and architecture attracted criticism. Daniel Niklaus Chodowiecki (1726–1801), a popular illustrator of the time, was among the first to present Arminius 1782/85 as a sovereign with a heart, surrounded by his subjects and sharing their sorrows (Fig. 4).

45 The complete title *Groszmüthiger Feldherr Arminius oder Hermann, Als Ein tapfferer Beschirmer der deutschen Freyheit, Nebst seiner Durchlauchtigten Thusznelde In einer sinnreichen Staats-, Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte Dem Vaterland zu Liebe Dem deutschen Adel aber zu Ehren und rühmlichen Nachfolge in Zwey Theilen vorgestellt* is already a foretaste of the character of the book – a universal history, a national epos glorifying the Germans, a love story and a romance, in which truth is not really a key issue: Odysseus trav-

els through Germany to found some cities, Medea has taken a German duke as her second husband, Hannibal has a German mother and the Varus Battle is the pivotal point in world history. Lohenstein took the ideas for his novel on love and adventure from the French author Gautier de Coste de La Calprenède (Cleopatre, 12 vol. 1647–1658), who also became a source of inspiration for librettists and composers (Bendikowski 2008, 139; Kösters 2009, 109).



Fig. 3 Johann J. Sandrart (1655–1698), *Arminius und Thusnelda*, picture for D. C. von Lohenstein 1689/1690 illustrating the political dilemma of the time: warring Germanic warriors, threatening Romans and a helpless Germania.

Arminius' success and popularity was not solely based on his military triumph. The story of his tragic love for Thusnelda and the family quarrels following from that played a significant role as well.<sup>46</sup> His personal tragedy provided the shining young hero with a human side, and gave his life story the bittersweet touch of passion, romance and tragedy – an attractive plot for love stories and baroque operas that had appeal even to poets,

46 Tac. *Ann.* 1.55–56.

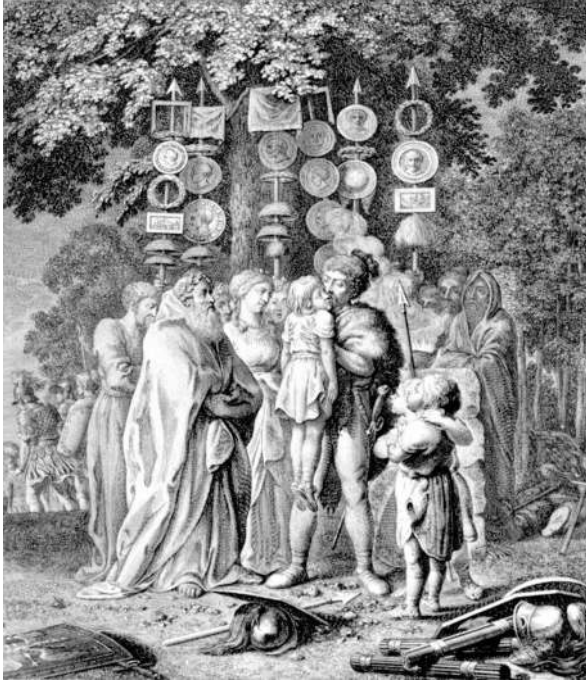


Fig. 4 Daniel Chodowiecki, Illustration for Klopstock's "Hermann's Schlacht", 1782.

writers and composer outside of Germany.<sup>47</sup> In addition to bringing Arminius into the realm of the theatrical imagination, and onto European stages, romance also made him attractive to a public that showed only little interest in simple warrior heroes. In these works, the actual historical event was completely beside the point, what mattered was Arminius – his courage, his bravery, his despair.

But the political dilemma and the central question remained. What is Germany and what are its constituting factors? "Deutschland? Aber wo liegt es? Ich weiß das Land nicht zu finden. Wo das gelehrte beginnt, hört das politische auf,"<sup>48</sup> objected Goethe

47 For example Georges de Scudéry, *Arminius ou les frères ennemis* (tragicomedy that premiered in 1642), Gautier de Coste de la Calprenède, *Cleopatre* (novel, 1648–1658), Jean Galbert de Campistron, *Arminius Tragédie* (love tragedy, 1685). These authors also had a great impact on librettists and composers, such as Heinrich Franz Ignaz Biber, *Arminio – qui dura la vince* (Oper 1687 Salzburg), Alessandro Scarlatti, *Arminio* (1703 Pratolino), Georg Friedrich Händel, *Arminio* (Oper 1736, London), Johann Adolf Hasse,

*Arminio* (1730 Mailand). For a complete list see Barbon and Plachta 1995, Appendix 1, in Wiegels and Woesler 1995, 288–290.

48 Friedrich Schiller, Xenien 1796; zitiert nach: Erich Schmidt / Bernhard Suphan (Hrsg.), *Nach den Handschriften des Goethe- und Schiller-Archivs*. Weimar 1893, Nr. 122. – "Germany? But where is it? I do not know how to find it. Where the scholarly starts, the political ends" (translation H. D.).

and Schiller in 1796 in their jointly authored *Xenien*, in which they argued for a cosmopolitan and enlightened view. Due to the lack of a political and territorial frame of reference on the one side and a growing self-consciousness combined with improving education and the ideas of enlightenment on the other, criticism of the feudal social order increased, and the search for a new social model continued. The questionable morality of the nobility should be replaced, it was argued, by virtue, reason and responsibility. But without any political clout behind them, the efforts were focused on the search for identity. The emphasis was on language, history and culture, and the intellectuals again drew on the antique sources to find the true German virtues there. Any sense of national pride and national identity was still absent. While bringing that to life, intellectuals and philosophers, artists and authors in the late 18th century slowly started to move towards a slightly excessive patriotism of a rather idealistic, romantic and enthusiastic nature. The resulting texts and pieces relieved the Germanic peoples again from any reproach of barbarism, considered them in some respect even as culturally and morally superior to the Romans, recognized in Arminius a national hero and role model and dreamed and raved about German unity and freedom or the German virtues of temperance, generosity, chastity, fidelity, courage. All this was put forth in the highly emotional tone typical of the romantic era, which, with its very specific sentimentality, kitsch and pathos, is difficult to stomach today.<sup>49</sup> Together with what was at the time a rapidly growing book market, Arminius and his victory left their marks in every literary genre – novels, love stories, tales for children and history books for readers of all ages became increasingly popular, conveying the story to the masses.

## 6 Arminius – from stage to battlefield

Up to this point, the reception of Arminius was indeed quite politically motivated. Writers and historians had used Arminius to deliberately touch what were obviously raw nerves, but all their efforts remained inconsequential, sometimes bizarre or even naïve – a romantic infatuation. However, the invasion of the Napoleonic troops brought about a radical change, and what had been no more than an enthusiastic passion for freedom and unity was now confronted with reality: Austria was defeated in 1805, the emperor abdicated, the battles in Jena and Auerstedt were lost in 1806, Prussia collapsed, the French troops arrived in Berlin and the *Holy Roman Empire of German Nation* disappeared from

49 For example Johann Elias Schlegel, *Hermann*, Trauerspiel 1743; Justus Möser, *Arminius – ein Trauerspiel*, 1749; Christoph von Schönaich, *Hermann oder das befreyte Deutschland*, Heldengedicht 1752; Friedrich Gottfried Klopstock, *Hermanns Schlacht*, 1769, *Her-*

*mann und die Fürsten*, 1784, *Hermanns Tod* 1787. The works of Klopstock and Schlegel also inspired contemporary artists like Johann Heinrich Tischbein (1722–1789), Angelika Kaufmann (1741–1807) and Josef Abel (1768–1818).

the map. The social and political shortcomings, as well as the failures of past decades, now became obvious. There was no ‘Volk’ one could have mobilized against the enemy, because there was no sense of cohesion. But this was something that should be quickly changed. Two instruments were introduced: modernization and propaganda.<sup>50</sup> As resistance to the French occupation grew, the desire to belong to a politically united nation increased steadily, and Arminius played a very vital role in this process, as perceptions of him changed. Now, he was used as the impeller, the instigator, in short: the whip. He was the propaganda instrument and leading voice advocating one mission, one goal – the fight against the French and liberation – and hate became the new catchword. The now intended people’s war (*Volkskrieg*) required firstly that the established norms from the Age of Enlightenment concerning civilization and humanity be weakened<sup>51</sup> and secondly that the term ‘Volk’ be filled with meaning. The friendship and love ethic of the 18th century was replaced by Ernst Moritz Arndt by an ethic of hatred. “He who cannot hate Rome, cannot love the Germans” – this sentence, which Schlegel had, almost incidentally, inserted back in 1743 in his drama *Hermann*,<sup>52</sup> became a mission statement.<sup>53</sup> In countless poems and songs, Ernst Moritz Arndt celebrated hate as a virtue and a moral weapon to be used in times of war to mobilize the masses against the French enemy.

Ja ich hasse, es ist meine Lust und mein Leben, dass ich noch hassen kann; ich hasse innig und heiß [...] und darum will Hass auf Leben und Tod [...] und wenn dann das Volk, wie unsere Ahnen vormals, nur zu Keulen und Spießengriffen – das Franzosenungeziefer, das bei uns ist, würde bald vertilgt sein und neues würde nicht wiederkommen. So ist mein Hass.<sup>54</sup>

In the end, ‘Hermann’s grandchildren’ went to war, and their victory in 1813 was celebrated as the ‘New Hermann Battle.’

50 The long overdue process of modernization was started and brought some major changes: serfdom was abolished, freedom of trade and urban self-government was introduced, Jews received civil rights, education was made compulsory, an independent judiciary was installed. The army was completely reformed, corporal punishment was abolished, the elite’s privilege to hold higher ranks in the army was abolished, etc. – but the spring of modernization only lasted until 1815, and at the Vienna congress clocks were turned back.

51 Dörner 1995, 87.

52 Schlegel 1963 [1743], 128.

53 In the same period, Heinrich von Kleist wrote *Hermannsschlacht* (1808). But his drama was largely ig-

nored, although he blew the same horn and in the phrases “As long as there is still one enemy in Germania, hate is my duty; revenge is my virtue” found a short and precise formula encapsulating the task that lay ahead. He had to wait more than 100 years before his message and his language really fitted the time.

54 Arndt 1813, 438. – “Yes, I hate, it is my pleasure and my life that I can still hate: I hate fervently and hot [...] and thus want to hate life and death [...] and if the people would take up only clubs and spears, as our ancestors once did, – the French vermin that are in our land would soon be destroyed, and new vermin would not come back. Such is my hatred” (translation H. D.).



With the defeat of Napoleon in 1813, the map of Europe had to be re-drawn. The Reform movement hoped for a united German nation, but the nobility saw to their interests first. The newly founded German Confederation, created at the Congress in Vienna in 1815, was still comprised of 39 independent states. Political participation, civil rights, freedom of the press and all the other social and political changes that had been introduced in the few years since the invasion of the Napoleonic troops, were taken back. Disappointed, proponents of the reform movement retreated to their 'Biedermeier' homes.

For the next decades, two images of Arminius co-existed: an aggressive and a liberal version. The latter gained importance in the emancipation movement of the 19th century. But with that movement's defeat in 1848/49 and the wars against Austria, Denmark and France beginning in 1862, the liberal national idea faded away. What remained was an aggressive nationalism with Arminius at the fore and at the top. Art was promoted as a didactic tool for teaching history to the general public. Large oil paintings were intended to make the public aware of the parallels between past and present. Thus Arminius 'conquered' schools, living rooms and public buildings, like, for example, the town hall of Krefeld, where Peter Janssen created a sequence of eight large-scale oil paintings on the Varus Battle from 1870–1873. Janssen received the commission in 1869, by a jury that had assessed the historical-patriotic timeliness of his ideas, and the artist had left no room for doubt that he had the German-French war in view (Fig. 5).

## 7 Arminius – a monumental hero

Though other memorials to Arminius had been planned before, like the one by Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1813/1814), only the Hermann Monument in Detmold, created by Ernst von Bandel, was actually realized (Fig. 6). By the time it was finished in 1875, its creation had taken 55 years. The monument had seen all the political shifts of the 19th century and was now perceived as symbolically representing the Emperor, although the idea behind it went back to the invasion by Napoleonic troops at the beginning of the century. The young Ernst von Bandel (1800–1876) had presented the first designs back in 1819, but construction did not actually begin until 1837, made possible by the fund-raising efforts of civil associations, historical societies, political parties and patriotic circles, women's associations and liberal reform clubs from 1820 to 1848, which saw the monument as a symbol of the idea of a modern German civil society. The speeches given upon completion of the pedestal in 1841 referred to a peaceful co-existence of nations and the cosmopolitan meaning of the monument,<sup>55</sup> and the main speaker, Moritz

55 Kösters 2009, 238.



Fig. 5 Peter Janssen (1844–1908), *Der siegreich vordringende Hermann*, Wall-painting for the Townhall Krefeld 1870–1873.

Leopold Petri, a municipal councilor in Detmold, even stressed Arminius' democratic impact: as he saw it, the victory of Arminius had liberated all peoples of the world by introducing a concept of freedom that “abolished differences between masters and slaves as well as between citizens and foreigners”<sup>56</sup>, thereby serving the cause of peace and harmony among peoples.<sup>57</sup> Thus Petri provides an example of how exaggeration and the exuberance of enthusiasm for Hermann and the Varus Battle could also swing towards a liberal direction.

With the suppression of the revolutionary movement in 1848/49, fundraising stopped, and so did the building work. It was not until the German Wars of Unification (1864–1871) that donations began to flow in again. Thanks to a generous cash injection from Wilhelm I, the work was finally completed and the monument unveiled in 1875, in the Emperor's presence. One inscription reads “Germany's unity is my strength / my strength is Germany's might.” Having undergone another shift in meaning, the monument was now seen as a symbol of glory, of military power, as representing the emperor,

56 Petri 1842, 7.

57 Petri 1842.



Fig. 6 Hermann's Monument, near Detmold.

as a gesture in stone and metal threatening the archenemy, France, and as a warning to all potential enemies of the 'reborn' German Nation as well. Four years after the foundation of the German Empire at Versailles in 1871, the national euphoria reached its peak. Arminius was a national hero and his victory in the Varus Battle became the mythical foundation of the Reich, now demonstrated by his widely visible monument. The enemy had been defeated, the nation had been founded. The mission of Arminius was fulfilled. From that point on, his gloss began to slowly fade, and the myth started to lose its great unifying social power.<sup>58</sup> In the two decades after 1871, a wide variety of interest groups claimed Arminius and the monument for their particular goals. It was put in the service of defaming Catholics, Socialists, Jews and Democrats, with a growing emphasis on racist and anti-Semitic issues.<sup>59</sup>

58 Doyé 2001, 599.

59 Mellies and Migdalski 2012, 112.

## 8 The search for the battle site

Although Arminius began to lose some of his unifying power after 1875, the importance of the historical Arminius, which had been almost secondary in the previous centuries, was slowly growing. In the course of the 19th century, history had become a leading academic discipline,<sup>60</sup> and was represented by historians like Johann Gustav Droysen, Heinrich von Sybel, Heinrich von Treitschke or Theodor Mommsen, who were committed to history and to politics. The political goal had been achieved – the nation had been founded – now the history of the Varus Battle could finally come into focus. Facts were needed to provide historical authenticity to the myth.<sup>61</sup> Against this background, the search for the site of the battlefield gained popularity. Accordingly, the numbers of publications on the subject increased, coming to an initial peak between 1870 and 1880, with further peaks to follow. Theodor Mommsen reopened the discussion with the publication of his essay *Zur Örtlichkeit der Varusschlacht* (1885) and his proposal of Barenau-Kalkriese as the location of the battlefield. The search was not followed only by professionals; local historians and the public took a vivid interest as well.

Research concentrated on the region between Detmold, Paderborn and Münster, resulting in the emergence of four region-based theories:<sup>62</sup> the Lippe theory, the Münster theory, the south theory (South of Münsteraner Bucht) and the north theory (Wiehengebirge/Weserbergland), with Theodor Mommsen the most prominent advocate of the lattermost. But even Mommsen's theory was not able to win general acceptance, despite the fact that it was based on a considerable number of Roman coins. Critics complained about the lack of evidence like, for example, Roman weapons. Hundreds of suggestions were made, leading Friedrich Koepp in 1927, with regard to the floods of proposals, to make the ironic remark: "The shade of Arminius still wanders around, taking terrible revenge on his grandchildren."<sup>63</sup> In most cases, the ideas were based on the historical records, despite the fact that these did not offer any relevant clues, place names, landscape or topographical information. No sound evidence, such as archaeological remains, was discovered at any of the locations under consideration.

60 Dörner 1995, 151.

61 Dörner 1995, 160.

62 Von Petrikovits 1966, 174. Though this regional limitation did not come up in the 19th century, it actually went back to a publication of Pastor and chronicler Johannes Piderit (1559–1639), who simply designated the "Lippischen, Dithmoldischen und Hörnschen Wald" – three forest areas – as "teutoburgiensi saltu", thus referring to Tacitus (Tac. *Ann.* 1.60.3) who had given this name to the place of battle without describing its location. With the pub-

lication "Monumenta Paderbornensia" (1669) by Prince Bishop of Paderborn Ferdinand von Fürstenberg, the "Teutoburger Wald" was first marked on maps, again without any evidence. The naming was completely arbitrary, but this was soon forgotten. With the erection of the monument, most people thought – and some still do today – that it had been placed more or less at the site of the battle, because the area was now considered to be Tacitus' Teutoburger Wald.

63 Wiegels 2007, 8.

## 9 Arminius and the wars

Although the question concerning the site of the battle had to remain unanswered, the mythical Arminius managed a ‘grand comeback’ with the end of World War I. After the defeat, Arminius was the first voice in the myth of the ‘stab in the back.’ Afterwards, he joined the chorus against the Weimar Republic, and while democratic forces lost any interest in the Hermann monument, it now became a popular place for the meetings and assemblies of nationalist, ‘völkische’ and anti-Semitic groups and associations. The 50th anniversary of the erection of the monument (1925) was used to attack the Treaty of Versailles, and the monument became a weapon in the hand of radical right wing elites<sup>64</sup> as the frequent meetings there of the Stahlhelm, Jungdeutschen Orden and others demonstrate. In the 1930s, Arminius was used by the Nazis as a crucial instrument in election propaganda. Once victorious, they had no more need of this strategy however. Germany now had one ‘Führer’, a second one would have been superfluous, all the more so as Adolf Hitler was far from being interested in prehistory. Still, in 1942, he let his listeners know: “Unser Land war ein Saustall, durch das sie höchstens durchgezogen sind. Wenn man uns nach unseren Vorfahren fragt, müssen wir immer auf die Griechen hinweisen.”<sup>65</sup> Arminius was no longer at the center of historical consciousness. He did, of course, remain an integral constituent of the historical narrative though. After all, the myth was so well established in the public consciousness, that no further promotion was needed. Thus, the application by the mayor of Detmold that the Hermann Monument be declared a place of national pilgrimage was rejected on 13 May 1933 by the Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. The foreign policy situation at the time, and particularly the ties with Rome, also argued against a stronger promotion of the Varus Battle however. To avoid irritation during the 1936 visit by Mussolini, the monument was left off the list of sightseeing destinations.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Wilhelmine monuments hardly seemed suited to the image building of a new era and its claim for power. New and – above all – specifically Nazi symbols were needed and consequently developed. In this context, the Varus Battle had lost its importance.<sup>67</sup>

64 Dörner 1995, 250: Three aspects in particular attracted these groups: a) story and monument were used to mobilize people against the French, b) the murder of Arminius was changed into the ‘myth of the stab in the back’ and c) Arminius as leading figure was an example for a successful leader and thus an argument against parliamentarianism.

65 Jochmann 1980, 213–214. Transl.: Our country was a pigsty, at most one they only passed through. When someone asks us about our ancestors, we have to refer to the Greeks.

66 Doyé 2001, 600.

67 The only exception refers to the redesign of the Gallery of the Reichskanzlei. Hitler wanted the 146m-long corridor to be decorated with large tapestries measuring 5.4 to 10 m. The tapestries should show eight fateful battles of German history, starting with the Varus Battle. Design and workmanship were planned according to the model of Versailles and its *Galerie des Batailles*, opened in 1837. This project was never realized.

But one artwork from the 19th century did become a sensation at this time: Heinrich von Kleist's *Hermannsschlacht*. Written in 1808 while Kleist was under the impression of the invasion of Napoleon, the stage drama was largely ignored in the 19th century. Its language and content was rejected by audiences then due to its cruelty and brutality. The stage drama was rediscovered during World War I though, when the latest news from the front were read to the audience during the performances. And every soldier was urged to take the book to heart as a 'wonderful patriotic rage,' because after reading such a book they would "conquer a hundred times over."<sup>68</sup> But it was only after 1933 that Kleist was discovered as the poet of the time. Kleist's discourse of hatred was now linked with the race issue<sup>69</sup> and Arminius was seen as the first person who had led the breed of the north against the peoples of the Mediterranean and thus prevented racial mixing.<sup>70</sup> "Kleist's battle call is our battle call and his song of revenge is our retaliation," wrote the press, and the Kleist Week in Bochum 1936 celebrated Kleist as "a milestone in the history of the national socialist theatre."<sup>71</sup> Kleist's hate and revenge discourse was perfectly suited to the contemporary rhetoric. Twenty theatres had already included *Hermannsschlacht* in their program by the 1932/1933 season, in 1934/1935 the play was performed on 150 stages.

After 1945, the political Arminius was virtually dead, and the few attempts to return him to the stage are almost negligible compared to those of previous centuries. In the 1950s and 1960s the monument served as a rallying point for the Federation of the Expellees and the *Free Democratic Party* (FDP), with their appeal for "Unity in Freedom and reunification" (17 June 1954). The 75th anniversary obtained only local significance as all the prominent figures from the political scene declined to attend. Today the monument enjoys unbroken popularity as a visitor attraction and as the most impressive and spectacular monument of the 19th century.<sup>72</sup>

In the former GDR developments took a slightly different course. Engels had commented positively on Arminius and had stated that suppression justifies any means.<sup>73</sup> Accordingly the Germanic peoples were seen as 'Genossen' – comrades – who had defeated the 'Sklavenhaltergesellschaft' – slave-owning society – in order to rescue their social-economic autonomy. But this was only one aspect. The second was linked to the unity of the German nation. Until well into the 1950s the idea of detaching the FRG from its Western partners and creating a pan-German country in the GDR mould still persisted. This was the message linked to the performance of Kleist's *Hermannsschlacht*

68 Unverfehrt 1981, 336.

69 See also Alfred Rosenberg back in 1927 in *Völkischer Beobachter* on the performance of the 'Hermannsschlacht' in the Münchener Prinzregententheater and his conclusions on the meaning of the text for the national socialist movement. Text reprinted in Rühle 1988, 823.

70 Doyé 2001, 599.

71 Dörner 1995, 253.

72 Mellies and Migdalski 2012, 114–115.

73 Engels 1962, 442, 446. "Die Mittel aber, die man zur Unterjochung anwendet, müssen auch gestattet sein zur Abwerfung des Jochs" (Engels 1962, 446).

during the Deutsche Festspiele at the Harzer Bergtheater, 1957, directed by Curt Treppe. To ensure that everybody would understand the political message intended, the program booklet gave following guidance:

1. Rom, das ist uns Amerika, 2. Die entzweiten und von Rom gegeneinander gehetzten zum Bruderkrieg aufgestachelten Völker: das ist der deutsche Westen und der deutsche Osten; und vor allem die deutschen Arbeiter in Ost und West.
3. Aristan: das ist uns Adenauer und Co. 4. Das Verzeihen und Vergessen zwischen den betrogenen und in die Irre geführten deutschen Brüdern und Hermann – so wollen wir es auch halten, wenn erst die deutsche Einheit erkämpft ist.<sup>74</sup>

In West Germany almost 40 years passed before Kleist's *Hermannsschlacht* returned to the stage. The first performance, given in Bochum in 1982 with Claus Peymann directing, was inspired by the Middle American struggles for freedom in the 1980s and the idea of Arminius as a person trapped in a circle of violence.

In summary: from the 16th to the 20th century the perception and propagandistic use of Arminius underwent remarkable shifts. Arminius helped people to overcome feelings of cultural inferiority; he promoted idealistic patriotic concepts and the ideas of enlightenment. He supported the struggle against Napoleon, coached liberal reforms and civil emancipation and then turned into a political firebrand, an unscrupulous nationalist and a heartless racist before sinking into political obscurity. Today, Arminius has lost his political meaning and significance. This also became apparent with German reunification. Unity had long been the key issue in the Arminius discourse. Whenever unity seemed far out of reach, threatened, merely a vision or just a hope – Arminius had entered the stage. In 1989 reunification occurred without him though, and nobody praised Chancellor Helmut Kohl as the new incarnation of Arminius.

## 10 New discoveries in Kalkriese

There were several hundred suggestions made as to the site of the Varus Battle. But none of their authors provided any material evidence, and the descriptions in the historical

74 Programmheft des Harzer Bergtheaters in Thale. Heinrich von Kleist, *Hermannsschlacht*, Inszenierung Curt Treppe, Quedlinburg: no publisher, 1957, 16; Dörner 1995, 260. – “1. Rome for us this is America, 2. The divided peoples, incited to mutual hatred by Rome and spurred toward a fratricidal war: this is the German West and the German East, and above

all the German workers in East and West. 3. Aristan: this is Adenauer and Co. 4. Forgiving and forgetting between the German brothers who were deceived and led astray and Hermann – we want to adhere to this path as well, once the battle for German unity is won” (translation H. D.).



Fig. 7 Location of the main site – the Oberesch – on the northern slope of the hill of Kalkriese Mound and the Great Moor.

records were too vague to allow any sound conclusions to be drawn. So it came as quite a surprise when, in the late 1980s, Tony Clunn, a member of the British army, discovered several Roman coin hoards and three Roman slingshots, and thus the first evidence for the presence of Roman legions, in Kalkriese. Excavations began in 1989, and since then Roman finds have turned up in an area of almost 20 square kilometers (Fig. 7).

The highest concentration of evidence for a battle was found at a site called Oberesch, which is today the location of the park of *Museum and Park Kalkriese* and is situated at the narrowest point between the hill called Kalkriese and the Great Moor. Excavations in this area uncovered evidence of a 400 meter long rampart, as well as skeletal remains and more than 5000 Roman finds, including weapons, military equipment, implements and tools, objects associated with administrative activities, medicine, transport and military life, showing traces of battle, plundering and ritual. The highlight of the collection is a Roman face mask (Fig. 8), made of iron and originally covered with silver, which was found only a few meters north of the rampart.<sup>75</sup>

75 For a general description of the excavation and latest results see Harnecker 2008; Wilbers-Rost et al. 2007;

Rost 2009; Wilbers-Rost 2009; Rost and Wilbers-Rost 2012.





Fig. 8 Face mask of a roman helmet.

## 11 Planning a museum

It was not until 1993 that a link to the Varus Battle was officially accepted, even though the media was already promoting the idea in 1991. The first permanent exhibition opened at the site in 1996.<sup>76</sup> But the growing number of visitors soon gave rise to the idea of building a new museum. A controversial debate concerning the character of the institution ensued. Archaeologists, politicians, tourism experts and people living in the area got involved, and the suggestions ranged from a simple stone with a cross, to an anti-war museum to a recreational park. While in most debates the touristic impact took on more importance.<sup>77</sup> Politicians and tourism experts saw the site as a great opportunity to put Osnabrücker Land on the map. Nevertheless, one thing that was never part

76 Since 1992 there was a small information center on-site and guided tours by volunteers informed visitors on the progress on the excavation. In 1993 a first exhibition in the Kulturgeschichtliches Museum, Osnabrück, gave a general overview of the results. Afterwards the exhibition was presented in more than ten different museums.

77 In this context debates and workshops were organized, whose results went into several research works and feasibility studies, i.e. *Die Kraft des*

*Mythos*, Heithoff & Partner, Münster 1994; Kuhl (Unpublished); *Touristische Entwicklung um den geplanten Museumspark Kalkriese*, Workshop Ostercapeln 1997; *Tourismusentwicklungsplan unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Archäologischen Museumsparks Kalkriese*, Deutsches Wirtschaftswissenschaftliches Institut für Fremdenverkehr, München 1998; *Outline Design Concept* 1997; *Namenstest*, Produkt und Markt, Wallenhorst 1999.

of the agenda was making the site a venue for memory or national commemoration. There had already been enough emotionally charged remembrance, political misuse and propagandistic abuse, and nobody wanted to continue in that tradition. This kind of memory was to be avoided by all means.

A second aspect considered related to the latest trend in museum development: the modern archaeological open-air museum. First developed in the 1980s in England and Scandinavia, this type of museum reached Germany in the 1990s,<sup>78</sup> and open-air museums had been mushrooming in this country since then. Detailed reconstructions of Neolithic farmsteads, Bronze-Age hamlets and Iron-Age settlements intended to give visitors an authentic image of the past have cropped up almost everywhere. But though popular, now even academically accepted and well-tested, the approach is not necessarily appropriate for every archaeological site. A battle site is not just a place or a location, it is, more importantly, an event. What, then, should be reconstructed – the landscape, the rampart, the battle, the Roman soldiers, the Germanic warriors, the wounded, the dead? Secondly, the battle had not left much evidence to draw on in creating reconstructions, and the course of events was not, and still is not, completely understood. Thus, it became obvious that alternative ideas were needed. Without the decisive impetus provided by the Swiss architects Mike Guyer and Annette Gigon this experiment would have had little chance of success. But with their support, an abstract, purist and provocative concept was developed, one that deliberately avoided any of the images, associations or patterns of the previous centuries. The institution today includes a visitor center, a museum with a permanent exhibition and a large park – the former battle site and the core area within an obviously much larger landscape of conflict.

## 12 Visiting park and museum

Entering the park, one encounters a wide open space surrounded by trees that conveys, at first glance, an impression of emptiness (Fig. 9). The existing landscape was only partially modified to create the park. The landscape was seen as a multi-layered structure in which modern features should dominate, while relics of older layers would ‘rise up’ at certain points to illustrate the changes through time. Accordingly the major transformation

78 There were some highly ideological museums projects of that type in the 1930/40s, for example Pfahlbaumuseum Unteruhlding and Freilichtmuseum Oerlinghausen, with the result that this muse-

ological approach was for obvious reasons abandoned after 1945 and was long considered to be non-scientific.



Fig. 9 View over the Park at Kalkriese.

undergone by landscape since the Middle Ages, to the result of the ‘Plaggenesch’,<sup>79</sup> was not erased but instead fully incorporated into the concept.

The few structural interventions in the park, which are constructed of weather-proof steel with its typical rusty surface, make no attempt to imitate ancient or historical architectural forms and are thus immediately recognizable as modern buildings. No obvious information panels welcome the visitor at the entrance. Instead, information is presented in a restrained way and has to be discovered. Thus the park initially offers

79 ‘Plaggenesch’ refers to a method of agricultural fertilization practiced mainly in parts of northwest Germany. To improve the poor sandy soils, the vegetated top-soils from forests or other areas not used for farming were removed and taken into the stables as bedding for livestock. Then it was composted

and at some point used as fertilizer. This procedure was repeated every year. The soil that developed from these layers of composted top-soils is called ‘Plaggenesch’. The historical floor level of the battle-field now lies buried under a ‘Plaggenesch’ layer of up to one meter in thickness.



Fig. 10 Pavilion of Seeing with the museum building in the background.

a visual and a spatial framework, intended to encourage visitors to explore the site on their own, discover the traces and suggestions, and to stimulate their perception of their own imaginations and associations.

The park is divided into two sections: forest in the south and the archaeological-core zone, the battlefield in the north. The forest was partly replanted and, since the park's opening in 2000, has been subject to as little interference as far as possible. Small pathways lead through it, alluding to how Germanic peoples may have moved through their habitat and the potential this landscape, with its dense vegetation, may have offered for guerilla tactics of any kind. Forest and battlefield are separated by a row of iron bars, marking the course of the rampart discovered during the excavations. Parallel to the iron bars runs the path of iron panels, which symbolizes the westward march of the Roman troops into the bottleneck between hill and moor. This feature in particular seems to be quite inspiring, and it evokes very different associations. Some see the panels as grave-stones, others as an image for the Roman shields thrown away during the battle or as a metaphor for the Roman army slowly breaking apart. The visitors become interpreters, and the sovereignty of interpretation is shared between them and professionals.

As the visitors walk through the park they pass the reconstituted landscape and three pavilions. The reconstituted landscape is located in the middle of the park. In this limited area the 'Plaggenesch' was removed, allowing the historical surface to be seen, and a reconstruction of the rampart was embedded in the vegetation. This is intended to give an impression of what the place may have looked like 2000 years ago. The three pavilions are cube-shaped buildings: the pavilions of watching, listening and asking (Fig. 10). The

pavilion of watching does not show the battle, the pavilion of listening does not offer the soundtrack, and the pavilion of asking does not give any answers. “Die Varusschlacht is Vergangenheit, Krieg nicht. Warum?” – The Varus Battle is a thing of the past, war is not. Why? With this question written on the wall inside in mind, and the narrow slots allowing the view out onto the idyllic landscape, the visitor is left alone with his thoughts.

How does one visit the site? Well, one just walks in. There is no defined tour or path to follow and no emotional moods or attitudes are expected. Reverence, pity, respect, curiosity or interest – visitors decide for themselves how they want to experience the site, and they make their own choices. Most visitors do not come for national or patriotic reasons, and the very few who may be guided by such ideas are probably disappointed by the purist and rather un-emotional character of the setting.

### 13 Exhibiting the battle – a conceptual challenge?

Details on the general historical background, the circumstances of the Varus Battle, research results and excavations finds are presented in the museum. The first permanent exhibition opened in 2002. With the question ‘What happened 2000 years ago?’ at the focus, visitors were sent on a search for traces and were confronted with fragmentary evidence that had to be pieced together. The second exhibition has been open since 2009 and focuses on the facts and answers acquired so far. This exhibition is divided into six sections, one of which is devoted to the historical reception from the 16th to the 20th century. Instead of describing the overall concepts,<sup>80</sup> I would like to concentrate on the presentation of the battle.

One appropriate solution for presenting battles in exhibitions is the landscape model with tin soldiers. These models show many details and are able to depict even complicated battle strategies. But they are static and present only a single moment in time during an event that may have lasted hours or even days. For this reason many museums addressing military topics have replaced the tin soldier with films or computer animations. These media allow museums to depict the course of events and thus the dynamic character of a battle. But in order to visually depict complex series of events one has to have highly detailed information and a sufficient budget. If either the funding or the detailed content is unavailable, the whole video project boils down to some fighting scenes with five, six actors, a horse, screams and blood. This is then the battle! – in every respect a depiction that fails to meet any scholarly standards and produces only diffuse emotional atmospheres. This may be sufficient for the history channel documentaries that flicker on television screens daily, but not for a museum.

80 For more information see Derks et al. 2009.

In the face of a dearth of both facts and budgetary resources, and having adopted a general concept that focused not on the battle but on the research process and the fragmentary evidence, in our first permanent exhibition in 2002 we decided to confront the visitor with a completely different aspect: the moment of fear upon an unexpected attack from an individuals' viewpoint. The visitor would enter the exhibition space and, completely distracted by displays, objects and texts, would not notice that s/he was about to enter a 'bottleneck' and had already triggered a multimedia installation. The bottleneck looked like a narrow corridor, enclosed on three sides by something that appeared like walls with graphic décor, but were actually large projections.

Though marching Roman legionaries and a walking museum visitor have little in common, there are some parallels: both tend to develop a specific routine. On the part of the Roman soldier – marching through the seemingly endless gloomy forest, concentrating on his feet, his heavy pack, the undergrowth, the pace of the man in front of him, his thoughts already at the destination or elsewhere. The museum visitor for his or her part – more or less concentrated, taking a few steps, stopping, reading, looking, the next text, the next exhibit, the next interactive. Nothing unusual, nothing unpredictable is supposed to happen. But suddenly the floor starts trembling, strange sounds fill the air, oversized projections fill the room and obscure movements and dark shadows seem to approach from the walls.

The video tried to put the visitor in the situation of a single Roman soldier and to create the moment of shock, the sudden loss of orientation before one regains one's senses – the decisive seconds before the fighting starts. Fast camera movement simulated the first seconds, when the signal of danger reaches the brain and the body starts to react: at first confusion, then rapid eye-movements to locate the threat, uncontrolled movements and then the immediate reaction: fight or flight.

I don't want to deny that this presentation would have been considered as merely a rather conventional video art-project in the context of the *Documenta* or of any other modern art project. But for an archaeological museum it turned out to be a provocative and highly controversial experiment. Some visitors complained about the lack of story and the fuzzy pictures, others asked why we had not chosen a better camera man and again others told me that it was here that they first understood that the Varus Battle is not just history, that every battle, even one that happened 2000 years ago, is above all a dramatic individual and existential experience, a human disaster: in the moment of danger anyone, including a Roman soldier, is left alone with his fears.

Some years later our historical archaeological knowledge about the battle has considerably improved, and it seems clear now that the Romans were attacked while march-



Fig. 11 Model with tin soldiers illustrating size and extension of a roman army on the march.

ing.<sup>81</sup> Since 2009, we have been presenting the course of events in two different models. For the first model (Fig. 11) we returned to the good old tin soldier and show two Roman legions with cavalry, foot soldiers, supply troops, pack mules and carts. The first legion stands in formation, the second is on the march, in a display extending more than 10 meters through the exhibition hall. This model is based on the awareness that infrastructure in Germania was poorly developed. A legion on the march would have had to abandon its formation and, depending on the roads, ways and pathways, an orderly march could have degenerated into a vulnerable string of troops which could easily extend over 20 km through the landscape, thus offering guerilla fighters many opportunities for attack.

The second model (Fig. 12) approaches the question from a different angle, assuming that the Roman legions were still marching in more or less compact formations through the woods. A large box was constructed to illustrate what might have happened; it shows an abstract schematized rendering of the topography, all white in color, with the Kalkriese mountain on the left and the wet moorland on the right. The ground between the hill and the moorland is covered with notches and holes symbolizing all kind of dangers that could threaten the life of a soldier. Between the hill and moor, three lines

81 Moosbauer 2005, 93–94; Moosbauer and Wilbers-Rost 2009, 66; Rost 2009, 69; Rost and Wilbers-Rost 2012, 12–13.





Fig. 12 Model simulating the march of a Roman army through the bottleneck between mound and moor.

of round plungers have been inserted, symbolizing the Germanic fighters attacking the Roman legion from the mountain side. With the press of a button, around 2000 small metal balls roll in fairly ordered formation towards the impasse created, as soon as they arrive at the bottleneck the formation begins to break up, the plungers start to move up and down, increasing the disorder and more and more balls fall into the holes. No matter how often this experiment is repeated, no more than 30 balls ever reach the end of the impasse. The message is simple and clear: in tricky topographical situations, large numbers, rigid formations and hierarchical chains of command become a problem and, despite better equipment and military superiority, can lead to disaster.

Why do we present two models to answer one question? Because we do not have one simple answer. If no certainty can be established from a research point of view, an exhibition should not pretend to have definite solutions. This will not frustrate the visitor. Archaeologists are not the only ones who are stimulated by unanswered questions, they excite our visitors as well. With two possible answers to the question ‘What happened at Kalkriese 2000 years ago?’ on display, the discussion is opened in the exhibition room, and everybody can join in and think about pros, cons and plausibility. This and the hands-on research elements in the next section are intended to make it obvious that (a) there is rarely one key piece of conclusive evidence, (b) one therefore has to approach the question from different angles and thus (c) arrive at different indications, which may (d) make the one or the other scenario appear plausible or (e) just raise new questions. The



aim is for visitors to follow the process of research: they should recognize when or where the basic facts end and interpretation and supposition begins and then be in a position to evaluate the results or conclusions presented, despite the fact that our fragmentary knowledge often lacks clarity and precision.

#### 14 Kalkriese – a *lieu de mémoire*?

In the last decades Pierre Nora's concept of *lieu de mémoire* has enjoyed growing popularity among historians in this country. Several compilations of such sites have included the 'Varus Battle',<sup>82</sup> without, however, discussing the reasons for such a categorization. The existence of some historical importance, some political meaning or some prominence or popularity seemed sufficient to consider the Varus Battle a *lieu de mémoire* as the concept was defined by Pierre Nora.

Without a doubt, the Varus Battle is an interesting issue historically, the research work is fascinating and *Museum and Park Kalkriese* have a lot to offer. So, why do we not consider and promote Kalkriese as a *lieu de mémoire*? Why don't we exploit the advantages such a label would provide? In the ears of laypeople, the notion has a convincing, sublime and illustrious ring, but it also signals importance, true relevance and real meaning and elevates the place over all other important historical events, places, buildings, subjects. Any marketing expert would immediately recognize the competitive advantage this entails, as museums today compete on one market with other visitor attractions and have to fight for visitors by promoting their unique selling propositions. From a marketing point of view, it would seem rash not to do so, as the word would even intensify the already given unique selling proposition and would promote Kalkriese to the list of places everybody should visit at least once in his/her lifetime. Of course, Pierre Nora's intent was not to create a marketing tool, he was guided by other ideas and intentions, but in a public and therefore marketing guided domain the *lieu de mémoire* runs the risk of too easily degenerating into a simple selling point or sales pitch. However, for a museum like ours, which has to generate almost 50% of its annual budget from admissions, third-party funds, sponsors and other sources, this would be nonetheless worth for the attempt, as one should tap every funding source. So, why don't we do it?

