

*Dieter Brandes*¹:

The Mission of Christians for Reconciliation in Europe²

Abstract.

The old historical wounds of Europe are century-old wounds like the “Northern Ireland conflict”, the Russia–Finland conflict, the Poland–Germany–Russia conflict, the long-lasting conflict between Ottomans, Hungary, and later, the Habsburg and the Russian Empire, but also the thousand-year-old religious borderline between Eastern and Western culture.

Moreover, the first half of the 20th century in (the Christian) Europe is characterized by wars and genocide in a terrible, hitherto unknown dimension. About 10 million people died in World War I and about 50 million in World War II.

Countries all over Europe like Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine were involved in these war-related events. Many unhealed mental wounds are still deeply rooted in the hearts of individuals and peoples. Unhealed wounds also remained concerning the genocides of the 20th century, like the Armenian genocide, the Holodomor in Ukraine, the Holocaust against Jews and Gypsies, the genocide against Tatars in the Crimean region. Finally, let us remember the million fold wounds that arose from the

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communist dictatorships. After World War II, we have to mention the wounds inflicted by many additional European conflicts like the ones between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Georgia and Russia, Ukraine and Russia, the Bosnia–Croatia–Serbia conflict regarding the dissolution of the old state of Yugoslavia, the conflict between Greeks and Turks regarding Northern Cyprus, the Moldova–Russia conflict regarding Transnistria etc.

“The need for healing and reconciliation in our broken world cannot be overemphasized. The pain and burden of memories of ongoing, recent and past conflicts haunt and hamper normal life and progress. The process for ‘Healing of Memories’ is designed to advocate for, develop and promote healing of memories and other healing and reconciliation processes in Churches and faith communities, so as to strengthen their role as channels of hope, healing and reconciliation in our world today.”

This was part of the final message of the WCC “European Ecumenical and Interreligious Consultation on ‘Healing of Memories’ on 4th-6th May 2010”, in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On the one hand, the Bible leads us to peace and reconciliation, like in Prov 16:7 in the Old Testament: “*When a man’s ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him*”, or in the new Testament, when in Cor 5:18, Paul says “*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.*”

Moreover, the European Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, and Catholic churches avowed in the Final Document of the Second European Ecumenical Assembly in Graz 1997: “*The church communities must confess that throughout history they often showed themselves as a bad example for the Christian message of reconciliation and ‘religions and churches became themselves part of the problem’.*” Therefore, the European churches signed in their common *Charta Oecumenica* in chapter 3: “*In the spirit of the Gospel, we must reappraise together the history of the Christian churches, which has been marked by many beneficial experiences, but also by schisms, hostilities and even armed conflicts.*”

There have been several church initiatives of reconciliation in Europe, like the Stuttgart Church Confession of Guilt, the reconciliation process between the Polish Ecumenical Council and the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Czechian and German church reconciliation process, the reconciliation process between the Church of Norway and the Sámi, the reconciliation process in Northern Ireland, the process called „*Reconciliation in Europe between the Churches in Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, and Germany*”, the Anglican–Orthodox Dialog, the Porvoo process between the Anglican and the Lutheran Churches, the Pro Oriente reconciliation process regarding the schism of the “Unions of Brest and Transylvania”.

The “Healing of Memories” (HoM) process – originally developed in South Africa as a counselling methodology for the healing of personal emotional wounds after the apartheid – was further developed in South Eastern Europe on behalf of CPCE, CEC, and WCC into a process between cultures and religions.

Healing of Memories between cultures and religions is a methodology to help overcome frozen history and “hi-stories” by putting emphasis on voices that were not heard, ignored or not acknowledged so far. According to its methodology, HoM is a “*process of the generations*” that implicates the three steps of “*walking together through history*”, “*sharing the pain of others*”, and “*preparing the future together*”. The HoM process between cultures and religions adds to the above “*three historical steps*” the previous step: “*Interdisciplinary researching of the history of the nations, cultures and religions and/or communities.*”

For these HoM processes, special training courses have been developed in Romania in order to train facilitators, which have been recognised and adopted in the meantime as master courses at the universities of Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár, Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár, and Sibiu/Nagyszeben.

Keywords: Reconciliation, Healing of Memories, Historical wounds, Genocide, *Charta Oecumenica*

Preface

Reflections on a “Healing of Memories in Europe” process were presented by the author for the first time in 2003 at the 10th anniversary of the Faculty of Reformed Theology published as “Healing of Memories – a Task of Ecumenical Ecclesiology in the 21st Century” in *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Theologia Reformata Transylvanica*, XLVIII, 2003/5-6. In the following year, 2004, the author was commissioned with the project “Healing of Memories between Cultures and Religions in South Eastern Europe”, a joint project of CPCE, CEC and WCC.

The project found its local focus in Romania, which, within its borders since Trianon 1920, could on the one hand become a special example of reconciled coexistence between cultures, religions and nations as a multi-ethnic state. On the one hand, however, Romania within the current borders also forms a region that has been a battlefield of European Great Empires for centuries.

Nevertheless, the ecumenical and interreligious Healing of Memories process was also extended to other reference regions such as Hungary, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Slovakia. In Romania, faculties of Theology, History, and Sociology were involved in the project at about ten locations with a special focus on Kolozsvár/Cluj Napoca, Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia, and Nagyszeben/Sibiu. In addition, the process was supported by all historical churches, as well as by the Muslim Muftiat and the Jewish Federation.

Healing of Memories was originally developed in South Africa as a counselling method for healing of personal emotional wounds after the end of the apartheid (Desmond Tutu). Based on this, a process of healing of memories “between cultures and religions” was developed in South Eastern Europe in cooperation with initiatives in Northern Ireland, Norway, and others. The “European Process of Healing of Memories” includes the social and the ecclesiastical level.

