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The Postmemorial Narrative of the Expulsion of the Sudeten Germans
in Czech Literature and Film.

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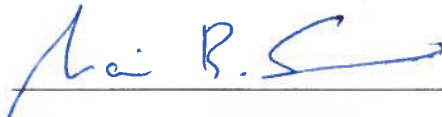
Finally, this thesis would not be possible without the support of my parents who instilled in me as a child the passion for literature. Thank you.

Declaration of Authorship

I confirm that this Master's dissertation is my own work and I have document all sources and material used.

This dissertation was not previously presented to another examination board and has not been published.

Prague, 27 July 2017

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marie B. Schwarz', written over a horizontal line.

Marie Bettine Schwarz

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I. Introduction

When Radka Denemarková's novel *Penize od Hitlera* ('Money from Hitler') was published in 2006, Filip Tomáš wrote in the weekly journal *A2*, that the novel raises the question of what 'our' fathers did after the war (Tomáš 2017). What could be observed was an evocative debate about the role of ordinary Czechs in the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans in the aftermath of the Second World War. Although the story of a German speaking Jew who is expelled by Czech people as a Nazi collaborator, is strictly fictional, testimonials of children with similar family histories of the expulsion wrote to Denemarková asking if the novel was based on the particular fate of their parents (Vaughan 2010).

During the 2013 Czech presidential election campaign Miloš Zeman, the Czech Social Democratic Party candidate, accused his opponent Karel Schwarzenberg of speaking as a 'sudet'ák' [Sudeten German, M.S.] and not as the president of the Czech Republic, after Schwarzenberg, who himself is of Habsburg German heritage, had stated that the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans following the Second World War would have been considered in the 21st century a crime against humanity (Hospodářské noviny 2013). Further, the outgoing president Václav Klaus declared that he could 'never forgive' Schwarzenberg for questioning the justification of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans (Aktuálně 2013). According to some polls, Schwarzenberg's stance on the 'Sudeten' topic was one of the essential factors for his failure (Kirchick 2017: 67).

These snippets show that the narrative of the expulsion of 3 million Sudeten Germans in post-war Czechoslovakia is still, more than seven decades after the actual events, controversially debated in contemporary Czech memory politics and culture.

Firstly, both examples illustrate how those born later engage with the past – by accessing it through family history. Secondly, Schwarzenberg's and Klaus' different perspectives on the expulsion reflect the different stances on the location of the expulsion in Czech memory. Whereas, the expulsion was often re-framed in the context of human rights, especially following the Yugoslavian war, traditionally the expulsion is often regarded as a historical necessity. That is justified by the Nazi-Occupation and the active involvement of the Sudeten Germans in the dissolution of pre-war Czechoslovakia. (Wingfield 1996: 96). Thirdly, the incident reveals how the past is functionally used for present purposes. In addition to that, the debate

about *Penize od Hitlera* unfolds that the interpretation of the past is to be framed in the context of a community's self-affirmation (Kraft 2005: 348).

In so far, memory culture can be described as the cognitive dimension of historical science (Hardtwig 2002: 112). Thereby, the term memory culture refers to all forms of appropriation of the memorized past (Hardtwig 1990: 8). According to Reichel's concept of memory culture, four fields can be distinguished: memory politics, public memory, the scientific dimension of memory and the aesthetic realisation of the past (Reichel 2003: 9). Thus, all kinds of texts, images, buildings such as memorials, symbolic representations are subjects of memory culture: 'a shared sense of history that is not the result of common experience, but rather the outcome of the mediated production and circulation of narratives supported by a whole gamut of memory institutions' (Rigney 2012: 617). The mentioned 'outcome' reflects the cultural and historical narratives of a community at a specific moment in time. In line with Hayden White's concept of metahistory (White 1973), historical work is defined by its constructed nature as the past is processed into a verbal structure in order to generate meaning. Thereby, the narrative mode allows to classify past structures with reference to the current system of communication and its meanings (White 1973: 46). Based on White's theory of historical narratives, Paul Ricœur highlights the intertwining of narrative and narration: 'The text is a discourse fixed by writing' (Ricœur 1981: 145). Fictional text thereby serves as the storage of memories as it allows the imagination of the past (Neumann 2005: 153). Fiction, on one hand, is shaped by public discourses about the past and, on the other hand, participates in creating narratives by constructing versions of the past.

Overall, a true memory boom emerged within the last decades (Blacker, Etkind 2013: 1). Interestingly, this boom takes place at a time when memory is in transformation. Since the 1980s a change of communicative memory can be observed: the last witnesses of the Holocaust are dying. Hence, the 'living connection' of *the* catastrophe of the 20th century breaks off (Cornelissen 2012) and a debate emerges about how to tell the past. Furthermore, the position of Holocaust in the cultural memory is unique as the cipher 'Auschwitz' describes a global point of reference that not only interprets the actual event of the annihilation of the Jews but also a 'signature of a whole age'¹ (Uhl 2003: 8). Moreover, an increasing attention is paid to the victims of historical events (Rouso 2007: 275). The experience of the Holocaust is universalized and thereby becomes accessible for various victim groups (Marchart 2003: 51).

¹ 'Signatur eines ganzen Zeitalters'

Within recent years many texts of the so-called Second and Third generation, dealing with the experiences of their ancestors as well as their social groups and home regions regarding the Holocaust and the Second World War, were published. Against the backdrop of family and collective memory not only one's own relation to the past is negotiated but also the question about possible forms of representation is posed: 'The discourse about the form of the representation of the historic event is replaced by the form of the representation of memory'² (Rudtke 2009: 187). Therefore, questions of subsequent, in the context of Central and Eastern Europa also belated, memories and their limits move into focus of the discourse. I will address these assumptions before I begin my argument properly.

I discuss both the historical event of the expulsion and its historiography in more detail below, however, I will briefly lay out a picture of the events and their historical context. Following the withdrawal of the German Wehrmacht from Czechoslovakia, first so-called 'wild expulsions' took place whereby remaining so-called Volksdeutsche³ and Sudeten Germans were expelled under compulsion and with the threat of violence. Eventually, those wild expulsions resulted in the forced expulsion in the following months and the large-scale expulsions under the Potsdam agreement. The overwhelming majority left under compulsion in 1945 and 1946, about 660.000 during the expulsions at the end and immediately after the war and around 2.8 million under the Potsdam Agreement. It is supposed that tens of thousands were killed and died because of poor conditions in the internment camps. However, the exact number is subject to controversial discussion (Glassheim 2000: 77). In the context of flight and expulsion during and in the aftermath of the Second World War the case of the Sudeten Germans is insofar special as they were citizens of Czechoslovakia, never belonged to the German Reich prior to 1938, and were not expelled following the territorial reordering of the post-war period as in the Polish case (Kraft 2005: 335). Regarding the narrative of the expulsion in the Czech memory, the expulsion was justified by the collaboration of the Sudeten Germans with the Nazis and their betrayal of the first Czechoslovak Republic (Glassheim 2000: 480). Overall, the topic remained suppressed over the decades of Communist rule.

² 'Der Diskurs um die Art der Darstellung des Unsagbaren wird von der Art der Darstellung der Erinnerung abgelöst'

³ 'Germans in terms of people or race'

In sum, this thesis should be seen as a contribution to studies on Czech memory culture regarding the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans after 1989. Thereby, I will examine the narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans in fictional representations in consideration of patterns of the post-war and Communist narrative and their re-actualisation. In attempting to do so, I will focus on the interplay of public discourses and their aesthetic appropriation. Not least, symbolic representations are always to be evaluated in light of national self-images. In this particular case the meaning of the expulsion in the Czech self-image. Therefore, the analysis of the historical narrative of the Sudeten Germans includes discourses about the consequences for Czech society. Moreover, fiction in terms of literature and film will be understood as media that ‘builds and observes memory’ (Erl1 2011: 159). The aim of this thesis is to unfold how the expulsion is thematised and processed in contemporary Czech literature and film, taking into account the level of perception and meaning (Ferro 1973: 111) of memory. Since popular media is one of the key spheres used for constructing versions of the past, it is fair to assume that the historical narrative found in the works, reinterpret and present the public memory of the expulsion. In a broader context, the conducted study sheds light onto processes of universalisation of memory and an emerging human rights framework within the discourse about flight and expulsion. The concluding analysis will unfold how these shifts in memory culture are taken up by media. Hence, this thesis focuses on the aesthetic appropriation of the expulsion and how the memory of it repeats itself ‘in new, creative but recognisable forms, which circulate in cultural space and reverberate in time’ (Blacker, Etkind 2013: 6).

The secondary literature that informed the thesis consists mostly of books and journal articles covering either the public or cultural memory of the expulsion and on texts that helped to construct the theoretical and methodological structure. Here it is important to mention in particular Astrid Erl1 and Aleida Assmann who elaborated concepts of cultural memory and its media. Further the editions by Cornelißen (ed.), Uhl (ed.) and Blacker, Etkind, Fedor (eds.) served as a basis to identify common shifts in memory culture and their application to the Central Eastern European context.

Although, for example Machala (2015) suggest that the period of the Second World War and especially the expulsion of the Germans is an attractive topic in post 1989 literature, there are only few academic works dealing with questions of representations of the expulsion in cultural memory. Moreover, there is little on the narrative of the expulsion in post 1989 fiction. Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to fill this gap.

1.2 Methodology

In order to reach this paper's research goal of identifying dominant features of the postmemorial narrative of the Sudeten Germans, a focused analysis of literary and filmic representations by applying narrative theory is conducted. For the purpose to determine the patterns of the postmemorial narrative of the expulsion, the thesis aims to answer two intertwined questions. Firstly, how does fiction reflect and react to the memory of the expulsion? Secondly, which narrative strategies are employed to make the past available?

Whereas the comparison in chapter 5 aims to uncover dominant features of the postmemorial narrative, the case studies go into more detail trying to unfold narrative strategies and representations of the expulsion. Thereby, this thesis assumes that history is constituted within a narrative discourse:

‘There is an inexpugable relativity in every representation of historical phenomena. The relativity of the representation is a function of the language used to describe and thereby constitute past events as possible objects of explanation and understanding’ (White 1992: 27)

The narrative of an historical event can be understood as a reflection of certain memory events at a certain moment, which we define as acts of revisiting the past with its established cultural meanings (Blacker, Etkind 2013: 6). According to Hayden White, the interpretation and representation of an historical event is ‘mirrored in the narrative’ (White 1985: 51). Furthermore, the current narrative always includes prior interpretations and representations of the event (Herman 2002: 90). Thus, the postmemorial narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans is to be reflected in the light of earlier public and symbolic interpretations.

This thesis teases out the narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from five fictional works. The chosen collection does not claim to be exhaustive but to trace striking genre-independent patterns in order to provide an overview on the current state of the imagination of the expulsion in Czech fiction. It must be acknowledged that the works have highly different genre and narrative traditions they are built on. Therefore, the thesis will focus less on the aesthetic dimension of the works as the representation forms may vary due to the respective genre such as specific narrative strategy of comics. Nevertheless, I will take the different genre traditions into account with regard to matters of symbolic representations. In attempting to do so, the selection will be analysed under the following aspects: the image of the Sudeten German, the representation of the actual expulsion, discourses about Czech guilt and

perpetration and memory processes. These categories are used to reconstruct the key features of official narrative. A literary analysis will be conducted. Overall, a phenomenological approach was chosen. The named categories are used to reconstruct the key features of the narrative.

1. By analysing the image of the Sudeten German, I will pay attention to the construction of stereotypes. In accordance with the social psychology approach, stereotypes will be understood as special cases of cognitive schemas or theories which allow 'easier and more efficient processing of information' (Hilton, Hippel 1996: 237). Moreover, the perception of the other also shapes the self-affirmation of a group as it highlights differences (Bordalo, Coffman, Gennaioli, Shleifer 2015: 1). Thereby, the image of the German conflates with the perception of the co-habitation of Czech and Germans and how the Sudeten Germans are depicted in the context of Czechoslovak national identity.
2. The representations of the expulsion will be analysed in terms of their historical contextualisation and their framework.
3. The category 'Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration' focuses on how the works assess Czech perpetration and its societal processing. Further, given motives of the crimes will be examined.
4. Reflections of the public and political memory as well as re-mediations of earlier representations will be discussed in the category 'Memory processes'.

The selected works – the novels *Penize od Hitlera* by Radka Denemarková, Pavel Kohout's *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem*, the comic *Alois Nebel* by the author duo Jaroslav Rudiš and Jaromír 99, the TV-series *Zdivočelá země* and the film *Habermannův mlýn*, directed by Juraj Herz – were published or released between 1997 and 2010. All named titles are postmemorial works, understanding postmemory as a productive appropriation of the past with recourse to cultural memory. *Penize od Hitlera* and *Alois Nebel* are postmemorial works in a classic understanding as they were written by the Second generation. Although Kohout belongs to the first-hand generation, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* reflects the events from the perspective of the Second generation. Regarding the selected visual media, *Zdivočelá země* and the film *Habermannův mlýn* are both based on novels. Whereas, the manuscript of *Zdivočelá země* was already completed in the 1970s, *Habermannův mlýn* was published in 2001. Nevertheless, the TV-adaptation of *Zdivočelá země* from 1997 onwards addresses a different audience as the last eyewitnesses are passing away. Generally, all works do have a multigenerational approach,

either in terms of narrative organisation or in terms of the addressed audience. Overall, the thesis attempts to present a variety of representations not only in terms of genre but also in terms of time. The covered time span is approximately 15 years. This allows a comparison over time and tracing the shifts in the narrative. The works will be analysed in chronological order.

However, as this thesis aims to provide a complex analysis of the cultural memory representations, the cinematic adaptations were chosen, not least as it allows to pose questions regarding the visualisation of the expulsion. Further, all works were publicly debated or popular in terms of readers or viewers or the public attention they draw. The perception of the works will be discussed in the in-depth analyses. Moreover, some of the works as *Habermannův mlýn* inhere transnational components as it was a Czech-German-Austrian co-production, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* was adapted for German TV. These cooperations illustrate that the representation exists more and more in a transnational framework. Besides, all authors or directors can be regarded as cultural figures engaging in public debates and thereby becoming memory actors themselves. These issues will be addressed in the in-depth analyses.

This thesis is organized as follows: The next chapter gives an overview of the theory on cultural memory and a classification of the analysis into context of Czech debates and representations of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans are given subsequently, before the works are analysed in the subsequent chapters. A structured comparison of the chosen works based on the developed categories, focusing on common features follows, before the patterns of the respective categories are discussed in backlight of the public memory in the conclusion.

1.1. Hypotheses

Since the mid-1990s the expulsion becomes contextualised in the framework of Czech marginalised history. The expulsion is juxtaposed with experiences of the Holocaust, Czech collaboration during the occupation and Communism. Symbolically the memories of the expulsion are presented as peripheral in Czech memory.

The expulsion is embedded in the century-long co-habitation of Czechs and Germans. Thereby, the image of the Sudeten German is pluralized and the stereotype of the Sudeten German as ‘the’ Nazi reversed, rejecting the concept of collective guilt. Generally, the co-habitation is depicted as neighbourly, shattered in 1938.

The experiences of the expulsion are tended to be universalised, participating in Holocaust representations and a genocide framework. Further, the expulsion becomes more and more located within a European narrative of the Second World War.

The postmemorial representations employ strategies of individualisation of both, victims and perpetrators. The involvement of ground-level perpetrators, acting out of hate and greed is highlighted.