In fact, the unbroken popularity of this concept and its wide ranging, metaphorical and vague definition or, to use Kończal's<sup>83</sup> terms, the 'elasticity' of the analytical category *lieu de mémoire*, seem to speak rather for than against it.<sup>84</sup> The event of the Varus Battle

82 I. e. François and Schulze 2001; Stein-Hölkeskamp and Hölkeskamp 2006; Hahn and Traba 2012.

83 Kończal 2011, 36.

84 In his abridged English version (Nora 1997), P. Nora defines a *lieu de mémoire* as "any significant entity, whether material or nonmaterial in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time

has, after all, left its marks in culture, in art and in politics, especially on the promotion of national identity – but when, where and for whom? The historical event primarily affected the landscapes between the Rhine and the Elbe. The reception history had its main impacts in the Protestant regions that later formed Prussia, and thus concerned the north, north-west and north-east of the present country. The rest of the German states showed less interest in the Varus Battle,<sup>85</sup> and occasional attempts to locate the battle in Augsburg or in other cities beyond the hypothesized areas in the northwest were little more than short-lived local patriotic marginalia. Neither the event, nor its reception concerns or covers what is today understood as Germany or as the Germans.

Secondly one has to ask, what, in the case of the Varus Battle, would actually constitute the *lieu de mémoire* – the battle, Arminius, the subsequent historical interpretations, the reception history, the excavation at Oberesch at Kalkriese, *Museum and Park Kalkriese* or all these diverse aspects together? This question may seem irrelevant at first, but not when one once again recalls the criteria for a *lieu de mémoire*. It is no coincidence, for instance, that the frame of reference taken in the available compilations on places of remembrance is national and the chosen events are drawn mainly from the last two or three centuries, thus the period in which the national consciousness of the particular nation was either developed or consolidated from which point it would be substantially maintained up to the present day.<sup>86</sup> These works are not just understood as a compilation of interesting historical facts or aspects, they are intended to demonstrate that our awareness of ourselves as citizens of modern nation states is not just based on the historical development of our political institutions or political frontiers, but as Pierre Nora

has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community” (Ref. 5, XVII). Referring to Nora’s original French version, François and Schulze offer the following definition: “Dergleichen Erinnerungsorte können ebenso materieller wie immaterieller Natur sein, zu ihnen gehören etwa reale wie mythische Gestalten und Ereignisse, Gebäude und Denkmäler, Institutionen und Begriffe, Bücher und Kunstwerke...Erinnerungsorte sind sie nicht dank ihrer materiellen Gegenständlichkeit, sondern wegen ihrer symbolischen Funktion. Es handelt sich um langlebige, Generationen überdauernde Kristallisationspunkte kollektiver Erinnerung und Identität” (François and Schulze 2001, 17–18).

85 The regionally limited degree of fame is nicely illustrated in the local farce, *Datterich*, written by Elias Niebergall in 1841. Hermann is first confused with Gutenberg then with Blücher, when the sly fox Datterich asks his drinking pals in the finest local Hessian dialect: “Hawwe-Se aach ebbes for des Her-

mannsmonement unnerschriwwe? Bennelbächer: Wann ich des Geld zu fresse hett! Mir setzt aach Kahner ahns, wann ich emol doht bin... Spirwes: Warum will mer dann Dem zwah setze? Schmidt: Wie so zwah? Spirwes: In Mainz steht je schon ahns; es wer doch Der, wo die Buschdawe erfunne hot? Datterich: Nein, liewer Freind, des war e ganz Annerer: Der hat Deitschland befreit. Spirwes: Ganz wohl, des wisse mer aach, awwer er hot Blicher gehaaße, des wer der Maschall Vorwerts. Datterich: Aach net. Der Hermann hat vor lange Zeite geläbt un hot die Remer abkamesolt” (act 2, scene 2).

86 In this context, the following works should be mentioned: for Italy Insnenghi 1996–1997; for Germany François and Schulze 2001; for Austria Brix, Bruckmüller, and Steckl 2004–2005; for the Netherlands Wesseling and Blockmans 2005–2006; for Luxembourg Margue and Kmec 2007; for Russia Nivat 2007. For differences and similarities in concepts and approaches see Kończal 2011.

showed for France, is also founded on a rich amalgam of various and diverse aspects of history, literature, art, music, architecture, social and political developments, symbols, imaginations and others. As *lieux des mémoires* these aspects constitute new, no longer linear narratives but, to keep the image going, ‘memory landscapes’. Like conventional history compilations, this new concept focuses on the past and wants to contribute to the re-creation and re-confirmation of national consciousness and identity by creating a new canon.<sup>87</sup> Of course, viewed from political and economic perspectives, the importance of the modern nation state is diminishing, but as an interpretational paradigm for collective memories it is still fairly vivid, as discussions about the ‘European places of memory’ demonstrate.<sup>88</sup> Against this background it seems almost arbitrary when Nora’s concept, which has been criticized for its strong linkage to the idea of nation, but which is actually very definite on this point, is used or transmitted to contexts beyond this frame of reference.<sup>89</sup>

As far as the Varus Battle is concerned, the event did not occur in a national context, particularly not in a German national context. The Germanic tribes of the 1st century CE were not a nation, and, as modern researchers never get tired of pointing out, they were not Germans.<sup>90</sup> It was not ‘the Germans,’ not ‘the Germanic peoples’ and not even ‘the

87 Several further questions arise from this: do the choices of the various authors really fulfill this aspiration? Who evaluates their relevance? Is it possible to obtain a somewhat definitive and representative selection, keeping in mind that this approach is guided by specific interests, intentions or the spirit of the time, and that at the same time, the people and thus members of a collective make their selection, and collective memory and identity are not static? Or is the main impetus to provoke a discussion?

88 See for example Cornelißen 2011, 5–16; Den Boer 1993; Majerus et al. 2009.

89 Furthermore, it is this aspect that distinguishes memory studies of this kind from those carried out within the context of oral history or oral tradition that are also dedicated to the past, but try to reconstruct it from personal memories of witnesses. Considering the memory boom of the last years, it is of course fairly tempting to use the term to dress up conventional compilations as well, hoping that the fashionable mantle may attract attention and thus increase sales.

90 One has to admit that the question as to when German history starts is difficult to answer. For that reason, most history books, especially popular ones, start nonetheless with Tacitus and the Germanic peoples, as this is the time span, when certain re-

gions or landscapes of today’s Germany enter the stage of history illuminated by historical records. Despite all subsequent efforts to explain that the Germanic tribes are not Germans, the impression that German history starts with the Germanic peoples is thus recreated repeatedly. One has to fear that, in spite of all modern research, the old patterns of thinking from the 19th century are perhaps more apparent and more deeply ingrained than one would wish to believe as “nichtprofessionelle Geschichtsbilder in der Bevölkerung” (Langewiesche 2000, 82). But from that it follows all the more that, on the academic side, one should avoid the use of any terminology that could support such misunderstandings or carry them even further. Against this background, one has to doubt whether the provocative irony in the title of the book *Der Tag an dem Deutschland entstand – die Varusschlacht* (Bendikowski 2008) will be grasped by most readers. Also the oft-cited, very snappy and intentionally sensation-causing notion of the Varus battle as the “*Urknall der deutschen Geschichte*” (Matussek and Schulz 2006, 168–172 and at the press conference on the occasion of the opening of the German History Museum Berlin, 03.06.2006) is in all its ambiguity rather counterproductive and was seriously criticized (Wiegels 2007, 15; Wolters 2008, 10), the more

tribe of the Cheruski' that defeated the Romans, it was Arminius, a man with Roman military training, and his auxiliaries.<sup>91</sup> Since 1945, there have been many efforts in the spheres of research and education made to overcome this pattern of thought, particularly the ideology claiming an ancestral link between the present day Germans and the former Germanic tribes and the related assumption that there is a cultural continuity and unity of character reaching from the Germanic tribes to the present day. To consider the site of the Varus Battle in the sense of Pierre Nora as a *lieu de mémoire* of the German nation would be to re-couple it directly to the pattern of thought that governed the collective memory and the thinking of the Germanic/German people in the Empire of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th, which paved the way for the subsequent fatal development of nationalism and racism. This is not made any better by giving it a new and more fashionable label. Using the term *lieu de mémoire* would again construct a continuity and thus be re-launching a historically erroneous historical myth with the help of modern terminology. Without a doubt, the Varus Battle would have been a *lieu de mémoire* in the 19th century, indeed it was much far more than that: it was the mythical foundation of the newborn German nation.<sup>92</sup> But according to Nora, it is the 20th, or the 21st century and not the 19th century that should be the point of reference for this concept – otherwise we run the risk of transmitting or adopting long outdated ideas to the present under new labels.<sup>93</sup>

One could of course object that it is not the historical event but its interpretation, the history of its reception that should be considered the *lieu de mémoire*. After all, the event did not acquire its meaning or start to anchor collective identities until centuries after it occurred. Yet, the process of re-interpretation, use and misuse also happened largely outside of a national context. Aside from definite historical effects and consequences, the Varus Battle is more than anything an example of how historical facts can be orchestrated and ideologically charged and adapted to suit current political interests. That is, in all its tragedy, not only illuminating, but, above all, worth knowing. But not all that we should know or should keep 'in memoriam' is or should be labeled a *lieu de mémoire*. Thus one problem of understanding arises from the distinction between knowledge and memory. For example: one should definitely know or remember the formula of Pythagoras (even if we rarely need it). But nobody would define 'memory places of mathematics' for that reason, despite the fact that mathematics has a tremendous impact on our understanding of the world. Not everything that is important and worth knowing necessarily, almost automatically, constitutes a place of remembrance or memory as well. Yet memory places have cropped up everywhere – in Nordfriesland as well as in Oberschwaben, in Oldenburg, Kassel or Stuttgart. The Dominican Provost

so as it became around 2009 the most cited formula in the popular press.

91 Timpe 1970; Steuer 2004, 363.

92 Dörner 1995, 155; Kipper 2002, 191.

93 Steuer 2004, 366.

Church in Dortmund has received the honor as has the Hamburger Kammerspiele, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and even soccer.<sup>94</sup> The frame of reference shrinks dramatically and with it the number of individuals concerned. Most of the SPD *lieux de mémoire* are probably irrelevant to CDU members and outside of Hamburg probably only diehard theater-goers are familiar with the Hamburger Kammerspiele. The concept, originally intended to provide a baseline or foundation for a collective national identity, now boils down to a label that can assure importance and meaning to even the smallest particular interest group. This may enhance the group's identity and thus be satisfying, but it leads to an inflationary use that devaluates the concept and is already leading the original conceptual idea ad absurdum. But the loss of the concept's diagnostic relevance is not the only problem, its arbitrary use also undermines the relevance of sites, events or topics that should indeed be considered as memory places of national importance. When World War II, the Holocaust, the national anthem and the fall of the Berlin Wall are lined up with Marlene Dietrich, male choirs, the 'calves of the nation' and 'only pots outside'<sup>95</sup>, then one has to ask what such a collection is really supposed to tell us – certainly nothing about the quintessence of national identity – and whether the diagnostic instruments have been chosen rightly and adequately adjusted. Nora's concept has obviously given historical research a tremendous push by advancing an operational term to a new category and thus creating a new perspective of historical recognition. It is therefore all the more regrettable that its followers considerably increased a degree of arbitrariness already inherent to some extent in Nora's definition, with the result that now almost anything could be called a *lieu de mémoire*, as soon as somebody has included it in a list.<sup>96</sup>

On the subject of the Varus Battle, one can say that the profound and highly emotional relationship to this event in the 19th and early 20th century has cooled off considerably. The Varus Battle is irrelevant for our national understanding as citizens in a reunited Germany as well as in a united Europe in the 21st century. Thus we are dealing here with what is now at the most a 'cold place of memory,' one that plays little more than a peripheral role in the consciousness of the present day.<sup>97</sup>

94 Some examples: Schilp and Welzel 2006; Schilp and Welzel 2011; Hinrichs 2002; Hamburger Erinnerungsorte der Sozialdemokratie, Hamburg 2013; Borsdorf and Grütter 2000, 48–52.

95 This notion refers to the very typical custom in German restaurants of serving coffee on the outdoor terrace only in pots, rather than in single cups. Since the introduction of modern espresso machines, the sentence has become vanishingly rare and can now only be encountered in a few touristic 'hotspots' left over from the 1970s along the Rhine, the Mosel or in the country side. But from the 1960s and well

into the 1990s, this sentence was understood as perfect example of so-called 'typical German' inflexibility, stuffiness, inclemency and unfriendliness.

96 Critical voices have pointed out the arbitrariness of the concept (see Kończal 2011, 22–23; Den Boer 1993, 17; Judt 1998, 54; Schmidt 2004, 25–26) and its danger of becoming a "catch all category" (Zelizer 1995, 235) and pointed out, that "national traditions are invented to consolidate specific versions of nationhood" (Zelizer 1995, 231).

97 Raulff 2001.

Neither the historical Varus Battle, nor the history of its reception seem suitable to qualify as a *lieu de mémoire*, so what about Kalkriese – it is, at least, a place, a fact that could facilitate the communication and understanding of the concept in a public space like ours, and several studies have shown that space helps to preserve collective memories.<sup>98</sup> But until 1989, Kalkriese was only a tiny rural village in southern Lower Saxony. Only with the start of the excavations did it begin to receive more attention. Nevertheless, Kalkriese never did develop an ‘identity-promoting effect’ and it has not become a place of pilgrimage, nor one of emotive enthusiasm or national re-assurance. Instead, it got a museum that developed, over a period of ten years, into a tourist attraction and an ambitious center for education and research.<sup>99</sup>

So what might happen if *Museum and Park Kalkriese*, despite all the arguments against doing so discussed above, were to decide to make a serious attempt to shift its self-image seriously towards memory or commemoration, i.e. not just for marketing purposes but as mission statement? Today, we see ourselves as a modern and very lively forum for education, research and debate, particularly concerning the nature of the site. The question of whether this really represents the site of the Varus Battle is still open for discussion. This is, firstly, one of the main impetuses for the ongoing research. Secondly, it is the main reason that we present the findings in our exhibition not as proof, but as an evidence obtained so far, evidence which might render a certain interpretation plausible now but might cease to do so if new evidence pointing in other directions emerges. If we were to profile the site as a *lieu de mémoire*, this approach would have to be replaced by an attitude of certainty.

Secondly, in a public domain the term would have to be filled with meaning and/or a message, which would have to be supported or presented to the public in form of activities (or rituals) like an annual celebration or regular festivities to keep the *lieu de mémoire* alive and to transmit, to retain or just maintain its meaning. But what would the message be? As a *lieu de mémoire*, Kalkriese, the site of a battle, would almost automatically be lined up with other battle sites and places of commemoration, like the Monument to the Battle of the Nations (Völkerschlachtdenkmal) in Leipzig or the battle sites of the first and second world wars in Germany, Belgium, France or Great Britain. Would

98 Zelizer 1995, 223.

99 Of course one could argue that the existence of the museum already makes Kalkriese a *lieu de mémoire*, as it stores and presents archaeological artifacts and thus preserves cultural heritage. But this argument leads to a bottomless pit, as the same meaning and importance would then have to be given to any local museum, to every church, to every historical building (or perhaps every building more than 10 years old), every material artifact (more than 10

years old?), every household in which family heirlooms are kept. Then everything is memory, and there is no need for a concept of the *lieu de mémoire*. To avoid this, we have to define or accept existing criteria concerning the scope and scale of the concept and its frame of reference – either national or just collective, no matter of which size or context. Otherwise our unpretentious ‘memory landscape’ would turn into a thick memory jungle.

that be appropriate? Annual speeches about war, peace, the friendship of the nations, the unity of Europe accompanied by solemn brass music and the laying of a wreath? One does not necessarily have to think of Ypres in Belgium, with its daily ceremony at the Menenpoort,<sup>100</sup> to gain the impression that this practiced memory has nothing in common with the memory one could perform or celebrate in Kalkriese, and that any ritualized practice at Kalkriese would lack authenticity and credibility and thus appear exaggerated and artificial.

Secondly, such a re-launch would have serious consequences for our visitors. Their perception, understanding and behavior would be guided by the specific and prescribed expectations that are almost inevitably associated with such places. Most of our programs for children, pupils, families and adults would be inappropriate, as they are aimed at awakening our visitors' enthusiasm for archaeology, history and scientific research and, often enough, incorporating a lot of fun. One of our central ideas is that our visitors should approach the park, the museum and the Varus Battle with, above all, interest, open-mindedness and curiosity. We want them to have a choice, to choose how they wish to experience the place and not to be pre-conditioned by moral expectations on their behavior or perceive the visit as a duty that every citizen somehow has to perform once in his lifetime. After all, this battle happened 2000 years ago, nobody alive now has been personally affected by it. This is the main difference between Kalkriese and the battlefields and war cemeteries of first and second world wars. At the latter, traces of the destruction are still visible, wounds and injuries have left deep scars on landscapes, towns and hearts and memories that are still vivid. In Kalkriese, nothing of that remains. As forums for the debate on war and violence, places of recent history are therefore far more authentic and credible: in them, the tragedy is still emotionally accessible and somehow in the air. At Kalkriese, all of this would have to be created, imitated and staged artificially.

Thirdly, *Museum and Park Kalkriese* are open to the public, and the majority of our visitors are not specialists, but laypeople. For them, the term *Erinnerungsort* ('place of memory') could raise associations that do not necessarily reflect the abstract academic definitions. The term *Erinnerung* (memory/reminder) is already fairly fuzzy, and it is used in everyday language in contexts which have nothing in common with the complex and abstract concepts of Pierre Nora or Maurice Halbwachs. A non-scientific audience thinks of an *Ort*, a 'place', as a location and not as a metaphor. *Erinnerung* is understood by most people literally and refers to events and personal experiences that connect them with the recent past. The German language differentiates between a reflexive and a non-reflexive use of the verb *erinnern*. *Ich erinnere mich* (I remind myself/ I remember) always refers to

100 Since 1928, a group of musicians have gathered every evening at 8:00 pm at the Menen Gate, Ypres, to play the 'Last Post' in memory of and tribute to

those who died in 1914–1918 and whose graves are unknown.

personal experiences – my parents, the first kiss, holidays in France, the death of grandmother. This kind of memory is always perceived to be authentic and can never be ‘false’ – an important aspect which can bear a large potential for conflicts. The non-reflexive use, *ich erinnere an ...* (I remind of) addresses a counterpart and is often understood as affirmation. It can refer to almost everything, the Varus Battle, Goethe or the dentist appointment next week. For most people history begins where personal memory ends (‘I remind myself/remember’). Anything that is more remote – chronologically, spatially or emotionally – is considered as history or as cultural heritage, presented by monuments, memorials and museums. Naturally the events and facts presented or preserved by such things should not be forgotten, but this is perceived as knowledge in the sense of ‘remind of’ or to think of and not as a memory connected with oneself due to emotional nearness, attachment or personal witnessing.

In this context the term *lieu de mémoire* bears some potential for misunderstanding as it is only used for a highly selected range of places or subjects. One group would probably understand the term as a quality seal for a 1st class monument, in comparison to other monuments, which, accordingly, must be of only second or third class quality. The second group would be left with the question whether they are supposed to ‘remember’ or ‘be reminded’ and whichever they decided, what conclusions could they draw? The application of these concepts to the Varus Battle in a public and non-academic context suggests that we carry a memory of the Varus Battle, deeply fossilized within us, that could be brought to life if we would just dig deep enough. But what do we do when visitors tell us that they did not find any such thing buried within themselves and accuse us of exaggeration or terminological juggling? The degree of abstraction attached to this concept is simply too great for an institution in a public space and involves too many levels for misunderstandings. The more so as the terminology as such – *lieu de mémoire* – is not made up of off-putting technical jargon but is linked to everyday language, sounds good, and does not reveal the slightest indication of the complexity of the concept hidden behind the words.

In summary: the term would either degenerate to a simple marketing label or, if taken seriously, would call into question the whole concept and character of our institution, which is based on discussion, communication, multiplicity of interpretation, and research and education as ongoing processes. ‘Memory’ in this specific context would not require any of these. ‘Memory’ provides and defines the mode of perception as well as of meaning. The site would become a symbol that needs neither further research nor further discussion – it would become a freeze frame shot or even worse a still image.

The focus at our institution, though, is on the process of research, on fascinating modern methods that might open up new ways to increase our understanding of the past. This naturally raises the question of what makes us so interested in the past and



why. The answer is simple, almost banal and naive: like us, many of our visitors simply find archaeology exciting, surprising, thrilling or even just entertaining, and are simply fascinated by the fact that new scientific methods are making it possible to analyze a mule's tooth and find out where the mule came from and how many times it had crossed the Alps before dying in Kalkriese, and that this little piece of knowledge could change our understanding of Roman logistics. Nobody is thinking about national identity or collective memories in this context.

Kalkriese is a cultural heritage site. In 2005 it was recognized by Europa Nostra as a cultural site of European importance. This honor was not awarded in recognition of the Varus Battle but in appreciation of the unconventional way we present the site, its architecture and landscaping, the research and the philosophy, the conceptual approach and the design of our exhibitions. We bear the responsibility for this site, we are researching it, we are managing it and, yes, we are selling it. But we are doing so within the specific framework we have given to this site, and that framework does not refer to memory but to research, information and education.

This paper has presented many arguments against the use of the concept of *lieu de mémoire* for *Museum and Park Kalkriese*. It has shown that the concept is too sophisticated and leaves open to great a scope for all kinds of interpretations and misunderstandings. In a place like Kalkriese, dependent on raising visitor numbers to increase its cash income, the complexity of the concept would almost inevitably degenerate to a simple marketing and promotional tool devoted only to attracting attention and generating publicity. And the general idea behind Nora's concept of *lieu de mémoire* is nonetheless, and despite all its weaknesses, still too inspiring and too valuable to make that acceptable.

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1 Varusschlacht im Osnabrücker Land Museum und Park Kalkriese, Map: © Joachim Hirschner. 2 Photo: Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum Braunschweig, Inv.-Nr. Aholbein V 3.2837. 3 Johann Jakob Sandraart, Thronende Germania, umringt von Soldaten (Frontispiz von “Großmüthiger Feldherr Arminius oder Herrmann”). Photo: Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rom. 4 Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki, Ein Bardiet für die Schaubühne

Klopstocks Hermanns Schlacht: Hermann, vor einer großen Eiche, hebt den verwundeten Opfernknaben auf und küsst ihn. Photo: Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel. 5 Lippisches Landesmuseum Detmold. By Peter Janssen – (1), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6783514>. 6–12 Varusschlacht im Osnabrücker Land Museum und Park Kalkriese.

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Ruth M. Van Dyke

## Chaco Canyon: A Contested Memory Anchor in the North American Southwest

### Summary

Natural and archaeological places are powerful loci for social memories and continually negotiated meanings. As ‘memory anchors’ they are focal points for the construction of memory and meaning, and can become flashpoints for disputes over access, land-use, and knowledge claims among stakeholders with contradictory interests. In the North American Southwest the competing claims of Native American tribes, archaeologists, government bureaucrats, tourists, and the mining industry come into sharp relief. In this paper, I explore how the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Chaco Canyon figures prominently in the origin stories and sacred geographies of contemporary Pueblo and Navajo peoples – two indigenous groups with competing political stakes in the present.

Keywords: Memory anchor; landscape; Chaco Canyon; Navajo; Pueblo; Southwest U.S.

Als ‚Gedächtnisanker‘ können natürliche Plätze und archäologische Stätten wirkmächtige Orte sozialen Gedächtnisses sein, die zentrale Punkte für die Konstruktion von Erinnerung und Bedeutung darstellen. Als solche stehen sie im Zentrum der Konstruktion von Erinnerung und deren Sinn. Sie können Brennpunkte widerstreitender Interessen um Ressourcenzugänge, Landrechte oder Rechtsansprüche auf Wissen werden. Im Südwesten Nordamerikas zeichnen sich scharfe Interessengegensätze zwischen Nachkommen amerikanischer UreinwohnerInnen, ArchäologInnen, BürokratInnen, TouristInnen und der Bergbauindustrie ab. In dieser Studie erörtere ich die zentrale Rolle von Chaco Canyon, einer UNESCO-Weltkulturerbestätte, in den Schöpfungsmythen und Sakralgeographien der gegenwärtigen Pueblo- und Navajo-Gruppen spielt, zwei Stämmen mit gegenwärtig konträren politischen Interessen.

Keywords: Gedächtnisanker; Landschaft; Chaco Canyon; Navajo; Pueblo; Nordamerikanischer Südwesten.

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Stories, histories, and oral traditions create emotional connections, attaching peoples to places. Both natural and archaeological places are powerful loci for social memories and meanings that are continually constructed, obliterated, altered, and reconstructed. These intra-worldly ‘memory anchors’ become focal points for the construction of memory and meaning over time.

The North American Southwest (southwest Colorado, southeast Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, northwest Chihuahua, and northern Sonora) is a land of breathtaking topography and dramatic architectural ruins. It is also a land of competing stakeholders, including Native American tribes, government bureaucrats, archaeologists, tourists, and entrepreneurs. In the Southwest, memory anchors such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Chaco Canyon are emotionally charged places that figure prominently in the origin stories and sacred geographies of contemporary Pueblo and Navajo peoples – indigenous groups with competing political stakes in the present. They are flashpoints for disputes over access, land use, and knowledge claims among Native and Euroamerican groups with contradictory interests. In this paper I will explore Chaco Canyon as contested memory anchor claimed by diverse factions.

## I Memory anchors

‘Landscape’ in archaeology provides an ontological framework for thinking about difficult and slippery issues such as memory, emotion, and meaning. The term often is meant to encompass both the built environment and the natural world – indeed, recent critical perspectives point out that separation of the two is a relatively recent, post-Enlightenment, Cartesian construct.<sup>1</sup> Meaningful places are not only seen – they are lived in, felt, experienced, and remembered.<sup>2</sup> Over the past two decades, a voluminous literature has arisen around the exploration of archaeological landscapes.<sup>3</sup>

Features of the natural landscape, such as boulders, caves, springs, and mountain peaks often are ascribed special significance when they take unusual shapes, or dominate

1 Latour 1993; Thomas 2004.

2 Schachner 2011; Silko 1977.

3 For example Anschuetz, Wilshusen, and Scheick 2001; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Bender 1993; Cummings and Whittle 2004; Ingold 1993; Rodning 2010; Smith 2003; Snead 2008; Tilley 1994.

the horizon from a particular direction.<sup>4</sup> These places of unusual visual drama remind people to step out for a moment from the ordinary, quotidian scale of life, to focus their attention on the metaphysical.<sup>5</sup> They highlight the disjuncture between geologic and human temporal scales – mountain peaks do not seem to change, although people do. We are conscious of time passing in our lives, while canyons, mesas and sandstone spires seem timeless. These dramatic natural features seem to act as anchors in space, holding constant against changing seasons and passing years.

Archaeological sites similarly focus human attention on time, with their material evidence of older eras and deceased people. Places and things from the past carry a sort of ‘intra-worldliness’ – they were once part of a different social life, but are now part of ours.<sup>6</sup> Archaeological sites also can become memory anchors – the loci of social memories and meanings that are continually constructed, obliterated, altered, and reconstructed to legitimate political authority or identity.<sup>7</sup> Like natural places, these archaeological memory anchors confront us with the liminal, the emotional, the extra-ordinary. Archaeological landscapes can have tremendous contemporary political volatility.<sup>8</sup> *Lieux de memoire*<sup>9</sup> can also be *lieux de discorde*; places that figure strongly in collective memory can become focal points for contested interpretations of multiple pasts.<sup>10</sup> In post-colonial contexts such as the Southwest United States, stakeholders in these struggles include not only the predominately Anglo archaeological community, but also diverse indigenous factions with interests that may conflict as well as overlap.

## 2 The North American Southwest

The Colorado Plateau in the northern U.S. Southwest is a land of long, open horizons punctuated by dramatic buttes, mesas, and mountain ranges (Fig. 1). The rugged, photogenic topography is the scar tissue resulting from geologic processes set in place millions of years in the past. On this open and empty landscape, light and sky are important components of any lived experience.<sup>11</sup> In his well-known ethnography “Wisdom Sits in Places”, Keith Basso employed the term “sense of place” to describe how the Western Apache imbue their surroundings with values, meanings, and aesthetic resonance.<sup>12</sup> For

4 Boivin 2004; Brady and Ashmore 1999; Sharma 1992; Williams and Nash 2006.

5 Bradley 2000; Eliade 1961; Taçon 1999.

6 Ingold 1993; Olsen 2010; Thomas 2006.

7 For example Alcock 2002; Bender 1998; Bradley 2002; Dietler 1998; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003; Yoffee 2007.

8 For example Bender 1998; Bernbeck and Pollock 1996; Bernbeck and Pollock 2007; González-Ruibal 2011; Larkin and McGuire 2009; authors in Liebmann and Rizvi 2008.

9 Nora 1984.

10 Dolf-Bonekämpfer 2002.

11 Tuan 1974.

12 Basso 1996.



Fig. 1 Overview of badlands from Kutz Canyon, New Mexico.

the Apache and many other indigenous peoples in the Southwest, natural and archaeological places are integral to religious practices, histories, and ethics.<sup>13</sup>

When the Spanish arrived on the Colorado Plateau in the 1500s, they encountered farmers whom they termed Pueblo peoples, or town dwellers. In the Southwest, ‘Pueblo’ refers to the people, to the town as a whole, and to the inhabitants’ compact, apartment-like multi-storied dwellings. Today the Colorado Plateau is occupied by 20 indigenous Pueblo groups, including the Hopi (who speak Uto-Aztecan), the Zuni (who speak Penutian), the Acoma and Laguna (who speak Keresan), and 16 eastern pueblos (who speak Keresan and Kiowa-Tanoan) situated along the Rio Grande River and its tributaries. The Plateau is also occupied by the Numic-speaking Ute, Pai, and Paiute, and the Athabaskan-speaking Navajo and Jicarilla Apache (Fig. 2). Nearly all of these groups inscribe mountain peaks with social, ritual, and political meanings. For example, the horizontal and vertical divisions of Tewa pueblo society and cosmology have counterparts on the physical terrain marked by concentric tetrads of shrines and natural features.<sup>14</sup> At the outermost level, four sacred mountains associated with cardinal directions delimit the Tewa world. Each is associated with an earth navel or opening between worlds, a

13 For example Anschuetz 2007; Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2006; Ferguson and Hart 1985; Fowles 2009; Koyiyumptewa and Colwell-

Chanthaphonh 2011; Linford 2000; Ortiz 1972; Snead and Preucel 1999; Van Valkenburgh 1974.  
14 Ortiz 1969; Ortiz 1972.

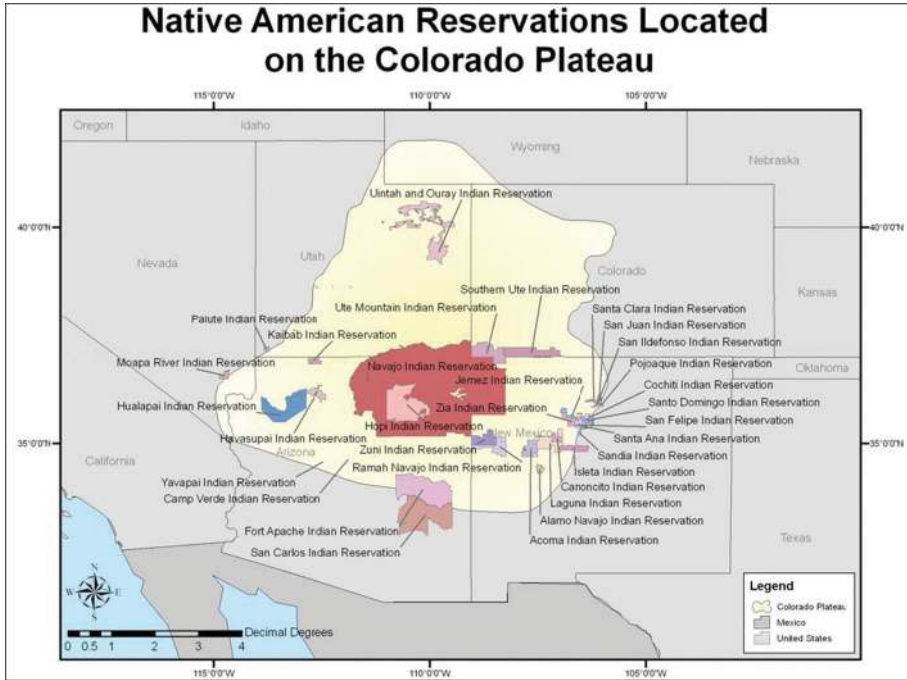


Fig. 2 Map locating tribal lands on the Colorado Plateau in the Southwest United States.

lake, a color, and various supernatural beings, and they are marked with shrines, cairns, and rock art (Fig. 3).

Similarly, the Navajo homeland traditionally is delineated by four sacred mountains: Tsis Naasjini (White Shell Mountain), or Sierra Blanca Peak in south-central Colorado; Tsoodzil (Turquoise Mountain), or Mount Taylor in central New Mexico; Doko'oosliid (Abalone Shell Mountain), or the San Francisco Peaks in northern Arizona; and Dibe Nitsaa (Big Mountain Sheep), or Mount Hesperus in the La Plata Mountains of southwest Colorado.<sup>15</sup> Mount Taylor, a 3445 m high remnant cone of an ancient volcano, is Tsoodzil for the Navajo, home of Turquoise Boy and Yellow Corn Girl, decorated with turquoise, dark mist, and female rain. The same peak is known by the Acoma as Kaweshtima, place of snow, home of the rainmaker of the north. For the Zuni, it is Dewankwin K'yaba:chu Yalanne, locus of ceremonial activities and plants associated with the medicine and Big Fire societies. For the Hopi, it is Tshipaya, the home of katsinas (Fig. 4).

As this example shows, the meanings of memory anchors can coexist and overlap. However, they can also be contested. Archaeological sites in the northern Southwest are

15 Kelley and Francis 1994; McPherson 2001, 5.

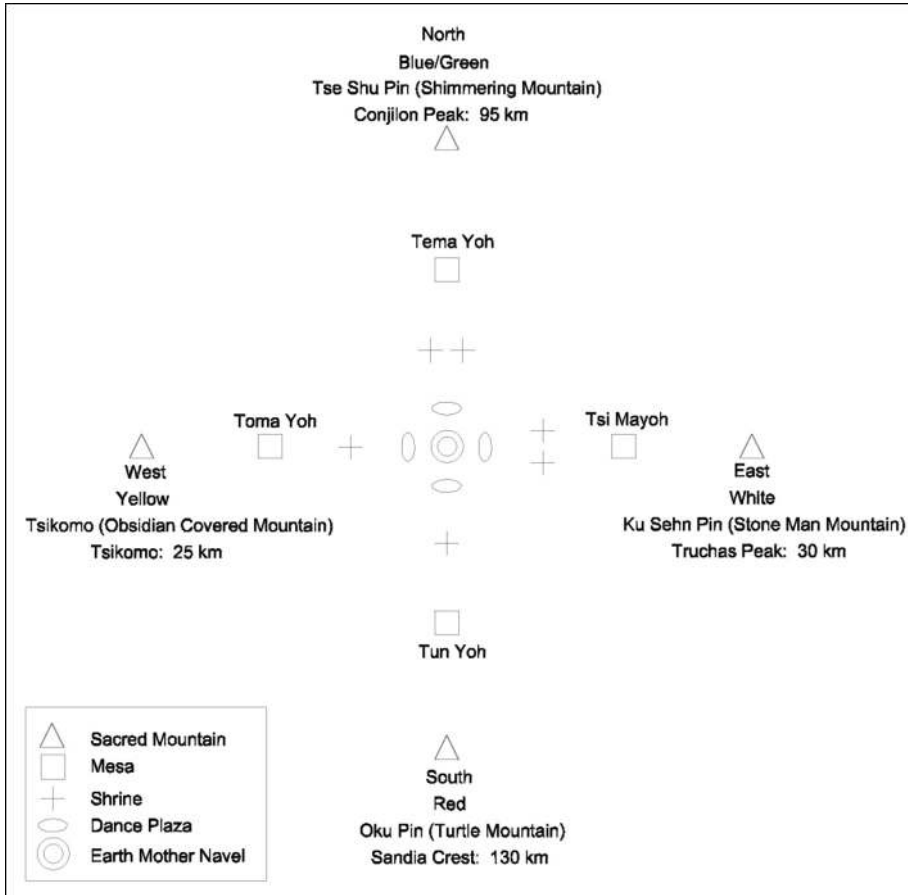


Fig. 3 Schematic depiction of the nested, directional, topographic elements of Tewa cosmology.

claimed in multiple ways by diverse indigenous groups. Chaco Canyon, in the center of the San Juan Basin in northwest New Mexico, is a topographically compelling archaeological locale that figures into the oral histories of many contemporary indigenous peoples in the Southwest. The area, now a National Historical Park, played a prominent role in the development of the history of North American archaeology, inspiring the passage of the 1906 Antiquities Act.<sup>16</sup>

Chaco Canyon is well-known as the location of one of the most complex sociopolitical phenomena in the ancient American Southwest.<sup>17</sup> During its heyday between AD

16 R. W. Lister and F. C. Lister 1984.

17 Judge 1989; Lekson 2006; Sebastian 1992.



Fig. 4 Mount Taylor, in northwest New Mexico.

1000–1140, Chaco Canyon was a “rituality”<sup>18</sup> – a focal point for ritual, political, and economic activities that brought together thousands of inhabitants from approximately 100 ‘outlier’ settlements across the San Juan Basin.<sup>19</sup> Outlier inhabitants made periodic trips to Chaco Canyon, contributing resources and labor to large-scale events, participating in ceremonial practices, and creating shared memories and experiences.<sup>20</sup>

In Chaco Canyon, builders erected formal monumental architecture.<sup>21</sup> At the heart of Chaco Canyon lie twelve massive great houses – very large pueblos exhibiting unique Chacoan architectural characteristics.<sup>22</sup> Pueblo Bonito is one of the earliest and best-known of the these (Fig. 5).<sup>23</sup> Chacoans crafted these buildings at an exaggerated scale, with formal symmetry, according to specific designs.<sup>24</sup> Builders stacked hundreds of very large rooms – many of them devoid of hearths or other indications of use – in blocks up to four stories high. The Chacoans also built circular, masonry-lined, semi-subterranean great kivas – underground meeting rooms for secular or religious societies – according to

18 Renfrew 2001; Yoffee 2001.

19 Kantner and Mahoney 2000; Marshall et al. 1979; Powers, Gillespie, and Lekson 1983.

20 Van Dyke 2007.

21 Lekson 1986; Lekson 2007.

22 Lekson 1986; Lekson, Windes, and McKenna 2006; Vivian 1990.

23 Judd 1964; Neitzel 2003; Windes and Ford 1996.

24 Fritz 1978; Marshall 1997; Sofaer 1997; Stein and Lekson 1992.



Fig. 5 The great house of Pueblo Bonito, looking down from the north rim of Chaco Canyon.

formal guidelines for size, layout, and orientation (Fig. 6). These structures, by contrast with great houses, are nestled within the earth. The monumental buildings contrast dramatically with the many small, domestic habitations that form clusters of low mounds along the south side of Chaco Canyon. Over time, Chacoans increasingly formalized the landscape with the addition of shrines, staircases, mounds, ramps, and road segments.<sup>25</sup>

The Chacoan landscape can be understood as the large-scale spatial representation of a worldview that emphasizes balance between the visible and the invisible, the cardinal directions, the celestial and the subterranean visibility.<sup>26</sup> The landscape connotes, on a visceral level, the sense of Chaco Canyon as center place. For example, the Great North Road leaves Chaco and heads 50 km due north to end at Kutz Canyon, a prominent gash in the earth. Exactly opposite, a south road exits through a gap in the canyon and points towards Hosta Butte, a prominent knob on the horizon (Fig. 7). As people arrived for ceremonies at Chaco, their spatial experiences confirmed for them that the canyon was an appropriate location in which to conduct the rituals necessary to ensure agricultural success and to keep their lives – and the world – in balance. The canyon

25 Hayes and Windes 1975; Kincaid 1983; Vivian 1997a; Vivian 1997b; Wills 2001; Windes 1978.

26 Marshall 1997; Stein and Lekson 1992; Van Dyke 2007.





Fig. 6 Excavated great kiva at the great house of Chetro Kettle in Chaco Canyon.

represents a balanced dualism between celestial and subterranean, highly visible, and entirely hidden.

The name Chaco Canyon suggests depth, but Fajada Butte and the mesas that form its walls are some of the highest points in the surrounding San Juan Basin (Fig. 8). Chacra Mesa is visible from many locations across the San Juan Basin and from landforms along the Basin's edges, 50–100 km away. From Chacra Mesa, visually dramatic landforms such as Huerfano Mountain, Cabezon Peak, Mount Taylor, Hosta Butte, and Shiprock punctuate the horizons. Places such as Huerfano Mountain and Hosta Butte may have represented particular directions or boundaries, or they may have been memory anchors, associated with particular myths or histories. We cannot know the precise meanings these places held in the past, but it is clear that Chacoans positioned some buildings and other features to create lines of sight with specific landforms. They also marked many of these high places with shrines.



Fig. 7 Looking down the South Road towards Hosta Butte from a stone circle on the north rim of Chaco Canyon, framed through South Gap.



Fig. 8 Fajada Butte, the remnant mesa at the center of Chaco Canyon, on a misty morning in June 2010.



Fig. 9 Historic Navajo hogan on Chacra Mesa, above Chaco Canyon.

### 3 Chaco and the Native American Past

The archaeological evidence indicates that Pueblo peoples migrated away from Chaco Canyon near the end of the 13th century. Today, the canyon and its immediate surroundings are occupied by the Navajo. Contemporary reservation boundaries were fixed by the US government in the 19th century (with additional and in some cases ongoing adjustments). These boundaries reflect the effects of four centuries' worth of colonial occupation on indigenous settlement and landuse. The archaeological space of Chaco, so quintessentially Pueblo, is today in the very heart of Navajo country. Navajo have been in Chaco Canyon since the early 18th century, engaging in farming, sheep herding, and hunting (Fig. 9). Local Navajo have been employed on archaeology projects in Chaco Canyon from the 1880s onwards,<sup>27</sup> and some Navajo continued to live there for some 40 years after the establishment of Chaco Canyon as a national monument in 1907.<sup>28</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that the archaeology in the park would become a *lieux de discorde* or flashpoint for Navajo and Pueblo contested claims to the Chacoan past and, by extension, to the Chacoan landscape and its resources.

