

Forms of Commemorating the Romanian Revolution of 1989 in Timișoara: The Case Study of the Memorial Association, 1990-2004

By

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Submitted to
Central European University
Department of History

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

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Budapest, Hungary

2015

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Abstract

This thesis addresses commemorations to the Romanian Revolution of 1989 in the city of Timișoara in the revolution's aftermath. Using a case study, it tells the story of The Association for the Memorial of the 16-22 December 1989 Revolution (Asociația Memorialul Revoluției 16-22 Decembrie 1989, AMR), a significant association dedicated to the revolution in Timișoara given that it houses a museum, a centre for research and documentation, and that it has commissioned the construction of monuments throughout the city. The thesis argues that the AMR used two kinds of commemorative activities during the first 15 years after the revolution, which were the results of adaptations to the specific context in Timișoara at different historical periods. It shows that the AMR began with memorial commemorations, defined as commemorative acts meant to preserve the memory of the dead through their mourning, by researching the events of the revolution and by building monuments to those who suffered during the revolution's violence. These early commemorations were the result of the immediate aftermath of the revolution and the context of the desire to prevent the memory of those killed from being lost. The thesis then shows how the AMR began to use didactic commemorations, defined as activities which teach a specific narrative of a historical event in order to commemorate it, by producing educational films about the revolution and hosting exhibitions of pictures drawn by children about the revolution. It then argues that these new commemorative acts were the result of the influx of foreign tourists to Timișoara combined with the coming of age of a new generation of children who had not experienced the revolution. This created a need for a way to teach the narrative of the revolution to these audiences, which the AMR accomplished through adopting didactic alongside memorial commemorations.

Acknowledgements

There are many individuals who provided significant care and assistance during the research and writing of this thesis, without whose support it would have never been completed. I would like to thank Professor Marsha Siefert, who as my supervisor gave useful critique and commentary to my research during its formative stages and who, moreover, remained patient and understanding in the face of my difficulties and panic during these past months. Professor Constantin Iordachi acted as the second reader of my thesis while also leading the thesis workshop class of which I was a participant, and for his insightful comments and criticisms I would like to thank him as well. I also owe an immense debt of gratitude to the staff of the *Asociația Memorialul Revoluției* (AMR), to its president, Traian Orban, who readily granted me access to both the breadth of archival materials within the AMR and to his private archive cataloguing its activities, and to Simona Mocioalcă and Adina Hornea Abruda, who answered any questions and offered unending assistance in navigating the AMR's archives; their assistance undoubtedly fuelled the very basis of this research. Finally, to everyone who provided such immense emotional support, to my colleagues here at the Central European University, to my friends in Romania, in Canada, and everywhere else, and above all to my parents, I thank you all from the very bottom of my heart for seeing me through this past year.

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INTRODUCTION

The Association for the Memorial of the 16-22 December 1989 Revolution (Asociația Memorialul Revoluției 16-22 Decembrie 1989, AMR) is an organisation founded in 1990 in the city of Timișoara, Romania. Meant to preserve the memory of the revolution in the city, the organisation has made use of a wide range of activities in order to carry out its function. During its formative years, the AMR commissioned the construction of monuments throughout the city based on aspects of the violence of the revolution, and devoted itself to the research of the revolution through cataloguing archival material and conducting oral interviews. Interestingly, its functions adapted over time, and in the early 2000s the AMR also began efforts to try and promote education about the revolution, such as the production of documentary films and the foundation of a museum space. How does one explain these adaptations?

This thesis is a case study of the AMR which outlines the first fourteen years of its activities. It shows how the AMR adapted its activities in order to promote the narrative to a wider audience. Though originally, the association's primary concern was to preserve the memory of the revolution among those who had experienced it, the influx of foreign tourism and the coming of age of children born after the revolution had occurred created an impetus to teach the narrative of the revolution along with memorialising it. Adapting Paul Connerton's theory of commemoration, this research argues that the AMR instituted commemorative activities in order to pursue its aim of preserving the memory of the revolution. It argues that the AMR used two specific types of commemoration. Firstly, it used memorial commemoration, which preserves a narrative of the revolution through activities mourning its tragedies. Secondly, the AMR used didactic commemoration, which both preserves and transmits a narrative of the revolution through educative means.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter addresses academic literature on the theory and history of commemoration, while also commenting on the methodology of this paper as a case study of the AMR and its resulting implications and limitations. The second chapter narrates the founding of the AMR and focuses on its use of memorial commemoration. It shows the AMR's efforts to conduct research in order to make sense of the revolution in its immediate aftermath, and explains the various monuments built by the association from 1990 to 1999 as memorials to the victims of the revolution's violence. The third and final chapter begins with the AMR's acquisition of a permanent building in 1998 and the museum it placed within its walls. It then speaks about the AMR's use of didactic commemorations within the museum during the early 2000s as a way of addressing the new audiences of foreign tourists and students, neither of which had experienced the revolution. It outlines the didactic films produced and events organised, followed by a discussion of a collaborative effort between the AMR and the Children's Palace of Timișoara (Palatul Copiilor Timișoara) to exhibit pictures drawn by elementary school students about the revolution.

CHAPTER I

COMMEMORATION LITERATURE AND CASE-STUDY METHODOLOGY

Writing about the history of commemorating the Romanian Revolution of 1989 is connected necessarily to similar practices of commemoration elsewhere, to conceptual theories of memory and public space, and to the broader context of Romania's history. One must therefore explore extensively both secondary literature related to commemoration and the specific methodological approach used here in order to comprehend fully the place of this research within the current breadth of related works.

Commemoration in Academic Literature

The social anthropologist Paul Connerton identifies in his seminal work *How Societies Remember* the different approaches toward the study of commemorative acts among the academic disciplines of psychoanalysis, sociology, and history, arguing that each fails to appreciate commemorations as a means of instilling communal memory on a societal level.¹ Understanding that all rituals have historical origins, and that their purposes may change over time, Connerton claims that historians therefore rely too heavily upon contextualisation in their treatment of commemorations. Seeking only to identify the “real” meanings behind commemorations, historians disregard the roles of commemoration outlined by their organisers and participants. Connerton's claim is supported by publications on commemorations in the field of history. The historian Jonathan Huener, in his work *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration*, narrates the use of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp after the Second World War as a site of memory and commemoration. His account centres in part

¹ Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 48-53.

around the argument that “memory at Auschwitz has never been fixed, for it has been subject to the vicissitudes of Polish society and politics as well as international political events,” that the site’s history must be understood by speaking of its surrounding historical contexts of Communist Poland and the Cold War.² Similarly to Huener’s account of Auschwitz as memorial through the political narratives surrounding it, the historian John Bodnar narrates the erection of a monument to the American citizens killed during the Vietnam War by referring to the intentions which drove the initial initiative to build a memorial site, the reactions among citizens and organisations to the proposed design of the monument, and the eventual building of two different Vietnam memorials in order to placate the multiplicity of opinions towards the war.³ Benjamin Ziemann, who addresses the history of commemorations to the First World War among Social Democrats during the Weimar Republic, similarly structures his research around the veterans’ associations of the Reichsbanner and the Reichsbund which were behind them, analysing their intentions and the purpose of their commemorative ceremonies.⁴

While Huener, Bodnar, and Ziemann all write about instances of war commemoration, within the context of studying post-1989 Romania it is also worth mentioning examples of authors discussing commemorations to revolutions. Frederick Corney addresses early attempts to shape the story of the Bolshevik Revolution in the Soviet Union through commemoration. His book *Telling October* focuses on key anniversary years, such as the twentieth anniversary of 1905 and the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution itself, narrating the attempts by the Soviet state and Bolshevik activists to shape a memory of these events and their limitations

² Jonathan Huener, *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration, 1945-1979* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003), xvi.

³ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 3-9.

⁴ Benjamin Ziemann, *Contested Commemorations: Republican War Veterans and Weimar Political Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 20-23.

in doing so.⁵ György Litván, on the other hand, writes about commemorations to the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 after the collapse of communism in 1989. His article “A Forty-Year Perspective on 1956,” focuses in part on the proliferation of organisations after 1989 which were dedicated to commemorating the revolution of 1956. Noting that many of these organisations’ members were veterans of the revolution, Litván traces the internal conflicts between groups as well as their efforts to catalogue and archive the history of 1956.⁶ Similarly to Bodnar, Huener, and Ziemann, these two accounts refer to the organisations behind commemorations in order to deliver their narratives.

Defining commemoration as a type of ritual on a collective or societal level, Connerton combines his criticism of other academic fields with an alternative interpretation, proposing to differentiate commemorative acts from similar rituals via their performativity, re-presentation, and unambiguity.⁷ Unlike a narrative taught to citizens or a monument placed as a site of memory, Connerton claims, commemorations carry a singular interpretation of an event commonly held by its participants, while the necessity of performance enforces an explicit connection between the past event and the present commemorative act.⁸ Thus monuments with contested interpretations, such as the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex or the Vietnam memorials as outlined by Huener and Bodnar, would qualify not as commemorations but rather as sites of memory. Using the example of Nazi Germany, Connerton refers to the public parades, marches, funeral services, and speeches repeated yearly on key anniversary dates associated with the establishment and rise of the Nazi Party as key examples of “commemorative ceremonies.”⁹

⁵ Frederick C. Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 1-3.

⁶ György Litván, “A Forty-Year Perspective on 1956,” in *Hungary 1956—Forty Years On*, ed. Terry Cox (London, UK: Frank Cass, 1997), 15-18.

⁷ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 61-63.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 44-45, 52-53.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 41-43.

These “performative” actions, he argues, had the effect of maintaining the memory of the Nazi Party’s history among members of its old guard, while also transmitting this interpretation of history to members of the Hitler Youth by presenting them as “contemporaries with the mythic event.”¹⁰ Commemoration, thus defined, consists of this specifically performative action of using ritual in order to promulgate a specific interpretation of a historical event via re-enactment.

Although Connerton’s criticism of the historical approach to studying commemoration has merit, the alternative definition that he then proposes is not without its limitations, and it is worth noting what remains excluded from this understanding of commemoration. Defining commemorative actions as mainly performative removes the possibility of including other forms of commemoration, such as the erection of monuments, the creation of audiovisual materials or the publication of literature dedicated to a past event. *Productive* actions, in comparison to the *performative* ceremony, are equally capable of being commemorative actions as defined by Connerton, as they can both maintain and transmit an interpretation of a historical event. Indeed, performative and productive forms of commemoration are often tied to one another, sometimes capable of being traced back to the same groups of people. The case of the Romanian Revolution of 1989 in the city of Timișoara serves as a prime example of this, where the AMR organised the building of monuments in commemoration to the revolution along with performative commemorations on key anniversary dates significant to the revolution’s process.

