

THE GAINS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT?

By

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Submitted to
Central European University
Nationalism Studies Program

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis wouldn't have been possible without the loving support of my mother, Etelka Tamás, the guidance and advices of my supervisor, professor András Kovács, the encouragement and caring support of Katalin Gyöngyösi, Tadas Janusauskas, Melinda Laszák, Alexandra Şindreştean, Kiss Péter, Blos-Jáni Melinda and Giulia Pozzi.

I would also like to thank the people who were willing to help me with my research and answer to my questions: Aurelian Grama, Bartha Éva, Bartha Zsuzsa, Bodolai Balázs, Bodolai Gyöngyi, Daniel Oltean, Fehér Csaba, Fekete Márton, Ioan Korpos, Jakab István, Kelemen Zoltán, Kulcsár Botond, Lázok Klári, Madaras Gabriela, Madaras Sándor, Madaras Zoltán, Máté Tekla, Székely Zsuzsa, Szőcs Kati, Tordai Zsuzsi, Tudor Chirilă, to Boros Kinga, the dramaturg of the play for supporting my ideas about this thesis.

Thank you all.

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Introduction

The title of my thesis is The gains of ethnic conflict?, where we need to imagine the word gains in quotation marks, given the context it is used in and the paradox it creates. Can we think of a perspective that allows us to think of an ethnic conflict from a perspective that can show us the *gains*?

What can the gains be of an ethnic conflict that has claimed lives, the number of those injured was around 300, and its aftermath has divided the city and its mixed Hungarian and Romanian population.

It happened in the Transylvanian town of Targu-Mures/Marosvasarhely, in 1990, on the 19-20 of March, known as well the Black March. Several books had been written and documentaries made on the events. The first book written about it was of the lawyer Kincses Előd, at that time the president of the FSN (National Salvation Front, NSF) of the Mures County, appeared one year later, with the title Marosvásárhely fekete márciusa (The Black March of Marosvásárhely), the diaries of Sütő András, Szemet szóért (Eye for a Word) in which the second part includes information about the events starting from the summer of 1989 till March 1990, Fehér Könyv: az 1990. március 19. és 20-i események Marosvásárhelyen (The White Book: The Events of The 19th and 20th of March 1990 in Tirgu Mures) including articles written by journalists, containing radio programs broadcasted in these two days, and the book written by the general Ioan Judea, Cumpăna lui Martie (The Ordeal of March), and documentaries of which the latest and longest (11 hours) is a compilation from several documentaries, such as the Black Box, and footage of Panoráma (MTV), TVR (Romanian Television), Duna TV. The portray-documentary dedicated to Előd Kincses, by his daughter, Kincses Réka, called the Balkan Champion allows an insight into the family life, local political relations and friendship overwritten by personal interests. For

years Targu Mures had been visited by experts in conflict management and been avoided by investors, cutting it back from economic development compared to what other cities had benefited of.

The conflict has erupted as a result of the accumulation of tensions, created by the requirements of mother tongue education on all levels, protest of the Hungarian students of the University of Medicine, counter-protests of the Romanian students against the Hungarian separatist desires. The celebration of the 142th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution on the 15th of March, had all been called manifestations that had hurt the Romanian national feeling and caused fear of Hungarian irredentist desires. On the 19th of March the president of the FSN on county level, Kincses Előd has been forced to resign, and in the afternoon several Hungarian language inscriptions and street name signs had been removed. Later that afternoon the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters has been attacked, and people had been brutally beaten up, among them the writer, Sütő András, the Mureş County RMDSZ (DAHR) president. The day after, already before noon, some 10000 Hungarians had gathered in front of the City Council and demanded information about what had happened the day before at the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters.

For the sake of impartiality, I will refer to the report of the Helsinki Watch for the short presentation of the events of the second day, the 20th. At 1pm many Romanians who had come from work, some 3000 started to gather on one side of the square, wearing the badges of the cultural organization called Vatra Românească (Romanian Fireplace). At 2 pm. a policemen chain formed by a single policeman has been placed between the two sides, ridiculously less than would have been enough. Representatives of both sides called for police intervention, which had not intervened until 7 pm with 5 or 6 tanks when the fights had been long going on. The report mentions as well who had started the fight and how the Hungarians managed to fight back, creating a general fight scene in the city, with both sides

involved. At 9.30 to 10.30 pm a group of Roma people came to help out Hungarians. The report mentions that those Romanians, who were from the city, did not have any instruments that could have been qualified as weapons on them, but those people who arrived from the nearby villages did. The fight had as a result around 300 injured and several casualties, the number of which is still not officially declared, only estimated as between 6 to 8. Around 5 am ten other tanks were brought in, but by that time the fights had already ceased. In this year, approximately 20000 Hungarians emigrated from the city.

20 years that had passed since this conflict. Justice still hasn't been done, no responsables were found, even though it is common knowledge that the confrontations had been organized. The only people who had been jailed and persecuted with continuously delayed dates of trial, had been Hungarians and Roma people. The year 2010 was called by local authorities the year of reconciliation.

Can 20 years provide a necessary distance to allow reconsidering our attitudes? Does 20 years produce detachment in relating to these events? Can dialogue on memories be established?

20/20 is a possibility for introspection and reflection, a possibility for dialogue.

20/20 is a play that uses no language in its title, but a universal one, that of numbers. 20/20 means the impartiality and equilibrium, 20/20 means those 20 years since the 20 of March, 1990, 20/20 refers to acuteness or clearness of vision, in terms of the distance between the viewer and the viewed, and thus, to the distance we acquired within these 20 years.

20/20 is play directed by Gianina Cărbunariu, a co-production of two independent theatre companies, one from Bucharest and one from Targu Mures. The play is made up of several scenes based on the collected oral histories from the participants in the street fights,

acted by five Hungarian and five Romanian actors, speaking in their own and the other's language, telling their past and present stories, of today and of 20 years ago.

Pierre Nora's definition of memory in The Realms of Memory is given as a perpetual actual phenomenon, a bond that ties us to the eternal present. If we accept that it is a continuous accommodation to the facts that suit us and the present, we see that memory is the product of a constant and ongoing negotiation process. It is produced in the dialogical relationship between the present and the past. Can the play be considered a process of negotiation that Nora refers to? Is the theatrical space and representation sufficient enough to provide for a process of interaction and communication among its participants?

The play 20/20 has a second act, when it invites the audience to participate and engage in a discussion, to share memories, comments, to contribute to the 20/20. Can this sharing of memories be interpreted as the first steps of a negotiation process?

Can this play stimulate the shaping and reshaping of memory?

I will argue that artistic/theatrical representation offers a different dimension for understanding and approaching tragic events. I will argue that it proves the need of transposing them into another dimension, thus creating the situation where tragic events can be perceived, lived through and detached from. The simultaneous presence of reliving and detaching stimulates an openness to sensitivity towards the other, stimulates acceptance, by allowing seeing the other side as well, and creates (in)sight, produces reflexivity and increases (self)criticism.

Every aspect of the play's construction has a precise role and effect. Even the way the physical space is created is meaningful: the audience does not have a frontal view on the stage, it sits around and a little higher than the actors, so that they have full visual control over the stage and its actors. It allows the viewer seeing it all.

At the end, the actors, when taking the bow, look in the audience's eye, and repeat this gesture over and over again, engaging the audience who had just been a part or a testifier of what had (just) happened. The situation where a dialogue can occur has already been provided, as the whole play is a dialogue: of actors, of actors and viewers; an introspection and process of self-verifying, of where am I, of what do I think, being the final question that the play addresses.

In my thesis I will compare newspaper articles written about the events 20 years ago and compare them to commemorative articles written 10 and 20 years later. I will use Critical Discourse Analysis in order to reveal the change in discourse that the passing of time has (not) created and I will compare these discourses with the interviews that I have conducted with the people who had seen the play.

In this way I will be able to measure the change of the shift in the paradigm of thinking about past events. In order that the comparison between the two discourses is compatible, I will perform the Critical Discourse Analysis on both of them, comparing the topics of the discourses, the discursive strategies and discursive position they reveal.

The structure will be as follows: the first chapter will provide a theoretical framework about memory and memory studies, the questions that can be addressed and formulated within the context of the play and its "actors", of how can we shape and reshape (separate) memories, of how can we share them and what the eventual process of its negotiation means.

My second chapter, with the help of Critical Discourse Analysis will focus on topics, discursive strategies and means of realization and argumentation, use of strategic and rhetoric devices to construct power position within and with the discourse. These aspects will reveal a discursive positioning and the creation of the other and the self, the distance between them.

The third chapter will focus on CDA on the conducted interviews, revealing discursive positions and strategies, so that they would be comparable to the article's

discourses. The shift produced in the discursive positions and attitudes can conclude on the outcome of the play in terms of the ability towards an openness, self-reflexivity and self-criticism. In my conclusions I will point out the results of this comparison relating it to the process of sharing and negotiating collective memory.

1. Short introduction to the theoretical framework of memory studies

There is no memory without forgetting. This idea as pointed out by Pierre Nora reveals not only the dichotomies of memory and history, but as well the selective character of memory and its dependence on the present together with its changing and overwriting character.

In my thesis the concept of memory plays a central role, it is the instrument that allows understanding contrastive meanings about the same event and reveals the dialogical relationship offered by this process of interaction. In Nora's The Realms of Memory, definition of history cannot be separated from the definition of memory. Their relation is of inter-dependence and reciprocity: „Lieux of memoirs are created by a play of memory and history, an interaction of two factors that results in their reciprocal over-determination” (Nora 1989: 8). Lieux de memoire can only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, recycling of meanings and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications.

It is important to mention how Nora defines memory and history and places them in opposition. He defines memory as borne by living societies, in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of successive deformations and vulnerable to manipulations and appropriations, susceptible of being long dormant and periodically revived (Nora 1998: 21)

In his understanding history is the reconstruction of what is no longer. Memory is an actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present. Memory only accomodates those facts that suits it. Might nourish reconnection that might be out of focus or telescopic, global or detached, particular or symbolic. With this approach to memory we can see that it is kept alive through the way we connect to past events, through the way we change and

accommodate them according to our present needs that change in time. This definition of memory allows us to think of the possibility of accomodating them to our present need allows for the process of negotiation.

Memories have a group formation ability, which at the same time allows for multiple and specific, collective, plural and yet individual memories. The possibility of adjusting the way we remember to different contexts and situations allows for a variety of overlapping memories, being context and time dependent. In this understanding, the play itself could be understood as a „lieux de memoire”, a reference point where we can go back to in order to remember. In his view, if thought of as in contrast to history, memory implies a decisive shift from the historical to the psychological, from the social to the individual, from the objective message to the subjective reception, from repetition to rememoration. In this sense the play that can be defined as an exercise of introspection, putting in practice the decisive shift from the historical to the psychological, from the social to the individual to enhances a subjective and private reception.

Maurice Halbwach's theory of collective memory stresses the ability to remember as a result of the socializing process, of a collective product. He states that even though collectives do not have memory, define the way individuals remember, adding that even the most personal memories are formed within the social framework in the process of interaction and communication among its participants. Collective memory has a reconstructive character. Is active in two directions: ahead in time and backwards, because memory does not only reconstruct the past, but structures the experience of the present and of the future. Can the play be a place of memory that does not only reconstruct the past structuring the experience of the present and doing it *for* the future?

The relation of collective memory and individual memory is defined by Halbwachs as forms and authonomous systems with components that influence and support each other, both

on individual and collective level. Thus, Halbwachs's view allows for reciprocity: if a collective memory can shape an individual one, the opposite is valid as well. Can the play prove that individual memory can define collective memory?

The communicative memory is the process of remembering constrained by a communicative situation: what is remembered needs to fit in into the frameworks of reference of the collective memory. Halbwachs pointed out that the present generations become conscious of themselves in counter-posing the present to their own constructed past, allowing for a critical attitude and rethinking of the past. Can the provide this critical medium of rethinking the past and the ethnic conflict within it?