27 Gabriel 1992.

28 Brugge 1986.

Both archaeologists and contemporary Native peoples view Chaco Canyon as a location important to Pueblo ancestors. Archaeological evidence and Pueblo oral traditions suggest there are strong relationships between Chaco and Hopi, Zuni, Acoma, Laguna, and the eastern Pueblos. This is not surprising – archaeologically, we know that many groups came together at Chaco Canyon a thousand years in the past. Those peoples also later dispersed, carrying with them ceremonies, stories, traditions, memories, beliefs, and practices traceable back in various forms to Chaco Canyon. Hopi, Zuni, and Eastern Pueblo oral traditions tell of an ancestral place called White House, where a series of seminal events transpired that relate to the development of Pueblo ceremonialism.<sup>29</sup>

Hopi clan histories describe emergence into this world through a succession of worlds below. After they emerged, a spirit being, M̄asaw, directed the Hopi to undertake a series of migrations before ultimately gathering to live at their current home, Tuuwanasavi, or the center place. For the Hopi, Chaco Canyon is Yupk̄öyvi, a place where the Parrot, Katsina, Eagle, Sparrowhawk, Tobacco, Cottontail, Rabbitbrush and Bamboo clans gathered and shared their ceremonial knowledge before proceeding on their migrations to Tuuwanasavi. The kivas of Pueblo Bonito are for the Salako ceremony, brought to Yupk̄öyvi by the Bow Clan, and the great kiva Casa Rinconada is for the basket ceremony, sponsored by the Parrot Clan.<sup>30</sup> Along their migrations, M̄asaw instructed the Hopi to make footprints, or “ang kuktota,” in the form of shrines, petroglyphs, and structures to record their passing. Many Hopi believe that archaeological sites survive today because they are the tangible, intentional markers that ancestors left to connect the present with the past, and to indicate ongoing Hopi land stewardship.<sup>31</sup>

Chaco also figures prominently in Navajo stories and ceremonies, including traditions surrounding the origins of the Kin yaa’ áanii (Towering House Clan), the Tl’ízlání (Many Goats Clan), Ánaasázi Táchii’nii (Red Running into Water Clan), and Tséńjiki-iní (Cliff Dwelling Clan).<sup>32</sup> Navajo stories tell about a Great Gambler, or Nááhwi-ihbíihí, who lived at Chaco and enslaved all the people before he was overthrown.<sup>33</sup> But Navajo voices are marginalized in Southwest archaeology. This is, in part, the legacy of a 20th century anthropological narrative that has portrayed a homogenous group of Athabaskans (including Navajo ancestors) entering the empty landscape of northwest New Mexico several centuries after the departure of all Pueblo peoples for Hopi, Zuni, and the Rio Grande.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the Navajo have been considered by some to have little to say about a past that is not theirs, despite the fact that contemporary Navajo occupy

29 Lekson and Cameron 1995, 194–195; Lekson 1999, 145–150; Stirling 1942, 83; White 1942, 145.

30 Kuwanwisiwma 2004.

31 Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2006, 156.

32 Begay 2004; Warburton and Begay 2005.

33 Judd 1954, 351–354; Matthews 1897; McPherson 1992, 87–93.

34 For example Adams 1991; Kintigh 1994; Kohler, Varien, and Wright 2010; Lyons 2003; Ortman 2010.

the Chacoan landscape and have close historic cultural and demographic relationships with Pueblo peoples.<sup>35</sup>

#### 4 Navajo ethnogenesis

Part of the controversy centers around the problem of Navajo ethnogenesis. The Navajo are Athabaskan speakers with linguistic ties to the Apache and to indigenous groups in northwest Canada. The timing of the arrival of Athabaskan speakers in the Southwest, and the nature of their interaction with Pueblo peoples, are topics of considerable contention. Traditional Navajo oral histories describe the Gathering of the Clans – a complex and prolonged process of ethnogenesis that suggests Navajo culture emerged out of interactions among Athabaskan, Numic, and Pueblo groups.<sup>36</sup> Linguists estimate Southwest Athabaskan speakers separated from the northern language complex between AD 950–1000.<sup>37</sup> Archaeological and historic evidence indicates that small, mobile groups of Athabaskans arrived in the Southwest around AD 1450.<sup>38</sup> These hunter/gatherer/horticulturalist sites are identified by the presence of forked-stick hogans, grayware pottery, maize, sweat lodges, and Pueblo ceramics obtained through trade.<sup>39</sup>

Despite the linguistic differences, there are many similarities between Pueblo and Navajo worldviews. Anthropologists have two hypotheses to account for these similarities: the *refugee* hypothesis, and the *acculturation* hypothesis. According to the refugee hypothesis, Navajo-Pueblo interactions date from the late 17th century when Pueblo groups joined the Navajo, and vice versa, as indigenous communities temporarily drove Spanish invaders from northern New Mexico during the Pueblo Revolt, between 1680 and 1692. But the Navajo had maize agriculture and Pueblo-style, polychrome pottery well before the time of the Pueblo Revolt.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, the acculturation hypothesis suggests that Athabaskan and Pueblo mixing happened in deep history, possibly as early as AD 1000–1300. The acculturation hypothesis fits well with the Gathering of the Clans scenario described in Navajo traditional histories. Oral traditions describing a Chacoan past may represent clan memories of ancient Pueblo peoples who joined with Athabaskan groups to become Navajo.

Clearly, Navajo – Pueblo relationships in deep history are a topic crying out for more research. However, this is a volatile area of archaeological investigation, in part because

35 Brugge 1968; Brugge 1983; Kelley and Francis 1998.

36 Reichard 1928; Hodge 1895; Matthews 1897; Towner 2003; Wheelwright 1949; Zolbrod 1984.

37 Hoijer 1956; Young 1983, 393.

38 Hovezak and Sesler 2009; Wilshusen 2010.

39 Hester 1962; Hester and Shiner 1963; Fetterman 1996; Hovezak and Sesler 2009; Towner 1996.

40 Towner 1996; Wilshusen 2010.

the Navajo and the Hopi have a bitter history of struggles over land use and territory.<sup>41</sup> When the U.S. government established the Navajo reservation in 1868, the Navajo were predominantly pastoralists whose territory ranged over most of northwest New Mexico and adjacent areas. The U.S. allotted approximately 3.3 million acres to the Navajo. This area has been expanded several times, so that today, the Navajo Nation covers over 15 million acres in northwest New Mexico, northeast Arizona, and southeast Utah – an area approximately the size of the state of West Virginia.

When the government established the Hopi reservation in 1882, the Hopi were sedentary farmers living in villages such as Walpi and Oraibi atop the Hopi Mesas in northeast Arizona. The Hopi reservation covers only 1.6 million acres. Its boundaries reflect where Hopi and Navajo were living in 1882, not where Pueblo farmers lived for the preceding two millennia. The U.S. did not take into account non-farming Hopi land use practices, such as gathering salt or eagle feathers for ceremonial uses, or religious pilgrimages to peaks, shrines, petroglyphs, and other archaeological sites. Furthermore, the U.S. government designated one district of the 1882 reservation for exclusive Hopi settlement, but 17 others were considered “joint use areas” with the Navajo.<sup>42</sup>

The situation was exacerbated in the mid-20th century when lucrative mineral resources were discovered in the joint use area. In 1958, the Hopi sued unsuccessfully for title to all of the 1882 reservation lands – the court ruling resulted in an unwieldy compromise involving continued joint use.<sup>43</sup> In 1966, legal contestation resulted in the ‘Bennett Freeze’ – a moratorium on any new building or home repairs in the joint use area until the situation could be resolved. In 1974, the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act divided the joint use area in two and required Navajo families living on the Hopi side to relocate, and vice versa. But many traditional Navajo families refused to be displaced from their familial homes of several generations. In 1996, the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act required those Navajo who refused to move to lease their homes from the Hopi by 2000 or be forcibly evicted.<sup>44</sup> This led to a United Nations human rights investigation in 1998, and in the end some Navajo have remained. The Bennett Freeze was finally lifted in May 2009 by President Obama.<sup>45</sup>

When we take this bitter history into account, it should be clear why archaeological sites – the tangible proof of ancient land tenure – acquire potent political power. Although Southwest archaeologists and anthropologists certainly recognize that ethnic and tribal identities are dynamic, permeable, and fluid, indigenous rights within the U.S. legal system rest upon tracing static groups back through time into the archaeological past. Contemporary indigenous rights to water, plants, minerals, and sacred landforms must legally be grounded in claims of *a priori* ancient use or occupation.

41 Aberle 1993; Brugge 1994.

42 Arthur 1904.

43 Shepardson 1983.

44 Congressional Record 1996.

45 Congressional Record 2009.

As discussed more extensively below, both archaeologists and indigenous peoples are drawn into legal situations where they must attempt to trace peoples, as groups, into the past, regardless of the anthropological problems this raises.<sup>46</sup>

## 5 Chaco Canyon – the site and the stake of struggle

If Chaco is a memory anchor, to what ships is she tied? It is of vital interest to both the Navajo and the Hopi to claim a relationship with the Chacoan past. The stakes include mineral, water, and landuse rights that have monetary value within a capitalist economy; they also include physical and ideological access to Chacoan sites for religious reasons. But perhaps most importantly, at stake here is the legitimacy of each group's oral histories – each group's conflicting stories about their own pasts. The struggle over Chaco has been escalating over the past 20 years, during a period when Southwest archaeologists have sought to build constructive and collaborative relationships with Native Americans, and Native Americans have gained considerable voice and control over the archaeological past.

The arguments extend to the very language we use to talk about peoples in the past.<sup>47</sup> In the late 19th century, Richard Wetherill, who initiated the first excavations at Chaco Canyon, coined the term “Anasazi” to refer to the prehistoric inhabitants. Wetherill reputedly asked his local, Navajo workmen if they had a name for these people, and the Navajo replied, “Anasazi”. This term has been translated at times as “ancient enemies”. By the 1930s, A. V. Kidder had codified the term to refer to a prehistoric culture area on the Colorado Plateau characterized by pueblo architecture, maize agriculture, and black-on-white pottery, and thus several generations of Anglo-American archaeologists, as well as the general public, referred to Chacoans as Anasazi.<sup>48</sup> But in the 1990s, Pueblo groups, particularly the Hopi, voiced stringent objection to archaeologists' use of what they consider a pejorative, Navajo term to describe their Pueblo antecedents. The Hopi wanted archaeologists to adopt “Hisatsinom”, which is translatable as “ancient Hopi”.<sup>49</sup> In an attempt to be conciliatory, in 1996 the National Park Service adopted the rather generic “Ancestral Pueblo”. However, the Navajo object strongly to “Ancestral Pueblo”, because it effectively excises the Navajo from participation in the discussion. Navajo scholars such as Richard Begay contend that the concept of *ánaasází* encompasses many past peoples, some of whom are ancestral to the Navajo.<sup>50</sup> It is important to clarify that Begay and his colleagues are not arguing that *all* Navajo came from *all*

46 See Ferguson 2004 for a good discussion.

47 Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009.

48 Cordell 1984, 77–88.

49 Dongoske et al. 1997.

50 Begay 2003; Walters and Rogers 2001.



Anasazi, but rather that *some* Navajo are descended from *some* ánaasází.<sup>51</sup> So, Navajo archaeologists prefer to retain the term “Anasazi” to refer to these ancestors.

For contemporary archaeologists, any of these label choices for past peoples has political implications in the present. “Ancestral Pueblo” signals an alliance with Pueblo peoples against the Navajo. The use of “Anasazi” denotes an alliance with the Navajo, but therefore against Pueblo peoples. If one attempts to circumvent the entire issue by calling the ancient subjects of study “the people, the inhabitants, the Chacoans, etc.,” then both the Pueblo and the Navajo construe that because the archaeologist is not firmly in one camp s/he must clearly be in the other.

In Chaco Culture National Historic Park, park service archaeologists have struggled to negotiate a balance among these competing factions. The Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act – NAGPRA – required that the National Park Service consult with indigenous groups over the disposition of 282 burials and 725 funerary objects excavated from Chaco Canyon over the past century. Part of this consultation involves determining “cultural affiliation.”<sup>52</sup>

However, NAGPRA has imprecise and problematic language regarding cultural affiliation that has left the door open for a host of interpretive issues. Cultural affiliation rests upon shared identity between a present group and a past group. Cultural affiliation is to be determined using a preponderance of evidence from 10 categories: geography, kinship, biology, archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, folklore, oral tradition, history, and expert opinion. The law does not dictate exactly what a ‘preponderance’ of evidence looks like. Furthermore, social groups past and present are not bounded, homogenous, permanent units, but are comprised of smaller groups – such as clans – that have come together and moved apart over time. The Hopi, for example, do not themselves consider that they became Hopi until they gathered at Tuuwanasavi on the Hopi Mesas. Before this, their ancestors were organized into various clans that traveled, separately and together, across the Southwest. In short, the way the law is written allows for various factions to interpret cultural affiliation as more inclusive, or less.<sup>53</sup>

In 1990, the Chaco Culture National Historic Park began a consultation process regarding the burials and funerary objects in question with a meeting that involved representatives from five tribes: the Acoma, Zia, Zuni, Hopi and the Navajo.<sup>54</sup> Everyone agreed that the human remains should be reburied. But this process unfolded at the same time that the Navajo-Hopi land dispute was escalating, in the 1990s. In May 1994, the Hopi Tribal Council passed a resolution declaring Hopi affiliation with the Anasazi, as well as other ancient groups. In October 1995, the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department sent documentation to the park service outlining a basis for Navajo

51 Warburton and Begay 2005, 537.

52 Schillaci and Bustard 2010.

53 Ferguson 2004.

54 Schillaci and Bustard 2010.



cultural affiliation to Chaco. In September 1998, all four Pueblo groups (Hopi, Zuni, Zia, and Acoma) submitted an official request for repatriation and reburial of the Chaco human remains, and the Navajo said that they would not make a separate claim for repatriation. In March 1999, Chaco Culture National Historic Park archaeologists completed their cultural affiliation assessment, finding that 20 out of 25 possible Southwest Native American tribes are culturally affiliated with Chaco, including both the Hopi and the Navajo. In May 1999, the Hopi Tribe brought a formal complaint before the NAGPRA review committee, arguing that the park did not consult with the tribal groups one by one, nor did it assess sites on a case-by-case basis; the crux of this complaint seems to have been the inclusion of the Navajo as culturally affiliated. Senior Southwest archaeologists Linda Cordell and Keith Kintigh provided expert testimony against the inclusion of the Navajo. In 2000, the review committee found the Hopi complaint to have merit and asked the park to redo the cultural affiliation study. In 2006, the human remains were repatriated to the four Pueblo tribes and were buried within the park in a secret location under the supervision of Hopi and Acoma tribal elders. In 2010, park service archaeologists published a lengthy discussion explaining their reasoning for including the Navajo.<sup>55</sup> Circumventing the volatile and understudied issue of Navajo ethnogenesis, Schillaci and Bustard argue that Navajo peoples share group identity with Chacoans because of centuries of Navajo intermarriage and exchange of religious and other cultural ideas with Pueblo peoples. Cordell and Kintigh disagree, pointing out that contemporary Euro-Americans have also intermarried with Pueblo peoples and have exchanged cultural and religious ideas,<sup>56</sup> so by Schillaci and Bustard's logic, Euro-Americans would also be culturally affiliated with Chaco. Cordell and Kintigh contend that this interpretation renders the concept of cultural affiliation essentially meaningless and does not honor the spirit of the law.

In 2017, the cultural affiliation of human burials and associated materials from Chaco Canyon is again at the center of a conflict, this time involving materials housed at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York. A group of researchers led by Douglass Kennett published a study in *Nature and Communications* announcing that they had used DNA samples from burials kept at AMNH to demonstrate the presence of a "matrilineal dynasty" at Pueblo Bonito.<sup>57</sup> The researchers did not consult or discuss their work with Pueblo, Navajo, or other indigenous groups. They conducted and published their work even though Pueblo people generally do not support destructive analyses of ancient remains, and despite the potentially volatile nature of a DNA study in a climate where multiple indigenous groups claim descendant relationships with Chaco. A review committee from the AMNH gave the researchers permission to

55 Schillaci and Bustard 2010.

56 Cordell and Kintigh 2010.

57 Kennett et al. 2017.

conduct the work without consultation based on the AMNH's 2000 NAGPRA classification of the Pueblo Bonito burials as "culturally unidentifiable." The AMNH committee did this despite the lengthy controversy and uneasy 2006 resolution over the reburial and repatriation of Chacoan human remains held by the National Park Service. However, the issue has never been whether the burials are Pueblo, but rather, to what extent other groups such as the Navajo may also claim affiliation.<sup>58</sup> The technically legal, but ethically questionable, actions of the AMNH and Kennett et al. have violated the fragile trust between archaeologists and indigenous stakeholders. Tribal leaders are now calling for re-examination of the AMNH's "culturally unidentifiable" ruling.<sup>59</sup>

## 6 Discussion and conclusion

The situation at Chaco brings new poignancy to the shopworn phrase 'who owns the past'? In an ideal world, we could set aside the identity politics and simply work to foster respect for past and present peoples as fellow human beings. Archaeological pasts could be shared and appreciated by all groups as common human heritage. However, the legal and political realities of indigenous life in a post-colonial world preclude adopting such a perspective.<sup>60</sup> Pueblo and Navajo peoples have lost, gained, adapted and changed as a result of half a millennium of colonialist domination. Today they are minority populations on a landscape that was once entirely theirs. Tangible resources such as water, oil, gas, timber, and pasture offer economic benefits, but that is merely a small piece of what is at stake in the American Southwest. Not only have native peoples lost most of their lands, but they have been denigrated as savages, impoverished through destruction of traditional lifeways, and 're-educated' at boarding schools by Euro-Americans who sought to assimilate them, saving their lives but destroying their culture. This history has left deep scars upon peoples that have nonetheless remained culturally and demographically resilient.<sup>61</sup> Today, at *lieux de discorde* such as Chaco Canyon, it is the very legitimacy of indigenous history (and thus, the indigenous right to exist as self-determinant people) that is at stake.

Both anthropologists and indigenous scholars recognize that ethnicity is not static across time but is perhaps best modeled as braided streams in a wash, with subsets of groups coming together and moving apart, retaining some materials and ideas, and leaving others behind.<sup>62</sup> We recognize that NAGPRA's language of 'cultural affiliation' is deeply problematic. The idea of tracing static cultural entities through time is not only

58 Cordell and Kintigh 2010; Schillaci and Bustard 2010.

59 Balter 2017.

60 Clifford 2000; Clifford 2004; McGuire 1992.

61 Henson 2008.

62 Ferguson 2004.



Fig. 10 Navajo archaeologist Davina Two Bears at a Chacoan site.

theoretically untenable but archaeologically impossible. Nonetheless, this legal protection for bodies, places, resources, and archaeological sites is a great leap forward in legal rights for indigenous tribes, and they are not about to weaken or relinquish it for the sake of a better fit with anthropological models. The legal status of indigenous groups as sovereign entities under U.S. law is grounded in an essentialist view of tribal identity as longstanding and unchanging. The hard-won rights of indigenous peoples for self-determination are based in the argument that they were in the Americas first. But all indigenous groups are not the same – tribes such as the Navajo and the Hopi have variable histories, rights, and economic and political power within the U.S. social and legislative fabric. It should not be surprising that indigenous groups would employ arguments of essentialism and primogenesis against one another, when these are the tools of power that have been handed them by U.S. legislation.

What are the rights and responsibilities of archaeologists as stakeholders in this complex situation? There is no simple answer to this question. As memory anchors, archaeological sites link us through time with people who came before. When these sites are also *lieux de discorde*, it reminds us that relationships with multiple versions of the past are complex and contested. Ultimately archaeologists are engaged in a social and politi-

cal activity that occurs in the present. Our words, our choices of theoretical perspectives, our choices to listen to some voices and not others have real impacts for living people today. In my view, it is time in the Southwest to respect and investigate Navajo views on their origins and their relationships with the Anasazi (Fig. 10). We should be treating the prospect of Navajo cultural affiliations with Chaco as a research question, not as a foregone conclusion. But most importantly, as anthropologists we should assume the responsibility to use our positions, voices, and resources to foster mutual respect and consideration for all.

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O'Halloran, after Ortiz 1972. 4–10 Photos by Ruth M. Van Dyke.

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## Memory Spaces and Contested Pasts in the Haudenosaunee Homeland

### Summary

American Indians are continually surrounded by memory sites of colonization. These often take the form of monuments erected by descendants of colonizers who 'remember' their heroic events while forgetting the atrocities they performed in order to achieve their objectives (violent dispossession). Some archaeologists are now lending a critical eye towards such memory spaces or Imaginative Geographies, as Edward Said called them, as they have been manifest in Haudenosaunee ('Iroquois') territory. They hereby support American Indians to counter skewed projections of their colonization with their own memorials of space. Such agency reflects the power to prompt a remembrance of some silenced or otherwise ignored history and to reverse the gaze.

Keywords: Archaeology; Haudenosaunee; Iroquois; colonization; memory spaces.

Amerikanische IndianerInnen sind beständig von Erinnerungsorten der Kolonisierung umgeben. Diese nehmen oft die Form von Denkmälern an, die durch Nachkommen der KolonisorInnen errichtet wurden, um an heroische Ereignisse zu ,erinnern'; während sie die Gräueltaten vergessen, die als Mittel zum Zweck der gewaltsamen Enteignung verübt wurden. Einige ArchäologInnen richten nun ihren kritischen Blick auf solche Erinnerungsräume oder imaginäre Geographien (Edward Said), wie sie im Haudenosaunee-Gebiet (der ,Irokesen') manifest geworden sind, und unterstützen damit amerikanische IndianerInnen in ihrem Bestreben, verzerrten Darstellungen ihrer Kolonisierung eigene Erinnerungsräume entgegenzusetzen. Dadurch kann totgeschwiegene oder ignorierte Geschichte erinnert und der Blick umgekehrt werden.

Keywords: Archäologie; Haudenosaunee; Irokesen; Kolonisierung; Erinnerungsräume.

This paper, and for that matter my overall research into the strained relationship between anthropology and American Indians would not be possible without the friendship, guidance, and assistance of John Kahionhes Fadden.

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My continuing research examines the production of anthropological discourses and the ongoing relationship between American Indians and the scholars who make their living by studying their culture and remains. More specifically, I examine the writings of ethno-historians, a collective mix of scholars from the disciplines of anthropology and history who study the 'Iroquois' or Haudenosaunee pasts and present. These discourse artifacts come from the self-appointed non-Native academic spokespersons of the Haudenosaunee, and deal with sites of contested memory and meanings. Such sites are contested because of insider/outsider differences in interpretations and understandings of the events that occurred within, though even more importantly because of the ideological posturing of non-Native so-called objective 'Iroquoianist' scholars (historians, anthropologists, ethno-historians) who have taken it upon themselves to define what is worth memorializing for a people they claim to speak for. Such people belong to groups for which academics are not a part of, and often they are not *recognized* by them as political nations. This conflict, between researcher and researched, arises where non-Natives inscribe their own meanings upon memory spaces. More importantly and specifically, the tension between archaeologists and American Indians, between so-called 'Iroquoianist' scholars and the Haudenosaunee in the traditional homeland of the confederacy of their nations, largely results from the perception of one such faction of academics that these particular Indian people are not their equals and should not be allowed to produce their own histories.<sup>1</sup> This powerful faction is variously referred to by Indians as *Fentonites*, after their leader and 'dean' of 'Iroquoianist' studies William N. Fenton, as *culture-vultures*, who pick at the dead, or as *trolls*, in reference to the mythic European creatures who attack those attempting to cross metaphorical bridges.

The Haudenosaunee are the people of the 'Iroquois' Confederacy whose traditional territories fall within the imposed boundaries of the state of New York and Canada. This alliance was composed of five distinct nations, the Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, and Mohawk, who were joined in the early 1700's by the Tuscarora, an Iroquoian speaking people who were displaced from their southern homes.<sup>2</sup> Collectively they known today as the Six Nations of the 'Iroquois' confederacy. The Haudenosaunee are living, breathing, vibrant, viable peoples who still practice their ceremonies, follow their traditional governance, and who still continue to struggle against colonial encroachment within the imposed borders of northeast states such as New York, and who continue to resist their disenfranchisement and the racism and xenophobia that fuels such cultural theft. Like many Indigenous peoples they are largely defined externally, with their histories principally produced and written by non-Native scholars. That is, the average non-Native primary school student in their formative years, learn about the 'Iroquois' from overwhelmingly white academic sources. Many of these scholars perform within

1 Chakrabarty 2000.

2 Johansen and Mann 2000.

disciplines such as archaeology and history, both of which have been and continue to be marked by a striking lack of diversity. For example, despite steady proclamations of inclusiveness since the 1980's, the discipline of anthropology did not award a single Ph.D. to any minority students, much less American Indians, between the years 1994–1995.<sup>3</sup> Indeed between 1973, when the American Anthropological Association (AAA) issued its report *The Minority Experience in Anthropology*, and its follow up in 2010 *Minorities in Anthropology: 1973 versus 2008, Progress or Illusion?*, little has changed.<sup>4</sup> American Indians with Ph.D.s in archaeology number no more than two dozen in the U.S. at the time of this writing, and those that enter the discipline consistently complain of ethnocentrism and overt racism.<sup>5</sup> It is certainly not difficult to find non-Native 'Iroquoianist' experts busily composing the history of a people who they have never actually observed in the present much less participated in any aspect of their contemporary culture, who they have never actually spoken or otherwise interacted with, with most never having actually entered any of the several Haudenosaunee reservations (U.S) and reserves (Canada) of the people they claim expertise about (see for example William Starna's testimony on behalf of Tuscarora gambling interests, *The People of the State of New York vs. Joseph Anderson and Jerry Chew*, 1987). With sarcasm fully intended, these would seem to be the basic preconditions for a relationship, yet the tendency has been to bypass this and assume center stage as some sort of expert on the *other*, relying instead upon sources written by their own ancestral anthropologists/historians/heroes rather than the descendant people.

When I entered academia and archaeology in particular, I was treated to various proffered reasons as to why there were so few American Indian archaeologists in attendance at universities; why there were so few American Indian students at all who chose to enter the discipline. I have found in my research that each explanation that ignores the obvious lends insight into the attitudes of the archaeologists themselves. For example, I have been told that American Indians are not really interested in their pasts, as if they are 'hard-wired' so to speak to feel this indifference. In addition to being complete nonsense and an argument based upon racialized, inherent, unchanging characteristics, this explanation is of course very convenient for those non-Native archaeologists who desire to maintain their exclusive access to Indian material culture. A very learned and well-paid college professor once told his class that American Indians, when they do make it into university, opt for disciplines where higher paying jobs are more plentiful. Again, it is as if disadvantaged people have no choice but to pursue a career where the financial returns exceed those provided by anthropology; that they simply follow in a Pavlovian way the trail of money to wherever their material pursuit lands them. When I protested such essentialist nonsense and offered to share my perspectives with

3 Patterson, Hutchinson, and Goodman 2008.

5 Patterson, Hutchinson, and Goodman 2008.

4 Patterson, Hutchinson, and Goodman 2008.

the professor and the class on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, and the problems American Indians have with museums and institutions collecting and possessing their human remains and sacred objects, another experienced and well-paid archaeologist informed me that with so many diverse American Indian nations I could not make generalizations about such matters. NAGPRA is a U.S. law that provides guidelines for the repatriation of American Indian cultural patrimony, including human remains and funerary objects that were unlawfully acquired by anthropologists and museums. This important piece of legislation requires all federally funded institutions to inventory their *booty of colonization* and to initiate the return of the sacred items and ancestral remains to the respective affiliated groups. Of course it is the archaeologists who define the categories of what can be considered ‘culturally affiliated,’ so this law is far from perfect. In an amazingly patronizing gesture, this *Indian expert* patted me on the leg as he told me that I could not talk about Indian attitudes to such things as human remains as I was not a spokesperson for all the nations. Yet somehow, throughout his career as an archaeologist he was able in turn to make widespread generalizations about American Indian assumptions and beliefs himself. I do not think he particularly liked it when I reached out, patted him back, and informed him that he did not speak for all archaeologists either.

To archaeologists like my former instructor, those American Indians that have negative sentiments towards the discipline are categorized as malcontents, radicals, or individuals with personality issues, and not reflective of the *true* feelings of the studied. Thus, when the powerful and critical characterization of the culture of anthropology by American Indian author Vine Deloria Jr. made it to print in his seminal work *Custer Died for your Sins*,<sup>6</sup> archaeologists countered by asserting that the impressions that American Indians have towards archaeology are not all that negative. When the American Indian Movement (AIM) protested the anthropological sense of entitlement to Indian past remains by disrupting archaeological digs and entering campus labs,<sup>7</sup> archaeologists assured themselves and all who were listening that AIM did not speak for all Indians. When Floyd Westerman Crow sang the lyrics to his hit song *Here come the Anthros*, “better hide your past away, here come the anthros, on another holiday”; the discipline responded with a “Disneyland version”<sup>8</sup> of how helpful anthropology has been in saving the past for Indians. Not surprisingly these discursive impression management strategies have often come from archaeologists who prefer to remain detached, to maintain a distance from their objects of study, an illusory ‘objectivity’ that does not require them to actually speak to living Indians during the course of their research. Indians did not disappear, yet such scholars only commune with the dead. The maintenance of this

6 Deloria Jr. 1969.

7 Biolsi 2008; Cordell, Lightfoot, and McManamon 2008; Pauketat 2012.

8 Nicholas 2010, 289.



fiction of the disappearing Indian is of course solidly based upon the paradigm of the same name that was largely used as justification to shift Indigenous heritage to U.S. controlled post-colonial repositories and institutions, veritable gardens of knowledge from which book deals and careers could be grown. Items of cultural importance and sacred traditional cultural meaning, including Wampum Belts and False Face Masks, were appropriated, and this was often achieved where outright theft was not possible through the use of American Indian assimilationist *informants*, those who sold stories, artifacts, and even the ancestral bodies of their culture often without permission to do so. Many such *informants*, like Arthur C. Parker, did not even live amongst their people nor were they socialized within traditional Haudenosaunee culture, yet there seems to be a tacit acceptance that such people actually represented or acted as *authorized* spokespersons for their groups, and as such that the transfer of such items was *legal*.<sup>9</sup> This illustrates the double standard under which the voice of American Indians are filtered; when they dissent, they are *not* representative of their groups, but when they make available the materials upon which 'Iroquoianist' careers are built, they are constructed as archetyp-ical. Rather than refer to them as assimilationists, thieves and/or traitors, as their local communities often know them, they become *complicated* characters to scholars of history.<sup>10</sup> Such *sell-outs* have been incredibly important resources to archaeologists, so it makes sense that their view of them would be significantly more positive than the more critical opinion held by traditional American Indians. Archaeologists seem to have difficulty training their critical eyes upon the activities of such assimilationists because, on the one hand they have sold the discipline so many wonderful, quant stories and artifacts from the past, and on the other it is expected that they will continue to do so and thus provide a steady supply of Indian material for the perpetuation/profit of the discipline according to the terms of its most powerful actors.

With such a disconnect between what scholars are saying about their relationship with the objects of their study, and what American Indians are saying, I decided early on in my academic career to critically evaluate the words and actions of the observers. My object of study, therefore, is the culture of anthropological archaeology. The orthodox gaze of anthropology is reversed in my work, and instead of asking Haudenosaunee peoples to provide material on themselves, which is unquestionably the traditional main entrée of archaeological consumption, I rather listened as they offered their views upon the sometimes exotic, often factional culture of archaeology. These outlooks were unmistakably and overwhelmingly negative, as in the words of late Mohawk scholar Salli M. Kawennotakie Benedict:

9 McCarthy 2008.

10 Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009; Crawford and D. Kelly 2005; Swearingen and Pruett 2009.

Generally speaking of course, our image of archaeologists, whether stereotypical or not, are those academics who have worked to study ancient aboriginal cultures, ripping into the land collecting burial goods, human remains, and artifacts, building their own reputations without regard for the living aboriginal cultures who have a cultural bond with these goods.<sup>11</sup>

Further, the disconnect between the positive things archaeologists say about themselves and their practices is quite clear here:

Archaeology must be counted among the list of oppressive acts that have been inflicted on aboriginal cultures by western civilization. Its effects are surely as oppressive and devastating to a culture as are relocation, confinement to reservations, or placement in residential schools. We believe that it is part of the process of cultural genocide.<sup>12</sup>

That last bit needs to be emphasized lest there is still any confusion or perceived ambiguity with the words the respected Salli M. Kawennotakie Benedict conveyed: archaeology has been, and continues to be thought of amongst traditional non-assimilationist Indians at Akwesasne as part of the “process of cultural genocide.” This pattern is repeated amongst the traditional peoples of many nations. Despite this, archaeologists continue to minimize the dissatisfaction and anger American Indians have towards their practice, though this should not be so surprising, as the discipline has consistently ignored living, sentient Indians that are critical of their work, from its earliest 19th century inception to present.

## I The trolls under the bridge

During the course of my research, I recorded a number of discursive strategies and devices used by archaeologists to silence such forms of dissent as they exist in traditional Haudenosaunee territory. In my dissertation, I provide specific details on how a faction of ‘Iroquoianist’ scholars, including notables such as William Starna, Lawrence Hauptman, Jack Campisi, and James Axtell, regularly violated the maxims of western discourse in order to silence the critiques of traditional Haudenosaunee like Salli Benedict, Chief Leon Shenandoah, and John Kahionhes Fadden. As mentioned above, this group of scholars, many of whom were or are employed by non-traditional pro-gambling assimilationist American Indian groups in the capacity of *expert consultants*, which in itself is a topic that should prompt a discussion of conflict of interest, are known as *trolls* by many

11 Benedict 2007, 433.

12 Benedict 2007, 433–434.

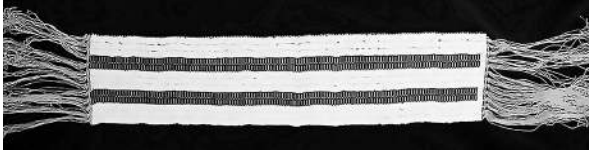


Fig. 1 The Kanien'kehaka Two-Row Wampum Belt.

traditional Haudenosaunee.<sup>13</sup> Those attempting to cross the metaphorical bridge under which the trolls lurk are both non-Native scholars and American Indians who carry with them the objective of creating a new relationship. This *new* relationship is not a novel idea, but one that is modeled after the Kanien'kehaka Two-Row Wampum belt (Fig. 1).

The Two-Row Wampum Belt commemorates the signing of the Tawagonshi Treaty of 1613, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Dutch. Amongst the Haudenosaunee, the Two-Row Wampum Belt provides a model or a guiding principle for the ongoing relationship with colonial powers, and has been invoked as a symbol for a new collective relationship between archaeologists and American Indians.<sup>14</sup> The two purple parallel rows of Wampum are seen as vessels moving across a white Wampum sea of life or time.<sup>15</sup> Upon one are the Haudenosaunee in their canoe and the other vessel is piloted by the Dutch, though any colonial power, institution, or discipline that emerged from imperial hegemony (including anthropology) can be substituted.<sup>16</sup> Both vessels are seen as separate but equal, both contain the culture, values, and laws of each respective sovereign nation or institution, and neither interferes with the other.<sup>17</sup> Such a relationship is anathema to those of the troll faction who believe they, *and they alone*, are the ones who should be in control of the production of 'Iroquois' pasts and present. In their version of 'Iroquois' history, the traditional Haudenosaunee Confederacy came about only in the 16th century as a response to European powers, and then simply disappeared and ceased to function after the American Revolutionary War.<sup>18</sup> The Chiefs and Clan Mothers who continue to meet in the Grand Council, who issue decisions relevant to the Six Nations, and who practice the Long House traditions are simply ignored by the troll faction who find working with assimilationists to be apparently more fulfilling and certainly more lucrative.

To redress violations (land claims, sovereignty issues), American Indians are at a distinct disadvantage as they must enter the legal system of the U.S. where they are obliged to retain lawyers and scholars alike to present and validate their complaints as *valid*.

13 John Fadden, personal communication 2013.

14 Benedict 2007; Jemison 1995.

15 Bonaparte 2007.

16 Tehanetorens 1999.

17 George-Kanentio 2000.

18 Starna 1979, 70.

Some must even prove they are American Indian first, even where they had already been recognized as such at the federal and/or state levels. Up until 1964, the official policy of the U.S. towards American Indians was one of assimilation, with the objective of removing their separate identities and making them Americans. This was enacted especially through termination policies, where in a ten year period from the 1950's to the 60's the relationship between over 100 tribes and the federal government was extinguished. The federal government in effect told them, "we no longer recognize you as Indians", and by extension no longer considered them sovereign nations with the right to self-governance. Before being able to legally pursue the various thefts of their lands and resources, those who had their identity extinguished faced the burden of proving that they were American Indians, and this was and is quite expensive, especially for groups who fall within the lowest socioeconomic levels in the U.S.<sup>19</sup> Solid sources of revenue to retain consultants and expert witnesses necessary to make a strong case are truly limited for many groups. For some, casinos, bingo halls, and smoke shops offer the possibility of increased revenues and by tying in the establishment of such operations with issues such as federal recognition and land claims, outside venture capitalists are convinced to invest. Thus, these groups are able to justify the high price tag of retained experts through the knowledge that if legal challenges are successful, such businesses will potentially produce large amounts of revenue. Where assimilationist Indians often did not have the permission of tribal governing powers to sell or give Haudenosaunee culture to archaeologists (esp. Wampum Belts, False Face Masks), the gambling supporters are also often at odds with traditional tribal decision making structures and values, and this is certainly the case in Haudenosaunee Confederacy territory. Members of the troll faction have positioned themselves as the go-to experts for non-traditional assimilationist Indians to call upon, and like lawyers following ambulances they proceed with vigor. Indeed, the troll faction has a financial stake in protecting and furthering its assimilationist employer's agendas, and they do so by attacking those traditional Haudenosaunee who are critical of their bosses' entrepreneurship. Not surprisingly, this involves a spin-doctoring of the past and present where the troll faction consistently disparages, minimizes, silences, and calls into question the *validity* and *legitimacy* of those people, structures and symbols that are at odds with their employers. Simply stated, such scholarly troll narratives have little to do with *truth*, but are instead shaped and fabricated according to political and economic concerns.

There is a clear binary tendency amongst the troll faction in particular and 'Iroquoianist' scholars in general, to define American Indians as either *friendly* or *hostile*, though the preferred terminology I have overheard at archaeology meetings and stumbled upon written in the margins of state archived documents (Peebles Island, NY),

19 Williams 2006.

seems to be that of *reasonable* vs. *unreasonable* Indians. The latter of course refers to those Indians who disagree with the assumption that archaeologists should continue to have unrestrained access to their graves, bodies, and artifacts. In such documents and through interviews with various New York State archaeologists I have uncovered a pervasive and simplistic dichotomous categorization of the Haudenosaunee people, and this illustrates one of many contradictions amongst 'Iroquoianist' scholars. As mentioned above, I was rebuked for attempting to convey to students of archaeology American Indian views about NAGPRA and the housing of ancestral human remains. My former professor argued there was simply too much diversity amongst American Indians for me to be able to articulate just one attitude they might have about archaeology. Yet in the next breath, so to speak, this professor, and members of the troll faction of 'Iroquoianist' scholars, then move on to their own binary categorization of Indians into the *reasonable* and the *unreasonable* camps. Put another way, Indians are either conceptualized as sensible, rational, and practical, or as arbitrary, irrational, and difficult, and hence little has changed since colonizers divided up the populations of this continent into groups of *friendlies* and *hostiles*. Archaeology was the handmaiden of colonization, working alongside and benefitting as the invading powers pacified American Indians and made it safe for its practitioners to enter and take what they wanted from groups who had their ability of dissent beaten out of them in extraordinarily dehumanizing ways. These processes, based upon the behaviors of the troll faction, have clearly not run their entire course nor has dissent been extinguished.

## 2 Monuments and monumental practices

During the course of my study, an unpublished document was graciously shared with me that lists many spaces of Haudenosaunee memory in the states of New York, Pennsylvania, and parts of present day Canada. The author, Ray Tehanetorens Fadden, travelled during the 1940's with other traditional educators to give young Haudenosaunee students a tour of their eastern territory, stopping at every known marker or important monument erected to the Six Nations Indians. The monument dedicated to Deskaheh is a great case in point (Fig. 2).

Deskaheh was a Cayuga Indian and member of the Grand Council of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy who travelled to Geneva in 1923 in an unsuccessful effort to enlist the League of Nations in the Haudenosaunee struggle for sovereignty. When he attempted to return to his home on the Grand River territory, the Canadian government refused his entry, dubbing him a *troublemaker*. While he was gone, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) changed the locks on the door to the Confederacy Council



Fig. 2 Haudenosaunee, including Ray Tehanetorens Fadden, stand by the monument dedicated to Deskaheh sometime in the 1940's.

House, and it was at that point that the Canadian government replaced the traditional form of governance with an imposed elective system. Thus, the Canadian government now only recognized its own puppet regime on Haudenosaunee territory, not the traditional governance of the Confederacy, and the objective of assimilation could, in their view, proceed more effectively. Notwithstanding the premature eulogy given the Confederacy by members of the troll faction, including William Starna,<sup>20</sup> despite the fomenting of factionalism that this imposition created, the traditional Haudenosaunee Confederacy has continued to function.

