Article

MEMORY STUDIES

The therapeutic imaginary in memory work: Mediating the Finnish Civil War in Tampere

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Abstract
The article analyses reconciliatory practices on war remembrance that draw from the imaginary of therapy. The decisive battles of the Finnish Civil War took place on the streets of Tampere in 1918. Only 90 years later, in 2008, was the city of Tampere able to organise a remembrance process, which mediated the war memory through exhibition, street drama, online discussion forums and mainstream media. The remembrance encouraged the disclosure of hidden memories, broke down predatory stereotypes and addressed the transgenerational victimhood and the guilt. I suggest that the case exemplifies a shift in how societies remember: The contemporary, more individualised and plural societies saturated with therapeutic practices are prone to adopt bottom-up and participatory memory practices. At the same time, however, the article points to the limits of memory work. It is not a magic wand for doing away with past injustices. In Tampere, it was possible only for the grandchildren of the war generation.

Keywords
Civil war, cultural trauma, Finland, mediation, reconciliation, social memory, Tampere, war remembrance

Introduction

War commemoration and remembrance, as well as the memory politics involved in them, have become a flourishing field of research (Ashplant et al., 2000; Gillis, 1994; Winter, 1995, 2006; Winter and Sivan, 1999a). Jay Winter's (1995) work on the First World War commemoration described how individual mourning transformed into public rituals and inspired studies on war remembrance (Winter and Sivan, 1999a). Ashplant et al. (2000: 15–16) argued further that one must look deeper into the politics of war memory to examine how social groups articulate their memories into narratives and seek recognition.

Civil wars in particular give rise to complex memory politics, as they often carve deep wounds into a society's social memory. Violent events are painful to remember and become sensitive issues within society, local communities and families. As it often happens, the memories of war are selectively moulded, manipulated, suppressed and polarised. Strict divisions between the victors and the

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defeated can persist for a long time and can be passed on to future generations. As such, civil wars can be understood as cultural traumas, horrendous events that have a long-term impact on society (Alexander, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Eyerman, 2001; Giesen, 2004a, 2004b; Goodman, 2006).

In this article, I examine how civil war remembrance can be turned into a reconciliatory project. The traumatic memory of the 1918 Finnish Civil War was renegotiated in the city of Tampere in 2008. I suggest that the reconciliatory practices of remembrance in Tampere drew from the therapeutic imaginary and discuss the possibilities and limitations of these therapeutic practices.

The memory of the 1918 Finnish Civil War has been hampered by divisions, suppressing and silencing. The decisive battles of the war, which led to the final defeat of the Reds, were fought in the spring of 1918 on the streets of Tampere, the industrial and (at that time) second largest city in Finland. Only 90 years later did it become possible to organise a memorial of the war. An interactive museum exhibition as well as a street drama and procession involving local citizens recounted the last stages of the battle at authentic locations. Moreover, there were public lectures, public showings of films, online activities, visitor's book and panel discussions as well as participative formats in the mainstream media.

The remembrance utilised an array of memory work practices that can be characterised as 'therapeutic', emphasising emotional recollection of the war experiences, the disclosure of hidden memories and the undoing of trauma by placing the emotions into their original historical context. The performative re-enactments of traumatic events as well as the use of witness testimonials aimed to turn the experience of individual loss into a more collective experience of loss (Alexander, 2004a; Ashuri, 2010).

The reconciliatory and therapeutic aims were facilitated by a participative, bottom-up approach in the remembrance. In this sense, different media (Rigney and Erll, 2009), especially the digitalised new media, provided opportunities for new forms of memory work (Hoskins, 2011; Reading, 2011). This new media ecology, however, did not only refer to the new media; the established mass media and museums also changed their practices to encourage more participative approaches, testimonials and discussions.

These practices clearly have their limitations. Both 'trauma' and 'therapy' can become circulating ideas that are utilised all too easily (Furedi, 2004; Kansteiner and Weilnböck, 2010). I would, however, argue that the reconciliatory forms of remembrance demonstrate wider changes in how societies remember. The participative forms of remembrance that draw from therapeutic ideals are typical of the more egalitarian and individualised societies, which are saturated with therapeutic practices and thus perhaps develop memory practices that encourage participation and tolerate heterogeneous memories more easily. Tampere exemplifies the notion that current remembrance is often a dynamic process (Rigney, 2008: 94; Rigney and Erll, 2009; Winter, 2010), not geared around nationalised commemorations (Lorenz, 2010), but rather favouring bottom-up instead of top-down memory practices. The past is mediated in performative ways with different media to various audiences (Pine, 2011: 3–4; Winter, 2010).

