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History and Histories: Shared and Unshared Sites of Memory

Theories of history

The notion of history (ἱστορία) has two basic interpretations: 1) History understood as casus or empery, as a living process and flow of historical events, peoples and deeds, located in a space and within a certain time framework (cursus temporum); in this case, we speak of a historical past, historical reality, i.e., the history of past deeds (res gestae, historia rerum gestarum). 2) History understood as a linguistic act (res verbae, rerum verbum, a story about the past as it was told, Geschichte). Res verbae is a kind of interpretation of the past and its archive of traces (oral and written stories). In that sense, history is a story (mythos), or rather a set of stories, a narrative historical memory, consciousness and reflection; thus, we speak of a historiographical science and its complementary genres: academic papers, chronicles, memoirs, letters, myths and legends, historiographical narratives.

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There are many sides to this dynamic to be considered. First of all, these two sides of history are closely related:

> The notion of *History* unites the objective with the subjective side, and denotes quite as much the *historia rerum gestarum* as the *res gestae* themselves; on the other hand, it comprehends not less what has *happened* than the *narrative* of what has happened. This union of the two meanings we must regard as of a higher order than mere outward accident; we must suppose that historical narratives have appeared contemporaneously with historical deeds and events. It is an internal vital principle common to both that produces them synchronously. (Hegel, 2008, p. 145)

But there are many concepts and aspects that are crucial to the awareness of their differences. Hegel distinguishes three modes of historical writing: original (written in the past, at the same historical moment), reflective (written afterwards and fragmentary) and philosophical ("[…] the Philosophy of History means nothing but the thoughtful consideration of it"; Hegel, 2008, p. 116).[1] The speculative philosophy of history considers two conceptions of history: the linear chronological one (inspired by the Christian concept of development) and the cyclical one (based on the Eastern philosophies and mythopoetic in its nature). The analytical or critical philosophy of history considers the narrative (Lorenz et al., 2021) and rhetorical aspects of history (White, 1973). In this context, Paul Ricœur explains the homonymy of the term 'history', introducing two particular notions: 'l'histoire-science' and 'l'histoire-récit'. He also differentiates history itself (die Geschishte selber) from historicity (l' historicité, die Geschichtlichkeit) (Ricœur, 2000, pp. 446, 480). On the one hand, there is the lost past filled with deeds and beings; on the other – the search for the lost past, research into remains and traces or, in fact, an understanding of the past and its meaning and role in the present/future. This distinction between History with a capital H and history with a lower-case h is introduced by Michel Foucault (1971) as a third conception of History (with a capital H), different from the one introduced by Hegel in his lectures during 1822, 1828, and 1830 (Hegel, 2008, pp. 113–152), which is related to our current historical *épistémè* (Han-Pile, 2005).

History/historiography is not free of illusions, especially when there is no authentic proof, so its revision might be a necessary correction. In that sense, historical discourse is a work in progress. Yet, sometimes revisions are

[1] G. W. Hegel's lectures on history at the University of Berlin in 1822, 1828 and 1830 were posthumously collected and published by his son Karl.

made because of political intentions, thus proving that "history is written by the victors" and that the discourse of history is a discourse of power. Theories of history are closely connected with hegemonic practices. The long Balkan experience of re-writing official narratives is a good example of the connection between hegemony (imperialism, colonialism), history, and histories. "Histories, like narratives in general, can foreground or exclude" (Chapman & Cassaithe, 2022), and national narratives, as 'official histories', can often mutate into "hegemonic expressions of existing value structures and worldviews of dominant groups in a society" (Berger & Lorenz, 2010).

Mythical vs. historical consciousness

Classifications are never simple and absolute. The distinction between mythical and historical consciousness thus contains at least two kinds of linguistic understandings and narrativizations of the past times (deeds, events, constellations): mythical and historical. This distinction is analogous to the duality of consciousness, its mythical and historical dimension.