Jan Assman's in Cultural memory defines various concepts that add to the understanding of group formation and the way societies shape their patterns of understanding and remembering as part of their culture of memory. Assmann's book shows the relation between the way societies imagine and perceive themselves and its connection with national identity. It shows how memory is in-rooted in society and shows how societies shape their own image and make it prevail over centuries, in order to preserve the culture of memory. Assman stresses the importance of the social and cultural frameworks which define the contents of the memories, their organization and structuring and its temporal aspects, its duration. Assmann defines the past as the result of the process of relating to it: by referring to and viewing it from a future perspective, the past is being reconstructed and explored according to future needs. Cultural memory, as being maintained by institutions, encompasses the symbolic figures of the past, on which memories rely. Cultural memory transforms factual past into a past worthy to be remembered, and thus, into myth. This does not mean that it becomes less real, on the contrary, this is how it can becomes real with a normative and formative character. Can this play enrole in having the role of a formative character?

Aleida Assman mentions that the past preserved by memories is incorporated in narratives that have a function of sustaining the idea of progress or of maintaining the idea of continuity. In her definition the myth with the role of showing contrast to the present, using as starting point the lacuna of the present. Its intention is to remember such a memory that would present characteristics of a glorious past, contraposing to it the missing, the marginal, calling attention to the gap between then and now. In this case, the present is not founded, but, on the contrary, becomes suspended, or at least, becomes relative. Does this relative aspect of memory allows for its negotiability?

Memory binds communities together, and creates social identities. Can the play be perceived as a common memory that can bind communities together? For Nora, the act of remembering is always related to the repository of images and ideals that constitute the social relations of which we partake. Places of memory are therefore determined by the mix of individuals that constitute the social group to which they relate. The play allows for this constitution of a social group to which the viewers can relate and thus contribute to determine the way we remember.

The play, if defined as the projection of a realm of memory is therefore the same sign of memory's disappearance and society's need to represent what ostensibly no longer exists.

In Mieke Bal's Acts of Memory, memory is viewed as a cultural phenomenon, as well as individual and social one. He defines cultural memory as the interaction of past and present and as product of a collective agency, as something that we actually perform. Can 20/20 be called such a play when interaction of past, present and collective agency are performed?

Bal talks about memory as action, the action of telling a story, of representation that can reveal the way how the formation of narrative memory takes place. Narrative memory

offers some form of feedback that ratifies memory. Can this play be called a performance of the narrative memory, being based on oral histories of those who participated?

Bal exposes the idea of art and artistic representation as a critical medium that can offer the positions of witnessing as well as of experiencing, and thus, allowing for occupying both positions. Thus it can provide a space of critical and autocritical reading. He supports the idea of artistic representation as critical medium. This act is potentially healing because it generates narratives that make sense. Trauma and wound precludes memory as a healing integration that can be overcome only in an interaction with others. A second person is needed for the first person to come into his or herself in the present, able to bear the past. Narrative is a privileged form of communication, information and artistic reflection, that can contribute to the success of narrative integration. Does the play acquire this healing role too?

Ernst von Alphen in his text on Discursivity: Experience, Memory and Trauma speaks of trauma as a failed experience and defines it as the impossibility of experiencing and subsequently memorizing an event. The experience of an event is already a representation of it and not the event itself. Telling the past is not located in the extremity of the event itself, but rather in the process and mechanisms of experience and representation, adding that representation its character of being historically variable, not a static, fixed, timeless phenomenon of which the possibilities are fixed once and forever. Does this play deconstruct fixed positions? Does this allow for multiple identifications?

For Bal memory is the mutually constitutive interaction between the past and the present, shared as culture, but acted out by each of us as an individual. Carol B. Bardenstein in the article Trees, Forests and the Shaping of Palestinian and Israeli Collective Memory, defines collective memory as both a response to and a symptom of a rupture, a lack, an absence and a „substitute” surrogate or consolation for something that is missing. She highlights the present-orientedness of memory, and that the construction of collective

memory is inextricably linked with the construction of collective identity and imagined community in the present.

Marita Sturken in Narratives of Recovery formulates similar ideas, stressing the role the listener has. He/she can become the co-owner of the event. This relation produces a situation of dialogue and understanding that can contribute to the development of new paradigms of cultural identity. In my „reading” the play 20/20 produces this situation of dialogue and it depends on each and every one of us on how much we engage in it.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis of newspaper articles

There are two types of narratives that I have chosen to perform CDA- Critical Discourse Analysis on, one of them being newspaper articles belonging to 4 newspapers and a series of interviews taken from people who had seen the play 20/20.

The four newspapers that I have selected are two locals (*Népújság* and *Cuvântul liber*) and two national ones, one Hungarian (*Romániai Magyar Szó*) and one Romanian (*Adevărul*) all write about the events of the Black March.

I will focus on the discursive strategies of the *us* and *them*, the relation between the two and the continuous positioning of one in relation to the other. The idea of othering is the basic tool of self-definition and functions as marker of power relations and their creation in discourses. Critical Discourse Analysis reveals the discursive strategies of othering and the power position it implies. Othering is defined by Dubravka Zarkov in her book The Body of War in the context of gendering by means of using physical violence, creating delimitations and boundaries, that legitimized and conserved in-groups and out-groups. In the context of the articles referring to and remembering the events, othering is inherent to self-definition.

By comparing newspaper articles that refer to the events of the 20th of March and their commemoration after 20 years, looking at the dominant discursive strategies, we can see how othering is performed and the relation it implies between the *us* and the *them*. The process of othering is enclosed as well different ways of remembering, or, the different ways of remembering reveal the othering process and the dominant discursive strategies it implies.

With this purpose I find it imperative to give a brief description of the methodology.

2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis: short methodological presentation

CDA is a discourse analyzing method that is interested in “de-mystifying ideologies through systematic and retroductable investigation of semiotic data”, where ideology is defined as representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation that may be enacted in ways of interaction and inculcated in ways of being identities. CDA defines its aim in uncovering relations of power even when they appear –as dominant ideologies do- as neutral. CDA is interested in showing how discourse (re)produces social domination, the power abuse of one group over another or others and how dominated groups may discursively resist such abuse (Wodak 2009:8).

Siegfried Jäger and Florentine Mayer quote Jürgen Link who defines discourse as “an institutionalized way of talking that regulates and reinforces action and thereby exerts power. A broader understanding of discourse is that of social practice, that serve particular ends, such as the exercise of power (Jäger in Wodak 2009:35).

Discourses not only reflect reality, but shape and enable it. This idea has been developed by Foucault in the Archeology of Knowledge, where he states that discourses can be treated as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Thus Foucault assumes a co-existence of discourse and object. He states that everything to which human beings assign meaning to become a particular kind of reality, shaped by the meaning that it had assigned with. In Foucault’s understanding, meaning is created with a motive, a particular need and aim. These products can be new thoughts, plans, which again may lead to new activities and products. With the change of discourse, the object, by changing its meaning becomes a different object, and loses its previous identity (Foucault 2002:54)

From discourse theory point of view it is thus not the subject who makes the discourse, but the discourse that makes the subject, and this is what is of interest in the

analysis of discourse. From the power position point of view, newspaper articles are defined as manifestations of social action, which at its turn is again determined by the social structure that it shapes. In this context language is defined as a vehicle for establishing differences and creating or reproducing power and hierarchical relations as well as social structures (Wodak 2009:10).

The newspaper articles that I analyse focus on the commemoration of the events and the presentation of the events. It shows the way they were framed, contextualized, explained, rationalized and presented while happening. The context of these articles, the content in which they appear are worthy to be presented as well, because of the exposed power structures revealed by the discursive strategies. When Wodak presents means and forms of realization involved in the discursive construction of national identity, focuses on discursive strategies that create unification, unity, sameness, difference, uniqueness, gradual or abrupt change, autonomy, heteronomy etc. The elements of vagueness, euphemisms, linguistic hesitation and disruptions, linguistic slips, allusions, rhetorical questions are as well important factors in analysing discourses, together with the naming of the social actors perceived as members of the collectivity. It is meaningful the way agents are rendered anonymous or agency is obscured by the use of the passive voice, and the role metonymy, personification and synecdoche can have in avoiding naming these agencies.

From the huge amount of articles that had read about the events of the Black March in the national and local newspapers I have performed a sampling. I have selected articles that present the same event, such as the siege of the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters on the 19th of March, the commemorative articles from 2010 on local level and the national newspaper's report on the events and the relation the local media had in preparing them.

The following is structured as: general overview of the commemorative numbers of newspapers in the years right after the events with a short presentation of the continuous

polarizations of discourses and the completely different focus points; presentation of the recurrent topics and the use of topoi within discursive strategies; power positions and the means of creating them. I will mention the contextualization of these articles, the main discourse frames that accompany the remembering act, the discursive positions and power relations created.

The next subchapter presents the articles written about the events of the 20 of March with reference to their elaborateness, detailedness and dominant discursive strategies and positions created. The main differences are among the variants, the different focus points they offer.

In the last subchapter I will analyse sampled articles from these newspapers, showing their characteristic strategies and discursive positions.

2.2. General overview of the articles from the years following the 1990 Black March (1991-1995)

What was interesting to observe reading through these articles was to see how the discourse of the events has become more and more polarized with the passing of years, especially the years following the conflict. Those articles create a separate memory of the events, speak to different groups that they thus create, and create separate memories.

The local Romanian newspaper, *Cuvântul liber*, remembers the one and only named hero, sanctified and called a martyr, Mihăilă Cofariu. He is celebrated and poems and prayers are dedicated to him. He became from a perpetrator a victim, than a hero. The explanation of the clashes that this newspaper offers is performed by naming the 15th of March commemorations as provocations, and hurtful towards the Romanian national feelings. An additional explanation of the events is the presentation of the conspiracy theory of Hungary, whose manipulative games lead to such a dreadful event.

But the preferred explanation is the term: *manipualtion*. The explanation is solved and exhausted by this simple answer, no questions are asked and no voice is heard claiming or taking responsibility. This attitude is accompanied by questioning the democratic character of the RMDSZ (DAHR), by calling the authors of books about the Black March, traitors, by naming Tőkés László the provocator of the events, ending the list with the act of profanation of the statue of Avram Iancu. There is no mentioning here that the RMDSZ (DAHR) had condemned such acts and had separated itself several times from such destructive behaviour.

This local newspaper uses a language characteristic for liturgies and prayers dedicated to saints and martyrs associated with the country most often defined in territorial terms. The commemorative articles are framed by the celebration of the constitution of the PUNR (RNUP-extreme right party) and the celebration of the unification of Basarabia with Romania.

It is important to mention that the national Romanian newspaper, *Adevărul* (The Truth) does not mention the events of the 20th of March until 2010, but it covers every year the celebrations of the 15th of March.

The national Hungarian newspaper, *Romániai Magyar Szó* (The Hungarian Word from Romania (from now on RMSZ) in its 1991 number starting with the 21st of March, publishes 3 articles, one of which remembers the solidarity with Hungarians and their demands, expressed by the famous physicist, Mircea Iosifescu, with the title Spânzurați-mă și pe mine! (Than You Shall Hang Me Too!). His message of solidarity has been published only in the Hungarians newspaper and is missing from the mentioned Romanian ones. The 1991 RMSZ remembers his act with an interview taken with the physicist, *În vizită la domnul Mircea Iosifescu* (Visiting sir Mircea Iosifescu).

The commemorative numbers of the RMSZ contain articles written about the three people who participated in the events and had been arrested, awaiting for trial in jail, with the trial dates being continuously delayed. In parallel we read fragments from the diary of Sütő András, accompanied by an article about the fears because of the celebration of the 15th of March, event that has become undesired because of the controversies and insults it causes.

In the 1995 number the commemorative article tells about the remembering of what has been the barricade of the 79 people in the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters on the 19th of March, with the list of the names of various Romanian intellectuals who had expressed solidarity with Sütő András right after the events: Mircea Dinescu, Gabriel Liiceanu, Gabriela Adamesteanu, Sorin Antohi, Andrei Călinescu, Monica Lovinescu, Eugen Ionesco and others. The names of the Hungarian deceased had been as well mentioned: Csipor Antal, Gimes István and Kiss Zoltán.