The reconciliatory practices in Tampere also show how memory practices can aim to be agents of change. Social memory is increasingly a contingent product of social and political actions and a ground for further action (e.g. Misztal, 2003: 69–73; Zelizer, 1995), that can thrive to transform our relation to the past and open up new frames of action (Assman, 2012; Assman and Shortt, 2012: 3–5; Dekel, 2009; Katriel and Shavit, 2011; Teneboim-Weinblatt, 2008; Till, 2008; Trigg, 2009).

At the same time, however, the Tampere case also clearly demonstrates the limits of therapeutic memory practices. Memory work is not a magic wand that replaces history writing or politics. There is also always the risk of political abuse (i.e. that the entire exercise is geared to whitewash

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the wrongdoings of the past). In particular, the case study emphasises the long temporality of memory work in civil wars. In Tampere, the affective memories remained so strong that a public remembrance process could be put forward only by the third generation, the grandchildren who no longer had any direct connection to the war through their own or their parents' memories.

Renegotiating civil war trauma

Civil wars are perhaps the most contentious cases of war remembrance, as they have to do with the most sensitive political issues in society and often involve violence and injustices. Civil wars can be understood as cultural or collective traumas (Igartua and Paez, 1997), yet on the contrary, one needs to ask what exactly are cultural or collective traumas and can they be reconciled in some way?

The burgeoning literature on trauma does not give a simple and straightforward answer. Indeed, it would be strange to think that society could be taken to see a therapist who specialises in dealing with collective problems that are similar to clinical traumas (Kansteiner and Weilnböck, 2010). Hence, I refrain from using 'trauma' in the strict clinical sense and instead use the notion of 'cultural trauma' (Alexander, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Eyerman, 2001; Giesen, 2004a, 2004b; Goodman, 2006). According to Alexander (2004a:1), cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel that they have been subjected to a horrendous event that has left marks upon their group consciousness and memories and changed their future identity in fundamental ways.

How, then, could a cultural trauma be reconciled or overcome? Cultural trauma is clearly not something that can be treated or cured in a similar way as trauma in clinical meaning. The writers on cultural trauma, however, have developed ideas on reconciliation, ideas that most often they borrow from the Freudian notions of trauma, yet apply them cautiously. Cultural traumas have been loosely understood from two main vantage points: enlightenment and psychoanalysis (Alexander, 2004b: 3–8). The enlightenment understanding is based primarily on arguments of reason and justice demonstrated through the notion of human rights. The idea is that a reasonable investigation of the past can provide a sensible view of its injustices and make it possible to make amends, either materially or through apologies (see, for example, Barkan, 2000: 314–317). More psychoanalytically oriented ideas of cultural traumas suggest that the feelings of trauma are repressed into the subconscious (e.g. Jay, 1999; Smelser, 2004: 34–59; Winter and Sivan, 1999b: 15). Moreover, in some cases, such as in the South African reconciliation process, the idea of reconciliation has also been combined with the Christian myth of truth being redemptive (Winter, 2010: 15). I would call these ideals 'therapeutic' as they suggest that a cultural trauma can be tackled with practices that disclose the silenced memories, create a better understanding of the past, which, subsequently, makes life easier in the present. These practices clearly borrow from the imaginary of therapy, which tries to bring suppressed memories to light, place them into their original context and show how they have traumatised one's current life and identity.

In civil wars, the culturally traumatic experience most often deals with the construction of enemies. The predatory identities between groups that are part of a similar collective come to play a central role as the imagined collective is split into two. Groups of people who have long lived in peaceful coexistence and shared close bonds and contacts, suddenly regard each other as their deadliest enemies, and the other group becomes an enemy that must be destroyed (Appadurai, 2006: 51; Ignatieff, 1999: 47–62,). This (in Freudian terms, the narcissism of small differences) explains the paradox in which sometimes brothers hate each other more passionately than strangers do (Ignatieff, 1999: 47).

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Such predatory identities have an impact on social remembering. The strict and polarised fantasies of 'us' and 'them' come to dominate public memory. Memories of civil wars or other intrastate conflicts are often subjected to manipulation, amnesia, forgetting and blocking (Garde-Hansen, 2011: 25; Winter, 2010: 15). For instance, in the Algerian, Spanish and Finnish civil wars, the victors trumpeted a dominant national memory, while the other sides were suppressed from public remembrance (Ashplant et al., 2000: 23–24; Raivo, 2000; Winter, 2010: 15). Vernacular groups that have been involved in intrastate rivals, such as the black Americans in the American Civil War (Blight, 2001, 2011; Savage, 1994) or the Australian Aboriginal people (Attwood, 2008), can be cut off from the national public memory. More recently, the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico (Reade, 2011), the genocide in Rwanda (Ibreck, 2010) and other ethnic cleansings in the last few decades (Borneman, 2002) have exemplified intrastate violence, which undoubtedly will carry on in the public memory in contested ways. In some cases, if some memories are suppressed from the public memory, civil war has lead to the formation of hidden counter-memories (Pötsch, 2011).