Not last, the works focuses on how those born later are affected by the events, unfolding the presence of the past. Strategies of individualisation and universalisation also help to make the past available for those born later.

2. Setting the context

According to Erll und Rigney (2009), memory is an ongoing process that entails both, remembering and forgetting in adaptation to a changing presence. Thus, the past is memorized in a dynamic act in which ‘individuals and groups continue to reconfigure their relationship to the past’ (Erll, Rigney 2009: 2). The versions of the past are impacted by the respective contemporary cultural values and norms. Therefore, memory is highly intertwined with collective identity as it does not simply reflect the past events but instead offers identity constructions. In contrast to history, memory allows talking about socially and politically shared ideas about the past. This thesis understands memory as an organizing principle of what is being remembered.

Autobiographical memories and personal identity, already, bear a collective dimension in themselves. Even though autobiographical memories cannot be embodied, they can be shared. In sharing individual memories within one’s groups of belonging, such as the family or the nation, one’s own experiences entangle in a social level with unfamiliar narratives, memories and faiths. Thereby, individual memories already participate in an ‘intersubjective symbolic system’ (Assmann 2008: 50). Thus, the individual integrates the foreign with the familiar so that it is not easy to draw a line between what has been heard and what has been self-experienced. (Assmann 2006a: 33). However, this so called communicative memory is not trans temporal, it demands a ‘living connection’ which includes three generations. The communicative memory is characterized by the interplay of memory and identity. (Assmann 2006a: 34). The next level, the collective memory is stable and permanent. The collective memory eventually transforms individual experiences into narratives independent from living memories. Thereby, stories are reduced to symbolic signs. There is only space for one narrative in the

collective memory, though it should be noted that contradictory experiences are hardly integrated on a collective level. Those contradictory and in the end 'forgotten' memories are not simply disposed but create a pool of non-integrated elements, the so-called latency memory (Assmann 2006b: 161f.). What is forgotten and what is remembered highly depends on the social and political settings (Winter, Sivan 1999: 25). Hence, the remembrance of the past is shaped by the present. (Ricoeur 1984: 12)

2.2 Cultural memory and media

Moreover, according to Aleida Assmann memory can be understood as a field of interaction whereby the communicative memory is understood as social interaction and the collective memory memorizes the past with reference to symbols and media: 'Cultural memory is produced through objects, images, and representations. These are technologies of memory, not vessels of memory in which memory passively resides' (Sturken 1997: 9). By means of the cultural memory individuals and groups engage with and perform the past in relation to established memory. (Erll, Rigney 2009: 2). Thereby, Assmann argues that the cultural memory consists of two modes: storage and function (Assmann 2006b: 268). The function-memory is a diachronic one that includes the current collective narrative and thus is to be understood as a section of the storage memory. Storage-memory functions as an archive of transmitted experiences which do not fit into or are suppressed in the current narrative. In between those two modes the mentioned latent memories are located. They are awaiting their integration into the function-memory or just have been displaced. (Assmann 2006b: 133)

In addition to that, cultural memory serves as an image and text-storage in which collective experiences are externalized and thereby stabilized with the help of signs and symbols. Besides, this symbolic system represents a so called 'disembodied' experience. Thus, it is generally accessible which means that the experiences can be adopted from those who did not experience the event themselves. It should be noted, that in the process of externalisation not only the translation of an experience into a sign takes place but also the actual event is replaced by the representation of the past (Assmann 2006b: 133). Thereby, the de-contextualized memories are needed to be coupled again and again with individuals, to be actualised.

Cultural memory and its media have a productive power in constructing memories. Hence, 'cultural memory is unthinkable without media' (Erll 2011: 113) as they evoke reminiscences of the past and in doing so contribute to the continuity between the past and the present. On one hand, memory media participate in the canonized sign system representation of the past and therefore not only mediate but re-mediate earlier acts of mediation (Erll, Rigney 2009: 4). On the other hand, this image generation is followed by the creation of new signs and symbolic representation. This act of re-actualisation of signs can also be read as a reaction to the temporal difference between past and present, in which the sign must be constantly actualised (Neumann 2005: 177).

In fact, the fictional creation of media allows an imagination of the past. Some, for example Nünning (2008) argue that media directly participates in construction of narratives. Hence, memory is 'a process of the present appropriation of history' (Ebbrecht 2007: 222). Moreover, literature and film do both, they illustrate and interpret memory. This means that those cultural productions represent a fictional simulation of the past through re-enactment. Apart from its ability to mediate 'between pre-existing memory culture on the one hand and its potential restructuring on the other' (Erll 2011: 156), literature and film as symbol systems themselves often refer to the suppressed and unrepresented by addressing the gaps in memory. It is also noteworthy that media reflects 'problems of memory in the medium of fiction through aesthetic forms' (Erll, Nünning 2005: 13).

2.3. Cultural memory and Postmemory

The concept of postmemory is interlinked with the return of traumatic knowledge and embodied experience: 'postmemory is not a movement, method or idea; [...] [it is] a structure of inter- and transgenerational return of traumatic knowledge and embodied experience' (Hirsch 2012: 5f). First of all, postmemory describes a mechanism of transmitting transgenerational trauma of Holocaust survivors from the first to the second generation who then create a secondary memory. However, the concept is applicable to transgenerational trauma in general, as Hirsch stresses herself (Hirsch 2012: 5). Moreover, the concepts of trauma and postmemory are highly intertwined. The very term trauma means wound (Assmann 2006b: 559). Indeed, trauma remains disassociated from the remaining parts of memory and therefore disintegrated. Further, traumata are characterized by their silent presence as they are present

and absent at the same time. According to the cultural studies definition, traumatic events describe a crisis of representation. Therefore, traumata are hardly bounded into linear narration. Hence, literary and filmic representation of traumata often refer to highly metaphorical and symbolic language as well as imagery. Additionally, belated reappearance is characteristic for traumatic events (Assmann 2006b: 187). The suffix 'post' means more than a temporal delay, it describes the access to transgenerational memory. Those born later ones integrate the traumata into their own identity. The events lie in the past but still affect the present and as a result, influence the identity building of those generations: 'postmemory represents a recombination of the material objects of cultural memory' (Blackler 2013: 178). Thus, the cultural memory with its symbolic sign system serves as a point of access to the past for the postmemory-generation. As Hirsch points out the traumata are actualised through the stabilisation of the so called 'living connection' via the cultural memory. Consequently, the appropriation of experiences is possible long after those who have experienced the events died (Hirsch 2012: 33).

Postmemorial narration is always shaped by the contradiction of continuity and fractures: 'Postmemory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation' (Hirsch 1997: 37). The narrated experiences shall bridge the temporal differences to the past. This has consequences for the narrative style, especially in the context of long suppressed and therefore latent memories as will be discussed below. Noteworthy in the context of marginalized history is, especially when the public memory is suppressed, that those born later cannot draw on a stable symbolic system as there is little narrative tradition.

2.4 Memory culture in Central and Eastern Europe

'In Eastern Europe [...] memories, novels, films and fast-moving public debates about the past have outpaced and overshadowed monuments, memorials and museums' (Blackler, Etkind 2013: 5). The past is mostly constructed in the public sphere and imagined in popular culture. Thereby, literature often acts as memory activist addressing the tabooed. Popular media in the context of memory is of special interest concerning Eastern Europe with its contested memory as those 're-enactments merge with remembrances and transfigurations in creative forms' (Blackler, Etkind 2013: 10). Indeed, memory allows not only to trace top-down processes, but also bottom-up processes. In the new memory boom in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) the dying voice of the witnesses is taken up by various activists. In the case of CEE

memory is first always to be evaluated in the light of prerogative interpretation of commemoration during communist times. The state shaped memory and transferred it into a symbolic system. The Post-Socialist space is to be understood as a space 'where personal memory existed in the `interstices of public commemoration`' (Kirschbaum 2000: 552). Thereby, the localisation of historic events was characterized by tension between so called public and private memory. Furthermore, the experience of impossibility of individual remembrance in public shaped the memory of Eastern bloc countries as there was little forum in which it could be discussed, often not even in the family (Blacker, Etkind: 3). Memories that did not fit into the official narrative were subjugated and marginalized. Overall, the experiences were modified and standardized, so that everybody had more or less the same narration. Hence, an interaction between memory and identity in the social level remained mostly impossible. Second, the demise of Communism followed a 'recovery of memory' (Nora 2002). Further, as 'the number of witnesses and live memories decreases, the importance of the media increases' (Spalová 2017: 85). Especially in Eastern Europe, individual memories that could not be adopted as they were contradictory to the official memory, were suppressed. Therefore, with no narrative developed, media steps now into the gap of personal experience.

2.5 Transnationalisation of Memory

Another important consideration of memory in the 21th century is the process of transnationalisation (Eigler 2014: 57). Levy and Sznajder (2001) based on the example of the Holocaust, illustrate how globalisation creates a transnational memory space which offers different interpretations for global events depending on the respective group (Levy, Sznajder 2001: 38). This view implies a reevaluation of the relation between collective memory and nation: national memory is transformed by the interplay of local and global memory. Thus, national history is reinterpreted in new contexts as well as global memories are applied to national memories (Heinlein, Levy, Sznajder 2005: 225f). The described interplay is not last a result of global mass media that permeates those levels. Referring to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, the memories form a transnational memory, on one hand, fuelled by the divergent Czech and German memories and their conflation, and on the other hand, influenced by the memory politics of the European Union. In 2002 the Beneš decrees led to a debate whether the Czech Republic would have to annul these decrees to gain membership of the European Union

(Nagengast 2003: 336). The debate illustrates how Europe is building upon memory and how divergent memories shape the political union.

The memory of the Holocaust is entangled with the above discussed processes. Over the last decades, the Holocaust became a global media event which led to a universalisation of the specific memory (Marchart 2003: 51). Through universalisation of the Holocaust victim as the victim per se the suffering became both, ‘the fundament or reason for human rights’⁴ (Marchart 2003: 55) and accessible for various groups. Thereby, the Holocaust is detached from questions of historical determination of perpetration and victimhood (Levy, Sznajder 2007: 12f). Moreover, the Holocaust marks a fix point in a global memory and thus provides a reference for the representation of violence. Especially, in the context of European memory, the Holocaust became a ‘negative founding myth of the European Union’ (Assmann 2013: 28). Besides, the change of the political system in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 brought an intensive examination of suppressed, marginalized history. At the same time, Central European discourses and cultural memory participate in the canonical sign system ‘Auschwitz’ and productively apply them to other historical memories.⁵ For instance, in the 2010 film *Habermannův mlýn* to the iconography of the Holocaust is applied to visualisation of the expulsion. Mink (2008: 470) indicates the reframing of flight and expulsion in the context of genocide as ‘a strategy of historical de-contextualisation’. This revaluation in the context of ethnic cleansing allows a universalisation of suffering detached from its historical context. This lets the expulsion to be located in a similar position to that of the Holocaust (Hahn, Hahn 2008). With regard to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, several attempts were made to frame the expulsion in contemporary politics (Wingfield 1996: 100). For instance, Havel argued that accepting the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans as a historical necessity implies acceptance for ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Wingfield 1996: 100).

Secondly, the reassessment of the expulsions in the aftermath of the Second World War is intertwined with the development of international law over the last decades (Haslinger 2005: 483). Since the 1960s the focus of international law shifted from the protection of the state towards the protection of the individual. This trend reached its peak in the 1990s when a new approach towards the victims of the genocide in former Yugoslavia unfolded. Moreover, these recent cases of ethnic cleansing draw attention to flight and expulsion as particular forms of

⁴ ‘zu einem neuen Fundament oder Grund der Menschenrechte wurde’

⁵ Reference should here be made to the Ukrainian debate about the Holodomor

ethnic violence and thus as a violation of international law (Glassheim 2000: 466). A committee of experts of the United Nations defined the ongoing removal of given groups from a certain area – accompanied by murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and so on – as a crime against humanity (Glassheim 2000: 466). This definition became a reference point many German expellee representatives referred to – detached from the historical context.

3. Historiography of the Expulsion

This section gives an overview about the expulsion and its historic background and additionally outlines the predominant features of the narrative in the respective periods. This longer exposé is necessary for understanding the current patterns of the narrative of the expulsion and its fictional examination.

With the expulsion seven-hundred years of co-habiting and mutual influence ended: ‘It was not always a harmonious existence, but a kind of symbiosis did develop which sustained the relationship to the point where one group was unthinkable without the other’ (Smelser 1996: 79). Habsburgs defeat in 1918 led to the incorporation of three million Germans who before had been subjects of the Habsburg Empire, into newly founded Czechoslovakia. It is worth mentioning that the German speaking population lived highly segregated from their Czechoslovak fellow citizens in parallel social structures and national mythology (Glassheim 2000: 476). Nevertheless, the independence brought vast changes for the German speaking population. In fact, the former ruling class which was constituted overwhelmingly of German speakers found itself only a minority in the new state (Kittel, Möller 2006: 548). Besides, at the Paris Peace Conference the Czechoslovak foreign minister Beneš produced a document arguing that the Germans in Bohemia were only descendants of colonists. Thus, the Germans were not regarded as ‘natural’ habitants of the Czechoslovak state territory (Kittel, Möller 2007: 557). Eventually, during the 1930s the majority of Sudeten Germans embraced the ideas of Konrad Henlein and his concept of ‘Volksgrenze’⁶ (Cornwall 1994: 931). Following the Nazi seizure of power in Germany the NSDAP had considerable influence on the Sudeten German movement. Additionally, the Sudeten Germans overwhelmingly wished to become incorporated into the German Reich (Kittel, Möller 2007: 554).

⁶ Self-determination within Czechoslovakia

The idea of transferring the German minority from the Czech lands in the case of war and a resulting German defeat was discussed as early as 1938 by the former Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš and Hubert Ripka, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Smelser 1996: 80). In the wake of the Heydrich assassination in 1942, which marked a turning point in occupation politics, less drastic solutions such as territorial cession were replaced by the idea of expulsion. ‘The combination of dismantling, occupation, and punitive behaviour’ (Smelser 1996: 79) of the German minority and an increasingly brutal protectorate regime, lead the exile leadership to the assumption that a newly constituted Czechoslovakia would only be viable if the German minority would be removed from the political body. Therefore, in 1943 the Czech exile leadership campaigned for an agreement with the Allies to secure support for the idea of reducing the number of Germans in post-war Czechoslovakia via transfer (Smelser 1996: 80). The debate about the fate of the German minority in a newly constituted Czechoslovakia is also to be evaluated in the context of the flight of the estimated 250,000 Czechs from the ‘Sudeten region’ in the aftermath of the Munich Agreement (Domnitz 2007: 257).

The between 1940 and 1949 issued Beneš decrees announced the immediate expulsion of the Germans. In April 1945, the newly constituted government, composed of the London exiles and the Communist Moscow exiles, issued the ‘Košice Program’. According to this program only those convicted of treason or collaboration should be expelled, whereas those who suffered from the Nazi occupation or who have fought in the Czechoslovak army before were exempted.⁷ However, following the withdrawal of the German Wehrmacht, so-called ‘wild expulsions’ of Germans regardless of individual guilt occurred, carried out by local Czechoslovak army commanders or local revolutionary committees (Smelser 1996: 86). Eventually, all citizens who entered German nationality in the Czechoslovak census in 1930 were to be expelled. It is to be mentioned that this included German-speaking Jews as well (Glasheim 2000: 467). By mid-May the German minority had to wear white armbands, were given smaller food rations, and those who had acquired Reich citizenship lost their Czechoslovak citizenship. Those wildcat expulsions included lynching, beating and rape (Becher 2007: 263).