The local Hungarian newspaper called *Népújság* (The Newspaper of the People) had published every year commemorative articles that remember the 79 people barricaded and the names of the three deceased. Articles refer to the injustice of trailing and persecuting only Hungarian and Roma people -42 of them imprisoned for a total of 72 years-, while Romanians had all been exempted from any charges. The article draws attention on the fact that Targu Mures has been the place of the first provoked ethnic conflict in Eastern Europe. The *Népújság* publishes translated articles from national Romanian newspapers such as 22, which exposes the relation between ghettos and nationalism. By translating other articles it shows openness and not on isolationist and separatist attitude. The translated article gives an explanation by naming poverty and the easiness and success of spreading populist discourses. The local newspaper mentions the peaceful commemorations of the 15th of March, and no connection is made between them and the eruption of the conflict as it had been portrayed by the local Romanian newspaper.

2.3. The articles about the events of the March, 1990

I find it important to mention the framing of the events and building them up in a chain of events, of causes and consequences and the different portrayal it has in the different newspapers. I consider this an important part of the process of othering.

The Hungarian national newspaper frames the events in the context of protesting for mother tongue education on all levels, basing their requirements on democratic ideals that they had fought for together with Romanian during the Revolution. The book-and-candle protest on the 10th of February was the first protest done for the fulfillment of these requirements and used a rhetoric of self-affirmation that had been opposed to the previous, oppressed one: „Until now the Hungarians could only show their presence in Transylvania on the day of the dead: now maybe another world will start, we will raise from our deaths, now we can march on streets, reinforced”. (RMSZ, 1990, 13th of February).

The newspaper publishes articles on collective rights of minorities, articles that reframe the tradition of Kós Károly's Trianon legacy: „we will have what we shall fight for”, using a rhetoric that remembers of Biblical quotations with the importance of mother tongue education.

The local Hungarian newspaper mentions the creation of a new Romanian local newspaper in Tirgu Mures, called *Dialog* (Dialogue) calling attention on the need of making the Romanian public know the Hungarians' point of view, as it is made impossible by the *Cuvîntul Liber* (The Free Word).

The local Romanian newspaper, the above mentioned *Cuvîntul Liber* (The Free Word), publishes articles that blame Hungarians for wanting privileges and not rights, accusing them of profanating statues and accusing them of irredentist aspirations. The process of othering is performed by the continuous attacks formulated by the Romanian newspaper articles and the continuous characterization of the Hungarian political party as

irredentist and chauvinist. While reading through newspaper articles one can observe how different these articles are, because they understand the same terms and notions differently. Common goals, such as *democracy* referred to by both communities and its newspapers have different meanings. The difficulties of „speaking the same language” prove to be very complex issues: what is equality for some, for others is separatism and irredentism. CDA can show the rhetoric and discursive manifestation of these problematic areas.

2.3.1. Discursive strategies

The same discursive strategies can be used by different newspapers having different aims and purposes. Strategies of justification are both employed by Hungarian as well as Romanian newspapers, by using different substrategies and achieving different aims. Hungarians use strategies of emphasizing difference, through the topos of difference by implying parallelism and expressing that they want the same rights as the majority.

The counterbalancing of this attitude is present on the Romanian side with the example of considering nationality unimportant in case of a doctor, with the constructive strategy of assimilation, inclusion and continuation, using the topos of similarity and of the common denominator: „our nationality is that of doctors”. The same was used in the case of undermining mother tongue education by stating that our nationality is that of children.

Singularization as a constructive strategy is used in an article of the national Romanian newspaper that refers to the beauty of the Romanian language that Hungarians had considered to be an oppressive tool. The article does make an emphasis on its national and positive uniqueness with the topos of *being lovely* by mentioning it as the Eastern variant of Latin (*Adevărul*: Mijloc de oprimare, 1990, 21 March). The assimilationist strategy is invoked by referring to the revolution used in the sense of the topos of rebirth, that at the same

time is used as a strategy of justification of difference by the Hungarian community. (*RMSZ: Marosvásárhely, Februar 11*, 1990, 12th February).

The strategies of heteronomisation are implied by Hungarian articles, using the topos of external constraints, especially when mentioning the repartition strategies used during communism that had forced Hungarians to move to places outside of Transylvania, where they had been humiliated in their national feelings. This strategy and example is used of course as a protest against the nationalizing and homogenizing system.

Downplaying and trivialization is used for instance in the case of the incident at the pharmacy on the 16th or in the case of the assault of the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters. Rationalization is present in the case of presenting a threat, of a super-ordinate aim, such as the one that the Ministry of External Relations formulated as a request of Hungary referring to move away its military troops from its eastern border.

The strategy of avoidance expressed by euphemising the responsible actors of events is present in the Romanian newspapers, when talking about- very briefly- the attack of the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters. It can be counterbalanced with the Hungarian newspaper articles that give an extensive and detailed report on the events, missing from the Romanian newspaper (*Népújság: Feldúlták az RMDSZ székházát*, 1990, March, 20).

Part of the constructive strategies is the autonomization one, stating independence and autonomy, examples that are provided many times in Romanian articles by defining the state as national, unitary and sovereign.

The unification and cohesivation strategy is implied both by Romanian and Hungarian articles that reproduce speeches of politicians calling for unity and calm in these difficult moments. The solution can only be of uniting forces and having trust in the problem solving capacities of the government. This strategy is present as well in the speeches of Hungarian politicians that call for unity and peaceful behaviour.

What can be called instigation and provocation is enlisted as the strategy of unification. It is present in Romanian newspapers, that constantly warn against the threat of loss of the national authority. At the same time the articles call the attention of the population on irrendentist and separatist intentions of Hungarians, connecting them with the awful events of the '40s. The Romanian newspapers use more strategies of justification such as that of scapegoating, of victim/perpetrator inversion. They do it by suggesting that a good and proper means of comparison can be that of counting our deaths and wounded, implying that those who have more, are the victims and those who have less are the perpetrators (*Adevărul: Să ne numărăm morții și răniții*, 1990, March 21), or the example of making a hero out of a perpetrator, Mihăila Cofariu.

What is interesting in the context of these events is that the strategy of dissimulation, exclusion and discontinuation can be as well a strategy of justification, as demonstrated in Hungarian newspaper articles that justify the change of political as proper moments for asking for collective rights.

2.3.2. Comparative analysis of the articles on the events of the 19th of March

The days of the conflicts are portrayed differently as well: there are differences in selecting information, in mentioning vs neglecting them and the detailedness and focus of the presentation of events. I will show these differences on the articles that mention the siege of the RMDSZ (DAHR) headquarters showing discursive strategies and their means of realization.

While reading through the newspaper articles of the events of the 19th and the 20th of March, we find that a very similar number of articles had been dedicated to the events of this month. But our findings show an other result as well: the events of the 19th of March passed unnoticed in the local newspaper. An event that had started in the morning with the gathering

of some thousands of Romanian protesters and ended with the forced resignation as County President of the FSN of Előd Kincses. The day's events had not ended here, but continued with several aggressive manifestations in the city, ending with the siege of the RDMSZ (DAHR) headquarters and with the beating up of more than 70 people.

The local Romanian newspaper does not mention at all the events of the 19th of March. Thus, the comparison of the articles of the two local newspapers is an impossible mission.

The central newspapers, both the Hungarian and the Romanian one report the events. The national Romanian newspaper reports in two articles on the events, while the Hungarian one dedicates only one to it.

At the beginning I would like to point out the basic differences these articles expose. The article with the title *Acțiune de protest la Târgu Mureș* ends after informing about the resignation of Kincses Előd, the president of the FSN (NFS) at county level. The second article that appears on the same page by the same author, continues with mentioning the continuation of the peaceful protest. The first line though already omits information about the time span between the 1 pm and 4 pm, the time when armed protesters headed towards the headquarters of the local parties. This is the last mentioning of the time and the events that occur after this hour. Two days after the events and one day after the clashes in the city, the local newspaper publishes a short article in which the local cultural organization, Vatra Românească states its detachment from the siege of the headquarters that occurred two days before.

In the following I will compare the two articles of the national Romanian newspaper and of the local one with an extensive article of the central Hungarian newspaper and the one article that the local newspaper had published referring to the events until 5 pm. The

presentation will not focus more on the content, but rather on the discursive strategies implied and the discursive and power positions it implies, including the process of othering.

2.3.3 Analysis of the articles

The article in the newspaper *Adevărul*, *Acțiune de protest la Targu Mures*, operates with the creation of othering as a consequence of self-definition. Self-definition is performed through the unificatory „big protest” in emphatic position that suggests sameness and homogeneity. This sameness is created by the opposition that the mentioned protest is directed against. The other is created by the counter-action the protesters unite against. Self-definition is triggered by and opposed to othering.

The strategy of naming the self by uniting against an opposed force is dominant throughout the article. The strategies of unification and cohesivation is exemplified by exposing shared sorrows and worries, emphasizing the will to unify and show solidarity. The unificatory warning against the loss of national autonomy is present throughout the text.

The self when not defined in opposition to the other is maintained on a general level: „and other socio-professional categories”, belonging to „institutions and enterprises” without naming them and accompanied repeatedly by the extensive use of the indefinite pronoun „other hundreds of citizens”, „some thousands” , „some material” „any approval”. The indefinite pronoun is used as well when naming the Transylvanian localities („some Transylvanian localities”), accompanied by the imprecise and undefined accusation that remain on the very general level of naming them: „chauvinist actions”, „actions that took place” , „declarations of Kincses Előd”, accompanied by the imprecise time framing „lately” and an over-generalized geographic definition: „from this part of the country”. The general level of formulating is present throughout the article „from abroad”, „tendencies”, „and so forth”. Thus othering is attained by attackings disguised as self-defense against unprecisely

and very generally formulated accusations. The abundant use of referential elements („as well as the one that took place”) obscure meaning and contribute to logical slips proven by lexical and semantic incompatibility used in the case of othering: „the chauvinist manifestations organized in some Transylvanian countries” to which it is added „as well as the one registered at the Pharmacy nr. 28”.

The extensive use of the passive voice that avoids naming agency and the substantival construction that avoid naming actors „it had been announced”, „the chauvinist actions organized in some Transylvanian localities” contributes to the vagueness and unelaborateness of the accusations directed against the other. The power relations created are exposed by the formulated attacks and the means of their realization by the use of the prefix with the meaning of creating deprivation: *denaturează*, with the meaning of priving the history of the Romanian nation of its true meaning. The power hierarchy is created once again by arguing for the justification of a counter-attack, which, paradoxically, is formulated with the help of a prefix having the meaning of deprivation. By stating deprivation as the surface for attack, power position is created.

The power relations are portrayed in inversed relations proved by the changing role Romanian language is characterized by: first, victimization by suffering an attack in the form of deprivation, insult, and the change of positions by imposing authority openly: „the authority of the Romanian language” , „the official language”. The word *official* that states this authority openly proves its authority when used in the following sentence. It refers to deprivation, to a lack of permission that is not granted to the „other”: „without any official approval”, exemplifying the strategy of legitimation and delegitimation, exposing again power structures.

The article exposes examples of contradictions between content and form. The protest of the Romanians is named as a spontaneous one, but in the following sentence it exposes it

as one that had very clear aims and reasons: „in the first place its starting point were the separatist actions manifested by the students and the parents of the Bolyai Farkas high-school, the strike of the Hungarian students and teachers of the Pharmacy and Medical Institute, the profanation of the statues of Nicolae Bălcescu and Avram Iancu....” and the sentence goes on being an extensive enumeration of the reasons of this spontaneous protest. This spontaneous protest had a „central aim, that of removing Kincses Előd from his position as the president of the FSN (NSF)...” and the list of aims continues with naming other Hungarian representatives and the desire that they are removed from their position. The main strategy that has been used is that of shift of blame and responsibility by casting doubt exemplified by the vagueness of the expressions.

The second article that the *Adevarul* had published mentions briefly the event of that same afternoon. Its title is Acte condamnabile la provocări condamnabile (Condemnable actions to condemnable provocations) works again with the same logic as the previous one: justifies action as reaction to a previous provocation. It can be named as a perfect example of downplaying and trivialization by using the strategy of emphasizing negative sameness with the topos of comparison, even though, the content already states a cause and causality relation.