1. The Historical Wounds of Europe

To analyse the backgrounds of the conflicts and to build ways of Healing of Memories in Europe, we have to mention the four main streams of pain in the past and present of Europe:

- the old historical wounds
- wounds from the beginning of the 20th century
- the genocide wounds
- wounds from the second half of the 20th century

It will not be possible to present all historical wounds between the cultures, nations, and religions of Europe in a comprehensive way, because we have to realize that there have been uncountable wars in Europe over these past thousand years.

In the following, we shall list some important “wounds of the past” containing tensions, prejudices, and aggressions, some of which are present in contemporary conflicts even after many hundred years.

1.1. Old Historical Wounds of Europe – a Selection³

1.1.1. Century-old Wounds in Europe – Examples of Western and Eastern Europe

The Northern Ireland Conflict

The Northern Ireland conflict “officially” started with a peace treaty after the Irish War of Independence (1919–1921), granting independence for 26 of the 32 Irish counties from the Kingdom of Great Britain. However, in the six northern counties that had remained part of the United Kingdom, Óglaigh na hÉireann formed the so-called Irish Republican Army – IRA.⁴

As the British government sent large troops to the area, after the “Bloody Sunday” on 30th January, 1972, the violence in Northern Ireland escalated. More than 3300 people were killed in the conflict, and some 42.000 were wounded.

Since 1991, the British government held peace talks with the involved parties. A peace agreement was signed on 10th April, 1998 (Good Friday Agreement).

Nevertheless, to understand the Northern Ireland conflict one must understand the 750-year-old historical conflict between England and Ireland involving conquest and resistance.

In the time of Christianization in the 4th and 5th centuries, the earliest Irish High Kingdoms were “stabilized”. This period ended with the Anglo-Norman invasion under Henry II in 1169; he declared himself “King of Ireland” in 1171. In the following seven and a half centuries, Ireland came to be under the rule of the Kingdom of England, respectively, from 1801, under that of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

³ The chapters 1.1. to 1.4 are a short version of Dieter BRANDES: *The need for Reconciliation in Europe Part I – The Role of the Churches, Historical wounds of Europe*, in: *Teologia – Revista Facultății de Teologie Ortodoxă*, Anul XX, Nr. 4(69), Arad, 2016. 44–68. 49–66.

⁴ For more information about IRA cf. M. E. COLLINS: *Ireland 1868-1966*, Dublin, 1993. 242; M. E. COLLINS: *Politics and Society in Northern Ireland 1949-1993*, Dublin, 2008; T. P. COOGAN: *The IR*, London, 1990. 327–351; 377–418.

The Russia–Finland Conflict

Finland – after belonging for more than 600 years to the Swedish Kingdom – became autonomous in 1809 within the Tsardom of Russia (Tsar Alexander I).

On 6th December, 1917, the Finnish regional Parliament declared Finland to be an independent democracy.

Nevertheless, to understand the Russia–Finland conflict, one must understand the 700-year-old historical conflict particularly concerning the region of Karelia.⁵

After the October Revolution in Russia and the Finnish Declaration of Independence in 1917, Karelia was the scene of bloody battles of the so-called Finnish Civil War.⁶

The Poland–Germany–Russia Conflict

To understand the tensions, prejudices and hurts between Poland and Germany, it is helpful to include Poland–Russia conflicts.

The first battle between German and the Polish troops took place in 1109, when the Polish king Boleslaw III connected large parts of Silesia and Pomerania to Poland.

The legendary “Battle of Vienna” in 1683 was the only important battle in history that Polish and German-Austrian troops fought jointly together!

However, German and Austrian troops, along with the Russians, destroyed the Polish empire completely with the 3 partitions in 1772, 1793, and 1795.

In 1939, German troops occupied Western Poland and Russian troops occupied Eastern Poland.⁷

In 1940, about 4400 captive Polish army officers were killed in Katyn by Soviet Special Forces.

In 1943, a revolt was bloodily crushed in the Warsaw Jewish Ghetto. Only 300 survived of the 450.000 Jews.

In the summer of 1944, the Warsaw Uprising began. However, Joseph W. Stalin refused any help to the insurgents. About 180.000 Poles lost their lives.

⁵ The Karelians like the Sámi are indigenous people of Northern Europe.

⁶ For more information about the Finnish history cf. Eino JUTIKKALA: *Geschichte Finnlands*, Stuttgart, 1964; Jason LAVERY: *The History of Finland*, Westport-USA, 2006.

⁷ Molotov-Ribbentrop Agreement.

In 1970, the Warsaw Treaty between Germany BRD and the Republic of Poland was signed.

*1.1.2. The Thousand-Year-Old Borderline between
Eastern and Western Culture*

Europe has constantly been, in several places, culturally divided into Western and Eastern Europe for about one millennium. The separation between Eastern and Western Europe has both theological, and political causes.

The theological aspects

The so called the Oriental Schism (the “Great Schism”) is generally dated to 1054. The theological differences were already obvious when the Western “Council of Toledo” proclaimed the “filioque”⁸ to the Creed of Nicaea in 589.

The political aspects

The political aspect of the Eastern–Western split was already strengthened when the Franconian king Pippin installed the Roman Pope as a secular monarch of the “Papal state”,⁹ Vatican, in 756 and when Pippin’s son, Charles the Great was crowned by Leo III the Western Emperor in 800.

In the following centuries, there have always been new permanent conflicts, injuries between Western and Eastern Europe, for instance:

- the conquest of Constantinople in 1204;
- the establishment of a Latin Patriarch;
- the inactiveness of the West during the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by the Ottomans;
- the “Union of Brest” in 1569;
- the “Union of Uschhorod” (Ungvár) in 1646;
- the “Union of Transylvania” in 1698.

⁸ This new interpretation of the Holy Spirit was introduced originally to distinguish itself against Arianism, but this declaration was not concerned with the patriarchy of Constantinople.