Through the use of such common and recognizable monuments, the Haudenosaunee accordingly recognize the power to influence public perception and to challenge dominant narratives, by carving their perspective of the past into their own solid, immutable stone expressions. Visits to such monuments were described as joyous occasions, where young Indians delighted in viewing their history as conveyed to them in their own words (Fig. 3).

There were places of grieving that the Mohawk also visited. These were spaces where mass murders of Indians had occurred, spaces capped with stone monuments erected by the colonizers that both glorified their cause while demonizing *the savages* who stood in the way of *civilization* and *progress*. Actual control by Indians over past narratives, marked as it were by such monuments is rare, however, with just a handful of known examples. Simply stated, monuments are often cost prohibitive, much as the consulting fees of so-called anthropological expert are, and the traditional Haudenosaunee lack the cash flow of non-traditional groups. Instead, regions such as upstate New York are dotted by many

20 Starna 2008.



Fig. 3 Young Mohawk Indians visit a monument to Deganawidah in the 1940's.

different aggrandizing pro-U.S./pro-colonizer memorials and monuments. The bigger the monument, the more persuasive the propaganda. For example, a site of grieving for American Indians is the Mount Rushmore monument in S. Dakota, and while this is obviously outside of Haudenosaunee territory, I include it as it illustrates in colossal scale the predominant strategy used to wrest control over such contested spaces away from Indians. In 1868, the Treaty of Fort Laramie was signed as an agreement between several bands of Lakota speaking peoples and the US that guaranteed the Black Hills, viewed by the Lakota and other American Indians as sacred, to remain in their possession forever.<sup>21</sup> Forever of course lasted just two years as the famous General George Custer

21 Johansen and Pritzker 2008.



Fig. 4 The ubiquitous Clinton/Sullivan monument mass produced for highways and parks in upstate New York.

himself began leading gold speculators into the hills, and the treaty was repeatedly violated and broken.<sup>22</sup> To spur tourism, the faces of four white U.S. presidents were carved into the sacred Black Hills and today the leisure industry industry here is dominant with gift shops, motels, fast food restaurants, and strip malls covering the landscape. This is all on land illegally taken by the U.S. in direct violation of the Fort Laramie treaty, on land considered to be sacred, and with a monument that celebrates Euro-American violent conquest. This is, in other words, the largest ‘*fuck you Indians!*’ monument I could find in North America erected by the U.S. colonizing nation. There is no point in my sugarcoating this rape of Indigenous collectivity for the safe consumption of academics.

Closer to home probably the most omnipresent *fuck you Indians!*-monument in New York State is that associated with the Clinton and Sullivan expedition of 1779 (Fig. 4).

Thirty-five of these mass produced identical monuments are found in major cities and large towns, along highways, and as markers in local, state, and federal parks in upstate New York. Commissioned in 1929 to mark the 150th anniversary, the monument

22 Fixico 2007.



commemorates the Clinton/Sullivan army routes as they went on “expedition against the hostile Indian nations which checked the aggressions of the English and Indians on the frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania extending westward the dominion of the U.S.”

As a growing number of historical scholars now acknowledge, much of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy actually stayed neutral during the hostilities between England and its rebellious subjects notwithstanding the revenge/justification propaganda used to rally the American public and troops towards the eradication and dispossession of the Six Nations. For instance, the role of the Mohawk Indians in the service of England during the revolutionary war under the so-called leadership of ‘Chief’ Joseph Brant has been wildly exaggerated. The rationalization recurrently cited for the Clinton/Sullivan punitive expedition is the Cherry and Wyoming Valley massacres of frontier Americans by the ‘Iroquois.’ There is ample evidence, however, that Brant’s *bloodthirsty* Mohawk warriors numbered only in the dozens, not in the hundreds as has been claimed, and many were not even Haudenosaunee, but actually displaced individuals from other Indian nations.<sup>23</sup>

Above I mentioned the disconnect between the scholarly treatment of anthropological *informants*, and the traditional Haudenosaunee views of such *traitors/thieves*, and Joseph Brant provides another good example of this. Like other assimilationists he is treated by scholars as a complicated character, as “a Man of Two Worlds,”<sup>24</sup> as a man “who led his people on the side of the British.”<sup>25</sup> Simply juxtapose these attitudes towards Brant with those of the traditional Haudenosaunee and again it is as if two different figures were being discussed:

Among the Mohawks of Akwesasne his name is spoken with spite for he was the person who signed away our ancestral lands to the Americans, giving away millions of acres of territory for a few thousand dollars which he conveniently pocketed, claiming it was for damages he suffered during the American Revolution.<sup>26</sup>

Akwesasne or Kanien’kéha refers to Mohawk Nation territory in the northern portion of New York on the American side of the border with Canada. Doug George-Kanentiio further challenges the myth of Brant by pointing out that he was never a Chief, he was denied a formal clan title name because he was too ambitious and motivated by material greed, he was a drunk who killed his own son during an alcohol fueled brawl, and he was deeply distrusted by the Mohawk people and required armed guards to protect him on his rare visits to Akwesasne and other reservations.

23 Mann 2005; Tierney 2006.

24 Kelsay 1986.

25 Bolton and Wilson 1992.

26 George-Kanentiio 2009.

What might be the motivation of the U.S. for creating such a fiction? Colonizing nations are quick to offer excuses or justifications for their various transgressions, be it the *White Man's Burden*<sup>27</sup> and its overt racism-disguised-as-philanthropy, or *Manifest Destiny*<sup>28</sup> with its land greed rationale obscured by gods-will-be-done, or the removal of Indians to *protect them*,<sup>29</sup> ostensibly (and with straight faces) from themselves. There certainly is a history of fabricating events in the U.S. to rally the masses towards warfare to achieve the colonizing objectives of possession and control, such as the myth of the last stand at the Alamo,<sup>30</sup> the Gulf of Tonkin incident that never really happened,<sup>31</sup> or more recently the non-existent weapons of mass destruction that Iraq was said to possess.<sup>32</sup> Overstating the scale of Brant's attack ('massacre'), and positioning him as a *noble* character torn between two worlds but respected by those he led ('Iroquois'), is just another example of such *false flag* incidents, as they are sometimes called, whereby mythic events are created to overcome public opposition to colonizer objectives. Fear sells, and by discursively positioning Brant as a hero of the Haudenosaunee and not as a disliked opportunist, this allowed the U.S. government to shape the public perception of not only him, but the collective 'Iroquois' who supported him. Thus the Haudenosaunee, like Brant, become at once *noble* and torn between two worlds, and *savage*, prone to resorting to *uncivilized massacres* of white people. The latter obviously was used to rally support for their removal and relegation to reservations. But why then would scholars emphasize the *good* qualities of Brant (*noble, conflicted, complicated, trying to do what was right for his people*, etc.)? Assimilationists give all things Indian away, albeit for a price. Anthropologists and archaeologists have an interest in maintaining good relationships with such sell-outs, as this is where they acquire the material culture and stories so necessary for the perpetuation of their discipline and the collective control they exert.

What is not stated in these monuments is the unwillingness of Clinton and Sullivan, under orders from American hero and first president General George Washington, to distinguish between those many Haudenosaunee who wanted peace, and the few who allied themselves with the British. What is not stated on the multiple monuments is that this, the single largest expedition ever mounted against American Indians,<sup>33</sup> was a campaign of ethnic cleansing. Those not killed in battle were slaughtered in their longhouses. Those who escaped watched as their orchards were cut down, and their crops burnt by Clinton and Sullivan's men who knew full well that as a result of their actions winter starvation for the Indians was just a few months away. George Washington is still known today amongst the Haudenosaunee as the *town destroyer*, for the scorched

27 Kipling 1899.

28 O'Sullivan 1845.

29 Jackson 1835.

30 Tucker 2009.

31 Goulden 1969.

32 Creed 2013.

33 Tucker 2009.



Fig. 5 The red handprint on the Clinton/Sullivan plaque.

earth policy he directed Sullivan and Clinton to enact, and for the many Indians who perished as a result of his directive.<sup>34</sup>

So how do the Haudenosaunee counter these fictions? One way is to disrupt the spectacle of the monument by defacing them with something recognizable in Indian communities. In Figure 4 above, a red handprint is visible in the center of the Clinton/Sullivan plaque, and this can be seen more clearly in Figure 5.

The closer one gets to Haudenosaunee population centers, the more often one can see this red hand print, and while local and state authorities regularly remove these markings you can still usually see the chemical incongruities of their paint removal upon the surface of the monuments illustrating this contested narrative. The red handprint is a reminder of not only a past wrong (Clinton-Sullivan genocide), but also an understanding that such pervasive fiction that was put in place during the initial colonizing dispossessions continues today in stone and spoken discourse. It signals a remembrance, and those who maintain the fiction must in turn continually clean their

34 Mann 2005.

monuments lest the *blood on the hands* of colonization be remembered and the disappeared/assimilated/compliant Indian myth be challenged.

The group of young Mohawk Indians also visited memory spaces that were not so clearly marked. For example, there are sacred springs known only to the Haudenosaunee, and certain hidden graves of important Indians that are visited regularly, as are the usually unmarked locations of particular important councils and meetings that are remembered. Tribal Stones are visited as well, where it is said that in certain instances, a boulder would appear near Haudenosaunee villages, and when the villages moved, the stones seemed to follow them to their new locations. The Oneida tribal stone is located in a Euro-American cemetery near Utica. Non-Natives placed it there after the Oneida were forced to leave their ancestral territory in central New York and resettle in Wisconsin in the 19th century. When a group of Oneida people returned they located this important tribal stone, and continue to visit it today. Its placement in a Euro-American cemetery affords it the protection it would not have were it placed in a Haudenosaunee memory space. New York still (at the time of this writing) affords no protection to unmarked Indian graves in the state, so by virtue of the individual Euro-American stone monuments otherwise known as gravestones, the Oneida Tribal Stone is secure through association.

So too the Mohawks visited groves and sites where longhouse towns and villages once stood. Archaeologists and pothunters alike have dug into many of these, and with few exceptions, such *research* was conducted without any sort of contact with the living Haudenosaunee descendants. One excellent exception is that of the site of White Springs, located in Geneva, NY, wherein a Seneca longhouse town stood in 1687. At this important memory space a non-Native scholar, Kurt Jordan of Cornell University, is conducting archaeological research and working collaboratively with G. Peter Jemison and the Seneca Nation, who each have their own objectives and things they want to learn from this site. Yes, Indians are in fact interested in the past! Jordan has provided scholarships for Native students, and I argue his approach should be considered as a model for respectful consultation and cooperative archaeological undertakings. The group of traveling Mohawks spent hours in this space quietly contemplating Haudenosaunee pasts. They also visited markers erected by non-Natives grateful for the help/assistance they received from the Haudenosaunee, such as the monument to the Onondaga Indians in Syracuse, New York, a place where starving non-Natives were rescued and given food by Onondaga peoples. Other memory spaces that were visited include natural landmarks, like Bare Hill or Genneudewah the sacred mountain of the Seneca's. There are also Treaty rocks like the one near the village of Canandaigua that mark the spot where the Treaty of Canandaigua was signed. So too the group paused to observe trails of memory, path-

ways like the great central trail of the longhouse, which is now paved over as New York State Rte. 5, and used daily by many oblivious drivers.

Throughout Haudenosaunee territory the names of the Six Nations are naturalized and commoditized by non-Native interests. One finds 'Iroquois' estates, *Oneida* bus manufacturers, *Mohawk* River fishing reel makers, *Cayuga* speedways, there are counties, lakes and towns, there are dorms at Universities named after the 'Iroquois' nations of the confederacy, and so on. The Haudenosaunee through such naming, are thus constructed as objects and places, but not as people. This is an effective strategy towards propagating the disappearing Indian paradigm, the likes of which anthropology used and still uses to shift Haudenosaunee heritage away from its rightful makers and owners. Objectifying American Indian symbols or likenesses into commercial ventures or stone monuments that celebrate the conquering nation, subsumes or assimilates Indian descendants and survivors within the dominant colonizing ideology, and in effect causes them to be forgotten as living peoples.

Now memory sites of different places are of course...different in the sense that the various strategies of colonialism and past mastering, as well as the forms of resistance to this domination, occur relative to their own specific context. Yet despite this some generalizations are possible. In Germany, for instance, there is at least an acknowledgment that horrible things occurred in the past (for example Holocaust). This awareness, while surely variable, far exceeds that of U.S. *remembering*, especially with regards to the Indigenous genocide of the Americas, truly a holocaust (a term I use with no compunction) of epic scale. These various memorials and monuments in Haudenosaunee territory, and elsewhere in the U.S., played an important role in the formation and ongoing maintenance of ideologies meant to deny, or where this was not possible, minimize or conditionally accept past deprivations against American Indians. They create a fiction of heroic proportions played out on the stage of stolen Indian land, and buried under dominant narratives which are locked in seemingly immutable stone form, are the stories of conquest seen through the eyes of the *other*.

### 3 Memory and resistance

Recollection rather than forgetting, in my view, is the criterion for a more balanced future. Furthermore, I believe it is my political, social, and ethical responsibility to contest such official memories, the likes of which are used to cover undesirable remembrances of the past and to legitimate U.S. authority and control in the present. The objective here, and of my overall research, is to expose and make present otherwise suppressed, concealed, lost, or awkward political memories that are manifest in material remains,

be they monuments, archaeological reports, or source documentation. Memory sites controlled by colonizers first and foremost are characterized by a silence about the existence of victims and the survivors. Edward Said referred to these as “imaginative geographies,”<sup>35</sup> spaces that pay scant attention to the reality of events preferring instead to narrate the fantasies of conquerors, and this must be seen as an ongoing process of colonization. My intentions are not to intellectually dabble with monuments and memory spaces, to ruminate on the arbitrary and context-specific meaning of symbols, but to assist in formulating a resistance to these less overt but no less dominating forms of inequality and silencing.

There are a number of strategies of resistance that are variously employed to counter the dominant narratives of colonizer monuments. As mentioned, some Indians, when they can afford to do so, simply erect their own monuments and inscribe them with memories of their own. Some disrupt the spectacle by inscribing their own symbols (the red hand print mentioned above; Figs. 4 and 5). The metal plaque of the monument becomes the contested battlefield of past memory, where the state removes and silences dissent and the Indians return consistently to symbolically re-inscribe a past that the state would prefer to forget. Other strategies include removing and/or destroying monuments. For instance, in 2010, a group of Mohawk Indians at Akwesasne used a backhoe and dug up a marker delineating the territory of the U.S. from Canada, as they do not recognize this imposed boundary that arbitrarily separates them into two groups (Akwesasne and St. Regis). The monument subsequently was smashed to pieces. This direct action is reminiscent to artist Horst Hoheisel’s idea for the Brandenburg gate in Germany,<sup>36</sup> but the problem is that by completely destroying the monument the memory of its placement is severed as well. In other words, the memory of the conditions of inequality that provided the context for the establishment of such markers and monuments in Haudenosaunee territory and elsewhere will become faint without a tangible symbolic manifestation. When the memory of the first colonizing fiction is completely destroyed, the unchallenged counter discourse is placed upon a falsely cleansed backdrop. This is not so much a visualization of repression, as it is a visual narrative of both resistance and ideological victory over colonizing fictions.

As seems clear with this relatively new scholarly interest in memory and spaces, there is a tendency to consider multiple agendas, to recognize the complexity of such negotiations, to problematize the ownership of the past. Archaeologists, who I would never expect to embrace post-modernism or the like, seemingly are doing so today, though in a highly selective way. Memory according to them is after all continually unfolding. Who can say what past is correct, who can even say there is an objective reality out there to find? Yet in the same breath, they position themselves as grounded experts able to give

35 Said 1979.

36 Young 1999.

voice to the past.<sup>37</sup> Much as priests of various religious persuasions have claimed they are in sole communion with a higher power, so too archaeologists like to claim to be intermediaries between the past and the present. For example, those scholars who continually measure and marvel over the Ancestral One (so-called Kennewick man) claim to be allowing him to speak in the present, though only they can read his remains and narratives like a book.<sup>38</sup> There are many such contradictions in monuments and memory spaces, though they are not uncommon in archaeological narratives as well. It seems quite convenient for archaeologists to problematize ownership of the past, as it can be quite lucrative acquiring, possessing, and studying the cultural material of *others*, especially if archaeologists can convince their respective governments that the *other* does not own their heritage, and this has certainly been the case in the U.S. Examples of this prior to the passage of NAGPRA were innumerable, as archaeologists and institutions simply assumed ownership of the past and its objects through tropes of relevance and discursively constructed notions of a shared history. Seen from this light it is expected that archaeologists will point out contradictions between competing Indigenous narratives of the past and not be so much concerned with the dominant fictional colonizing narratives themselves. Indeed, archaeologists and their discipline stand to continue profiting from American Indian material culture. They are the default owners to the spoils of conquest, and resistance to NAGPRA, repatriation, and diversity within the halls where the production of knowledge occurs is viewed by many American Indians as nothing more than an effort to maintain non-Native hegemony.<sup>39</sup>

It is not a stretch to say that many in the discipline of anthropology wish to continue their unfettered access to American Indian graves, goods, artifacts, stories, notwithstanding that irksome new NAGPRA law we have in the U.S. Truth be told, few institutions are actually in compliance with it anyway. There are some 150 000 American Indian bodies still stored in museums and institutions in the U.S., and where many archaeologists claim these bodies cannot be culturally affiliated to living Indians, archaeologist David Hurst Thomas believes some 80% can in fact be connected to descendants even within the restrictive wording of the law.<sup>40</sup> Such annoying facts get in the way of an otherwise lucrative field for the politically well-positioned archaeologists who articulate the trope of *shared heritage*,<sup>41</sup> as if non-Natives experienced the repression of colonization themselves. There is a financial stake in maintaining a separation between living and dead Indians, in maintaining the fiction that there is no cultural affiliation, a category whose boundaries are defined and redefined by archaeologists all the time. Such categories are,

37 Fenton 2009; Shimony and Rouse 2011; Starna 2013.

38 Chatters 2002; Owsley and Jantz 2001.

39 Alfred 2004; Owsley and Jantz 2001; Benedict 2007; Deloria Jr. 2000; Hill 2007; Jemison 2007; George-

Kanentio 2007; Mihesuah 2004; Riding 2000; Rosier 2003; Smith 2006; Watkins 2000.

40 D. H. Thomas 2000.

41 Pollock and Lutz 1994.

importantly, not defined and redefined by living Indians. Archaeologists argue for a shared global heritage,<sup>42</sup> yet even when they acknowledge this ideology as largely indistinguishable from those that drove colonist dispossessions of the *other*, they continue as stakeholders with an unmistakable economic incentive to maintain their elite positions as spokespersons for the dead. As a result, the foot dragging non-compliance of institutions to NAGPRA, and the vocal opposition by some of the disciplines *guard dogs* should not surprise anyone.

Lynn Meskell, in a paper she wrote shortly after the attack of the World Trade Center in New York City on 09/11/01, talked about the “unimaginable commodification” of the site of the towers.<sup>43</sup> She notes how the site of this loss of life was remarked upon by one grieving family member as, “a burial ground...a cemetery, where the men and women we loved are buried”<sup>44</sup>. The unimaginable commodification occurs as the site is turned into a tourist attraction, and parts of the fallen buildings are loaned to museums throughout the nation where you too can pay a fee and view these artifacts. The boundaries of the unimaginable commodification do not extend to Meskell’s own view of the event, and in this way the critique of archaeology’s own unimaginable commodification of fetishized Indigenous material culture is situated as outside of the *normal* purview. Of course, this sounds all too familiar to American Indians.

I offer non-Native scholars a solution to the problems that affect the relationship between them and the American Indians they study (past and present). Instead of continuing to lament, like a litany, how complicated it is to sort through the various stakeholders of archaeological material, or how difficult it is to inventory items that your discipline has removed from American Indians without receiving more funding, why not put your years of learning and scholarship to use for something other than yourselves and attempt to actually work through these issues? Why not help American Indians devise strategies to oblige a visitor to a memory space to actually remember what happened there, to challenge the dominant narratives? Better yet, how can American Indians best convince you to examine your own uncomfortable practice of Indigenous disempowerment, your own relationship to colonizing powers, and your own role in burying your undesirable pasts, the likes of which regularly insert themselves into the present? Lynn Meskell also claimed that archaeologists are not known for their political acuity.<sup>45</sup> I would argue the opposite, that archaeologists are indeed aware that their position as authorities of the past resides within the very same power structures that create the fictionalized accounts we all read and marvel at on these various monuments. Whom do archaeologists want heritage preserved for? For a collective humanity, or for themselves?

42 R. Kelly and D. Thomas 2013; Luke and Kersel 2013.

43 Meskell 2002, 560.

44 Meskell 2002, 560–561.

45 Meskell 2002.



Referring to the density of dominant/subaltern group networks of memory spaces as more or less relative to each other is akin to the initial categorizations archaeologists do when they come upon layers of multiple behavioral activities during the course of their field research. While initially of use to make some semblance of the oft times dizzying variety of cultural material one can encounter, this is only the first step in understanding the phenomena. Contextualization, the likes of which I have touched on here, is absolutely necessary in order to understand the relative appearance of density or the lack thereof. The networks of memory spaces of dominant groups are ubiquitous, and this is reflective of the controlling strategies of colonization that have been put into place. Within the context of the Haudenosaunee homeland we find a white-washed historical landscape where the remembrance of one usually mythic and heroic past is presented as the single narrative from which the descendants of the victorious (dominant) are, and continue to be socialized. As mentioned earlier, the cost of erecting a monument or other memory site marker can be cost prohibitive, so the investment in establishing, maintaining, and adding to the past narrative of dominant group memory site networks attests to the importance attached to this powerful post-conquest tool. One finds the largest colonizing monuments closest to the largest population centers, where daily throngs of people who know next to nothing about American Indians or history come to be passively socialized into an ideology of both fate and entitlement, and where one can note the high investment in maintenance (for example removing counter discourse/graffiti) that occurs upon the dominant, albeit contested, narrative. Conversely the networks of memory spaces of Native (subaltern) groups are more uneven, as attempts to counter dominant historical narratives are pricey and resisted by non-Natives who have been socialized to view and protect a certain history, infused as it were with American exceptionalism and patriotism.

Upon such a naturalized landscape, where monuments tend to either glorify the subjugation of the original inhabitants (for example Clinton/Sullivan campaign markers) of the continent, or celebrate those assimilated sell-outs (for example Joseph Brant) who helped the colonizers achieve their objective of dispossession, it is important for those scholars who study networks of memory spaces to note the incongruities that mark attempts to counter the dominant narrative (for example red hand prints, chemical removal or paint cover ups). The red hand print can be found on many Clinton/Sullivan monuments at any given moment, as the investment of dominant groups on isolated monuments mostly found along highways and rest areas is far more limited than the response one can find in civic parks within urban centers. As Indians become empowered and mobilized in their resistance, the scene of contestation shifts to those high population urban centers where their counter discourse can be heard by the most people. A good example of this occurred in the 1990's where Russel Means and the American

Indian Movement (AIM) launched a protest to the annual Columbus Day parade in Denver, CO by throwing red paint upon a large statue of Columbus, while articulating through a mega horn the facts of his 'discovery.' So too there is a qualitative dimension that distinguishes subaltern memory networks from dominant, as American Indians like the Haudenosaunee know of and visit sites that are not marked by the conventional Euro-American edifices of stone, but are nonetheless carried from generation to generation through oral history. Thus, such different ways of remembering produce equally different memory networks.

When American Indians do in fact reclaim sacred sites and remove, destroy, or otherwise counter the fictionalized *false flag* narratives encapsulated within imposed monuments/memorials, what will archaeologists do and say? If the Black Hills are ever returned to the Lakota, will you liken the Indians to the Taliban, or ISIS if they smash to bits the white faces carved into their revered mountain? Surely, they have the right to do so. Will you call them looters and destroyers of some sort of global heritage, a *heritage* that is of course not really shared with but taken from them? This sort of disdain is evinced on an almost daily basis albeit at smaller scales, as powerful members of the discipline bemoan the loss of material culture and bodies through the bothersome NAGPRA law that they and their predecessors expropriated from American Indians. Ultimately anthropology/archaeology has created and is a part of its own networks of memory spaces, spaces where the colonizing ideology of dispossession has been enacted. The one-way gaze continues to be dominant methodology, and such welcomed criticality of scholars regarding "imaginative geographies"<sup>46</sup> and memory spaces is sorely limited if it simply replicates the same sort of colonizing mentality that has been historically used by anthropology to paint the quant picture of disappeared or assimilated *others*. A critical scrutiny of the role of anthropology/archaeology as part and parcel of a larger memory space of dispossession is far overdue.

46 Said 1979.

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Reinhard Bernbeck

## *Lieux de Mémoire* and Sites of De-Subjectivation

### Summary

This essay consists of four different elements that approach the nexus of memory, place/space and subjectivity in different ways. I start out with a description of the concept of *lieux de mémoire* as formulated by Pierre Nora, its connections to Marc Augé's "non-places" and a critique of these ideas. I then discuss the postcolonial notion of Third Space as an alternative approach to the nexus of memory and space. Finally, an archaeological example of a megalithic site in Jordan illustrates the advantages and difficulties of mobilizing the idea of Third Spaces in archaeological contexts.

Keywords: *lieux de mémoire*; non-place; Third Space; subjectivation; postcolonialism; megaliths; Jordan.

Dieser Beitrag zeigt vier verschiedene Aspekte auf, unter denen die Verknüpfung von Erinnerung, Ort/Raum und Subjektivität in unterschiedlicher Weise aufgegriffen wird. Ich beginne mit der Beschreibung des Konzepts der *lieux de mémoire* von Pierre Nora, seinen Bezügen zu Marc Augés „Nichtorten“ und einer Kritik dieser Ansätze. Das postkoloniale Konzept des Third Space bildet einen alternativen Ansatz zum Verständnis der Verknüpfung von Erinnerung und Raum. Abschließend zeige ich an einem Fallbeispiel eines Ortes mit Megalithen in Jordanien die Vorteile und Schwierigkeiten der Anwendung des Third Space in archäologischen Kontexten.

Keywords: Erinnerungsorte; Nichtort; Dritter Raum; Subjektivierung; Postkolonialismus; Dolmen; Jordanien.

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## I.

Drowning in the raging river of time, we try desperately to hold on to the last stems of memory that protrude near the shore. This is the feeling one gets when reading Pierre Nora's plea for 'memory sites.' His principles specified in the introductory paper to a massive set of seven edited volumes on this topic<sup>1</sup> are dominated by a juxtaposition of memory and history that seems at times Manichaeic. On one side are the *milieux de mémoire* that envelope the past in a gentle way and underwrite identities, on the other the acrid, corrosive criticism of academically based history that destroys even the optimistic views of the French Revolution and throws all traditions into question. History demystifies the world so thoroughly that the perpetrator-historians are called upon by Nora to come to their senses. They ought to limit the damage by conceptualizing and developing *lieux de mémoire* as an antidote to the damage they have inflicted on social integration.

Nora's argument proceeds in a romanticizing yet colonialist fashion: he imputes to societies that preserve their memories without the medium of writing a happy, innocent "ethnological slumber";<sup>2</sup> they keep the deep past in the present through sacralization and its full inclusion in quotidian life. Specific places are treated with particular respect, so that they develop a thick mantle of aura. For Nora, this stands in contrast to the present, which is described as "uprooted", attacked by collectivization and transfixed by superficialities that correspond to its shallowness, democratic tendencies and mediatizations.

Even if the critical diagnosis of the present may have some value, the criticism concerning collectivization and democracy has an unsavory elitist flavor and is politically highly disquieting. The glorifying description of the non-Western *Other*, however, is completely unacceptable. Nora imagines "people without history" in the worst colonialist manner by merging past societies and those of our days that oppose modernity. The background for these ideas is the old cultural pessimism of Oswald Spengler bound up with social evolutionism: ultimately, the contemporary condition still remains the 'pinnacle of evolution,' although historians and others have the duty to mitigate the excesses and problems of long-term developments that have led the West to where it is today.

The problem which Nora observes is the increasingly skeptical questioning of firmly anchored historical convictions of entire collectivities. The idea of 'identities' is thrown fundamentally in doubt when critical questions are asked about what it means to share a common background. Nora's concern is this effect at the core of critical histories.

1 Nora 1984–1992.

2 Nora 1989, 7.



Long ago, Friedrich Nietzsche expressed himself similarly.<sup>3</sup> I see Nora's program of *lieux de mémoire* as an attempt to compensate for a widespread disappearance of collective identity. Nora locates responsibilities for this loss with those who give an account of the past, who construct it. These penitents should, according to him, repair the damage they have inflicted on an innocent public. This can be done through a discourse of truth claims (including those produced by historical sciences). Such a discourse is designed to anchor identities by offering the public a hold in a world marred by forgetfulness, the cause of which is history's critical attitude. Nora aims at nothing less than a modern, secular version of a canonization of memorable events, monuments and objects. The believers are not a church community but the citizens of a nation with their collective memory. Nora uses a clever procedure to try to achieve his goals. He does not advise establishing truth claims; rather, the goal is to write the history of the mnemonic *topoi* that are supposed to stand for a nation. This history of memory is a deeply affirmative one.

We can study the success of this state-supporting historiography and the ensuing European-wide epidemic of *lieux de mémoire* by taking a look at the books of the German publisher C. H. Beck. In addition to a three-volume set of 'German' *lieux*,<sup>4</sup> we find voluminous collections on *lieux de mémoire* of Roman<sup>5</sup> and Greek antiquity,<sup>6</sup> Christianity<sup>7</sup>, the Middle Ages,<sup>8</sup> and even the German Democratic Republic.<sup>9</sup>

Since Nora's explicit goal is the reconstitution and reproduction of the nation, his whole enterprise shows a substantial degree of reticence towards the future. I suggest three reasons for this. First, the basic unit for memory cultures that are reflected in *lieux de mémoire* are nations. For Nora, more precisely, France. Reviews of his monumental collection in most cases neglect this fundamental political dimension: the framework 'nation' is seldom questioned, critiques are concerned mostly with whether the selection of memory sites is appropriate. However, it is almost a truism that we live in an era of globalization in which nations, originally conceptualized as identitarian and political units, are dissolving and giving way to networks dominated by finance capital, NGOs and other players.<sup>10</sup> The process of globalization may well go through convulsions and regressions,<sup>11</sup> but there is no sign yet that the disappearance of borders for global capital and attendant large-scale migrations, both forced and self-interested, are slowing down. Insofar the normative framing of the whole project of *lieux* is anachronistic. The Hölkeskamps'<sup>12</sup> application of the idea to ancient Greece is inadmissibly de-

3 Nietzsche 1969 [1874], 230–231; but see Hübner 1996, 42–47.

4 François and Schulze 2001.

5 Stein-Hölkeskamp and Hölkeskamp 2006.

6 Stein-Hölkeskamp and Hölkeskamp 2010.

7 Marksches and Wolf 2010.

8 Fried and Rader 2011.

9 Sabrow 2009.

10 Abélès 2010, 52.

11 Ong 1999.

12 Stein-Hölkeskamp and Hölkeskamp 2010.

historicizing: ancient Greece was never a ‘nation.’ However, as an assemblage of memory sites it is misremembered as a past mirror of a kind of 19th century European nation.<sup>13</sup>

Second, the success of the concept in historians’ circles has led to a proliferation of frameworks for *lieux de mémoire*. Many entities can serve as containers for places of memory, not just nations. To remain within the German-language academic industry, one example is Silesia,<sup>14</sup> another the German colonies,<sup>15</sup> a third simply ecology.<sup>16</sup> Such frameworks essentialize certain units by attributing to them a unified memory, and thus a collective consciousness. However, it is presumptuous of historians to set these units *a priori*. The decision to produce a collection with the title *lieux de mémoire of X* stabilizes and objectifies what one purports to explore.

This brings me to a third, somewhat more specific critique that refers to the selection of memory sites to be included in a collection. What are ‘German’ sites of memory? Only those within the boundaries of present-day Germany? That would be too easy, and François and Schulze correctly included a chapter on Auschwitz.<sup>17</sup> When we look into the chronological framework, things become blurrier. How far back should the conceptualization of a national or other (id-)entity reach in time? Historians, and even more archaeologists, tend to imagine memory spaces with a greater depth than do other people. This is an obvious effect of their profession. However, the result is a tableau of collective memory that focuses at least in the two compendia on France and Germany on the late 18th to early 20th century, creating a guide to and idealization of collective memories that can only be considered deeply conservative.

The conservatism of Nora’s approach is even more apparent in another dimension of the selectionist decisions that underlie these volumes. Conceptualizing a network of memory sites in a region such as Baden-Württemberg compels the editors of this volume<sup>18</sup> to condense in a set of geographical places and discursive *topoi* what is deemed to be ‘typical’ for a construct such as ‘Baden-Württemberg,’ which was first constituted in 1952. Today, one would certainly include Stuttgart’s train station, following the logic of two chapters of that book that deal with Stammheim (a massive prison complex built specifically for the Red Army Fraction) and Wyhl, the site of a successful fight against a nuclear power station. But what about the ‘Hessentaler Todesmarsch’ of 1945? Is this ‘death march’ of the last survivors of the concentration camp Hessental less relevant than a chapter on “entrepreneurial personalities”?<sup>19</sup> Another example from another collection of essays illustrates this well: if one proceeds normatively as the *lieux de mémoire* concept otherwise does, would not the migrant household in a ‘cité HLM’ be one of the most important *lieux*, a core component of French social identity since the 1960s?

13 Marchand 1996.

14 Czaplinski, Hahn, and Weger 2005.

15 Zimmerer 2013.

16 Uekötter 2014.

17 Reichel 2001.

18 Steinbach, Weber, and Wehling 2012.

19 Hentschel 2012.

These are the “abject places” vividly described by González-Ruibal,<sup>20</sup> places that remain silenced in the discourse unleashed by Nora. To take a less material *lieu*: where is *Le Deuxième Sexe*,<sup>21</sup> and where are women generally in the seven volumes of French memory? Except for Joan of Arc, the 5700 pages compiled by Nora are largely devoid of women. This could be justified by the fact that they simply do not play a role in collective perception. But if that is the *modus operandi* of memory spaces, then such a history aims to capture the *status quo* and to cement it as the basis for the formation of collective identities.

With this observation I come to the central problem of Nora’s work: a national or federal state, or any other framing in terms of a collective, denies that European societies have always been plural entities, that they had highly diverse forms of memory that do not and did not necessarily coincide with political, linguistic, cultural or geographical boundaries. Here one might think of the Europe-wide communist aspirations before 1917 or the Polish immigration to the Ruhr region in the 19th century. European nations have always been multi-ethnic, a trend reinforced in today’s age of globalization. If the historical study of *lieux de mémoire* follows the ideas of a collective memory à la Halbwachs and its changes over time, it runs counter to historical realities according to which geographical units, whether regions, nations or empires, are made up of many different collective memories. This reality is pushed aside by Nora’s obsession with the nation as the framework for *lieux de mémoire*. Ultimately, he promotes a ‘memory from above.’

These specific features of *lieux de mémoire* are well suited for a particular political effect: exclusions. This happens in two ways, by the framing and by the choice of ‘sites.’ The definition of the frame leads to the naturalization of specific geographies – usually spaces with political boundaries that turn into containers for a common memory. This memory is assumed to be identical for all those who inhabit such a territory. ‘Goethe,’ it is insinuated, has the same identificatory value for a peasant family with partly migrant roots as for an older bourgeois citizen of Goethe’s hometown Frankfurt; ‘Canossa’ is an anchor for a German restaurant owner with Lebanese Shi’ite background just as much as for a Catholic priest. The framework glosses over heterogeneity and interpellates people as unified on the level of synchronicity, all the while paradoxically assuming diachronic dynamics.

The selection of memory sites itself is not only subjective, but a praxis involving highly specific exclusion. Especially in the field of cultural history, we see that the memorable is what elites claim as their culture. The German experimental band ‘Einstürzende Neubauten’ would not make it to that status, nor of course such objectionable writings

20 González-Ruibal 2008.

21 Beauvoir 1949.

as the ‘Göttinger Mescalero’;<sup>22</sup> in the case of François and Schulze’s compilation of *lieux de mémoire* for Germany, not even the Communist Manifesto is included! Overall, Nora’s program is not research into existing memories of a collective, but the imposition of an official memory.

What, then, about those who ‘remember differently?’ The collection of German sites of memory, for example, positions Heinrich Heine (included) above Erich Mühsam and Bertolt Brecht (excluded); it has a chapter on Beethoven but none on Heino, weaves specific memory strands and consciously omits others. Such a procedure creates a new historicist orthodoxy. Strangely enough, contributing academics seem to have willingly subjected themselves to this program of canonization.<sup>23</sup> They must be of the view that there is no difference, or at best a negligible one, between this kind of project and any other edited volume. It is as if I were to provide a contribution to a book on ‘innovation’ believing that the entire collection’s content and structure would ultimately set the limits of what belongs to the field of innovation. History and its praxis mutate from a more or less incisive interference in a dynamic discourse into the presumption of setting standards as well as limits both for the validity of a collective (usually a nation) and for a scientific community.

Perhaps in Nora’s defense, however, we must acknowledge that his project has failed – paradoxically because of its success. The *lieux* were created as a specific national project, not as a concept that could be transposed onto a variety of other geographic and social scales (see above). The proliferation of collections on memory sites makes the catchword ubiquitous; in this way, the initially intended exclusivity dissolves. The multiplication of frames and scales from local to regional to international (‘Europe’) betrays the will for *Staatsraison* which is overly apparent in Nora’s introduction to his massive original work on French memory sites. Still, the problematic ideological background alluded to above is the basis for the creation of a diversity of framing-dependent memory orthodoxies.

In Nora’s rhetoric, the spatial metaphor ‘site’ clearly plays a more important role than the term ‘memory’ itself. The site functions as a means of memory and is the mooring for the diachronic narratives. The reason is easy to find. Stasis, a resting point, is directly related to a collective identity that is anchored in a site. Since time and diachrony produce change, ‘identity’ and staying the same despite changes requires endurance, even if some change in meaning occurs. This type of history lives from the need to give an account of sameness that dominates and minimizes change.

Thus, each memory site is a diachronic-discursive construct that is part of a much larger assemblage. Memory sites operate on two levels. As individual entities, chapters on the *Marseillaise* or Alesia give an account about their inclusion in narrations of the

22 Brückner 1977.

23 But see Saint-Gille 2007.

collectivity 'France' – therefore, they are deeply constructivist in nature. But as an assemblage of many sites they are imbued with essentialism. The goal is to generate an immutable collective identity through mutability in the detail. The interpellative character of individual places is the ideological frame for such books, and it remains unclear to what extent they subjectivize people as 'being called upon' before the production of such books, and to what extent the books are supposed to create the interpellative power in the first place.

## II.

A critique of the concept can easily start from the selectivity and exclusionary background of *lieux de mémoire*, as a way to unveil the hidden political agenda.<sup>24</sup> However, I will turn instead to a deeper level, drawing on Halbwachs' theory of collective memory. As a faithful student of Durkheim, Halbwachs assumed that a society as a whole can display its own modes of action, and therefore that it can also develop a memory of its own. This conviction is firmly anchored in the sociological ideas of the first half of the 20th century. In the fields of history and cultural anthropology, the nexus of memory and identity has turned into an almost unquestionable dogma. Although there are some critiques of Nora's project, Halbwachs' undergirding perspective remains largely unchallenged.

Halbwachs bundled the three notions of memory, identity and collectivity into a complex assemblage. At his time, his thought was unusual as he conceptualized memory – in contrast to Freud<sup>25</sup> – as outside of the individual, located instead in relationships. These relationships are not necessarily restricted to intersubjectivity but can also include relations between people and places, as Halbwachs<sup>26</sup> graphically describes in his book on pilgrimage sites of Palestine. His argument considers multifarious links between memories of different (mainly Christian) communities and one place. In many instances, his ideas foreshadow later writings on oral history.<sup>27</sup> While his perspective is more differentiated than Nora's, he also regards selectivity generally as a fundamental characteristic of collective memory. However, he compares different strategies of selectivity, rather than elaborating on a dominant one. Another important complement to memory sites is anthropologist Marc Augé's<sup>28</sup> concept of "non-places"; which he borrowed from Michel de Certeau.<sup>29</sup> He describes non-places as typical for 'supermodernity' which is permeated with them. They are places of transit where a human subject

24 Rouso 1987.

25 Niethammer 2000, 342–366.

26 Halbwachs 2008 [1941].

27 Hutton 1993, 87.

28 Augé 1995.

29 Augé 1995, 64–65.

is not addressed as a specific, singular person, but rather as a generic entity. An individual may have to identify her/himself in such sites by credit or shopping card, passport or other means, but still remains only a generic passenger, consumer, motorist or the like. Non-places interpellate subjects in a transitory state, in an experientially temporary subject position that is not part of an individual's self-understanding. "If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place."<sup>30</sup> The diagnosis of our time is that clearly defined identities, collective or other, are slowly dissolving. In a somewhat similar fashion, Laclau and Mouffe describe the dissolution of the subject and the transition to temporary subject positions as a hallmark of our present condition.<sup>31</sup>

Non-places are paradoxical if one considers their interpellative character:<sup>32</sup> they no longer interpellate a stable subject as *sub-iectum*, subordinate, as a believer, a housewife, a bourgeois, etc. in order to create fixed and hierarchized relations of subjugation. Rather, these interpellation spaces aim at isolation and gradual desubjectification: subjects are supposed to be so flexible as to abandon all permanent positioning, and to remain incapable of self-positioning. The 'non-place' ultimately corresponds to a 'non-subject' that neither has nor needs any personal or collective identity. Augé illustrates this tendency with examples of the TGV, airports and highways that cut across France. In his analysis, he clearly refers to Nora's initial diagnosis of the loss of *milieux de mémoire* in modernity. However, Augé uses the notion of "anthropological places"<sup>33</sup> for this long-lost world and not that of 'milieu'. For him, *lieux de mémoire* are explicitly the result of a fundamental split of "anthropological places" into sterile and clearly delimited memory sites on the one hand and non-places on the other. These two categories of place complement each other structurally. In reality, each memory site and each non-place likely retains a few traces of what once were 'anthropological spaces'.