The discourse strategies are similar to the ones exposed in the case of the previous article, thus I will only mention them briefly. On content level there are many differences compared to the articles published in the Hungarian newspapers.

The article that mentions the afternoon events of that day, uses understatements, downplaying and trivialization. This strategy is present throughout the whole article by balancing one thing against the other: „a big number of protesters” „a big number of Romanian citizens of Hungarian nationality”.

The use of the passive voice is present again, this time in order to describe the Hungarian group: „had been positioned” (au fost postati), „had been calmed” (au fost calmate) implying again an agency that is avoided to be named. The parallel construction of the sentences contributes to the banalizing effect the article proposes, sustained by the use of the indefinite pronoun, „some” (some regrettable incidents). The gravity of the actions are downplayed by the use of nominal structures instead of the use of verbs for describing those actions.

The article of the local Hungarian newspaper *Népújság*, Feldúlták az RMDSZ székházat (The RMDSZ headquarters had been attacked), presents the events of the day of the 19th of March with a detailed presentation of the events, of the actions instruments used and agents involved. No passive or nominal structure is used, on the contrary. There is a huge list of enumerations of verbs, without any intentions of euphemisation. The constructive strategy of inclusion is exemplified by the mentioning of proper names, institutions, buildings with symbolic value such as Petőfi tér, Bolyai tér, Teleki Téka that are mentioned as targets of the attackers.

The article is presented in indirect speech with one example of direct speech. The article only mentions the pronoun *they*, no deictic *we* or the pronoun *them* is used. Spatial and temporal references are used, framing the time and the place of the events as well as the order of their happening. The dominant strategy is the constructive strategy expressing continuation with temporal references „at that moment”/”then”, „later”, „after” indicating continuity exemplified with the use of the conjunction „also” referring to the continuity of actions. All verbs are in plural, denoting a „they” without any naming and use of the pronoun „us”.

The text is in reported speech, with a quoted direct speech, with the quotation of the slogan that people shouted: „Death on Hungarians!”.

The strategy of dissimulation can be identified because of the referential dissimulation and exclusion through personal and spatial reference, by using the demonstrative and personal pronouns, such as „they” that in Hungarian is included in the form of the verb: „came”, „broke into”, „went up”, etc.

The central Hungarian newspaper, *RMSZ*, published an article, called Március 19: A terror napja Marosvásárhelyen with the subtitle Sütő András is súlyosan megsebesült

(March 19th: The day of terror in Marosvásárhely).

The article starts by describing a context and a situation of war, and compares it to the 1848-49 period that seemed to have been repeated in Marosvásárhely. This constructive strategy is achieved by an emphasis on historical continuity. The unification as a strategy of self-definition is achieved as well by the description of the siege and of the assault the armed villagers had performed in the town and on the buildings with symbolic value. The words used to describe the attack as pogrom, terror and lynching imposed the creation of the other, in opposition to what the construction of the *us* has been created into. This definition is as well reinforced by the othering performed by the *other* to which the article refers to when mentioning the presumed antecedents creating such diversion. The reason is mentioned as the inscription of the word Pharmacy in Hungarian, which was considered „scandalous” and „sinful” by the Romanian protesters. In mentioning the incident of the pharmacy, the strategy of delegitimation is present: the existence of any Hungarian inscription is considered a non-legitimate act. At the same time the strategy of legitimization is performed, by showing the legitimizing authority who can delegitimize. This reveals a power structure that includes the process of othering which includes a subordinate categorization.

The strategy of transformation is exemplified by the use of the normative- deontic modals emphasizes the need of the necessary difference between the present and the future, states the importance of finding the responsables. The accompanying strategy of blaming

includes the topos of the force of facts, supported by the detailed description of the aggression. Comparing the siege and its medieval-like characteristics because of the use of axes and other similar tools is contrasted with the old building that used to belong to the aristocratic Kendeffy family. The implicit topos of comparison that might convey the idea of we are superior compared to them is present the other way around: the siege and the attacker implicitly define themselves as inferior, by their acts.

When the article mentions that there had been beating and several had been severely injured: „The same had been the faith of Sütő András, now should I write, Sütő András, the biggest Hungarian writer?” is part of constructive strategy of the self.

The strategy of perpetuation is present as well, by mentioning the names that are meaningful for the Hungarian community.

The constructive strategy of the other is performed as well by the downplaying attitude of the policemen that walk by without intervening, by mentioning that they were „just” contemplating the events. The topos of ignorance is part of the constructive strategy of the other seen from the Hungarian side.

The article the Calling that the local newspaper had published the third day after the RMDSZ (DAHR) siege uses the strategy of perpetuation together with constructive strategy, both contributing to the creation of the image of the self.

Singularization is exemplified by the stress on national uniqueness given by the self-characterization as „the Romanians from Transylvania had never attacked anybody”. What is interesting that the positive identification is done by a triple negative construction and by implying a justificatory strategy. The use of this strategy reveals the need to justify innocence, which casts doubt on it. It includes the explicit comparison that results in superiority „majoritary always on this territory blessed by God”. The perpetuation strategy is

present by exposing the idea of continuity through the use of the adverb „always” when referring to the presence on this lands.

From the comparison of these articles and the strategies they use we can conclude that the process of othering in the Hungarian case is done by being defined as other and by being attacked as proved in the article of the siege, where the dominant discursive strategies were the justification and perpetuation strategies in both mentioned articles, with the substrategy of legitimizing/delegitimizing and of downplaying and trivialization. In the case of the Hungarian articles the dominant ones were the constructing and the transformational strategies.

The article written by Markó Attila as a calling for remembering of the Black March, Egy fekete március emléktáblájára (Remembering the Black March) every sentence reveals the constructive strategy of remembering and self-definition that after the twenty years has already incorporated this tragic events.

His definition of the events conflates its memory with the celebrations of the 15th of March, that had been called by Romanian local public voices as a provocation and is called as such since then. The local Romanian newspaper overlaps the presentation of these two events and establishes a causality relation between the two.

The article of Markó Attila establishes as well a relation of the two: the 1848 revolution repeated itself 20 years ago and repeats itself in our every day fight for our rights. The topos of the history as teacher is invoked in the context of the last 20 years, and looking back, a possibility for redefinition. Remembering implies a need for a continuous redefinition, of the need to „continue our everyday fights for our rights”. The constructive strategy expressed with the topos of history has imposed another way of self-definition as well, which chooses dialogue. Thus the strategy of perpetuation and transformation is implied in the (re)definition of the events and of their meaning. The article closes with the conclusion

that formulates another way of self-understanding emphasizing unification and cohesivation, to feel and show solidarity.

In the article of the local newspaper, Prieten să ne fie adevărul! (Let truth be our friend!) the first sentences strike us with their attacks and delegitimizing strategy that creates power positins by attacking and deprectiating the other, on the use of blaming strategies that emphasize the difference between the us and them, within the same community of newspaper writers. The justification strategy is implied by the use of biblical exemples, again a tool of discursive power position creation. The construction of the *us* and *them* is based on the attitude towards the events of the 20 of March and the criteria is established in ethnic terms: those who think that Hungarians are to blame are with us, and those who say otherwise are against us. The delegitimation strategy is supported by casting doubt about their truthfulness by attacking adn calling them traitors, comparing them to Judas. The power position that is created by invoking biblical examples is one of most obvious delegitimation strategies. Their minimization by the continuos attacks employs the topos of ignorance and justifies their own speaking position. The use of depreciative lexemes such as „the so-called journalists”, the ironic use of „good Romanians” their characterization „they make movies till they get dizzy” make these sentences a self-parody and an exemplary text for the strategies of justification. The claim of knowing the truth is „proved” by the lack of argumentation and the overgeneralizing statements and the abundant use of indefinite pronouns, „what”, „whose” . The delegitimation strategy is implied again, when demanding the *others* to reconsider their position, by adressing warnings and attacks to them.

By comparing the articles written after 20 years we see that the Hungarian newspaper exposes the strategy of perpetuation, transformation, and constructive one, while in the Romanian newspaper the dominant strategies are of legitimization/delegitimation and of justification.

The national newspaper, *Adevărul* does not mention the events of Târgu Mureș in its number in 2000 or 2005, but it does so in 2010. It exposes the theory that the conflict had been prepared with the contribution of the local newspaper who published provocative anti-Hungarian texts and how the profanation of the statue of Avram Iancu has been a debated event on both sides. The police had not identified anyone guilty and the inscription in Hungarian is so incorrectly put that it could not have been written by a Hungarian person. The newspaper article mentions the positions of both sides, criticizing more the Romanian one. It mentions every important factor that had contributed to the conflict, even the very controversial issue of the identity of the person present and broadcasted all over the world, identified as Mihai Cofar. The article mentions as well that a German newspaper had identified the identity of the person seen on the footage and the mother of that person who day after dead because of his wounds, with the name of Ioan Săcarea. This article was the first to present the events and their connectedness to media and how the othering process had been prepared that led to the ethnic conflict in Târgu Mureș.

3. The play 20/20 as ritual

In my third chapter, besides mentioning shortly the short history of the play and of the research conducted by the actors, dramaturg and director, I will make reference the play's reception in the local newspapers. This chapter will also refer to the question why a theatrical representation can and does produce the space where re-experiencing the past creates the situation of detachment. The question of why this state of presence-and-detachedness is so productive is formulated is well in the book dedicated to Victor Turner, By means of performance.

The book having the subtitle of Intercultural studies of theatre and ritual, focuses on the relationship between theatre and ritual, with focus points on transformation of being and/or consciousness, audience-performer interactions, issues that are of interest for this paper.

Turner's starting point is that of establishing the relation between social drama- called by Kenneth Burke the drama of living-, and performance, understood in the broad term that includes dance, music and ritual. He states that performances represent the third phase of a social drama, the redressive one. The first phase, the Breach, is defined as the point when a person or subgroup break a rule deliberately by inward compulsion in a public setting, followed by the stage of Crisis, where conflicts between individuals erupt, revealing hidden clashes of character, interest and ambition (Turner 2007:8).

These moments and phases correspond to the ones previous to the ethnic conflict in Tirgu Mures/Marosavasarhely, that had broken the mount of the group's unity, at its peak barely 3 months before, when Hungarians and Romanians fought together for the same common cause. The silent book and candle holding protest that aimed for attaining mother – tongue education was named as “separatist and undesired” by the Romanian public voice,

while both sides asked themselves what was that had happened to the unity present during the anti-communist regime protest 3 months earlier, where unity, fraternity, equality were the central slogans. Apparently, the two side's understanding differed. The result has been a schism on the level of the local community with unnamed and hidden frustration on both sides and an aftermath of parallelly lived lives of the local communities.

The analogy of drama and social life has been used by Geertz as well, in Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought, stating that there is a dynamic system of interdependence between social dramas and cultural performances, which brings us closer in understanding why we need an another dimension for re-enacting social dramas. The reenactment focuses on the social drama's third phase, the redressive one, with its liminal and exploratory characteristics, with the ability of containing some means of public reflexivity and the ability of having a role of a curative ritual or initiatory rite, with a therapeutic outcome.

The outcome of redressive action of social drama might be either a restoration of peace and normality among participants, either a social recognition of irremediable and irreversible breach of schism. 20/20 offers the possibility of changing this outcome and aftermath of the ethnic conflict by proposing a redressive process, where the contents of group experiences are replicated, dismembered, remembered and refashioned.

Self-reflexivity, detachment and critical thinking are being stimulated with the help of humour, irony. These means that I understand as belonging to liminal cases allow the shaping of a new gaze, the suspension of prejudices and the deconstruction of stereotyped thinking or its continuous replication. The play, thus, offers the possibility of a new outcome: of the restoration of peace and normality among its participants.

When Turner describes what true theatre is, he relates it to heightened vitality: a "complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events" (Turner 1997 : 13).

He explains that when this happens in a performance, there may be produced in audience and actors alike -what d'Aquili and Laughlin call in reference both to ritual and meditation- a brief extatic state and sense of union, often lasting only a few seconds. This extatic state may often be described as no more than a shiver running down the back at a certain point... This shiver has to be won, achieved, to be a consummation, after working through a tangle of conflicts and disharmonies" (Turner 1997: 13).

