

seek certain discontinuities. One example would be the Christian-Social Party (Christlichsoziale Partei – ChSP) which in 1890s disclosed a strong inclination toward formulating its political strategy around a confessional identity. Thereby, its notion of politicality nowise precluded (the) 'Slavs'. Next, I would look more attentively, and perhaps from a different angle, at the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Austria (Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei Österreichs – SDAPÖ). Is it true, following Siadkowski's idea, that those did not form an alternative image of Galicia? Another thing is that the problems or issues the author refers to are not at all an exhaustive catalogue of the Viennese public opinion's attitudes toward Galicia and the Poles. Gossip played a part of importance, which fact was not quite detected, or perhaps merely overlooked, by the author. It is without a big risk that one may claim that the world of rigid clichés and stereotypes started wavering at moments of political crises. Not at all such moments was the Poles' position uniform, which must have contributed to the way they were perceived.

One more strong point of the Marcin Siadkowski book is respect for the predecessors, that is, historians researching into the stereotypes and political culture of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The treatise now fills in a gap in historical research, unidentified until recently, while also showing the benefactions of a research attitude consisting in a skilful discussion not only around the posed exploratory queries but also around the theses and findings 'domesticated' within the historiography. Apart from some concept-related doubts already enumerated, the analytical work calls for high appraisal. The author has skilfully tackled the extensive input material, producing in effect an excellent introduction to a multilayered afterthought on the image of Poles in the Habsburg monarchy. This up-and-coming scholar definitely deserves attention.

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Moritz Csáky, *Das Gedächtnis der Städte. Kulturelle Verflechtungen – Wien und die urbanen Milieus in Zentraleuropa*, Wien, Köln and Weimar, 2010, Böhlau Verlag, 417 pp., bibliog., index

Urbanisation processes are one of the fundamental experiences of modernity. Until recently, the urban studies discourse had encompassed mainly such issues as progress, the dynamics of social life or the risks facing the individual. Its connotations had more in common with the present and the future than the past. The otherwise self-evident fact that 'history takes place'¹ has

¹ Karl Schlögel, 'Spatial Turn. Endlich', in *idem*, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit. Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik* (Munich, 2003), 68.

only recently become recognised as a fully-fledged scientific problem. That has become possible largely due to the explosion of two paradigms: a demand for memory, not infrequently called the memory boom, and the spatial turn.

Seeing the city as a transmitter of memory has intensified in the last years – particularly with regards to Central European towns. It was there that twentieth-century history made its exceptional imprint, leaving many traces which today, with the gradual passing away of the witnesses, have to be read by younger generations. Thus, city space reveals empty plots left by houses that have been bombed down, walls with old bullet holes, almost ineligible inscriptions in foreign languages. Still, not only war and evictions have left their mark there, but also later changes: pre-war architecture intermingles with socialist buildings and communist heroes have vanished from their pedestals. Central European cities also perfectly record the most recent transformations: old commercial murals painted on front elevations are being replaced with mobile banners, promoting that or other product.²

Against the background of the currently predominant urban memory concepts, based mainly on the assumption of cultural memory (Jan and Aleida Assmann), is Moritz Csáky's approach. He concentrates on the city spaces of Central-Eastern Europe – which he calls Central Europe – from around 1900. Among the cities he discusses are Vienna (as the focal point of the analysis), as well as Budapest, Bratislava, Trieste, Ljubljana, Chernivtsi and Prague. The places are distinguished by their trans-boundary, multinational, multi-language and finally: multicultural character. The cities of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire were at the time a meeting-point of people of different origins, who shaped the social and cultural life and, as a consequence, also the memory of those areas. When looking at the phenomena characteristic of urban modernity, Csáky places an emphasis on the merging of ethnic and national cultures. Central-Eastern Europe is to him a perfect laboratory for such an analysis, as many communities met there, speaking different languages, professing different religions and formed by different traditions. What proved to be a problem for such a dynamic cultural melting-pot, though, was communication. It is obvious that the elites in the Austrian-Hungarian towns spoke German. Additionally, most artists, journalists, scientists, lawyers, doctors, etc., also spoke their own national languages: Hungarian, Czech, Slovenian, Polish, Yiddish, etc. (if one could at all differentiate the mother tongue from the non-native language). The cultural memory of those towns has thus been evoked in a multi-lingual literature and in the local press, published in different languages.