Augé's reading reduces Nora's *lieux de mémoire* to artificial memory elements such as cultural heritage centers and museums, whereas Nora ascribes to these memory sites the last elements of embeddedness in real life. Augé's conceptual reduction can also be found in González-Ruibal's work and his transfer of non-places into archaeology.<sup>34</sup> The reason for this fundamental difference in understanding of collective memory and its sites may lie in the assessment of today's sensibilities. Augé clearly opposes a condition which he calls supermodernity but retains some optimism for a different future. Nora, however, works on a nostalgic project of return to the lost nation as a framework for a renewed foundation of a collective subjectivity.

30 Augé 1995, 63.

31 Laclau and Mouffe 1985.

32 On the notion of interpellation see Althusser 1971, 170–177; Charim 2002, 139–161.

33 Augé 1995, 41–43.

34 González-Ruibal 2008.

Reaching this point, a parallel in the ideas of the historian Nora and the ethnologist Augé seems to me more important: both insist on the categorical difference between a non-modern world and modernity. This repeats on a subliminal level the traditional argumentation of European intellectuals from colonial times. Whereas Nora characterizes the alleged twilight of a non-modern world with the contemptuous vocabulary of “slumber,”<sup>35</sup> Augé is far less prejudiced in his rhetorical boundary drawing. However, his criticism of the super-modern retains its sharp edge only because he denies any possibility for the construction of ‘non-places’ for non-modernities. Augé’s starting point is the idea of a coherent identity in all non-modern societies and cultures. This flies in the face of insights derived from research by cultural anthropologists, such as Strathern and Sökefeld.<sup>36</sup> They show that it is exactly those non-European cultures that have developed multifarious understandings of the self, for example as a ‘dividual’. These concepts of the self remain outside the standard narrative of social identities characteristic of Western concepts of subjectivity and identity.

### III.

In October 2010, Angela Merkel announced: “The approach to multiculturalism has failed, absolutely failed!”<sup>37</sup> Not long thereafter, David Cameron gave a speech in Munich in which he said, among other things, that:

under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives. [...] It’s that identity, that feeling of belonging in our countries, that I believe is the key to achieving true cohesion.<sup>38</sup>

Six days after Cameron’s speech, Nicolas Sarkozy opined that “le multiculturalisme est un échec.”<sup>39</sup> These quotes, stemming from a period of only a few months, uttered by the then most powerful politicians in Europe, have on the surface nothing to do with non-places and places of memory. They seem to run counter to the theoretical considerations of Augé, but can easily be set into the image that Nora is painting – if his constructivist stories came together successfully within an essentialist framework. Merkel et alii insist that we live in an era in which the nexus of culture, history and identity is not a purely

35 See above; the direct quote is “reveillées par le viol colonial de leur sommeil ethnologique”, Nora 1984, XVII.

36 Strathern 1988; Sökefeld 1999.

37 <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/integration-merkel-erklart-multikulti-fuer-gescheitert-a-723532.html> (visited on 15/02/2017).

38 <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference> (visited on 15/02/2017).

39 <http://www.lefigaro.fr/politique/2011/02/10/01002-20110210ARTFIG00709-sarkozy-nouvelles-mesures-pour-les-mineurs-delinquants.php> (visited on 15/02/2017).

academic topic. Powerful European politicians spread their opinions on culture, identities and their supposed need for cohesion as truths without further analytical support.

We as archaeologists are investigators of culture and are bound to critically evaluate discursive worlds of cultural exclusion such as those created by the aforementioned speeches. We ourselves have a tendency to do research on identities. It may seem at first sight as if exclusionary rhetoric from the centers of power in Europe politicize and polarize, whereas our archaeological research on past identities is harmless in nature. We only talk about the long-gone Celts, the Trichterbecher culture, the Greek colonies in Sicily, and others. But such scholarly statements are necessarily part of a larger political context that bridges the gap between academic and non-academic worlds because they support the idea that groups have fixed identities which are anchored in religious centers, towns, in remarkable natural features, buildings and other localities. Ultimately, therefore, archaeological statements reach far deeper into the ideological foundations of present societies than short-term political tirades. The peculiarity of archaeological discourse is that general assumptions such as a firm link between identity and locality, when they enter discursive constructions of a culture's deep past, give the impression that they are independent of the details of any individual case. This is also the point where talk about memory qua *lieux de mémoire* becomes politically virulent: the particular exclusionary historical constructivism drives European debates about foreigners and their alleged threatening nature. However, archaeological and other academic discourses ultimately lay the foundations that undergird the present deportation regime and the 'passive killing' of more than 10 000 of people in the Mediterranean since the turn of the millennium. Such discourse is a toxic mix of supposedly ahistorical principles of clearly identifiable features of group membership, and political performances and acts of national pride and discrimination against distressed and needy refugees.

A fundamental criticism of these kinds of identitarian considerations emerged with one of the most famous intellectuals in post-colonial circles, Homi Bhabha. Interestingly, spatial metaphors play a fundamental role in his writings, especially in his understanding of the notion of 'Third Space'. Such Third Spaces are neither identitarian *lieux* nor Augé's non-places. Rather, Bhabha claims that subjects, and for him particularly postcolonial subjects, actively occupy sites from where a discourse emanates, "spaces of enunciation".<sup>40</sup> Third Spaces are thus first and foremost positions from where to talk, and Bhabha is preoccupied with their insertion into relations of power.

He explains his views with reference to a central aspect of Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*,<sup>41</sup> the master-slave example. I give a very brief account of Hegel's complex argument since the postcolonial critique of Bhabha revolves around this core text. Hegel discusses the struggle for recognition between a master and a servant, elaborating on a

40 Bhabha 1994, 50, 55.

41 Hegel 1970 [1807], 113–137.



hierarchical relationship of recognition. Despite the antagonism that is fundamental to the relation, Hegel assumes a basic potential for mutual recognition. While the master is dependent on the recognition of the slave for the confirmation of his role, for the slave his own labor, the practical transformation of nature, is just as important. The master derives his self-consciousness from a purely intersubjective relation, while the slave's self-consciousness is less dependent on intersubjectivity. Labor and the object of labor are two externalities that take on a decisive role in a mediation and overcoming of the hierarchical antagonism. Labor is constitutive for the slave's independent self-consciousness. This text has received widespread attention, from Marx to Kojève, Butler, Žižek and Buck-Morss.<sup>42</sup>

One of those who engaged with Hegel's text was Frantz Fanon, the radical and foundational intellectual of post-colonialism. He compares the master-slave parable with the relationship between colonizers and colonized and claims that the colonial relation denies the colonized even the possibility of recognition and thus of the development of a self-consciousness. The colonial subject is forced to position her- or himself solely towards the colonial master, so that a sublation of the antagonism, the core of Hegel's idea of dialectics, is rendered completely impossible. The enslaved subject is not perceived by the colonialist as a subject and Other who is in principle on a similar ontological level. In turn, Fanon interprets Hegel's "work of the slave" as work on the death of the master-colonialist:

To work means to work for the death of the settler. This assumed responsibility for violence allows both strayed and outlawed members of the group to come back again and to find their place once more, to become integrated. Violence is thus seen as comparable to royal pardon. The colonized man [sic] finds his freedom in and through violence. This rule of conduct enlightens the agent because it indicates to him the means and the end.<sup>43</sup>

Where Hegel's dialectic identifies a relation of slave and work as a condition for the genesis of self-consciousness, Fanon claims violence as the basic constitutive element for the colonized subject.

Bhabha pacifies Fanon's radical interpretation of Hegel's recognition as a praxis of violence. He follows Fanon's critique of Hegel and notes the impossibility for the colonized to form a stable subjectivity. However, instead of searching for ways to reframe Hegelian dialectics, Bhabha asserts that the whole scheme is misconceived: the colonized ought to take up a position outside of the master – slave antagonism. He relies not so much on Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, but more heavily on his earlier work *Black*

42 Kojève 1947; Butler 1997; Žižek 2000; Buck-Morss 2009.

43 Fanon 1963, 84–85.

*Skin, White Masks* in which Fanon gives an account of the psychological consequences of the absurdity that the color of the skin is discursively imposed on black, colonized people as always already hateful, resulting in a desire to be different, a desire that can never be realized.<sup>44</sup> Bhabha proposes that the colonized should appropriate this requirement of self-contempt imposed by the colonial masters as an advantage: they should actively occupy a paradoxical 'Third Space' of displaced subjectivity, outside of the master – slave dichotomy, since recognition is an impossibility in the colonial sphere. Compared to dominant Aristotelian ways of thinking, but also to European dialectical thought, a Third Space marks an outside, to be distinguished from any intermediate position between two antagonistic poles. This is what Bhabha refers to when he characterizes the Third Space as 'hybridity', a standpoint from which the world appears in a completely different perspective, neither that of the slave nor master nor even the potential of taking one of these two positions.

Bhabha's 'enunciatory space' is this Third Space, which he encircles in his works in many different formulations but never clearly defines. This lack of clarity is not a conceptual problem. Rather, Bhabha interprets the desire for clear definitions and terminological boundaries as a means to produce power relations and fundamental scientific positions, a sphere in which he aims to act subversively. He wants to challenge the large- and small-scale categorizations that disciplinary traditions impose on us. For the logic of the Third Space, it would be inappropriate to continue with arguments that are based on dialectical reasoning, definitional dichotomies and associations, or clear-cut categorizations in the form of knowledge frameworks. Bhabha mounts a well-deserved attack on unreflected frames and structures of knowledge, particularly scientific ones.

To illustrate the issue, we can draw on the above-mentioned quotes by politicians on the supposed failure of multiculturalism. Diversity must always already be divided into a sharply delimited Self and Other to produce that kind of discourse. This chasm of Self and Other is also a precondition for the assumed integration of the foreign and a precondition for requesting from the Other that she/he assimilate, acculturate, disappear – at the same time claiming the impossibility of exactly that assimilation/acculturation. Western thought is strongly colonialist when it separates identity from alterity, and imposes on alterity and otherness a structural parallel to the identitarian. The result is a paradox. The Other as a subject is supposed to be split into a potential for sameness and an essentialized otherness, and these two elements are then inextricably linked. This condition is forced upon the colonized as well as those refugees from former colonies who seek protection for their lives in Europe. Political demands for integration aim at 'remaining different' in the process of 'becoming similar': they force a conflicted, decentered subjectivity on transnational migrants in the post-modern world.

44 Fanon 1963; Fanon 1967.

Bhabha attacks these very ideas, a set of precepts that are driven by the fear of a split subjectivity while simultaneously demanding it. He calls for post-colonial, fugitive and migrant people to accept the position of a decentered subjectivity in a productive manner. He discusses this process in a variety of ways, with metaphors from the practice of translation, biologicistic terms such as hybridity, and the idea of a “paradoxical community”, adapted from Julia Kristeva.<sup>45</sup> Fundamental is his insistence that the sphere of a Third Space does not allow a stable, unambiguous position. Rather, Bhabha as well as James Clifford productively mobilize the metaphors of the way, the route, aimless movement and diaspora. The colonized know no identitarian topoi or places of memory. For them, the whole world is a non-place. Nostalgic terms such as *Heimat* (‘homeland’) are no longer commensurable with the present world. Bhabha refers to Louis Althusser’s concept of interpellation when he elaborates enunciatory Third Spaces, positions that interpellate subjects as fundamentally ambiguous. As a literary critic, Bhabha draws on works such as Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* or contemporary artists such as Emily Jacir. Goethe and Hafez, Toni Morrison and Salman Rushdie are cited again and again. This has led to the accusation that Third Space is theorizing without practical relevance for the destitute who live in the abject conditions of uprootedness. Is Third Space a purely metaphorical discursive concept?

To ask for operationalization of a concept such as Third Space smacks of the addiction of our present age to turn everything into an entity that can point beyond itself. Can an idea such as that of Third Space, formulated out of reflections on a position that is irreducibly outside, ever be made ‘useful’ without destroying it? In the present context, I advocate a moderate functionalization. The reason is Nora’s and Augé’s conviction that pre- and non-modern cultures are characterized by a close intertwining of place, identity and memory. The advent of capitalism and its development up to post-modernity, accompanied by the emergence of a critical historical discourse, are the causes for the dissolution of this dispositive. I will try to show with a case study that this categorical difference of the non-modern cannot and should not be upheld; rather, in pre-modern times, there were also non-places that interpellated people into/as decentered subjects. To investigate this possibility, we can only rarely resort to written records of pre-modern times, for textual documents tend to reduce the ambiguity of the quotidian world through a simplifying reductionism. Archaeological evidence is more suitable for this task – even if academic archaeology has developed an almost instinctive drive to classify and categorize. Third Spaces can be identified in four archaeological spheres.

First, we often deal with borderline phenomena outside of established categories, both in the concrete sense of physical space as well as in metaphorical-discursive fields. For example, liminality is a well-known phenomenon in archaeology.<sup>46</sup> Liminal spaces

45 Bhabha 1994, 139–170.

46 See Schreiber 2013, 59–61.

remove subjects from an orderly space-time grid. They are architecturally and ideologically designed to produce a de-subjectivizing effect. The difference to Third Space as conceptualized by Bhabha is that liminal regions are temporary phenomena.

Secondly, the 'out-of-betweenness' of Third Space is certainly applicable to archaeological things and the categories imposed on them. One might even think that Bhabha's theory accords well with archaeological tendencies since he insists on "splitting". But he uses this word solely for the internal split of subjectivity, not for cladistic routines in an academic field. Since we sometimes create absurdly detailed typologies that are far removed from any past daily life, we would be well advised to follow Bhabha's thoughts on the hybrid, on ambiguity as a constitutive element of reality – rather than surrender to the typical drive for clear-cut classes and definitions. In Bhabha's terminology, Third Spaces are simply ambivalent. A recognition of this possibility would be the first step toward reflecting on past subjectivities that might have been connected with ambiguities of the material world.

Furthermore, Third Space is not primarily a physical space, but a metaphorical one of translation and dislocation. This needs to be taken into account for one of the basic elements of archaeology, the temporal dimension. The contradictions between the *then* and the *now* would not be so relevant, nor would the sheer temporal difference between the present and a past, but rather temporalities that are (sometimes radically) different from linear time, each one a 'chrono-logic' that operates with a specific relation of experiences and expectations.

Bhabha's concept of a Third Space develops its full complexity and attraction if we follow his discussions on subjectivation through interpellation. Specific elements of material culture that display the characteristics of a Third Space, that therefore refuse to be easily inserted into our classificatory schemes and dichotomous thinking, can be connected with past hybrid subjectivities.

#### IV.

The northernmost edge of the Jordanian capital Amman borders on a field of dolmens called Maqam Issa (*Tomb of Jesus*; Fig. 1. 2).<sup>47</sup> The area of southern Syria, Jordan, and the Golan heights includes large numbers of such dolmens.<sup>48</sup> They have been studied archaeologically for about 80 years, starting with Moshe Stekelis' ground-breaking work.<sup>49</sup> Attempts at systematizing have had varied results. In spite of continued research efforts,

47 The site is located at 32° 5' 31,5" N, 35° 54' 10,1" E. 49 Stekelis 1935.

48 Steimer and Braemer 1999; Scheltema 2008.

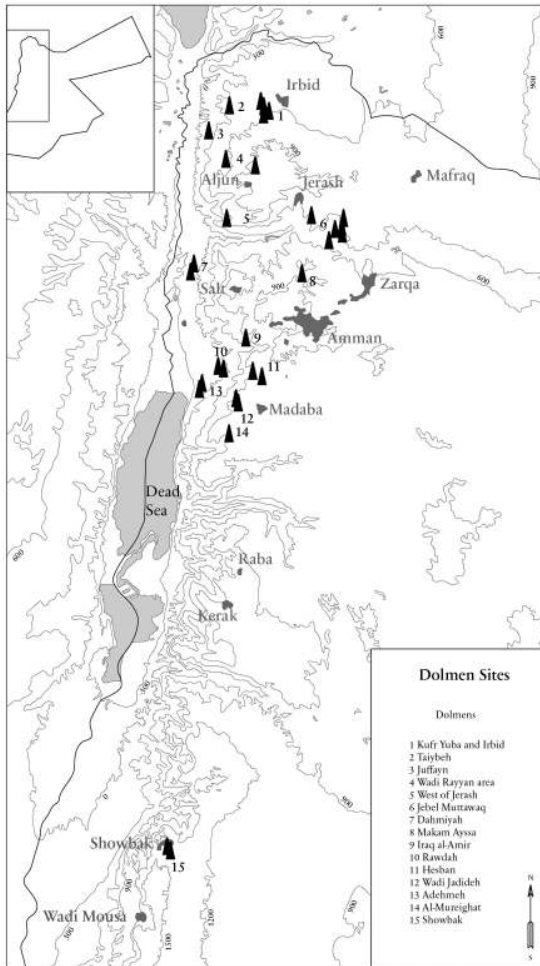


Fig. 1 Situation of the dolmen field of Maqam Issa north of the Jordanian capital Amman.

these megaliths still remain an enigmatic archaeological phenomenon because archaeologists have been unable to agree on a coherent set of variables to characterize them. Discussions of recent field research return so often to the holy trinity of space, time and function of these monuments that the affirmation of secure knowledge is a sign of the opposite.<sup>50</sup> The extant literature rarely includes the (postprocessual) question of the dolmens' meanings for their past and present users. I am of the opinion that these dolmen

<sup>50</sup> For example Polcaro et al. 2014, 2–3; Steimer and Braemer 1999, 176.



Fig. 2 An overview of the western part of the dolmen field of Maqam Issa, as seen from the south.

fields resist temporal and other determinations not only because of insufficient research. Rather, this vagueness will remain, regardless of how much money is spent on surveys and excavations to enlighten us about their original contexts. The reason for this apparent problem is that they are ancient non-places. These megaliths did not mark spaces of identity, as I will try to show by commenting on their chronology, spatial distribution and supposed function(s).

Jordanian dolmens can only rarely be clearly dated. In very few instances, objects are found in their surroundings, underneath or within these megaliths, and if there are, they usually consist of small sherds or fragments of bone that are unsuitable for clear dating. Where one finds relatively good preservation, ceramics can be typologically determined to belong to a period that reaches from the late fourth to the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE.<sup>51</sup> But if one takes seriously finds around the dolmens from the Iron Age and more recent periods, the continued use of dolmens in the Roman or

<sup>51</sup> Steimer 2004–2005, 38–41.

Byzantine period, in the Islamic Middle Ages up to the 19th century cannot be ruled out. Individual references show that these structures have been used in many epochs.<sup>52</sup>

Chronologically, dolmens are situated in a Third Space, namely outside of a supposedly uniform time of origin and the time of the researcher, perceived as two end points in a linear chronological scheme. They elude any clear chronological determination and thus the interpretation of belonging to a single social, religious or political context that would lend itself to one of the usual interpretations: the tombs of a nomadic group in early urban societies, the political center of a tribe in a specific period, etc. Cornelius Holtorf has drawn attention to a similar situation for European dolmens.<sup>53</sup> How then to proceed with further research? In my view, an appropriate approach would start from the premise that each of these buildings has its own biography, so that a field of dolmens is an assemblage of multitemporalities, a locality that does not lend itself to the creation of collective identities. Dolmens are places of transitory occupation, as was observed for two dolmens in Maqam Issa in 2003, and in 2009. One was used as a shed for agricultural tools, including a long garden hose (Fig. 3). Another dolmen showed many signs of temporary habitation, probably by a shepherd (Fig. 4). In front of the entrance to this box-like megalith, we found a cup, and the entrance itself had been protected from rainwater by a small earthen dam. Neither was built specifically for these uses.

For documentation of the spatial occurrence of megaliths, GIS-based maps seem to be the best means. It is clear that the Jordanian dolmens are often found in accumulations, so-called dolmen fields. However, those fields are not clearly delimited; rather, they show signs of merging into each other, resulting in difficulties of description when geographical framing and mapping are attempted.<sup>54</sup> Jordanian fields of megaliths are landscapes without definite boundaries, without an *inside* and *outside*, without the possibility to mark inclusion and exclusion.

On the campus of Jordan University in Amman, a single dolmen was erected, torn out of its original surroundings at Damiyah (see Fig. 1) and transported to a place where it is suddenly charged with the prominence of a *lieu de mémoire* that was lacking before. A similar attempt is currently being undertaken at Ludwig Albrechts University, Kiel, in northern Germany.<sup>55</sup> Dislocation and re-embedding in a university context, and thus professional production of memory discourses, implies a stable, primordial meaning that can be transported with the material. However, what if the monuments lack exactly this imagined original meaning?

52 For example Zingboym 2009; Savage 2010, 40.

53 Holtorf n.d. <https://tspacelibrary.utoronto.ca/citd/holtorf/1.1.html> (visited on 22/03/2017).

54 See Scheltema 2008, 7 Map; Steimer and Braemer 1999, fig. 1.

55 Under the title "Megalithsite CAU", several organizations are setting up the monument on 14/05/2015: <http://www.cau350.uni-kiel.de/termine/events/show/megalith-site-cau/> (visited on 22/03/2017).



Fig. 3 Maqam Issa. Dolmen in a field of olive trees, used as a shed for tools.

The topographic situation of most dolmen fields deserves attention as well. In search of meaning and significance of archaeological places, we are often inclined to tap into strategic-economic or political ‘factors.’ For this purpose trade routes, boundaries between ecotopes, waterways or other features are invoked and analyzed with GIS and other complex procedures. But what happens when these traditional archaeo-logics fail because they simply ask the wrong questions? What if there are no specifiable utilitarian reasons for the location of monuments, and there never were? I suspect that the Jordanian dolmens are a good example of anti-utilitarian and therefore unexplainable locations. They occur in uncharacteristic spaces in topographically variable areas: not on ridges, nor in valleys, not aligned, but rather strewn along slopes. Maqam Issa is a good case in point. One result is that they are in peripheral landscapes where neither agriculture nor major building activities occurred until very recently.

Fields of megaliths produce a secondary non-place, which has been rarely studied in Jordan: the terrain between these monuments. The regularly observed lack of clearly





Fig. 4 Dolmen at Maqam Issa, used as an overnight place, likely by a shepherd; containing remains of food, pieces of wood and a plastic bottle.

identifiable and datable finds has led to intensified search for objects that are directly associated with dolmens, in the hopes of finding traces of temporal and functional relevance.<sup>56</sup> The wider surroundings remain completely neglected. This research strategy leads to a Third Space of second degree. If one were to design a research strategy for those in-between spaces, only a microarchaeological approach could be successful, since it is highly unlikely that substantial material remains are preserved in a landscape left open since hundreds if not thousands of years.

In a broader sense, fields of megaliths constitute a complex spatial Other. At present, for example, the groups called Maqam Issa and al-Rawda are located in areas that are encroached upon by fast urban expansion of the Jordanian capital, Amman. Following a massive influx of migrants, especially refugees, in the aftermath of the Western occupation of Iraq in 2003, and after 2010 as an outcome of the Syrian civil war, rich city dwellers have resorted to the construction of new villas on surrounding ridges, in the case of ar-Rawda also of a whole settlement that covers the southern part of the former dolmen field. Infrastructure, including asphalted roads but also trails cleared by bulldozers for the ubiquitous land cruisers, have destroyed large numbers of dolmens. One such road crosses the Maqam Issa field and goes straight up the hill (Fig. 2).

Elderly men from the village at the foot of the slope of Maqam Issa to whom we spoke in 2003 still called the dolmens *beit al ghoul*, houses of evil spirits. The various discourses produce a clash between hyper-modern rational secularism of the villa owners and traditional ideas of the villagers. While one side keeps a respectful and safe distance

56 Yassine 1985; Polcaro et al. 2014.

from the stone monuments, the other sets out to brutally destroy them with heavy machinery. But even here there are third positions that I mentioned above, outside of the divide between respect and lack thereof: the use of dolmens as protectors against inclement weather, as an overnight lodging, or as a playground, a great variety of uses that remain to be explored in detail. The relationship of today's inhabitants of the area around Maqam Issa to these megaliths is therefore not reducible to a simple antagonism between the positions of *traditional* and *modern*. In addition, we have urgently to ask what kind of histories present-day uses as playground, shed and shelter have; and what kinds of material traces are associated with these monument histories.

Dolmens are not only Third Spaces today, they likely had the same aspect in antiquity. Despite their size, they are hidden in the surrounding landscape of huge natural rocks and cliffs. Attempts at 'grasping' their function and meaning are part of the archaeological labor of typologizing.<sup>57</sup> Again, among these and other attempts, none can be considered definitive, because they are all based on the Weberian concept of the ideal type(s), which reduces real multiplicity and variability to a few schematic entities at the detriment of many 'deviant cases.' Structuring and listing of types have been attempted many times, but their usefulness as convincing interpretations remains to be demonstrated. In this particular case, I contend that the ordering episteme of the archaeological discipline turns into science for science's sake.

One research goal of investigating the megaliths is to ascertain their function. According to the current interpretations of most experts, these monuments were tombs,<sup>58</sup> inscriptions of meanings into a landscape that served as identity markers,<sup>59</sup> or both.<sup>60</sup> Terminologies such as *nécropole* leave no space for any other function, while questions about specificities of burial rituals remain.<sup>61</sup>

If one follows the dominant opinion of a primary function of dolmens as tombs, the next concern is, who was buried there? Hierarchies of more or less rich dolmen tombs could not so far be established, since the number of dolmens with human remains is too small and the finds are not specific enough. Dolmen fields that are directly associated with settlements could only be detected in a few cases.<sup>62</sup> It is therefore often assumed that these megaliths were monuments of nomadic groups that supplied herd animals to an urban or rural sedentary population.<sup>63</sup> Attempts have been made to interpret the complexity of types of dolmens as an indicator of sociopolitical differentiation within mobile groups. These have not met general acceptance,<sup>64</sup> although recent

57 Zohar 1992; Kafafi and Scheltema 2005.

58 For example Prag 1995.

59 Lyonnet 2004; in general see Tilley 1994; Tilley 2004.

60 Steimer and Braemer 1999.

61 Steimer and Braemer 1999, 184–185.

62 Steimer-Herbet 2006; Polcaro et al. 2014.

63 For example Zohar 1992; Prag 1995.

64 Steimer and Braemer 1999, 187.

finds show some differentiation between individuals in a megalithic tomb from Jebel al Mutawwaq.<sup>65</sup>

However, the function ‘tomb’ has been identified for a comparatively small number of dolmens. All other dolmens without such functional indications have simply been declared to have been looted. While this is certainly the case for some of them, so that an unknown proportion of these structures can be said to have been tombs, the assumption of monofunctionality seems far-fetched.<sup>66</sup>

Could it not be a fallacy to separate the production of dolmens from their function? Instrumentalist modern thinking may reject the idea that the act of erecting a large stone structure is both purpose and objective. However, the aforementioned megalith construction at Kiel university is certainly a case in point. Others have made similar arguments for other kinds of monumental structures.<sup>67</sup> Despite a materiality whose main characteristic seems to be duration, the possibility should be entertained that the collective carrying out of a task was of greater import than its result. Thus, the presumed primary function of a tomb could have been a secondary effect.

The results of research on dating, regional contexts and functions of Jordanian megaliths can be synthesized in one word: enigmatic. In my view, an emerging impression of ‘clarification’ in the last decennia of academic labor is less due to accumulating knowledge than to a traditional procedure of constructing knowledge through pairs of oppositions and associations. Dolmens often are supposed to fit *somewhere* into a town-hinterland scheme, into the field of conflicts between sedentary and mobile groups, into rites of passage from life to death and so on. I would not deny that they may partly have had these purposes, but most of the time they likely held ambiguous positions in relation to passersby, just as much as the passersby related varyingly to the enduring materiality of the monumental stones.

How would it be if dolmens are an instance of past Third Spaces, owing their existence to activities that are not graspable in known discursive systems of domination and subalternity, city and countryside, the monumental and everyday life, agriculture and nomadism, life and death, past and present, periphery and center? Can they be read as an Outside, as non-places that would ultimately connect with hybridity and unstable subjectivities, with ‘dividuals’ external to any identitarian conceptualizations? Might they be grounds of interpellation that inscribe themselves into human beings as an anti-remembrance, where de-subjectivizing powers emanate from the stone rather than holding a potential for fixed meanings and historicization?

If we answer in the negative, dolmens can be regarded as *lieux de mémoire*, past and present. Then, they lead to the familiar set of questions mentioned above: when were

65 Polcaro et al. 2014, 11–12.

66 See also Scheltema 2008, 49 and especially Al-Shorman 2010.

67 Johnson 1987; Pauketat 2000; Joyce 2004; Bernbeck 2013.

the megaliths at Maqam Issa built? By whom, and for how long were they in use? We might want to know whether we can isolate different chronological layers of dolmens by extricating period-specific types from an initially chaotic multiplicity. The growth of a dolmen field through time could perhaps be determined with ever more precise microarchaeological methods. We could search for objects that are perhaps associated with some of these monuments in order to elicit links to nearby settlements. Our archaeological practice would consist of describing, delimiting, categorizing, defining, comparing. With a lot of methodological skill, but especially with some luck in the selection of soundings, we might even succeed in ascribing to the former builders and users a cultural identity, whether as Early Bronze I temporary urban settlers<sup>68</sup> or as nomads of a collapsed urban society in the Early Bronze IV period.<sup>69</sup> It is easy to imagine that we would find some of the items and contexts cursorily imagined here, because we have been educated to believe firmly in the potential of ordering all archaeological materials, and because we can construe statistical regularities out of available, if very small samples.

However, if we start from the possibility that Jordanian megaliths constitute an ancient set of non-places, we cannot follow such an approach. Instead of imposing order onto materials, we would aim to demonstrate their ambivalence. Is this possible? Starting with the familiar procedures of fallibilism or other rule-based logics, the endeavor would fail. Not de-scription, but circum-scription would be an appropriate goal. Not a praxis of delimiting, but of *entgrenzen* and de-territorialization; not of defining, but of de-concretization and ambiguation. The detection of ambiguities in archaeologically preserved pasts has become an extremely difficult task because this approach is diametrically opposed to the all-pervasive cladistic, analytical and classificatory ideology of the discipline. Our eternal return to questions of identity is due not just to a specific interest driven by today's political realities, but also by a methodological cage that does not even allow us to explore materialities that de-subjectivize. One day, archaeology will follow cultural anthropology and accept narratives that emphasize the diffuse, fuzzy and blurry elements of past multitudinous realities. Reductionism, the royal road to archaeological accounts, awaits its complementary Other.

68 Prag 1995; Lyonnet 2004.

69 Zohar 1992.

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Alfredo González-Ruibal

## Excavating Memory, Burying History. Lessons from the Spanish Civil War

### Summary

This chapter deals with a case in which work that aimed at rekindling a critical memory of a conflictual past ends up producing a certain form of oblivion instead. The work in question is the archaeological research we conducted at two battlefields of the Spanish Civil War. During our work, we found the traumatic history of the war neutralized through memory practices sponsored, in one case, by government institutions and in another by grassroots associations. In both cases, the involuntary memories materialized in things insisted in disrupting the comfortable narrative that people tried to impose on them. I will argue that archaeologists should work to channel this material memory so as to construct critical accounts of the past that are helpful to foster a more reflexive citizenry.

Keywords: Archaeology of modern conflict; traumatic heritage; collective memory; memory practices; Spanish Civil War.

Dieser Beitrag handelt von einem Fall, in dem die Absicht, eine kritische Erinnerung an einen historischen Konflikt wiederzubeleben, eine bestimmte Form des Vergessens bewirkt hat. Bei dem besagten Fall handelt es sich um unsere archäologische Untersuchung auf zwei Schlachtfeldern des Spanischen Bürgerkriegs. Während der Arbeit wurde die traumatische Kriegsgeschichte durch Erinnerungspraktiken von Regierungsinstitutionen, in einem anderen Fall durch nichtstaatliche Organisationen neutralisiert. Spontane Erinnerungen, die sich an Objekten festmachten, störten jedoch in beiden Fällen dieses befriedende Narrativ. Ich erläutere hier, wie ArchäologInnen materielle Erinnerung für die Erstellung kritischer Erzählungen der Vergangenheit nutzen können, um eine stärkere Reflexion in der Zivilgesellschaft zu fördern.

Keywords: Archäologie rezenter Konflikte; traumatische Erinnerungen; kollektives Gedächtnis; Erinnerungskultur; Spanischer Bürgerkrieg.

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## I Introduction

In this article, I would like to describe a situation in which work aimed at rekindling a critical memory ends up producing a certain form of oblivion instead. By ‘critical memory’ I refer to what in Spain has been called ‘historical memory,’ that is, an endeavour to retrieve and make public repressed memories of subaltern groups (in the case of the Spanish Civil War, it usually refers to the Republicans that were assassinated or punished during and after the conflict) with the aim of constructing a political system based on radical democratic values, as opposed to right-wing fundamentalist democratic principles.<sup>1</sup> I will work here with the distinction famously established by Pierre Nora between history and memory.<sup>2</sup> Nora links memory,<sup>3</sup> which is “in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revive”, to premodern forms of collective knowledge of the past, as those of peasant cultures, and particularly to subaltern groups, such as the colonized and ethnic minorities, who “until now have possessed reserves of memory but little or no historical capital.”<sup>4</sup> According to the historian, “the ‘acceleration of history’ [...] confronts us with the brutal realization of the difference between real memory – social and unviolated, exemplified in but also retained as the secret of so-called primitive or archaic societies – and history, which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies, propelled by change, organize the past.”<sup>5</sup> History, as opposed to memory, is a prosaic, intellectual and secular production of knowledge that, released from the sacred, calls for analysis and criticism.<sup>6</sup> Nora intended to establish a new relation between history and memory, one in which history is again reinscribed into the consciousness of people, into their memories.<sup>7</sup> This implied a move away from history’s perpetual suspicion of memory and its true mission: “to suppress and destroy it”.

At the same time as Nora was trying to make history into a new form of memory, the postcolonial critique was casting doubts on history as an academic discipline. History was identified with the colonizers, slave masters or simply powerful, whereas collective memory was associated with the historical consciousness of indigenous peoples and the subaltern in general (working classes, women, slaves). This perspective has exercised a great influence in archaeology during the last decade and many practitioners have developed a genuine interest in the memories of marginalized groups.<sup>8</sup> This process of decolonization of historical-archaeological narratives has gone hand in hand with a greater

1 On democratic fundamentalist see Cebrián 2011.

2 Nora 1989.

3 Nora 1989, 8.

4 Nora 1989, 7.

5 Nora 1989, 8.

6 Nora 1989, 9.

7 Assmann 2011, 134.

8 For example Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2006; Schmidt 2010; Schmidt and Karega-Munene 2010, 220–222.

engagement with contemporary society, which is manifested in the increasing relevance of both public and community archaeology and heritage management,<sup>9</sup> especially what we could call popular or non-elitist forms of heritage. In all cases, what is at stake is the collaborative production of knowledge, guided by social concerns and not just by obscure scientific agendas that are imposed upon society by experts. The other aim is to deconstruct hegemonic history by paying attention to other voices and memories. Thus, Yannis Hamilakis reveals in his archaeological-ethnographic work the alternative memories attached to classical remains in Greece, such as those of the Ottomans and the Greek peasants, which have been cleansed away by generations of historians and archaeologists.<sup>10</sup> In turn, Paul Shackel has shown how African-Americans have been trying to redress the racist image of the American Civil War portrayed in official monuments, memorials and museums, through alternative memory practices.<sup>11</sup>

It is out of the question that this has been a crucial and praiseworthy move in archaeology. However, there seems to have been a tendency to eschew the most problematic forms of collective expressions of memory. Memory and non-hegemonic heritage are not necessarily progressive or emancipatory; neither is history or archaeology always a tool of symbolic oppression or of destruction of lively memory traditions (although it has often been). The fact is that there exist reactionary memories, even if they are popular, spontaneous and collective (think of the Neo-Nazis), and there are radical, critical histories and archaeologies, albeit being written in the ivory tower of university departments: consider Subaltern Studies,<sup>12</sup> the work of E. P. Thompson<sup>13</sup> or the various Marxist archaeologies.<sup>14</sup>

In the cases that I will describe here the same neutralization of a painful, conflictual history is achieved by memory practices sponsored, in one case, by government institutions and in the other by grassroots associations. In both cases, the involuntary memories<sup>15</sup> materialized in things insist in disrupting the sanitized narrative that people try to impose on them. I will argue that archaeologists should work to channel this material memory so as to construct critical accounts of the past.

The sites to which I will refer are battlefields of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). My colleagues and I have been studying a diversity of scenarios from the war and postwar period in order to produce a material narrative of the conflict.<sup>16</sup> In this article, I will present two of these scenarios: the Offensive of the Alto Tajuña River and the Battle of the Ebro. The remains that we excavated are from 1938, a decisive year that saw the beginning of the Republican defeat at the hands of General Franco's armies.

9 Plantzos 2012.

10 Hamilakis 2011.

11 Shackel 2001.

12 Guha and Spivak 1989.

13 Thompson 1964.

14 McGuire 2008.

15 Olivier 2008; Olsen 2010, 117–119, 169–170.

16 González-Ruibal 2012.

## 2 Forgetting the forgotten battle

The province of Guadalajara lies to the northeast of Madrid. It is close to the capital (75 km) and is crossed by one of Spain's main roads, the one that communicates Barcelona and Madrid. For this reason, it played an important role during the early phase of the Civil War, when Franco tried to capture Madrid. After failing several times in the outskirts of the capital (November–December 1936) and in the Jarama valley (February 1937), another attempt was made by the Nationalists at Guadalajara in March 1937. The brunt of the attack was borne by the Italian volunteer corps sent by Benito Mussolini to help Franco. The Republican troops, however, managed to stop the advance with the help of the International Brigades and prevented once again the capture of Madrid by the rebels, which would remain in loyalist hands until the end of the war. After the front stabilized in 1937 there was little fighting in the area for the rest of the conflict, with one exception: the Offensive of the Alto Tajuña River. The battle took place between 30. March 1938 and 16. April. The Republicans were at that time engaged in heavy fighting in Aragon and faring badly. The attack in the Alto Tajuña basin intended to relieve pressure in Aragon by distracting Nationalist troops from the main front. Despite the initial thrust, the offensive soon stalled, a Nationalist counteroffensive was launched, and by mid-April the front was stabilized again with little territorial (and no strategic) gains for the Republic. Perhaps for this reason and for the fact that it was seen as a minor encounter in the larger and decisive Aragon campaign, the battle was utterly forgotten and it does not appear in any major synthesis of the Spanish Civil War.<sup>17</sup> Despite the hundreds of thousands of troops involved, the mobilization of artillery, tanks and airplanes by both sides and circa 8000 casualties, the confrontation slipped away from collective memory and academic history alike.

At least until 2010. This year, under the request of a local historical association based in the tiny village of Abánades (Asociación de Amigos de los Espacios Históricos de Abánades), we started an archaeological project to recover the material traces of the battle.<sup>18</sup> Between 2010 and 2012 we conducted three field seasons in which we excavated Republican and Nationalist positions, first lines and second lines, and sites from before and after the battle. After the end of the last season we were in a position to offer a narrative of life and death in this front from an archaeological perspective. Some of the most interesting evidence came from the scenarios where the Offensive of the Alto Tajuña took place. We were able to document in detail here the close quarters combats in which hundreds of soldiers from both sides died in the first week of the battle.

Particularly dramatic was the situation revealed in one of the scenarios, the so-called Enebrá Socarrá. Here we excavated a sheep pen where a group of Nationalist soldiers

17 For example Thomas 2001; Beevor 2006.

18 González-Ruibal 2011; González-Ruibal 2012.



Fig. 1 A medal of Pope Pius XI, in all likelihood belonging to a Nationalist soldier, and a red star of the uniform of the Popular Army of the Republic. They appeared only a few centimeters apart (Abánades, Guadalajara).

sheltered for a while and resisted the Republican advance. We found abundant evidence of the combat, including exploded artillery and tank shells, mortar rounds and grenade fragments, pistol and rifle shell casings and a large amount of incoming bullets. We retrieved also things more intimately related to the soldiers that were involved in the fight, such as religious medals (one of Pope Pius XI and another of the Christ of Limpías, a place in northern Spain), a tag showing membership to the Spanish Fascist Party (Falange Española), a cuff link, military insignia (including a red star of the Republican Army), coins, a toothbrush ... (Fig. 1).

The most shocking finds were the remains of several Nationalist soldiers who were killed in the battle, some of them in gruesome ways. They were expediently buried after the fray by the Republicans who captured the position. One of the best preserved bodies belongs to a very young man, around 20 years old or less, with ammunition pouches full of clips for his German Mauser rifle, some coins in his pocket and a lighter. He was hit by an artillery shell: a large fragment was found stuck in his neck and smaller pieces elsewhere in his body. Despite the seriousness of the wounds, they were not immediately lethal: we found evidence of a coup de grace. In another pit we recovered several bones, including part of a leg and foot with the boot still put, probably the remains of another soldier hit by artillery fire (Fig. 2).

The finding of human remains was received with alarm by some people, including the major of Abánades, who considered that publicly showing the bones (as we did in our blog)<sup>19</sup> could reopen old wounds and be traumatizing for some. This, however, created no problem among the elderly neighbours of Abánades, with whom we talked and who even encouraged us to find the remains of the war dead and provided valuable information to retrieve the bodies. For them, the corpses scattered through the fields after the war had been a common picture. It is important to note that they were not

19 <http://guerraenlauniversidad.blogspot.com.es/2012/09/recuperando-vidas.html> (visited on 22/03/2017).



