

WW2 in Romanian Social Remembering. A Methodological Framework

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Abstract

The last decades witnessed an unprecedented proliferation of studies aimed to explore how the memory of the past is disseminated and institutionalized at State-level, shaping what a society should remember and/or forget, and sculpting thus the national belonging and identity feelings (Misztal, 2003). This paper focuses on the specific case of Romania, a country whose war memory was partially erased and partially rewritten during the almost 45 years of communism, and who now is trying not only to regain its lost recollections, but at the same time to reconcile with its darkened totalitarian past. Specifically, having as starting point the transdisciplinary approaches in social sciences enquiring the challenges at the frontiers of knowledge raised by pan-European research on collective memory (particularly, the comparative studies East vs. West), the paper aims to provide a theoretical and methodological framework for examining the memory of the World War II in the particular context of Romania. Two main interpretative dimensions are set at the foundation of the analytical design: *our war* (i.e. defense of the national territory and military participation to the war motivated by the aim of liberation of all the occupied national territories) vs. *others' war* (i.e. the social support of Romanians within war alliances). These dimensions are explored through case studies of key- WWII facts and events, allowing us to hypothesize about how Romanians position themselves in relation to Europe through the memories of the WWII.