One of the basic tenets of reconciliation could be to undo the predatory identities, to deconstruct the rigid identities of winners and losers (Winter, 2010: 15) and instead try to find more open-ended interpretations. According to Eyerman (2001: 4), a trauma is reconciled by trying to retell past events in a new, alternative way. Repressed and alternative experiences are brought forth, and new meanings that make reconciliation between past and present possible are sought. Alternatively, as Pine (2011: 4) suggests, the traumatic past can be presented with empathy or with horror, and it can also be viewed as either open-ended or as having strong implications for the present.

The most obvious reason for undoing predatory identities would be to prevent similar events in the future. However, perhaps a more subtle aim would be to break down generational burdens. Traumas may turn into traditions or lessons learned, which suggest or rule out certain identities or actions (Misztal, 2003: 91–98; Schudson, 1997: 10). This transgenerational trauma, 'archaic heritage' in Freudian terms (Giesen, 2004a: 54–65), can assume many different forms. In Germany, for instance, the rigid wartime constellations were passed on to the next generations (Giesen, 2004a: 130–132). Similarly, some suggest that the memory of the Holocaust provides an ongoing identity of victimhood for the Jews (Assman, 2012; Margalit, 2003). Victimhood or the guilt of perpetrators can be passed on generationally, and these feelings can create rigid identities in the descendants of the war generation (Giesen, 2004a: 54–65). Thus, the idea would be to deconstruct the obligations of the past, which foster identities of perpetrators or victims. In the following, I employ here these suggestions on reconciliation in order to show how the remembrance of the Tampere battles renegotiated the trauma of the civil war and show how the remembrance was organised in a way that aimed to undo the trauma of the civil war.

That being said, I do, however, realise that there are severe limitations in this approach: A society's social memory is not to be equated with an individuals' suffering from, for example, post-traumatic stress, and therapy can become an all-too-easily applied notion (Furedi, 2004; Kansteiner and Weilnböck, 2010). Moreover, reconciliation efforts cannot replace politics, as the problems of the recent reconciliation efforts spanning from civil wars to truth commissions show in concrete terms (e.g. Barkan, 2000; Carey, 2003; Hayner 2002; Hydén, 2000; Posel, 2008: 199; Sesay, 2007; Stahn, 2001). Accordingly, I will also address these limits for the memory work.

The 1918 Finnish Civil War in Tampere

The Finnish Civil War of 1918 is a typical example of an event that can be understood as a cultural trauma: Hatred flared up between proximate groups, both of which wished to gain control of the country (Alapuro, 2008). The war became a horrendous, violent and divisive event, which clearly has remained a cultural trauma (Alexander, 2004a) in Finland, especially in Tampere.

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The war in the spring of 1918 was part of the Great War in Europe. The war broke up as the Grand Duchy of Finland achieved independence from Russia after the October Revolution. The Civil War was fought between the leftist forces, representing agricultural and industrial workers (commonly called the 'Reds'), and the forces of the conservative middle and upper classes (commonly called the 'Whites'). Both sides wanted control over the new state of Finland, and both were supported by European powers, the Reds by the Russian Soviet Republic and the Whites by the German Empire (Hoppu, 2010a).

The industrial cities in the south, Tampere in particular, were the heartlands of the Reds, and the decisive battles of the war took place on the streets of Tampere in April 1918. Tampere, the third largest city in Finland in 1918, was an industrial town of cotton mills and iron works. Tampere had factory workers as well as relatively poor inhabitants, as the average unemployment rate was 50% (Hoppu, 2010b: 69), and thus became a stronghold for the Reds.

During 1917, the Finns followed the Revolutions in Russia enthusiastically as the weakening of the Imperial seemed to open up a road to independence. To safeguard their interest in the uncertain circumstances, both workers and non-socialists began founding Red Guards and Protective Guards, which were later turned into White Guards. In October 1917, the Social Democrats lost their majority in the Parliament and that radicalised the Red Guards in large cities (Hoppu, 2010b). In December 1917, Finland declared independence, and shortly after that, in January 1918, the conflict between Reds and Whites escalated into open civil war.

In Tampere, the Red Guards took control of the city. Tampere had about 45,000 inhabitants of which at least 6000 men and women were members of the Red Guards (Hoppu, 2010b: 105). The Protection Guard in Tampere did not resist – some 100 men, however, left the town to join the Whites and were shot by the Reds. The 'Suinula Bloodbath' became evidence of how the Reds treated their prisoners of war (Hoppu, 2010b: 56–59).