Furthermore, though Connerton argues that one must “focus attention on the content rather than on the *form* of ritual,” to disregard the various forms of commemoration would run the risk of ignoring possible differences in interpretations of the subject of commemoration

¹⁰ Ibid., 43, see also 70-71.

among those performing them.¹¹ Contrasting commemorative rituals against the transmission of memory through the telling of stories, Connerton argues that while “to recite a myth is not necessarily to accept it,” rituals necessarily “specify the relationship that obtains between the performers of the ritual and what it is they are performing.”¹² The “potential for invariance” of commemoration, in its definition by Connerton as a performative ritual,¹³ removes the possibility of variance, which is nonetheless present among commemorative actions. Referring to commemorations of the Romanian Revolution elucidates this point. During the celebrations of the revolution’s 25th anniversary in 2014, citizens in Bucharest gathered on Piața Universității (University Square) on December 21st for the purpose of commemorating the events of the revolution which had occurred there. Though citizens had gathered together and ostensibly for the same official commemoration, they were united neither in form nor in content.¹⁴ Monarchists carried pictures of the Romanian king Mihai I and handed out placards calling for his restitution as head of state, other participants used spray paint in order to rewrite messages from the revolution on pieces of paper as well as on the road of the square, and still others had joined an Orthodox Christian religious funerary service to those killed in Bucharest during the revolution. All of this took place within the same square among several other commemorative actions, and participants were free to choose to act in whichever ones they wished (if any).

Accounting for the intricacies of defining and understanding commemorative actions and their societal role, this paper seeks to apply that knowledge to the history of

¹¹ Ibid., 52. Emphasis in original.

¹² Ibid., 54.

¹³ Ibid., 57.

¹⁴ The commemoration was organized officially by one of the organisations dedicated to the revolution of 1989 in Bucharest, the 21 December 1989 Association (Asociația 21 Decembrie 1989), though it was attended by a variety of individuals both affiliated and unaffiliated with the association. See “Comunicat de presă,” *Asociația 21 decembrie 1989*, December 19, 2014, accessed May 27, 2015, <http://www.asociatia21decembrie.ro/2014/12/comunicat-de-presa-41/>.

commemorations to the Romanian Revolution of 1989. Though examples such as Bucharest in December 2014 are interesting and pertinent in discussing the variety found within commemorations, this paper focuses on the commemorative activities of the AMR as a case study of a single organisation in the city of Timișoara. With reference to Connerton's work, commemoration is here defined in part as a type of ritual which aims to maintain and transmit an interpretation of a historical event (in this case the revolution). It is, however, not limited to performative actions, but includes creative actions with the same role, such as the monuments, films, and literature created in order to propagate a narrative of the revolution. Despite Connerton's objections, this narrative also accounts for the merits of the historical method in approaching the study of commemorations. Although the content of commemorations do play a significant role, this narrative is focused around the organisers of commemorations and (whenever possible) their participants as historical actors. Like Huener and Bodnar's accounts, this research aims to outline the origins of commemorations and their evolution over a period of time. This being said, this research also addresses the societal role of commemorative acts in transmitting memory, which Connerton identifies as central to understanding commemoration. Indeed, the structure of this thesis is based around an evolution in commemoration's function, which is understood through changes in *both* their content and their form over time.

The AMR as a Case Study

The format of this thesis is a case study, which is useful in its ability to provide depth, but one must also be aware of the visibility and influence of case under study in order to prevent creating equivalencies between the actions of an organisation and the mindset of a city or even society. The AMR is a relatively influential group compared to similar associations dedicated to the Romanian Revolution of 1989. It was named an object of national interest by

the Romanian parliament in 2000, and has been the force behind the construction of nearly every monument to the revolution in Timișoara. Thus the AMR is a case worthy of study, but must still not be equated with all of Timișoara. Though the monuments commissions by the AMR are meant by the organisations as memorial sites, for example, it does not follow that all citizens who were bereaved during the revolution agree or even visit these monuments at all. Indeed, it may be the case that many who choose to commemorate loved ones killed during the revolution do so at their homes rather than at the AMR's monuments. The popularity of the AMR is also relevant. The historian and member of the AMR Marius Mioc has maintained data on the number of visitors to the association each year, showing an increase in popularity over time.¹⁵

This study on the activities of the AMR is based on a variety of primary source materials. Along with published archival materials, it relies upon pamphlets and posters printed by the AMR, the website that it maintains, interviews with its key members, and the commemorative items such as monuments and paintings that it produces. With this in mind, there are several methodological limitations which must be accounted for in order to comprehend the specific scope of this research. First and foremost, it must be noted that the vast majority of materials related to the AMR have been produced by the association itself. Thus interviews with members of the AMR are usually conducted by fellow members, films related to the AMR are funded by it, and the memorial monuments around Timișoara have almost entirely been the result of commissions by the AMR. Even the vast majority of books published on topics related to the AMR's activities (such as those which calculate the number

¹⁵ Marius Mioc, "Asociația 'Memorialul Revoluției' – Bilanț la 25 de ani," *Blogul Lui Marius Mioc*, April 29, 2015, accessed June 8, 2015, <https://mariusmioc.wordpress.com/2015/04/29/asociatia-memorialul-revolutiei-bilant-la-25-de-ani/>. According to Mioc's calculations, there were 1680 visitors to the AMR in 2003, 1386 in 2004, 1850 in 2005, 2141 in 2006, 2294 in 2007, 2671 in 2008, 2767 in 2009, 3292 in 2010, 3758 in 2011, 2378 in 2012, 5618 in 2013, and 7160 in 2014.

of dead and wounded in Timișoara during the revolution) have also been published by the AMR. Thus one must be careful when writing about the AMR not to write as if *within* the association, but rather to try and address primary sources critically and analyse their use and limitations.

The AMR itself houses a number of primary sources. The AMR is home to the National Centre of Documentation, Research, and Public Information about the Romanian Revolution of 1989 (*Centrul Național de Documentare, Cercetare, și Informare Publică despre Revoluția Română din Decembrie 1989*),¹⁶ and as such it holds an extensive archive of documents and audio-visual materials related to the revolution, particularly regarding events in the city of Timișoara. This archive focuses on the revolutionary period itself, rather than on the post-revolutionary period and the subsequent formation and activities of the AMR. The AMR also keeps an internal database of materials, meant for internal use by the association in its day-to-day activities. My access to this information has been generously provided by Traian Orban, the president of the association since 1991. The physical format of these materials include the AMR's network of computers, used primarily by its staff, which contains a breadth of digitised files including documents outlining and dating the monuments commissioned by the AMR as well as copies of the films the association has produced. Additionally, Orban maintains a private archive of the AMR's activities on an external hard drive capable of storing several terabytes of data. This archive contains everything from email correspondences between the AMR and other individuals or organisations, to posters and photographs of the events hosted by the AMR, to

¹⁶ The National Centre of Documentation was founded in 1995, housed by the AMR and operating in collaboration with the Civic Academy Foundation, which administers the Memorial of the Victims of Communism and of the Resistance in Sighet (location in the city of Sighetu Marmăției), as well as various writers in Timișoara. See Traian Orban, "Memorialul Revoluției la 25 de ani," *Memorial 1989: Buletin științific și de informare* 15 (2015): 11. For the Civic Academy Foundation, see "General Information on the Civic Academy Foundation," Memorialul Victimelor Comunismului și al Rezistenței, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialsighet.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=103&lang=en.

video interviews with foreign tourists visiting the AMR giving their impressions of the association's activities, all invaluable for research.

As with every primary source, a historical analysis must take into account the circumstances of the source's cataloguing into an archive, must acknowledge what could be missing from the archive maintaining the source, and must observe critically the source itself. This process is necessary not just to understand the limitations of an archive, but also its contributions and uses. Unlike the AMR's Centre of Documentation, the private AMR archive is an internal and, in the case of Orban's hard drive, a personal archive. This being said, the variety and amount of materials about the AMR and its activities, not only during the first fourteen years under analysis in this thesis but also up to the time of writing, is necessary in any research on commemorative activities to the Romanian Revolution of 1989 in Timișoara.

Finally, one must address the use of language. Since most of the documents related to the AMR's activities have been produced by the association, a certain terminology emerges within them. Some of these terms carry political and religious connotations, particularly surrounding the violence of the revolution. I have tried to refrain from copying the same language as the AMR in this research, except for when I make direct references to the words found in the association's archival material. Otherwise, I have opted to refer to the "victims of the revolution's violence" or "those killed during the revolution," for example, rather than the "heroes" or "martyrs" of the revolution.

CHAPTER II

FUNERARY RITES OF THE MARTYRED: MEMORIAL COMMEMORATIONS IN THE REVOLUTION'S AFTERMATH

The early history of the AMR is connected to the events of the Romanian Revolution of 1989 in Timișoara and its immediate aftermath. With the flight of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu from Bucharest on December 22nd, the former Communist turned dissident Ion Iliescu became a revolutionary figurehead in the capital and formed the National Salvation Front (Frontul Salvării Naționale, FSN) as a provisional government meant to maintain control in the country until open elections could be held. However, Iliescu announced in February of 1990 that the FSN would participate as a political party during the forthcoming elections, rather than existing as a purely temporary entity as had been promised originally. The decision prompted demonstrations in multiple cities against what was perceived as a continuation of the Romanian Communist Party under a different name and leadership.

Political activity in Timișoara during the initial aftermath of 1989 was varied, as the revolution had begun there before being consolidated in Bucharest. Some former participants of the revolution, along with significant local political and intellectual figures, began forming organisations dedicated to the revolution in one form or another. The goals of these newly formed associations were numerous, and while groups often worked together, other times differences of opinion created internal conflicts and tensions. It was within this environment that the AMR was founded, along with its initial goals of preserving the memory of those killed during the revolution by conducting research into the cause and perpetrators of their death and by enacting monuments as sites of memorial commemoration.

Unrest in Timișoara: The Founding of Organisations and the Memorial Association

Amidst the immediate aftermath of 1989, organisations dedicated to the revolution were largely focused on its initial participants, often being founded by groups of former revolutionaries themselves, such as the 16 December 1989 Timișoara Association (Asociația 16 Decembrie 1989 Timișoara). Established in 1990, the association lists among its tasks the direct “support of the revolutionaries...with juridical assistance, financial assistance, and technical consultation.”¹⁷ It also outlines a three-point mission statement in its listing by the Romanian Chamber of Deputies which includes “the respect and gratitude of the hero-martyrs and fighters participating in other actions for the victory of the Romanian Revolution,” “the respect for historical truth” about the revolution, and “the organisation and participation of commemorative actions to keep alive and honour the memory of the martyred heroes who fell in the fight for freedom and democracy in December 1989.”¹⁸ Other organisations were similarly concerned with maintaining the “political, economic, and social” values of the revolution, and with uniting “in a legal form the wounded and the descendants of the hero-martyrs of the Anticommunist Revolution...aimed at promoting and defending their rights and freedoms.”¹⁹

¹⁷ “Asociația 16 Decembrie 1989 Timișoara: Scop/Mișune,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2445; For a similar example elsewhere, see “Asociația Revoluționarilor din Decembrie 1989 Pucioasa Dâmbovița,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2342. As the name suggests, this organisation was concerned specifically with those from the town of Pucioasa, Dâmbovița County, who participated in the revolution. It was also founded in 1994, rather than 1990.