Although Csáky concentrates on literary and journalistic life, there are nevertheless interesting interpolations on Central-East European music and

² Ella Chmielewska, 'Logos or the Resonance of Branding: A Close Reading of the Iconosphere of Warsaw', *Space and Culture*, viii, 4 (2005), 349–80.

cuisine. For what they have in common is the fact that neither cooking nor music require language. Hence, dishes and melodies easily transgressed the boundaries of ethnic and national communities and appeared 'under the thatches' – also in places where people spoke only their native tongue on account of their inferior social position. Thus, the memory of the multicultural urban spaces of Central-Eastern Europe at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been recorded in the recipes used till today for *knedle* (dumplings), goulashes and chocolate cakes, as well as in many music standards still played at New Year concerts by the Viennese philharmonic orchestra.

The city is to Csáky first and foremost a place where culture is created, where works of art (also culinary art), literature, journalism and music are born. The urban space involved, both material and – much more so – immaterial one, serve him to formulate a new definition of culture, which he terms 'communicative space' (*Kommunikationsraum*). Focusing on literature, journalism, autobiography, music and culinary examples, the author almost ignores the city iconosphere. Still, for the memory of Central-European cities, the architectural and visual dimension is equally important. What deserves special attention is the relation of collective memory to the evolution of urban iconography, beginning with the turn of the twentieth century.³ The opulence of the spatial iconosphere was at the time noted by Walter Benjamin with an almost prophetic consistence: 'Writing which had found an asylum in the printed book, where it led an autonomous existence, is unavoidably cast out onto the street by advertising and subjected to the brutal heteronomies of the brutal economic chaos'.⁴ Although one could presume that the transient iconosphere of advertisements and sounds deafened by the urban hubbub has not been – contrary to literature, architecture and culinary art – a particularly long-lasting means of conveying collective memory, yet it is just that memory of the modern city that makes today's post-modern cities dominated by visual and audiovisual media facades.

How are we to translate such observations into research practices? The analyses of the memories of Central-East European towns and cities proposed by Csáky can be supplemented with an architectural dimension. The 'cultural interweaving' (*kulturelle Verflechtungen*, as Csáky calls the result of inter-cultural communication) of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, Budapest or Prague could presumably be also seen in their city plans, architectural designs or photographs. Undoubtedly, the mobility of the modernist architects, their

³ See i.a. Anne Friedberg, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern* (Berkeley, 1993); Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2001).

⁴ Walter Benjamin, 'Attested Auditor of Books', in *idem*, *One-Way Street, and Other Writings* (London, 1979), 62.

mutual contacts, study at the same colleges made architectural inspirations spread just as culinary recipes and musical motifs were interpenetrating. We could, for instance, make the biography and designs of the Ljubljana-born architect Jože Plečnik (indeed a couple of times mentioned in the book) the subject of such an analysis, as he worked not only in his hometown but also in Graz, Vienna and Prague. It would also be worthwhile to look more closely at the transient elements of the urban iconosphere from around 1900: architectural details, advertisements, shop signs, the programmes of wandering and stationary cinemas (it should be remembered that the language barrier did not exist in the early years of the cinema), newspaper illustrations, etc. Putting it shortly, parallel to the cultural phenomena discussed by Csáky, there also existed a huge space of popular urban visual culture.

What is the chief merit of Csáky's book? He first of all supplies empirical arguments to the reflections on the connections between memory, the city and modernity. The work to a great extent retains the 'media' paradigm of memory, as communication, language and also writing (through many references to regional literature and journalism) are important concepts in it. Csáky stresses also the role of the multicultural Bohemians and avant-garde in shaping the culture of Central-Eastern Europe around 1900. From among the numerous works in German on the memory of different Central-East European towns,⁵ Csáky's is the only one to introduce a comparative perspective, confronting different places and, further, presenting the influence of the memory of other Central European cities on shaping the multicultural melting-pot in Vienna. The author sets alongside different sources, stresses the role of music, which is very rare in the reflection on modern cities. He at the same time uses a very ample archival material (e.g., demographic data), thus developing the tools of his trans-disciplinary work, which lays the foundations of his theory of culture as communicative space.

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⁵ See i.a. Karl Schlögel, *Petersburg. Das Laboratorium der Moderne 1909–1921* (Munich, 2002); Gregor Thum, *Die fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945 und danach* (Munich, 2003); Per Brodersen, *Die Stadt im Westen: wie Königsberg Kaliningrad wurde* (Göttingen, 2008); Jan Musekamp, *Zwischen Stettin und Szczecin. Metamorphosen einer Stadt zwischen 1945 und 2005* (Wiesbaden, 2010); Felix Ackermann, *Palimpsest Grodno: Nationalisierung, Nivellierung und Sowjetisierung einer mitteleuropäischen Stadt 1919–1991* (Wiesbaden, 2011); Peter Oliver Loew, *Danzig. Biographie einer Stadt* (Munich, 2011).