By the time the Potsdam Conference took place, German property was confiscated and many Germans were subjected to forced labour, whereas others were held in camps (Glasheim

⁷ For the program see Procházka (1963: 640)

2000: 87). In the Potsdam Protocol⁸ the Allies recognized the transfer of German minority populations, albeit ‘in an orderly and humane manner’ (<https://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga4-450801.pdf>: 10). However, the transfers were suspended temporarily in August 1945 by the Allies. In the course of this, a special department in the Czech Ministry of the Interior was created to carry out the second stage of the expulsion. From January 1946 on, the Germans were shipped in trains from the camps to zone borders, authorized by the Allies. The main transfer was completed by 1947. Nevertheless, more than 16,000 Germans still left until 1951 (Smelser 1996: 89). In the former Sudeten land Czechs from other regions were resettled in order to ‘rebuild’ the borderland (Spalová 2017: 86).

Before going into a structured analysis of postmemorial representations of the expulsion, which are needed to evaluate the assumptions on memory culture listed above, this section aims to deliver a general understanding of the place of the expulsion in Czechoslovak or Czech public and cultural memory.

Although the Czech-Sudeten German history comprised 700 hundred years of co-existence, ‘the ‘friction’ of memory is limited [...] to the period from 1938 to 1945’⁹ (Becher 2007: 262). Moreover, the memories of Czechs and Sudeten Germans are still shaped almost exclusively by victim narratives (Becher 2007: 263). Therefore, Sudeten Germans do not connect their expulsion to their involvement in National Socialism and Czech do often solely see the expulsion as a result of the Nazi occupation: in 1995 the vast majority (68 per cent) expressed in a survey the opinion that the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans was a justly revenge for the brutal Nazi occupation (Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung Prag: 1996).

Overall, the memory of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans was long suppressed, especially under Communist rule and it is still a marginal topic in Czech memory culture nowadays (Kraft 2005: 342). However, following the demise of communism an increasing examination of the ‘complicated coexistence of Czechs and Germans in the Czech Republic, in particular in the border regions’ (Machala 2015: 69f) took place, both in public and aesthetic forms. Officially, the expulsion was caused by the betrayal of the First republic by the Sudeten Germans and later their collaboration with the Nazis. Regarding the aesthetic appropriation, there was an existing genre of expulsion literature as early as 1945 (Kaptayn 2013: 21). At this early

⁸ Article XIII

⁹ ‘Die Reibungsfläche ihrer Erinnerungen beschränkte sich auf den Zeitraum [...] von 1938 bis 1945’

stage, Kovárna's *Listy mrtvému příteli* ('Notes to a dead Friend') thereby concludes that a further co-habitation is not possible anymore considering the war atrocities committed by Nazi Germany. In 1947 the first novel that reconstructs the actual expulsion is *Dům na zeleném svahu* ('The House on the Green Hill') by Anna Sedlmayerová. The novel depicts violence against the expelled by Czech citizens. Nevertheless, the brutality is contrasted with national socialist crimes for which the Sudeten Germans are made collectively responsible (Bock 2003:80). After the Communist takeover, the expulsion was presented as part of the national or social revolution. This narrative was taken up by literature: In *Nástup* ('March') by Václav Řezáč, a prototype of the socialist realism, the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans appears to be the answer to fascism and further the weak bourgeois society as the conflict is embedded in class struggle (Zand 2004: 92).

During the socialist period, the history of the German inhabitants was marginalized: 'German history had been a part of the bourgeois and later Nazi regimes' (Spalová 2017: 102). The very name 'Sudeten' was banned from the public discourse by a presidential decree (Spalová 2017: 86). In the 1950s the expulsion was mostly erased from collective memory, not least due to the entanglement of the state in the events that were not part of the official narrative (Spurný 2012: 258). Novels published during the Communist period tend to draw a static black and white picture of the evil German and the good Czech (Bock 2003: 80). Therefore, *the* German became a collective category not paying attention to individual fates and questions of Czech guilt and violence related to the expulsion (Kaptayn 2013: 20). Although, there was little appropriation of the expulsion itself, the narrative of the expulsion was fuelled by images of exploitative, spiteful Germans (Peroutková 2006: 129). In the comparatively liberal times from the late 1950s that abruptly ended with the crushing of the Prague spring, after which a commencing problematisation of the brutality of the expulsion can be found in literature. Karel Ptáčník *Město na hranici* can be read as the first novel breaking with stereotypes of the evil German and the good Czech in non-Samizdat literature (Maidl 2001: 124). Following the impediments of a censorship in the second half of the 1960s, possible reasons for the violence are discussed in the literature (Jungmann 1993: 7). For instance, Ota Filip's *Cesta ke hřbitovu* ('The Way to the Cemetery') depicts acts of violence such as rape and murder. Further, the voice of expelled is included (Kaptayn 2013: 25). Representative for that stage is also Vladimír Körner's *Adelheid*. The novel reflects the expulsion from an individualized perspective – the former strict division between the good Czech and the evil German fades.

Later, in the 1970s a viable debate about the morality of the expulsion evolved. Indeed, in the following young writers touched upon the question of continuity between the ‘moral climate’ that the expulsion created and the Communist takeover of power (Bradley 1996: 235). Besides, attention was drawn to the cultural and social losses the expulsion of the Germans caused. However, in the period of the so-called ‘normalisation’ the expulsion could only be discussed in non-official Samizdat-publications. In this era the topic almost disappeared from the official literary discourse (Bock 2003: 85). The state-led suppression peaked in the 1980s when a generation took over that did not experience the events first hand (Spurný, 2012: 258). In the 1980s dissidents critically examined Czech historical narratives and thereby also reassessed the role of the German minority. Nevertheless, the official representation differed only marginally. In *Cukrová bouda* (‘The Little Sugar House’) (Kachyňa, Körner 1980), even if the expulsion is not the main topic, one of the main German characters is an antifascist. The filmic representation of the ‘good German’ is to be evaluated in light of the East German and Czechoslovak foreign relations. The other Germans still resemble caricatures – their German is poor and they are only characterized by their conviction of National Socialism (Bubeníček 2006: 74).

Concerning the narrative of the region that was known as the Sudetenland, before the velvet revolution the borderland was represented as a formerly colonized land that needed to be reconquered (Spalová 2017: 86). In literature, the colonisation novel which forms a subgenre of the ideological genre of socialist realism, became popular. As Kaptayn (2013) points out, a determinate motive of socialist realism is the resettlement of the border areas. In *Země dokořán* (‘Open Land’), a representative of the genre, the Sudeten land resembles a wild land that needs to be civilized: ‘And the Germans left and the Czechs only move here. And therefore, the horses and carriages are here alone’ (Říha 1950: 44). Those novels about the new settlement only marginally address the expulsion but rather describe the re-appropriation of the area into Czech identity. Thereby, patterns of traditional adventure novels and western can be identified (Maidl 2001:121). Besides, the representation of the expulsion is highly entangled with the representation of the German who is ‘never just the neighbour most of the time securely separated by borders, or even the ruthless invader and colonizer.’ (Hanáková 2014: 94). Indeed, as Sedmidubský (2006: 45) shows the image of the German in general is conflated with the image of the German Nazi and thereby became a symbol of the Other, the non-Czech. However, in the borderland the remaining traces of the German settlements and the vast social and economic

changes brought by the resettlement preserved the memory of the former inhabitants. This present absence was lately not only picked up by memory actors but also by fiction as it will be shown.

In the post 1989 period the expulsion entered the public memory. Thereby, the culture of remembrance became more diverse. Concerning the academic field, Spalová (2017) differentiates two historic views on the expulsion. First the ‘apologist’ approach which does criticize the brutality of the wild expulsions but rarely questions the German collective guilt. Second, the ‘critics of the Beneš decrees’ approach which criticises the concept of the expulsion itself and further draws a line between the ‘social revolution’ and the Communist takeover (Spalová 2017: 89). In terms of memory politics, in 1989 Havel already addressed the expulsion as ‘an unsolved moral problem’ (Spurný 2012: 359).

In addition to that, the topic still fuels the Czech-German foreign relations (Becher 2007: 261). Although a German-Czech historical commission was established in 1990 and following the 1997 Czech-German agreement an extensional joint discourse unfolded about the shared history, the topic is still controversially discussed. This is also evaluated in the background of the agenda of the Sudeten German Landsmannschaft that still claimed property rights throughout the 1990s. In reaction to that the Czech president Havel stated in 1995 that demands for restitution have no legal bases (Kopstein 1997: 68). Furthermore, in 2000 the chairman of the CDU/CSU in the European parliament criticised the Beneš decrees as violating international law, in 2002 the German chancellor Schröder cancelled his visit to Prague because of Zeman’s statements regarding the Sudeten Germans as Hitler’s fifth column (Becher 2007: 261). Generally, ‘the expulsion of the German population was considered the most politically charged and morally dangerous gap in history’ (Spalová 2017: 98) that still impact current politics.

Another shift in the discourse is the embedment of the expulsion in the century long co-habitation of Czechs and Germans. For example, in 1990 the Czechoslovak embassy in Germany published a book outlining the long common history of Germans and Czechs. Further, in 2006 Collegium Bohemicum was founded. It is devoted to research about the cultural heritage of the Bohemian Germans, with a museum also being planned. Nevertheless, the Bohemian Germans and the cohabitation with them is largely framed within the history of national minorities (Spurný 2012: 360) and hence still read as the other, a non-part of the Czech nation. For instance, the 2007 state-established Institute for Studies of Totalitarian Regimes which is tasked

with studying the era between 1938 and 1989, has no specific project dealing with the German minority (Spalová 2017: 89).

As the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic indicates, the expulsion is since 1989 ‘undoubtedly the most discussed historical topic among Czech historians, as well as in society’ (Spalová 2017: 89). After 1989, the topic of the expulsion was rediscovered for various reasons. On one hand, non-official samizdat works on the expulsion were subsequently published, on the other hand, the Second and Third generation took up the topic and processed the expulsion in new forms (Kaptayn 203: 27). Mainly, those novels problematize the excess of violence and the former national stereotypes. Moreover, memory as a narrative subject steps in from the mid-1990s on. A motive that is often present within this new fictional discourse is the loss of the expellees as neighbours which will be also discussed in this thesis. In the aftermath of 1989 various social memory activists drew the attention of the Czech public to the memories of the expulsion: ‘The slowly dying out voice of Sudeten Germans has partly been taken up by Czech memory activist’ (Spalová 2017: 102). Different approaches were chosen. For instance, the non-governmental organisation Antikomplex focuses on the losses caused by the expulsion. The Sudeten land as a memory space gains more and more attention as new mass graves were discovered¹⁰ and a nostalgia tourism of Sudeten Germans emerge. Besides, binational organisations such as the Czech-German Brücke/Most foundation works in the field of reconciliation and youth exchange. The public discourse included not only historical volumes and expert debates but the topic was also taken up by novelists and filmmakers (Spalová 2017: 98). Little by little, the violence against the Germans was reflected. In 1999 Jan Hřebejk thematised the brutality of the expulsion with the film *Musíme si pomáhat* (‘Divided We Fall’). Although the movie shows violence against Germans, those who are victims of the brutal excess are former fanatical Nazis. Eventually, the 2005 TV-production *Krev zmizelého* (‘Bonds of Blood’) embeds the expulsion within Czech historical traumas and covers the time span from 1939 until 1961. The film depicts drastic acts of violence such as rape and lynching. Moreover, popular history took up the topic, such as the documentary *Zabíjení po česku* (Killing in Czech) from 2010. David Vondráček’s widely debated documentary was aired on state run television and led to a renewed debate about guilt and justification of the expulsion. In line with this, the comic *Alois Nebel* addresses the topic of ground-level perpetrators.

¹⁰ In 2010, the discovery of a mass grave in Dobronín led to a debate of how the past should be remembered on the ground (Taylor 2013: 74)

Another important consideration is the semantic framework in which the discourse takes place. Although the Czech-German historical commission agreed on the terms *Vertriebung/vyhnání* (expulsion), normally, in Czech the expulsion is referred to as ‘odsun’ (transfer) which ‘has no ethical or juridical connotations’ (Schmidt-Hartmann 1985: 143). Moreover, the term is bereft of human responsibility (Smelser 1996: 90). Noteworthy, ‘odsun’ also is used to describe the flight of Czechs from the Sudeten land in 1938. Thus, the term reflects symbolically the injustice of the 1938 events. Regarding the name of the German minority in the Czech lands, in the public discourse as well as in this thesis the term Sudeten German is used for the German population of Czechoslovakia. As Hanáková points out the title is diffusing as Sudeten historically referred only to one out of four Czechoslovak governmental units with a clear German majority. Tracing the term over time, a ‘specific generalization’ (Hanáková 2014: 95) can be observed. The rise of the term Sudetenland is intertwined with the label Sudeten Germans which was picked up also by the Bohemian Germans nationalistic movement. Sudeten became a label for the former neighbour who betrayed Czechoslovakia. Consequently, the expulsion of the ‘Sudeten’ is justified as a necessary cleansing as they turned from neighbours to Hitler’s ‘Fifth Column’ (Glassheim 2000: 479). As the Schwarzenberg incident unfolds, the expression is used in a derogatory way and refers to stereotypes of the Sudeten as the other. Interestingly, the name Sudeten Germans was picked up by the Bohemian Germans during the first Czechoslovak Republic.

4. Analyses

4.1 *Zdivočelá země* (‘Land Gone Wild’)

For the fourth and last season of the TV-serial *Zdivočelá země* Czech ex-president Vaclav Havel joined the team for a cameo appearance. The serial was first aired in 1997 and was a big commercial success in the Czech Republic. The third season, for instance, saw an average of 840.000 viewers (týden 2012). The TV-series was overwhelmingly perceived as a turning point in the Czech culture of remembrance as it found a symbolic representation for the Communist period, stimulating a critical intergenerational dialogue about the post-war era (Spáčilová 2012). Moreover, *Zdivočelá země* was the first post 1989 TV-production portraying the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans (Sedmidubský 2006: 94).

The plot of *Zdivočelá země* is loosely based on Jiří Stránský's novels *Zdivočelá země* and *Aukce*. Stránský already completed *Zdivočelá země* in 1970 but the novel was published only in 1990 following the velvet revolution. Due to the time the novel was written at, it bears characteristics of colonisation novels, namely the 'western style' and the adventurous mode (Sedmidubský 2006: 94).

The series tells the story of Czech war veteran Antonín Maděra who joined the British RAF after escaping occupied Czechoslovakia. In July 1945, he returns to the former Sudetenland. Back in his home town, Maděra is confronted with a devastated borderland. He moves to an abandoned estate – the former German inhabitants were expelled – that he runs with a group of young 'cowboys' as they name themselves, referring to the colonisation of the US-Midwest. Although the series consists of four seasons, I will focus on the first episodes, while making reference to other episodes where relevant.