In March 1918, the Whites began an operation to capture Tampere. On 22 March, the Whites attacked the town, which was in a chaotic state, from different directions. Fierce fighting took place on the streets, and dead bodies lay on the streets for days. On 6 April, the Reds finally surrendered. The Whites took about 11,000 prisoners (Hoppu, 2010b: 130). Altogether, between 2500 and 2800 men and women died during the events and were buried in the Red mass grave in Tampere (Hoppu, 2010b: 133)

The Whites won the battles of Tampere and subsequently the whole war, in which about 37,000 people died out of a population of 3 million (Westerlund, 2004). Violence and terror in the war were brutal, and rumours circulated on the brutalities of both sides. In Tampere, the civilians became heavily involved in the war as the Red Guards gathered men to their work companies. Civilians, especially the members of the bourgeoisie, were terrified of the violence, and some were caught in the middle of fighting and artillery fire (Hoppu, 2010c: 108–109).

After the war, the defeated Reds were sent to prisoner camps, which contained over 70,000 prisoners after the war, and on average, 16% of the prisoners died at the camps due to disease or starvation. In Tampere, the Whites took about 11,000 Reds as prisoners of war, who were taken into field courts. The leaders, agitators and armed Russian soldiers, approximately 3%–7% of the captured, were shot. Other soldiers, 40%–60% of the captured, were imprisoned, while the rest were freed (Tikka, 2010: 144–156).

Mediating the civil war memory

The remembrance of the Finnish Civil War has a long and complicated history. The victors' perspective was long dominant in public life, whereas the experiences of the defeated were deleted from official tradition (Peltonen, 2003a, 2003b: 192). The Finnish Winter War of 1939–1940, in

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which ‘the nation’ was joined in a war against the Soviet Union, was described as a ‘restorative’ experience (Raivo, 2000), but even then, the Civil War remained a silenced issue. The first time that the Reds’ experience gained any national exposure was with the publication of Väinö Linna’s famous novel trilogy, *Under the North Star* (*Täällä Pohjantähden Alla*), in 1959–1962.

In the 1960s, archives of traditional culture began to collect personal accounts from both sides of the Civil War divide. The focus was very much on recollections from the Red side, which until then had received very little public attention. These were mainly oral accounts of the terror of war, violence and death. The burial sites of executed Red prisoners were one particularly sensitive issue on which official comment was scarce. Ulla-Maija Peltonen (2003b: 193–194) has described how recollections of the war were divided into two parts: the official White account and stories on the Red side about death, chaos and burial sites. The Whites described the Civil War as a struggle for independence and freedom, while the Reds characterised it as a class struggle. The victors erected monuments, but the defeated were prohibited from doing so – any Red monuments that did appear were promptly destroyed. On the Red side of the divide, stories were created in which the perpetrators of injustices received their due punishment: The White priest committed suicide, and the executioner was blinded or lost his mind (Peltonen, 2003b: 193–198).

In Tampere, things were further complicated by local politics. Tampere was long dominated by a Brothers-in-Arms Axis between the conservative Coalition Party and Social Democrats, which cut across the division of Reds and Whites. Thus, for a long time, the events of 1918 were too delicate an issue for the coalition to handle.

In the 1990s, the process of remembrance gradually began to unfold. Historian Heikki Ylikangas provided detailed accounts of the battles of Tampere. His book, *The Road to Tampere* (*Tie Tampereelle*), was adapted into a popular play (Ylikangas, 1993, 1996). In 1998, the 80th anniversary of the war, discussions were held regarding the possibility of joint celebrations, but this was still too much to handle, and the project fell through (Malmi, 2009, personal communication).

In the 2000s, however, changes began that made it possible to bring the events of 1918 out into the open. Some efforts were made to think of the war in a less polarised way; for instance, one project identified all the people who were killed in the war (Westerlund, 2004). On the local political scene in Tampere, the Brothers-in-Arms Axis began to crumble as the Green Party emerged as a major force in the city council. A new generation began to grow up not only in politics but also in museums and at the local university.

The 1918 remembrance events organised in Tampere in 2008 involved many elements that can be understood as a public renegotiation of the traumatic past. The main point of the remediation was to show that the two oppositional interpretations of the war were not mutually exclusive: Both interpretations could coexist even in the mind of the same person (Alapuro, 2008: 13). As the director of the Vapriikki Museum, Toimi Jaatinen (2010), put it, ‘For the people of Tampere, this meant a transformation of the most difficult time in the city’s history, for which silence had been preferred over discussion, into a common memory that could even bring people together’.

This was done by creating participatory and ‘bottom-up’ practices of memory work. The events of 1918 were mediated in Tampere with multiple media, including (1) a museum exhibition, (2) participant dramas and tableaus and (3) interaction: guest books, online media, discussion panels and media publicity. I have interviewed organisers of these events, visited the commemorative exhibition, studied online materials and reviewed the media coverage. I show how these different media were used to reconcile the traumatic memory of the war. In particular, I focus on how the remembrance thrived to break down the predatory identities of the war and applied a host of practices that draw from the therapeutic imaginary, which emphasises emotional experience and tries to disclose alternative or hidden aspects of memory.