Fig. 2 Part of a leg of a Nationalist soldier hit by artillery fire near Abánades.

related to the killed, who came from all parts of Spain. There was however the impression among people from the local association that the appearance of human remains could ‘politicize’ the project, which was regarded as ‘apolitical’ until then. This is an interesting issue. On the one hand, there is the idea that excavating corpses immediately associates a project with the search for the Republicans assassinated during and after the war, which is carried out within a political framework.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, people grant bones an extraordinary agency: bones can derail history, at least history of the pacified kind. This is surprising since it is not at all strange that bodies of soldiers appear in a battlefield. The reason people feel alarmed, apart from the ‘contamination’ from the historical memory campaign, is that, after all, dismembered, wounded bodies remind us in an unambiguous way how the war was (something quite removed from epic military stories), but, more than that, it shows that the war simply *was*. It is not the obscenity of

<sup>20</sup> Ferrándiz 2009.



Fig. 3 Displays in the Museum of Abánades.

violence which is in itself important, but rather the realization of the fact that *this* happened here<sup>21</sup> – this unspeakable violence that we tend to associate with remote places, peoples and eras. The dead from recent conflict convey an uncanny impression of a warning or a threat. For some reason, it is regarded as indisputable evidence, more than trenches, artillery fragments or cartridges. In any case, despite initial misunderstandings with the major, the situation in Abánades was clarified and no obstacles were created to our research by the authorities or other instances – quite the opposite. We managed to make clear that, notwithstanding our political sympathies, we were first of all scientists that employed a scientific method to recover material evidence of the war – tin cans, bullets, trenches or human bones – and that we did that with the utmost respect for the dead.

It is important to note that our archaeological research was just one form of memory work among others that were developing simultaneously. The interviews conducted by the historical association of Abánades with the elderly people of the village have been crucial in complementing the archaeological record with the oral memory of the local population, and, more importantly, in involving the neighbors in the project. Besides, members of the association have established a small, but very well-organized museum with objects related to the war and postwar period (Fig. 3).

This is an important initiative because it keeps the memory of the war active and its material traces visible when excavations are not being carried out. At the same time, the museum works as a space of collective remembrance for the people of Abánades: they donate artifacts and documents that they have kept in their attics as well as stories. Also, the association has managed to involve different actors in the project, such as metal detectorists, filmmakers, and prison inmates from a rehabilitation program. In turn, we

21 Sontag 2003, 88.

added military re-enactors, cultural anthropologists and even a group of Californian visitors from a university program abroad. Regarding re-enactors, we have been working with them since our first excavation of a Civil War site in Madrid in 2008. The reason to cooperate is twofold: on the one hand, they have an in-depth knowledge of the material culture of the war, which is very useful during our work, in order to identify and interpret artifacts. On the other hand, they are concerned with the public dissemination of civil war history and their performances are actually very appealing to non-specialists and complement well the outreach activities of archaeologists. Thus, the sites of Abánades became the anchor of a true memory network through which different groups and individuals have established relations which have been carried to different levels according to the interests of those involved, as we will see.

How is the war remembered in this multivocal scenario? The museum itself has little information on the history of the war, but this is understandable, given the small space available and the absence of texts – beyond identification labels. It is also probably too much to ask for a complete and nuanced narrative in a local war museum. As it happens with other similar places in Spain, the exhibit is artefact-centred and all emphasis is put on the military events and daily life, with no mention to the political context or the political affiliations of the soldiers. As the collection grows and diversifies, however, it is inevitably faced with the political consequences of the war. This is in part due to the fact that some of the objects and documents that have been donated lately have to do with the postwar period, such as a ‘camisa azul’ (the uniform of the Spanish fascist party, *Falange*) or a bunch of forms to enlist in the Blue Division to fight with the Nazis in the Eastern Front. Unlike bullets and tin cans, these artefacts are less politically innocent. They speak bluntly of a fascist dictatorship. An attempt to cope with the aftermath of the war is a poster that was placed in the museum in 2012.

It reproduces an original letter by a former Republican soldier who fought in the area and was sent to a concentration camp after the war. The veteran, a Catalan musician, has to beg their former enemies to return him his saxophone so that he can eke out a living. The letter starts and ends with the compulsory hails to General Franco. Without any need of interpretation, the text is already a denunciation of the Francoist regime. Within the local association there are those who take a more political (left-wing) stance (such as the designer of the aforementioned poster), and others, more conservative, that prefer to bypass the political side at all.

There is however another memory practice that deserves attention, because of the number of people it involves and the vision of the past that it provides. During our first field season in Abánades, we organized an open day, which consisted in a lecture, a guided visit to the site, an excavation for children, and an exhibition of the most relevant findings. A central role in the event was played by the small group of reenactors





Fig. 4 The hug that never was: reenactors embrace after the reconstruction of an episode of the Forgotten Battle.

from the association Frente de Madrid,<sup>22</sup> with whom we had contacted in 2008. They dressed as Nationalist soldiers (we were excavating a Nationalist position then). After this experience, the local historical group and the reenactors decided to organize a major living history performance to commemorate the battle. This has taken place yearly since 2010 under the evocative title ‘The forgotten battle.’ We have collaborated in the first two events giving lectures on our archaeological excavations. Other activities are also organized by the local association, such as guided visits to the museum, a short film competition, a photography exhibition and music performances in which Spanish songs from the 1930s are interpreted by artists dressed in war-era clothes. In this memory network, that includes more and more actors every year, archaeologists play just one role – and not necessarily the most important one.

Around 80 re-enactors participate in the event. They prepare themselves carefully in order to reconstruct the uniforms, tactics and even bodily gestures and forms of speaking of the military involved in this particular war episode. Thus, the reconstruction has a high degree of verisimilitude. Except for one thing: once the battle is finished, the combatants from each side, dead and alive, come together and embrace in a fraternal hug (Fig. 4).

With this, re-enactors want to symbolize the purpose of the event as an act of reconciliation: it is not for opening old wounds, but for showing that they have been healed. But have they? The problem is that the historical truth was quite different: the soldiers from one side and the other did not embrace. After the war, the victors imprisoned half a million Republicans, of which approximately 50 000 were executed and several thousand more died of starvation, disease or torture inside prisons and internment camps.<sup>23</sup>

22 <http://www.frentedemadrid.com> (visited on 01/04/2017).

23 Juliá 1999; Gómez Bravo 2009.

The wounds of the war and postwar violence were never healed, since Franco organized the exhumation of the Nationalists killed by Republican forces and commemorated them,<sup>24</sup> whereas the Republican dead were condemned to oblivion and mourning was severely hindered.<sup>25</sup> It is only since 2000 that the situation started to be redressed with the proliferation of initiatives to exhume mass graves with victims of the Nationalist repression.<sup>26</sup> The reenactment of the forgotten battle, then, produces a biased image of the war, which is in keeping with popular perspectives of the war as a conflict between brothers, where both sides had more in common than reasons for fighting each other. This apolitical vision of the war has been made durable in Abánades in 2013 with the inauguration of a plaque in the local museum that reads, in capital letters: IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL. What does it mean *all*? Those who fought for democracy and those who fought against it? Those who started the war and those who were smashed by it? Those who raped and looted, who killed civilians, who tortured people in concentration camps? Those who sculpted the effigy of the Republic deserve the same remembrance as those who scribbled “Viva Franco” in the trenches? Why should fascists, serial killers or rapists be remembered at all? This reminds Žižek’s comment on a Steven Spielberg’s animated series *The Land before Time*,<sup>27</sup> where dinosaurs, of all sizes, shapes and attitudes, are the protagonists. In the series, the same message is repeated all the time: we are all different, but we should learn to live with these differences. “It takes all sorts to make a world,” says the song: “Does that mean nice and brutal, poor and rich, victims and torturers?” asks Žižek. In the series, as in our neoliberal society, “Any notion of ‘vertical’ antagonism that cuts through the social body is strictly censored, substituted by and/or translated into the wholly different notion of ‘horizontal’ differences with which we have to learn to live because they complement each other.”<sup>28</sup>

This image of the war in which all sides are victims also tallies well with the depoliticizing stance of neoliberalism<sup>29</sup> and that is perfectly manifested in the Neue Wache memorial in Berlin. Here, the political identity and responsibilities of collectives are erased to create a global, apolitical victim with whom all the nation is supposed to identify.<sup>30</sup> The bronze plaque at the Neue Wache equally commemorates soldiers killed in action (even if they were SS and were committing crimes at the time of being killed) and civilians who were murdered in the extermination camps. Similarly, the acts of commemoration of the Forgotten Battle in Spain clearly level out memories and responsibilities. The commemoration helps to forget the actual history of the war, which was heavily ideological and brutal: a typical conflict of the period, where no human rights, military codes or war laws were respected and where the enemy was often characterized

24 Rodrigo 2008, 202–203.

25 Renshaw 2011.

26 Ferrándiz 2009; Ferrándiz 2010; Gassiot and Steadman 2008.

27 Žižek 2002, 64–65.

28 Žižek 2002.

29 See Žižek 2000, 54–63.

30 Till 1999, 272.

as less than human. In the trenches, we have brought to light the material memory of a war, in which people celebrated the war against Fascism or hailed Francisco Franco, depending on the side: this is clearly seen in the many political graffiti that can still be found in the area. We have documented the brutality of close-quarter combats, which did not precisely end with hugs, but often with the killing of prisoners (as has been documented for Nationalist troops in Abánades by our colleague historians). Yet this material memory tends to be silenced and with it the history of the war, in order to construct an apolitical narrative without sides or ideals: only victims.

### 3 One site to bring them all and in the darkness bind them

If the Offensive of the Alto Tajuña was forgotten, this was certainly not the case with another battle that we studied: the Battle of the Ebro. This was the longest, bloodiest and most decisive confrontation of the Spanish Civil War. It started on 25. July 1938 and ended on 16. November with around 80 000 casualties (dead and wounded) and with irrecoverable human and material losses for the Republic.<sup>31</sup> The defeat opened Catalonia to the Nationalist armies, which fell less than three months later. The Battle of the Ebro was for Spain a sort of Verdun for the French, in that a large percentage of the soldiers that took part in the war participated in this battle at one time or the other. It was also an international confrontation, which saw the involvement of Moroccan, Italian and German troops on the Francoist side and British, American, German, Polish and many other nationalities on the Republican one. Thus, the Battle of the Ebro became not just an integral part of Spanish collective memory, but also of the world. In the aftermath, monoliths and memorials dotted the landscape, remembering the actions of the troops that fought for the Francoist cause.

Our research on the Ebro battle was done in collaboration with heritage experts Francesc Xavier Hernández Cardona and Mayca Rojo Ariza from the University of Barcelona and a local heritage association (Lo Riu). It consisted in a specific intervention in a trench located near the village of La Fatarella (Tarragona) that witnessed action only during the last two days of combat (November 14–15). The Republicans created a belt of fortifications around their last bridgeheads on the Ebro to protect the many troops that still resisted on the right bank of the river.<sup>32</sup> The units that volunteered to make the last stand were mostly annihilated, but were crucial to save the lives of thousands of Republican soldiers. We excavated a trench and a concrete pillbox that were part of the last line of fortifications. Despite the fact that both structures had been severely altered after the war (the pillbox was blown up and backfilled with debris and the trench cut

31 Reverte 2003; Besolí 2005.

32 Besolí 2005, 293.

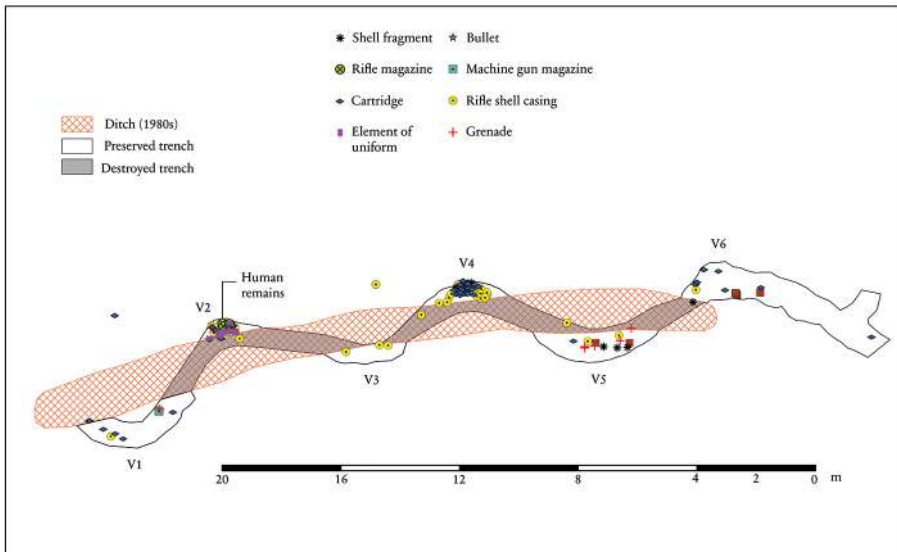


Fig. 5 Map of the excavated trench with distribution of finds per type (La Fatarella, Tarragona).

across by an irrigation ditch), the excavation was extremely successful. In the pillbox, we were able to reconstruct the attack: we found evidence of two artillery impacts, probably from Republican tanks captured by the Nationalists, rifle fire (bullets incrustated in the wooden planks that lined the embrasures), and grenade throwing (a detonator from a Spanish Lafitte bomb). After the position was taken, Nationalist soldiers lived there for a while, as proven by many tin cans, an unexploded Polish grenade and German ammunition that was recovered in one of the galleries of the bunker.

The excavation of the trench was even more fruitful (Fig. 5).

In each of its preserved vertices we discovered a different kind of evidence: several offensive grenades (that illustrated the way in which the fortification was taken); dozens of shell casings from the Soviet Mosin Nagant rifle (indicating the position of a Republican shooter, desperately trying to stop the Nationalist advance); packs of Soviet ammunition (still wrapped in paper, waiting to be used), and, the most impressive find: the remains of a Republican soldier exactly in the same place where he fell dead the last day of the Battle of the Ebro. The excavation showed that he had emptied at least three magazines of his Mosin Nagant on the enemy before trying to return a grenade. The artifact exploded in his right hand, which was obliterated. Fragments reached his right lung and spinal cord and broke his right femur (Fig. 6).

From his side bag we recovered two unused fragmentation grenades, several magazines and packs of ammunition, a razor, a mess tin, a medicine bottle, a shaving bowl,

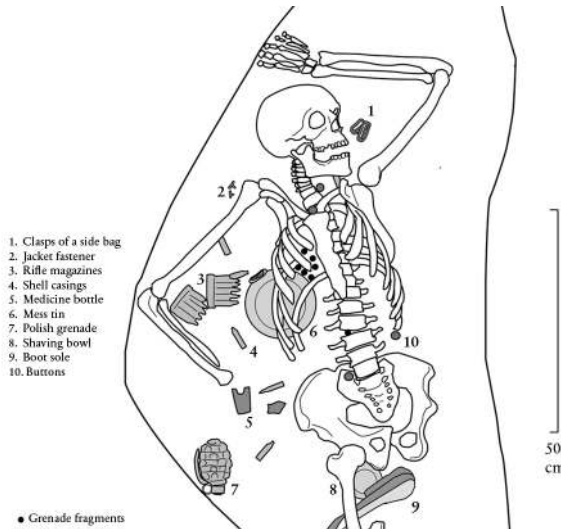


Fig. 6 Plan of the skeleton with associated artifacts belonging to a Republican soldier found during our excavations in La Fatarella.

toothpaste, and a military leaflet. Our research brought this unknown Republican soldier back to life. Through the media and our own blogs,<sup>33</sup> he was remembered and his actions commemorated. Unfortunately, the discovery did not only bring the attention of the general public and the media, but also the Government of Catalonia (*Generalitat*).

The law of Catalonia regarding human remains from the Spanish Civil War is quite unique. In the rest of the country, families and grassroots associations actively promote the location and exhumation of mass graves from the war and postwar period and their work is relatively unhindered by institutions or authorities. Between 2008 and 2012, exhumations were mainly funded by the central government through public grants. In Catalonia, there were several attempts at excavating unmarked graves, but most were thwarted by one reason or the other, sometimes by the *Generalitat* itself.<sup>34</sup> A law was eventually passed that asked for a series of criteria to be conducted before permission

33 <http://guerraenlauniversidad.blogspot.com> (last visited on 01/04/2017).

34 Íñiguez Gràcia and Santacana 2003.

was granted to conduct an exhumation.<sup>35</sup> These criteria are so difficult to meet that in fact very few mass graves have been opened in Catalonia. Furthermore, it is compulsory to contact the administration if human remains related to the conflict are found by chance. It is the Generalitat that is in full charge of exhumations.<sup>36</sup> The Generalitat hires a forensic expert to carry out the exhumation, remove the corpse and produce an anatomic-forensic report. This is of course not always done: human remains appear regularly during agricultural and construction work and they are simply disposed of or taken to the memorial of Camposines to which I will refer later. In addition, before the law was passed an institution had already been created – Memorial Democràtic<sup>37</sup> – to manage the sites of memory related to the Civil War in Catalonia (including graves).<sup>38</sup> What the administration does not seem to have taken into account is the possibility of archaeologists finding human remains during a project focused on Spanish Civil War remnants but not specifically on Civil War dead. When we found the corpse during our excavation, we duly notified the authorities of our finding and then proceeded to excavate the remains and communicate the discovery to the media.

The authorities were not happy at all with our actions: firstly, because they had wanted us to stop the excavation until they sent their own expert. This seemed ludicrous: we are trained archaeologists and capable of exhuming human remains. Nobody has to stop a Neolithic excavation because a skeleton turns up. It is important to note that this was not regarded as a forensic context, in the sense that the remains could not be used as evidence in court – not even the corpses of the murdered Republicans in mass graves are accepted as criminal proof in Spanish courts and judges refuse to attend exhumations.<sup>39</sup> Besides, the moratorium would have implied leaving the corpse for three days to its own devices until the forensic team arrived, since we discovered the bones on Thursday, managed to communicate with the administration on Friday morning and they told us that they would not be able to send anybody before Monday. By then, the human remains would have been altered (heavy rains were announced) or looted. When I pointed out the risk of looting (very high in the scenarios of the Battle of the Ebro), the person from Memorial Democràtic told me that they could have sent a couple of policemen to veil the corpse the entire weekend. It is, of course, quite unreasonable, but shows the degree to which the administration wants to control the spectral presence of the war dead. Secondly, the authorities criticized our public announcement of the finding. They told us that these things had to be handled with utmost care and without

35 “Llei 10/2009, del 30 de juny, sobre la localització i la identificació de les persones desaparegudes durant la Guerra Civil i la dictadura franquista, i la dignificació de les fosses comunes.” <http://www.gencat.cat/diari/5417/09176147.htm> (visited on 04/01/2017).

36 Article 7.1 of the 10/2009 Law; <http://www.gencat.cat/diari/5417/09176147.htm> (visited on 04/01/2017); Gassiot 2008, 126–127.

37 <http://www20.gencat.cat/portal/site/memorialdemocratic> (visited on 04/01/2017).

38 Guixé 2008.

39 Gassiot 2008, 124.

contacting the media, due to all the political trouble that they might generate. Which trouble, I wonder? Is it a secret that there was a battle in the Ebro in 1938 that took the lives of 15 000, many of whom still have their bones scattered all over the countryside? It was certainly not a secret to the neighbors of La Fatarella: after finding the bones, many came to us to notify the appearance of human bones in their fields. The situation degenerated in a conflict between the research team and the Generalitat, which soon reached the media and made things worse. The Generalitat was precisely trying to avoid all media attention in the controversy and, when it failed, it adopted a more intransigent attitude towards us.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that, although the intervention was a joint project between the Spanish National Research Council and the University of Barcelona, when the conflict gained momentum the University of Barcelona disappeared from the news – especially in government media. The message that was conveyed was that researchers from Spain had come to Catalonia to meddle in Catalanian history. Thus, a memory of political conflict became entangled with other contemporary conflicts. In fact, one of the defendants of the Memorial Democràtic, historian Queralt Solé,<sup>40</sup> explicitly casts the memory problem in Catalanian terms: against the heavily politicized memory that prevails in the State (Spain), she proposes a national (Catalonian) memory that remembers all dead alike, without making distinctions. The war is presented as a tragedy for Catalonia as a people (which it undoubtedly was), irrespective of the political affiliation of the dead.<sup>41</sup> In this way, Solé finds in the memory of the war a productive way of constructing a post-political (Catalonian) nation in which all other conflicts (of class, gender, or race) are erased.<sup>42</sup> Strikingly enough, the historian does not seem to consider a (conservative) nationalist agenda to be political.

Despite our attempts to retain the rights to study the human remains, we were ordered to hand in the bones to Memorial Democràtic. We offered to conduct the forensic analysis at our own expenses (at the University of Barcelona and by qualified forensic experts), before handing over the remains. This, however, would go against the protocol established by the law and would mean relinquishing power. Thus, the Memorial insisted in taking care of the bones and hiring a forensic anthropologist. We did transfer the human remains and then they disappeared. Nobody knows for sure where they are now or what were the results of the forensic analysis, as they are kept secret (notwithstanding the fact that the report is paid with public taxes). Although the fate of the remains has not been made public, it can be easily discerned. They are probably resting

40 Solé 2010.

41 Solé 2010, 128.

42 I use the concept 'post-political' here following Mouffe 2005. The post-political is the negation of

the political by the neoliberal order, which presents itself as neutral and beyond ideologies (which is itself, of course, a clearly political position).



Fig. 7 Memorial of Camposines with plaques remembering fallen soldiers.



Fig. 8 One of the displays in the museum of Corbera d'Ebre.

in the Memorial de Camposines. This is an ugly monument built in one of the most beaten areas of the Battle of the Ebro (Fig. 7).

Its purpose is to store the bones of all the combatants that are retrieved in the former battlefields, irrespective of their side and political ideas. This is an initiative to deal with the war in an allegedly apolitical, even-handed way.<sup>43</sup>

The Memorial de Camposines is in fact just part of a larger memory network that involves all sites affected by the battle (COMEBE: Consorci Memorial dels Espais de la Batalla de l'Ebre).<sup>44</sup> The network includes small museums, interpretation centers and specific landmarks evenly distributed throughout the Ebro region. There is much to be praised in this initiative, which is unique in Spain. The museums host excellent collections and the displays are often engaging, innovative and well designed (Fig. 8).<sup>45</sup>

There are at least two main problems, though. One of them is of a scientific and ethical nature: part of the exhibited materials comes from private collections of looters and lacks information on provenance, something which would be unthinkable in a local museum covering other periods and that inevitably devalues modern archaeological artifacts.<sup>46</sup> In this way, the systematic destruction to which the battlefields of the Ebro have been subjected is officially condoned and even sanctioned. The other problem is political: the same message of the Camposines Memorial is transmitted in each and every site, center and museum. Both sides are depicted in equal terms: it is actually difficult to know for what they were fighting, as very little information on the causes and political contexts of the war is provided (in that, these public museums are not that different from the private-run Museum of Abánades). A heavily ideological war ends up being described as a dynastic or territorial conflict of the eighteenth century, by focusing on

43 Solé 2010, 129.

44 <http://batallaebre.org/app/index.php?page=comebe> (visited on 04/05/2017).

45 For a more critical perspective see Martín Piñol 2011.

46 Martín Piñol 2011, 162.





Fig. 9 Photo of a group of international brigadists shown in the museum of La Fatarella.

military details, territorial gains and losses, weaponry, uniforms and daily life. Perhaps where the trickiness of the Memorial Democràtic is best exposed is in the center devoted to the international participation in the battle, which is located in La Fatarella. If one was expecting a museum on the International Brigades, one would be disappointed. There is nothing wrong, however, with the idea in itself: “The exhibition examines the political aspects and international diplomacy linked to the Spanish conflict, and volunteer movement, which emerged in response to the non-intervention of democratic countries.”<sup>47</sup> The problem is that, as it happens in the other centers, both sides are presented equally: thus, hanging on one wall we have photographs of international brigadists (Fig. 9), and on the other Italian, German and Moroccan troops fighting for Franco (Fig. 10).

The ultimate purpose of the Memorial Democràtic, as its name implies, is fostering a ‘democratic memory’ in Catalonia.<sup>48</sup> However, to offer a vision of the past in which the events are not explained in the first place, in which the origins of the war are not discussed, and in which the reasons for which the combatants were dying and killing are whisked away does not seem to be the best way of building a solid democratic memory

47 As quoted from a poster at the museum.

48 Guixé 2008.



Fig. 10 Photo of one of Mussolini's soldiers shown in the museum of La Fatarella.

and transmitting democratic values. Building a mausoleum to put together those who strove to destroy democracy and impose a fascist-style dictatorship with those who were fighting on the side of a legitimate, constitutional government does not seem to buttress democracy either. This does not mean that a partisan display, one that celebrates a set of values and decries others, has to be acritical. Of course, there were many fighting on the Republican side who were anything but democrats in any imaginable sense or sensitive to human rights (such as Commander Lister or the brutal FAI assassins). In fact, that the repression in Republican-controlled Catalonia was among the bloodiest in Spain has to be fully acknowledged. Yet I am not saying that we have to give a eulogy of the Republic. Forgetting the painful, murky aspects of history is neither emancipatory nor democratic, but neither it is to put all sides at the same level.

What are the Memorial Democràtic and the COMEBE actually remembering? What values are they transmitting? In my opinion their work does not help to remember, but to disremember, by offering a sanitized, amnesic history (amnesic inasmuch as it does not recall its origins). The values that they transmit are the post-political principles of the neoliberal order, which only a cynic could identify with truly democratic values. In typical neoliberal fashion, a variety of voices are put on display without privileging anyone – the fascist, the Stalinist or the democratic. Furthermore, as few interventions are actually conducted into what already exists, the landscape of the war is still very much the one bequeathed to us by the victors, with no critical commentary. Thus, the makeshift monument erected by international brigadiers by their comrades during the Battle of the Ebro crumbled into oblivion and had to be restored by private individuals (Fig. 11), whereas the sturdy monument to Gustav Trippe, a German commander with the Nazi Condor Legion who was killed in front of the trench that we excavated, continues its work of commemoration undisturbed (Fig. 12).



Fig. 11 Restored monument of the International Brigades to their fallen comrades.



Fig. 12 Monument to German tank officer Gustav Trippe in La Fatarella.

This pseudo-neutral and pacified vision of the war is disrupted every time bones are brought to light. With their involuntary memory they break the dominant narrative and spread panic. In order to re-establish the natural order, the bones have to be kidnapped and taken to Camposines: one place to bring them all – democrats and totalitarians, rightist and leftists, heroes and villains, criminals and innocents – and in the darkness bind them. Not in the Land of Mordor, but in the Ebro, where the shadows (also) lie.

#### 4 Conclusions

In this article I have tried to show that, notwithstanding the good intentions of archaeologists, excavating sites of conflict can be a way of fostering memories while at the same time erasing history – and by that I mean knowledge of the past produced through the systematic, objective analysis and continuous critique of contrasted empirical sources. Memory practices are often celebrated as democratic, bottom-up, open-ended and inclusive, in opposition to official discourses of the past.<sup>49</sup> However, without denying the necessity to retrieve repressed subaltern experiences, I have tried to show here that collective memories may also become a weapon for conservative forces to neutralize a trou-

<sup>49</sup> For example Shackel 2001; Hamilakis 2011.

bling history that insists in haunting the living and replace it by a form of commemoration that is acceptable, and therefore neutral. *Lieux de mémoire*, then, are not necessarily the product of state intervention alone (as in Camposines), but can also be the end result of spontaneous initiatives of specific communities (as it happens in Abánades). In that, there is no distinction between official and unofficial standpoints, government and collectives. I have reviewed here two archaeological interventions in Spanish Civil War sites conducted by my research team: in one of them, a potentially critical memory is neutralized by a popular memory discourse that portrays the Spanish Civil War as a fratricidal nonsense; in the other, the result is the same, although in this case it is the government that strives to bypass history by presenting an abstract memory of suffering in its place through a *lieu de mémoire*: the Memorial of Camposines. In both cases, the Spanish Civil War is restricted to the period covered by armed confrontation (18. July 1936 to 1. April 1939) and to specific regions – the Alto Tajuña or the Ebro – with their micro-networks of memory sites. There is no discussion of the causes that led to war in the long term or of the reasons that justified the use of violence for each side. There is no understanding of the wider geography of the conflict either. The brutal punishment of the defeated is elided in the first case, and narrowly presented as a national (Catalonian) catastrophe in the second. By portraying the war as a natural disaster in which people killed and got killed, no distinctions are made between those who pursued legitimate ideals (many of which still guide our current democratic system) and those who did not. Furthermore, it prevents us from constructing a really democratic master narrative that is still lacking. The monolithic Francoist view of the past has disappeared as the only and dominant discourse. However, its disappearance has not given way to a democratic master narrative, but rather to a very postmodern multiplicity of competing narratives (fascist, rightists, leftists, democratic, totalitarian), all at the same level.

Gabriel Moshenska has pointed out that “the representations and uses of controversial archaeological research will remain largely outside the archaeologists’ control; we must weigh up the values and risks with a careful and critical eye.”<sup>50</sup> The dangers are particularly clear in the context of the Spanish Civil War, where we still lack an established master narrative and fascist views cohabit comfortably with democratic ones. The sites and landscapes of war are always open to multiple views, some of them reactionary and antidemocratic. While I still believe that the role of the archaeologist is to make things public and encourage debates about the past using material evidence,<sup>51</sup> I do not think that her or his job should consist in just managing a diversity of views and memories. As engaged researchers, we have to listen to all voices but privilege narratives that are fair to the facts, politically critical, and that do not balk at dissension or the lack of consensus. A critical archaeology does work with (local) memories, but it also has to transcend

50 Moshenska 2008, 165.

51 González-Ruibal 2007.

the emotions, images and recollections evoked by places of memory and insert them in the wider geographical and temporal framework – in the case of the Spanish Civil War, the history of social inequalities, global economic crisis, rising European fascism, totalitarian states and militarism that characterized the 1930s, as well as the history of dictatorship that followed the war in Spain. In our research, we have worked in different sites from the war and postwar period all over Spain. The idea has been to evince the connections that exist between a diversity of places, events and historical actors related to the conflict. We have worked with local communities, but we have also insisted in the necessity of looking at the long term and the global context. Because at times, we have to forget memory and remember history instead.

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Gabriel Moshenska

## Public Archaeology beyond Commodities, Alienation and the Fourth Wall

### Summary

Public archaeology provides us with the means and opportunity to critique the socio-political and epistemic foundations of archaeology. This paper explores an interconnected set of issues in public archaeology, focusing in particular on the historical archaeology of conflict. It outlines some proposals for a practice of public archaeology that transcends the everyday commoditization of archaeology and the resulting transactional nature of the relationship between archaeologists and the public. To do so it draws on the works of, amongst others, Guy Debord and the Situationist International.

Keywords: Public archaeology; conflict archaeology; memory; Situationism; commoditization; heritage.

„Public archaeology“ gibt uns Mittel und Möglichkeiten an die Hand, soziopolitische und epistemische Grundlagen der Archäologie kritisch zu hinterfragen. Diese Studie untersucht miteinander verflochtene Themen einer „public archaeology“ mit Fokus auf der historischen Konfliktarchäologie. Der Beitrag skizziert Vorschläge für eine Praxis der „public archaeology“, die über die alltägliche Kommerzialisierung der Archäologie und den daraus resultierenden Geschäftscharakter der Beziehung zwischen ArchäologInnen und der Öffentlichkeit hinaus führt. Die Studie baut unter anderem auf den Arbeiten von Guy Debord und der Situationistischen Internationale auf.

Keywords: Public archaeology; Konfliktarchäologie; Erinnerung; Situationismus; Kommerzialisierung; Kulturerbe.

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This paper brings together several strands of my research into the nature and potential of contemporary public archaeology. It combines themes and theories derived from the archaeology of modern conflicts; leftist and specifically Situationist politics; and the history of archaeology within the wider history of public science. By mixing elements drawn from these fields I have tried to identify a potential for radical political and creative interventions within the practice of archaeology. As such, this paper falls firmly within the type of public archaeology research that Brian Fagan has derided, not unfairly, as “overloaded with eloquent calls to action couched in far-from-specific terms”<sup>1</sup> I am not arguing that this work is useless – far from it – but rather that I hope that it can serve as the stimulus for further thought, discussion and action.

There are several interconnected starting points for this analysis; questions that have arisen and, for various reasons, endured during my work in archaeology over the past fifteen years. From 2002–2006 I worked at the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project,<sup>2</sup> an independent archaeological project funded by its participants and run on broadly democratic socialist principles of collective decision making. In this work I was involved in presenting the site to the public both through formal site open days, on informal site tours, and through other forms of communication and outreach. During this period I also began to work on projects relating to the archaeology of the Second World War in Europe, including some on sites located in London that attracted considerable numbers of visitors.<sup>3</sup> These experiences forced me to consider one of the fundamental features of public archaeology, namely the widespread and intense popular fascination with watching archaeologists at work.<sup>4</sup> This raised the following questions: why do members of the public enjoy looking at archaeological excavations in progress? What do they think that they are seeing, and how do they understand it? And finally, what role might they as an audience and their ‘gaze’ play in the creation of archaeological knowledge?

The second starting point is another aspect of my work on Second World War archaeology mentioned above. Excavations that focus on events that are both within living memory and (to a greater or lesser extent) historically contested present a number of ethical and practical problems to archaeologists.<sup>5</sup> Alongside questions of trauma and the responsible collection of oral histories, there is a reasonable possibility that the excavation itself will become a contested space or *lieu de discorde*,<sup>6</sup> with different and/or opposed groups attempting to use it to promote their partisan perspectives on the events in question. This hijacking can take the form of spontaneous protests and ostentatious performances of commemoration, or more subtle attempts to co-opt the narrative and

1 Fagan 2003, 3.

2 Faulkner 2000.

3 Moshenska 2010.

4 Moshenska 2013.

5 Moshenska 2008.

6 Dolf-Bonekämper 2002, 247.

findings of the archaeological project during or after the excavation. Even in places (such as London, the site of most of my work) where the history of the Second World War is relatively uncontested this has the potential to divide local communities along lines of class and ethnicity.<sup>7</sup> This process is not uncommon within archaeology, and is by no means restricted to research focusing on recent or contested histories. It raises my second area of questions: what are the circumstances in which archaeological sites can be appropriated by different interest groups – both hegemonic and subaltern – as arenas for the promotion and contestation of different historical narratives?

The third and final starting point is drawn not from my fieldwork but from seminar discussions in heritage studies and public archaeology: specifically, the lazy, too-common and rather inane question used to set essays, exam papers and to begin seminars: “Who owns the past?”<sup>8</sup> This question is so open that all meaning has fallen out of it, and can only be rendered even slightly interesting by deep and time-consuming preliminary analyses of the possible meanings of the concepts of ‘ownership’ and ‘the past’ (to which it could not unreasonably be replied: it depends what I mean by ‘meaning’). As John Carman has shown,<sup>9</sup> the concepts of ownership and property are central to the understanding of archaeological heritage, but poor wording and long-winded abstractions distract from and discourage detailed analysis of real-world heritage issues. My third question is therefore: can anything of interest or value be salvaged from the vacuous phrase “who owns the past?”

A common and recurrent theme in my explorations of the first two of these issues within public archaeology has been to consider the intricacies and contextual problems of the ‘archaeological site’ or space of archaeological practice as a social, cultural, intellectual, scientific and economic space which creates the potential to generate interesting and unexpected outcomes. This thinking has led me to some practical experiments, the principal outcomes of which have included a better understanding of the archaeological site as a space of production and consumption and, beyond this, a glimpse of something still more interesting: the potential for interactions around archaeological sites to generate participatory, theatrical, carnivalesque spaces. In such circumstances there is occasionally the potential to create instances of diremption, of de-alienation, or radical combinations of, or connections between people, places and things: events or happenings that strike not only at the social relations around the workplace but at the rarely-questioned assumptions that lie at their foundations.

To explain and contextualize these generative points in time and space I have found it useful to draw comparisons with the notion of ‘constructed situations’ as defined by

7 Ashplant, Dawson, and Roper 2000.

8 Selkirk 1997.

9 Carman 2005.

Guy Debord and the Situationist International in the 1950s.<sup>10</sup> To understand the significance of this, we need to consider the issue of control, both of the site itself and of the narratives produced in and around it, and the implications and possibilities for the archaeologist of truly sharing or giving up this control. In exploring these questions I have tried to bear in mind Guy Debord's assertion that to challenge 'la société du spectacle' "individuals and communities have to create places and events suitable for the appropriation of their total history".<sup>11</sup>

My understanding of archaeological sites as disorderly spaces where conflicts and encounters occur emerged in part from fieldwork that I undertook on a Second World War site in London in 2003. This was the excavation of a crashed British fighter aircraft in the street behind Victoria Station that took place over a long weekend and was broadcast live on television.<sup>12</sup> I was surprised by the number of local people who came to the site to watch the dig taking place for long periods of time, and by their interest and engagement with the material we uncovered. The most affecting element was the number of people for whom the excavation became a forum for reminiscing about the air crash we were studying and about the war and local history in general. Many of these elderly people were disconcerted by the description of the work as 'archaeological' with its popular implications of deep time, and some of them were a bit overwhelmed by the number of other passers-by and audience members who took an interest in the stories that were shared. Some were invited to tell their stories to the cameras, but others simply recounted anecdotes and narratives to their friends and to strangers. Working on the site throughout the day, I heard several of these stories repeated over and over, sometimes by different people. Some of these storytellers used the site and the fragmentary artefacts that we uncovered to illustrate their narratives. Several of them told me that they had never talked about their experiences before in such detail, or at all. Many of the other local residents and passers-by watching the dig and listening to the stories returned repeatedly over the course of the project to discuss the history of the site and to bring personal objects and heirlooms relating to the Second World War including fragments of airframe collected from the crash site. In all of these ways the excavation became a *lieu de mémoire*; a realm of memory in Pierre Nora's formulation of the term: something that stands as a representative of wider historical narratives, crystalizing popular discourse about the past and the representation of the past in the present.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, many of the stories told around the excavation did not fit into what might be called traditionally nationalistic, glorifying narratives of warfare: a few were frankly horrifying, highlighting again the potential for a *lieu de mémoire* to become a *lieu de discorde*.<sup>14</sup>

10 Debord 1983; Marcus 2002; Moshenska 2006.

11 Debord 1983, 178.

12 Moshenska 2007.

13 Nora 1989.

14 Dolf-Bonekämper 2002.

Building on this and similar experiences in my fieldwork I have tried to develop an understanding of the mechanisms whereby an archaeological site becomes a site for the formulation, expression and contestation of small-scale, intersubjective memory narratives, and how one might decide to instigate and control (or attempt to control) these processes.<sup>15</sup> Negative outcomes of my own work in conflict archaeology including co-option into conservative historical narratives in education and media have made me wary about the growth in recent years of archaeological projects on sites relating to episodes of violence and oppression within living memory. One problem is that in many cases work of this kind becomes a feel-good exercise for the researchers: an emotionally cathartic, politically fulfilling and personally meaningful exercise for the team, and certain members of the community with whom they choose to engage – most often the most vocal and eloquent ones. The lesson I have taken from this is that good intentions are not enough in the complex ethical environment of conflict archaeology.<sup>16</sup> Researchers blinkered by insufficiently critical, Manichean views of the past and a failure to appreciate the complexities and nuances of historical consciousnesses often interfere clumsily and dangerously in already tense situations – and then leave.

The key conceptual and practical error that researchers make in these situations is based on a fundamental quandary in public participatory research: to what extent should the researcher maintain control over the nature and direction of the project, and to what extent should they attempt to devolve control to the community within which they are working? On the one hand, to give up control entirely and hand the reins to the local community would abrogate the archaeologist's legal, professional ethical and intellectual responsibilities. On the other hand, to keep too tight a rein on the project can restrict its evolution and growth into unexpected and important areas, making it boring and irrelevant. These questions of balance are perhaps best approached individually, with an open and utilitarian model of research ethics. There are other ways to work with the communities in which our research is embedded, but first we need to ask: what's in it for them?

This brings us back to the second of my key questions: why do people come and watch excavations taking place? What powers and epistemic significances does the eyewitness have? There are a number of factors here, from simple curiosity to the excitement of discovery, and perhaps a more morbid or uncanny dimension as with visitors to the sites of accidents and violent crimes. At the risk of massively over-interpreting a potentially simple phenomenon I think it is worth noting that archaeology is just about the only science that puts its most fundamental processes of knowledge creation so clearly and accessibly on show.<sup>17</sup> If the history of modern scientific practice is one of grad-

15 Moshenska 2010.

16 Moshenska 2008.

17 Moshenska 2013.

ual withdrawal from the public sphere (as Schaffer and others have suggested)<sup>18</sup> then archaeology is a notable exception that has remained where physics, chemistry and biology were located just a few hundred years ago: in the public eye, reliant to some extent on public assent and acknowledgement.

Archaeology as a public spectacle takes two forms: the viewing platforms found on some urban excavations allow spectatorship but no interaction with the archaeologists. As in traditional theatre, a virtual 'fourth wall' divides the performers and their audience, the producers of archaeological knowledge and spectacle and the consumers.<sup>19</sup> In other cases, as at Mortimer Wheeler's excavations in the 1930s, the public is encouraged to engage with and interrogate the fieldworkers, turning the performance of archaeology into a more experimental form of knowledge production: a Brechtian theatre of the past that tries to reach out and drag the viewer across the divide that separates them from the past beneath their feet.<sup>20</sup>

This distinction between passive observation and active engagement is important. People want to look at archaeology and I want to know what they see. I think they see a process of knowledge creation: one that operates most commonly in a conventional producer-consumer relation, where the archaeologist creates knowledge that the viewer can only passively consume. Where the viewer can become part of the process of knowledge creation by their witnessing and acknowledging the work in front of their eyes, this division of producer and consumer begins to break down, calling into question our pre-conceptions about the places of knowledge creation and the nature of authority. If we accept that knowledge and truths are to some extent socially constructed then we need to consider the numerous real and potential ways in which public assent and meaningful engagement or collaboration can play a role in validating archaeological knowledge. This in turn brings into question the extent to which some elements of archaeological practice can be 'owned', bringing us back to the third of my opening questions: the useful meanings (if any) of the phrase "who owns the past?"