Television can be defined as a discursive cultural practice (Lembo 2000: 74). As Anderson points out television as part of social communication 'plays a significant role in cultural memory and the popular negotiation of the past' (Anderson 2001: 20). Television reduces complex memories to so called 'memory figures' (Assmann 2006b: 28). Those symbolic representations are (re)actualised by the viewer with reference to the current collective narrative. Thereby, TV-series *Zdivočelá země* can be understood as a container of symbols reflecting popular views and opinions of a given era (Bílek 2013: 2). Further, TV-series are composed of a running plot in the background that progresses over time and an anthology plot that is concluded in the respective episode (Innocenti, Pescatore 2014: 2). In order to help the viewer to understand new storylines, series employ so called narrative formulas (Bílek 2013: 3). In the case of TV-history, those units that 'allow access to the largest unit of segmentation' (Pop 2013: 13) also help the viewer to gain access to the fictional past via processes of identification. With regards to *Zdivočelá země*, the protagonists are especially easy to identify with: they are sympathetic, stand together against attacking gangs and are full of life. Generally, the series features classic patterns of popular TV-series narration: the love story between Maděra and Ilonka, the friendship between the young 'cowboys' and the conflict between the former best friends Maděra and Karel Kušera, the latter of whom became a fanatic Nazi. In general, as *Zdivočelá země* was the first post-Communist visualisation of the expulsion, it did build memory.

Next, I will discuss the postmemory features of this TV-series. Firstly, as mentioned above the past is made available through emotional attachment. Secondly, with Maděra, a main character was chosen which comes from the outside. He did not experience the occupation of Czechoslovakia and returns when the expulsion is already in progress. Therefore, he functions as a quasi-observer of the events from the outside. This allows the viewers to reflect the events and thus makes it easier for those born later to classify the action within its historical context. For instance, Maděra raises questions about the proportionality of the measurements against the Germans and thus picks up recent debates. Thirdly, in the beginning of every episode the previous action is summarized by a narrator. Summarizing the previous action for the viewer is not unusual (Bílek 2013: 4) but in *Zdivočelá země* a quasi-dialogue situation is created as the audience is addressed as ‘we’. The narrator helps, on one hand, to contextualise the events historically and, on the other hand, the storyline of the diegetic world.

4.1.1 The image of the Sudeten German/ the Co-habitation

Although in *Zdivočelá země* the image of the German is pluralized, it does employ stereotypical patterns of the Communist narrative. The series show Sudeten Germans in close ups that contrast ‘the’ German Nazi with individuals. However, the most developed Sudeten German character is Karel Kučera, Maděra’s former best friend and the brother of his first love. In flashbacks, it becomes clear that politics tore the two apart. Formerly Maděra’s friend, he joins Henlein’s party and becomes a fanatic member of the SS, accusing his sister of racial defilement because of her love affair with Antonín. Furthermore, Kučera is the son of a large landowner. Here, the TV-series employs the pattern of the cliché Sudeten German as a ruthless, fascist capitalist. After the war, he returns from the front to Svatý Štěpán where he is looking for a secret Gestapo archive. Although the majority was already forced to leave, the Sudeten German – represented by Kučera – is still present, haunting the region and its inhabitants. In the aftermath of the war, German partisans, organised in gangs, – trying to regain lost property – are raging in the borderland. For instance, when a newly arrived settler asks an administrative employee to whom the house he is moving into used to belong, the answer is ‘Nazis’¹¹ (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep.I 1997: 00:08). It is reflected here that the terms ‘Sudeten Ger-

¹¹ ‘Nacisty’

man' and 'Nazi' became almost exchangeable after the war (Smelser 1996: 82). Thus, the Sudeten Germans become marked as the other, non-Czech. Nonetheless, some counter examples such as the afore mentioned old men are introduced. Overall, the image is thus pluralized.

The flashbacks tell the story of a mostly harmonious co-existence supposedly until the mid-1930s. In one of the flashbacks, Maděra remembers how he used to spend afternoons with an old Sudeten German man, drinking and chatting (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep.II 1997: 00:31). The Sudeten German is clearly depicted as a neighbour. Reinforced is this impression by a scene in which Maděra meets the old neighbour again. Moreover, in the first episode the city appears as formerly German dominated. The idyll only shatters as politics step into the village life, segregating the German-speaking from the Czech-speaking inhabitants.

In the first episode the last words of a Sudeten German before he shoots himself to escape deportation are 'I'm staying',¹² (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep.I 1997: 00:02). The saying is not translated into Czech, the sentence remains incomprehensible for the audience. Thus, the Sudeten German lack of understanding for their treatment by the Czechs remains incomprehensible, too. The scene reflects the feeling of loss the Sudeten German experienced because they consider the region their natural home. The war alienated the two groups and it seems from a Czech perspective that the Sudeten Germans forfeited their homeland.

4.1.2 Representations of the Expulsion

The storyline of *Zdivočelá země* begins in July 1945, when the wild expulsions were underway and the Allies agreed on the transfer of the remaining Germans from Czechoslovakia (Smelser 1996: 85). Generally, the series focuses on the stages of the expulsion in the village: the transport of the Sudeten Germans, forced labour, quartering of Czech families in German houses and the exchange of population with arriving new settlers. The expulsion becomes part of the normal city life in the aftermath of the war. The administrative staff is depicted drinking coffee while in front of the city council Sudeten Germans must do forced labour.

The TV-series emphasises that some Sudeten Germans were victims, especially Sudeten German women and elderly are depicted as subjects to Czech arbitrariness: Sudeten Germans doing forced labour – marked with swastikas on their face – are beaten up (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep II 1997: 00:14) and German women are auctioned off as labour forces (*Zdivočelá*

¹² 'Ich bleib da'

země, Ep.II 1997: 00:14). However, the actual transports appear as being carried out in an orderly manner: names are crossed out from a list, families are not separated and no excess of violence during the deportations is shown. Consequently, the actual transports are shown as relatively well administrated. Generally, the series does address acts of violence against Sudeten Germans but does not frame the expulsion in the context of genocide as it appears as a historical specific measurement.

As mentioned above, the series does not employ strategies of identification when it comes to the Sudeten German characters. Although the mass of the expellees is individualized by close up shots, no individual faiths or questions of individual guilt of Sudeten Germans are narrated. Therefore, little emotional connection between the viewer and the Sudeten Germans is established.

Noteworthy, the expulsion is not framed within a European narrative of the Second World War. The Holocaust is marginally represented and the expulsion is mostly seen as a direct reaction to the Munich Agreement. (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep.I 1997: 00:25).

4.1.3 Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

Zdivočelá země raises questions about the treatment of the Sudeten German. Thereby, two striking patterns can be identified. First, the justification for punishing ordinary Sudeten Germans is questioned by Maděra. Witnessing Sudeten Germans subjected to forced labour and Czechs shaving off Sudeten women's hair, he states 'that can't be possible'¹³ (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep.I 1997: 00:18). His companion replies that the expulsion is a natural response to 'what they have done to us'¹⁴ (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep. I 1997: 00:18). The expulsion is legitimized as a fair punishment for the Nazi occupation. Hence, possible discourse about Czech guilt is negated. The answer of Maděra's neighbour of the expulsion as a legitimate measurement follows the traditional narrative patterns of the expulsion (Spalová 2017: 102). However, Maděra takes the stance of the so-called 'apologists', criticising the outburst of violence during the wild expulsions but not the measurement itself (Spalová 2017: 89).

¹³ 'to není možné'

¹⁴ 'Co udělali s námi'

With regards to the topic of Czech perpetration, mainly two aspects are highlighted by the TV-serial, first, the masterminds behind the scenes and second, bystanders. The series reflect the expulsion not only as a spontaneous action but also as an organised, bureaucratic act: the German-speaking population needs to be registered for the transports, listed for forced labour and its property is confiscated and distributed among the arriving settlers. Furthermore, the TV-series picks up the perpetrator category of bystanders: ordinary Czechs applauding for acts of humiliation (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep. II 1997: 00:13). Indeed, in *Zdivočelá země* revenge seems to be one of the main motivations for the expulsion. This can be seen in line with public debates of the early 1990s about justice and injustice of the events. For example, Vaclav Havel stated that the post-war treatment of the Germans was highly impacted by the idea of revenge (Kopstein 1997: 57).

Besides, it becomes obvious that the expulsion also bears the chance for personal enrichment. Abandoned property and values are taken over by the new settlers. For instance, villagers shoot and rob a Sudeten German who returns to his old home to take hidden values (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep. I 1997: 00:06).

4.1.4 Memory Processes

This section outlines how the TV-series reacts to and reflects the representations of the expulsion. To begin with, I will discuss the title of *Zdivočelá země*. The borderland is described as wild. The word *Zdivočelá* can be ascribed, on one hand, to the land devastated by the war and, on the other hand, to the abandoned borderland that needs to be resettled. Thereby, the novel intertextually refers to the colonisation novel but re-interprets it.

Already the title can be understood as a re-interpretation of the genre. Whereas the classic colonisation novel depicts the borderland as an open land to be colonised by the new settlers, in *Zdivočelá země* the land is portrayed as wild and full of traces of the (Sudeten German) past. The flashbacks project the past into the presence. Traditionally, in the colonisation novel, there is a clear cut between the old and the new order: the, mostly faceless, fascists are transferred and the new settlers arrive (*Zdivočelá země*, Ep. I 1997: 00:14). Contrarily, this TV-serial narrates the transition and thereby highlights the temporary co-habitation of those who are supposed to leave and those who arrive. Further, in *Zdivočelá země* the expulsion does not

mark the liberation of the borderland from the colonizer. First, the image of the Sudeten German does not correspond to the stereotypical image of the colonisation novel and second, with regards to the further development of the storyline, the expulsion becomes juxtaposed with the arbitrary Communist regime. Maděra fell victim to the repression after the Communist takeover. One could argue that the series takes up dissident debates of the 1970s, drawing a line between the rights denied the Germans after the war and the Communist order denying the population the same human rights (Bradley 1996: 239).

Overall, the TV-series is told from a Czech perspective, focusing on how the expulsion affects the borderland. It does not include individual fates of Sudeten Germans. The expulsion can be classified as a subplot to the main plot, the (re)-building of society in the borderland after the war.

4.1.5 Summary of the chapter

To sum it up, *Zdivočelá země* adheres to the following patterns with regard to the narrative of the expulsion. Firstly, the image of the Sudeten German is pluralized. Although the series employs stereotypical patterns, apparent in the character of Karel Kučera, the Sudeten German is depicted as the former neighbour. Nevertheless, the Sudeten German fate is not individualised and thus the experience of the Sudeten Germans is not emotionally accessible. Secondly, the co-habitation is depicted as harmonic. Though, the Sudeten German support for the National Socialists and the war made a further co-habitation impossible. With the expulsion, the German imprint of Svatý Štěpán is also eradicated. Thirdly, the series critically reflects acts of violence against Sudeten Germans. However, the transfers themselves are shown in a relatively orderly manner. Fourthly, the expulsion is exclusively framed in a Czech national context. The experiences are not universalised but shown as a particular reaction to the historical circumstances. Fifthly, in contrast to the Sudeten German characters, the main Czech characters appear authentic. Thus, their stance on the events can be accessed by those born later.

4.2. *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* ('The Long Wave Astern')

The reflection of the Czech-German mutual history and the co-habitation is a determinant motif of Pavel Kohout's work (Košnarová 2009). Kohout is one of the best known contemporary Czech writers and received multiple awards for his work and his effort to improve

Czech-German mutual understanding (Riese 2013). Kohout was also one of the spokesmen of the Prague Spring and part of the Charta 77 movement. Following his dissident activities, he was expatriated in the 1970s. Nowadays, Kohout acts as a memory activist in the field of Czech-German reconciliation (Adámková 2011: 106).

The expulsion of the Sudeten Germans is the subject of various texts of Kohout, all following different approaches to the topic (Maidl 2004: 126). In the context of this thesis, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem*, published in 2001, was chosen because of its multigenerational approach. The posthistory of the expulsion is the main subject of the novel, so to speak, what is left of the past. Although Kohout himself belongs to the generation of experience, *Ta dlouhá vlna za Kýlem* focuses on the memories and the appropriation of the past by those born later. Therefore, the approach of the novel can be defined as postmemorial.

The plot of *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* takes place in the 1990s, the Iron Curtain has disappeared. On board the cruise ship MS Harmonia, the Sudeten German Margarethe Kämmerer meets the Czech professor Martin Burian again. During the expulsion Burian had had Margarethe's husband Sepp executed. Margarethe wants revenge. Her nephew Siegfried who accompanies her is supposed to help her but he falls in love with Burian's daughter in law Sylva. He spends a night with her. Following the intergenerational dialogue about the events, it is revealed that Sepp had Burian's brother killed in 1938. Eventually, Margarethe and Martin allegedly jump overboard together.

Formally, the novel employs patterns of popular narration. The plot is centred around the (love) relations of the four main characters. All four characters suffer from traumatic memories: Martin and Margarethe embody the memories of war and expulsion, Sylva wants to overcome her trauma of being betrayed by her husband and Siegfried is haunted by the memories of the death of his best friend through drugs. The experience of trauma is to some sense universalised and thus made available for the readers. The scene of action could also be read as an intertextual reference to the popular TV-genre of 'cruise ship' serials (Thau 2012:151). In accordance with the soap opera concept the novel includes the classic narrative patterns but reinterprets them in the context of latent memories.

4.2.1. The image of the Sudeten German/ the Co-habitation

By looking at the presented images of the Sudeten Germans, one must distinguish between the perception of the generation of experience and those born later. Whereas the generation of experience defines the other by their nationality, those born later perceive the Sudeten Germans as a category of the past. The homeland folklore remains alien to Siegfried. The same is true for Sylva who seems not to understand the lines drawn by Martin as Sylva notes that they also speak German from time to time (Kohout 2001: 147). The category of nationality seems overhauled as a marker of shared identity or difference.

Although both, Margarethe and Martin, perceive the respective other as the occupant, both share a speech melody which only they know (Kohout 2001: 31). The expulsion marks an end of a long, neighbourly co-habitation of Czechs and German. For instance, Michalov's chess club remained mixed throughout the 1930s to increase the club's chances of winning. Besides, Martin and Sepp were friends until Sepp joined Henlein's party. Indeed, Kohout narrates the increasing alienation between Czechs and Germans in the 1930s. The peaceful co-existing already begins to crack before the annexation of the Sudetenland. Whereas the Czechs accuse the Germans of supporting the dismantlement of Czechoslovakia, the Sudeten Germans regard the Czechs as suppressors of the German minority. One could argue that in the novel the co-habitation is at no point idyllic. Although neighbourly relations are mentioned, both communities claim the region their homeland and see the other as an occupant (Kohout 2001: 102).

Furthermore, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* reflects the self-image of the Sudeten Germans. According to Margarethe, the Sudeten Germans were not convinced Nazis but naïve. The guilt of the crimes committed is externalized, they are located within a small clique of 'sick minds'¹⁵ (Kohout 2001:103). Juxtaposed is this image by Martin's portrayal of Sepp as a fanatic, brutal Nazi and Margarethe's sister who still defines the Czechs as insidious (Kohout 2000: 171) after the war. Overall, the Sudeten Germans fail to critically questions their role in the annexation and occupation.