¹⁸ “Asociația 16 Decembrie 1989 Timișoara: Scop/Mișune,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2445. For similar organisations founded in 1990, see “Forumul Revoluției din Decembrie 1989—Libertatea—Timișoara,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2140; “Asociația Revoluționarilor din Decembrie 1989 Pucioasa Dâmbovița,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2342;

¹⁹ “Fundăția Națională a Revoluției din Decembrie 1989 Timișoara,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.cdep.ro/informatii_publice/ong.chest_aprobate?f_idc=2102; “Despre Asociația 17 Decembrie 1989,” *Asociația 17 Decembrie 1989 Timișoara: Asociație a Răniților și a Familiilor Indoliate din*

The AMR was established in Timișoara on April 26, 1990, and like similar organisations being formed at the time its founders were primarily participants in the revolution. The engineer Vilmos Soós acted as the AMR's president until 1991, after which a change in the organisation's management board gave the position to Traian Orban,²⁰ a former veterinarian who was wounded during the revolution.²¹ Previously the secretary of the 17 December 1989 Association, Orban remarked during an interview in 1997 that he had been dismissed from his position.²² While working with the 17 December Association, Orban helped establish an archive cataloguing the details of those wounded during the revolution, noting exactly of how each victim had been injured so as to ideally identify and bring charges to those who had perpetrated the violence. The archive mysteriously “disappeared” after some time, and though some local court trials had begun, they were soon moved to Bucharest making it difficult for citizens in Timișoara to travel across the country and give testimonies.²³ Orban

Revoluția din 1989 în Timișoara, România, accessed May 11, 2015, <https://asociatia17decembrie1989timisoara.wordpress.com/about/>.

²⁰ Given that this thesis research has been submitted for review at a university in Budapest, there is a resulting possibility of name confusion between Traian Orban, President of the AMR, and Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, which must be addressed. Within the context of this work, the surname Orban refers solely to Traian Orban. This research addresses a topic in the history of Romania, not Hungary, and as such Viktor Orbán is not mentioned anywhere in the thesis, which should ultimately prevent any ambiguities in naming.

²¹ Orban was shot and suffered a fracture to his left femur on December 17th while in Piața Libertății, a couple streets north of the city centre. See *Enciclopedia Revoluției din Timișoara 1989 Volumul I*, 191. For Orban's participation in the revolution, see Titus Suciuc and Vasile Bogdan, *Candelă împotriva timpului* (Candle against Time) (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1989, 2011), 320-323; The original management board consisted of Vilmos Soós (President), Mihai Botescu (Vice-President), and Dan Popa (Secretary). After 1991, it consisted of Traian Orban (President), Ioan Bânciu (Vice-President), and Mihai Botescu (also as Vice-President). The only change in management since 1991 has been Botescu's replacement as Vice-President with Gino Rado.

²² Traian Orban, interview with Adrian Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban,” AMR, April 4, 1997, accessed May 11, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=baza-de-date/declaratii-ale-victimelor/traian-orban>.

²³ Ibid. The topic of trials against perpetrators of violence in Timișoara is too vast to deal with sufficiently within the scope of this research. For further literature on the topic, see Gino Rado, *Procesul de la Timișoara: audierea în cadrul urmăririi penale a celor 21+4 inculpați* (The Timișoara Trial: Hearings in the Political Prosecution of the 21+4 Indicted) (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1919, 2013), and Marius Mioc, *Curtea Supremă—Procesele revoluției din Timișoara (1989) adunate și comentate de Marius Mioc* (The Supreme Court—The Revolution's Trials in Timișoara (1989) Gathered and Commentated by Marius Mioc) (Timișoara, RO: Artpres, 2004); a reference to Romanian geography is important in understanding the implications of moving between Timișoara and Bucharest. While Timișoara is in the westernmost region of Romania, Bucharest is located

travelled to Bucharest with several other members, “to government, to parliament...to the presidency and the Supreme Court of Justice, the Military Prosecutor and the Ministry of Justice, but we were not understood.”²⁴ He received his dismissal from the 17 December Association soon afterwards, working subsequently with the AMR as its president.²⁵

Regarding the activities of the AMR, Orban noted during the same interview that the association’s initial purpose was twofold. First, it was committed to archiving documents and conducting research about the revolution. Like the similar organisations of the time, the AMR involved itself with the immediate concerns of the post-revolutionary period, and particularly in the case of Orban’s presidency this meant in part a continuation of the work that had begun with the 17 December Association. The AMR, for instance, investigated the activities of hospitals in and near Timișoara during the revolution due to the possibility (and, as it turned out, the reality) that members of the *Securitate* (the Romanian secret police under Communism) along with some military personnel prevented a number of demonstrators from receiving proper treatment or even entering certain hospitals, increasing the death toll caused by state violence during the initial days of the revolution.²⁶ The association also helped prove that during the first

in the middle of its south. The two cities are separated by over 400 km as well as the sizeable Transylvanian Alps, meaning that travel between them usually requires navigating around mountain ranges with a total distance realistically closer to 600 km.

²⁴ Orban, interview with Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban.”

²⁵ Although there has not been any official commentary as to why the changes in the AMR’s management occurred, it is worth noting that unlike Orban’s account of his time with the 17 December Association shifts within AMR seem not to have been the result of conflicts within its membership. Soós attended the AMR’s celebration of its twentieth anniversary in 2010 and, during an interview conducted by another member of the association at the event, Soós stated that it was his “inspiration” to hand the leadership of the AMR to Orban and that “without [Orban], we would not be where we are today.” The AMR continues to display the works of Botescu, an architect and photographer, during exhibitions and publications. Soós’s interview is found in Liza Kratochwill, “Două decenii de luptă pentru recuperarea identității: Opinii & Impresii,” *Memorial 1989: Buletin științific și de informare* 7 (2010): 42. For a recent example of the AMR exhibiting Botescu’s work, see “18 martie 2015: Lansări de carte la Memorialul Revoluției,” AMR, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=evenimente/2015/lansri-de-carte>.

²⁶ Orban speaks of this investigation in Orban, interview with Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban.” A book the role of hospitals during the revolution has since been published by the AMR. See Lucian-Vasile Szabo, *Revoluția din 1989 în spitalele timișorene (The Revolution of 1989 in Timișoara’s Hospitals)* (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1989, 2014)

days of the revolution the state ordered and carried out the removal of 43 bodies of citizens killed in the violence in Timișoara. Originally held in the county morgue, the bodies were shipped to Bucharest, cremated, and labelled as having fled the country rather than as being killed.²⁷

The Monuments to the Revolution

The second aim of the AMR mentioned by Orban in his 1997 interview was to “honour the memory of the heroes” who had been killed while participating in the revolution.²⁸ Although the mission statements of other organisations dedicated to the revolution claimed similar aims, such as the 16 December Association’s declared goal of enacting “commemorative actions to keep alive and honour the memory of the martyred heroes,”²⁹ the AMR was unique in the way it honoured the dead. From its onset, the AMR began a project of building memorial sites to the victims of the revolution in Timișoara, funding the construction of monuments along with a cemetery dedicated to those killed and wounded during the revolution. These monuments carried multiple levels of significance in their creation. The AMR placed most monuments at locations which were centres of violence during the revolution, while the monuments themselves often depicted subjects or themes relevant to particular groups of victims.³⁰

²⁷ See Orban, interview with Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban,” and Suci Bogdan, *Candelă împotriva timpului*, 320-323. For more on the transportation and cremation of bodies from Timișoara during the revolution, see the chapter on the subject in Romeo Bălan, *Victimele Revoluției: Timișoara – 1989 (The Victims of the Revolution: Timișoara—1989)* (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1989, 2011), 58-87.

²⁸ Orban, interview with Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban.”

²⁹ “Asociația 16 Decembrie 1989 Timișoara: Scop/Mișune,” Camera Deputaților.

³⁰ Traian Orban, interview with Adrian Onica, “Declarație Traian Orban,” AMR, April 4, 1997, accessed May 11, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=baza-de-date/declaratii-ale-victimelor/traian-orban>; Orban, “Memorialul Revoluției la 25 de ani,” *Memorial 1989: Buletin științific și de informare* 1/15 (2015): 11-12.

Given the centrality of these monuments to the AMR's existence,³¹ it is worth outlining and explaining the significance of what has been constructed thus far.³² The first project completed by the AMR was the construction of the *Memorial Complex*, located in the Heroes' Cemetery north of the city centre, which is unique among the AMR's monuments in that its location serves as both a symbolic site of memorial and a literal resting place for the dead.³³ The *Memorial Complex* itself contains no "real" graves; small black tombstones were built for each victim but all remain empty. This setup is partly a result of the initial chaos of the revolution and the difficulty for the bereaved to retrieve and bury properly the bodies of those who they lost. During the revolution, those who were able to recover their loved ones often buried them at this cemetery, but had to do so hastily and without properly marking the graves

³¹ Additionally to being listed as one of the main founding purposes of the AMR in Orban's 1997 interview, the AMR has up to the time of writing consistently referred to its project in building monuments as one of its central purposes. The AMR's website refers to the monument project in the second sentence of its introductory text, and all who visit the AMR's museum today are given a pamphlet outlining the organisation's activities (in which the monuments project is included) and a map of Timișoara listing the location of the AMR's monuments. The AMR museum also has an exhibit with smaller versions of each monument. The AMR museum and the documents it gives to visitors and tourists will be covered in more detail later in the research, but I mention it here to justify my claim that the monument project is a central facet to the AMR's existence and thus worthy of explaining in detail. Further references to the monument project's centrality will be made later in the thesis. For the AMR's online introductory text, see "Despre Noi," AMR, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=home>.