1) "Primitive" historical consciousness is a complex archive of signs and is largely characterized by a mythical consciousness based on a mythical perception of the world and mythical memory. Mythical consciousness is an act of primitive, pre-rational reflection on the past, including recent reality. It is like a memory-history (Nora, 1989, p. 7). In the contemporary historiography, mythical memory is profane and used more frequently as an alibi for the current pseudo-histories and mystifications rather than creative activity. "Myth and history are essentially similar": there is no "sharp distinction between history and myth", but "the new boundary is still being negotiated" (Cruz & Frijhoff, 2020, p. 16). As a result, when historical myths are politically grounded, they lose their archaic iconography.

The mythical dimension of collective memory does not make national history meaningless. Legends, unlike historiography, when evoking a certain past event, do so in an ambiguous and metaphorical way. Such folk memories of the past are in accordance with the mythical understanding of the world and the genre conventions of oral or written national history: myths, fairy tales, legends, folk tales, historical novels or chronicles, books of travels, memoires, diaries, personal correspondence, biography, reports, classroom histories, or

other descriptions. History based on mythical consciousness raises cognitive scepticism and cannot replace historical consciousness. Yet, the "impossibility of distinguishing neatly between myth and history and the prevalence of myth-history in national histories" (Berger, 2009, p. 498) makes mythic consciousness a relevant factor in constructing nations and their historical narratives.

2) Historical consciousness is something between myth/legend and history. It is a marginalized notion, often replaced by inappropriate terms such as 'historical awareness' and 'historical education' (in Britain), or 'historical literacy' (in North America). From the German idealistic-phenomenological tradition to the American behaviouristic approach, historical consciousness has been an object of semantic substitution. However, information about history is not historical consciousness, and there is a difference between an inherited and a current historical consciousness. "People's relation to the past is not only a matter of formal education but a broad social phenomenon" (Ahonen, 2005, p. 699; Seixas, 2004). When interpreting historical events, one should take different historical consciousnesses into consideration. History is a matrix that generates endless reflections, images, fictions and illusions as to its authenticity. The historical past itself is a process and not a complete fact. This is so because the historical process is tightly linked to historical consciousness. In fact, the historical process cannot be imagined without historical consciousness, which is not a passive object but an efficient one: "Reflection is continuously involved in the historical process (…) the momentum of reflection is of its origin, besides being involved in the process. The separateness and correlation between consciousness and the process is an essential aspect of history" (Rotenstreich, 1987, p. 9).

Historical consciousness can be personal and collective, an "idiosyncratic mental construction" that includes collective memory, historical experience, culture of history, an ethical dimension (historical justice), and a "construction of stories of consecutive events and acts" as "a necessary asset in the orientation to life" (Ahonen, 2005, p. 700). The shared memory of transnational religious 'collective communities' is different from the memory of the 'imaginary' political national formations. The Orthodox Christian community in the Ottoman epoch known as 'Rum Millet' has shared places of memory that should not be exclusively seized by contemporary nation-states because they are a matter of system and category differences.

Archived, classified, documented and secularized historiography is of particular state interest. It is legitimized as a historical science and a complex

of scientific disciplines with a historical prefix: historiography, theory, philosophy and hermeneutics of history, general history of humankind, national and cultural history, the history of wars, the history of empires, the 'history of systems of thought' and discourses (Foucault, 1971, pp. 236–239). The sense of historical events is not determined and fixed in time and space. Historical science reconstructs the chronology and the logic of historical events. It creates an established chronology in which the historical consciousness suppresses the mythical one. It is not just a process of researching, selecting, verbalizing and narrativizing the historical past: it has more of the status of a (modern) social institution. Such institutionalized history gives or takes away the legitimacy of the current "politics of historical interpretation" of the past (White, 1982, p. 113). That history approaches the patrimonial archive of signs selectively instrumentalizes empirical facts; it adjusts the historical story of the current national, regional and global pragmatics, sometimes acquiring political dimensions and using mystifications of history (past eo ipso).

In fact, ethnic and national narratives mix mythical vision with historical perception. Regardless of whether the approach is mythopoetic or scientific, the past is absent, fragmented, filled with dark spaces, interruptions, and void places. Historical consciousness, both when it occurs as a mythical consciousness and when it is based on scientific methodology, always faces the fact that the image of the past is sensitive and unstable. First, even historical contemporaries are not devoid of their internal consciousness, accompanied by a certain verbalization. Second, in whatever form stories are told, they are not strictly realistic or true to historical reality. Therefore, there is always a risk of the past being represented unrealistically and historiography being mixed with fiction, thus becoming mystified.