⁹ Papal States, also called Church States had sovereignty from 756 to 1870

We have to mention that in the present time, the majority of the countries of the European Union are part of Western European culture. Only Bulgaria, Greece, and Cyprus are clearly part of Eastern European cultural area.

1.1.3. Wounds Originating from the Ottoman Occupation

The Ottoman Empire had occupied several South-East-European countries for more than 400 years: 1393/96 Bulgaria, 1389/1459 Serbia, 1394/1417 Walachia, 1417 Moldova, 1446/53 Greece, 1463 Bosnia, 1468/1501 Albania, 1526 Hungary, 1541 Transylvania (Vassal).

With the second Viennese defeat in 1683, the Ottoman expansion in Europe was stopped. Within the next two decades, the conquered European territories became independent again: 1686 Hungary, 1687 Transylvania (Conquest by the Habsburg Empire), 1699 Croatia and most part of Ukraine (Peace of Karlovci/Karlóca), 1718 Banat, Northern Serbia (Treaty of Passarowitz/Požarevac), 1775 Bukovina, 1821–1829 Greece, 1856 Serbia, Moldova, and Walachia, 1878 (Treaty of San Stefano) Bulgaria and affiliation of Dobrogea to Romania, 1878–1881 Albania, 1912/13 Montenegro.

Many non-reconciled wounds arising from over 400 years of occupation still remain in mind in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, and Russia etc.

1.2. Wounds from the Beginning of the 20th Century

The first half of the 20th century in (the Christian) Europe was characterized by wars and genocide in a terrible, hitherto unknown dimension.

Partly, there were “*old, historically pent-up scores... settled between people of different cultures, ethnicities, languages, and denominations and this led to million-fold murder, to desecration, torture and expulsion- and new trenches of hate.*”¹⁰

¹⁰ Dieter BRANDES – Manoj KURIAN: *Healing of Memories in Europe*, in: Manoj KURIAN – Dieter BRANDES – Olga LUKÁCS – Vasile GRĂJDIAN (ed.): *Reconciliation nr. 7 Reconciliation between Peoples, Cultures and Religions. Reconciliation in Bosnia-Herzegovina Compared to European-Wide Experiences*, European Interreligious Consultation on ‘Healing of Memories’ Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, May 3-6, 2010. 15–26. 16.

1.2.1. Following World War I: a New Map of Europe

World War I ended with the peace Treaties of Versailles (Germany), Trianon (Hungary), Saint-Germain-en-Laye (Habsburg), Neuilly-sur-Seine (Bulgaria), and Sévres (Ottomans, respectively Turkey). The main results created a “new map of Europe” with new states like Poland, the Baltic countries, Belarus, Ukraine¹¹, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Moreover, the borders of several existing states have been significantly changed, like those of Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Romania.

Thesis:

“The new map of Europe created many new injuries and wounds between cultures and nations.”¹²

- Germany with France and Poland
- Poland and Russia
- Ukraine and Russia
- Hungary and Romania
- Hungary and Czechoslovakia
- Hungary and Ukraine
- Serbs with Croats etc.

Two decades later, new conflicts have already emerged, but this time, in addition to “deep historical streams” on the background of historically grown cultural and racist prejudices and unhealed wounds of the past.

1.2.2. Wounds of World War II

The result of World War II were 50 million dead, the partial or total destruction of entire cities and the Holocaust of about 6 million Jews and about 500 thousand Sinti and Roma.

¹¹ The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litowsk of 3rd March, 1918 (a separate peace treaty between the Soviet Union and Germany-Habsburgs) plays a special role, because already in 1921, with the Peace Treaty of Riga, Ukraine became part of the new Soviet Union.

¹² BRANDES–KURIAN: *Healing of Memories in Europe*, 20.

World War II left new wounds for example between:¹³

Germany/Austria and	Poland/ the Czech Republic/ Slovakia/ the Netherlands/ Belgium/ France/ Serbia/ Russia
Russia and	Finland/ Poland/ Ukraine etc.
Hungary and	Romania/ Slovakia/ Ukraine
Greece and	Turkey
Romania and	the Soviet Union regarding the loss of Northern Bucovina and Eastern Moldova (Bessarabia)

It was an immense challenge for the next decades to overcome the prejudices and the injuries and the mental and physical wounds.

1.3. Wounds of Genocides in Europe

1.3.1. Violence Against Indigenous People – the Sámi in Scandinavia as an Example¹⁴

When we think of persecutions and discrimination of indigenous people, we think, for example, about the aborigines in Australia, Amazonian Indians in Brazil, and Hereros in Namibia. Few know, however, that the Sámi are an indigenous Northern European people in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Karelia/Russia.

Since prehistoric times, the Sámi have been living in the Arctic in the Sapmi Country for more than 5,000 years.¹⁵

The suppression of the Sámi began with the fact that between 1635 and 1659, the Swedish crown forced them to work in the Nasafjäll silver mine.¹⁶

¹³ Compare BRANDES–KURIAN: *Healing of Memories in Europe*.

¹⁴ To this chapter cf. BRANDES: *The Need for Reconciliation in Europe Part I*, 49.

¹⁵ Cf. Noel D. BROADBENT: *Lapps and Labyrinths – Saami Prehistory, Colonization, and Cultural Resilience*, Washington, 2010. 304.

¹⁶ Ulf MÖRKENSTAM – Andreas GOTTARDIS – Hans Ingvar ROTH: *The Swedish Sámi Parliament: A Challenged Recognition?*, European University Institute Florence, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies 2012/10. 4. National Case Studies – Political Life, Final Country Reports, Work Package 4 – National Case Studies of Challenges to Tolerance in Political Life, 8.