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Museum exhibition at the Vapriikki Museum Centre

The local museum, now renamed the Vapriikki Museum Centre, had had long-standing plans to hold an exhibition on 1918 ever since the war. In 1918, the curator of the museum, Gabriel Engberg, collected war prizes and artefacts from sites of battle with the intention of setting up an exhibition soon after the war had ended, but his plans never materialised. In the 1920s, the war was deemed an inappropriate subject for an exhibition, and for long periods after the Second World War, the museum still felt uncomfortable with the idea.

Plans began to float around for an exhibition in 2008, on the 90th anniversary of the war. With a team of historians from the local university, the aim was to give as broad and impartial an account of the war as possible, representing the perspectives of all of the different groups involved (Antila, 2009, personal communication; Jaatinen, 2010: 5). The 2008 exhibition was designed to counter the divided memory and local amnesia surrounding the Tampere battles, and as such, it clearly had a transformative purpose (Jaatinen, 2010).

The therapeutic aims were clear, as the exhibition turned into a performative arena that mediated the war experience in multiple ways (see also Katriel and Shavit, 2011: 77). The exhibition was constructed in ways that amplified the lived experience (Lorenz, 2010: 88) and placed the audience in the midst of real-life events. In addition, witness testimonials were intended to reconcile a traumatic past (see also Ashuri, 2010).

The exhibition was designed as a journey through the war to give a sense of what the war had felt like and looked like to ordinary people in the street. It described the living conditions and everyday lives of local people around the turn of the century. It then showed how the battles developed, allowing visitors to walk through the streets while surrounded by the sounds of battle and music.

As visitors walked through the exhibition, they were turned into eyewitnesses, who experienced the events first hand, as it were, so that they got to know both sides of the story and got a sense of what the people who were there must have felt. They were also asked what they themselves would have done in that historical situation. In one section of the exhibition, visitors were led into an interrogation room where they were to sit down and listen to tape-recorded questions in a natural sequence. In another section, visitors were placed in front of a death squad, looking down the barrels of their rifles.

Various artefacts of war were also on display: guns and flags, cookware and clothes. Many of them were items that had a special poignancy about them. For instance, there was a picture of a soldier sitting at a coffee table before a battle and then another of his uniform, pierced with a bullet in the neck, which had taken his life. Another display item was a set of shelves from the local shoe factory that had served as a prison for Red prisoners of war, who had scribbled notes on those shelves.

In addition to the museum's own artefacts, the exhibition displayed a wealth of material collected from other sources. Photographs and film materials were obtained from public and private collections and family albums. A large number of previously unseen pictures were discovered in the course of this process, and at the same time, much work was done to contextualise old pictures (i.e. to find out when, where and how they had been taken). Images were included of summary executions, as well as of the condemned, but also of parades and military exercises, along with those of the symbolic struggle waged among the winners. There were also pictures of street scenes that captured the chaos and confusion: dead bodies strewn about the streets, ruined buildings, prisoners of war and civilians.

The organisers were determined not to hide the cruelty of war; they did not want to shy away from describing the violence, death and destruction. The exhibition featured pictures of people

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who had been killed in the streets of Tampere as well as staged corpses. Accounts were also included about the use of child soldiers, including two boys aged 13 and 14 years, one of whom fought with the White Guards and the other with the Red Guards. The first died of injuries he received in fire fighting, and the second boy was executed.

Violence is at the heart of traumatic experiences, and thus, one would suggest that it needs to be faced in memory. War memories often support memorials that hide the ugly side of violence. Thus, heroes as well as victims are easily depicted in romantic ways. The harsh description of violence that affected both parties thus perhaps helped spectators to come to grips with the war reality at the time. It made visitors see the cruelties of the war and empathise with boys who had been called into arms and subsequently lost their lives in the middle of the chaos.

The exhibition also served to break down stereotypical conceptions of the war and its victors and the defeated part. Thus, for instance, the exhibition featured images of men posing for the camera before they left for war. Many of these men took on pompous poses, with rifles in their hands. On the contrary, many others chose to dress down and highlight the other, harsher reality of war. It was clear from the pictures that the divide between the warring camps was not necessarily very strict and that the fighters on both sides had a great deal in common. As was pointed out in the caption of one studio shot, the word 'Red' had been scribbled on the photo to ensure there was no confusion about who it represented. Members of both the Red and White Guards had taken portraits of themselves that clearly conveyed the idealistic fervour that drove these men to war. The faces shown in these stark pictures revealed a sense of optimism about the future: The war seemed to offer a promise of a better world for both Reds and Whites. The similarity of both sides suggested that both sides had similar, idealistic aims, and thus, the pictures broke down the predatory identities.