4.2.2. Representations of the Expulsion

Looking at the representations of the expulsion, the novel focuses on an event during the period of the wildcat expulsion. In May 1945, the Sudeten German men of Michelsberg or

¹⁵ 'zvrácených mozků'

Michalov were lynched and the women raped. Thereby, the events are told from both perspectives, the Czech and the German. Whereas Margarethe's memories are centred around the brutal violence, Martin emphasises the crimes committed by the Sudeten German and that the punishment had a legal basis. However, he does not deny the brutality of the action and condemn the raping. Noteworthy, both agree on the term St. Bartholomew for what happened in that night (Kohout 2001: 106). On the Bartholomew day in 1572, a massacre of Huguenots was carried out by Catholic nobles and French citizens. It should be noted that the St. Bartholomew massacre became a metaphor in literature for mass murder of minorities (Heilmann 1998: 50). Thus, *Ta dlouhá vlha za kylem* locates the expulsion in a genocide-framework. The Second World War and the events in its aftermath are embedded in a European history of flight and expulsion. The expulsion of the Sudeten German is part of what Martin describes as 'way to hell'¹⁶ (Kohout 2001: 26). Therefore, the expulsion appears as part of a European history of violence.

Moreover, the experience of being expelled serves as a connecting link between the characters: Martin had to flee in 1938 and Sylvia had to leave Czechoslovakia following the Prague Spring (Kohout 2001: 179). On one hand, this approach does universalise the event and hence make the experiences accessible. On the other hand, the historical links between the 'expulsions' are unfolded by juxtaposing them.

4.2.3. Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

'In our former homeland, the era of freedom has dawned. It opens up long forgotten closets and in these closets, there are skeletons'¹⁷ (Kohout 2001:124). The novel precisely discloses these skeletons and how they still affect the presence, almost causing a new murder.

Sepp Pichler is executed with other Sudeten Germans during the events of the aforementioned May night. Here, it is up to the perspective of the reader whether Pichler is perceived as a perpetrator or a victim (Maidl 2004: 137). As mentioned above the events are only narrated from either Margarethe's or Martin's point of view. Martin Burian stresses that the execution was voted for unanimously by the local committee. Therefore, he had no choice than to legalise the action (Kohout 2001: 122). Burian argues that he would have been lynched himself otherwise. Here, Kohout addresses the legal dimension of the expulsion, whereby Burian represents

¹⁶ 'Cestu [Cesta, M.S.] do pekla'

¹⁷ 'A k tomu vypukla v naší stare vlasti svoboda. Ta ted' otvírá zapomenuté sklepy, a v nich leží kostilivci.'

the post-war legislation. Indeed, acts of violence or crimes committed during the expulsion were retrospectively granted amnesty by the national parliament (Kopstein 1997: 63). Therefore, crimes committed by Czech often became a blind spot in memory. The novel not only reflects crimes committed by Czech citizens during the expulsion but also non-intervention against crimes. For instance, Burian allows rapes to happen during the May night, arguing that he had no possibility to intervene.

Margarethe notes that legally the crimes are time-barred (Kohout 2001: 107). Interestingly, whereas on the level of the political memory the events are described as processed, reconciliation on a social level did not take place. The discourse about guilt is shaped by biblical ideas of guilt and revenge: ‘An eye for an eye’¹⁸ (Kohout 2001: 107), preventing a historical reappraisal. Not last, the novel raises questions about proportionality of guilt. Burian sees in the murder of Sepp a just punishment for the murder of his brother. Contrarily, Margarethe denies personal guilt related to the National Socialist crimes. Kohout leaves it to the reader to judge if the violence is justified.

4.2.4. Memory Processes

This section outlines how the novel reflects the memory of the expulsion. To begin with, I will discuss the title of the novel. The long wave asterisk could be understood as, on one hand, the posthistory of the events and, on the other hand, as a metaphor of memory. The events impact the present as the past is not yet processed: ‘Every past has to end at some point. This is the only way how it will become what it should be – a source of wisdom’¹⁹ (Kohout 2001: 81). In the novel, the unprocessed past bears danger. As long as no reconciliation has taken place, the events could happen again. Thereby, the author appeals to those born later and their responsibility to remember.

Further, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* reflects the politics of memory: ‘As soon as the last witnesses have passed away [...] it [the memory, M.S.] become pray for parasites’²⁰ (Kohout 2001: 221). The past is never just the past, it is subject to politics. The novel ironically reflects the gap between the official memory politics and the communicative memory. For instance, Margarethe wants to finance a foundation that academically deals with the expulsion (Kohout

¹⁸ ‘Okno za okno’

¹⁹ ‘Každá minulost musí někdy skončit, jen tak se stane tím, čím má být, pramenem zkušenosti’

²⁰ ‘Až umřou ti zbylí, co ho spolu vedli přímo, stane se kořistí parazitů’

2001: 210) but on a social level there is little processing. This situation conjuncts with the various political and academic initiatives throughout the 1990s in the field of Czech-German reconciliation. However, on the ground there were memory wars over monuments and mass graves. Kohout also highlights the gap of the Sudeten German experiences in the German memory. For example, Siegfried hardly believes in the victimhood of the Sudeten Germans. Generally, the combination of patterns of victimhood and perpetration does not does not successfully enter memory.

It is no coincidence that Margarethe suffers from cancer. In a sense both, cancer and trauma represent a mutilation of the body. They both represent a foreign body. Whereas cancer can be often cured, traumata can only be bound into narration. This would also describe a process of re-acquiring the memories. When Margarethe and Burian allegedly jump overboard together, it shows that the memories cannot be transferred into a symbolic representation.

4.2.5. Summary of the chapter

Overall, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* discloses the gap the latent memories have left in both the Czech and German memory. Regarding the memory of the expulsion, the following patterns can be identified. First, both Sudeten German and Czech perpetrators are individualised. Through this questions of personal guilt, especially, are examined. Second, the novel depicts the mistrust and alienation between Czechs and Sudeten Germans prior to 1938. The cohabitation is depicted as a neighbourly relationship but one that is full of conflicts rather than idyllic. Forth, the expulsion is located within a chain of violence, framing the events as a St. Bartholomew and thus in a universal context of genocide. Fifth, the novel gives a voice both perspectives, the Czech and the Sudeten German. Sixth, the novel reflects the transmission of the past and the role of those born later in reconciliation.

4.3. *Penize od Hitlera* ('Money from Hitler')

The 2007's jury of the prestigious Czech literature prize Magnesia litera justified its choice for *Penize od Hitlera* by its approach to reflecting the long, traumatic aftermath of the expulsion (Česká televise 2007).

In his review of the book, Ondřej Horák wrote in the Czech newspaper *lidové noviny* that Radka Denemarková raises questions about how the present and the inhabitants of the borderland are affected by the past (Horák 28.06.2017).

Penize od Hitlera was a vast success²¹ and has been translated into several languages. Additionally, the novel was adapted for theatre in 2010 and in 2014 a contract for a cinematic adaptation was signed. Moreover, the author acts as a memory activists herself. She is highly involved in the work of the German-Czech ‘Zukunftsfond’ (future fond). The former German president highlighted Denemarková’s novel as an example for Czech-German reconciliation work in a speech on the occasion of the ‘Tag der Heimat’ in 2016 (Gauck 2016). However, Denemarková was also anonymously threatened by Czechs accusing her of ‘fouling her own nest’ (Vaughan 2010).

In *Penize od Hitlera*, sixteen-year-old Gita Lauschmannová who survived the Holocaust returns after the war to Puklice where she grew up in a German speaking family. Arriving in Puklice, she finds her family house occupied by strangers, the property is confiscated. The village inhabitants treat Gita like a Nazi collaborator and German traitor. In the following story-line, she is nearly killed and lumped together with the Germans in a camp. Eventually, she manages to stay in Czechoslovakia. Already in the 1950s Gita returns to Puklice trying to rehabilitate her father who was killed in a concentration camp and is now accused of being a German exploiter. During the visit to the village, Gita is raped by former neighbours and her new born son is killed. Nevertheless, in 2005 – 60 years later – Gita Lauschmannová returns to the village to seek justice for her and her family, now confronted with the children of her former neighbours and perpetrators.

Formally, the novel is divided into six chapters. The chapters cover Gita’s first return to Puklice in 1945 and her various visits to Puklice in 2005. Thereby the story is told with various focalization on Gita, Denis and Nataša, the children of the family that took over Gita’s family house. Remarkably, neither Denis nor Nataša eye-witnessed the events in 1945 as they were born later. Here the postmemory approach of the novel becomes obvious. The novel builds a multi-generational ‘summer mosaic’²² of the events told from the present, attempting to create an intergenerational dialogue as ‘It is also their story’²³(Denemarková 2006: 166). Noteworthy, the novel is interrupted by photographs of village scenes, taken between 1952 and

²¹The fourth edition was published recently

²² ‘*Letní mozaika*’

²³ ‘Tohle je taky jejich příběh’

1986, at the end of every chapter. Marianne Hirsch argues that photographs ‘affirm the past’s existence and, in their flat two-dimensionality, they signal its unbridgeable distance’ (Hirsch 1997: 23). This will be discussed later in the context of memory processes.

Another striking feature of the novel is how the Holocaust and the expulsion are inter-linked in *Penize od Hitlera*. The expulsion of German speaking Jews has been erased from the dominant historical memory during Communist times (Čapková 2013: 347). However, it is estimated that about 2000 Jews struggled to retain their Czechoslovak citizenship (Čapková 2013: 353). In the aftermath of the war ‘little distinction was made between Nazis and the general run of the population’, Jews were often not excluded from the measurements against the German speaking population (Smelser 1996: 87). Indeed, the Košice Programme stated that those who declared German ethnicity depending on their mother tongue in the last official census in 1930 would lose their Czechoslovak citizenship (Čapková 2013: 348). Although antifascists and people who suffered in a concentration camp were excepted, Jews were not mentioned separately. In order to retain their Czechoslovak citizenship, Sudeten Germans had to prove that they were not only persecuted but also that they remained loyal to the first republic (Čapková 2013: 351). The treatment of German-speaking Jews is also to be seen in the context of the nationality policy in pre-war Czechoslovakia. Choosing nationalities in Czechoslovakia census had political impacts, towns with 20 or more per cent of a minority were officially bilingual (Glassheim 2000: 476). Thus, Jews were sometimes regarded as betrayers in choosing German nationality.

4.3.1. The image of the Sudeten German/ the Co-habitation

Penize od Hitlera, on one hand, critically reflects the category Sudeten German and, on the other hand, addresses the historical interweaves of Czech and Germans in the borderlands. Gita Laschmannová who was deported by the Nazis for being Jewish finds herself persecuted for being German after the war. In the novel, the national committee equates being German with speaking German at home. Thus, speaking German is the crucial factor, not the stance on National Socialism. Nevertheless, the following passage reveals that even language does not function as a marker of differences: ‘No house is yours anymore [...] We have other things to take care of then chatting with you. [...] The faults your family made cannot made up’²⁴

²⁴ ‘Žádnej *haus* už nejni tvuj.[...] Mame jinačí starost než tady *pauzirovat*.[...] Vina tvé familije je nezvratná’

(Denemarková 2006: 34). As Schwarz (2014: 165) points out, the quote uses many Germanisms. Thereby, Denemarková ironically unfolds the mutual influence, often symbiotic relation, between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia.

Concerning the representation of the co-habitation of Czechs and Germans, three striking features can be found. First, the idyllic co-habitation is destroyed in 1938 when nationality categories became important (Chitnis 2013: 434). Second, the children in the village, regardless of their 'nationality' were all born with the help of the same midwife (Denemarková 2006: 57). Third, the borderland is depicted as the natural homeland of both, Czechs and Germans, destroyed by the evil of the war.

With regards to the representation of the Sudeten German, one has to distinguish two layers, the self-image and the Czech ascription. *Penize od Hitlera* allows a Sudeten German woman her voice (Denemarková 2006: 79). What is striking, is that she mentions conflicts between Czechs and Germans. The woman could be classified as a typical bystander, admitting her enthusiasm for the annexation and suppression of Czechs. However, she is also presented as a victim during the expulsion.

The second layer is the retrospectively ascription of the Czechs. The majority of the village inhabitants characterizes the Germans after the war as fascists, exploiters and traitors of the Czech people (Denemarková 2006: 57). The different stances on what happened between 1938 and 1945 illustrate the estrangement of the two groups. Even 60 years later, the same categories the national committee applied, are used to discredit Gita's family. The Sudeten German becomes a stereotype.

Last, I want to discuss the motif of return. Interestingly, the motif of return is usually found in German literature about the expulsion (Kaptayn 2013: 28). However, the return fails. Gita is buried away from Puklice and it becomes obvious that there is no space left for her, not even for her memories.

4.3.2. Representations of the Expulsion

In the novel, the expulsion appears as an on-going process through the present day. In fact, Gita is 'expelled' twice from Puklice – in 1945 and in the 1950s. Additionally, one could interpret the Holocaust as a quasi-expulsion from home as well. Indeed, in Gita's case the expulsion appears as a holocaust after the Holocaust (Schwarz 2014: 165). The expulsion is framed in the context of a European exodus which began in 1938: 'The first wave spilled over

into the East, the current spills over into the West'²⁵ (Denemarková 2006: 60). The established continuity of the Holocaust and the expulsion is reinforced by the fact that the Sudeten German are imprisoned in a former concentration camp. The experiences in Auschwitz and the internment camp are blurring. Both become narrative non-places, 'tamtuds' (Denemarková 2006: 19). It should be noted that *Penize od Hitlera* does not put the expulsion on a level with the Holocaust. The novel rather embeds the expulsion in the history of violence of the 20th century, unfolding the continuities and differences.

Generally, the expulsion is depicted as clearly brutal, including lynching, rape and robbery. The novel highlights the systematic violence in the internment camps and that the expulsions were not undertaken in an orderly manner. Further, Tomášová (2014: 299) notes that the language in the novel is highly physical. Thus, the body is objectified, becoming a plaything of power. In the novel, it appears as bodies not humans are transferred from one camp to another.

4.3.3. Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

Regarding the discourse about guilt and perpetration, the novel focuses on the following complexes: ground-level perpetration, complicity of the second generation and the legal dimension of guilt. Generally, in *Penize od Hitlera* the perpetration is individualised. Whereas the woman who saves Gita remains nameless, the perpetrators are named.

In the novel, the involvement of ordinary Czechs in the expulsion is clearly depicted: crimes are not only committed by officials but by normal citizens. Moreover, Gita is tortured and her brother even killed by their former neighbours. Thereby, it becomes obvious that Addis is not killed out of revenge – as he is Jewish – but out of greed. The new inhabitants and the members of the national committee fear to lose their newly acquired wealth. Indeed, another interesting pattern concerns the resettlement. In contrast to the resettlement of the former German territories in Poland, the new settlers were not expellees themselves but often came to the borderland in a gold-rush mood, hoping to get rich. Abandoned values and confiscated property was taken over by the new settlers.

Concerning the second generation, the novel reflects different shades of guilt. Whereas the village boys who rape Gita and kill her child on the occasion of her first return become guilty in the classic sense, the others in a sense become guilty for not looking at the past. For

²⁵ 'první vlha odšplouchla na východ, nynější na západ'

example, Nataša supports the campaign against Gita Lausmannová because she fears losing her flat. Overall, the novel indicates that the second generation is guilty for not wanting the truth.

Further, the novel addresses the legal dimension of the expulsion. When Gita Lausmannová returns to Puklice in the 2000s, the Beneš decrees are still binding but her parents were rehabilitated. Although the novel illustrates that there are legal possibilities for justice in the case of Gita, the mediation talks reveal that the expulsion is still regarded as justified in the collective memory. Further Gita's former neighbours try to discredit her by making her appear mentally ill. Of special interest here is also Gita's first return in the 1950s. She visits Puklice with her infant son, wishing to take her old highchair from her old family home. Eventually, Gita is raped by the sons of former neighbours and her son is killed (Denemarková 2006: 134f). One could argue that the drastic violence does not only fit in to the 'holocaust after the Holocaust' but does also appear as an attempt by the perpetrators to cancel their guilt of which Gita Lausmannová reminds them.