³² Several individuals have already offered artistic interpretations of the AMR's monuments, which form the basis of this part of the thesis. My analysis here is based partly on their writings, along with which I offer my own additions and understanding. Consulted interpretations of the monuments include *In memoriam*, directed by Gabriel Burza (Timișoara, RO: AMR, 2003), AMR film archive, video file; Sidonia Grama, "In Between Places of Remembrance and Realms of Memory: The 15-Years Commemoration of the Romanian Revolution in Timișoara," *Philobiblon: Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities* 10-11 (2005): 311-342; Dana Sarmăș, "Despre Monumente și Eroi (I). Povestea monumentelor din Timișoara dedicate Revoluției din 1989. Reprezentări ale Sfintei Cruci FOTO," *PRESSALERT.ro*, December 20, 2014, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://www.pressalert.ro/2014/12/despre-monumente-si-eroi-povestea-monumentelor-din-timisoara-dedicate-revolutiei-din-1989-reprezentari-ale-sfintei-cruci-foto/>; Sarmăș, "Despre monumente și eroi (II). Povestea monumentelor din Timișoara dedicate Revoluției din 1989. Figura Umană FOTO," *PRESSALERT.ro*, December 21, 2014, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://www.pressalert.ro/2014/12/despre-monumente-si-eroi-ii-povestea-monumentelor-din-timisoara-dedicate-revolutiei-din-1989-figura-umana-foto/>.

³³ Ionel Pop, Liviu Brebe, and Pompiliu Alămoreanu, *Complexul Memorial*, 1990, mixed materials, Cimitrul Eroilor (Calea Lipovei), Timișoara. Dates for the completion of the AMR's monuments from 1990 to 1999 are taken from "Memorialul Revoluției," document summarising the construction of the AMR's monuments, March 1998, AMR Archive, scanned JPEG image. For an image of the monument, see "COMPLEX-MEMORIAL-IMG2," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Complexul_Memorial/COMPLEX-MEMORIAL-IMG2.jpg.

they had made for fear of being caught in another wave of gunfire.³⁴ Some could not find the remains of their killed friends or relatives in situations where they were deliberately removed, like the case of the 43 bodies shipped to and cremated in Bucharest. Creating new graves for the revolution's victims in this way brings together this chaotic displacement or, as Orban described it during a 2004 interview, the victims of the revolution "were together, they died together, we honour them together."³⁵ The centre of the *Memorial Complex* is punctuated by an "eternal flame," literally a fire meant never to go out, behind which stands a tall black-and-white striped structure and a Christian cross.

The Timișoara-born sculptor Ingo Glass designed the AMR's second monument, which is dedicated specifically to the 43 victims of the revolution whose bodies were taken by the state and cremated in Bucharest.³⁶ Built from steel and completed in 1992, the monument consists of two thin rectangles facing one another with a few metres of space between them. One monument lists the names of the 43 victims, and a tall cross is fastened on each side of the list. The other monument has a curved outline shaped like a door or curtain, half of which has been cut out from the rectangle of steel. As others have suggested, Glass' monument is not only a memorial for those cremated in Bucharest, but also a symbolic representation of the iron curtain.³⁷ The monument's title of *Deschidere* (*Opening*), the use of a metal as building material, and the specific shape of the piece etched into and cut out of one of the rectangles all

³⁴ This dilemma is described in Grama, "In Between Places of Remembrance and Realms of Memory," 322.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ingo Glass, *Deschidere*, steel, 1992, Calea Martirilor, Timișoara. Glass immigrated to West Germany in 1979. See "Ingo Glass," *Banaterra: Die Enzyklopädie des Banats*, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://www.banaterra.eu/german/content/ingo-glass>. For an image of the monument, see Dorotea Momir, "Timișoara: 'Deschidere,' Monument închinat eroilor Revoluției din Decembrie 1989," *Banaterra: Enciclopedia Banatului*, July 21, 2008, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.banaterra.eu/romana/in_memoriam/monumente/89_02_deschidere_calea%20martirilor/index.htm.

³⁷ This is suggested by Burza in *In memoriam*, and by Sarmăș in "Despre Monumente și Eroi (I)."

point toward an opening iron curtain.³⁸ Given that the two rectangles face one another, the names of the cremated victims thus face and can be seen through the opened curtain.

Five monuments commissioned by the AMR were completed in 1993, each of which addresses different aspects of the revolution. Ștefan Călărășanu's *Clopotul Libertății* (*Liberty Bell*) depicts a large bell in the Orthodox Christian tradition, placed near the Serbian Orthodox Church in Piața Traian.³⁹ Although the church bell carries symbols of gathering and attention and its physical function is as a creator of noise, the construction of this structure in travertine prevents the bell from carrying out this purpose.⁴⁰ With images of featureless human heads embedded along it, the monument sits silently in reverence. Marian Zidaru also used Christian themes in his sculpture *Biserica Plângătoare* (*The Crying Church*).⁴¹ Constructed from bronze and travertine and placed near the Piața Sinaia Orthodox Church, the monument is shaped as a triangular altar on top of which stand three crosses. Semicircular holes shaped downward like mouths yelling in despair fill the triangular shape, and below each mouth an eye has been etched into the bronze. The monument is connected to a fountain and some of the eyes serve as

³⁸ Sarmăș goes so far as to claim that the monument is actually made from iron. The AMR, however, lists the monument's building material as steel.

³⁹ Ștefan Călărășanu, *Clopotul Libertății*, 1993, travertine, Piața Traian, Timișoara. The monument takes up 350 square metres of space. Piața Traian is located in the far east of the city, past the Bega river which surrounds the southern and eastern halves of the inner city. For an image of the monument, see Sarmăș, "Despre Monumente și Eroi (I)," <http://www.pressalert.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/stefan-calarasanu.jpg>.

⁴⁰ Travertine is a calcareous rock similar to limestone, which is formed naturally near hot springs and has a porous texture formed in part by carbon-dioxide erosion, often becoming a habitat for various microorganisms and particularly bacteria. Though there is not sufficient space to address it fully in this research, the use of a particularly biogenic rock as the material for a monument does create potential symbolic connections, linking those memorialised to the earth itself in a physical manner. Sarmăș also makes this reference to travertine in "Despre Monumente și Eroi (I)." For more on the properties of travertine, see "What Is Travertine?" accessed June 8, 2015, <http://what-is-travertine.com/>.

⁴¹ Marian Zidaru, *Biserica Plângătoare*, 1993, bronze and travertine, Piața Sinaia Orthodox Church (Piața Mocioni), Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "MARIAN ZIDARU – Biserica Plângătoare IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Biserica_Plangatoare/MARIAN%20ZIDARU%20-%20Biserica%20Plangatoare%20IMG.jpg.

its spouts, out of which water flows in the spaces between the open mouths and across the rest of the etched eyes.⁴²

Two of the sculptors whose monuments for the AMR were completed in 1993 took the human form as their subjects. Paul Vasilescu's bronze sculpture *Eroica* (*Heroic*) depicts a man standing tall and looking ahead, with both of his feet missing and his arms amputated just past the shoulder.⁴³ A cross is embedded in the man's chest, and a circle of clothing floats around his waist as if caught in the middle of falling to the ground. Given that the clothing seems to be falling and that it has just reached his waist, it is most likely a shirt which the figure removed from his body in order to reveal his bare chest, armed in the face of violence with nothing but the Christian cross.⁴⁴ The figure himself is also standing in the shape of a cross, with arms extended outward despite being amputated. The image of a man standing tall regardless of his wounds reminds of those who were crippled permanently during the revolution, maintaining the honour of their memory alongside those killed.⁴⁵ Similarly, Constantin Popovici's monument *Învingătorul* (*The Winner*) depicts a man missing his left arm and leg staring ahead.⁴⁶ Using his right leg and a crutch placed under his left shoulder to keep upright, the figure holds a sword using his right arm. The sword is also broken, with most of the blade missing, yet the figure wields it regardless, pointing it straight upwards as if in sombre celebration. Indeed, although

⁴² Available images of the monument do not depict water flowing from its spouts. However, remaining rust stains on the monument show where the water flowed when the fountain was active.

⁴³ Paul Vasilescu, *Eroica*, 1993, bronze, Calea Lipovei, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "PAUL VASILESCU – Eroica IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Eroica/PAUL%20VASILESCU%20-%20Eroica%20IMG.jpg>.

⁴⁴ Burza makes precisely this argument in *In memoriam*. He also refers to demonstrators in the city of Cluj-Napoca who, during the revolution, tore open their shirts in order to reveal that they had no weapons when faced by security forces. The demonstrators were shot regardless, killing eight and wounding three. See Duțu, *The Revolution of December 1989*, 154-155.

⁴⁵ According to the AMR's own publications, a total of 93 demonstrators were killed and 268 were wounded in Timișoara between December 17th and 22nd. See *Enciclopedia Revoluției din Timișoara 1989 Volumul I*, 132, 165.

⁴⁶ Constantin Popovici, *Învingătorul*, 1993, bronze, Bulevardul Take Ionescu, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see Sarmăș, "Despre Monumente și Eroi (II)," <http://www.pressalert.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/invingatorul.jpg>.

the positioning of the figure and his weapon suggests a victorious scene, the reality of his condition reminds that this victory is bittersweet. Within the context of the revolution, it further recalls the fact that for many demonstrators who participated in the revolution, despite its success in overthrowing the Ceaușescu regime, the price paid was permanent.

Gheorghe Iliescu-Călinești's monument, *Evoluție* (*Evolution*), is an abstract piece placed near the Continental Hotel in the city centre.⁴⁷ It consists of a triangular cone pointed up, with its wide end forming the base of the sculpture and its point interrupted by a sphere cut into two. Piercing the top half of the sphere with its point, a second triangular cone continues the path upwards; inverted, its widest portion constitutes the top of the monument. Given the monument's title, the cones seem to represent a progression in society over time. The sphere, which had contained the bottom cone, is burst open, allowing the cone to continue growing upwards. With this in mind, the monument perhaps suggests the spark of 1989 breaking the "sphere" of communism and allowing the Romanian state to "evolve" like Iliescu-Călinești's triangles.

Two sculptors completed their monuments for the AMR in 1995. Victor Gaga's *Fântâna Martirilor* (The Martyrs' Fountain), constructed from travertine and placed near the Capitol Cinema building, consists of a rectangular slab cut into a thick "T" shape with a thin cross chiselled onto it.⁴⁸ A pattern of shapes rests below each arm of the cross, representing the two sides of the revolution. To the right of the cross, shapes of various shapes and sizes, some with discernible faces, depict the demonstrators, while to the left, finely cut semicircles recall

⁴⁷ Gheorghe Iliescu-Călinești, *Evoluție*, 1993, bronze, near the Continental Hotel, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "GH-ILIESCU-CALINEȘTI – Evoluție IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Evoluție/GH-ILIESCU-CALINEȘTI%20-%20Evoluție-IMG.jpg>.