Metahistory and metahistoriography

Different interpretations of 'past deeds and beings' use different paradigms (epistemology, methodology) in order to make history ethnic, national, transnational, and official. That is why there are both fictional myth-stories and non-fictional or factual (empirical) history: mythomania and factomania. When writing national history, historians have a double role: to be myth-breakers and myth-makers (Berger & Lorenz, 2010). They represent different perceptions

of the past and of the existing and official history, so historical knowledge is metahistorical: history of history. The complexity of historical knowledge related to the metahistorical approach generates some conflicting perceptions and interpretations of the same past and motivates a certain revision of official narratives.

The historiographical paradigm went through a major epistemological transformation due to Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004), who emphasized the linguistic character of the understanding of history and established a new hermeneutics of history (written tradition, written history, vs. 'past 'history'), and Francois Lyotard (1979), who showed that there are no fixed and constant historical stories but a myriad of historical variants. Historiography is not a register of national aspirations but refers to the absent past, the present archives of artifacts, traces of past civilizations, and times with different systems of moral, religious, social, political, and human values. The historiographical approach is an introduction to historical hermeneutics, for clearly facts cannot tell the truth by themselves: they have a meaning that is initiated in the context of the original historical context and are reimagined as part of new historical contexts that require new aspects, new methodological paradigms, new interpreting subjects and, finally, a new focus of interest. Even though historical science refers to traces, remains and fragments, it is established as a description – an interpretation and understanding of those remains in wider social constellations. As a result, the most elementary descriptive positivism contains, at least implicitly, elements of historical hermeneutics. Historicism is not just a presentation of facts but strives for the reconstruction of a certain event, period or social environment of the past (mentality, ideology, religious, moral, and aesthetic ideals).

Previous historiographical sources become an important source of the new historical research, along with authentic artifacts and narratives. Metahistory is a history of history writing and a history of historical consciousness (White, 1973). Narrative metahistory and basic historiography make (postmodern) metahistoriography, the role of which is to constantly criticise the established historiographic perceptions, narratives, blind-spots, and installations of the historical mise-en-scène (Wilson, 2013, pp. 32–56). Metahistoriography is especially applicable on the regional and local history level. The historical system of knowledge is not only multifocal but also multidisciplinary and multimedial, which provides many diverse methods of description and interpretation of facts and sources, including their authenticity, and particularly their

social, political and cultural impact. The conservative constraints of dogmatism, national megalomania and exclusive misinterpretation of historical and cultural heritage are conflicting interpretative paradigms. Balkan history is an illuminative example of the phenomenon of antagonistic interpretation and misinterpretation of the past and its shared and unshared places of memory: on the one hand, it is a set of multiple explicit national narratives; on the other, it is one implicit transnational/consensual narrative.

Semiotic vs. semantic reading of history

If history is a system of signs, then it should be interpreted as a discourse – semiotically (the principle of explicit and implicit similarity), and not simply semantically (over-interpreted) – as a story (Eco, 1992). Interpretation, which follows the development of past events with curiosity, linearly, and causally, is not sufficient to understand the historical process. To understand history, a semiotic research is needed as an act of remembering, discovering, collecting in archives, narrating, writing, reading, and evaluating its texture. Making histories of history is, in fact, creating histories about history. History is structured as multiple histories-in-history. On the other hand, historiography can be dogmatic while serving nation-building processes. Semiotic interpretation detects not only the facts and creates not only the story but also the strategies of performing history. The historical past is filled with entropy and must therefore be clarified and explained in its original constellation and in the actual interpretative context. The excess noise may be part of the historical charm, making it mythic, mysterious, enigmatic, secret, so the historian is in the position of a detective who is supposed to discover the "culprit".