Especially in the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century, barely imaginable violence took place against the indigenous Sámi in Northern Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Finland), when farmers occupied the land of the Sámi reindeer herders. The Sámi also had to do transport and mining work as slave laborers, and they were paid with alcohol.¹⁷

1.3.2. Genocide Wounds in Europe in the First Half of the 20th Century

In the first half of the 20th century, genocide occurred in unprecedented harshness and brutality.

The “popular search” for the supposedly guilty for the lost wars has found a special confirmation in the marginalization of minorities. This identification of racial and cultural minorities with the alleged suffering brought about through these minorities was therefore predominantly the breeding ground in the “loser states” of World War I in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Turkey, and Russia.¹⁸

The “main genocides” of the first half of the 20th century in Europe are the following:

- the genocide of 1 to 1,5 million Armenians in 1894/95 and 1915/16.
- the Holodomor in 1932/33¹⁹ (Ukrainian: Hunger Murder), when the Soviet Union government under Stalin caused a famine in Ukraine, North-Caucasus regions, Volga, West Siberia, and Kazakhstan with about 6 to 7 million dead.²⁰

¹⁷ Cf. Anna STÜSSI (ed.): *Die Sami: Bedrohte Kultur in Lappland*, Bern 1990. published on the homepage of the Associazione per i popoli minacciati – Sudtirolo – Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker – Südtirol – Lia por i popui manacês Bolzano/Bozen: <http://www.gfbv.it/3dossier/eu-min/sami.html>

¹⁸ This includes the Soviet Union as a successor state of the Russian Empire, with the loss of territories in the West – especially the Peace Treaty of Dorpat (Estonian: Tartu) in 1920 concerning Finland and Estonia and the Peace Treaty of Riga in 1921 concerning Poland–Lithuania.

¹⁹ The famine was the result of the destruction of agriculture and the village by enforced collectivization. It was also the punishment of the peasant population for resisting the collectivization of agriculture.

²⁰ Out of a total of six to seven million fatalities, 3 to 3.5 million people died in Ukraine, about 1.7 million in Kazakhstan, other hundreds of thousands in the North Caucasus, along the Volga and in West Siberia. See Gerhard SIMON: *Analyse: 80 Jahre Holodomor – die Große Hungersnot in der Ukraine*, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 28. 11. 2013: <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/ukraine/174179/analyse-80-jahre-holodomor-die-grosse-hungersnot-in-der-ukraine?p=all>

- the genocide of about 6 million Jews in the time of national socialism in Germany between 1941–1945.
- the genocide of about 500 thousand Sinti and Roma between 1939–1945.
- the genocide of about 100 thousand Crimean Tatars in 1944²¹.

1.4. Wounds from the Second Half of the 20th Century

1.4.1. The Communist and other Dictatorships

Very soon after the end of World War II, under the influence of the Soviet Union, communist states emerged in Eastern Europe manifesting a “*high degree of oppression, deportations, state terrorism and murders*”.²²

Communist governments came to power:

1945	Poland and Yugoslavia
1946	Albania and Bulgaria
1948	Romania, Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic (GDR)
1949	Hungary

Other nations became communists after the occupation by the Soviet Union as Soviet republic within the Soviet Union:

1922	Ukraine and Belarus
1940	Moldova, Estonia, and Latvia

²¹ Cf. Robert CONQUEST: *The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of Nationalities*, London, 1970; Alan W. FISHER: *The Crimean Tatars*, Stanford, 1978.

²² BRANDES–KURIAN: *Healing of Memories in Europe*, 2.

In 1989–91, the communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe came to an end, but the hearts are still wounded and waiting to be healed. The persecutions, expulsions, mass deportations, and mass murders suffered over 40 years under the communist governments left many wounds and many of them are still waiting for healing.

In Western Europe, there were also dictatorships after World War II:

Spain (Franco dictatorship – 1934–1976)

Portugal (Salazar dictatorship – 1926–1976)

Greece (military dictatorship –1967–1974)

These dictatorships also produced deep wounds, many of which are not healed to this day.

1.4.2. New Wounds in Europe after the End of the Cold War

After the end of the “Cold War”, in Europe the climate of reconciliation and mutual understanding came very quickly to an end.

The following are the most important European conflicts and wars after World War II:

- Azerbaijan and Armenia regarding the conflict around the Nagorno-Karabakh region.
- Georgia and Russia after the undeclared war and the dividing of Abkhazia from Georgia.
- Ukraine and Russia regarding the Eastern Ukraine civil war and the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula.
- Serbs and Croats after the war between Croatia and Serbia, 1991–1995, and behind century-old conflict lines.
- Bosnians, Croats, and Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the civil war in 1994.
- Greeks and Turks after the occupation of Northern Cyprus by Turkish troops.
- Moldavians and Russians regarding the split of the region of Transdnistria.

These conflicts produced new wounds and injuries and most of these unhealed wounds are still waiting to be healed.

2. The Need for Healing and the role of the Churches

2.1. Reconciliation in the Holy Bible

2.1.1. Reconciliation in the Old Testament – Some Examples

Probably the most famous interpersonal reconciliation story is the story of Joseph and his brothers: instead of punishing the brothers for their iniquity, Joseph finally invites them to a feast and forgives them with the words: “*And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life*” (Gen 45:5). Instead of the just “*life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, wound for wound*” (Gen 21:24), Joseph turns to forgiveness and reconciliation.

Another famous and beautiful reconciliation story of the Bible took place between the brothers Jacob and Esau. When an encounter with Esau started, Jacob expected punishment. „*But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept*” (Gen 33:4).

2.1.2. The Ministry of Reconciliation in the New Testament – Some Examples

Jesus urged people to eliminate all disagreements with others and to reconcile before confronting God: „*So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift*” (Matt 5:23f).

Jesus turns “*Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot*” into: “*If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also*” (Matt 5:38ff).