The play can be defined as a liminal space, in Turner's sense, as it provides a stage for unique structures of experience, characterized by the presence of ambiguous ideas, monstrous images, sacred symbols, humiliations, esoteric and paradoxical instructions, and the emergence of symbolic types (Turner 1997: 11). The limen or threshold refers to the second of the third stage of a rite of passage, a fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, a striving after new forms and structure, a gestation process, a fetation of modes appropriate to and anticipating post-liminal existence.

The play's has a "second act", a discussion where everybody from the audience is invited to share his/her stories and comments, to establish a dialogue with the other side and share memories. Thus he also answers the question on why we need another dimension to present conflicts and to find a way out from polarized positions. In order to reconcile, we need to re-experience the past, and as a consequence, to reach peace, normality, a common standpoint. He mentions that performance increases people's ability to experience and re-experience each other's cultural identity, and adds that performance can bring together what he calls a dialectic of flow, of spontaneous movement in which action and awareness are one. With reflexivity the central meanings, values and goals are seen in action as they shape and make us understand behaviour (Turner 1997:1).

By pairing awareness and action with reflexivity, it brings together all the important characteristics and phases a performance must contain, by marking a detachment and at the

same time participation and a (re)living of events through the act of performance. This pairing contributes to the understanding of the other through the included component of reflexivity, expressed as self-criticism, humour and parody. The play 20/20 allows for an insight into the other side and facilitates a better understanding of it. It builds on various oral histories collected from both sides, thus, very personal and subjective. With the uncensored representation of opposed subjectivities, veracity is being created (Nagy 2009).

Reflexivity is created by the employment of humour, irony, (self)criticism, but without making fun of the other, rather by enacting their own self-parody: by speaking clearly about known, but unspoken realities, on their own or on the other's language, with grammar or expression errors or not matching accents (Nagy 2009).

Veracity is increased by the fact that it encloses true stories collected from those present in the events 20 years ago, information provided as well by the text of the play. The lack of biased-ness is shown by the image portrayed about the self, on both sides, with self-criticism having key role. Presenting stereotypes and prejudices on both sides is enclosed in a perfect balance in the birthday party scene.

The lack of biasedness was a basic concept of ideating the play. As Kinga Boros mentions it in an interview after the play's premiere in Hungary in November, their standpoint was accepting that all that had been told and narrated, was true. And this was the key to win over people's trust. (Boros 2009)

Humour defined by Myerhoff in the context of the transformation of consciousness in ritual performances, is that ludic element used in rituals to produce the release from a demonic possession (Myerhoff 1997: 249). In the case of the play her idea can be translated as a moving away from solid polarized standpoints with the help of humour and irony. This moving away shows the opportunity to "rewrite" our states, our desires, our stories, knowing fully and freely and exactly what we are doing and why (Myerhoff 1997: 249).

3.1. Methodology: Qualitative interviews

I have used qualitative methodology in the context of the discourse on national identity and the process of negotiating collective memories.

The interviews had been conducted individually, being topic oriented, semi/structured, with various people who had seen the play, belonging to different generations, nationality and gender, with the aim of finding out the way we remember and the place remembering occupies in the way we conceive of self/other in the context of the memory of 20 of March, 1990.

The question to which we are lead is: to what extent can we perceive the play and its “second act”, the discussion as an introduction to the process of negotiating a common collective memory. Is this memory still a polarized one? Does the play offer an opportunity of rethinking our mental maps and our position in it and of the other?

The socially shared perceptions form the link between social systems and the individual cognitive system and perform the translation, homogenization and co-ordination between external requirements and subjective experience, idea expressed (Meyer 2001:21).

The interviews took place in an informal and relaxed setting, sometimes right after the play, which was the ideal situation, and mostly after a certain time had passed after having seen it. Given these circumstances, the aim of this research attempts to reveal society’s openness to accept the other’s standpoint. Still, the answers given show in an overview, the willingness to dialogue and curiosity and openness towards the other.

The strongest asset of the play has been referred to by both sides as the opportunity to see the other side. Already this statement gives an insight into how this play stimulated sensitivities and created an openness and curiosity towards the other.

My aim was to conduct the interviews in a way that they would resemble informal conversation, so thoughts could be expressed freely and without any pressure or constraint. It did not involve persuasion or any other constraining circumstance, on the contrary: those who accepted to answer my questions were willingly and happily doing it and at the end expressed their content and gratefulness for the possibility of talking about the topic and sharing their thoughts. It was most definitely a very pleasant and enjoyable experience for me as well.

The interviewing process had developed its network firstly by starting from the people I know who had seen the play, mainly from my generation, then moving on to their parents, in case they had had the chance of seeing it, and their Romanian friends or just simply viewers at the shows.

My attempted interactions with older generations had proved to be a failure regarding a possible interview. They had all refused talking and had not failed in giving me an explanation for it. One of the old men just plainly told me that he thought that all had already been written in the books, and he could not be wiser than those books. Another older lady told me she could not even go to see the play, as she is still so troubled by the events, she did not think she could stand it and was afraid of not taking it well. I had not really seen younger people in the audience, and those few that I had asked told me that they know nothing about the events and that most probably would not be able to tell me anything.

I had managed to interview 17 Hungarians and 4 Romanians, of which 9 women and 12 men, with occupations varying from students to doctors and lawyers, teacher, psychologists, priest, journalists, historian, engineers, dramaturg, reporter, editor, actor. The same questions were addressed to everybody, but not necessarily in the same order, depending on where and how the answer had lead us, as the aim was to maintain the natural flow of the discussion rather than turn it into a report. Most of them had been done at workplaces or at home, or over a coffee.

Interestingly enough, people did not get embarrassed or reticent when the recording device was on and the discussion went on after it was turned off, so there were moments when I had turn the recorder on again as the people were still willing to go on with the discussion. The difficulty of reaching Romanians is indebted to the fact that fewer Romanian spectators came than Hungarians, statistical research showed that the proportion of viewers is of 30% and 70%, with Hungarian majority presence (Sebestyén: 2010).

Of course, the question arises: how can my research reveal in any way the extent to which the Hungarian and Romanian community of Târgu Mures is willing to negotiate the past and common memories, if the viewers are not equally distributed and not even I could manage to reach as many Romanians as Hungarians. Even though, during the research process these questions were haunting me, every single interview had managed to show me something so far invisible and untouched upon until then , that had been stimulated by the play. Every single interview convinced me that changes of attitudes were being visible. Even though my research cannot be called representative and it does not pretend to be, it manages to put into light the questions and curiosities people developed towards each other and the stimulated ability and willingness to talk about past events after experiencing the play in a public space, shared by both Hungarians and Romanians.

3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis for interviews

The plurality of methods that the CDA gathers, operate with three closely intervoven dimensions of analysis which focus on contents, strategies and the means and forms of realisation (Wodak 1999:30).

The definition of contents distinguishes thematic areas that are formulated with the questions asked during the interviews, each of them focusing on one aspect of the main theme: (shared) collective memory. With the presentation of these question and the

motivation that stands behind them and their formulation, we can reveal as well the discursive strategies that are shaped by the answers. These strategies can be examined by the way and means of their narrative formulation, by touching upon issues the given question had not touched upon. In this sense, Bourdieu's definition of strategy describes fittingly those actions that are objectively oriented towards a goal and yet may not be the goals subjectively pursued.

Bourdieu mentions that the significance of strategies cannot be associated with a simplistic finalistic and voluntary perspective, as strategic action is oriented towards a goal but not necessarily planned to the last detail or strictly instrumentalist (Bourdieu 1993: 90). Revealing strategic action and conscious intention is the aim of these discursive products. It is assumed that political commemorative speeches, newspaper articles have a greater and a more conscious intention, while it occurs to a lesser degree in individual discussions in the case of focus group discussions and occur even more in the case of individual interviews.

In my analysis on the interviews what I had found particularly interesting and challenging is the different relation between the collective frames, the ways of social representation and the individual cognitive systems that particularizes the situations while consciously reflects on it.

Interviews allow the formation of discursive positions and narrative identities. Narrative identity can be defined as a narrative configuration that mediates between concordance and discordance, while a dynamic concept of identity is formed, including the concept of transformation. Thus the concept of identity can go beyond the one-sided model of an invariant. In this process it is possible to reinterpret past events and relate it or re-relate it to one's life, allowing bringing into harmony conflicting elements (Ricoeur 1991: 247).

The essence of Ricoeur's theory is that the identity of an individual is derived from the story, the plot creates it, of which he /she is the narrator.

Thus, individualizing the content of the interviews in this case coincides with the construction of narrative identities in the form of answers given to the questions. These narrative identities are shaped by the discursive strategies that can be “below” or “underneath” the content. The way of formulating answers can go beyond answering the question, creating discursive strategies on micro-levels, as called by Wodak. These micro-levels surface in the recurrence of certain topics and themes, and contribute to the construction of the narrative identity that Ricoeur refers to.

In the following two subchapters I will present the two levels and their strategies, making reference to generational, gender or nationality differences when they occur.

3.3. Macro-levels and strategies

The different levels of strategies can be broken down into macro-levels and micro-strategies which include construction, perpetuation or justification, transformation and demontage or dismantling, which are present more or less simultaneously and are interwoven in discursive acts. Constructive strategies are the most comprehensive discursive strategies and their aim is to construct and establish a certain national identity by promoting ideas that sustain unification, identification, solidarity and differentiation, leading thus to the presence of the idea of groupness, with the ideas of inclusion and exclusion.

Constructive strategies are especially dominant in newspaper articles that argue with the strategies of assimilation, inclusion and continuation, that can be as well identified as a topic. Usually Romanian newspapers tend to stress similarity and the difficulties that we had went through together. This topic is used as a counter-argument for the Hungarian ambitions of having mother tongue education, accompanied by the accusation of separatism and nationalism.

In the conducted interviews I have observed the predominance of the constructive strategies and of the strategies of justification. The latter is present by the balancing one thing against the other and with the strategy of emphasizing the difference between the now and then, emphasizing difference as an advantage, and by emphasizing the topos of illustrative example, and implicitly, emphasizing the difference between *us* and *them*. The constructive strategies are expressed as present especially in the discourse of the generation that had already been an adult person during the conflict. From the constructive strategies we can mention the following: singularization, unification and cohesivation, with the emphasizing of unifying common features, exemplified by the topos of the shared sorrow or worries at subnational or national level, and the emphasis to feel and show solidarity, accompanied by the unificatory warning against the loss of national autonomy and uniqueness. Dissimilation/exclusion is expressed by the stress on the difference between then and now (reflecting on the example of they are inferior compared to us).

In contrast to the constructive strategy and the strategy of justification I have observed the presence of the strategy of demontage or dismantling and destruction, present in the discourses of the younger generation, which exposes examples of self-criticism and negative self-presentation and negative singularization. These strategies are accompanied by the strategies of heteronomization with the emphasis on extra-national dependence and the strategy of assimilation expressed by the emphasis of international sameness or communality.

The strategies of transformation are present in both generations stressing the aspect of discontinuation and dissimilation, with the emphasis on the difference between then and now and emphasis on the necessary difference between now and the future. These contrasting differences will be shortly referred to in the chapter that compares interviews of persons belonging to the same family and to different generations, such as mother and son, father and son, mother and daughter. I will show how generational differences do not necessarily fit into

the frame mentioned above with the predominance of strategies of justification among the older generation.

3.4. Discursive strategies – macro level

1. My first question was a general one, an introductory one, so the persons could express freely their points of view without me influencing or guiding them by another formulation of a question. This way they could create their own standpoint and discursive space and it proved to be a very productive approach.

The answers given at this question in the majority of cases were pretty extensive.

The interviewees praised the play for being real, for making them realize that we need dialogue, for breaking down taboos and saying them out loud, for creating the situation where you can see from the outside, and thus making you see the other side and realizing how ridiculous your standpoint might be from the other's perspective, for making people think and become curious about the other, for letting you out from your iron cells, for settling things down in you, for putting it on an easily approachable level, for showing that our memories were shared memories, the good feeling that others do see it in the same way, being an introspection.