The historical process does not bear arbitrary interpretations (improvisations) for it has its own logic. To understand the past, historiography must rid itself of imagological prejudice and political pragmatism. Understanding history means understanding the language of history, which is iconic and secret, or multilingual. However, even secret languages have their own code, their systems of rules and can, therefore, be decoded. History would not qualify as the 'mother of knowledge' if it had no repetitiveness and rules. History is predictable. It is just necessary to know the historical causalities and methods. Consequently, in order to understand the meaning of current events and pre-

vent future ones, it is vital to know history. In the very essence of understanding, history is the maxim: what has been will be again: not so much because of the cyclical nature of history, but because of the rules of the historical process.

Whatever the interpretative approach to the historical past is – mythopoetic or scientific – the past itself is absent and fragmentary, filled with interruptions with dark and empty spaces. Any type of historical consciousness (subject) is faced with the fact that not only is the image of the past variable, but the historical consciousness (the subject) is also variable. The mega historical constants are visible not in the micro context but transhistorically, from a certain chronological, philosophical, and ideological distance. In whatever form history is narrated, there is always the risk of representing it in an unrealistic or imaginary manner, mixing fiction and facts. Thereby, history is a matrix that constantly generates reflections, images, and illusions of reality. It is closely related to the narrator and his narratives, regardless how big (mega) or small they are. In search of the cyclic principles of history, semiotic interpretation faces various pragmatic signs and signatures, ethnic and national stories, local and global interests.

History, identity, and nation

The humanities can fill in the gaps and dark places of the historical past, as well as the national history, but only if they have at their disposal sufficient facts that will enable the establishing of the documented diachrony and chronology, giving them an appropriate additional logic – anthropological, mythological, religious, national and political. Combined with documented facts, national history can establish the (imaginary) continuity of the historical process (Leerssen, 2010, pp. 71–85).

Paradoxically, even though historians pretend to be scientific "myth-breakers", national historians are predominantly "myth-makers". It seems that constructing the official national narrative declared in the constitution of a country means integrating mythical and historical times. A national narrative is essential for the national identity and the historical consciousness (Gyáni, 2016). The role of the narrative is to build the feeling of belonging to the same nation, sharing the official story for the collective history.

This is the birth of modern national historiography: "development of the genre of national history writing in Europe, in particular, seeks to eliminate the relationship between history writing and the construction of national identities

in modern Europe" (Berger, 2015, p. IX). If peoples construct nations through the production of historiography (Berger, 2015, pp. 285–379), national historiography is an important factor of influence in constructing modern states. Recognizing one state means recognizing its constitution, its nation, its political and cultural background, and its official state language. If this is not the case, the act of formal recognition is problematic and is, in fact, a misrecognition (the case with the para-recognition of the Republic of Macedonia by Bulgaria in 1991).

The fact that national histories are initially based on a combination of mythical and factual sources is not problematic per se (Berger, 2009, pp. 490–502). However, when the mythomaniacal perception predominates, when a narcissistic perception of one's own nation occurs, then the national narrative becomes a potential source of hegemony. Such situations happen more frequently at local and regional levels, rather than globally. The modern Nordic nations avoided political conflict between each other by avoiding the creation of supremacist narratives and allowing for the simultaneous existence of different perspectives of interpreting their national identities, of the shared places of memory, or of the historical zones of cultural and political contact between nations, states and territories.

The modern Balkan nations, on the contrary, have not reached a consensus of a similar kind, leaving space for the cyclic actualization of nationalistic supremacy. Balkan national identities are formed in correlation with one another as a mutual reply, by negation, assimilation, revision and conversion. What, during the 19th and 20th centuries, was created as a national construct – recognized and legitimized by constitutional and international agreements – once again becomes the subject of revision. The national identity process is hypersensitive in its incompleteness. As such, it projects its internal conflicts onto the national plane, in relation to the identity of the neighbouring nations and in relation to the status of its own national minorities.