To approach this issue I first interrogated the concept of 'public archaeology' as I teach and, to some extent, practice it: as both a field of practice analogous to science communication, and as a field of disciplinary critique analogous to science studies, drawing on the sociology, history, philosophy and anthropology of archaeology. In a fit of reductionist Marxism on a long bus journey I reduced public archaeology still further, to "a practice of disciplinary critique focusing on the production and consumption of [...] archaeological 'commodities'."<sup>21</sup> These commodities are archaeological capital: not only financial but cultural, social and intellectual capital. I identified categories of archaeological commodity including archaeological labor, materials, knowledge and experiences.

18 Pomata 2011; Schaffer 2005.

19 Moshenska 2009a.

20 Moshenska and Schadla-Hall 2011.

21 Moshenska 2009b.

It wasn't until my neat little formulation was all worked out that I realized that I had created a totalizing model that implicitly defined not only public archaeology but archaeology as a whole as 'the process of producing archaeological commodities'. Perhaps a step too far.

Having identified this apparently totalizing commoditization of archaeology combined with the ideas I mentioned earlier about the ownership and control of contested sites leads me to ask: are there any non-commodities left? Has the whole of archaeological heritage been subsumed into capitalist consumer society? Even the seemingly radical bits? Perhaps they have – after all, how many arguments for emancipatory and progressive archaeology have you read in over-priced journals and books produced by corporations such as Springer?

This capacity of consumer society to incorporate every dimension of our lives through work, leisure, media and social norms constitutes what Guy Debord called the Society of the Spectacle.<sup>22</sup> The Situationist International of which Debord was a founding member defined the Spectacle as an all-encompassing, constructed, false view of the world that consumer capitalism has developed as a mechanism to survive, grow and reproduce itself. The full history of the Situationist International, its philosophies and feuds, its myths and its not inconsiderable pretensions to revolutionary action are beyond the scope of this paper, but certain elements are worthy of note. These include the revitalization of some of Marx's rather period-specific critiques of capitalism and their important but arguably incidental contributions to feminist theory in their focus on the commoditization of social relations and the oppressive formats of everyday life.<sup>23</sup>

The Situationist critique of 'la société du spectacle' included a powerful analysis of the ability of consumer capitalism to resist, absorb, co-opt and commoditize all attempts to overthrow it or to construct alternatives. Rebellion becomes just another consumer commodity. The valuable contribution of the Situationists was to tackle the question of what could be constructed or brought into being outside the Spectacle – something that could not be commoditized, sold or passively consumed. The outcome of this study – and one that has considerable relevance to my questions posed earlier – is the concept of the constructed situation, which Debord defined as: "a moment of life, concretely and deliberately constructed by the collective organization of a unitary environment and a game of events".<sup>24</sup> The constructed situation is something artificial but also playful and free: a chaotic and carnivalesque event with a momentum of its own that by its temporary and contingent nature cannot be owned or commoditized. It cannot be consumed because by its participatory nature it precludes passive consumption. At the core of the

22 Debord 1983.

23 Ehrlich 1977.

24 Debord 2014, 68.

constructed situation are the notions of participation, performance and theatricality that I identified in the best of public archaeology.<sup>25</sup> According to Debord:

The construction of Situations begins on the other side of the modern collapse of the idea of the theatre. It is easy to see to what extent the very principle of the theatre – nonintervention – is attached to the alienation of the old world. Inversely, we see how the most valid of revolutionary cultural explorations have sought to break the spectator’s psychological identification with the hero, so as to incite this spectator into activity by provoking his capacities to revolutionize his own life. The situation is thus made to be lived by its constructors. The role of the ‘public,’ if not passive at least a walk-on, must ever diminish, while the share of those who cannot be called actors but, in a new meaning of the term, ‘livers,’ will increase.<sup>26</sup>

Where the Situationists saw artistic ‘happenings’ and revolutionary acts I see a possibility for a different kind of public archaeology.

At this point, having savaged the concepts of audience, public and ownership, I want to review the questions that I posed at the start of this paper in relation to the proposed new entity: the uncommodifiable moment or event in public archaeology. To create such an event requires a new understanding of the public’s roles as participant-audiences, based on a richer understanding of the epistemic power of eye-witnessing and the ability of audiences to generate meaning, particularly (but by no means exclusively) in the archaeology of the recent past. This connects closely with the second question examining the problem of the appropriation of archaeological sites for use as propaganda. Arguably one of the most interesting aspects of an uncommodifiable event in public archaeology is precisely its resistance to appropriation of this kind, and therefore its utter non-duration; any ‘durability,’ I’d argue, immediately offers the potential for appropriation and commodification. Finally, to return to the third and final question, we find that it can be flipped around, to ask “is there any aspect of the past (however defined) that cannot be owned?”<sup>27</sup>

To think about these new questions it is interesting to reconsider the case study that I mentioned earlier of the excavation of an aircraft from a street in central London.<sup>28</sup> This media-driven project attracted an unexpectedly large audience at the site; local people watching, discussing and debating the work, the war, local history and their personal histories. The aircraft we were digging up had famously rammed a bomber that attempted to attack Buckingham Palace, and had subsequently crashed. The pilot sur-

25 Moshenska 2006.

26 Debord 2002, 47.

27 Gestrich 2011.

28 Moshenska 2007.



vived by parachuting out and was present at the excavation.<sup>29</sup> The television crew tried to interview some of the older local people and collect reminiscences. The site had become an arena of memory by accident as much as by design, and the crowd was drawn from a community with a strong sense of local identity and a widespread popular awareness of the event that we were investigating. This was a perfect-storm situation where neither the archaeologists, nor the media, nor the public audience definitively owned the narrative of the site or the event, but the television crew was broadcasting live, in unknowing obedience to one of Debord's specific suggestions for the construction of situations.<sup>30</sup>

In a shocking exchange broadcast on television the interviewer asked an elderly local woman to recount the events of the air battle and the crash. In utter contrast to the triumphalist tone of the entire event she recalled that the bombing war had scarcely touched that area of London until that day, but that the local people had nevertheless come together in a mob and tried to murder the pilot of the German aircraft who had survived the crash. As this story unfolded and the woman refused to express contrition the interviewer visibly panicked and the broadcast shifted to another part of the site.<sup>31</sup>

In that moment the public dimension of the event had asserted itself. The ownership of the narrative had been publicly wrested away from the media's patriotic nostalgia and from us archaeologists with our flashy toys, and one spectator had asserted her place as a participant in the event. In that moment – and for that brief moment only – the event was outside ownership and control, an accidentally constructed situation that had occurred, and been witnessed and experienced by a number of people on the site including myself, as well as a considerable television audience nationwide.

To say that events such as this one can occur is not the same as to claim the capacity to make them happen. I can't write a recipe for turning archaeological excavations into diremptive environments or *lieux de discorde*. Ownership of a project and the commensurate responsibilities cannot be given up, but it can be spread as widely and evenly as possible through participation, planning and consultation so that as large a group of the participants as possible share control. On the Second World War sites that I work on this includes the now-elderly people whose memories form part of my dataset, whose stories form a part of the narrative and power structure of the event, and to whom the archaeology lends an authoritative forum.<sup>32</sup> In these circumstances the role of the project leader comes to resemble that of a circus ringmaster keeping a semblance of control amidst chaos. The confidence necessary to maintain this process must be combined with a willingness to tear down the fourth wall of archaeology and invite the spectators to become participants and owners in a real and meaningful sense, as well as a firm conviction that the answer to the question 'who owns the past?' should be 'nobody'.

29 Holmes 1997.

30 Debord 2002, 48.

31 Banks-Smith 2004.

32 Moshenska 2007.

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Christopher Ten Wolde

## Making Memory – Culturescapes and the Communication of Archaeological Meaning

### Summary

Archaeology plays a unique role in the rediscovery and restoration of lost moments of cultural memory. It also bears a responsibility beyond the narrow confines of academia, and can and should play a role in the public perception of the past. Understanding the material basis of a shared past is now more important than ever, as humankind is engaged in perhaps the most challenging endeavor in its history – learning how to manage the constant expansion, articulation, and integration of our global material culture. However, academic archaeology is an inherently self-referential field, and often fails to engage the public on these larger issues. This article examines an attempt to bridge that communication gap through the development of an innovative, radically cross-disciplinary curriculum.

Keywords: Archaeology; memory; urban culture; sustainability; interdisciplinary teaching; environmental art; architecture.

Archäologie spielt eine einzigartige Rolle bei der Wiederentdeckung und Wiederherstellung verlorener Momente des kulturellen Gedächtnisses. Aber sie hat auch Verantwortlichkeiten über die engen Grenzen der Wissenschaft hinaus; sie sollte eine aktive Rolle in der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung der Vergangenheit einnehmen. Gerade heute ist ein Verständnis der materiellen Basis unserer menschlichen Vergangenheit wichtiger als je zuvor, denn wir befinden uns in einem kritischen historischen Prozess: wir müssen lernen, die andauernde Expansion, Verflechtung und Integration der globalen materiellen Kultur zu bewältigen. Das Fach Archäologie ist jedoch von sich aus selbst-referentiell und es gelingt ihm daher oft auch nicht, die Öffentlichkeit auf diese große Herausforderung aufmerksam zu machen. In diesem Beitrag wird ein Ansatz untersucht, diese kommunikative Kluft durch die Entwicklung eines innovativen, radikal transdisziplinären Curriculums zu überbrücken.

Keywords: Archäologie; Erinnerung; Stadtkultur; Nachhaltigkeit; interdisziplinäre Lehre; Umweltkunst; Architektur.

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## I The archaeology of forgotten memories

It seems fitting, in a collection of works meant to explore the perspective of memory in archaeology, to briefly redirect the attention of the reader back towards him or herself. If I can beg a moment's indulgence, therefore, I would like to ask you to try and summon a memory from this morning, from the instant when you first awoke, and attempt to capture that elusive impression in your mind. Now, answer this simple question: How did you know who you were when you first awoke?

The answer, of course, is that your conception of self, your identity as an individual, is made up of all of your memories, whether they be vivid, half-remembered, or all but forgotten. Your past is what created the person who woke up this morning.

In the same way, humankind's sense of self is made up of its cultural memory. Humankind's multitude of experiences throughout its long history have created what we think of as human culture, in all of its often wonderful and sometimes terrible diversity. And just as you would not be quite who you are now if you lost some of your most important memories, becoming an individual somehow lesser than the whole had been, humankind itself is made the poorer with each memory lost, with each human moment forgotten.

As practitioners of a field devoted to the past, to exploring worlds that exist only if summoned from memory and preserved for the future, archaeologists are painfully aware of how many memories humankind has lost throughout the ages. It is the unique role of archaeology to make a vital contribution to the discovery and restoration of these lost moments of human cultural memory. We give voice not only to the long millennia before written history, when humankind was inventing a new way of life for itself as a species crafting its own environment, but also throughout time to our relationship with the material creations which have come to represent an integral part of our modern way of life.

We need only return briefly to our original question to illustrate how our material creations have become enmeshed with our memory. Thinking of that defining awakening moment, we likely sensed that: I awoke in my bed, in my room, surrounded by my things – my immediate sense of self being interwoven with the material reality of the

spaces and objects with which I have interacted. Some of us may also have shared this immediate experience with another person or persons, creating an intimate instance of mutual comprehension at once a mirror of ourselves and a lens through which we incorporate other perspectives into our own.<sup>1</sup> Our memory of self is then carried by successive layers of these spaces and objects and people that move outward from our private space to public places, across landscapes of diminishing familiarity, and encompassing a broader memory of others. This intertwined landscape of the natural environment, built space, objects, and interpreted meaning makes up what I refer to as the human *culturescape* – the world we have fashioned for and of ourselves.

Archaeology represents the means to explore the culturescapes of the past; however, it is also the means to connect them to the culturescapes of the present. Archaeological culturescapes are, of necessity, made up of discrete memory sites, or recovered spaces and objects that have been given meaning by us as symbols of our past.<sup>2</sup> Our understanding of the past is in turn made up of networks of these memory sites, linked by theories that explain both the connections between them in the past and their connection with our own memory networks in the present. This reflexive relationship exists on the most basic level in the form of our constantly changing generational memories and informal oral histories, in most cases unconnected with an understanding of the more remote

- 1 Although this example is particular to the 21st century audience of this essay, with all it entails of the encapsulated and materially rich built environment and social circumstances which one can assume to accompany it, the same would nevertheless hold true for an individual awakening – for the sake of contrast – upon a bedroll next to the campfire of a migratory camp. While the surrounding space may have been less permanently shaped, the material array less expansively realized, and the definitions of private and public places differently defined, they should not be considered less meaningful.
- 2 I use the term *memory site* here in the most general sense: that of an instance of physical space about which something is ‘known’ through experience (either direct or indirect) and cultural interpretation, and which thus inhabits individual memory and acquires the potential to participate in shared communication. Depending on the degree to which direct experience of the site is shared, the strength of the individual memories, and the nature and intent of the subsequent communication, the qualities of a memory site will prove malleable over time. Although the characteristics of a memory site are thus being constantly renegotiated over its lifetime, it is this adaptable nature that ensures its continu-

ing cultural value. In the physical sense, there are no minimums or maximums to the potential size of a memory site: it can range from a vaguely defined geographical area (‘The West’), to a more closely defined region (‘Italy’), to a city (‘Rome’), to a circumscribed space (‘The Forum Romanum’), to a building (‘The Senate House’), to a small place (‘The Black Stone’), and it is the nature of memory sites to be contained one within the other and to be related to each other in associative networks. Perhaps the most practically applicable scale of memory site for archaeology is that of the settlement or activity space, which is the scale used in this essay. Although there was of course an objective physical and cultural reality to the original sites, which as archaeologists it should be our goal to define or clarify so far as might prove possible, the evolving reality of the sites as developed through cultural communication is an equally valuable source of study. Approaching an archaeological site as a memory site thus emphasizes the perspective that material culture derives from socially constituted and transmitted knowledge systems, albeit actualized by social controls which facilitate the use of both natural and human resources.

past. However, just as archaeology might be said to have taken upon itself the task of exploring the memory network of the past in a thorough and responsible manner, it is my belief that it has also assumed a responsibility to strengthen that too often tenuous connection of the past with the present. This is a responsibility that passes beyond the narrow confines of academia, and can and should play a role in the public perception of the past.

For while we are right to be cautious of the potential abuse of academic opinion, we nevertheless cannot ignore the simple facts that public narratives of the past exist in plethora, that they are most often misinformed or incomplete, and that they are equally often abused for social, economic, or political gain. Thus, while we may properly question the ability of any single field to provide a wholly balanced perspective on the past, we cannot doubt that our contribution would help to *bring* balance to an already imbalanced situation. And even apart from the less tangible benefits of studying the past, of encouraging the imagination to exceed the limits of the known now, an active and balanced appreciation of the past is more than ever a *practical* and necessary part of our future. For humankind is currently engaged in perhaps the most challenging endeavor in its history – learning how to manage the constant expansion, articulation, and integration of our global material culture. We are only now beginning to realize how perilous this experiment is, and the only responsible course open to us is to take every possible consideration into account as we plan our next steps. However, by firmly fixing our gaze on the future and asking only what *can* be done, we ignore the deepest source of data about what *should* be done – humankind’s successes and failures in similar circumstances in the past.

Unfortunately, as the public portrayal and use of the past by modern media, business interests, and politicians constantly reminds us, the *field* of archaeology – as opposed to the manipulated *products* of archaeology – has hardly played an influential role in this discourse. And while we may bemoan such developments within the confines of our own discipline, when we speak about such things as the differences between the archaeological interpretation of a site and the political or cultural identity of a site, what we are really speaking about is our failure to communicate a lasting *meaning* of archaeology to the broader public which can be incorporated into their own lives and memories. Although there are many aspects to this problem, the failure often originates in the simple fact that archaeologists perceive the world, and especially the material world of the past, in a very different way than the public.



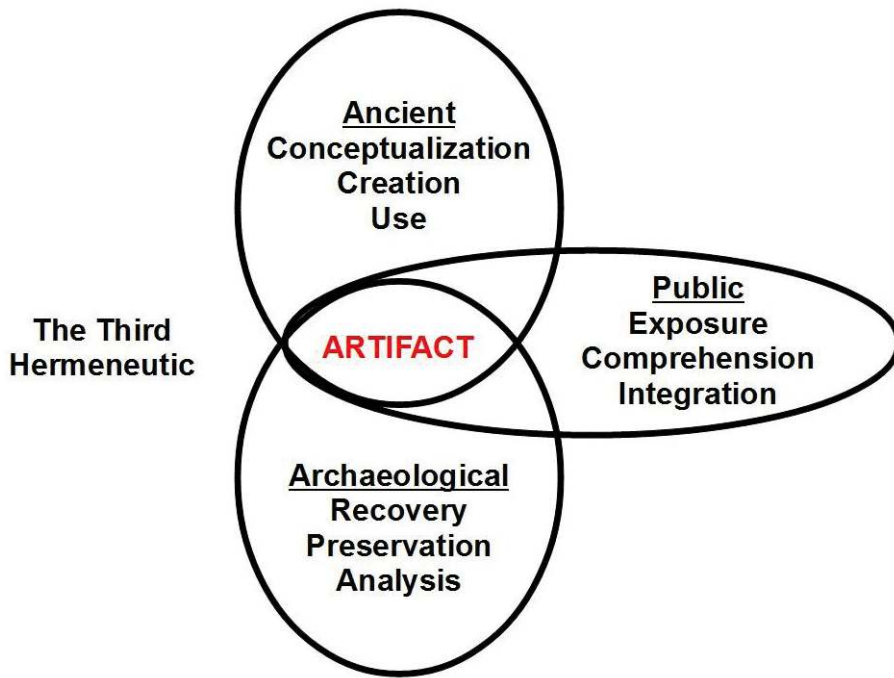


Fig. 1 The three Hermeneutic circles of archaeological communication between the past and the present.

## 2 Communicating in circles

While we are accustomed to the challenges represented by the fact that the archaeologists who interpret an artifact perceive it from a very different point of view than those who created it – the effects of the so-called Double Hermeneutic Circles of differing living experiences on the valuation of an object – we do not often address the challenges posed by what might be called the Third Hermeneutic Circle: the way in which our own way of living as archaeologists presents us with challenges in communicating with the public about our shared past. This conceptual continuum can perhaps be illustrated in the following way:

- |                         |                                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| – Ancient Sphere        | Conceptualization, Creation, Use     |
| – Archaeological Sphere | Recovery, Preservation, Analysis     |
| – Public Sphere         | Exposure, Comprehension, Integration |

Considering that these suggested terms all describe ways in which human beings bring new material objects into their lives and ascribe utility and cultural value to them, they

may be seen as broadly similar, although representing successive stages in the social life of an object. The processes of initial *conceptualization* of the object by its creators, later *recovery* of the object by archaeologists, and still later *exposure* of the object to the public, all result in a new instance of material meaning being added to the lives of those involved. The processes of *creation* by those who conceived of the object, *preservation* by those who rediscovered it, and *comprehension* of its purpose and history by the public are all ways in which the potential of that material meaning is actualized. However, the ultimate value of the object only becomes apparent in the third step, through the actual *use* of the object by its originators, through the *analysis* of the object by archaeologists, and through the *integration* of the object's meaning in an active way into the life of the public. While archaeology has done much to bridge the gap between the effects of its own processes and the perceived reality of the ancient world, and has served as a means to expose otherwise unknown aspects of antiquity to the public and encourage the comprehension of individual objects, we often fail to take the final step of pursuing the meaningful integration of the past into the individual public lives of today. However, do we not judge projects in our own field that may recover and preserve artifacts, but never take the final step of analyzing and sharing them, to be a loss of enormous potential? How then can we accept the enormous loss of potential in not sharing our own knowledge, of failing to face the challenge of breaking through the Third Hermeneutic Circle and ensuring not only the legacy of the past but also that of our own field?

The result of this isolation of ideas has been the popular perception that academic archaeology, viewed together with archaeological tourism and popular archaeological contributions to public debates, is one-dimensional in nature. We have produced spaces and objects to be readily and visually consumed, interpreted through individual memory either as examples of the familiar continuity of human activity or the foreignness of the inexplicable other, but we have not effectively communicated their meaning so that the lessons of their cultures can be integrated into our living culture. And yet this challenge is far more than an isolated academic exercise. For in a world increasingly overwhelmed by the need to adapt to both the creation of unfamiliar new technologies and the depletion of long-accustomed levels of natural resources, archaeology has the unique ability to provide balance to our perspective, based not on the breakneck pursuit of the future but on an appreciation of the lessons to be learned from our rediscovered past.

Archaeology's natural focus on the role of material culture interacting with shaped space, and the effect this process had upon the larger landscapes over which we walk on our surveys and dig through on our excavations, should give us the ability to bridge past and present and build meaningful perspectives on the problems we face today. Perhaps most importantly, we can provide an understanding of how humans learned to create

the complex material environment of our current urban culture. It is often forgotten in public debate that humankind has not always lived in villages or towns or cities, and that even for most of our recent history what we conceive of today as urban life was a rare and sometimes tenuously supported concept. Put in context, over the past twelve-thousand years humankind has managed to emerge from the last Ice Age, learn how to transform the natural environment into a designed source of sustenance through agriculture, and acquire the skills to create our own artificial environment through an adaptation to sedentary life in built space. From the time of our earliest explorations along this path, we have now progressed to the point where the future of human culture is linked not simply to settled life in discrete built spaces supported by a locally designed environment, but more intricately to urban life in densely populated cities supported by a globally exploited environment. We have learned over the millennia to live as an urban species, and like so much of our cultural behavior our ability to utilize this skill, the skill to build and support and live in urban environments, and our attitudes towards it, have been shaped by a long and complex history. It is on this topic – the exploration of how human culture has invented and has in turn has been influenced by our built environment – that archaeology has a unique opportunity, and indeed responsibility, to contribute.

### 3 Field reports from the borders of archaeology

But how do we overcome the barriers put in place by the demands of an academic discipline and the intransigence of cultural preconceptions?

Despite its public recognition, academic archaeology is an inherently self-referential and somewhat isolated field. Unlike other arts or sciences, archaeology has almost no role in pre-university education but receives a prodigious amount of media attention over the more materially impressive aspects of its field work, with the result that public perception is governed more by what we *do* than what we might have to *say*. Archaeology's primary means of communication, both within itself and with the public, is ensconced within the halls of the university, and therein its most effective method of outreach is through teaching. And yet, whether in the early stages of graduate education or later as lecturers, archaeologists are not taught to be teachers, and the subject is one which elicits comparatively little debate within the field.

However, I would like to suggest that we can indeed utilize the popular attraction to archaeology to make the public more self-aware through innovative methods of education, and in this way increase the valuation of the field in general and overall support for its work. Although there are many ways to approach this goal, perhaps one of the

most effective ways I have encountered is to build partnerships with people in other fields whose perspectives will complement and challenge our own, and to make this interactive process part of the learning experience. In the spirit of more traditional field reports, therefore, I would like to briefly present two of these educational experiments. In contrast to field work, these projects do not explore the borders between archaeology and the past, but between archaeology and the present.

#### 4 Human spaces

From 2007 to 2011 I was given the opportunity to develop a series of courses at the University of Art and Design Helsinki<sup>3</sup> exploring the material culture of the past, with the specific goal of communicating this in a way that would be meaningful to students learning to create the material culture of the future: students of art, design, architecture, and eventually even engineering and economics as the university later underwent a merger with other technical and business universities. These courses, entitled *Human Spaces*, focused on the development of built space and urban culture as social phenomena, exploring what were described as *culturescapes* above in order to encourage students to see beyond the material artifacts and into the social realm. This was intended to provide a direct connection to the interests of students studying spatial fields such as environmental art, architecture, and urban planning, but also – by examining the use of different types of specialized spaces – serve as a way of integrating the interests of as many other fields as possible. In addition, the transformation of modern urban culture and its tension with the natural world were then topics of widespread interest, and it was hoped that demonstrating how archaeology could inform the debate on these issues would strengthen the student’s belief that the past could meaningfully inform the future.

After briefly experimenting with more traditional lecture formats,<sup>4</sup> I realized that what was needed was a means not only to fill the students’ imaginations with visions of past cultures but to also connect with their own career goals on their own terms. In other words, I needed to move beyond a surface recognition of the Third Hermeneutic,

3 I would like to thank then Professor of Environmental Art Markku Hakuri for his steadfast support in this project, as well as the members of what was then the Department of Visual Culture.

4 The first course offered as part of the program was actually somewhat more prosaically entitled “Art, Archaeology, and Society” and followed a traditional lecture format which progressed chronologically from the Neolithic through the Bronze Age and Classical period, and geographically from

the Near East through the Aegean and on into the west. Mid-semester reviews indicated that the message was not being communicated as effectively as it could be, and the second half of the course was spent reviewing the material through lectures dealing with specific types of urban spaces. This attempt to redress a less than successful start is what produced the eventual Human Spaces lecture model, and served as an instigation to attempt other more innovative teaching methods.

merely *exposing* them to the perspective from which archaeology viewed the past, and find a way for them to *comprehend* the past in a way that would allow for meaningful *integration* of it into their own lives – a way for the world of the past to pass through the archaeological process and become a part of a broader memory of human achievement and a catalyst for future ambitions.

The eventual solution was to craft three distinct parts to the course, each designed to target a specific step in this process. During the first part of the course, a series of lectures would expose the students to a range of topics, each drawing from a range of iconic sites such as Göbekli Tepe, Çatal Höyük, Ur, Saqqara, Knossos, and Mycenae, and ending with more familiar sites such as Athens and Rome.<sup>5</sup> Although the format evolved somewhat over time, the topics addressed included:

- Sedentism – Private Spaces and Community Places

*introducing sedentism as a comparatively recent and revolutionary human practice*

- Urbanism – Building a World of Meaning

*introducing urbanism as layered socially symbolic and institutional materiality*

- Spaces for the Living

*exploring the role of public spaces*

- Spaces for the Dead

*exploring mortuary spaces*

- Spaces for Things

*exploring manufacturing and mercantile spaces*

5 Although the course's admittedly western focus was a byproduct of my own background in Aegean prehistory and Classical Archaeology, which was usually an advantage as I could rely on a general familiarity with the better known sites of later antiquity as teaching tools, it did sometimes create challenges. The course always included a number of students

from Asia, who were often unfamiliar with historical references normally taken for granted in the west and in turn sometimes posed questions from an unfamiliar perspective. While representing a potentially fruitful avenue for exploration, plans for sister-courses focusing on Asia and the New World unfortunately never materialized.

– Power Spaces

*exploring political spaces*

– Belief Spaces

*exploring religious spaces*

– The Other-Space of Nature

*exploring bounded nature and the disappearing border between urban and environment*

– Archaeology and the Urban Singularity

*exploring urban culture as a resource sink historically tending towards collapse  
& how archaeology can offer a perspective on a balanced built society<sup>6</sup>*

– Experiencing Urban Culture through Environmental Art

*introducing the history and techniques of environmental art<sup>7</sup>*

Each lecture followed the same general format, exploring the topic by beginning with Near Eastern Neolithic sites the students would likely never have heard of, moving to the generally more recognizable Bronze Age sites of the Near East and Aegean, and ending with the familiar cultures of Greece and Rome. In this way, the students could

6 Where previous lectures had focused on understanding specific aspects of built culture, this lecture was an attempt to explore urban culture on a higher level, with the main goal being to connect the topic to problems confronted by modern global urban development. To accomplish this, urban culture was described metaphorically as a simple interactive system, composed of Environmental, Social, and Material resource pools, in which Resource Sinks (consumers) encounter Resource Ceilings (limits) and as a result create and implement Resource Levers (multipliers) in increasingly complex and interdependent ways. Societies have often tended towards an event characterized here as the Urban Singularity – a tipping point at which urban culture no longer acts as an overall Resource Lever but instead becomes a Resource Sink, drawing down resources of all sorts

until the point of collapse. Past urban cultures were confronted with their own Urban Singularities, brought about by a range of problems including an inability to understand and correct the limitations of the natural environment, a lack of control over the natural resources upon which they relied, an over-reliance on trade and exterior resources, and a dependence on the stability of complex political systems. These factors represented great challenges to the developed urban cultures of the past, even when only a single problem was predominant – and yet today we face them in combination. This brief overview was meant to encourage students to appreciate the importance of studying the past when addressing future challenges, no matter how large.

7 Kuebel 2009.

be introduced to new ideas and slowly associate them with sites that they may already have known of or even experienced. Although this method meant that a broad brush approach had to be taken at first when situating the sites within their own culture and milieu, the iterative approach also meant that the students became more and more familiar over the semester with the iconic sites, and thus a richer depiction of each culture became possible. The students also became accustomed to a method that required them to compare and contrast different aspects of urban culture as they developed over time and in different social contexts, which would hopefully encourage them to take the next step and think about modern urban culture in the same light.

In order to reinforce this process, immediately following each weekly lecture the students would leave the classroom and travel to a part of the city which embodied the theme that had been introduced that day.<sup>8</sup> Helsinki is a remarkably compact city and provided a well-rounded range of sites for this purpose, including the Senate Square, the National Cemetery, old market squares and new malls, old and new Parliament buildings, a range of cathedrals and churches both traditional and innovative, and widespread parks. Once at a site we would hold an open examination and discussion of how the history and theories that had been introduced in the day's lecture could be applied to an understanding of the living world. Students were encouraged to realize that they were not simply walking through built space on these trips, but were instead walking through layers of time and meaning embedded in the present and constantly interacting with their lives. This second part of the course was meant to foster a deeper comprehension of their places as evolving end-points of the urban culture process, and the results were often immediate and remarkable.<sup>9</sup>

The students in the course generally fell into one of four groups: Finns who had grown up in Helsinki, Finns who had grown up outside of Helsinki, and foreign students from Europe and Asia.<sup>10</sup> Each of these groups naturally tended to approach the various sites in the city from the perspective of their own backgrounds. For the city natives, who often transversed these sites on a daily basis, it was not uncommon to have

8 As may have been surmised, these classes were longer than the usual lecture hour, and typically ran to a 1.5 hour lecture followed by another 1.5 hours of travel and discussion on site, or a 3 hour commitment.

9 Although not the focus of this essay, I would be remiss if I did not mention the obvious potential for partnerships with the field of anthropology in this 'living laboratory' approach to teaching. Much that was accomplished through creative workgroups in environmental art, due to the special focus of the

host University of Art and Design, could also be explored through a partnership with anthropology in more typical university environs. This is an area of great potential for future exploration, particularly for the study of urban cultures.

10 Due to the fact that Human Spaces was one of the few open enrollment courses taught in English, there was an unusually high percentage of foreign (non-Finnish) students enrolled in the course, ranging from one-third to one-half of the total. Helsinki natives were usually in the majority.

relegated them to the status of background settings, acting merely as a physical framework for their day-to-day activities. As memory sites, their significance was simply that of delineating home ground. However, learning to appreciate the cultural and historical process that produced these sites, in essence expanding their existence as memory sites from the personal plane to the social plane, often resulted in sudden feelings of revelation. In a similar manner, the Finns from other parts of the country often tended to see these sites as static markers, identifying Helsinki as *the city* and serving, in a sense, as memory sites demarcating the urban center of the country. Once seen in a larger context, they were more easily able to relate to the sites as a part of their own broader national culture. The European students naturally tended to interpret the Helsinki sites through the lens of their own home place memories, a process which sometimes relegates new sites to a secondary status and attributes them with qualities from better known sites regardless of their suitability. However, during our discussions they were often able draw new connections and contrasts that revealed an increased appreciation of both the commonalities between and unique attributes of each urban culture. This process was, if anything, magnified for the Asian students, many of whom related to Helsinki through a mix of home sites that included both Asian and western influenced elements of urban culture. In their case, however, it often proved difficult to overcome the sense of *other* in these sites, and their reflection tended to focus on larger issues of how more general cultural perspectives drawn from sources in the west could be applied to Asian sites.

While each of the four groups approached this two-part exercise from different vantage points, they shared a common process and end point. The lectures initially served as an additive memory process, exposing the students to new information and ideas about the history of urban culture. In this way, one might say that new memory sites were added to their personal memory networks, and that some new details were added to more familiar memory sites that may have already existed therein, such as Athens and Rome. The students were also exposed to cultural theories that had the potential to link these disparate memory sites into something larger and more meaningful, what might be described as a network of memory sites connecting those from the past with the sites they inhabited in the present. However, the addition of this new information and the exposure to these new theories represented little more than unrealized potential until they also learned how to relate to them on their own terms – how to close the circle and connect to the network of historical memory sites from the vantage point of their own network of living memory sites. This was the goal of the second, on-site discussion group part of the course, which both proved successful in its own right and also had the effect of encouraging the students to become more active during ensuing lectures, thus building a continuously more interactive learning community.



The final part of the course was intended to build upon the foundation laid by the lectures and discussion groups, and to link the students' new knowledge and understanding of the past more directly to their own accustomed learning methods and future work; in other words, to integrate their abstract learning into their active lives. In order to accomplish this it was necessary to provide them with the means to experiment with the main concepts of the class in a concrete, hands-on manner, to move beyond the theoretical study of the material world of the past and allow them to experiment with the material world of the present. Considering the natural focus of the students at an art and design institution on creative work, the last third of the course was thus devoted to an art workshop. This was perhaps the most innovative step taken by the Human Spaces courses, and certainly the most challenging for me as an instructor. As it involved exploring teaching methods usually associated with the creative arts, I felt that the best way to achieve the desired results, and to establish the credibility of the exercise in the minds of the students, was to form a partnership with an artist also interested in exploring urban culture. Fortunately, I found just such an enthusiastic partner in environmental artist Catherine Kuebel, who had recently completed her MA thesis on experience and memory in urban culture at the University of Art and Design Helsinki.<sup>11</sup> Working together, we created a format in which the thirty students were divided into small groups of 3–4 individuals, each of which chose one of the main themes of the course to explore through artistic means.<sup>12</sup> At the end of the semester, the students would also be responsible for displaying their works at a week-long public exhibition hosted by the university.

Although these teaching methods were as unfamiliar to me as they would be to most archaeologists when I began this project, I quickly saw how effective they were as ways to explore material culture. In order to facilitate an active exchange of ideas and provide a firm footing for the artistic elements of the workshop, each group was composed of individuals from different fields wherever possible, although always including at least one artist and ideally one with experience in environmental art. The traditions of environmental art have a strong element of public interaction and intervention, meaning that the works are often created and placed within public spaces with the intent of drawing out public participation and encouraging the exploration of new perspectives on particular topics. These methods were quickly adopted by the students, whose works were usually meant to challenge the participants to reconsider elements of urban culture exactly as they had been asked to do in the course, with the framework for the questions being moved from the past to the present. In effect, the students' works created small,

11 Kuebel 2009.

12 Although the University of Art and design is a small institution (approx. 1500 students at the time), af-

ter the first year the semester enrollment had to be capped at 30 students in order to maintain a manageable workshop size.

temporary memory sites fashioned from their own recently expanded understanding of urban culture and intended to act as bridges between the memory network of the class and that of the public, with the goal of sharing their experiences and thus both enhancing the value of these exterior memory networks and also creating a new, larger network bridging study and practice. This unanticipated effect of the workshop resulted in the students being recruited as agents of cultural communication, having effectively been transformed from outsiders seeking an understanding of archaeological perspectives to adoptive insiders, in turn championing those values to other outsiders.<sup>13</sup> In this way, the divide between the second and third hermeneutic circles, the archaeological and public understanding of the past, was bridged in two different places and fully integrated into the students' lives.

#### 4.1 A memorable day

Although each of the dozens of workshop projects had their own value,<sup>14</sup> in order to illustrate the process I have selected one that has particular relevance to the subject of built space and memory. In the Autumn of 2009 a group of three international students of diverse backgrounds<sup>15</sup> decided to focus their project on the World War I era network of defensive trenches surrounding Helsinki. The trench system was built by the Russians, who at the time controlled the area that would shortly become modern Finland, as part of their efforts to defend their Baltic territories against the Germans. The construction was carried out from 1914–1917 on an ambitious scale, with an estimated 100 000 Russian soldiers, Finnish laborers, and conscripted Chinese, Kirghiz, and Tartars working alongside each other.<sup>16</sup> The massive undertaking would ultimately prove futile, as the

13 One of the best examples of this was a project called "Building a Nation" by Juuso Janhunen, Sami Pekkala, and Charlie Richardson). The students used a fictional flag, designed to combine differing iconic elements such as an 'Islamic' green color as a background for a white 'Christian' cross, to explore how symbolism can come to represent concepts of socialized space. The flag was flown at various public places, and even received some media attention, but due to the natural deference given to flag bearers the students were never interfered with. The final step in the project was to take the flag to a local primary school and ask the students there to write about the type of place the flag might represent. The English-language International Baccalaureate class had an unusual mix of nationalities represented in its student body, and the ensuing debate was en-

lightening as to how early such concepts of spatial symbolism become embedded in our consciousness.

14 Many of the same students from the 2009–2010 academic year also participated in the expansion of Human Spaces called Epic Spaces, a course in which we explored the role of spatial settings in story-telling throughout time (telling stories about, with, and through places) with lectures such as "The Man from the Tigris, the Tiber Bitch, and the Tatooine Kid?"

15 Sisko Hovila (Finland), Charlie Richardson (UK), and Mayu Takasugi (Japan).

16 These types of trenchworks are known as 'Running Graves' (*juoksubauta*) in the Finnish language, and tradition holds that a large number of workers dies during the construction of these particular works, however the etymology of the term is unclear.

Russian defense collapsed in the face of combined pressure from the Russian revolution, a German landing, and the eventual Finnish declaration of independence in 1917. In the decades since, the sites were gradually worn away through sale of material, looting, erosion, and neglect, and in more recent times the surviving remnants often served as local dumping grounds. The goal of the student project was to transform one of these sites into the grounds of a community festival, attempting to restore the memory of the abandoned spaces to the local residents. The title of the project reflects this perspective: originally called “A Memorable Day: A Musical Happening in a Forgotten Place”, it was eventually changed to the more succinct “Revive”.

Combining interests in environmental art and music, the students thought that they could use music both as a way to recreate the original atmosphere of the place and also to draw in the public. Insofar as was possible they attempted to recreate the music of the time that the trenches were constructed, although researching the music of the Asian workers proved difficult. Their efforts proved very successful and the day was well attended by local residents, who were not only exposed to a carefully cleaned up area of trenches, which they had taken to avoiding as unclean, but also to music that set a background to short walk-throughs and talks on the history of the site. The effects of the project were immediately apparent, as it was revealed that the majority of attendees had believed that the trenches had been created as defenses *against* the Russian invasion during World War II, rather than by the Russians themselves during the previous world war, and the role of the Finnish and Asian workers had been all but forgotten. Despite a rainy day, the event in fact proved so successful that the residents contacted the group a year later to recreate the festival. While this unfortunately did not prove possible, it is a strong indication that the students’ efforts had, in fact, ‘revived’ this forsaken place and restored a forgotten memory site to the present. In the process they had also encouraged the residents to rethink what had been viewed as a vaguely nationalistic site in broader and more vivid cultural terms, thus informing and enriching the culturescapes of both groups.

#### 4.2 Spirit of place

One of the advantages of developing the creative workshop as a teaching tool was that it made it much easier to explore other partnerships in the arts. Perhaps the best example of this was when, in the Autumn of 2009, American architect Travis Price came to Helsinki in search of local participants in his award-winning *Spirit of Place* architectural workshop.<sup>17</sup> Spirit of Place is a ‘design-build’ program, meaning that students both de-

17 Information on the Spirit of Place project can be found here: <http://spiritofplace-design.com/spirit-of-place/> (visited on 22/03/2017).



Fig. 2 A section of the Helsinki trenches before the project cleanup.

sign and actually build the architectural structures and installations that are the joint product of the class. The unique element of the Spirit of Place program, which is hosted at the Catholic University of America (Washington, D.C.), is that the design phase of the course is based on the study of the spiritual culture of the host country, and the goal of the workshop is to create built space that directly reflects that culture. The host country changes with each project, of which Finland would be the fifteenth since the program's inception in 1992. Although Price had never been able to include students or faculty from the host country in these projects, the existence of the Human Spaces courses, whose aims and methods were closely related to those of the Spirit of Place program, allowed us to participate and contribute.

Through the support of the University of Art and Design Helsinki, I and three Human Spaces students<sup>18</sup> were able to take part in the Spirit of Place project. The course began in January of 2010 with a nine-day design charrette hosted by the Embassy of Finland in Washington, D.C., during which the students attempted to distill the mythical elements of the Kalevela (the Finnish national epic poem) into architectural forms. This interactive process was complimented by study groups and lectures on various topics, including the historical evolution of 'Belief Spaces,'<sup>19</sup> and after long days of intense

18 Sarah Alden, Wilhelmiina Kosonen, and Inka Saini.

19 It is interesting to note that, of all the examples given, the architecture students were most fascinated with the Neolithic site of Göbekli Tepe. Their instinctive questions about the structures and building program at the site were remarkably similar to those posed by archaeologists, and included: Who came up with the idea, an individual or a group?