⁴⁸ Victor Gaga, *Fântâna Martirilor*, 1995, travertine, summer garden square behind the Capitol Cinema, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "VICTOR-GAGA-Fântâna-Martirilor1 IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Fantana_Martirilor/VICTOR-GAGA-Fantana-Martirilor1-IMG.jpg.

the helmets of military and *Securitate* personnel who acted on the orders of the state. A small fountain rests at the base of the monument which, though it does not carry any water, serves as a potential place for commemorative items (such as personal photographs or funerary candles). Béla Szakács's sculpture *Omul Țintă* (The Target Man) depicts a male figure stretching his arms out to the sky while simultaneously beginning to fall onto his knees.⁴⁹ Interlocking pieces of bronze give a skeletal texture to the figure, making it seem as if he has been deprived of his skin, and a piece of metal in the shape and design of a target has been fastened to his chest. The man looks upwards, with a downturned curve of the mouth revealing an expression of pain. Given the figure's position, the monument seems to have captured the precise moment immediately after having been shot, offering a visceral representation of the violence committed during the revolution. The imagery of *Omul Țintă* is yet more potent within the context of its location; placed in Piața 700, it is between two major hospitals in Timișoara's city centre and thus acts as a reminder of the tragedies which occurred there during the revolution.

Another two monuments commissioned by the AMR were completed in 1996. *Martirii* (*Martyrs*), a bronze statue designed by Péter Jecza, addresses the question of rushed burials during the revolution.⁵⁰ Along with the bodies shipped to Bucharest and cremated, some members of the *Securitate* allegedly ordered burials of the dead *en masse* as part of the same effort to hide the number of the dead and claim that some citizens fled the country.⁵¹ Moreover, as with the *Memorial Complex* there was the reality that not all friends and families were able

⁴⁹ Béla Szakács, *Omul Țintă*, 1995, bronze, Piața 700, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "BELA-SZAKACS – Omul Țintă IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Omul_Tinta/BELA-SZAKACS%20-%20Om%20ul%20Tinta%20-%20IMG.jpg.

⁵⁰ Péter Jecza, *Martirii*, 1996, bronze, near Castelului Huniade (Muzeul Banatului), Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "PETER-JECZA – Martirii IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Martirii/PETER-JECZA%20-%20Martirii-IMG.jpg>.

⁵¹ Unlike the bodies cremated in Bucharest, which has been more solidly established, the extent to which the state sanctioned secret mass burials of protesters within Timișoara is still debated. For further reading on the subject, see Peter Siani-Davies, *The Romanian Revolution of 1989* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 281-282.

to give their lost loved ones proper burials during the chaos of the revolution's violence. With this in mind, *Martirii* depicts seven human bodies in the form of thin rectangular slabs of bronze. The bodies, discernible as human through engraved faces and arms but otherwise wholly rectangular, lie horizontally while stacked vertically on top of one another. The result is an artistic re-creation of the revolution's hasty and (potential) mass burials, its existence above ground an inversion of the otherwise invisible mass graves. Silvia Radu's *Sfântul Gheorghe* (*Saint George*), also made from bronze, is a depiction of the titular Christian saint who, in keeping with the iconography associated with Saint George, is riding atop a horse while slaying a dragon.⁵² The most unique aspect of the Radu's monument is the age of the characters involved in the scene. Saint George is sculpted thin and almost child-like, and both the horse and the dragon seem closer to toys than creatures. Though it is not made explicit by its location or subject matter, the form of Saint George's depiction here suggests that the monument represents youth, thus memorialising the children killed during the revolution.⁵³

The final two monuments commissioned by the AMR during its initial project of building memorial sites addressed specific groups which were affected by the violence of the revolution. Ștefan Kelemen built a monument in the student's complex of the West University of Timișoara (Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, UVT) in memory of the students killed during the revolution.⁵⁴ The monument, completed in 1997 and titled *Reverential Monument of the Student Martyrs of December 1989*, consists of a Christian cross formed from a rectangular

⁵² Silvia Radu, *Sfântul Gheorghe*, 1996, bronze, Piața Sfântul Gheorghe, Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "SILVIA-RADU – Sf.Gheorghe IMG," AMR, accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/library/galerii-foto/Sfantul_Gheorghe/SILVIA-RADU%20-%20Sf.Gheorghe-IMG.jpg.

⁵³ This argument is made in Burza, *In memoriam*.

⁵⁴ Ștefan Kelemen, *Monument omagial al studenților martiri din decembrie 1989*, 1997, travertine, Strada Cluj (Complexul Studentesc), Timișoara. For an image of the monument, see "Ștefan Kelemen, Monument omagial al studenților martiri din decembrie 1989," Uniunea Artiștilor Plastici din România Filiala Timișoara, accessed June 15, 2015, <http://uapt.cjtimis.ro/membri/skelemen/m10h.htm>.

slab of travertine, evoking symbolism related to martyrdom and salvation. A small archway juts out in front of the cross with a small hole in the centre of the monument, at once creating a space for commemorative objects (such as funerary candles or photographs) while also repeating the architecture of Timișoara's Opera House, around which much of the revolution was centred.⁵⁵ The sculptor Péter Jecza chose to emphasise the female victims of the revolution in his 1999 monument *Pieta*, which depicts a woman falling while being held in the arms of a man.⁵⁶ Built from bronze and placed on Decebal Bridge just northeast of the city centre, *Pieta* re-creates an actual event during the revolution when, on December 17th, a demonstrator was shot and died there in her husband's arms.⁵⁷ Apart from their heads, the two bronze figures meld together and are nearly indistinguishable from one another. The woman's head lies to her

⁵⁵ The Opera House is a site of tragedy, where much of the revolution's violence occurred, while simultaneously being one of victory, as it was at its balcony where Timișoara was first declared to be a free city on December 20th. For a chronology of the revolution in Timișoara, see Florin Mendelet and Mihai Ziman, *O cronică a revoluției din Timișoara 16-22 decembrie 1989*, 2nd circ., 1st ed. (Timișoara, RO: Muzeul Banatului Timișoara, Asociația Muzeografilor din Banat, 1990), and Lucian Ionică, cood, *Enciclopedia revoluției din Timișoara 1989, volumul I: cronologia și victimele Revoluției* (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1989, 2014). For a wider chronology of the Romanian Revolution including the international context of the revolutions of 1989 and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union, see Alesandru Duțu, *The Revolution of December 1989: Chronology*, 2nd ed. (Bucharest, RO: Editura Institutului Revoluției Române din Decembrie 1989, 2012). For details of the victims of the revolution and the sites of violence, see Romeo Bălan, *Victimele Revoluției Timișoara – 1989* (Timișoara, RO: Editura Memorialul Revoluției 1989, 2011), and Angela Țintaru, Corina-Daniela Untilă, and Marius Mioc, *Libertate, te iubim! Ori învingem, ori murim! [Freedom, we love you! We will overcome, or we will die!]* (Timișoara, RO: Excelsior Art, 2014).

⁵⁶ Péter Jecza, *Pieta*, 1999, bronze, Decebal Bridge, Timișoara. The word *pieta* does not exist in the Romanian language. It may refer to the Italian word *pietá* (pity), but more likely it is a shortened form of the Romanian word *pietate* (piety). For an image of the monument, see Sarmes, "Despre Monumente și Eroi (II)," <http://www.pressalert.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/pieta.jpg>.

⁵⁷ The story of *Pieta*'s subject matter comes from Burza, *In memoriam*. Four demonstrators were killed on Decebal Bridge on December 17th, three of whom were women, with 21 injured (four of whom were women). Out of the three women who were killed, the story most likely refers to Leontina Bânciu, the wife of Ioan Bânciu, one of the vice-presidents of the AMR. Her fate was similar, though not identical to what is depicted in *Pieta*. While Ioan and Leontina were fleeing the violence, Leontina was shot in the back. Ioan ran back, returned to her, carried her to a car, and drove her to the nearest hospital. Leontina died while in the hospital, and after Ioan left to tell her family, her body was among the 43 taken and cremated in Bucharest. For the casualties on Decebal Bridge on December 17th, see Bălan, *Victimele Revoluției*, 21-23. For Leontina and Ioan Bânciu's story, see Vasile Surcel, "Leontina Bânciu: 'Mama, acasă e bine. Dar eu presimt că o să mor,'" *Jurnalul.ro*, December 4, 2009, accessed June 8, 2015, <http://jurnalul.ro/scinteia/special/leontina-banciu-mama-acasa-e-bine-dar-eu-presimt-ca-o-sa-mor-529266.html>.

right side and looks downward; the man's head rests above hers, tilted to the left and staring outward.

Conclusion

Overall, the various monuments commissioned by the AMR carried with them several themes. Some were dedicated to specific groups of the revolution's victims, such as Jecza's *Pieta*, Popovici's *Învingătorul*, and Kelemen's *Reverential monument*. Others carried primarily Christian themes, such as Călărășanu's *Clopotul Libertății* and Gaga's *Fântâna Martirilor*. Still listed names of those killed during the revolution—Glass's *Deschidere* did precisely this. All of the monuments shared aspects of memorial commemoration. Though the *Complexul Memorial* was the most explicit as a site for memorial commemoration, given that it exists as a cemetery, all monuments were placed in locations where violence and deaths occurred during the revolution. Any of these monuments could potentially be used as site of mourning, whether by the AMR or by individuals. Though we cannot speak of whether or not private individuals used these monuments in this way, it can be noted that the AMR does use the monuments as sites of mourning. The creation of the monuments is thus intimately tied with memorial commemoration, their very construction being an act of trying to preserve the memory of those killed during the revolution.

During its early years of existence, the AMR was an organisation committed primarily to this type of commemorative activity. Formed within the context of the influx of organisations dedicated to the revolution in the aftermath of 1989, the AMR first committed itself to researching and cataloguing archival information about the revolution. These actions helped reveal facts about the revolution's events, such as the removal of bodies from Timișoara and their cremation in Bucharest, which were essential in trying to make sense of the revolution in

its immediate aftermath and in attempts to bring charges against those who perpetrated violence. It also commissioned monuments to the revolution as a commemorative action, each of which preserved specific aspects of the revolution's history and for certain groups of people who had been affected by its violence.

When speaking of the question of audience, it must be pointed out that this form of commemoration likely had as its audience those who had experienced the revolution and who had suffered in some way as a result of it. Monuments meant as sites of mourning may have been understood best by the bereaved and the wounded—in short, those who had reason to mourn the violence of the revolution. Those who had not actually experienced the revolution, such as the children born every year after 1989, would not necessarily see the same value in the building of monuments as the AMR, an organisation founded largely by participants of the revolution many of whom had suffered in some way from its violence. Regardless, the AMR would find a way to adapt to the interests of those for whom memorial commemoration had little meaning.