The experience of living through the play was formulated as being liberating, intense and with the humour involved, created a situation of detachedness. It has been mentioned by both sides that this exercise of introspection offered you a chance to confront your own biases and practice self-criticism. It also gave an opportunity to translate certain situations to your own life and make you more aware of your attitudes and deconstruct your biases and the ability to generalize.

The play shows how to be critical towards yourself and how to be more open towards the other. The role of the play as being didactic came up several times as well. Criticism has

been mentioned both from Romanian and Hungarian side, that people tend to see these events one-sidedly.

From the above mentioned conclusion regarding the topics that had come up, we can distinguish the deconstruction of the strategy of perpetuation, of going against the portrayal of Black and White and of emphasizing positive continuity by praising such initiatives. These have been expressed very suggestively by F.Cs, 31, dramaturg, Hu, M. who said that : „it was liberating that I could see both sides at the same time, and we all have a kind of identity where these events count, that build you into a wall made of concrete and now all of a sudden it was very good to get out of it.”

The deconstructing strategy of perpetuation has been expressed by B.GY. (journalist, 55, F, Hu) who reiterates and at the same time deconstructs the Black and White portrayal: “despite being Romanian she had really dared to touch upon such a sensitive topic”.

The emphasis on positive continuity as strategy of perpetuation by establishing a link to a model has been expressed by B.Zs., (lawyer, 31, F, Hu): „it felt very good seeing scenes that I already knew of. It felt good that others saw it in the same way. It really made me feel as a part of it.”, and M.S., (doctor 56, M, Hu): „made me realize that these memories are not only mine but they do belong to others as well, as they have the same ones as I do, and we remember together something we had lived through together” and by D.O, (lawyer, 37, M, Ro) who mentions as well that we had all experienced the same things together.

The constructive strategy of unification and cohesivation together with dissimulation substrategy by expressing the difference between the then and the now is nicely put by L.K. (31, historian, F, Hu): „ it was a cathartic experience, because it started a discussion, it mentioned things that we never dare to do, and presented scenes that could have come up on one side or the other, that people did not think of these events since they wanted to forget all

about it. But by making you watch it, and all those funny situations liberated you and of course that this is the right track of the solution, and by avoiding it without dealing with it.”

The macro-level topics that had come up in the answers to this question was: the idea of a shared memory. This topic had come up in different generations and genders, and different nationalities. So it is neither a generational nor a gender based difference, nor something that would be missing from the answers of Hungarians or Romanians.

2. My second question could be considered to be an extension of the first one: What was your favourite scene? My intention was again not to ask a very precise question as I wanted to see what people were prone to, what was that they had been touched by, what were they sensitive to. From their answers it could be easily inferred in what terms can that sensitivity be interpreted. The responses did reveal what they identify with or detach from and how they position themselves in relation to the scene/issue they were mentioning. They revealed as well the discursive positions by creating the speaking position from where they could relate to the play and refer back to their memories as well.

The explanation and motivation why a certain scene was a preferred one does as well give information about the awareness, self-criticism and solution-seeking attitude the interviewees are aware of. The answers given to this question predominantly name two scenes that were favoured. One of them is the birthday party scene, the longest of the play with many humorous scenes, with a mix of the comic and tragic, where very typical, if not extremely typical ways of being are shown. The other preferred scene is the one about watching the moon. The scene is about a lad, who of the day of the events remembers only the moon that he had stared at with his Hungarian friends. His monologue also mentions how he misses his Hungarians who that year had all left the country. The third in the preference-rank is the scene of the solutions in case of inter-ethnic conflict as it is funny and one of the

suggestions was even to put it at the entrance of the city. The problem solving attitudes were exposed in the answers given to these questions, as well as the introspection that the viewers had experienced.

The strategies that stand out are the strategies of demontage expressed by the substrategy of negative self-presentation of self in constructing singularity in connection with negative attributions accompanied by the strategy of discontinuation, emphasizing the need for disruption in what regards the lack of attempts for dialogue:

SZ. ZS., (teacher, 30, Hu) motivated the birthday party scene as her favourite one, by saying that there is no communication, no dialogue, and that we need to understand that the majority will not solve our problems, and it is us who need to have the initiative. B.GY., (55, journalist, F, Hu), in her explanation uses as well the strategy of demontage by the negative presentation of the self as well of the other: “it really reflects back at how we are with our implemented chips of superiority that we feel towards each other”.

The second preferred scene is the one with the moonwatching, which of course had various different interpretations. For T.Ch., 27, reporter, Ro, it was motivated by the fact that those guys had no idea about what was going on and did not care at all and for them the moon was way more interesting than any fight that went on: „didn’t really care, rather went on with playing together and staring at the moon”.

The constructive strategy is implied by M.É.(36, psychologist, F, Hu) by mentioning the unification and cohesivation value that scene had, with the linguistic means of realization that suggests solidarity and co-operation. For her it was about the “the reality we all dream of, it was nice to see that we can change and shape reality, this is what the scene was about. Lovely.”

The same strategy is present in the answers of B.Zs, J.I. and K.B., who mention their third preferred scene the one on solutions offered in case of inter-ethnic conflicts. B.Zs.

(lawyer, 31, Hu) states that the director suggested a solution there, that we should know each other and this would mean the way of avoiding or preventing such a conflict from happening again. According to J.I., 32, doctor, Hu those panels should be put at the entrance of the city. Either if we understand it as a joke or if we take him seriously, what we see is the intention towards finding a solution and avoiding its occurrence again. This strategy emphasizes the will to unify, co-operate and feel and show solidarity.

K.B. (engineer, 31, Hu) used the deconstruction of the strategy of perpetuation, by expressing the protest of portraying in Black and White. He mentioned it as a scene that was full of humour and liberating, it really made you see how much stupidity is involved in it and allowed you to step back instead of taking sides.

B.B. (actor, 31, M, Hu) mentions a scene from the beginning of the play, a child's game of occupying territory, and speaks about the way we all grow up with these ideas in our minds, nationalities, countries, etc. He speaks as well about the story of one of the actors, Korpos András and his personal life-story and the life-path he goes through and the decisions he makes so relaxedly: „Korpos's story is really something, as he takes part in the fights 20 years earlier, he feels like a big hero with his 16 years, throwing rocks with his burning patriotic heart and everything, and then, after 20 years, with the same burning heart he marries a Romanian girl and they have a son together, and then the decisions on the child's religion and nationality and name just become very relaxedly taken decisions, to be Orthodox and Hungarian, making these issues seem banal and unimportant. The road that he had done seems very interesting to me”. He uses the strategy of transformation by emphasizing the difference between then and now and the necessary difference between the now and the future. In his first example he deconstructs the constructive strategy of singularization. From these strategies we can see what are the main topics that come up, such as nationality, identity

and the deconstructive attitudes the interviewees expose by agreeing to the ridiculization of the rigidity and exaggerated importance we assign to these categories.

3. My third question was about situations that made them feel embarrassed, uncomfortable or situations that they had found funny. I had put all these terms/adjectives together so that the interviewed persons could talk about them at their choice, and choose whichever emotion that had been dominant. With this question I could see the sensitivity people have and the role they attribute consciously to these emotions and how they position themselves and the other and what are the results of such a positioning. It is interesting to see how topics came up again and how explanations are given to the roles certain emotions in their view provoke on them. The answer can evaluate as well how emotional and how involved people got and how this involvement contributed to their (re)positioning in terms of perceiving other. The answers help understand how the play had stimulated openness, or how it had strengthened or weakened the feeling of group-ness and of belonging, or to what extent could they be overcome. The answers to this question were pointing to an ideal future, and what is that we can like about living together.

What is interesting about these answers is that each of them reflects on what that particular emotion and attitude does to you and how does it makes you aware of your own standpoints. Few people mentioned funny scenes, and those who did related it to the consequence it had in making people more relaxed and accepting and opened toward the culture of the other person (I.K., 30, reporter, Hu). Sz.Zs. (teacher, 30, F, Hu) mentioned as well that humour is the only language in which we would be able to communicate or at least start from, and F.Cs. (31, dramaturg, M, Hu) suggest a humorous solution for history book writers “who should really consider applying humour in their own researches so that it would facilitate negotiation and create more easily a common memory”.

By naming common denominators that can be called starting points for dialogue, we can identify the constructive strategies of discontinuation, stressing the importance on the difference between then and now.

The second most named emotional attitude was embarrassment. It was mentioned by T.Ch (27, reporter, M, Ro) who, when speaking about the hilarious gifts the Moldavian neighbours had brought for the birthday party had detached himself by stating that he was Transylvanian and that he never heard of anybody here to have given pyjamas as a gift. He mentions as well the hypocrisy of the Romanian guy who found to be lying, by denying where he had been the day before (out in the square, fighting). T.Ch. creates a situation of detachment and criticism that he exposes, implying the strategy of justification with the substrategy of relativisation by emphasizing the difference between *us* and *them*, in intra-national context, referring to a sub-national identity. This involves the constructive strategy of exclusion, implying an attitude of them being inferior to us, reflected in criticizing the gift.

The shame is mentioned as well by F.Cs (dramaturg, 31,M, Hu), when the vehemence of the patriotic feeling is exposed by one of the actors and makes him become self-reflexive and ask questions from himself and check his own attitude towards it: „one of the actors said that he was a patriot, and it just erupted and it really made me feel uncomfortable, it was more than uncomfortable, because it had a strong vehemence in it that was difficult for me to deal with, and so I was asking myself how real that vehemence is, how present it is in people”. What is interesting and important to mention here is that he is not only “worried” about himself and does not pose this question only to himself, but to people, in general.

The discursive positions are of detachment and reveal an opposition to the constructive strategy that promotes continuation and assimilation. The emphasis on intra-national sameness in ethnic terms is lacking and opposed to or questioned.

F.Cs. got emotional as he says when the play jumped to the present and presented an ideal situation: “I got very emotional at the end when things just transformed into an ideal present that you had named as documented. Well, if that is the case, then I definitely feel great among those youngsters who have this kind of identity that is far from being similar to a wall made of concrete, but rather it is possible to make you feel that you can choose from the perspectives, and how this attitude is free of any tribal, exclusivist loyalty, where you do not need to have the position of someone who is constantly being on guard”. His emotionality is expressed as getting rid of past bad habits that we inherit. He uses a constructive strategy that applies the topos of redefinition, and uses the strategy of cohesivation and unification emphasizing on unifying common features, using lexemes with the semantic components creating unification (“then I definitely feel great among those youngsters who have this kind of identity that is far from being similar to a wall made of concrete”), using the topos of implied comparison between himself and the youngsters he refers to.

Another interesting aspect of these answers show the complexity of feelings that people feel had dealt with during the play. What they say is that you did not just feel one thing or the other, “it was all these feelings together” (F.M., priest, 36, Hu, M) talks about how emotional he was all along, and that he had lived those scenes as heartbreaking. He mentions the very nice lad who watched the stars and how he had wanted to hug that girl coming from the mixed marriage who was the peacemaker who was all along trying to maintain peace between the two groups. It is interesting that he had observed and protested against a bad translation, exactly in the moon-watching lad’s monologue. The guy kept telling about his Hungarians and that his Hungarians all left the country. The translation which is projected on the walls during the show „only translated Hungarians, which is not the same”. He remembers how emotional it was hearing all the names of the injured, of those too many injured people. His words reveal sorrow and an overwhelming sadness.

Several of the interviewees mention crying, as K.L. (historian, 31, Hu, F), or Sz.K. (56, editor, F, Hu) calls the play overwhelming and very intense: „it was breathtakingly emotional and I felt the panic again, that you did not know what was to happen next.”; and how she draws her conclusions for herself: “And what I liked the most is how the two sides try to complete each other. We should not think of it as a taboo, but something for which we should find a solution everyday”. Not only those people get emotional and on the verge of crying or actually crying who had lived those events. K.L. mentions that she was ten when those horrible things happened, and she was crying during the play as she relived and remembered her childhood memories. “All the nervousness had come out, and I could feel finally relieved. It might seem pathetic and sentimental, but there were scenes that touched me so much that I was crying all along, not because they were so emotional, but because, as if after 20 years all those feelings had come back...but meanwhile I knew I was watching from the outside, as I could see how other people felt... The scenes were very alive and suggestive, and I saw again what I had witnessed as a child, and I had things to think about.”