The exhibition also used testimonials. Eyewitnesses of different ages contributed their own and their family members' recollections of the war, and the accounts were videotaped and shown at the exhibition. The creation of testimonials is a soul-searching process through which people encounter their pasts and reflect on moral questions (Katriel and Shavit, 2011: 81). As such, testimonials resemble therapeutic encounters that aim to bring out the repressed memories as well as understand and renegotiate their meaning. Public testimonials can become part of a more collective reconciliation as they turn the representations of private traumas into public issues (Ashuri, 2010).

The testimonials in Tampere not only repeated the war experience but also, in particular, disclosed the hidden and silenced aspects of the war. Thus, the exhibition also described the point of view of innocent bystanders and civilians who are often forgotten in a war memory dominated by soldiers and armies. The most famous figure was an elderly man by the name of Kauko Lindell, who appeared in one of the exhibition photographs in the middle of battles as a young boy of just 10. Lindell became the symbolic figurehead of the testimonials, and his vivid, detailed and accurate stories were recounted both at the exhibition and in the media. His testimonials recollected the chaos and violence and the view of the innocent bystanders such as himself.

In addition, younger people, whose families had lingering memories of the war that can be understood as generational burdens, contributed their recollections. The well-known local musician Jaakko Löytty, for instance, recounted stories about his divided family and how their life had been hampered by the strict Red and White split. These testimonials served to show how the traumatic division into Reds and Whites affected the future generations (Assman, 2012: 54–55; Giesen, 2004a).

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Public street drama: day of reconciliation and revolt route

The events of 1918 were also addressed by means of a street drama and routes that were placed at the actual sites of battles. All these activities clearly reiterated the war experience and aimed to position the spectators in the midst of the war. The street theatre and procession were placed at the actual sites of battles and as place-based practices (Till, 2008; Trigg, 2009) recreated the war experience. They called upon the audience to participate in the performance and turn from audiences into witnesses, who would themselves be changed by re-enacting the painful events (Ashuri, 2010; Dekel, 2009).

On 6 April 2008, Tampere played host to a Day of Reconciliation, an event that included a street procession and a Day in Tampere 1918 street tableau (Päivä Tampereella, 1918 (2008)). Tampere City Cultural Services contributed to setting up a 'revolt route', a guided walking tour that passed through key battle sites in the city. Again, these efforts included local people as actors in the drama, and the main idea was to involve people in the actual sites in order to give them a hands-on experience of the war.

The idea to organise a Day of Reconciliation was first raised when local historian Timo Malmi, inspired by a street tableau enacted to commemorate the 1956 Hungarian uprising, brought the concept back to Tampere (Malmi and Järvelä, 2008). The event grew into a public street drama organised by University of Tampere alumni, the local Theatre Siberia and the Finlayson tradition committee. In addition, contact was made with various local organisations to recruit volunteer actors. The purpose was to reminisce and look back upon people and events from the Civil War era and to try to understand the actions taken by previous generations in the difficult circumstances in which they found themselves (Malmi and Järvelä, 2008; Päivä Tampereella, 1918 (2008): 4).

Malmi (2009, personal communication) himself said that the purpose of the event was to finally address this taboo subject and to describe the Battle of Tampere as a major urban battle comparable to Madrid, Warsaw, Berlin, Leningrad and Stalingrad, which involved not just local people but also Russians, Swedes, Germans and Jews. One key objective was to preserve the honour of all the parties concerned and to show how on both sides the decision to go to war was motivated by a good cause: to find freedom or a better future. This aim worked to alleviate the burden of victimhood, especially on the side of the defeated Reds – the war was not only a demonstration of victimhood (Assman, 2012; Margalit, 2003), as the soldiers on both sides demonstrated courage and determinism.

The event itself was divided into two parts: the Wounded Angel street procession and the street tableaus. The Wounded Angel procession involved some 100 people in role-playing costumes. All of the participants had a name, and local celebrities were recruited to play certain roles, such as Guard leaders, street fighters, conciliators and medical staff. All of the parties to the war were presented: White forces and Red forces, Russians, Germans, the Red Cross and others. The idea was for the participants to play the role of someone from the opposite side of the divide (i.e. someone with whom they could not identify in the current situation). A brochure of the procession was produced that portrayed and briefly described the most important characters.

People at the front of the procession carried a wounded angel, Tampere's 'patron saint', which was modelled on Hugo Simberg's famous painting. The procession was led by Red and White bands, and there was also a choir. Thousands of people lined the streets, and the city centre was crowded to capacity: People first followed the procession and then wandered around the Finlayson factory area where the tableaus were on display, as dramatised by Theatre Siberia.

Moreover, the city of Tampere organised the Tampere Revolt Route, which was a historical walking route along which people could visit places associated with the events of 1918. The route became one of the City of Tampere culture walks, and guided tours were arranged.

