Abstract

Cultural memory and its media have a productive power in constructing historical narratives. Especially, in Central and Eastern Europe, memory is mostly created through bottom-up processes: The past is mediated in the public sphere and imagined in popular culture (Blacker, Etkind 2013: 10). The velvet revolution is followed by a memory boom in the Czech Republic, in which media acts as memory activists addressing tabooed memories. At a time where the last witnesses of the expulsion are passing away, the dying voice is taken up by media. This thesis aims to explore the determinant patterns of the Czech narrative in post-1989 fiction. Particularly, it focuses on postmemorial representations. The thesis is based on an analysis of five fictional works dealing with the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans. The expulsion is embedded in the century-long co-habitation with the Sudeten German depicted as a neighbour. However, the Sudeten Germans are only incorporated into a regional but not the national Czech identity. While the expulsion is reframed in an ethical-legal framework, on a narrative level strategies of individualisation and universalisation are employed to make the past accessible for those born later.