In the second epistle to the Corinthians (5,18ff), Paul puts it this way: “*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation... Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ.*”

2.2. The Secret of Reconciliation is Remembrance: Christians Live on Remembrance²³

In 1991, a student group from Germany visited the extermination camp of the National Socialists in Theresienstadt in the Czech Republic. They were welcomed by the Jewish guide Jiří²⁴ with the statement: “*The secret of reconciliation is remembrance.*”²⁵ Every human society bases its identity on remembrance in historiography and cultural history. Remembrance connects to the present as well as to the previous generations.²⁶ Moreover, during Eucharist, Christians also break the bread and drink the wine “*in remembrance of Jesus*”.²⁷

Desmond Tutu, inspired by a visit in the concentration camp Dachau-Munich, in his book, “*No future without forgiveness*”,²⁸ quoted George Santayana with the following words: “*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*”²⁹

2.3. The Role of the Churches in European Conflicts³⁰

The European Christian community had to confess that “*the history of the Christian churches... has been marked by many beneficial experiences, but also by schisms,*

²³ Cf. to this chapter Dieter BRANDES: *Reconciliation through Remembering – An Overview about the Methodology of Healing of Memories (HoM)*, in: *Revista Teologică*, 2/2016, Serie Nouă, Anul XXVI (98), Sibiu, 2016. 272–284. 274.

²⁴ *Der trennende Zaun ist gebrochen – Zur Verständigung zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, Evangelische Kirche der Böhmisches Brüder und Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland EKD Leipzig, 1998. 58.

²⁵ The provenance of this cognizance may be traced back to the Jewish scholar Israel ben Eliezer/Baal Shem Tov (1698 or 1700-1760), the constitutor of the Polish Hasidism: “*The exile exists in a long duration to forget. But in remembering exists the secret of salvation.*”

²⁶ See Dieter BRANDES: *Zur Methodologie von Healing of Memories und Bezüge zur ethnischen, kulturellen und religiösen Identität*, in: Dieter BRANDES – Olga LUKÁCS (ed.): *Reconciliatio nr. 2.2. Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen aufarbeiten*, Leipzig, 2011. 23–39. 26.

²⁷ *Participation in God’s Mission of Reconciliation – A Resource for Churches in Situations of Conflict* (nr. 148), Faith and Order Paper 201, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 2006. 52.

²⁸ Desmond TUTU: *No Future without Forgiveness*, Doubleday, 1999.

²⁹ George SANTAYANA: *Reason in Common Sense*, volume 1. *The Life of Reason*, 1905, quoted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Santayana

³⁰ This chapter is a short version of BRANDES: *The need for Reconciliation in Europe Part I*, 47f.

hostilities and even armed conflicts” (*Charta Oecumenica 3*) and they had to confess that “throughout history they themselves had created bad witnesses of the Christian message of reconciliation.”³¹

Michael Lapsley, director of the Healing of Memories Institute in Cape Town, states it this way: “Where we count, we have much in common ... we who strive to be disciples of Jesus have a story in which miraculous, but also complications, are mixed with the evil and the ugly.”³²

3. The Church’s Ministry of Reconciliation in Europe

3.1. Reconciliation – A Permanent Concern for the Conference of European Churches

At the First European Ecumenical Assembly in Basel Switzerland 1989, “representatives from all churches in Europe gathered for the first time since the church division between West and East”.³³

Section 5.3 of the final document speaks about “Healing the division of Europe”.

3.1.1. The Ministry of Reconciliation of the Conference of European Churches³⁴

The Conference of European Churches (CEC) was founded “in order to serve as a platform of encounter and dialogue between the churches in the divided Europe”.³⁵

³¹ BRANDES–KURIAN: *Healing of Memories in Europe*, 15.

³² Michael LAPSLEY SSM: *Healing Memories – Gewalt überwinden als Teil der Mission der Kirche*, speech June 2002 in Breklum/Germany, unpublished manuscript.

³³ Viorel IONIȚĂ: *Reconciliation – A Permanent Concern for the Conference of European Churches*, in: Vasile GRĂJDIAN – Olga LUKÁCS (ed.): *Reconciliatio nr. 4 Telling Stories of Hope – Reconciliation in South East Europe Compared to Worldwide Experiences. Festschrift in Honor of Dieter Brandes to his 65th Birthday*, Cluj-Napoca–Leipzig, 2010. 93–98. 94.

³⁴ This is the original title of a report of Viorel IONIȚĂ at the WCC International Consultation of Healing of Memories in Sâmbatâ-Romania, published in *Reconciliatio nr. 4.*, loc. cit. 93–98.

³⁵ IONIȚĂ: *Reconciliation*, 93.

The movement dates to the time of the Cold War, to the years between 1953 and 1957. Its aim was “to enable the churches of Europe to become instruments of peace and understanding”.³⁶

At the 5th Assembly, in 1967, in Pörtlach-Austria, Reconciliation was the guiding theme: “To Serve and Reconcile – the Task of the European Churches Today”.³⁷

Between 15th-21st May, 1989, in Basel, Switzerland, in cooperation with the Council of the European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE), the CEC “meant to bring a European contribution to the worldwide process of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)”.³⁸

Between 23rd-29th June, 1997, the Second European Ecumenical Assembly in Graz-Austria formulated: “We would request that the churches take on an active and persistent role in the peaceful transformation of conflicts (e.g. in Northern Ireland, in Cyprus) and in peace and reconciliation processes following violent conflicts (such as those in Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Chechnya etc.)”.³⁹

On 22nd April, 2001, in Strasbourg, France the presidents of the CEC, Metropolitan Jérémie of France, and of the CCEE, Cardinal Vlk of Prague, signed the *Charta Oecumenica*⁴⁰ as “Fundamental ecumenical responsibilities... to promote an ecumenical culture of dialogue and co-operation... and to provide agreed criteria for this.”⁴¹

Between 25th June–2nd July, 2003, the 12th Assembly of the CEC took place in Trondheim with the theme “Jesus Christ Heals and Reconciles: Our Witness in Europe”.