Last, I want to discuss the reflection of the categories guilt and perpetration. On a metalevel the novel raises questions about what is guilt and who is guilty. For instance, the Czech camp warden who helps Gita to get out of the camp, says 'I'm also just a human'²⁶ (Denemarková 2006: 72). Considering the war and its aftermath, human does not longer indicate humanity. On the contrary, the crimes committed are the results of human acting not solely political systems. The perpetrators are personally responsible for their action.

4.3.4. Memory Processes

With regards to the reflection of the memory of the expulsion, *Penize od Hitlera* includes different perspectives, by following a mosaic approach. The novel focuses mostly on the posthistory of the expulsion. Thereby, the novel offers an approach to how the events of the past impact the presence.

Regarding the scene of action, the rural village is deliberately chosen as a place for opening the past as there is a tradition of the countryside as a space of memory in Czech literature (Chitnis 2013: 433). This is intertwined with the fact that the borderland is the actual

²⁶ 'Já jsem taky jenom člověk'

space of digging into the past – memory-wars over memorials are waged, mass graves are discovered and nostalgia tours to the former Sudetenland are booming.

The events lie in the past, but still affect the present and as a result influences the identity building of those born later. The violent past is like a stigma attached to Puklice. The past can neither be erased nor processed as the memories are fragmented and thus not bound into narration: ‘She cannot build a new wall from the friable bricks of the present’²⁷ (Denemarková 2006: 81). The non-processing of memory is intertwined with the mentioned photographs which are included in the text. They do not help the reader to contextualise the text as the past is not yet transferred into a symbolic system. Consequently, they remain alien.

Although the expulsion is examined by a Czech-German historical commission since the 1990s and various memory actors work in the field of reconciliation, the novel reflects how the collective memory is still shaped by the language of the perpetrators (Schwarz 2014: 165). In contrast, Gita’s language is the one of a traumatized victim. The experiences cannot be brought together. Eventually, Gita dies of a ‘crack in the heart’ (Denemarková 2006: 280f). Further, Schwarz (2014: 167) notes the similarity between ‘Puklina’ (crack, M.S.) and Puklice. The German past of Puklice is not reincorporated – Gita is buried in Prague. The Sudeten German remains the other, non-Czech.

In addition to that, the novel thematises the transmission of the past through family memories and not last through official memory. The perception of Gita by the second and third generation is shaped by stereotypical patterns of the Germans as fascist exploiters. Generally, there seems little will to engage with the past as the stance of the mayor illustrates: ‘If it were only to me ...’²⁸ (Denemarková 2006: 186). Nonetheless, Denemarková stresses the responsibility of the second generation to remember: ‘This world should sort things out’²⁹ (Denemarková 2006: 168).

Last, I want to draw attention to the representation of the Holocaust. The examination of the Holocaust should not be seen solely in a European memory framework but Czech marginal history. Until recently, the topic of involvement of Czechs in the Holocaust was not addressed (Holý 2015: 36). Though, Czechs actively engaged in the annihilation of the Jews, acting out of anti-Semitism and often greed (Lichtenstein 2016: 118).

²⁷ ‘Z drolivých cihel přítomnost sama zed’ nepostaví’

²⁸ ‘kdyby to záleželo jenom na mně’

²⁹ ‘Nechám to na tomdle světě’

4.3.5. Summary of the chapter

To sum it up, the following patterns concerning the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans can be identified. First, the expulsion is interlinked with the Holocaust. Noteworthy the novel does employ classic patterns of Holocaust narration not in order to universalise the Sudeten German experience but to contextualises both, the Holocaust and the expulsion within the chain of violence that began in 1938. Thereby, the expulsion is depicted as an on-going holocaust after the Holocaust. Second, *Penize od Hitlera* pick up the perspective of those born later and how their dealing with the past. Third, the Sudeten German is depicted as someone who was at home in the borderland once but the neighbourhood ended as early as 1938. Fourth in the novel the guilt is individualised, stressing the personal responsibility for the actions. Besides, those born later are included in discourses about guilt as they are guilty of non-remembering. Fifth, in the novel the memories of the perpetrators and the victim cannot be brought together, the reconciliation process does not succeed.

4.4. Alois Nebel

The graphic novel *Alois Nebel* by the author duo Jaroslav Rudiš and Jaromír 99 contextualises the expulsion within Czech marginalized history. *Alois Nebel* consists of three volumes *Bílý potok* (2003), *Hlavní nádraží* (2004) und *Zlaté Hory* (2005) which were published as a complete edition in 2006. The comic has already developed a cult following that could be best described as a pop phenomenon (Kuhlman 2013: 5).³⁰ Further, the comic was adapted into a theatre production, in 2011 an animated film adaptation was released and an app for Google play based on the 2012/13 spin off *Na Treti* was released.

The Comic begins with a prologue in which the ‘Němy’³¹ travels to Jeseníky where he is picked up by the police at a train station in the former Sudetenland and hospitalised in a psychiatry. The actual plot of *Alois Nebel* begins ‘podzim sobotní pod-večer’, hence at the end of the 1980s at the mentioned train station where Alois Nebel works as dispatcher. Alois Nebel, born in 1948 – the year of the communist takeover, derives from a Czech- German family. In his spare time, he likes to read old train timetables. Occasionally, when he falls asleep, he is

³⁰ More than 25.000 copies were sold (Kuhlman 2013: 17)

³¹ The Czech word ‘němy’ means mute. Further, the Czech term for ‘German’ (německy) is rooted in ‘němy’.

haunted by unsettling memories triggered by a mysterious fog³². During these fog sequences ghosts of the past appear: trains full of German soldiers, Jewish concentration camp inmates, expelled Sudeten Germans and Russian occupants. Eventually, Alois Nebel is hospitalised in a psychiatry where he meets Němy who is haunted by fragments of traumatic memories. When Alois Nebel is discharged from the psychiatry, the world is a different one – the iron curtain has collapsed. Then unemployed, he lives at the Prague main train station for a while where he falls in love with a bathroom attendant.

To begin with, I will briefly give an overview about the comic before outlining characteristics of the medium comic and its potentials. First, the relation of text and image is hybrid in comics, they are an interacting entity. Second, the synchronic and diachronic sequential order of the signs creates narration. Overall, storytelling in comics can be characterized as ‘showing and telling’ (Kukkonen 2013: 49). Last, I want to draw attention on the phenomena of meta-narrative. Signs in comics are always self-referential. At the same time, signs are performative, the materialisation of an assertion (Frahm 2012: 11). Meta-narrative is to be understood as a self-reflexive moment and not least a reflection about the constructiveness of the sign. This mentioned self-reflection finally equals a reflection about its fictionality. In summary, the medium comic, in using certain signs, reflects simultaneously the (problematic) dealing with signs. These assumptions are of particular interest regarding the participation of the medium on the cultural memory. Thereby, there is an interplay between memory and cultural memory as comics are characterized by its inherent tension between the recall of images and image creation. Therefore, the meta-fictional level discusses also the representation as such. Concerning *Alois Nebel*, the self-awareness of the medium is of special interest as the treated experiences are not yet translated into a stable sign system. The experiences are fractured and therefore cannot be integrated visually. Additionally, in continuously repeating the signs, which reflect identity, the fragility of the signs is revealed. Thus, memory itself is reflected.

The graphic style of Alois Nebel refers to traditional silhouettes of the Jeseník-region (Černík 2011). The shadow silhouettes throw a ghost alike light from the past on the characters. Besides, the comic becomes a kind of archive in which collected memories and materials are connected, however, in a disordered manner. Interestingly, the comic creates a quasi-oral narrative situation, as the reader is addressed by the character Alois Nebel as part of a ‘we’. Furthermore, the author duo is drawn into the comic as part of the intradiegetic world, discussing

³² It is noteworthy that the German word ‘Nebel’ means fog and ‘Leben’ (life) when spelled backwards (see also Kuhlman 2009: 3)

how the action develops (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006)³³. Due to this so-called metalepsis *Alois Nebel* is classified as interpolated narration as the narrated story is not completed at the beginning of the story. This narrative situation implies that not only the narration is not yet completed but also that the memory is yet not transferred into a symbolic representation. Consequently, *Alois Nebel* illustrates memory processes.

4.4.1. The image of the Sudeten German/ the Co-habitation

As the plot of *Alois Nebel* begins long after the expulsion, the Sudeten German is the absent or returns as a ghost of the past in Nebel's fog-visions. Concurrently, the Sudeten German past is inscribed in the landscape. On the graphic level, traces of the Sudeten German settlement creep in again and again – weathered grave stones and abandoned churches. Thus, the image of the Sudeten German is the one of a memory, representing the loss the expulsion caused.

In the fog-visions the Sudeten Germans are depicted as neighbours. The neighbourhood of Czech and Germans is represented as the constant whereas the respective rulers changed: 'During the war grandfather was appointed points operator and Müller dispatcher. After the war they changed positions agains'³⁴ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). Moreover, by telling the events based on *Alois Nebel*'s family history, the symbiotic co-habitation in the borderlands becomes apparent. Although Nebel states that the majority of the Sudeten Germans supported Henlein and the annexation (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006), there are individual counter examples presented. For instance, Müller a German who worked with Nebel's grandfather. According to *Alois*, Müller remained loyal to the Czechs during the war, but left with the other Sudeten Germans because of his fear of Czech revenge. Further, *Alois*' grandmother fought against Henlein and eventually joined Polish partisans. Interestingly, the SS and Wehrmacht soldiers who arrive with the fog-trains in Bílý Potok are not brought together with the depicted Sudeten Germans. The Sudeten Germans might have supported the Nazi German politics but they are not depicted as actual perpetrators.

4.4.2. Representations of the Expulsion

Although, the expulsion is not the main subject of the story, it does appear and is clearly depicted as part of suppressed memories in Czech memory culture as they are part of the fog-visions. Noteworthy, the expulsion is referred to as 'odsun' by *Alois Nebel*. The comic covers

³³ Please note that the comic has no page numbers

³⁴ 'Za války z dědy udělali výhybkáře a z výhybkáře Müllera výpravčího'

all stages of the expulsion, however not linear. It should be noted that the expulsion is classified post hoc.

The expulsion is represented as clearly brutal: ‘Horrible things were done’³⁵ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). In line with recent debates the comic stresses the involvement of ordinary Czechs. For instance, the barkeeper Wachek senior is shown about to execute a Sudeten German. Thereby, a close-up which occupies half of the page depicts the Sudeten German begging for his life. The way this scene is drawn, with the focus on the man’s expression, individualises the event. Moreover, it calls for the reader’s sympathy (Kuhlmann 2013: 9).

Further, the category of collective guilt as a justification for the expulsion is addressed. As mentioned above Müller fears the Czech revenge, even if he did not cooperate with the Nazis. The comic depicts the hate for all Germans, independently of their point of view: ‘A good German is a dead German’³⁶ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). Besides, *Alois Nebel* reflects the narrative of the Sudeten German betrayal of the first republic by letting a Czech soldier state ‘You want be part of the Reich? No problem. It’s for free. Go home!’³⁷ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). Generally, the Germans are depicted as helpless victims in the panels concerning the expulsion. This image is reinforced by the juxtaposing of expelled Sudeten Germans next to concentration camp inmates and expelled Czechs in 1938. Consequently, they all appear as victims of the ‘century of forced migration’ (Ther 2001: 50): ‘History is full of throwing. And manoeuvring. And before and after the war, people were manoeuvred as never before’³⁸ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). Thus, the post-war expulsion is classified as ethnic violence in a human rights framework and not only as the historical consequence of the Second World War.

Last, I want to draw attention to the quote ‘What did I forget?’³⁹ by an expelled Sudeten German with a swastika on her back (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). The question can not only be understood with regards to the belongings she forgot to pack but also to the general situation. The panel is surrounded by scenes of deported Jews and fleeing Czechs in 1938. Taking the neighbouring panels into account, one could argue that quote reflects the incapacity of the Sudeten Germans to reflect their role in the protectorate. On one hand, the question could be

³⁵ ‘Děly se tu hrozné věci’

³⁶ ‘Mrtvej Němec, dobrej Němec’

³⁷ ‘Chceš do rajchu? Můžeš. A zadarmo. Marš domů!’

³⁸ ‘Dějiny jsou plné prohazování. A šibování. A před válkou a po válce se s lidmi šibovalo jako nikdy předtím’

³⁹ ‘Was habe ich nur vergessen?’

interpreted as a – slightly ironic – reflection about what caused the expulsion and, on the other hand, about the current location of the expulsion, in an all-European genocide framework.

4.4.3. Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

The discussion about guilt and perpetration in *Alois Nebel* includes pattern of individualisation and ground-level perpetration. The comic shows the involvement of ordinary Czechs, acting out of hate and revenge.

The comic raises questions of individual guilt and motives for the actions. What is striking here is that one of the main characters, Wachek senior, is a perpetrator. He does not only participate in lynching but also rapes a woman with whom he has a child, Němy. The woman is forced to live together with Wachek by the circumstances of time. She is constantly abused, under the eyes of her son. Interestingly, with Wachek the author duo chooses a perpetrator whose involvement in the expulsion is partly personal motivated: he profits from the new order. Moreover, he does not only brutally involve in the expulsion but also collaborate with all regimes. Nevertheless, Wachek's character is not terribly unsympathic – he is depicted as sly but is willing to speak in the end, recognising his son. Nevertheless, he is eventually killed by his son. Thus, the comic succeeds in combining patterns of victimhood and perpetration.

However, the crimes committed in the aftermath of the war have not been processed yet. Alois Nebel who belongs to the Second generation, states: 'Horrible things were done, Wachek senior was right in the middle of it, as far as I know, but maybe that's just rumours'⁴⁰ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). As Kuhlman (2013:10) points out the voice remains passive. The quote also reveals the little knowledge about the events of those born later, the crimes remain rumours.

Regarding the resettlement, in contrast to the colonisation novel the acquisition of the land does not succeed in *Alois Nebel*: 'half of them [new settlers, M.S.] drank themselves to death, the other half hanged themselves'⁴¹ (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). Hence, the settlers become so to speak victims of their guilt of denying the past because 'One cannot gloss over history'⁴² (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006).

⁴⁰ Děly se tu hrozné věci, starý Wachek prý byl při tom, co tím myslím. Jak říkám, možná jsou tu jen pomluvy'

⁴¹ 'polovina chlapů, co sem přišla za lepším, uchlastala a druhá polovina oběsila'

⁴² 'všechno to je historie, a ta přemalovat nejde'

4.4.4. Memory Processes

With regards to the examination of the memory of the expulsion, it should be noted that the events are classified by those born later, namely Alois Nebel. In general, the comic can be read as an examination of memory. Thereby, the comic focuses on two points – first on how the borderland is shaped by the past and second on how those born later are effected by the past. In *Alois Nebel* the borderland is haunted by the ghosts of the past but also rediscovered as a landscape of memory. This conjunct with the work of local memory activists drawing attention to the individual fate of the local German community (Spalová 2017: 89). The comic also draws attention to the losses the expulsion caused, the cultural loss but also the loss of neighbours, such as Müller. Interestingly, the borderland is, on one hand, portrayed as the periphery to the city, here Prague, and, on the other hand, as a periphery of memories which are part of the latency memory.