M.G. (31, doctor, F, Ro) mentioned that it was so emotional to see that there were all these other mixed couples who were happy and had a child together who knew both languages and it was all a happy ending.

What is interesting is that the interviewees when spoke about what was that had touched them, talked about things that they had envisioned as a future and it proved to become a reality, as D.O.: puts it: “Maybe this play is the only thing in this country from which we can start from.” These answers expose strategies of unification and cohesivation, with the use of lexemes and components that evoke unification, appeal to co-operation, and call for solidarity.

4. My fourth question referred to whether they have felt that there had been an imbalance in the play in terms of the portrayal of the two sides. My aim was to measure the sensitivities this play had stimulated and the biases or their lack and its awareness and the way the interviewees deal with it. It was surprising that until a certain point in the interviewing process Romanians said that the Romanian side was more positively portrayed and the Hungarians said that it were the Hungarians who were more positively portrayed. In their answers there were differences in argumentation which I find interesting to mention. Those Hungarians that state that there had been an imbalance which was in the favour of the Hungarians argued that Romanians had only been portrayed as newcomers, as people who were not at home, who were already in a less advantageous situation. They said that they were bothered by it that is why they had noticed it. I consider that the sensitivity towards the other's vulnerability shows lack of bias and lack of stereotyped thinking. Their protest is rooted in the awareness that there had been Romanians who had not moved in the city as a consequence of Ceasescu's assimilationist politics, but had been always lived in Transylvania.

A very elaborate answer came from K. L. (historian, 31, F, Hu) who said that following „it does favour the Hungarian side, but maybe it is because I was trying to be objective, I had the feeling that a Romanian person might feel pretty uncomfortable. But maybe this is how it is real, and even those who think that this is bothering, still find it normal.” She explains to herself that Hungarians find it normal that a Romanian can be portrayed as less favourable compared to a Hungarian, and that it is an inbuilt reflex, and the play just reinforced it. But, nonetheless, this is something she is aware of and attempts and explanation of it, by looking at her own biases.

The only Romanian person who thought that Romanians were favoured in their way of portrayal argued not in the context of the play, but of external factors that she referred to as

reality. M.G. (31, doctor, F, Ro): “it presents in a better light the Romanian side, because it is a play directed by Romanians, who want to make peace with the Hungarians, without giving them any rights”.

The rest of the interviewees answered to this question stating that there is a balance in the way of representing and portraying the sides, but there are differences in the way they argue this balance. For instance, T.Ch (27, reporter, Ro, M) argued again by referring to an external reality instead of the reality of the play. This rejection of referring to the context of the play might as well try to hide the feeling of imbalance that he denies. He argues that “the balance was established by the majority who were brought in”. Obviously he does not refer to the portrayal but to an equal percent of inhabitants, where the discussion is taken to the level of the proportion of forces.

F.CS, (31, dramaturg, M, Hu) argues that he felt a balance, but which was uncomfortable for both sides.

Sz.K. (editor, 54, F, Hu) states that there was balance and it was one of the best assets of the play: “It was very naturally dealt with, these terms, majority, minority were completely lacking. And if these terms had been there, then we would have already had an imbalanced situation, and I would start to become suspicious. These things were not named, they both were martyrs of the manipulations of politicians”.

B.Gy (journalist, 56, F Hu) has a similar position: “it measures the good and the bad with the same scale in each of us, this is the first time in my whole that I have seen something like this. I had never seen this before”, and a similar argumentation is the one of D.O. (lawyer, 36, M, Ro): “nobody could believe that you can write in an equilibrated way, and you see, you can.”

B.B. (actor, 31, M, Hu) has an argument worthy of mentioning as he refers to the balance or imbalance that the actors had experienced in their real lives. He as well refers to

external elements, and mentions that to some, that had contributed to their „acting” to be real: „No, I did not feel any imbalance. But it was weird, as I know all of the Hungarian actors and I know that what they were talking about was what they had done and experienced, whereas the Romanians were talking about something that they had found out about. But of course, this is a great thing.”, and goes on trying to find from this point of view that balance when both sides could have had the same background and life experience.

The answers to these questions reveal how unbiased people are toward the other, as we can understand from the answers of those who find the other side to be put in a more favoured light. The answers that state that there is balance in portrayal show an awareness that constantly arises in the form of asking ourselves some questions and trying ourselves out on how (un)biased we are. Are we as unbiased as we think or like to think that we are? The need for this constant raising of questions and self-confrontations makes this play worthy to be called a psychological and social performance and an exercise that can only be beneficial and constructive. The dominant discursive strategies is that of unification and cohesivation, with the presence of the topos of comparison that they all implicitly apply. The parallelisms were emphatic in every case, showing no differences in terms of age, gender and nationality.

5. My fifth question referred to a narrative that the interviewees had to tell in a hypothetical situation when stopped by a foreigner on the street and asked what was it that had happened on the 20th of March?

With this question I tried to measure the ability of the speaker to position himself/herself outside of his/her own situation and to reflect on the events objectively. The aim was to see to what extent he/she is capable of doing it, and what is the distance that can be maintained and how is the discursive position created.

The answers varied. People had to find a position to speak from and still to be comfortable with it, to be impartial but still not underplay the role and effect it had on their lives or on their community's life.

F. Cs. (dramaturg, 31, M, Hu) says that among Hungarians finding the position is already a problem as explaining what you are, a Hungarian in Romania is very difficult. The two key terms of this narrative, "problematic" and "identity" are related to each other. This difficulty creates the frustration and the awareness that the whole issue of identity is just a private matter, something that is important to us, Hungarians in Romania.

J.I. (doctor, 31, M, Hu) has a judgemental attitude when he begins his story telling that it has to be called „unfortunate”. His self-positioning is something that lacks any sense of responsibility, shame or guilt. „I don't feel shame. The majority wanted to annihilate the minority out of national feelings.” His “objective” standpoint, as he understands it, refers to stating the different attitudes people have towards the event, with the need of stating that Hungarians speak more about it: “There is a difference about how people deal with the 20th of March, Hungarians speak more.”

T.Zs (31, piano teacher, F, Hu) concludes in the most general and objective way: “everybody was afraid, we just did not know this about each other.”

Another respondent positioned herself in telling another recent event about the visit of the Dalai Lama, invited by László Tőkés to honour the statue of Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, the Hungarian researcher who had written the first Tibetan-English dictionary. The media had named this upcoming event as hurtful for the Romanian national feeling and named it a situation that can and would possibly cause tensions among the Hungarian and Romanian population and named the possible visit as undesired. Her metaphor stands for the conflict as well, and evaluates it on the basis of the lack of knowledge of the other's culture and an ignorance that cannot guarantee peaceful living. Still, after this introduction that was meant to

suggest that the same tensions still exist, her “objective” variant of the events is told. Her adverbs and adjectives that describe the aggression of the Romanian side are judging: “The political leaders, I don’t know why, but I have some ideas, instigated some unaware villagers, where, as I am aware, live only Romanians, that in Tirgu Mures, the Hungarians are massacring the Romanians, but as far as I know, they just wanted a Hungarian educational system, and thus, Romanians decided to beat Hungarians up. And this is such an animalistic attitude, and those who came in the help of the Hungarians were kicked out of their jobs and their family lives were destroyed. But only Hungarians were charged and the Gypsies, but why did Romanians get so upset, I don’t get it. I am not sure it was because of the candle-and-book protest or what. The so-called revolution had just recently happened, so this country was so busy with so many other things that I don’t know why it had all happened. In December people fought together, as the cause was common, but then it had suddenly changed, but maybe it is as easy as that: don’t you dare to want rights, ’cause we will beat you up. Maybe it is this easy”. She mentions as well the unjust and unbalanced trailing process, and goes back even further in time, to the so-called revolution to come up with even more puzzles: “I don’t know why it all happened.”

M.S. (doctor, 56, M, Hu) is unable to find an objective position and just speaks of his own very subjective point of view, which reveals a lack of distance from what had happened. What is stressed is that it had been a shock and that had still remained one. His words are very strong too, and judging: “it had called out an amounted hatred and it had destroyed everything till it had life in it. As if it had come out from Aladdin’s lamp.” The inability of naming a reason or understanding it is still present.

A.G (journalist, 60, M, Ro) finds it very easy to explain, he even gives more examples and even more cruel ones, of the hootsies and the tootsies, repeating that ethnic conflict is an universal story: “In every tribe there are differences, they wanted our land, we did not want to

give it. It is easy to tell. It is a universal story.”, and repetition becomes the dominant rhetoric device for argumentation and creating a banalizing effect. His discursive strategy is that of downplaying and trivializing the event.

The most successful variant in terms of objectivity belongs to B.B. (actor, 31, M, Hu) who uses general pronouns and the passive voice: “unchanneled tensions erupted and nobody was able to deal with it. Somebody was guilty, but we still don’t know who.” His use of general pronouns and his objective standpoint stands for the need of finding those *somebodies* who were guilty and gives an explanation that frames sides as equally involved: “everybody was upset with everybody.”

If we look at the dominant strategies that the interviewed people imply we can easily individualize the constructive strategy of unification and cohesivation, the topos of rebirth, the difference between then and now, the stress on unifying features and on co-operation and solidarity. There are fewer examples of strategies of demontage, referring to negative self-representation and self-criticism, strategies of justification that emphasize intra-national difference with the criticism involved, and the transformational strategy stressing the difference between then and now and the constructive relation between the now and the future. From these dominant discursive strategies we can conclude that unification and cohesivation reveal a more critical self-perception and more openness towards the other.

3.5. Discursive strategies of remembering – micro level

When Stuart Hall defines national culture as discourse, a way of constructing meanings that influence the way we organize our actions and our conceptions of ourselves, he adds that national identities are contained in the stories we tell to ourselves or are told to us, and are memories that connect the past with the present (Hall 1996: 613).

In the process of conducting interviews there were recurrent topics that had been included in the answers, even though my question did not invoke them. These discursive positions change according to age and nationality.

In the group of the Hungarian people above 50 that I had interviewed, speaking about the play called back memories that they referred to. It is interesting to see the point to which they go back in time and the detailed-ness of their narration. Contrasting it to younger generations, we might say that the discursive position shows recurrent topics and commonalities. The generation of the people of and around 30 show a very different way of relating to the events, of creating discursive strategies. Their recurrent topic is cosmopolitanism and their discourse is characterized by self-reflexivity and self-criticism.

These discursive positions can be called as well patterns that organize discourse that change from one generation to another.

Comparing the narrative position of a Romanian person and a Hungarian one of the same age, we can find certain commonalities and differences.

There are more commonalities in discursive patterns between the generation of 30 and above belonging to different nationalities and there are more differences in the patterns of discursive strategies in the generation of the people above 50.

Let us start with comparing the differences in discursive position of the mentioned generation above 50 belonging to different nationalities.

There is a difference in the tendency of universalising vs particularizing historical events, be that of Trianon or of ethnic conflict. Hungarian people tend to show less distance and involvement when speaking about the events of the 20 of March. This is shown by the discursive positioning they take, the moment in time they go back to when remembering and the detailed-ness of their memories. All Hungarian persons that had been interviewed mentioned memories of the events of those days. B. Gy. remembers in her interview the

details of that day, with temporal and spatial references, with a cause and causality relations and motivation of the events, with the messages that had been said in the previous evening by the president in the Romanian Television. Her rememberings of the events start from the '89 revolution. Her discourse mentions the changes that had started to occur gradually by using the terms “the Romanian side” explaining it with giving names accompanied by adjectival pronouns “such Tira and Scriciu”. Her discourse refers to “the Romanians” that had decided to teach us a lesson, creating a continuation between those times and those of today by the use of temporal references: “The Romanians are still governed by those same powers, then and even now...” She mentions constancy and the unchanging times. The pronouns she uses to refer to Romanian clearly creates an “us “ and “them” opposition: “and then they had all been everywhere”. The oppositional relation is present in the way she describes the “Romanian students’ counter-protest. The opposition is present in her description of the street fights: “the police had vanished from the group of Hungarians and Romanians”, “and the Hungarians fought back”. The emphasis of the opposed forces is suggested by the way she uses adverbs and negative forms: “the Hungarians dismembered everything that had found in the street and they did not run away, but faced them. They thought they can scare them, but no, no, they had nicely reorganized themselves and beaten them up nicely”.