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Interaction: lectures, online media and the book of reconciliation

The therapeutic ideals were also fostered by organising various opportunities for audience participation. The use of the digitalised media facilitated participation and served to build up a dynamic memory assemblage suggesting a new media ecology (Hoskins, 2011; Reading, 2011). The Vapriikki website ran a feedback and discussion forum where members of the public could recount their own memories and exchange experiences. The Internet provided an important new forum through which people could relate their memories and exchange experiences. Material published online does not disappear as quickly as more traditional journalism, and discussions can continue over longer periods of time. Furthermore, the Internet provides an opportunity for large numbers of people to express their voices, vent their emotions and find out what other people think about things. As such, the online environment clearly provides forms of remembering with therapeutic undertones, as it encourages personal memory work and keeps up the reflective process.

The more traditional media, however, also developed participatory practices. In the various side events of the museum exhibition, members of the public had the opportunity to express their own thoughts and vent their feelings. The Museum Centre hosted a number of discussion panels and lectures dealing with the war. There was also a guestbook at the exit of the exhibition. Initially, it was intended as a straightforward guestbook for visitors' signatures, but people began to add their own personal thoughts and comments, turning the book into a 'book of reconciliation'.

In addition, the old media encouraged testimonials and disclosure. The events received extensive media coverage. In particular, the local daily *Aamulehti* gave great coverage of both the exhibition and the Day of Reconciliation, interviewing participants and giving space for recollection. The public service broadcaster Yleisradio hosted a discussion programme on the events of 1918. The programme recreated the 'original' war setting, having the participants in the debate seated opposite each other, and indeed, on occasion, voices were raised in the heat of the discussion.

Renegotiating cultural trauma

The mediation of the Tampere battles in the Finnish Civil War sought to renegotiate the trauma of the civil war by employing memory practices that drew from the therapeutic imaginary. The remembrance brought to light suppressed or hidden memories, and placed the war memories into their original historical context. The mediation of the war aimed to bring out as rich and as varied a picture of the past as possible by 'telling it all' and not trying to cover up its conflicts and contradictions. The past was to be understood on its own merits, from the vantage point of the contemporary historical situation, and the stereotypical enemy images and we-fantasies from the war era were questioned. The focus of the remembrance was turned to the reality of the war, with all its confusions, complexities and paradoxes, highlighting the fact that the warring factions had much in common, including their idealism and their tragic fates. The exhibition and street drama were clearly aimed at producing a more heterogeneous interpretation of the reality of the war – an interpretation not based on stereotypes or the logic of war. In this way, the renegotiation of trauma suggested storylines that challenged group-based stereotypes, exposed the structural effects of violence and offered contextual explanations (McMahon and Chow-White, 2011).

The objective was also to discharge the transferred generational burden of the war, which may have caused subsequent generations to adopt rigid attitudes. Historical injustices may be handed down in identities of victimhood and wrongdoing. In particular, the identity of victim, which is inherited and imposed upon the next generation (Assman, 2012: 54–55; Margalit, 2003; Mbembe, 2008: 7), includes melancholy and a sense of powerlessness. Reference has been made, for

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instance, to the melancholy of black people (Luciano, 2000), to the German sorrow for the past as *Ostalgie* and *Westalgie* (Boyer, 2006), to the melancholy of the Left (Brown, 2000; Scribner, 2000) and, in Finland of Finnish working-class men (Koivunen, 2006), to the cultural descendants of the Reds.

Seen from this point of view, the losses suffered by the Reds in the Civil War may have created a transferred burden that has assumed different forms. In the decades following the war, the losers lived their lives in the shadow of the winners, clenching their fists, and Red interpretations of the war were deeply coloured by their sense of loss. In the remembrance event, for instance, the studio photographs of the young soldiers and the street drama demonstrated the idealism and courage of both sides. The remembrance events in Tampere in 2008 may well have helped in the process of unloading these kinds of transferred burdens by encouraging people to both recount their experiences and look upon the Civil War as a distinct historical moment in time that no longer imposes any obligations on today's generations. This would highlight the fact that it is no longer necessary for the next generation to carry either the burden of guilt or the identity of victim. Similarly, Pine (2011) suggests that the anti-nostalgic cultural remembrance of the Irish past has opened up the past, making the narrative of Irish historical identity more plural and more cognisant of the memories of victims of past traumas (p. 16).

The remembrance also encouraged emotional and personal experience focusing on the everyday experience of the war. The street theatre and procession were place-based practices (Till, 2008; Trigg, 2009) that took place at the sites of battles and thus embodied the difficult past. The remembrance was framed as a local and communal event – an element that has perhaps been neglected as the national frame of the Finnish Civil War has dominated social remembering.

Museum exhibition, witness testimonials and street drama were used to transform the traumatic personal loss of experience into a collective experience of loss (see also Alexander, 2004a; Ashuri, 2010). In the exhibition and street drama, the audiences were turned into witnesses as people were placed in the midst of war to experience the reality of the battles. Public lectures and 'the book of reconciliation' as well as an Internet site, newspapers and television fostered public discussion on the past events. For visitors, they created a space for experiencing the war and exploring their own relation to the past (see also Dekel, 2009).