Moreover, the landscape becomes a storage of memories in memory theory terms. The landscape is the carrier of repressed and latent memories: memories that were not part of the official socialist memory politics, such as Czech collaboration, the brutality of the expulsion and the Sudeten German as a neighbour. Looking at the landscape on the graphic level, the meshing of non-contemporary and competing memories is revealed: deported Jews, expelled Germans and Russian occupiers meet at the train station. Regarding Czech memory culture, a linear narration remains impossible because non-official memories were suppressed. Thus, *Alois Nebel* not only unfolds the lack of symbolic representation of the expulsion but also the gap between experience and postmemory, the gap the dead left behind. Due to the suppression of the memory during the socialist period, no oral narrative in the communicative memory developed. Therefore, the comic refers to lexicon entries and articles attempting to actualise those unavailable memories.

Concerning the transmission of memories, the character of Němy who is haunted by traumatic events is of special interest. The fragments are disorderly and cave as incomprehensible shards into the panels. Němy embodies the trauma of his Sudeten German mother, who is raped by Wachek senior, via inter-generational transmission. In a sort of dream alike sequence the different layers of time conflate: Němy sees his former self and simultaneously witnesses the rape of his mother, a Sudeten German who is raped during the expulsions by pub owner Wachek. The fragments are for the first time put together, also visually in a macro panel (Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006). The memories are bound into narration for the first time. However,

Němy dies shortly after. Consequently, the memories pass again over to the latency memory. One striking aspect here is that the temporal layers merge at the space of the crime which becomes the space of the new crime the moment Němy kills Wachek. Indeed, it is typical for traumatic experiences that they constantly cave into the presence. In Alois Nebel the past is interlinked with the presence as the past is not transferred into a symbolic representation system: ‘What did he search for?’ – ‘The past’⁴³(Rudiš, Jaromír 99 2006).

4.4.5. Summary of the chapter

To sum it up, the following patterns of the narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans can be identified. First, *Alois Nebel* frames the expulsion in the overall context of flight and expulsion in the 20th century. By disorderly juxtaposing concentration camps with internment camps and Czechs fleeing from the Nazis, the experiences become universalized. Besides, the disorder refers to the lacking symbolic representation of the expulsion in Czech memory. Second, the traumatic memories cannot be transferred into narration as the case of Němy illustrates – he dies before the memories are passed onto the cultural memory. Third, what is striking is the individualisation not only of the Sudeten German but also of the perpetrators. Fourth, the borderland is portrayed as still being impacted by the past – socially and culturally. Fifth, the expulsion is narrated from a postmemorial perspective, mirroring the popular narrative.

4.5. Habermannův mlýn (‘Habermann’s mill’)

Juraj Herz's film *Habermannův mlýn*, which was released in 2010, was the ‘first film in the whole history of Czech(oslovak) cinema to deal openly with Czech brutality towards Germans and to picture the so-called ‘wild expulsion’’ (Hanáková 2014: 106). Notably, the film was an Austrian-Czech-German co-production. Therefore, the film can be framed into a European memory culture context, addressing questions of neighbourhood and common reappraisal. Furthermore, the movie was highly anticipated⁴⁴ by the public. The Czech media debate about the movie was driven by the idea of eventually breaking the silence about Czech perpetration (Křivánková 2010, Fila 2010). But there were also critical voices, claiming that the plot

⁴³ ‘Przeszłość. Może pan skoczyć pot e róże? Daibli wiedzą’

⁴⁴ More than 20.000 viewers saw the film on the first weekend. Besides, it was among the 2010’ 25 most popular films in the Czech Republic (Do Kina 2010)

was dramatized (Spáčilová 2010). Indeed, the movie features the classic patterns of popular narration as it will be discussed below. However, while the film was successful from an economic perspective, the film did not foster a critical reflection of the long-suppressed memories (Hanáková 2014: 106).

Habermannův mlýn is based on the 2001 novel of the same name by Josef Urban. The book is inspired by real events. Nevertheless, the exact circumstances of Habermann's death are disputed (Procházková 2010). The novel as well as the movie tell the events between 1937 and 1945 in the Sudetenland from the perspective of the German mill owner Habermann who is married to a Czech wife of Jewish heritage and lives in harmony with his Czech neighbours. Following the annexation of the Sudetenland by Nazi Germany, the idyll is destroyed. Eventually, by the end of the war Habermann is killed by his Czech neighbours during the wild expulsions and his wife Jana – although Jewish – and their daughter are expelled. In terms of narrative organisation, the wild expulsion is used as a framing device with which the film returns in the end.

The film is to be seen within the boom of popular history movies such as the Polish movie *Katyn* (Andrzej Wajda 2007) since the early 2000s: 'Film and television have become the most effective (and paradoxically least acknowledged) institutional vehicles for shaping historical consciousness' (Kaes 1990: 112). Hence, films directly participate in constructing narratives. Furthermore, filmic representations of historical events illustrate the intertwining of memory and its fictional appropriation (Kaes 1990: 111).

Thereby, the films combine the historic incident with popular patterns of fictional narration, focusing on the individual faith of few characters. The focus lies on the individual. Thus, the 'abstract' past is personalized and thereby proximity between the past and the present is achieved. This means that historic events are emotionalized and thus presented as immediate: Film 'reduces complex connections and fits historic incidents into a dramatic story' (Ebbrecht 2007: 223), telling 'big historical events' as part of personal history and individual fates. It makes history available at a relatively low level. The emotional attachment is an important factor for making the past available in media. By additionally providing information regarding the further fate of the characters after the fictional plot has ended, the action is already classified for those born later and prompts the audience to ascribe historical authenticity to the fictional story. Besides, focusing on few main characters – based on real persons – and their individual fate against the historic background helps to communicate authentication. The personalisation of historical events serve as access points to the past through emotional attachment.

In the case of *Habermannův mlýn* ‘the division of roles is purely schematic in the film’ (Hanáková 2014: 108). The characters are divided not along their nationality but along good and bad – the good German is married to a Czech wife, whereas the good Czech Březina has a German wife. None of these main characters is a perpetrator. Consequently, for the audience it is easy to identify with the good. They stand against their opponents – evil Nazis and greedy village inhabitants. Apart from that, the historical incidences are sometimes shown as a catastrophe which overtakes the harmonic village life: It is not the main characters who are primarily responsible for the actions, it is the war that will destroy them all. Therefore, it is easy to identify with the characters as none of them is a real perpetrator.

4.5.1. The image of the Sudeten German/ the Co-habitation

Although *Habermannův mlýn* tries to embed the expulsion in a broader context of Czech-German co-habitation, it fails to present the alienation of the majority of the Sudeten Germans from the first Czechoslovakian republic. However, while the enthusiasm of the Sudeten Germans about the annexation is depicted, the film does not touch upon the historical segregation between Czech and German speaking citizens – they visit the same church, celebrate together and only the horrors of the war tear them apart. The village is represented as a space of idyllic co-habitation: the ‘story [...] fails to critically reflect the representation of national identity and its corollary – the definition of otherness’ (Hanáková 2014: 109). Overall, the image of the Sudeten German is the one of the natural neighbour with whom the Czechs live symbiotically together prior to the war. Thereby, the plentiful dubbing is of special interest as it creates a historical false image, suggesting that that German was only marginally spoken (Hanáková 2014: 107). Interestingly, only those from the outside, the Nazis, speak mainly German. Moreover, the Sudeten Germans only become visible through their use of German following the annexation. The film suggests that the distrust against the Czechs steps in only with the annexation as before the Sudeten Germans were not recognisable. Although, the film depicts the enthusiastic collaboration of the German population, the German speaking inhabitants remain mostly in the background.

The main character August Habermann is the clichéd good German who speaks fluent Czech, too. He is, in addition, married to a Czech wife and is accused by the Nazis of employing too many Czechs. Moreover, he is contrasted with the spiteful Czechs who kill him in the end (Hanáková 2014:107). Besides, he appears highly apolitical, only caring about his mill and

employees. He rejects any identity patterns other than regionals. When the Sudetenland is annexed and Březina points out that the German Reich also is Habermann's fatherland, he replies that only those have a fatherland who have nothing else and that the region is his homeland (*Habermannův mlýn*: 00:20). In addition to that, Habermann speaks of 'us' when debating the possible changes following the annexation with Březina – there is no distinction made between the German speaking and the Czech citizens of Czechoslovakia.

The film circumvents questions of national belonging or feelings of the Sudeten Germans, by letting Habermann distinguish between homeland and fatherland. Later in the movie, Habermann asks the Sturmbannführer Koslowski ironically which nationality the electricity has. This scene again reveals how nationality questions are excluded by the film. The exclusion of national categories creates the image of the Sudeten German as the natural neighbour who is at home in the region regardless of the respective ruler.

As already mentioned above, the evil of the war is not brought from within, by the Sudeten Germans, but from the outside, by the Nazis. Although Hans Habermann, August's younger brother, appears at first glance as the stereotypical Sudeten German – enthusiastically embracing the 'Anschluss', admiring Hitler and voluntarily joining the Wehrmacht – he is in fact not. Like his brother, Hans speaks fluent Czech and seems to be well integrated into the Czech village community and by the end of the war he is disillusioned. He is wounded at the Eastern front and horrified by the events. Jana drags him out of a hospital train in order to save him from a return to the front and hides him in a hut. Eventually, at the end of the war he appears broken. Generally, even in moments of moral crisis, the main German speaking characters distinguish themselves from the Nazis portrayed as brutal and uncultured: 'they are not my Nazis' (*Habermannův mlýn* 2010: 07:00). Maybe one could call them naïve, but not brutal. Although Habermann co-operates with the Sturmbannführer, he only does it to prevent further harm. He sells all his family jewellery to Koslowski for the life of Czech village inhabitants who should be shot in revenge for the killing of two Germans by supposed Partisans. Thereby, he resembles a Schindler giving away his possessions in order to save his neighbours lives, even willing to sacrifice his own life.

Last, I want to draw attention to the scene in which Jana and Březina's German wife pass a deportation train with Jewish children begging for water. This scene could be read in the

context of discourses about German bystanders. However, Martha Březina, married to a Czech, knows about Jana's Jewish heritage and backs her.

4.5.2. Representation of the Expulsion

The movie concentrates on the so-called wildcat expulsions in the direct aftermath of the war. Thereby, two striking features can be identified. First, the representation of drastic violence by 'ordinary' Czechs against the Sudeten resembles recently released footage as shown in the already mentioned documentary *Zabijení po česku* documentary. *Habermannův mlýn* depicts beating and lynching under the involvement of village inhabitants. The killing of Habermann is freighted with religious metaphors – he is forced to carry a flour bag like Jesus carries his cross amidst beating and he is bounded on the mill wheel resembling Christ on the cross.

The second striking feature is the adaptation of classic Holocaust narrative patterns to the representation of the expulsion. Indeed, the first minute of the film resembles visualisations of deportation of Jews – people with luggage are pushed into cattle wagons amidst beating and abusing. It is only when the supposed Nazi-supervisors pee against a Hitler photography that the image is broken. Then, the red armbands of the supervisors are shown – the symbol of the revolutionary guards which were highly involved in the expulsions. By adapting fragments of Holocaust narratives, the information the viewer has stored about the Holocaust, here the iconic images, merge with the representation of the expulsion. Consequently, the suffering of the Sudeten Germans is detached from the historical context and hence universalized. In addition to that, Jana Habermann is marked doubly as a victim as she is Jewish and Czech. One of the last footages shows Jana Habermann wearing the yellow star of David, next to her child. Thus, in combination with the martyrdom of August, the expellees appear as the victim per se of an arbitrary atrocity that does inhere meaning like the Holocaust.

Generally, the film rejects concepts of collective guilt that would justify the violence against the Sudeten Germans. Eventually, the expulsion of Jana, a Czech Jew, negates the idea of the expulsion as a consequence of the involvement of the Sudeten Germans in National Socialism. Therefore, the individual guilt is detached from the idea of the expulsion as a historical necessity and thus reframed in a global context of expulsion and genocide: the expellees become the total victim, neglecting historical links (Radonić, Uhl 2016:13).

4.5.3. Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

Regarding the representation of Czech perpetration, the film picks up the topic of ground level perpetrators that became academically researched in the early 2000s (Glassheim 2000). Thereby, the film focuses mainly on the individual level of guilt. *Habermannův mlýn* raises questions about the involvement of ordinary Czechs just following the war. Thereby, the film touches upon the taboo of personal enrichment in the course of the expulsion. In the film, former employees of Habermann start to plunder the mill owner's villa, even conflicts about the valuables are depicted. Further, the plundering of the Habermann property is interlinked with the revelation about mill employee Mašek, the son of Habermann's housekeeper. During the looting, Eliska Mašek explains to her son that they will now take what is rightfully theirs as Mašek is the illegitimate son of August Habermann's father. Mašek then tries to stop the looting of 'his' properties by claiming the belongings as his. However, he is accused of being a German such as his father by the others and in the end, hangs himself. Hence, greed or revenge becomes one of the main motives in the movie. Březina even warns his friend at the end of the war that he should fear what's coming because he is rich (*Habermannův mlýn* 2010: 01:22).

Besides, the film addresses the topic of Czech collaboration with the Nazis: the priest does help the Sturmbannführer to escape at the end of the war but also supervises the expulsion, the hotel manager collaborates with whoever is in power and the mayor uses the information about Jana's Jewish origin to enforce own interests. By juxtaposing collaboration during the war and active involvement in the expulsion, *Habermannův mlýn* frames the expulsion in a general decline of morality during the war referring to the dissident debates of the 1970s (Glassheim 2000: 464). Additionally, acts of Czech resistance against the occupiers remain few in number.

However, the outburst of violence of Czechs against their neighbours is contrasted with Březina who preserves his moral integrity and only circumstances beyond his control let him become guilty, like Habermann. Moreover, some of those playing a leading role in the lynching act out of unawareness of the real circumstances. For instance, the wife of one of the men shoot for the death of two German soldiers saw Habermann during the raid and now makes him responsible for the death of her husband. Mašek who sabotages the work in the mill and who takes a critical view on the Sudeten, eventually becomes a victim of the expulsion, too.

Overall, the hostility is fuelled not by historical inner community conflicts but mainly by the brutal Nazis that play off Germans against Czechs.

4.5.4. Memory Processes

Next, I want to discuss how memory processes are embedded in *Habermannův mlýn*. According to Hanáková (2014: 108), ‘the film is a typical EU co-production’. Not only does the film establish symmetry between Czech and German victims and perpetrators but also chooses a European memory framework. The expulsion is framed within a broader context of the Second World War. Furthermore, *Habermannův mlýn* circumvents competing memories of the Holocaust and Sudeten German suffering by juxtaposing both. Nevertheless, the attempt to integrate the Jewish suffering – which remained marginal in Czech memory culture – fails. Rather than shedding light on the faith of Sudeten German Jews, Jana’s story leads to the image of the expulsion as a genocide among genocides. A feature that is in line with the trend of Europeanisation.

In addition to that, the film can be seen as Czech-German-Austrian memory work. In accordance with recent transnational project the film follows a reconciliation approach focusing on the mutual history and individual fates. Although the film includes the pre-war period, tensions between Czech and German speaking citizens prior to the annexation are marginally addressed. Indeed, Mašek states that occupiers come and go, but the tone remains in jest (*Habermannův mlýn* 2010: 00:15). This quote can be read as an intertextual reference to the colonisation novel with its presentation of the German as foreign coloniser. However, the movie rejects the conquer-image of the German by embedding the expulsion in the context of century long cohabitation. Here, the film is to see in line with various social memory actors such as Antikomplex stressing the coexistence.