Going back to the events of 1989 is her starting point, but SZ.K. goes back in time even more, and compares the 1920s with what is still going on now. She uses several time references that express the continuity: “it is the same even now” accompanied by temporal adverbs such as “once and for all” we should deal with these issues.

Her ways of othering refer only to the Romanians of Transylvania, implying that we share a common history. Her point of reference is not the us, the Hungarians, but she uses an objective one while speaking on a general level. She does not speak of the we and us, but rather of the us, of a community that needs to deal with its past: “A person with dignity

needs to confront reality and the past”. Her point of reference is the past and the relation we have to it. That is why the use of pronouns are indefinite ones: “Those who dear to face their past, prove self-consciousness and national consciousness”.

A.G (journalist, 60, M, Ro) does not construct a discourse on the events of March , nor on the regime change in 1989, nor on Trianon, but keep the discussion on a more general level and gives several other examples, of Belfast, Serbia, of the hootsies and tootsies, universalising the issue and banalizing the events in comparison to the particularizing and detailing attitude Hungarians showed. His distance from the events and the discussion is shown by how he refers both to Hungarians and Romanians by using the indefinite pronoun “other”: “it is natural to want to know the other and the other to know you”.

The main differences between the discourse of Hungarians and Romanians is characterized by the following differences: the Hungarians create a well defined discursive position from where they speak which defines the way they do it. The discourses are characterized by detailed presentation of the events, the creation of causality between past and present events, the precise positioning of the speaker: from Hungarian perspective, historically defined decisive moments: the 20 of March, or Trianon. From the Romanian perspective the positioning is less definite and more general.

There are other discursive patterns that characterize different age groups, the younger generation having the age of 30 to 40. These patterns are connected to the discursive positioning, and to the character of it. This generation reaches back to their own childhood memories, recalling their attitudes towards the events. This act of remembering shows how the past is being adjusted to the present, the time of remembering and how the (re)positioning of the narrator and his/her relation the the parents and the parent’s attitude is performed.

Remembering becomes an act of jumping from the present to the past and from the past to the present. Thus we can observe a continuous overlapping between the past as it is

remembered 20 years after, between what thought as a child, and between what they think that they had though as a 10 year old and how this fits into the current ways of thinking about those events. For many, this interview had been the first time of thinking back.

This act of remembering is problematized even more, as it includes as well a relation of a child and parent, and the current relation the person has with his/her parents. The way they remember influences the way a 10 year old remembers, and the way a 10 year old remembers is influenced by the relation he/she has at the current time with the parents.

This problem is exemplified by F.Cs (31, dramaturg, M, Hu): “I had thought about is a 10 year old, and I did not agree with my parents on ideological level, so to speak, and tried to calm them, and told them that we live far from the centre. “ In the next sentence he details the relation he had with his parents related to their not participating: “as I was sure it was no big deal, I asked them why we were not there, and I remember that they were shocked about what I said”. And then he adds: “and now, seeing this play, it made me feel liberated, yes, that is a good word for that, that I could see the parts together”, where it is not well defined anymore what he means: the danger that had remained hidden for him as a child and of which the parents were appearantly aware of, or, he means the other side, as the Romanian one. We might assume, both. And when he speaks about sides, he uses the term identity for the first time in his discourse, where, again this identity is defined by the relation to the events and the relation to the parents: “of course people have an identity where these events do count, and they rigidify his identity, and now, all of a sudden it was so good to get out of these rigid world, because people helped me, and I had the feeling that I, as a child, was right.”

The relation of child and parent and the way 30 year old people remember is a topic present in K.L. (31, historian, F, Hu) who had a view on the square where the events were going on the 19th. She remembers living the events as an adult, then she mentions how the play made her travel back in time and see the same events with her “childhood eyes”.

Remembering overlaps the then and the now, and creates a circular relation between them. The play made me “lived them again and it really made me think”. Then she remembers what she saw when she was ten: “what I had seen just didn’t fit the way I saw the world”. From the use of the adverb “just” we can see how memories are defined by the present time. When she argues for wanting to forget about it, she explains that it “just didn’t fit in the way I saw the world” and adds that “and I did not allow it to influence me in my future development”. The overlapping of present and past memories is proven in the way she defines her attitude as cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism is another topic that is present and lacking in the discursive strategies of the older generation. But what is more important is how this topic is being presented and the discursive positions it creates. Both L.K. and F. Cs mention cosmopolitanism as a desired way of self-perception, but both of their positions become questioned and put under introspection. This introspection creates the self-reflexive positions that this generation exposes, irrespective of nationality.

L.K. confesses that she had never thought about how it must feel on the other side, until now. She confesses about her awareness of not wanting to make the difference between who is who, and rejecting it, while being aware of it. She questions our ability to be really honest and look inside us, asking herself whether “you really dare to say what you think, because maybe you don’t even want to admit it to yourself that yes, you are very angry and you feel at the same time that you belong to a group as well. F.Cs. as well puts himself questions on whether we just are fond of the idea that we project of ourselves as cosmopolites, and O.D. (35, lawyer, M, Ro) admits as well that he catches himself “wondering to what extent this Hungarian-Romanian friendship is not somehow over-exaggerated, that we become friends, because we have to, because we are expected to, and than maybe, it does not come naturally.”

The self-reflexive attitude as discursive position calls out the memories of the awareness of detaching and critically relating to what these once 10 year old children had heard from their parents. B.B. (30, actor, M, Hu) mentions that for a while now he does not “just accept everything his parents say and tries to maintain a distance”. His distance is proven by the way he creates a space to redefine the terms of ethnicity, and religion. Referring to the scene of the mixed marriage couple with a son and their relaxedness towards deciding on the child’s nationality and religion, he mentions that „these things are not important in the same way they used to be”. He does not (re)name these categories into other ones, he just reinterprets their meaning and decreases their importance: “we got used to these things to be important to us, we grow up like this, and it is pretty difficult to get rid of it”. His honesty is exemplified by a story he tells about a visit in Serbia: when „I was in Belgrade I was fine with just saying that I came from Romania.” His attempts of find the point until when what you are, Hungarian or Romanian does not matter anymore.

Another discursive strategy that involves memory is overlapping scenes from the play and “reality”, the way people remember, the way had constructed themselves a way to understand. SZ. K. remembers the birthday scene and she mentions the tense Hungarian guy who „was in a fighting mood, while the rest were calm and tried to calm him down. The majority were disciplined, but at that moment they had all realized that something was not right, why was it all happening, that they had been manipulated, I don’t think that those on the streets knew what they were fighting for, but not even those who attacked knew.” Her remembering brings together the birthday scene with the street fights.

The same overlapping of how she remembers with the scenes of the play occurs when B.ZS. (31, Lawyer, F. Hu) remembers the same scene, the birthday scene. She tells that we even find out who were those who started the fight, and the act of overlapping occurs when

she adds that for those who do not know the story – by which she means the real event – do not understand.

The discursive patterns of remembering show differences between generations and differences between people of different nationality. Differences occur between the way remembering creates discursive strategies and the discursive positions it produces. These discursive positions create overlapping between the moments of remembering and what is remembered, overlaps events and the way they are remembered with the scenes of the play. Still, these overlapping situations of reality and representation help understand ourselves and the other more, and contribute to creating self-reflexivity and self-criticism, that create new spaces where the meaning and importance of notions such as nationality can be overwritten.

Conclusions

In my thesis I have shown the possibilities of the gains of an ethnic conflict. 20 years had passed since it had occurred in my hometown in Transylvania, in Târgu-Mureș/Marosvásárhely. The local authorities had named the year 2010 the „Year of Reconciliation”. In my thesis I have shown the possibilities and means of reconciliation, the negotiation of collective memory. 20/20 is the title of the play written and directed by Gianina Cărbunariu, remembering the events that had occurred in this town 20 years ago on the 20th of March. The play is about and for the inhabitants of the city, the co-authors of the play, which was based on their personal stories, of both Hungarian and Romanian people.

I had argued that the play offers a different dimension for understanding and approaching tragic events. Building on the theories of Pierre Nora, Maurice Halbwachs, Jan Assmann who define the past (memories) as a result of the process of relating to and viewing it from a future perspective. The past is being reconstructed and explored according to future needs. I had shown that the play can be perceived as a *lieux de memoire*, a place of memory that does not only reconstruct the past structured by the experience of the present, but does it in the view of and *for* the future. With the help of the conducted interviews I had shown that the play allows for developing a critical attitude towards rethinking the past and that shown that 20/20 provides a critical medium of rethinking the past and the ethnic conflict within it.

I had argued that the play can have the role of a curative ritual or initiatory rite, with a therapeutic outcome, with exploratory characteristics and an ability of containing some means of public reflexivity. I had defined it based on Victor Turner's theory of social drama (or, the drama of living), with the third, the redressive phase. This third phase encloses the possibility of changing the outcome and aftermath of the ethnic conflict, by replicating, dismembering and refashioning group experiences. I had shown that this third redressive phase is the play itself. By pairing awareness and action with reflexivity, it brings together

all the important characteristics and phases a performance must contain. It marks a detachment and at the same time participation and a (re)living of events through the act of performance. This pairing contributes to the understanding of the other through the included component of reflexivity, expressed as self-criticism, humour and parody.

In order to prove that the play can and does have the ability of a curative ritual I had compared the discourses that newspaper articles produced about the events 20 years ago and now, on local and national level. I have compared the discursive strategies, the performance of othering and the power positions created with the discursive strategies individualized from the conducted interviews. The predominantly justificatory and delegitimizing/legitimising strategy implied by Romanian newspapers were counterbalanced by the dominance of the strategies of perpetuation and transformation. These differences in discursive strategies show the different power positions and discursive positions, the means of othering and the differences in remembering.

Compared to the newspaper articles, the discursive strategy dominant for the interview was strategy of transformation accompanied by the discourse organizing topics and strategies that prove a growing ability towards self-criticism and critical thinking. This self-reflexivity and critical thinking together with the predominant presence of the discursive strategy of transformation prove that the gap between then and now shows a tendency towards negotiation, towards binding communities together and creating new social identities that define the way we remember. In my understanding, the play 20/20 produces this situation of dialogue and it depends on each and every one of us on how much we engage in it.

Appendix

List of the names of the interviewed persons:

Aurelian Grama : A.G. (60, journalist, M, Ro)
Bartha Éva : B. É. (36, psychologist, F, Hu)
Bartha Zsuzsa: B. Zs. (31, lawyer, F, Hu)
Bodolai Balázs: B. B. (31, actor, M, Hu)
Bodolai Gyöngyi: B. Gy. (55, journalist, F, Hu)
Daniel Oltean : D. O. (37, lawyer, M, Ro)
Fehér Csaba : F. Cs. (31, dramaturg, M, Hu)
Fekete Márton: F. M. (36, priest, M, Hu)
Ioan Korpos : I. K. (30, reporter, M, Hu)
Jakab István : J. I. (31, doctor, M, Hu)
Kelemen Zoltán: K. Z. (32, engineer, M, Hu)
Kulcsár Botond: K. B. (31, engineer, M, Hu)
Lázok Klári : L. K. (32, historian, F, Hu)
Madaras Gabriela: M. G. (32, doctor, F, Ro)
Madaras Sándor: M. S. (56, doctor, M, Hu)
Madaras Zoltán: M. Z. (32, doctor, M, Hu)
Máté Tekla: M.T. (22, student, F, Hu)
Székely Zsuzsa: Sz. Zs. (30, teacher, F, Hu)
Szőcs Kati: Sz. K. (56, editor, F, Hu)
Tordai Zsuzsi: T. Zs. (30, pianist, F, Hu)
Tudor Chirila: T. Ch. (27, reporter, M, Ro)

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