CHAPTER III

TEACHING THE NARRATIVE OF THE ASSOCIATION: DIDACTIC COMMEMORATIONS AND THE REVOLUTION'S MUSEUM

The initial opportunity for the AMR to begin focusing on didactic activities alongside memorialising the revolution came in 1998, when the association obtained its own building in which to establish a headquarters for its activities.⁵⁸ Located on Strada Ungureanu in the city centre, the building was in need of substantial repair and restoration, for which the AMR began to allocate its funds and efforts. Once enough work had been accomplished in order to set up a permanent establishment within the building, the AMR moved its archival materials and staff to the new location.

It is significant to emphasise the term *opportunity* in describing the AMR's transfer to the building on Strada Ungureanu, rather than *intent* or *purpose*. Three years prior to the acquisition of the building, the AMR established the National Centre of Documentation, Research, and Public Information on the Romanian Revolution of December 1989, a subset of the AMR's main organisation meant to house the research and archival materials conducted by the organisation and make it available for public use.⁵⁹ As outlined in the previous chapter, the main initial goals of the AMR were the memorialisation of the revolution's victims through monuments and the cataloguing of archival material in order to help discern historical facts about the revolution. The establishment of a headquarters on Strada Ungureanu was therefore more likely intended to further this initiative. "Public information," as defined in the name

⁵⁸ Orban, "Memoialul Revoluției la 25 de ani," 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid. See also "People: Traian Orban," European Security Initiative, accessed June 8, 2015, http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=311&film_ID=7&slide_ID=6.

given by the AMR to the research initiative, at this point meant public access to archival information.

However, the acquisition of a permanent space did open an opportunity, and along with making the building a headquarters for the National Centre of Documentation the AMR also founded a museum to the revolution of 1989, the first of its kind in the country.⁶⁰ The combination of the new headquarters and the AMR museum allowed the association to attempt different types of commemorative activities alongside its established roles of research and memorial. This included attempts to teach the revolution, transmitting narratives of the revolution through forms of education—what I call didactic commemoration.

The “Object of National Interest” and the AMR’s Didactic Initiatives

During a series of parliamentary debates in April of 2000, the Romanian Chamber of Deputies addressed a formal request to recognise the AMR and its activities as an object of national interest, a status which would allow the association to be allocated governmental funding. The request was presented by Hunor Kelemen, then a member of the Romanian parliament representing the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (*Romániai Magyar Demokrata Szövetség*, RMDSz),⁶¹ who outlined the AMR’s role in archiving documents and audio-visual materials on the revolution and in “the establishment in the city of Timișoara of a memorial which represents a symbol of gratitude for those who sacrificed themselves in the

⁶⁰ The Sighet Memorial Museum in the city of Sighetu Marmăției must also be mentioned here, as it was founded in 1993. However, this museum is dedicated to the repressions and resistance citizens experienced while under the Communist regime. It is not a museum to the revolution of 1989 itself, as the AMR’s museum is.

⁶¹ I have chosen to use the Hungarian name and abbreviation for the RMDSz, as it is meant to represent the ethnic Hungarian minority in Romania. It is worth noting that the RMDSz is also commonly associated with its Romanian name (*Uniunea Democrată Maghiară din România*, UDMR); for a biography of Hunor Kelemen, who has since become the president of the RMDSz, see “Magamról” [About Me], accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.kelemenhunor.ro/magamrol>.

fight for freedom and democracy.”⁶² Vasile Lupu, the deputy for Iași county and moderator of the discussion,⁶³ invited commentary from the then-reigning Christian Democratic National Peasants’ Party (Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat, PNȚCD) as well as a representative of the alternative parties elected into parliament. Tănase Pavel Tăvală of the PNȚCD supported the proposed legislation, echoing Kelemen’s words while adding that “it is a matter which obligates every one of us so that this work that they have done does not become forgotten.”⁶⁴ When Hildegard-Carola Puwak, representing the alternative parties in parliament, questioned the need to fund the AMR specifically and not any similar organisations in Timișoara, Kelemen claimed that the association had been founded with “all participants from the time of the Revolution of Timișoara, all persons and personalities,” and noted that the AMR was in any case the sole organisation which had initiated and established revolutionary monuments in Timișoara.⁶⁵ The legislation subsequently passed, recognising the AMR as an object of national interest.

⁶² “Dezbateri Parlamentare: Ședința Camerei Deputaților din 10 aprilie 2000,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=4924&idm=11&idl=1>.

⁶³ For Vasile Lupu’s credentials, see “Vasile Lupu: Sinteza activitatii parlamentare în legislatura 1996-2000,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=62&cam=2&leg=1996>.

⁶⁴ “Dezbateri Parlamentare: Ședința Camerei Deputaților din 10 aprilie 2000.” It is worth mentioning the translation in the statement that the AMR’s work must “not become forgotten” (*să nu fie date uitării*). It is also worth noting that the referent for his words are left ambiguous, as in his previous sentence he emphasises both the significance of the work of the AMR and the importance of giving gratitude to those who, similarly to H. Kelemen’s words, “sacrificed their lives for Romanian society, for the common good, for justice and freedom.” Thus when speaking of something which must “not become forgotten” from the perspective of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Tăvală could be simultaneously referring to the participants of 1989 and the AMR itself. For Tăvală’s credentials, see “Tănase-Pavel Tăvală: Sinteza activitatii parlamentare în legislatura 1996-2000,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=92&cam=2&leg=1996>.

⁶⁵ Ibid. Although she was representing alternative parties in general during the parliamentary debate, Puwak herself is a member of the Social Democratic Party (Partidul Social Democrat, PSD). For Puwak’s credentials, see “Hildegard-Carola Puwak: Sinteza activitatii parlamentare în legislatura 1996-2000,” Camera Deputaților, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.mp?idm=197&cam=2&leg=1996>. Considering that this proposed legislation addressed the possibility of making a *local* organisation into an object of *national* interest, it is worth mentioning the geographical representation of the key speakers involved in the debate. Lupu is from Iași County, in the northeast of Romania and bordering Moldova, while H. Kelemen is from Harghita County, in the mostly Hungarian-speaking Székelyföld (Szeklerland) region of central Romania. Both Tăvală and Puwak represent Timiș County.

As can be seen in Kelemen's assertions during the parliamentary debate, the aspect of the AMR which allowed it to be recognised as an object of national interest was specifically its memorial commemorations, such as the commissioned monuments around Timișoara. The increased funding the AMR received as a result of this parliamentary decision is relevant when addressing the association's adoption of didactic activities, given necessary structural repairs to its headquarters and the costs associated with its new initiatives (including, but not limited to, the costs of producing films, publishing books, and hosting events), but it is worth noting that this was not the reason that the AMR was made an object of national interest and given governmental funding.

This being said, with increased funding the AMR was still able to host a larger variety of commemorative activities within the walls of its headquarters. Some events were related to the topic of the revolution, while others were entirely unrelated. In April 2001, the AMR hosted a showcase of works by the artist Sanda Lăzărescu for the Christian holiday Palm Sunday, while in August of the same year it opened an exhibition of photographs from the revolution of 1989 in Romania.⁶⁶ Some hosted events involved children specifically, usually via direct collaboration with schools and youth organisations. The first event of this type was a workshop named "Plastic Creation" in June of 2003, hosted by the AMR in collaboration with the Children's Palace of Timișoara (*Palatul Copiilor din Timișoara*), which boasted an array of arts

⁶⁶ "Flori de Florii," poster of an event organised by the AMR, Timișoara, RO, April 7, 2001, "Afis Flori de florii-2001," AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image; "Revoluția din decembrie 1989 în imagini," poster of an event organised by the AMR, Timișoara, RO, August 3, 2001, "Scan836," AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image. The AMR also began hosting visits from religious groups, mostly affiliated with local churches and often involving a performance by a youth choir group. The frequency of these visits is unfortunately outside the scope of this research, but for the onset of such events within the context of the increase in events hosted by the AMR after 2000, see "Capela Eroilor Revoluției," poster of an event organised by the AMR, Timișoara, RO, September 16, 2002, "Afiș – Capela," AMR poster archive, scanned JPEG image.

and crafts ranging from “painting” to “fashion design.”⁶⁷ Another event held a year later brought students from the Avram Iancu secondary school together for an exposition of decorative arts, again hosted at the AMR.⁶⁸

In addition to the influx of new events hosted at the AMR’s headquarters, the AMR also began to fund projects capable of instilling a didactic element into the organisation’s commemorative events. Beginning in 2002, the AMR has funded the production of documentary films about the revolution by the local director Gabriel Burza.⁶⁹ *Noi nu murim!* (*We do not die!*) was the first such film to be completed and, in December of 2002, the AMR screened the film as part of a commemorative week to the revolution.⁷⁰ The film presents a concise narrative of the Romanian revolution, beginning with Gorbachev’s economic and political reforms and concluding with the FSN and Iliescu’s provisional government within roughly twenty minutes.⁷¹ Interestingly, the film ends with a photograph of a young child staring blankly ahead along with narrated questions about the future of the Romanian state and the result of its revolution. Though there is no specific call to action, the combined image of

⁶⁷ “Creație Plastic: pictura, grafică, artă decorativă, design vestimentar, modelaj,” poster of an event organised by the AMR and the Children’s Palace of Timișoara, Timișoara, RO, June 10, 2003, “Afis elevi de la Palatul Copiilor iunie 2003-1” and “Afis elevi de la Palatul Copiilor iunie 2003-2,” AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image. A similar event was repeated in 2004, see “Copiii și natura: expun cercurile de pictură, grafică, artă decorativă, design vestimentar, modelaj,” poster of an event organised by the AMR and the Children’s Palace of Timișoara, Timișoara, RO, June 16, 2004, “Dscn1463,” AMR poster archive, scanned JPEG image.

⁶⁸ “Expoziția de artă decorativă,” poster of an event organised by the AMR and the Avram Iancu Secondary School nr. 19 Timișoara, Timișoara, RO, May 14, 2004, “Afiș elevi Sc Gen Nr.19-arta decorativă,” AMR poster archive, scanned JPEG image.

⁶⁹ For Burza’s biography, see the homepage of his production company, Dorifor Media, which was founded in 2006, “Home,” Dorifor Media, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.doriformedia.ro/>. See also Stefan Both, “Gabriel Burza, regizorul documentarelor despre Revoluție,” *Adevarul Timișoara*, October 22, 2010, accessed May 29, 2015, http://adevarul.ro/locale/timisoara/gabriel-burza-regizorul-documentarelor-despre-revolutie-1_50ae3a037c42d5a6639ad90c/index.html.