Who was in charge, the person with the 'idea' or the person with the practical experience, or someone outside the building process? Where did the building material come from, and how did it get to the site? How did they manage their workers? Why did an apparently successful program come to an end? Given the appropriate framework, the students



Fig. 3 The original poster for the 'Memorable Day' festival, showing project member Mayu Takasugi playing an improvised string instrument fashioned from materials gathered at the site.

work eventually produced the model for an installation that would later be built on the historical museum island of Seurasaari in Helsinki. Finally, after a semester spent designing the actual structural plans, which involved weekly teleconferencing sessions for the Finnish students, the group was reunited in Helsinki for another intense nine days of building. In honor of its source of inspiration, the structure was named the *Kalevalakehto* – the Shaman's Haven.

During this time I was able to witness a process that archaeologists can usually only speculate about – the weaving of cultural meaning into the physical form of a built site. Although I had often attempted to decipher such meaning from too-often fragmentary artifacts preserved in equally fragmented ancient environments, it was an eye-opening

were thus able to steer the discussion along paths that were both meaningful to them and upon which

archaeology was able to provide guidance, if not definitive answers.

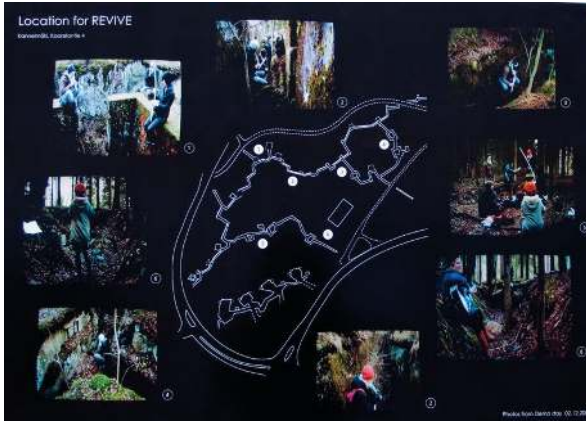


Fig. 4 A later poster for the re-named “Revive” festival, depicting the trench works and locations of various activities.

exercise to witness artisans striving with such energy to imbue static forms with elements of music, chanting, and symbolism taken directly from myth. For the Human Spaces students, this process strongly reinforced the main message of the course, that the study of history and culture can and do play an influential role in the creation of materiality. In a similar vein, the archaeological perspective on built culture provided by the partnership with Human Spaces hopefully deepened the experience of the Spirit of Place students.

The choice of the site on Seurasaari island was itself significant, and represents a rich exploration of overlapping culturescapes or memory site networks. The island was dedicated as an open-air architectural museum in 1909, before Finland declared its independence from Russia but amidst a widespread stirring of interest in defining and preserving the roots of Finnish culture. The goal of the museum was to preserve the old wooden buildings that even then were in danger of disappearing, and today the island hosts 87 structures ranging from farmsteads to boat houses to churches from various historical periods. The northern tip of the island, which is also designated a bird sanctuary, was chosen to be the site for the Kalevalakehto; in this way, the structure would be integrated into the history and purpose of the island but would also lie somewhat outside the museum area, identifying it as different from the other buildings. In a place of consciously preserved culturescapes of the past, it serves as a reminder that culture can also inspire the future.

The Kalevalakehto thus represents not only the creation of a new memory site, literally built from the cultural memories of the Finnish people (as intersected by those of American architectural students), but also the expansion of the network of historical memory sites represented by the island. This new site is in turn host to a continuously





Fig. 5 One of the volunteer musical groups which participated in the “Revive” festival, setting the historical mood with period pieces.

expanding population of local residents, tourists, and students, all of whom are given the opportunity to ponder not only the value of preserving the past but also how the material culture of the present can interact with it in a meaningful way.

#### 4.3 But is it archaeology?

Although the material results of the Human Spaces creative workshops would not be identified with archaeology in the traditional sense, we can ask whether archaeology contributed to the learning process in a unique and perhaps even irreplaceable way, and whether the students eventually participated in a historical process guided by values provided by archaeology. In this sense I believe the courses can be judged successful, in that the students were exploring deep-rooted cultural themes which could only be developed through archaeology, and were consciously focused on studying the interaction of historical and present-day social forms expressed by and embedded in the complex materiality of urban space. In the case of at least some of the projects, such as “Revive”



Fig. 6 One of the volunteer guides who participated in the “Revive” festival, talking about the history of the trench site.



Fig. 7 A depiction of the various lectures and workshops held at the Finnish Embassy in Washington, D.C. during the nine-day design charrette. The students are shown working on their individual models, which were meant to represent their interpretation of key elements of the Kalevala and would later come together to produce the final metaphorical model.

presented here, the work also involved a conscious mediating between historical sites and the public, albeit from a sometimes unconventional perspective.

While there has been interest in exploring the potential for an artistic perspective on the archaeological process for some time,<sup>20</sup> and some archaeologists have even gone so far as experimenting with on-site environmental art themselves<sup>21</sup> or incorporating artists into their fieldwork,<sup>22</sup> the potential for partnerships in education is perhaps even

20 For example Renfrew 2003. As well as a review of that work: Hamilakis 2007. Also Kümmel, Müller-Scheeßel, and Schülke 1999.

21 Tilley, Hamilton, and Bender 2000.

22 Brodie and Hills 2004.



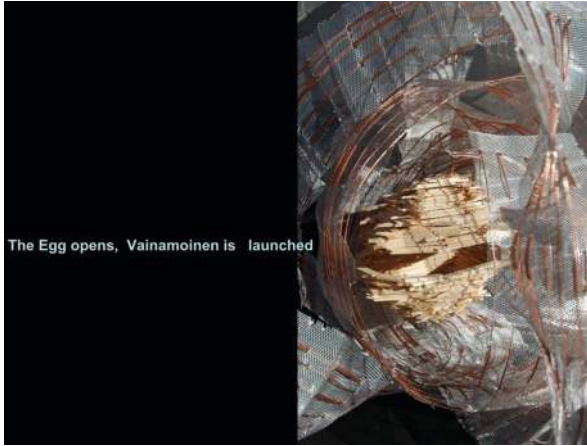


Fig. 8 The final metaphorical model, meant to incorporate: the mythical elements of birth, creation, and voyage, seen as key to the meaning of the Kalevala; the natural elements of wood and metal that are so strongly represented throughout Finnish folk tales and in modern Finnish design; and elements of the traditional music and chanting which were the oral foundation of the Kalevala cycle, through the number of structure of the wooden and metal elements.



Fig. 9 The final architectural model, translating the metaphorical model into a structure and situating it on the island of Seurasaari.

stronger. These cooperative teaching partnerships are effective in three ways. Firstly, as the Human Spaces experience shows, they are able to provide an innovative platform for the communication of archaeological meaning to a wider audience of students, as well as the potential for public outreach. Secondly, should a partnership with a field project prove possible, it would be all the more effective if it was founded upon an existing relationship of mutual understanding created by long-term cooperation in the classroom. Finally, while the challenges posed to the archaeological educator when pursuing such partnerships should not be underestimated, neither should the potential for



Fig. 10 The finished Kalevala-kehto structure, which was opened to the public and has often served as a site for musical events.

improving on the archaeologist's own understanding of material culture. In the same way, although there has recently been a vast growth in archaeological research on the evolution and sustainability of urban culture,<sup>23</sup> we should not ignore the potential of our urban spaces as educational laboratories which could also serve as testing grounds for research linking the lessons of the past with the trials of today.

Ultimately, however, the end result of the five-year Human Spaces program was a new population of future artists, designers, architects, engineers, and even economists – the people who will be building the material world of tomorrow – whose personal culturescapes now include experiences drawn directly from archaeological teaching that was fully integrated into their world view and path of practice. As they progress through

23 For example the *Urban Mind* project at the University of Uppsala, a part of the IHOPE (Integrated History and future of Peoples on Earth) initiative: [http://www.arkeologi.uu.se/Research/Projects/Urban\\_Mind/Introduction/](http://www.arkeologi.uu.se/Research/Projects/Urban_Mind/Introduction/), (visited on 22/03/2017); Sinclair et al. 2010.

their careers, the memory of the names and specific details may fade, however hopefully the knowledge that the past can meaningfully inform the present will not.

#### 4.4 Practice and pursuit

As a final point, this approach embodies what I have come to think of as the difference between the *Practice* of a field and the *Pursuit* of its broader meaning. Practice involves all that is necessary to define the field itself, and for archaeology includes the vital skills of survey, excavation, recovery, restoration, research, reporting, and analysis of artifacts of all sorts – skills without which archaeology would not exist as a scientifically defined and responsible field of study. However, the Pursuit of archaeology involves much more. It involves finding an active place for the field within society, and participating in the broader debates of the day.

While we can be trained in and master the Practice of archaeology, we must continuously strive to find new ways to contribute to its Pursuit. For when archaeology fails to create convincing and compelling narratives about the past, we abandon the meaning of the past to other parties – whether they be entertainers, tourist agencies, corporations, or politicians – who by their very nature are motivated by competitive self-interest. And yet as frustrating as this can be professionally, it has a much deeper impact than simply playing witness to occasional triumphs of commercialism and political agendas; it is, quite literally, a contest for the control of mankind's memory of itself.

Yet this is the great irony of archaeology, that although we have devoted ourselves to the discovery and understanding of what has been lost and forgotten about past cultures, the vast majority of our learning remains lost to our own culture. Ultimately, however, archaeology does not simply have the opportunity to prove itself more interesting or valuable by effectively communicating the meaning of the past, it has a broader cultural responsibility to provide balance to the public perspective on the past and to have a meaningful impact on the public life of today.<sup>24</sup>

24 This essay is an expanded version of my similarly titled lecture at the 17. September 2011 Annual Meet-

ing of the European Association of Archaeologists in Oslo.

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Joachim Baur

## Staging Migration – Staging the Nation. Imagining Community at Immigration Museums

### Summary

Migration and migration history have become major themes in the global museum landscape. In this article I argue that the establishment of museums of immigration can be seen as an answer to the crisis of collectively shared narratives and the heterogenization of cultural identities. By presenting immigration as the common experience shared by most members of society, museums construct a master narrative of migration and thus contribute to re-visions of a national imagined community. After pointing to a few instances where the construction of an overarching migration narrative causes problems and sketching the ways in which the museums deal with it, I conclude with advocating to overcome the 'methodological nationalism' in museum representations of migration history.

Keywords: Immigration museum; representation; multiculturalism; dissonant heritage; national narratives.

Migration und Migrationsgeschichte sind zu großen Themen der globalen Museumslandschaft geworden. In diesem Beitrag wird die Ansicht vertreten, dass die etablierten Immigrations-Museen als Reaktion auf die Krise kollektiver Narrative und die Heterogenisierung kultureller Identitäten verstanden werden können. Indem sie Immigration als gängige und gemeinsame Erfahrung darstellen, konstruieren sie ein Masternarrativ der Migration und tragen so zu einer Revision der Nation als vorgestellter Gemeinschaft bei. Nach Darstellung einiger Fälle, in denen sich ein solches Narrativ als problematisch erwiesen hat, und nach Skizzierung der Lösungsversuche der Museen, plädiere ich abschließend für eine Abwendung vom ‚methodologischen Nationalismus‘ in musealen Repräsentationen von Migrationsgeschichte.

Keywords: Immigrations-Museum; Repräsentation; Multikulturalismus; dissonante Überlieferung; nationale Narrative.

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Migration and migration history have become major subjects of interest in the global museum landscape. Against the backdrop of the massive movements of people, goods, information and ideas associated with globalization, academic debates about transnational social spaces<sup>1</sup> or traveling cultures<sup>2</sup> and not least the political and societal tension between a widespread revalorization of cultural diversity on the one hand and enduring xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiments on the other, an increasing number of museums have discovered migration history – a theme that until the 1980s was almost absent from museum representations – as an interesting and timely subject for exhibits. The topic, moreover, is not limited to temporary or permanent exhibits of existing museums. Rather, one can observe a growing tendency towards establishing purpose-built museums around issues of migration, and especially immigration. This new type of museum, the immigration museum, as a repository of transient memories and as a stage and arena for the negotiation of belonging and (national) identities in multicultural societies, is at the center of the following discussion.

With a few exceptions, the emergence of immigration museums on the global museum scene dates back no more than two decades. A brief and non-exhaustive overview may illustrate the dynamics of its evolution. The first museum of its kind, the *American Museum of Immigration*, opened its doors in 1972 in the pedestal of New York's Statue of Liberty, after more than twenty years of controversial discussion and stop-go planning, only to be closed again in 1991 shortly after the opening of the neighboring *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*.<sup>3</sup> The oldest still existing immigration museum worldwide, the *Migration Museum in Adelaide*, was established in 1986,<sup>4</sup> followed in 1990 by the opening of the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*, still the biggest and best-known immigration museum. Not far away, the *Lower East Side Tenement Museum* has been telling immigration history in the context of an old tenement building in Manhattan's famous immigrant neighborhood since 1992.<sup>5</sup> In the late 1990s, a whole wave of new immigration museums were established: in 1998, the *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne and the *Memorial do Imigrante/Museu da Imigração* in São Paulo were opened to the public,<sup>6</sup> the *Canadian Immigration Museum Pier 21* in Halifax followed one year later. Finally, the *Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum* near Cape Town was established in 2000<sup>7</sup> and the *Argentinian Museo Nacional de la Inmigración* in Buenos Aires in 2001.<sup>8</sup> A similar development in Europe took somewhat longer to gather momentum. For a few years now, debates about establishing immigration museums have been ongoing in several countries. The first and,

1 Pries 1999; Pries 2008.

2 Clifford 1997.

3 Blumberg 1985; Baur 2009, 96–101.

4 Szekeres 2002; Simpson 1996, 64–66.

5 Abram 2005; Baur 2006.

6 Vieira 2007.

7 Witz 2006, 123–129.

8 Ochoa de Eguileor 2005.



thus far, the only existing national museum of immigration in Europe is the *French Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration*, which opened in Paris in 2007.<sup>9</sup>

## 1 Immigration museums and “dissonant heritage”

The following examination of this new type of museum, along with some of its characteristics and implications, will focus on examples in the United States, Canada and Australia. I will argue that the establishment of distinct, purpose-built museums of immigration in these countries can be seen as a response to the perceived crisis of collectively shared narratives and the increasing heterogeneity of cultural identities. By presenting immigration as *the* common experience shared by most, if not all members of a society, such museums construct a master narrative<sup>10</sup> of migration and thus contribute to re-revisions of a national imagined community.<sup>11</sup> In this process, the transnational phenomenon of migration transmutes from a challenge to nation-state thinking into a constitutive part of its narrative (re-)construction.

This line of argument takes its cues from what John Tunbridge and Gregory Ashworth discuss under the rubric of “heritage dissonance.”<sup>12</sup> The authors highlight the challenge of defining a national identity on the basis of shared history and heritage faced by post-colonial settler societies.<sup>13</sup> Rather than concluding that these challenges have been overcome, they point to an extensive fragmentation into “heritage identities”, with various groups, themselves internally fragmented, in structural, sometimes latent, sometimes open conflict about interpretations of the past. In this constellation, the traditional founding societies, which tend to dominate national narratives and founding myths, are confronted with claims both from indigenous peoples, who press for the acknowledgement of their own perspective on colonialism and the crimes associated with it and for material compensation, and, at the same time, from later immigrants and their descendants, who want to see their heritage respected and included in the canon of national culture and history. In this situation, references to history tend, as often as not,

9 Green 2007; Stevens 2008; Stevens 2009; see also various articles in *Museum International* 59 (2007), 1–2.

10 Following Jarasch and Sabrow 2002, 16, “master narrative” is understood as a “coherent account of history from a distinct point of view generally oriented towards the nation state that is formative not only within the academic discipline but within public discourse as well” (Translation J. B. – Originally: “eine kohärente, mit einer eindeutigen Perspektive ausgestattete und in der Regel auf den National-

staat ausgerichtete Geschichtsdarstellung, deren Prägekraft nicht nur innerfachlich schulbildend wirkt, sondern öffentliche Dominanz erlangt”).

11 Anderson 1991.

12 Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996.

13 “Settler societies” are defined, following Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995, 3, as “societies in which Europeans have settled, where their descendants have remained politically dominant over indigenous peoples, and where a heterogeneous society has developed in class, ethnic and racial terms”.

to produce not national unity and social cohesion but cultural tensions and centrifugal tendencies.

The recent development of immigration museums can be seen as a response to this diagnosis and an attempt to mitigate historico-political conflicts. I will try to show that the main trait of existing immigration museums is the presentation of migration history as an overarching and inclusive narrative. Not only are the heterogeneous experiences of migrants from diverse backgrounds incorporated into this narrative, but in a sweeping gesture they are also brought together with the histories of colonial settlers, who are also portrayed as migrants. On the basis of this underlying narrative, the new type of museum serves as an instrument and platform for the harmonization of “dissonant heritages” and thus of public memory. One should emphasize the ambivalent character of this narrative operation: on the one hand, the resulting master narrative of migration is decidedly more inclusive than were earlier versions of imagining and narrating the nation. On the other hand it (re-)produces specific forms of exclusion – not least with regard to indigenous perspectives and through the silencing of a critique of colonization – moreover, it tends to obscure social and political issues.

I will explicate this argument in the following by looking at three museums of immigration: the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* in New York City, the *Canadian Museum Pier 21* in Halifax and the *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne.<sup>14</sup> In close readings of some of their displays, I will focus less on differences and singularities of the individual institutions, and more on common features that I identify, in accordance with my main line of argument, as structural principles of the immigration museum. Lastly, in order to prevent this particular perspective from becoming too hermetic, I will focus on irritations and contradictions to the representation of a master narrative of migration in these museums.

## 2 Three cases

The *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*, opened in 1990, is by far the biggest immigration museum worldwide. Located in the meticulously restored main building of the former U.S. immigration station on an island right next to the Statue of Liberty, its exhibits spread over 9000 m<sup>2</sup>. Today, the museum receives almost 2 million visitors annually.<sup>15</sup> The museum has a long history prior to its opening proper. In 1954, the Immigration

14 For detailed case studies of all three museums, the politics of their production and the poetics of their permanent exhibitions, see Baur 2009. Research for this article was carried out mainly in 2005/06. Some

parts of the museum exhibitions have since been changed.

15 <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/ellis-island-history> (visited on 21/02/2017).

and Naturalization Service closed the immigration station that had operated on Ellis Island since 1892, and the buildings began to rapidly deteriorate. In 1965, President Johnson added Ellis Island to the Statue of Liberty National Monument, which is run by the U.S. National Park Service, but early plans notwithstanding almost another twenty years would pass before the museum project gathered steam. The successful initiative to turn the former immigration station into a museum developed in the context of the centenary of the Statue of Liberty in 1986. In terms of funding, as well as the public use of history, the project was in many respects symptomatic of the Reagan administration's agenda. On the one hand, reflecting a neoliberal approach to cultural policy, it was the first public museum project in the U.S. to be realized entirely without public funding. Costs for the restoration of the building and the creation of an interpretative program, ultimately totaling approximately \$150 million, were covered solely by private donations and corporate sponsors.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, at least in Reagan's reading, the new museum was intended to appeal to the pride of established ethnic groups, focusing on individual achievements and including a tendency to romanticize Ellis Island. At the same time, this specific reading of immigration history suggested:

That contemporary immigrants and African Americans should rely on themselves, and implied their depressed situation was a temporary phenomenon. In time, blacks, Asians, and Hispanics too would move to the suburbs. And if they did not, the record of prior immigrant success would prove their failure to be a matter of insufficient grit and determination.<sup>17</sup>

The rhetoric of its political initiators notwithstanding, the actual exhibits were planned and realized by curators and historians who were committed to telling a more critical story of immigration and tried to counter the use of immigration history at Ellis Island for patriotic purposes. The fact that many different actors with differing agendas influenced the creation of the museum led Luke Desforges and Joanne Maddern<sup>18</sup> to describe Ellis Island as a "multivocal and fragmented heritage landscape." The permanent exhibits of the museum mostly tell the history of Ellis Island and immigration to the United States from late nineteenth to early twentieth century. One part of the exhibit, tellingly titled *The Peopling of America*, however, addresses a wider history of migrations to the United States from pre-colonization to the present day.<sup>19</sup>

*Pier 21, Canada's Immigration Museum* was opened to the public in 1999. Like the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*, *Pier 21* is located in a building that once housed a former immigration station, though in its case not one on an island, but on the southern fringe of Halifax harbor, situated between railroad tracks and industrial facilities. 'Canada's Ellis

16 Holland 1993; Baur 2008.

17 Wallace 1996, 58.

18 Desforges and Maddern 2004, 453.

19 Chermayeff 1991; Welz 2000; Baur 2009, 79–198.

Island', as it is routinely called by the media and the museum itself, is hardly comparable with its famous precursor in terms of its size. It contains only a fraction of that institution's exhibition space, and visitor statistics do not rise much above 50 000 each year. The original initiative to open a museum of immigration at the site can be traced back to the former director of Nova Scotia's immigration office, whose idea was followed up by a local philanthropist. The museum was realized with financial support from the Canadian government and a public fundraising campaign and is run by the private *Pier 21 Society*. In 2009, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the intention to designate *Pier 21* as a national museum (*The National Museum of Immigration*).<sup>20</sup> The permanent exhibit *The Immigration Experience*, divided into multiple sections, follows the path of the immigrants during *Pier 21*'s time as an active immigration station from 1928-1971. The displays are dominated by three iconic design elements: a ship (symbolizing the voyage to Canada), a train (for the voyage through Canada) and finally the immigration station building itself, which is further emphasized within the exhibit by a model of the facility and the replication of an immigration station waiting room, which includes the desk of an immigration officer. The museum, which overall presents a nostalgic and romanticized version of immigration history almost completely bereft of thorny issues like exclusivist immigration policy or societal racism,<sup>21</sup> is currently hoping to expand both physically and thematically, in order to include a more comprehensive history of migrations to Canada in its representations, extending beyond the current narrow perspective on the historical phase from 1928 to 1971.<sup>22</sup>

The *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne opened in 1998 and houses its exhibits in the nineteenth-century building of the Old Customs House in downtown Melbourne. In this instance, the plan to establish a museum did not, as in the two other cases, develop around a historic building closely associated with immigration. Rather, the *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne emerged from a re-orientation of *Museum Victoria*, a state-owned multidisciplinary museum complex with roots dating back to two of the earliest museums in Australia. Under the influence of new social history and the policy of multiculturalism in the 1980s, the institution began to collect objects related to Australia's and Victoria's immigration history. In the mid-1990s, backed by then Premier of Victoria Jeff Kennett in the context of ambitions to distinguish Melbourne as Australia's capital of culture, after much debate the decision was taken to raise the exhibit's profile by showing these collections in a separate building. Since then, the *Immigration Museum* has operated as a branch of *Museum Victoria*. The permanent exhibit presents Australian

20 "The Government of Canada officially opened the *Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21*, Canada's sixth national museum, in February 2011, committing approximately \$25 million over five years to upgrade the museum" ([http://www.](http://www.newcanadianmedia.ca/item/20462-halifax-museum-expands-to-celebrate-the-stories-of-canadian-immigrants)

[newcanadianmedia.ca/item/20462-halifax-museum-expands-to-celebrate-the-stories-of-canadian-immigrants](http://www.newcanadianmedia.ca/item/20462-halifax-museum-expands-to-celebrate-the-stories-of-canadian-immigrants) (visited on 21/02/2017)).

21 Walcott 2001.

22 Vukov 2002; Baur 2009, 199-251.

and Victorian immigration history from its nineteenth century beginnings up to the present day, with individual sections reflecting moments of immigrants' journeys (including 'Leavings', 'Getting In' and 'Settlings'). The succession of the respective rooms, however, unlike at *Pier 21*, does not allow for a linear narrative, which, among other things results in a more open and (self-) critical picture. The museum places special emphasis on its cooperation with immigrant communities, not least through community exhibits which are shown in a separate space called *Access Gallery*.<sup>23</sup>

### 3 Imagining community

Differences in their institutional genealogy, organization and funding, location, thematic focus and political agendas aside – aspects which cannot be dealt with in detail here – the three museums do share one essential characteristic: they all focus on the construction and staging of a common or shared experience of immigration. This overarching narrative, which ultimately aims at creating an imagined community of immigrants, becomes tangible within the exhibits not least in form of a particular 'figure of display' (as in 'figure of speech') which I call the 'container'. By this I mean a particular visual metaphor through which differences between individuals or groups are framed, bundled together and dialectically reconciled within a larger whole.<sup>24</sup>

On Ellis Island and at *Pier 21*, the buildings as such function as 'containers' of this kind. The claim, routinely included in exhibit texts and brochures, that these are the authentic sites through which *the* immigrants passed, serves to ascribe a connective quality to the buildings. Beyond such rhetoric, the figure of a binding and at the same time limiting frame is visually and spatially realized in the Registry Room on Ellis Island, which is the main hall, where the medical and bureaucratic inspections of immigrants used to take place. It is the museum's heart and simultaneously its symbolic shell; the hall has been left empty, yet seems to atmospherically contain all of the individual, disparate histories of the immigrants who passed through it.

'Containers' can also be found on a smaller scale however. One display case in the exhibit *Treasures from Home* on Ellis Island, for instance, assembles a great number of diverse personal objects that immigrants from various times and places brought with them on their journey. Visitors learn little about the individual objects, apart from scant information on their country of origin plus a descriptive title, and sometimes the name

23 Barr 2002; Sebastian 2007; Baur 2009, 253–321.

24 The effect I mean is best described by the German term *aufheben*, namely in the three partly contradictory shadings of the word as pointed to by Hegel:

"to preserve", "to eliminate" and to "lift up". My use of the container metaphor takes its leads from Beck 1997 who critically examines the "container model" of modern nation state thinking.

of the owner and a date. Nothing is revealed about the cultural context in which these objects were originally used, let alone the uses to which they were put in the new country, if or how they kept, lost or changed their meaning in a new environment. On top of that, the arrangement of objects within the case is somewhat bewildering: a violin next to a pillow beater, Russia next to West Guyana, 1880 next to 1924 – a potpourri of oddities, isolated and exotic specimens from other worlds and times. It is not until one steps back from the case and contemplates it as a whole that the display begins to make sense and the meaning becomes clearer. It seems as if the individual objects are actually of little interest. What really matters is the case as a ‘container’ of diversity, within which all of the objects find their place and, moreover, are collectively transformed into a larger whole.

In Melbourne, the museum building does not lend itself convincingly to the metaphor or a ‘container’ of diverse immigration experiences, as it is not an authentic site of immigration. Consequently, the museum provides a substitute in the middle of the permanent exhibit and its narrative: the installation of a stylized ship with reconstructed cabins from three different periods through which visitors can walk. The first lines of the introductory label read: “All immigrants, no matter when they arrived in Victoria, are linked by the common experience of a journey.” Meaning: differences aside, as immigrants ‘we are all in one boat.’ *Museum Pier 21* presents a comparable display: a mock-up of a train car, which gives the impression that it is actually moving as visitors enter it, thanks to simulations of sound and movement, and contains a number of cabins in which videotapes of immigrants talking about their individual experiences are shown. While these stories are presented in separate cabins, they and their narrators are symbolically united in the train car as ‘container,’ which furthermore seems to be steadily carrying all of them in the same direction.

A different form of the staging of a collective experience of migration and an imagined community of immigrants can be identified in the ‘Walls of Honor’ that can be found in all three museums. Differences in size and style notwithstanding, the ‘American Immigrant Wall of Honor’ on Ellis Island, the ‘Sobey Wall of Honour’ at *Pier 21* and the ‘Tribute Garden’ of the *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne, all follow the same pattern. They assemble the names of thousands of immigrants from different times and places on stainless steel plates and out of this variety form a harmonious ensemble.<sup>25</sup> In this respect, they share a family resemblance with other memorials, such as Maya Lin’s

25 On Ellis Island and at *Pier 21* the ‘Walls of Honor’ function at the same time as part of the fundraising campaigns for the museums. Everyone who donates 150 US or 250 Canadian dollars, respectively, is entitled to have their names engraved on the walls, be they immigrants, the descendants of immigrants or neither. The installation is thus a weird amalga-

mination of a commodified/democratized memorial and oversized donors plaque. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 181 scathing criticism of the underlying symbolic operation is only too appropriate: “The ease with which one can sign on to the American Immigrant Wall of Honor, however, obscures the very real obstacles to obtaining a visa and green card.”

famous Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., and reflect an overarching trend in modern memorial design. The abstract form that relies solely on the names precludes any of the debates about inclusion or exclusion that routinely ensue when more figurative forms are involved.<sup>26</sup> What is more, the memorials fulfill a dual function by presenting the names of individuals: on the one hand, they allude to the individual dimension and experience of migration and to the diversity of cultural backgrounds. The strict order of the alphabetical list, on the other hand, inserts the individual names into a unifying pattern in which these individualities are collectively transformed into a larger whole. Through the memorials and their lists of names, historical immigrants are incorporated into the master narrative and an imagined community of the immigrant nation. Beyond their function as visual metaphors, the memorials display a decidedly performative quality, which to no small degree secures the ongoing actualization of their symbolic meaning. They have become sites of inconspicuous, quiet rituals, repeated on a daily basis, a million times: visitors, often the descendants of immigrants, search the lists of names, and sometimes point to particular entries or even trace them with their fingers. By touching the names, they are not only paying tribute to individual immigrants, usually their own ancestors, they are also getting ‘in touch’ with the nation. The gestures transcend the individual or family dimension, becoming rituals of national belonging.

At the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* and *Pier 21*, the ‘common experience’ of immigration expressed and constructed in these forms of display is literally superimposed with the symbolism of the nation. The permanent exhibit at *Pier 21*, for instance, concludes with a short movie that presents pictures of a large number of apparently culturally diverse Canadians. Their portraits eventually merge into a colorful mosaic which, to the strains of ‘O Canada,’ slowly metamorphoses into the Canadian flag.<sup>27</sup> An installation at the center of the final exhibit on Ellis Island, called the ‘Flag of Faces,’ follows a very similar idea: it shows hundreds of portraits representing an ostensibly ‘colorful’ mix, despite the fact that images are black-and-white. When visitors walk by, however, the multiplicity of individual faces dissolves into the Stars and Stripes of the American flag. ‘Unity in diversity,’ ‘E pluribus unum’ – these representations are perfect metaphors of a neatly ordered and harmonious multicultural nation.

26 See for example the controversy about the statues of soldiers and nurses that were added to the original wall of names at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Sturken 1997, 66–70).

27 See Lechte and Bottomley 1993, 36 for criticism of such standard versions of visualizing multiculturalism (referring to the Australian context): “In many of the official representations of the multi-

cultural, a collection of faces – often of children – beams out at the viewer. These faces have all the features of the stereotype that common sense will use to refer each one to a particular cultural/racial grouping.” An image of cultural diversity then originates quasi cumulatively from a multitude of individual faces/identities envisioned as pure and visibly identifiable.

Through these kinds of displays, all three museums work at constructing and establishing a national master narrative of migration. Immigration is presented as the one shared and uniting experience. Such a narrative, to be sure, is explicitly directed against older forms of imagining the nation, against visions of cultural homogeneity or (Anglo-) conformity. The diversity of individuals and groups is openly acknowledged and underlined. The focus, however, is almost completely on cultural diversity, with other forms of societal differences, be they along lines of class, race<sup>28</sup> or political agenda, or the result of social or gender inequality, disappearing from view, giving rise to a noticeable culturalization of social issues.<sup>29</sup> ‘Heritage dissonances’ and the potentially centrifugal tendencies within multicultural societies – or, rather, the centrifugal tendencies and conflicts in late modern societies, which tend to appear in cultural disguise under conditions of multiculturalism – are at once both framed and contained. Thus the potential for de-centering and de-stabilizing the concept of nation inherent in the transnational phenomenon of migration is turned into its opposite and made useful for the regeneration and revitalization of nation-state thinking.

#### 4 Complications

It would be misleading, however, to assume that a national master narrative of migration could be staged without additional qualifications or opposition. I will, therefore, point to a few instances where the construction of an overarching and all-encompassing migration narrative causes problems and briefly depict the ways in which the museums deal with these.

The first issue is a potential tension between the historic site at which and around which the history of immigration is told and the intended narrative itself. *Pier 21* may serve as a good example: the building of the former immigration station in Halifax harbor, which serves both to house the museum and as its narrative starting and focal point, is closely associated with a particular phase of immigration to Canada, namely the time between 1928 and 1971, when the immigration station was in active use. Focusing on this particular phase means that the museum can tell only a partial story and represent only one specific chapter of Canada’s migration history. One of the premises of national master narratives, however, is exactly that these narratives are able to transcend such limitations and aspire to some kind of generality in order to incorporate a maximum

28 For a sharp distinction between ethnicity/cultural diversity and race see Forest 2002. Stratton and Ang 1998 argue that race – which the displays tend to displace by ethnicity – constitutes the inherent “sign

of fracture” that forecloses the construction of harmonious national identities in settler societies by reference to colonial violence and trauma.

29 Kaschuba 1995.



of historic periods, individual experiences and social groups. The museum responds to this peculiar situation with a rhetorical sleight of hand. The gulf between the partial character of the place and the claim that the museum narrative incorporates everyone is bridged by the rhetorical figure of synecdoche. Museum brochures about the expansion of the museum declare:

When you step through the doors of Pier 21 you do not simply walk in the footsteps of the one million people who passed through this landmark between 1928 and 1971 – you also experience the emotions and feelings of every immigrant to this country, whether their journey brought them here 300 years ago or as recently as last week.<sup>30</sup>

Thus *Pier 21* is represented as standing *pars pro toto* for immigration to Canada as a whole. It is depicted as the nucleus of an immigration experience that is no longer confined to a particular phase or specific historical circumstances, but taken as universally valid within the national frame. The emotions and ‘first steps’ that are put on display in order to be re-enacted by the visitors no longer involve only the small group of people who actually passed through the building, but instead evoke a transhistorical universal immigrant. In this way, immigration to Canada that occurred or occurs at other times or places is written into the narrative of *Pier 21*, and concentrated, as it were, at this one place. The implications of this rhetorical operation are far-reaching. Highly disparate historical movements of people are brought together to form a harmonious whole. What is more, a positive light is also shed in this context on the colonization of North America, which is depicted as but one of many forms of welcome immigration.

A similar phenomenon can be observed at the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*. Writing about the narrative presented by the museum, which she compares to those of other sites associated with immigration history, such as the famous Plymouth Rock, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett rightly contends:

Sites long associated with a discrete historical experience and an exclusive set of participants, whether Pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock or immigrants coming through Ellis Islands, compete for the status of definitive master narrative. How shall the founding of the nation be told? Which site can be more inclusive, which is to say, more ‘democratic’? [...] Ellis Island, in a slick taxonomic move, has absorbed Plimoth. The rock is just another port of entry for just another group of immigrants.<sup>31</sup>

30 Pier 21 Media Kit, 2005, unpublished museum document of the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 (<https://www.pier21.ca/>).

31 Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, 200.

By virtue of its sheer size, its status of a de-facto national museum of immigration, and the expansion of the exhibit narrative far beyond the history of Ellis Island proper, the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* encompasses and subsumes not only the vast variety of different migration histories, but also the different places connected with them. In doing so, it produces not just a historical, but a structural narrative of immigrants coming through ‘one door’ – a narrative that, in turn, fuels the desire for a clear-cut, easily controllable border, which in present-day xenophobic discourse is said to be constantly under threat.<sup>32</sup>

It is not particularly surprising that a symbolic and historico-political operation of this kind does not always meet with unanimous consent. As an illustration of the conflicts that can arise – and thus a second complication associated with the construction and staging of a national master narrative of migration – I shall focus here on voices from the African American community in the context of the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* project. On the occasion of the centenary of the Statue of Liberty in July 1986 – when planning for the nearby *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* had reached its most intense stage – various representatives of that community expressed reservations concerning an all-inclusive narrative of immigration. Historian John Hope Franklin, for instance, programmatically distanced himself from an ‘imagined community’ of immigrants, asserting: “It’s a celebration for immigrants and that has nothing to do with me. I’m interested in it as an event, but I don’t feel involved in it.”<sup>33</sup> Such explicit indifference towards a history unrelated to one’s own, however, in many cases tipped into outspoken criticism. Along these lines, Atlanta’s then mayor Andrew Young voiced the widespread concern that an emphasis on the immigration narrative would displace the history of the slave trade and the experience of slavery, cornerstones of African American identity, and thus tend to cause public awareness of them to fade: “No one in the black community is really excited about the Statue of Liberty. We came here on slave ships, not via Ellis Island.”<sup>34</sup> A form of at least passive resistance against the subsumption and silencing of the very different migration heritage of African Americans, i.e. the slave trade, under a national master narrative of immigration at a site coded dominantly white and European can be detected in the very unenthusiastic response from African Americans to the repeated calls to lend or donate objects to the museum. To offset the meagerness of the donations and tell a broadly inclusive story despite the lack of response, the museum curators had no choice but to scatter the few objects relating to non-Europeans they did receive throughout the exhibits in order to achieve a maximum of visible diversity. This practice can be identified, for instance, in an exhibit called *Family Album* in which

32 See Baur 2007 for a more extensive discussion of images and imaginations of a ‘good’ and ‘clear-cut’ border as produced at the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* and *Pier 21*.

33 Smothers 1986, on 30 June 1986, *The New York Times*: A1.

34 Vecoli 1994, 68.

numerous photographs of immigrants are displayed. When one visitor wrote to the museum asking why the pictures of a Caribbean father and his daughter were presented not next to each other, but on opposite sides of the hall, the project manager scribbled an illuminating internal note: “I don’t know the specific photograph, but would not find it hard to believe that Meta-Form [the external curators, J.B.] may have stretched things a bit for the purpose of being inclusive rather than exclusive.”<sup>35</sup>

Finally, a third complication of a national master narrative of migration in settler societies stems from the difficult relationship between such narratives and the histories and perspectives of the indigenous part of the population, or – as Ann Curthoys<sup>36</sup> has described it in the Australian context – the “uneasy conversation” between “the multicultural and the indigenous.” The problem is evident: indigenous peoples, whether Aborigines or Native Americans, are by definition non-immigrants, and they cannot be reinterpreted as such – particularly in view of their legitimate political and material claims, for example for the restitution of land – although there have been attempts to do exactly that through references to prehistoric migrations.<sup>37</sup> Here, the integrative potential of the migration narrative, no matter how inclusive it may attempt to be, clearly reaches its limit. While a majority of the American, Canadian and Australian society can be narratively absorbed under the sign of the ‘universal immigrant,’ the role of the indigenous groups and individuals are systematically written out of the national community in such narratives. Indigenous peoples always remain the Other in a master narrative of migration, the constitutive outside of the immigrant nation. What is more, in contrast to indigenous perspectives, a largely affirmative master narrative of migration ultimately places even the colonization of North America and Australia, as a form of early immigration, in a positive light.

There are very different ways in which the three museums respond to this kind of challenge: *Museum Pier 21* completely excludes any reference whatsoever to indigenous perspectives and experiences, which though it may be consistent with the museum’s narrow focus on the twentieth century, is certainly not in line with the much more comprehensive claim to transhistorical relevance, which I discussed earlier. For its part, the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* acknowledges the fact that for Native Americans “contact with Europeans brought disease, warfare, removal to reservations, and destruction of the traditional ways of life.” However, these crimes are framed and overwritten by a generally positive narrative of immigration in the larger context of the exhibit. As part

35 Gary Roth to Diana Pardue, 16/08/1991, Ellis Island Archives, Cadwallader/Roth court Hearings, Box 3.

36 Curthoys 2000.

37 Attempts to redefine indigenous peoples as Ummigrants and thus eligible for incorporation into a long history of immigration have routinely met

with rejection and protest by indigenous groups. For an example from the Australian context, namely Australia’s Bicentenary in 1988 when such conflicts over interpretation erupted, see Cochrane and Goodman 1992.

of the ‘pageant of immigration’, celebrated by the introductory text and the museum at large, it is the colonizers, and not the traumata of the colonized, that form the basis of the tradition. The *Immigration Museum* in Melbourne is the only one of the three museums to include references to the history and perspectives of indigenous people in various parts of its permanent exhibit, thus establishing the image of complex histories of contact and conflict. By occasionally presenting two different or opposing points of view, the museum at least hints at the fact that the celebrated master narrative of migration is but one specifically positioned version of national history.

## 5 Conclusion: narrating migration – narrating the nation?

Immigration museums are laboratories for the narrative (self) portrayal of multicultural societies and productive fields for the study of (national) identity work under conditions of cultural diversity. The trend towards the establishment of such museums is an important and overdue thematic expansion of the museum landscape. The emergence of this new type of museum signals the opening of museums for a wider spectrum of histories, people and groups (‘from below’). Immigration museums put the experiences and memories of migrants center stage – aspects that have long been marginalized even in the classic immigrant countries. As such they prominently acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity and their widespread formation may be welcomed as an impulse to further democratize museum representations.

In the analysis of three existing immigration museums in the United States, Canada and Australia, however, I have tried to point out a tendency that I see as problematic or at least ambivalent. On the basis of the three case studies, one can reach the conclusion that immigration museums tend to confine the history and movement of migration within a national frame. What is more, by constructing and staging a national master narrative of migration within their displays in their effort to manage and contain ‘heritage dissonances’, the transnational energies and memories of migration are made useful for the re-centering and stabilization of the concept of nation. Such re-visions of the ‘imagined community’ may be more inclusive and multicultural than earlier versions oriented towards cultural homogeneity,<sup>38</sup> but they nevertheless produce, as I have argued, specific exclusions. Moreover, as in any kind of consensus nationalism, they also tend to promote the hegemonic cover-up of social inequalities and conflicts. To abandon – in view of the transnational phenomenon of migration – the exhibits’ “methodological nationalism”<sup>39</sup> and to liberate the museums’ representation of migration history from its confining frame would be an important and worthwhile step forward.

38 Stratton and Ang 1998.

39 Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002.

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