4.5.5. Summary of the chapter

Classifying *Habermannův mlýn* with regards to memory theory, the following patterns can be identified. First, processes of individualisation of both, the Sudeten Germans and Czech perpetrators. Thereby, especially the examination of ground-level perpetrators is noteworthy. Second, the representation of the expulsion adapts symbols of Holocaust narratives. By re-

actualising the expulsion with the narrative of the Holocaust, the expulsion becomes a metaphor for universal suffering. This is also read in conjunction with an ethnic cleansing framework. However, by including Jana's faith and deportations of Jews the film tries to embed the expulsion within a European narrative of the Second World War, centring around the Holocaust. Third, the image of the Sudeten German is one of neighbours. Prior to the annexation of the Sudetenland, there is no recognisable segregation between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechs. Moreover, the image of the colonizer is shifted from the Sudeten German to the invading Nazis who trigger the mistrust and violence. Fifth, the past is made available through emotional attachment.

5. Comparison

The previous chapters presented the narrative strategies regarding the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans in fiction and its dominant features. In order to explore the narrative, the analyses focused on identifying strategies and patterns of the narrative.

The subsequent analysis will take the patterns found and compare the representations of the expulsion against categories developed for this, so as to allow for an overall evaluation of the postmemorial narrative. A concluding table will illustrate the identified narrative patterns and strategies.

5.1. The image of the Sudeten German / the Co-habitation

It can be observed in all five works that the image of the Sudeten German is pluralised. The stereotypical image of the Sudeten German as 'the' Nazi, a foreign colonizer and ruthless capitalist employed by the Communist narrative, are contrasted with diverse individual fates that do not allow for generalisation. Thus, the collective category Sudeten German is critically assessed. This trend is consolidated through narrative strategies of individualisation. This strategy is reinforced by the fact that some of the works give Sudeten Germans a voice. Focusing on individual fates helps to communicate authenticity. Not least, this personalisation serves the postmemory generation as an access point to the past.

By depicting women and children as subjects to Czech arbitrariness, processes of victimisation take place: The persecution measurements against the Sudeten Germans as a collective are questioned. Consequently, the application of collective guilt is rejected.

Regarding the image of the Co-habitation, all works describe the Czech-Sudeten German relation prior to 1938 as neighbourly. The cultural interlinks are highlighted. The Sudeten German is not the other but the neighbour who is at home in the region. This almost idyllic co-existence is destroyed in 1938. Although the Sudeten German enthusiasm for National Socialism is depicted, with the exception of *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem*, the conflicts between both groups prior to 1938 are not brought up. Thus, the mistrust between Czechs and Germans is fuelled from the outside.

Moreover, the image of the co-habitation implies a regional identity that cannot be described with national categories. The categories of Czech, German and Jew are overwhelmingly marked as artificial political constructs, that are not paying attention to the borderland identity. However, (re) incorporation of the Sudeten Germans into the Czechoslovak nation in memory fails. For instance, Gita Lauschmannová remain the German – the other.

While early works as *Zdivočelá Země* still employs stereotypical pattern of the image of the Sudeten German, the image becomes more and more pluralised. Further, the image of the co-habitation as neighbourhood was emphasised, peaking in the most recent production *Habermannův mlýn*. One could argue that this shift is to be seen firstly, in the context of the EU neighbourhood policy and secondly, in relation to the public examination of Czech-German mutual history. Following the 2004 EU enlargement, the European Union promoted the concept of transnational EU regions in the Czech-German borderland, extending economic, cultural and administrative cooperation (Haack 2010: 36). Further, European integration also helped the perception of Germany as a neighbour in a European framework. Throughout the 2000s, an extensive examination of shared history took place in both countries, revealing the mutual influence and cultural links (Becher 2007: 261).

5.2. Representations of the Expulsion

The discussed works mainly concentrate on the expulsions in the direct aftermath of the war, including lynchings, beatings and forced labour. Visually, the later works such as *Alois Nebel* and *Habermannův mlýn* rely on recently released footage and images produced by popular history, *Zdivočelá Země* was the first visualisation of the expulsion on TV. Therefore, the

series still participate in Communist representations, letting the actual deportations appear relatively well administrated.

Another pattern is the resettlement in the Sudetenland as part of the expulsion in *Zdivočelá Země*, *Penize od Hitlera* and *Alois Nebel*. As highlighted, the exchange of population did not take place after but during the expulsion. The settlers did not arrive in open land but became witnesses of the brutal expulsion and helped – active or passively – to carry out the expulsion. In *Zdivočelá Země* and *Alois Nebel* the new settlers see a chance for personal enrichment. The new settlers in *Penize od Hitlera* even kill Gita's brother, fearing to lose their newly acquired property.

What is striking is the increasing contextualisation of the expulsion within a genocide framework. Whereas the 1997 TV-series *Zdivočelá Země* frames the expulsion as a singular event in Czech history, the later works tend to re-evaluate the expulsion in the context of genocide. Thereby, different strategies of universalisation and victimisation are employed. By juxtaposing the expulsion with historical or contemporary cases of ethnic violence such as St. Bartholomew or the Yugoslavian war, the experience of the expulsion is universalised. Consequently, the expulsion appears as a genocide among genocides, decontextualized from its specific context. Thus, the events become accessible. Moreover, processes of victimisation take place. The strongest genocide framework can be found in *Habermannův mlýn* which participates in the representations of the Holocaust – the symbol of arbitrary violence per se.

5.3. Discourses about Guilt and Perpetration

As Mink (2008) points out, a judicial and moral framework for the guilt of individuals responsible for violence emerged following the Yugoslavian case. Indeed, an increasing examination of ground level perpetration can be observed in all works. On a narrative level the examination of questions of personal responsibility is coupled with strategies of individualisation. The guilt is not externalised onto a small group of persons responsible but the involvement of ordinary Czechs is picked up.

Further, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem*, *Penize od Hitlera* and *Alois Nebel* pick up the subject of rape as a war crime committed during the expulsion. Indeed, rape as a war crime became debated following the Yugoslavian war which also led to a renewed debate about the expulsion

as ethnic violence (Hahn, Hahn 2008). The topic of rape as a weapon was also covered by media in the context of various civil wars in Africa in the late 1990s.

This stands in accordance with the political discourse about the judicial dimension of the expulsion, especially the Beneš decrees, in the 2000s. Particularly, *Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem* and *Penize od Hitlera* broach the issue of the non-processing of the crimes committed during the expulsion. Not least, the recent discoveries of new mass graves fuelled the debate about the legitimacy of the expulsion. In 2009 also a poll indicated that the portion of Czechs considering the expulsion policies fair, decreased to 42 per cent compared to 1996 (Peers 2009: 5f).

Regarding the motifs of the perpetrators, greed and personal enrichment stand out, undermining the idea of the measurements as fair punishment. Therefore, the postmemorial works do not solely see the expulsion as a reaction to the persecution of Czechs during the occupation regime but as an outburst of violence at the end of the war.

5.4. Memory Processes

The analyses indicate that the expulsion is framed in the context of Czech marginal history. All works juxtapose the expulsion with other suppressed memories such as the Holocaust in Czechoslovakia, 1968 and the Soviet occupation. Thereby, it becomes obvious that the expulsion is not processed and transferred into a symbolic representation system. The works disclose a gap as no communicative memory of the expulsion developed due to the oppressive Communist memory regime.

In the works focusing on the posthistory of the events, the expulsion as a traumatic memory is transferred to the Second generation of both, Czechs and Germans. Consequently, on a narrative level, the presence is still impacted by the past. The influence of the past on those born later is coupled with a reconciliation approach. In line with the call to remember, is the work of various initiatives established in the late 1990s and the Czech-German historical commission.

The 'presence of the past' is interlinked with the established image of the borderland. The narrative of the reconquered borderland is contrasted to a 'land gone wild' in *Zdivočelá Země*, *Penize od Hitlera* and *Alois Nebel*, a region full of traces of the former Sudeten German

neighbours, almost appearing ghost like. The works depict the borderland as ‘trans-dimensional spaces where partially collapsed conceptual, physical and temporal elements coexist’ (Grafijczuk 2013: 10). Following the spatial turn in Cultural and Social Science, space becomes a central category (Eigler 2014: 38). In the case of the Sudetenland, the region became, on one hand, the space for opening the past and, on the other hand, a carrier of memories in lack of memorials. Here, the works draw once again the attention to the losses of the expulsion. The adventurous pattern of the 1950 colonisation novels is replaced by the picture of a peripheral, economic and social devastated region. Besides, the over glossing of the German past is critically reflected.

Last, an emerging Europeanisation of the expulsion can also be identified regarding the location in memory, in an overall context of the Second World War. For instance, all works do include the Holocaust as a central pattern of the war.

5.5. Overview

Pattern	<i>Zdivočelá Země</i>	<i>Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem</i>	<i>Penize od Hitlera</i>	<i>Alois Nebel</i>	<i>Habermannův mlýn</i>
Sudeten German as the neighbour	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Regional identity	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Losses caused by the expulsion	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Genocide-framework	no	yes	partly	yes	yes
Ground-level perpetration	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Reflection of the resettlement	yes	no	yes	yes	no
Reconciliation approach	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

Strategies	<i>Zdivočelá země</i>	<i>Ta dlouhá Vlna za Kýlem</i>	<i>Penize od Hitlera</i>	<i>Alois Nebel</i>	<i>Habermannův mlýn</i>
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Universalisation	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Europeanisation	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Individualisation	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Identification	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

6. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to investigate the postmemorial narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans. What has been examined are dominant patterns of the narrative, based on five fictional works. The work has established four separate categories that profile the narrative of the expulsion. Choosing five works of different genres and covering a time span of almost 15 years, allowed to determine patterns genre-independent and to trace shifts in relationship with contemporary discourses. The thesis understood historical narratives as ‘shared sense of history’ (Rigney 2012: 617), interpreting and representing the historical event. Therefore, it assumed that fictional works actively participate in constructing historical narratives. Using concepts of cultural memory suggested by Ann Rigney and Astrid Erll it analysed how the events are aesthetically appropriated by Czech cultural media production. As it has been shown, postmemory is a reaction to and reflection of memory. Consequently, postmemorial works always inhere an examination of memory, they draw on earlier acts of mediations of the past (Erll, Rigney 2009: 4). The thesis also shed light on the interplay of political or public discourses and the remediation of the past in fiction. It also looked at the employed narrative strategies. Thereby, the focus lied on how the past is made available for those born later and how these strategies go into the making of the narrative.

In the context of Czechoslovakia or the Czech Republic, where memory was promoted exclusively top-down during the Communist period, collective memories of the Sudeten German as a neighbour and crimes committed during the expulsion remained taboo. Hence, the memories could not be actualised on the level of the communicate memory. After the demise of Communism, these ‘frozen’ memories were taken up by media. It should be noted that often media stepped in the gap the lack of processing of memory has left on the social level.

What emerges from the thesis is that the postmemorial narrative of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, reframes the events in an ethical-legal framework. In locating the expulsion in a global context of ethnic violence, the narrative of the expulsion as a fair collective punishment is critically reassessed. The employment of strategies of universalisation and individualisation further raises questions about victimhood and perpetration.

The narrative is built on the image of the Sudeten German as a neighbour who was at home in the region. The image is pluralised, negating the concept of collective guilt. And even the image of the German as an invader is rejected. Noteworthy, most of the works focus on individual Sudeten German fates, trying to include their perspective into the narrative. The cohabitation is depicted as almost symbiotic. The mistrust between the both groups is not brought from within, but the outside by National Socialism. These representations are highly shaped by the idea of neighbourhood in the European Union and the mutual Czech-German examination of the shared history since the mid-1990s.

Although, the image of the Sudeten German as the other is re-assessed, embedding the expulsion within a century-long shared history, the Sudeten Germans are not fully incorporated into the Czech self-image. In most of the works a regional identity is established, circumventing national categories. In fact, in the discourse it is still debated how to frame the Sudeten Germans within Czech national identity (Spurny 2012: 4). Their presence is defined by representations of loss in the works. However, it's the loss of a local neighbour not a fellow Czechoslovak citizen.

Regarding the representation of the actual expulsion, it is re-mediated within the context of ethnic violence during the 20th century. The experience is juxtaposed to historical genocides and partly participates in symbolic representations of the Holocaust. On one hand, this is to be seen in relationship to the newly emerging human rights framework (Winter 2013: 44), and on the other hand, with regards to the lack of symbolic representation of the events. The outburst of ethnic violence in Yugoslavia introduced ethic and legal categories to the debate about flight and expulsion at the end and in the aftermath of the Second World War. Moreover, by universalising the expulsion, the experiences can be transmitted; they are made available. These processes are intertwined with strategies of victimisation. The Sudeten Germans become victims among victims in a global history of violence. Hence, the expulsion is detached from its specific historical context, evading questions of Sudeten German perpetration.

The analysis of discourses about guilt and perpetration showed that the works examine the role of ground-level perpetrators, highlighting the involvement of ordinary Czechs in the expulsion. The moral justifiability of the expulsion is questioned by depicting robbing and rape. This is reinforced by the fact that greed and personal enrichment are mentioned as motifs for crimes. The pattern of Czech perpetration also challenges the traditional Czech narrative of the Second World War based on victimhood. Furthermore, the recent debates about the binding of the Beneš decrees gave new impetus to the discourse on the legal process of the expulsion. The non-prosecution of the crimes leads to a transmission of the traumatic events, causing new crimes. Therefore, the committed violence still impacts Czech society. Additionally, the borderland is presented as an almost lawless, devastated space, suggesting lines of continuity between the expulsion and the oppression by the Communist regime.

With regards to the reflection and reception of memory in the works, the memories of the expulsion are presented as peripheral. Marginalised during the Communist period, the memory was rediscovered after 1989. Hence, the works restructure the narrative by preforming memory. The media become memory activists themselves as there is little representation to build on. In doing so, the works rely on the landscape as a carrier of memories, the past unfolds in the space of the memories.

Moreover, the majority of the works identify a gap between the political and communicative memory of the expulsion. Whereas on the political level Czech-German reconciliation took place and academic work further processes the events, on a local or social level there seems little will to engage with the past. Indeed, the 2013 election debate and various campaigns for memorials in the former Sudetenland reveal the reluctance to reassess the national self-image of Czech victimhood, whereby the expulsion is regarded as a historical necessity in order to save the nation. Nevertheless, most of the works follow a reconciliation approach, appealing to those born later to process the events in order to prevent further violence.

‘Media are continually commenting on [...] and replacing each other’ (Erl1 2011: 140). Thus, the postmemorial narrative presents a re-mediation of earlier mediation of the events. Thereby, the pattern of the reconquered borderland is replaced by a ‘land gone wild’, highly shaped by the violence against and by the loss of the former neighbour. Furthermore, the expulsion becomes increasingly framed in a European narrative of the Second World War to which the Holocaust is central. Consequently, the expulsion is contextualised in the European negative founding myth, participating in the European memory.

The dissertation proposed first insights into the contemporary narrative of the expulsion in media of the cultural memory. Nonetheless, the dissertation has not exhausted the topic. The topic could be considered from a broader perspective, including further works or memory genres such as public debates, exhibitions and the work of non-governmental organisations.

Similarly, the interplay of cultural and political memory could be considered from the perspective of memory landscapes. This would include questions such as to what extent a regional memory culture is established, as well whether a local communicative memory developed.

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