⁷⁰ Similarly to the commemorations in 1997, the AMR organised a wider programme spanning several days in December 2002. Events included various photography exhibitions on the Polish Solidarity movement during the 1980s and on the Pan-European Picnic in the Hungarian city of Debrecen, a symposium, and a “pilgrimage” to the monuments and Heroes’ Cemetery in Timișoara, as well as the Popești-Leordeni site in Bucharest. For the programme itinerary, see “Programul activitatilor aniversare decembrie 2002,” subfolder “2002,” folder “activități pe ani,” Traian Orban AMR Archive, Timișoara, RO, DOCX file.

⁷¹ *Noi nu murim!* directed by Gabriel Burza (Timișoara, RO: AMR, 2002), AMR film archive, video file.

youth and questioning of the future does suggest an implicit need to maintain the ideals of the revolutionary narrative the film has presented by teaching it to the new generation of youth who represent the future of Romania. Burza's later films would make this connection more explicitly.

Burza's next film, *In memoriam*, addressed the monuments built around Timișoara by the AMR.⁷² The film's treatment of the monuments, which mixes artistic analysis with re-enactments of the tragedies which inspired them, is bookended by explicit references to youth.⁷³ The opening scene of the film shows a young child wandering in darkness along with a voice narrating that "a child hesitates between light and darkness, between hope and fear. He is still, walking straight, searching for the truth, the light.... It [the revolution] was a long time ago. The children became teenagers and then adults too busy to remember."⁷⁴ After presenting each of the AMR's monuments and the Heroes' Cemetery, the narrator returns to the film's initial phrase, remarking that now "a man is hesitating between darkness and light, between hope and fear. The man is still searching for answers, for the truth.... Unfortunately, the man falls as a victim of his own fear, suffering, and searching of the heart.... He remains a victim."⁷⁵ Taking the two phrases together, the film thus suggests that those children who had witnessed the revolution were now, as adults, powerless to find any answers about the chaos they had endured in 1989. Who, then, could help these "victims"?

⁷² *In memoriam*, directed by Gabriel Burza (Timișoara, RO: AMR, 2003), AMR film archive, video file.

⁷³ One example of this re-enactment occurs when the film speaks about Péter Jecza's monument, *Pieta*, which memorialises the women killed during the revolution by depicting a woman falling into the arms of a man. After a scene showing the monument and mentioning that its placement at Decebal Bridge (just east of the city centre) refers to a woman who was shot and died in her husband's arms there, the scene cuts to a re-enactment of the shooting. For the monument, see Péter Jecza, *Pieta*, 1999, bronze, Decebal Bridge, Timișoara.

⁷⁴ *In Memoriam*. The film's translation comes partly from its English subtitles, the transcript of which has been graciously provided in its original document form by the AMR, and partly from my own interpretation of film's narration in Romanian. For the English subtitle's transcript, see Burza, "In Memoriam," trans. Simona Mocioalcă, transcript of the English subtitles for *In Memoriam*, AMR film archive. Timișoara, RO, DOCX file.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

In memoriam concludes with an answer to this question. Showing images of teenagers and young adults happily walking the streets of contemporary Timișoara, the narrator notes that:

Timișoara begins a new day. It is silent—too silent. The youth are walking restfully in the centre of the town. These youth have no problems, they are free. It is important to underline that they are not alone. They did not know that during a December the residents of Timișoara's will for liberty won over the feeling of isolation. Many youth did not know that in the places where they walk today in freedom, people were kneeling and saying prayers to God asking for the victory of the Revolutionary movement, for the soul and peace of the dead.⁷⁶

Accompanied by increasingly dramatic music, the film then shifts to scenes of the same youth marching through the streets of Timișoara while holding placards and repeating phrases from the revolution. The narrator continues that “on December 1989 people died for liberty, democracy, and for God. Today, many years after that bloody December, many ideals of the Revolution have not been completed. Somewhere behind the graves, our Heroes stimulate us to continue the fight for truth and justice.” The concluding scene shows a dramatic re-enactment of the narrator's words. Using computer-generated imagery, it shows each of the AMR's monuments returning to life. Healed of their revolutionary wounds,⁷⁷ they march in unison towards the city centre and the youth protesting the incompleteness of the revolution, enacting literally (within the context of the film) the narrator's prophecy about those killed in 1989 urging for a continuation of the revolution.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ The most explicit instance of this “healing” is when the film shows the sculptor Constantin Popovici's work *Învîngătorul* (*The Winner*), a statue of a man missing his left arm and leg and holding a broken sword in his right arm which memorialises those left permanently disabled while wounded during the revolution. Specifically, the scene shows the statue coming to life and his sword returning to its proper length. Constantin Popovici, *Învîngătorul*, 1992, bronze, Bulevardul Take Ionescu, Timișoara. See also “Învîngătorul,” AMR, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=monumente/invingatorul>. For Popovici's biography, see “Constantin Popovici: Curriculum Vitae,” accessed May 29, 2015, http://constantin-popovici.6te.net/biografie_rom.htm.

One may to some extent speak of the intended audience of these films by looking at how they have been screened, as this helps assess their use by the association as didactic commemorative works. Since its initial screening, the AMR has given *Noi nu murim!* its own room within the museum, and visitors are now customarily shown the film upon arrival.⁷⁸ The film is also available with subtitles in eight different languages, which certainly suggests an international audience.⁷⁹ Burza's other films on the revolution are maintained within the AMR for internal use, shown only during commemorative events, and no film has been released commercially. Screenings of the films outside of the AMR have mostly been in collaboration either with youth and educational organisations (when shown in Timișoara) or with libraries and cultural institutes (when shown elsewhere).⁸⁰ The intended audiences of the AMR's films are thus mixed. Foreign tourists visiting the AMR's museum emerge as one potential audience, as are groups related to education (such as students and libraries). Particularly when comparing foreign tourists with students in the 2000s, a correlation emerges in that neither group is likely to have actually experienced the events of the revolution in Timișoara themselves.

⁷⁸ Visitors, who usually come to the AMR in order to visit its museum to the revolution, are thus shown the film before seeing anything else.

⁷⁹ English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Serbian, and Spanish subtitles have been made available since the film's initial screening in 2002.

⁸⁰ For example, a screening of *Noi nu murim!* was organised in 2003 in collaboration with the House of Teacher Training of Timiș County (Casa Corpului Didactic Timiș), a body under the Ministry of Education (for which one exists in each county) responsible for the training of teachers. The audience of this event was those would potentially become those responsible for the education of youth, emphasising the film's potential didactic role. For the screening with the Casa Corpului Didactic Timiș, see "In Memoriam '89," poster of an event organised by the AMR, Timișoara, RO, January 31, 2003, "afis in memoriam015," AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image. Despite the event's name, *Noi nu murim!* was the film shown—*In memoriam* had not yet been completed. For examples of film screenings outside of Timișoara, see "Decembrie '89 (Timișoara-Brașov)," poster of an event organised by the AMR, the December '89 Brașov Association, and the George Barițiu Library, Brașov, RO, October 8, 2005, "Scan844," AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image, and "Decembrie '89," poster of an event organised by the AMR and the Jimbolia House of Culture, Jimbolia, Timiș County, RO, October 30, 2005, "Afis Jimbolia," AMR Poster Archive, scanned JPEG image.

“As Seen by the Children”: The Images of Revolution Drawn by Youth

Another major type of didactic commemoration in Timișoara was the direct involvement of youth into the narrative of the revolution by drawings its events in their own image. This particular initiative has existed in some form since at least 1990 at the Children’s Palace of Timișoara (Palatul Copiilor Timișoara), an extra-curricular educational institute for children in a variety of academic subjects.⁸¹ Maria Bana Jichița, a local artist who spent some years teaching at the Children’s Palace, began asking her students to make drawings about the revolution almost immediately after it had occurred.⁸² The project was mostly confined to Bana Jichița’s classroom until the early 2000s, when several groups dedicated to commemorating the revolution took an interest in displaying and publishing these works. The AMR was the first organisation to present the pictures outside of the Children’s Palace, holding temporary exhibitions with titles such as “Exposition on the Revolution as Seen by the Children” at their headquarters as early as 2001.⁸³ Following further yearly exhibitions, the AMR created a space in its museum for a permanent display of pictures from the Children’s Palace in 2004.⁸⁴ The AMR also selected a number of the pictures shown during these exhibitions and kept within its permanent collection, publishing them officially as an art catalogue in 2009.⁸⁵

It is worth noting that the pictures in both the museum and the catalogue carry certain limitations in the story they tell about how children have been taught the story of the revolution

⁸¹ For more on the Children’s Palace, see “Prezentare,” Palatul Copiilor Timișoara, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://scoli.didactic.ro/palatul-copiilor-timisoara>.

⁸² For Bana Jichița’s credentials, see “Despre mine,” Maria Bana Jichița Website, accessed May 29, 2015, http://mariabanajichita.ro/CV_ro.html. For a brief history of Bana Jichița’s project within the Children’s Palace, see AMR, *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii despre Revoluția din 1989* [Catalogue with Children’s Drawings about the Revolution of 1989] (Timișoara, RO: Where to Go Publishing, 2009), 2.

⁸³ “Expo rev văzută de copii,” subfolder “2001,” folder “activități pe ani,” Traian Orban AMR Archive, Timișoara, RO, video file.

⁸⁴ For an example of the yearly exhibitions of children’s paintings before 2004, see “Martie 2003: Expo Copii, CCD, Timișoara,” AMR, accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.memorialulrevolutiei.ro/index.php?page=evenimente/2003/martie-2003>.

⁸⁵ AMR, *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii despre Revoluția din 1989*.

in Timișoara. Neither presentation carries any dates for the artworks themselves, though given that they were the result of collaboration between the Children's Palace and the AMR it is likely that the pictures were all completed sometime during the exhibitions of 2001-2004. It is also impossible to know the details of the AMR's selection process in presenting these artworks, whether the organisation displayed every piece related to the revolution available or whether they chose to include certain works and exclude others. Furthermore, any potential selection process may have occurred at the Children's Palace by Bana Jichița or by the AMR for their exhibition, if not by both parties. Thus what one accesses through the museum and catalogue is not necessarily the revolution "as seen by the children," but rather a representation of the Children's Palace and the AMR's intent in teaching the revolution to the children of a generation that never experienced it. Perhaps these two images of the revolution are identical, but for methodological purposes it is significant to note their separation. Insofar as these pictures are representative of the revolutionary narrative the AMR wishes to present, the form in which they are created and presented makes them didactic commemorative acts.