Between 4th-9th September, 2007, in Sibiu, Romania, the Third European Ecumenical Assembly started the guiding theme “The light of Christ shines upon all. Hope for renewal and unity in Europe”. Between the 5th and 9th Forum, the need for Healing of Memories in Europe was addressed.

On 6th April 2008, in Sibiu, Romania, the first common ecumenical foundation called “Reconciliation in South East Europe” was created with the participation of the

³⁶ Conference of European Churches in <http://archived.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/europe/cec.html>, picked up on the 18.06.2020

³⁷ Regarding the guiding themes of the assemblies compare *Conference of European Churches*, ibidem.

³⁸ Ibidem.

³⁹ *Reconciliation – Gift of God and Source of New Life*, in: RÜDIGER – Stefan VESPER: *Documents of the Second European Ecumenical Assembly*, Graz, 1998. 51.

⁴⁰ “However, it has no magisterial or dogmatic character, nor is it legally binding under church law.” (IONIȚĂ: *Reconciliation*, 93).

⁴¹ Ibidem.

Christian denominations of Romania and the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), and the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) as members.

The main aims of the foundation were to advance:

- Reconciliation processes between churches, cultures and religions;
- The intercultural and interreligious dialogue in South Eastern Europe and so to counter the estrangements between Western and Eastern European culture.

3.1.2. The Charta Oecumenica as the Ecumenical Church's Confession of Reconciliation in Europe⁴²

A significant step regarding the “*European Church Ministry of Reconciliation*” and also in promoting an ecumenical culture of dialogue, was the creation of the *Charta Oecumenica* as a common ecumenical document, ratified in 2001, in which the European Churches confessed their own responsibility for reconciliation in Europe.

For the processes of Healing of Memories, the following ministries of the Christian churches are confessed in the *Charta Oecumenica*:

(1) The Ministry of Reconciliation *between Churches*:

Charta Oecumenica 3 “*Moving towards one another*”:

“*In the spirit of the Gospel, we must reappraise together the history of the Christian churches, which has been marked by many beneficial experiences but also by schisms, hostilities and even armed conflicts.*”

(2) The Ministry of Reconciliation *among Peoples and Cultures*:

Charta Oecumenica 8 “*Reconciling peoples and cultures*”:

“*In view of numerous conflicts, the churches are called upon to serve together the cause of reconciliation among peoples and cultures.*”

⁴² This chapter is a short summary of the chapter with the same name in Dieter BRANDES: *The need for Reconciliation in Europe Part II – The Church's Ministry of Reconciliation, Reconciliation – a Permanent Concern for the Conference of European churches*, in: *Teologia – Revista Facultății de Teologie Ortodoxă*, Anul XXI, Nr. 1(70), Arad, 2017. 82–109. 108f.

- (3) The Ministry of Reconciliation regarding *Judaism*:
Charta Oecumenica 10 “*Strengthening community with Judaism.*”
- (4) The Ministry of Reconciliation regarding *Islam*.
Charta Oecumenica 11 “*Cultivating relations with Islam.*”

3.2. Examples of Reconciliation Processes Between and Within Churches

3.2.1. Regional Reconciliation Processes

1945 The Stuttgart Church Confessions of Guilt

The Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt (*Stuttgarter Schuldbekennntnis*) from 19th October, 1945 was a declaration of guilt by representatives of the Evangelical Church in Germany (*Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, EKD*), in which the German Protestant Churches confessed: “*We accuse ourselves for not standing to our beliefs more courageously, for not praying more faithfully, for not believing more joyously, and for not loving more ardently.*”⁴³

The Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt “*opened again the way to international ecclesiastical ecumenism*” and “*paved the way to reconciliation with churches in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary and in Western Europe with France, the Benelux countries, Great Britain, Denmark and others.*”⁴⁴

The Reconciliation Process Between the Polish Ecumenical Council and the Churches in Germany

In February 1957, for the first time, an official EKD delegation, headed by the President of the Church of Hessen-Nassau Martin Niemoeller, visited the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession in Poland (Polish: Kościół Ewangelicko-Augsburski w

⁴³ Translation of the Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt from October 1945, for instance: <https://victimsfamiliesforthedeathpenalty.blogspot.com/2014/10/the-stuttgart-declaration-of-guilt.html>, picked up on the 18.06.2020

⁴⁴ Ibidem.

Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej).⁴⁵

In 1965, the so called “*East Memorandum*”⁴⁶ of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) brought about a sustained breakthrough.

The “*East Memorandum*” of the EKD was strongly controversial and triggered large discussions in Germany. But this memorandum “*regarded as the pioneer of the policy of détente*”.⁴⁷

In 1964 then, the German Catholic lay movement Pax Christi started a pilgrimage to the concentration camp Auschwitz with visits also to concentration camp victims and surviving descendants in Poland.

The Separating Fence Between Czechia and Germany is Broken

In 1955, the official church dialogue between churches in Germany and the Czech Republic had begun with the first visit of an EKD delegation to the Churches of Czechoslovakia.

There followed a long and painful process of reconciliation, which reached its preliminary climax in 1998 with the joint memorandum of the Evangelical Church of the Bohemian Brethren and the Evangelical Church in Germany: “*The separating fence has been broken off*.”⁴⁸

The Healing of Memories Process Between the Church of Norway and the Sámi

The first initiative for a dialogue and reconciliation between the Church of Norway and the Sámi of Norway was taken in October 2004⁴⁹ when the Lutheran

⁴⁵ Cf. *Neue Gräben in Europa? Versöhnung*, Kontaktausschuss des Polnischen Ökumenischen Rates und der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, Hannover, 1997. 8.

⁴⁶ Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, Hannover, 1965.