Shared and unshared history

The historical past must not be underestimated or relativized and must not be appropriated by others nor conceded to others; so-called shared places of memory are different from common history and, more importantly, are less of an alibi for cultural hegemony (Kulavkova, 2021, pp. 7–20), called 'ethnocide' in science, which is different from 'genocide' and refers to forms of ultimate

ethnic, religious and cultural conversion (Comte-Sponville, 2013, p. 368). Some people have always found themselves at these shared sites of contact, carrying on their personal histories as individuals, families, communities, or even nations. Yet, simultaneously, other more general histories are happening at those same sites of contact, so realities become intermingled and a shared world is created that is filled with all those 'sites of memory'.

The Balkan history contains a) shared, and b) unshared sites of memory, so it is legitimate to speak of a shared and an unshared history/past. The shared Balkan history is reflection of the grand Mediterranean and European imperial narratives. The image of Southeast Europe is not equal to the stereotypical image of the Balkans. The unshared Balkan history is an indication of a diverse native, ethnic, mythic, religious, linguistic, and cultural patrimony. Shared and unshared sites of memory, being complementary and conflicting at the same time, have been interpreted differently in postimperial times. Narcissistic Balkan narratives have created many hypersensitive ethnocentric identities, especially after the establishing of the new independent nation-states in the 19th century.

Different interpretations of shared historical heritage sometimes have the intention of adopting the heritage of the Other, particularly the heritage of the neighbouring Other, but history is neither a private nor an ultimately national possession. Yet, the post-imperial adoption of the shared Balkan history is still a reality, and a coalition of fragmented histories is possible. So, in the third decade of the 21st century, the question of Balkan priority is how to make an intercultural Balkan history based on a tolerant interpretative coalition?

Macedonia as a shared site of Balkan history

In this theoretical context, the perception of "Macedonia" as a multiple, inclusive and specific 'continuum in space and time' gives an opportunity to interpret the Macedonian political and cultural heritage in its widest context: from prehistory to national historiography, outside political, state, and even regional borders; from the Balkan to the global context, and outside the strict thematic and interpretative frames, both factually and mythically. The contemporary context needs to be reflected in the history and vice versa.

The Balkan issue is not exhausted by the Macedonian issue, just like the Macedonian issue is not merely a Balkan issue. The history of the Mace-

donian territory is not equal to the separate and fragmented histories of the national historiography of Balkan states that share the Macedonian territory and cultural heritage. Still, when the Macedonian issue is raised, all the other Balkan issues are also raised, especially those regarding neighbourly relations and sites where history was and is happening – the zones of contact among the Balkan ethnicities, languages, traditions, and cultures. To give an answer to the (so cold) "Macedonian issue" is not easy. Instead of an answer, a list of exceptional indications of the Macedonian national identity – more confused than ever before – will be mentioned.

How to tell the history of Macedonia when the term 'Macedonia' is a homonym with multiple meanings, an example of an entropic text (Wilkinson, 1951)? If we look at the different types of historical narrative – 1) ethno-geographical (territorial), 2) ethno-cultural, and 3) state (political/national) – they can be applied to analysis of the Macedonian issue as follows:

1) Territorially, Macedonia has been fragmented several times throughout history, changing its original ethno-geographical entity, its administrative-political affiliation and its identity attributes: as an ancient empire, as a Roman province, as a Byzantine sclavinia, as an Ottoman vilayet, as an annexed part of the Bulgarian principality (3.03.1878 to 13.07.1878), as an autonomy within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, as an occupied territory during the Second World War, as the Socialist Republic of Macedonia within the Yugoslav Federation, as an independent state, and as the Republic of North Macedonia. Confusion is also caused by the division of the Macedonian territory by the Treaty of Bucharest (1913), when it was further fragmented and assigned to several neighbouring states: Greece (Greek or Aegean Macedonia), Serbia (Vardar Macedonia), Bulgaria (Pirin Macedonia) and Albania (Tesser, 2012, p. 23).