The Tampere events show how a variety of media, museums, photographs, documentaries, personal witness testimonials, theatre and mainstream media (Kuhn, 2010; Zelizer, 2002, 2008) helped to renegotiate the traumatic past, offering a chance for repair and recognition (Goodman, 2006). With regard to the mediation of memory, it seems as if the centralised memory practices supported by national media are giving way to new, more heterogeneous activities that utilise new media technologies. The Tampere case, however, suggests that the new media are not the only devices that can be utilised. The more traditional media such as lectures, books, street theatre and the mainstream media played a considerable role. Journalism worked jointly with them as a form of memory work, as this seems to develop new, more participatory practices (see also Teneboim-Weinblatt, 2008; Zelizer, 2008).

Thus, the change in memory practices does not only signal the advent of the new media. In addition, the old media, such as museum exhibitions and journalism, seem to move towards social remembering that allows heterogeneity and encourages participation. The more heterogeneous memory practices also pose new challenges to historians, who tend to stay away from memory practices. As Jay Winter (2010: 21) suggests, history writing becomes crucial as more heterogeneous memories are performed. In Tampere, historians, being involved in setting up the exhibition and writing the book *Tampere 1918: A Town in the Civil War* (2010), played an important part in the process.

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As such, Tampere perhaps exemplifies also a wider shift in remembrance: Many remembrance activities are undergoing a change from nationally organised memorials to more heterogeneous, multileveled, porous and mobile memories (Conway, 2008; Hoskins, 2011; Reading, 2011). As societies are becoming more plural and individualised, and are saturated by therapeutic discourses, they are also likely to remember differently, in more individualised ways that allow heterogeneity and draw from therapeutic practices. Social memory is increasingly a contingent product of social and political actions and a ground for further action (Misztal, 2003: 69–73; Zelizer, 1995). Solemn and predominantly national practices of commemoration (Gillis, 1994; Rigney 2008) might become increasingly replaced by more heterogeneous practices that draw from the therapeutic imaginary. With the use of different participatory media practices, memory work can at least to some extent become a therapeutic agent of change, as it can help transform one's relation to the past and open up new frames of action (see also Assman, 2012; Assman and Shortt, 2012).

At the same time, the case, however, also points to the limits of the therapeutically induced memory work. Tampere shows just how persistent and complex the traumas of a civil war can be – in Tampere, the renegotiation only became possible 90 years after the war. The distant past, a significant event in history, can be surprisingly alive (Brownlie, 2012), and while memory work can help ease out affectivity and negative attitudes linked to it, in some cases in which the wounds are still fresh, renegotiation might not be possible at all (Ashplant et al., 2000: 41–42). For instance, the experiences from the Balkan wars in the 1990s (Ignatieff, 1999) or from the Rwandan Genocide (Bucley-Zistel, 2012) suggest that it is too early to reminisce about recent violence that took place between neighbours living in the same villages. Indeed, there seems to be a delayed memory syndrome that is more a rule than an exception: Major historical traumas such as the Holocaust, the American Civil War or Vietnam War are often followed by roughly 15 years of relative neglect or repression (Kammen, 1995: 249).

The outcomes of truth commissions have often been modest, and sometimes, they have been accused of simply shoring up the prevailing system. The victims have been torn between wanting to forget their suffering and wanting to achieve restitution (Hayner, 2002). Reconciliation has failed, particularly in cases where society has failed to address the underlying causes of the original trauma and where corruption, discrimination or poverty remain firmly in place (Sesay, 2007: 46–53). Critics have argued that reconciliation has become a fashion or industry (Moon, 2008), a one-size-fits-all model (Sesay, 2007).

The renegotiation of cultural trauma is not a simple or straightforward process. The performative practices often involve issues that are highly charged, politically and socially. One always needs to ask what aspect of the past is being remembered, how is it being performed and what are the consequences of those performances (Pine, 2011: 3–4).

The expectations placed on the process should always be considered in their broader context. There is always the risk that a shared story is designed to cover up cruelties and injustices (cf. Moon, 2008), and the case of Tampere is no different. The tension is always there, as it indeed should be, the key is perhaps to recognise its existence in every process.

This also points to the fact that we should tone down our expectations: Renegotiation is viable when there are no insurmountable obstacles. It is farfetched to imagine that social injustice, oppression, persecution, war and violence could be treated as traumas that can be resolved by means of therapy. Public renegotiation of memories can help construct less rigid oppositional identities and, in some cases, even prevent the recurrence of violence and vicious circles of revenge. It can help individual people come to terms with their pasts and continue their lives with lesser burdens. At the same time, however, it is important to bear in mind that renegotiations always involve a political element: They are just one way of trying to make it easier for people to live with their past. Even then, it is important to consider whose lives are being made easier and how.

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