⁴⁷ *Dialog, Versöhnung und Brüderlichkeit, Gemeinsames Wort der Deutschen und der Polnischen Bischofskonferenz vom 13. Dezember 1995*, press release of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference of Germany, Bonn, 13th December, 1995.

⁴⁸ *Der trennende Zaun ist gebrochen – Zur Verständigung zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen*, Evangelische Kirche der Böhmisches Brüder und Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland EKD, Leipzig, 1998.

⁴⁹ Rolf STEFFENSEN: *The Difficult Talks – Experiences from a Reconciliation Process of Norway*, in *Reconciliatio* nr. 7, loc.cit. 54–58. 54.

Church Diocese Council of Sør-Hålogaland, Northern Norway, decided to start a Healing of Memories Process initially for 3 years.

The process Healing of Memories between the Church of Norway and the Sámi contained two elements:⁵⁰

1. “*a dialogue process between the ethnic majority Norwegians and the indigenous minority Samies*”;
2. an exchange programme between representatives of the Church of Norway and the Sámi.

After 4 years of “scratching of the surface”, in October 2008, at a conference in Bodo, the centre of the conflict finally was focused by the issue “*the demonization of the old Sami faith through the Church missionary efforts since early 1700*”.⁵¹

The Healing of Memories Process in Northern Ireland

Although „*churches have played little direct role in the achieving of [the] political transformation*”,⁵² some church-oriented organizations started reconciliation processes in Northern Ireland. The following describes three such activities:⁵³

(1) The Institute of Healing Through Remembering in Belfast:

The Healing Through Remembering (HTR) initiative as a project „*emerged from discussions held in 1999 with a range of individuals concerning the issue of dealing with the past*”.⁵⁴

The peace project was officially launched in 2001 to “*individually and collectively contribute to the healing of the wounds of society*”.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Ibidem, 56.

⁵² Geraldine SMYTH: *Peace Ten Years on: and where are the Churches Now?* in: Dieter BRANDES (ed.): *Reconciliation nr. 1 Healing of Memories in Europe*, Leipzig, 2008. 156–170. 156.

⁵³ At the European Ecumenical Assembly 2007 in Sibiu-Romania, the three initiatives have been presented together with the foundation Reconciliation in South East Europa (RSEE) a common concept of steps of Healing of Memories.

⁵⁴ *Making Peace with the Past*, Institute Healing through Remembering, Belfast, 2006. 1.

⁵⁵ Ibidem.

(2) The Corrymeela Community:

„Corrymeela is Northern Ireland's oldest peace and reconciliation organisation.”⁵⁶

David Steven, the leader of the Corrymeela Community from 2003 to 2010 underlines the importance of dealing with the memories: “*Whatever is remembered has a direct bearing on the things that preoccupy us today.*”⁵⁷

(3) The “Education for Reconciliation” of the Irish School of Ecumenics in Dublin:

The Department of the (Dublin) Irish School of Ecumenics in Belfast counts on 6 resources for reconciliation in Northern Ireland:⁵⁸

The Consultative Group on the Past, the group Healing Through Remembering, the community-based group Towards Understanding and Healing, the Journey Towards Healing, the Education for Reconciliation, and the Victims Unit.

3.2.2. Transregional Reconciliation Processes

The Consultation Process “Reconciliation in Europe” – Responsibility of the Churches in Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and Germany

In 1997, consultations on “*Reconciliation in Europe – The Church Ministry in Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and Germany*”⁵⁹ took place, in which the main question was: “*What has to happen to finish this historical bonding?*”

Finally, it was found that injuries between humans, cultures and peoples “*did not only root in the wars of the 20th century. Very often, they date far back in history.*”⁶⁰ In the case of Orthodox, Greek-Catholic (Eastern Catholic), and Roman-Catholic churches in the habitat of Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland have to be retraced back to the time of the

⁵⁶ *The Corrymeela Community*: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-corrymeela-community>

⁵⁷ David STEVENS: *Dealing with the Past in Northern Ireland. The Corrymeela House Perspective*, in: *Reconciliatio nr. 1*, loc. cit. 115–143. 116.

⁵⁸ Johnston MCMMASTER: *Healing of Memories in Northern Ireland*, in: *Reconciliatio nr. 7*, loc. cit. 77–84. 82.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Versöhnung in Europa – Aufgabe der Kirchen in der Ukraine, in Weissrussland, Polen und Deutschland*, Kirchenamt der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland EKD, Hannover, 2006.

⁶⁰ BRANDES: *The need for Reconciliation in Europe Part II*, 90.

Brest jurisdiction in 1596 (inception of the Union of Brest of the Greek-Catholic church). Other 16 consultations followed from 1997 to 2006.⁶¹

The final paper of the last conference, in 2006, in Hannover declared as results: “*The Interchurch Working Group succeeded that in the participating churches of the respective countries trust in their work was growing.*”⁶²

The Anglican-Orthodox Dialog

In the 17th century already, the Archbishop George Abbot of Canterbury invited the Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril of Constantinople to send Greek to England to study Theology.⁶³ This exchange took place from 1611 to 1633.

In July 1888, the Assembly of the Anglican Bishops at the third Lambeth Conference⁶⁴ declared in its final document at resolution no. 17: “*This Conference... desires to express its hope that the barriers to fuller communion may be... removed by further intercourse and extended enlightenment.*”⁶⁵

The following Orthodox-Anglican dialog may be scaled into four phases:⁶⁶

- (1) The *Moscow Agreed Statement* in 1976:⁶⁷ “*the Filioque clause was introduced into this Creed without the authority of an Ecumenical Council.*”
- (2) The *Dublin Agreed Statement* in 1984: the *Filioque* by both Anglicans and Orthodox “*led to the reaffirmation... that this phrase should not be included in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*”.⁶⁸

⁶¹ Cf. *Versöhnung in Europa*, 29.