2) The ethno-cultural concept of history refers to the Macedonian entity in a narrower, ethnic sense, and in a wider geographical one, thereby covering a spatial and time continuum beyond the borders of the Macedonian state. The Macedonian ethnos has been subjected to violent and non-violent (legal, voluntary) assimilation and conversion since the disintegration of the ancient Macedonian empire. In some time periods it was subjected to oblivion; in the 19th century, it was exposed to powerful assimilatory propaganda, and from 1944 to 2001 it was nationally and internationally legally established. As the Macedonian political consciousness became articulated, the resistance against a Macedonian political autonomy increased. In the 21st century, the Macedonian national identity is defined depending

on which national context is used. For example, articles 1 (line 3), 7 and 8 of the so-called Prespa Agreement (*The Prespa Agreement*, 2017) allow Macedonians in Greece and even ethnic Greeks to declare themselves descendants of the Macedonians of the ancient kingdom of Macedonia and their Hellenic cultural history, whereas the Macedonians in the "Republic of North Macedonia" (the new name of the country and its new internationally legal identity since February 12, 2019) do not possess such national, cultural and historical rights.

3) The political approach refers to the Macedonian state and its supra-ethnic or national history. It initiated the officialization of the confusing semantics of the term 'Macedonian nation'. The Prespa Agreement describes the Macedonian language as 'Slavic' so as not to be mixed with ancient Macedonian (Kalléris, 1954). It created the impression that Macedonians are acknowledged for their medieval Slavic history (Vaillent, 1938). However, the latest political interpretations of history initiated by Bulgaria question even Macedonian Macedonians' right to a medieval ethno-cultural history.

Bulgaria promotes the notion of "Macedonian Bulgarians" and does not recognize the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. The very idea of a Macedonian national continuum in space and time (people, language, culture, folklore, religious tradition) is disrupted. This confusing new narrative is reflected in the identity of the Macedonian nation and delegitimizes the inherited cultural and the acquired political identity of the Macedonian nation. For example, national institutions are not allowed to use the attribute 'Macedonian'. The rhetorical question is can there be a nation without national institutions and identity attributes? Contemporary narcissistic politics are a reflection of an arbitrary interpretation of history. Macedonia is an example of an excessive historical and political arbitrariness.

Narcissistic, consensual, and transnational interpretation of history: The Balkan case

Balkan history could be articulated as a) an imperial history (Ancient, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman); b) a national history of new nation-states; c) a history of multiethnic states; d) a history of ethno-geographic territories; e) an intercultural Balkan history; f) a history of Balkan wars; g) a history of Balkan religious, ethnic and linguistic conversions.

Historical narratives of Southeast Europe (Balkans) have two sides: imperial (colonial) and ethno-national, written between big mega-narratives and small, fragmented narratives. These two options are constantly possible in the Balkans: to be integrated and to be disintegrated. The options are debalkanization or balkanization of the Balkan region with its Slavic and non-Slavic populations. With both major or minor national and cultural differences, the Balkans have always been a liminal, borderline Euro-Mediterranean zone, and a historically and geopolitically extraordinary story.

There are three interpretative approaches to history that are particularly important for the Balkans: 1) narcissistic, 2) consensual, and 3) pluralist (empathic, intercultural). The first is mostly practiced; the second is probably not real in the actual circumstances, and the third is still latent, but if it becomes real, it could bring long-term benefits, such as prosperity and peace.

1) The narcissistic interpretation of history is an ethnocentric, nationalistic, obsessed, supremacist, exclusive, megalomaniacal, mythomaniacal and violent option. It has been the dominant interpretative policy over the last two centuries in Southeast Europe and produces conflicting relations between states and peoples. Historical expansionism is the other face of "territorial expansion" (Tesser, 2012, p. 3). The narcissistic interpretation of the shared and unshared Balkan history produces many misinterpretations and misrecognitions among the Balkan nations and states. Balkan nation-building nationalism is narcissistic, which means it is basically myth-historical, distorted, romantic, and linguistic (Dimitras, 2000, p. 2). It is so distorted, multiplied, antagonistic, and adoptive that it is difficult to unite it in one regional narrative.

2) The consensual interpretation of history is a theoretically ideal but pragmatically utopist solution that is important for regions with shared historical heritage. As long as there are expansionist and hegemonic pretensions, the adoptive narcissistic interpretation of the shared past will make a shared historical consensus impossible. A consensual option of a shared Balkan history, for instance, could rewrite or write new a colonial narrative. Endless negotiations that become endless interpretations of history are potentially a source of new conflicts. The actualization of the discourse of the autochthon/native origin of the Balkan ethnicities has made the great historical consensus unrealistic alternative.