It is also worth surveying the content of the children's pictures to the revolution, as this helps understand the specifics of the narrative of events promulgated by the Children's Palace and the AMR. The art project included a wide range of ages, with entries by children as young as eight years old up to the final grade of elementary school.⁸⁶ Though most of the images are of protesting crowds in the city centre, there is significant variety in how they depict demonstrators. Several images use wide perspectives and massive, faceless crowds,

⁸⁶ The Romanian educational system has eight years of elementary school, with grades I-IV spent in a primary school and grades V-VIII in a gymnasium. High school lasts four years and covers grades IX-XII, the final two of which are optional. Education begins at the age of six, meaning that the oldest participants in this art project were likely 15 years old (ignoring any unforeseen circumstances, such as a student repeating a grade).

emphasising the scale of popular participation in the revolution.⁸⁷ However, military figures included alongside undefined crowds are disproportionately large, with soldiers often drawn to be the same size as tanks.⁸⁸ When images of protests include defined facial expressions, demonstrators are occasionally shown either sad or angry while shouting and holding flags and placards.⁸⁹ These images often, but not always, include military figures. Most pictures of protestors with defined expressions are however depicted as happy, regardless of military presence, celebrating their moment of defiance in the streets and sometimes drawn marching alongside young children.⁹⁰

Pictures of other scenes are far less cheerful, depicting the tragedies of the revolution's violence. Florentina Ciusleanu, in her entry, painted protests in the city centre when the military first opened fire. Soldiers stare blankly with guns pointed forward while some protesters attempt to flee and others have their hands raised. Most of the crowd is screaming; some are weeping openly, others are holding onto their children, and a few near the front have already fallen. Nearly everyone in the crowd is running in a different direction.⁹¹ Alin Cozari similarly depicted a shooting at the Timișoara Orthodox Cathedral, painting protestors as faceless figures either fleeing with arms raised or having already fallen to the ground.⁹² The sheer sense of panic in the moment when violence first occurs connects these two pictures, while other works instead focus on the suffering in the aftermath of violence. Roxana Marcov also drew protesters

⁸⁷ Significant examples include Annaisse Leon (Grade VII), "Revoluție în față catedralei," and Cristina Petras (Grade VI), "Revoluția din 1989," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 33, 37.

⁸⁸ Examples include Anca Sirbu (Grade V), "Revoluționari între tancuri," and Bianca Zghimbe (no age included), "Revoluționari și soldați," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 18, 22.

⁸⁹ Examples include Andrei Teci (Grade VI), "Drapele decupate," and Cosmina Bodnari (Grade V), "Ceașescu, te urăm," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 48, 54. Some images also have a range of emotions among the demonstrators. See Ștefan Fedea (Grade VI), "Lanturi vii," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 67.

⁹⁰ Examples of happy protesters include Iasmina Rudnianin (Grade VI), "Vrem libertate," and Renaldo Galea (Grade VII), "Jos comunismul," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 31, 69. For happy protesters with equally happy children, Alex Trandafir (Grade VI), "Azi în Timișoara," and Patricia Pura (Grade V), "Copiii și revoluția," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 20, 40.

⁹¹ Florentina Ciusleanu (Grade VIII), "Lupte în strada," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 26.

⁹² Alin Cozari (age 11), "Cruci și răniți," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 27.

shot at the Timișoara Orthodox Cathedral, but without accompanying images of soldiers. Protesters are instead attempting to recover from their wounds, with those still able to walk trying to leave the scene, and with others pinned sitting or lying on the steps of the cathedral. A few figures are holding and consoling one another, while the rest bleed out on their own.⁹³ Raul Milos sketched in black-and-white a similar and highly detailed scene. Here three soldiers and a tank stand tall, weapons poised to fire their and teeth bare. Below them, a protester is crying while holding one of the wounded, and a third demonstrator lies nearly headless on the ground.⁹⁴

Finally, there are images of grieving and memorial which depict commemorations to those killed during the revolution, particularly interesting within the context of the presentation of these pictures as commemorative pieces themselves. Some images seem to take place within the revolution, such as Oana Sandu's picture of women and children grieving in front of a single wooden cross labelled only as "heroes" on ground still stained with pools of blood.⁹⁵ Other pictures depict mourning within a deeply religious context, with images of filled churches and praying figures.⁹⁶ Some images seem deeply personal, such as Evelyn Bojic's picture of a single faceless figure dressed in black and surrounded by swirls of colour, scattered crosses, and jots of text carrying messages such as "we think about you when we're happy, we think about you when we're sad" and "I'm thinking about missing you."⁹⁷ Several pictures show candles and flags placed on the steps of the opera house and the Timișoara Orthodox

⁹³ Roxana Marcov (Grade VII), "Sânge vărsat," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 6. For a similar image, see also Razvan Vingan (age 10), "Lumânări și cruci," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 80.

⁹⁴ Raul Milos (Grade VIII), "soldați trăgând," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 8.

⁹⁵ Oana Sandu (age 9), "Curcubeul revoluției," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 44.

⁹⁶ Alexanxra Sunda (Grade VII), "Dumnezeu există," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 47; see for example Alina Dascaluic and Sergiu Buda (Grade VIII), "Rugăciune," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 85.

⁹⁷ Evelyn Bojic (age 12), "Doliu," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 81.

Cathedral, and some depict the monuments and Heroes' Cemetery built by the AMR.⁹⁸ Though most images of the AMR's memorials are left empty, this is not the case uniformly. Ioana Balau, the youngest entrant in the exhibition and catalogue, painted the Heroes' Cemetery along with figures standing by its graves. Though the mourners carry no discernible expressions, the sun and clouds painted above them are, indeed, smiling back at them. Balau's work was titled "the sun of the revolution."⁹⁹

Conclusion

It is worth returning momentarily to the AMR museum itself in understanding the association's adoption of didactic commemorative activities. Despite the didactic activities outlined in this chapter (most of which were hosted at the AMR's museum), many aspects of the museum itself are still focused around the act of memorial commemoration and of honouring those killed during the revolution. One of the early additions to the museum, completed in 2002, was the painting of a chapel dedicated to those killed during the revolution wherein those wishing to mourn a lost loved one could pray.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, all visitors to the museum were given (and still are given) two pamphlets. The first offers a brief history of the AMR with small pictures of the monuments it commissioned around the city between 1990 and 1999.¹⁰¹ The second pamphlet is a foldable map of Timișoara, highlighting certain tourist

⁹⁸ Corina Prelipcean (Grade VIII), "Drapele la catedrala," and Loredana Bundurus (Grade VI), "Lumânări," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 76, 82; examples include Adela Cinade (Grade VIII), "Cruci," and Dana Fischer (Grade VII), "Cimitrul Eroilor," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 84, 91.

⁹⁹ Ioana Balau (age 8), "Soarele revoluției," in *Catalog cu desene realizate de copii*, 53. To avoid any misinterpretation of the translation, it must be noted that any potential connections between generations was unlikely to have been implied by the title of the work. Although the English homonyms "sun" and "son" allow for such an interpretation, their Romanian equivalents of *soare* and *fiu* do not.

¹⁰⁰ Manole Pătrașcu, *Capela Eroilor*, 2002, chapel painting, AMR museum, Timișoara.

¹⁰¹ "The Association 'The Memorial of the Revolution 16th-22nd December 1989' Timișoara: The National Center for Documenting, Research and Public Informing on the Romanian Revolution," pamphlet distributed by the AMR during museum visits, n.d. At the time of writing, the pamphlet is available in the English, French, German, Hungarian, and Romanian languages.

destinations alongside marking the location of each of the AMR's monuments, accompanied by images of the monuments.¹⁰² Monuments and memorial thus remained a part of the AMR museum.

This being said, the AMR museum also hosted an increasing number of didactic activities, including the screening of educational films and the exposition of various art exhibits. The audiences for these activities were varied. As evidenced by the translation of the museum's pamphlets and the AMR's films into several languages, foreign tourists were a group potentially interested in learning about, rather than solely mourning, the revolution. Increasingly, the AMR's didactic activities were also focused on teaching children and students about the revolution. Given that these youth were from Timișoara, the AMR was able to work in collaboration with local educational institutions in order to involve students directly within didactic commemorations, not only teaching them about the revolution but also having them re-create the narrative taught to them through art. Significantly, like with foreign tourists, the fact that by the early 2000s Timișoara's youth would have been too young to have experienced the revolution may have created an impetus to teach rather than to memorialise. This allowed didactic commemorations to emerge within the AMR's activities along with its original memorials.

¹⁰² "December 1989: Revolution Monuments," map and pamphlet distributed by the AMR during museum visits, n.d. At the time of writing, the map is available in the English and Romanian languages.

CONCLUSION

The AMR's exposition of children's paintings in 2004 offers a fitting time to bookend the early years of the association's activities, as it compares well with the monuments project of the AMR's onset while also marking fifteen years since the revolution. Though both highly visual projects were commissioned by the AMR, they represent two different methods of delivering a narrative of the revolution. The monuments, built by established artists within Romania who had no doubt lived for some time under communism, were sites of mourning. They depicted a dying woman falling into the arms of her husband, a fountain consisting only of wailing mouths and crying eyes, and a Christian cross in reverence of students killed during the revolution, among others. Contrastingly, the children whose pictures were showcased in 2004 had most likely never experienced the revolution. Their pictures were instead representations of a narrative taught to them, whether by the Children's Palace, the AMR, their school or their family, and they were varied in how they depicted the revolution. Images of suffering and grievance were presented alongside those of celebration and victory.

The difference between the two projects, as this paper has argued, was a difference between types of commemoration. The building of monuments was an act of memorial commemoration meant to create sites of mourning for those who had suffered during the revolution, while the children's pictures were products of didactic commemoration, showcasing a narrative of the revolution taught to those who had not experienced it. In understanding the difference between the two, one must refer to the context of the AMR's history. When the AMR was founded, it existed within the context of the revolution's immediate aftermath. The bodies of some victims were still missing, multiple organisations were being formed in Timișoara claiming to preserve the aims of the revolution, and a revolutionary figurehead who

had claimed to form only a provisional government had instead opted to run for president. There was an immediate need to try and preserve the memory of the revolution, to try and find out what had occurred and who had perpetrated violence, and to make sure that those killed were not forgotten over time. However, by the early 2000s the situation had changed. With the influx of foreign tourists and the coming of age of a new generation of children who had not lived through the revolution, there was instead a need to teach the revolution rather than to memorialise it.

This is not to say that the AMR either did only one type of commemoration or the other. Rather, it began as an entity devoted to memorial commemoration and adopted didactic commemorations alongside its original activities. This can be traced through its activities, as well as its growth as an organisation. The acquisition of a building in 1998 allowed the AMR to create the first museum to the revolution of 1989 in Romania, and its newfound status as an object of national interest in 2000 allowed it to receive government funding to pursue new types of commemorative activities. The history of the first fourteen years of the AMR can thus perhaps be understood as a history of adaptation, of an organisation dedicated to memorialising the revolution which learned how to teach it as well.

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