3) The transnational interpretation of history is like a coalition of variable narcissistic national/state histories. Such a pluralistic and empathetic interpretation of shared sites of history could create conditions for a mag-

nanimous and beneficial historical narrative and consciousness that are free of the hegemonic syndrome and imagological prejudice. The shared and unshared Balkan history gives the opportunity to make an intercultural coalition of historical writings, memories and narratives. A historical platform deprived of narcissistic supremacy might be a solution for a less conflictual reading of history. This would be a balanced, noble, self-reflexive and inclusive interpretive strategy that would advocate for the coexistence of different non-conflicting national narratives. The conflicting regional reality seeks a new historical paradigm. Over-national and over-interpreted histories need to be rationalized. The notion of a shared historical patrimony that is distant from ethnically bordered histories might be a good option for a new, inclusive, tolerant, transnational perception of both past and present times (White, 1982, pp. 32–56). Being at the same time beyond and inside state and national borders, historical patrimony is more regional and less sensitive to local political misinterpretations. History is a palimpsest: a unity of narrated, written, and secret deleted manuscripts. The integrative role of history should be activated in order to promote a pluralistic, empathetic intercultural and transnational interpretative strategy. Theoretically, and practically.

Translated by Ana Kečan & Jasmina Ilievska-Marjanović

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Historia i historie: Wspólne i niewspólne miejsca pamięci

Artykuł poświęcony jest kwestii nowoczesnej historii/historiografii jako transdyscyplinarnemu systemowi wiedzy i świadomości mitycznej, historycznej i metahistorycznej. Pytanie dotyczy tego, w jaki sposób można ustanowić równowagę między etnocentrycznymi, supremacjonistycznymi, megalomańskimi i często arbitralnymi narracjami; jak można uniknąć nadinterpretacji historii w ramach regionów? Niniejszy artykuł koncentruje się na trzech strategiach interpretacyjnych: narcystycznej (narodowej, wyłącznej), konsensualnej (idealistycznej) i ponadnarodowej (pluralistycznej, inkluzywnej). Współistnienie wspólnych i niewspólnych miejsc bałkańskiej pamięci może być pretekstem nie tylko dla różnych narracji etnocentrycznych, ale także dla narracji postnarodowej lub ponadnarodowej opartej na empatycznej świadomości historycznej. „Macedonia" była w przeszłości i nadal jest niezwykłym przykładem nadinterpretowanego miejsca wspólnej i niewspólnej bałkańskiej historii. Im bardziej „Macedonia" staje się czynnikiem integrującym bałkańskie wspomnienia i historie, tym bardziej staje się przedmiotem niespójnych interpretacji.

Słowa kluczowe: historia; świadomość mityczna; świadomość historyczna; narracja; narcyzm; konsensualizm; interpretacja ponadnarodowa; niewspólne miejsca pamięci; Bałkany; Macedonia

History and histories: Shared and unshared sites of memory

The paper is devoted to the issues of modern history/historiography as a transdisciplinary system of mythical, historical, and metahistorical knowledge and consciousness. The question is how can a balance be established among the ethnocentric, supremacist, megalomaniac, and, often, arbitrary narratives; how can the over-interpretation of history within regional frames be avoided? This paper focuses on three interpretative strategies: narcissistic (national, exclusive), consensual (idealistic), and transnational (pluralist, inclusive). The co-existence of shared and unshared sites of Balkan memory can be a pretext not only for diverse ethnocentric narratives but also for a post-national or transnational narrative based on an empathetic historical consciousness. 'Macedonia' was in the past and still is an extraordinary example of an over-interpreted site of shared and unshared Balkan history. The more 'Macedonia' becomes a factor in integrating Balkan memories and histories, the more it becomes a subject of incoherent interpretations.

Keywords: history; mythical consciousness; historical consciousness; narrative; narcissistic; consensual; transnational interpretation; unshared sites of memory; the Balkans; Macedonia

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