⁶² *Ibidem*, 30.

⁶³ Cf. *Orthodox Anglicanism and Christian Reunion*: <https://www.pravoslavie.ru/59798.html>

⁶⁴ For more information cf. David RANDALL (ed.): *The Lambeth Conferences of 1867, 1878 and 1888*, London, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1889

⁶⁵ Cf. *Orthodox Anglicanism and Christian Reunion*, *ibidem*.

⁶⁶ For more detailed information cf. for instance Gary VACHICOURAS: *Historical Survey on the International Bilateral Dialogues of the Orthodox Church*, *Derecho y religión*, nr. 3, 2008 (Ejemplar dedicado a: Christianity in Europe). 151–190; *Dokumente wachsender Übereinstimmung. Sämtliche Berichte und Konsentexte interkonfessioneller Gespräche auf Weltebene*, Bd. 1: 1931–1982, Bd. 2: 1982–1990, Bd. 3: 1990–2001 edited by H. MEYER u. a., Paderborn–Frankfurt a.M., 1983–1992.

⁶⁷ http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103815/the_moscow_statement.pdf

⁶⁸ http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103812/the_dublin_statement.pdf

(3) The *Cyprus Agreed Statement* in 2006:⁶⁹ “*The universal Church exists only as a communion of local churches.*”⁷⁰

(4) In 2015, the Commission finished with the final agreed Statement, “*In the Image and Likeness of God: A Hope-Filled Anthropology*,” known as the Buffalo Statement.⁷¹

1996: The Porvoo Declaration between the Anglican Churches of Great Britain and the Lutheran Churches of Northern Europe⁷²

In 1985, discussions started between the Church of England, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR, and the Evangelical Church in Germany.

The goal of this process was to bring a 460-year-old schism to an end between the Church of England and the protestant churches of the continent.

In 1991, the Meissen Agreement⁷³ was signed in London and in Berlin.⁷⁴

The Pro Oriente Reconciliation Process Regarding the Schism of the “Union of Brest” and the “Union of Transylvania”⁷⁵

On the former territories of the Habsburg Empire in the Baltic area, in Ukraine and in the area of Hungary–Transylvania, a history of mutual injuries and infringements

⁶⁹ *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue: The Church of the Triune God. The Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue 2006*. London, The Anglican Communion Office, 2006. 9.

⁷⁰ „It is a fact of both Orthodox and Anglican church life that each church is organized on the basis of national or regional local churches.” Hugh WYBREW: *The Church of the Triune God: the Cyprus Agreed Statement of the International Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue 2006*, Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift, Neue Folge der Revue internationale de théologie, Band 97, Zürich, 2007, Heft 4. 249–274. 260.

⁷¹ Published by the Anglican Communion Office: <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/208538/in-the-image-and-likeness-of-god-a-hope-filled-anthropology-2015.pdf>

⁷² To this article cf. BRANDES: *The Need for Reconciliation in Europe Part II*, 96f.

⁷³ *On the Way to Visible Unity A Common Statement*, 18th March, 1988, Meissen.

⁷⁴ The “Meissen Declaration” explained: “*We ... on the basis of our sharing the common apostolic faith and in the light of what we have rediscovered of our common history and heritage, commit ourselves to strive together for full, visible unity.*”

⁷⁵ Cf. to this passage Dieter BRANDES: *Healing of Memories – Eine Aufgabe christlicher Kirchen in Europa*, in epd-Dokumentation nr. 40 / 2005, Evangelischer Pressedienst, Frankfurt/M, 2005. 16–25. 18.

was sustained between the Orthodox and the Greek Catholic Churches since the time of the Russian–Habsburg–Hungarian–Ottoman wars.

On the background of the jurisdiction of the “Church Union of Brest”, in 1596 (newly confirmed in 1643), and the Union of 1692 in today’s Ukrainian territory, as well as the founding of the Greek Catholic Church from 1698 to 1701 in Transylvania, “*it is very necessary to clarify the Orthodox and Greek Catholic relations*”.⁷⁶

Since 2001, the “Pro Oriente” Foundation in Vienna has been conducting a source-critical research project on the union of the Greek-Catholic in Transylvania with the Catholic Church (1697–1761) and the resistances against it.⁷⁷

Since 2002, Pro Oriente has been conducting a further source-critical research project dealing with the controversial questions of the union of the Greek-Catholic with the Catholic Church in the “Union of Brest” (1596/1692).⁷⁸

3.3. Healing of Memories Processes in South Eastern Europe in the Responsibility of the CPCE, the CEC, and the WCC

In October 2004, the process “*Healing of Memories (HoM) between churches, religions and cultures in South Eastern Europe*” began in cooperation of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC).

At first, HoM started in Romania, it being a country between the historical and cultural areas of Western, Eastern, and South Eastern Europe. Romania is a borderland between the historical European cultural regions, and it forms many denominational, cultural and national boundaries and areas of tension between Western and Eastern European culture.

⁷⁶ BRANDES: *The need for Reconciliation in Europe Part II.*, 97.

Cf. to the sensitive relations between the Roman Catholics and the Greek Catholics in Miroslaw MARYNOWYCH: *Die Osterweiterung der Europäischen Institutionen – Historische Belastungen am Beispiel der Ukraine in Versöhnung in Europa – Aufgabe der Kirchen in Belarus, Polen und Deutschland*, Kontaktausschuss des Polnischen Ökumenischen Rates und der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, Hannover, 1998. 24–37. 35f.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Pro Oriente - Union von Siebenbürgen*: http://www.pro-oriente.at/Union_Siebenbuergen/

⁷⁸ Cf. *Pro Oriente - Union von Brest*: http://www.pro-oriente.at/Union_Brest/

A process of Healing of Memories needs to achieve the meticulous reprocessing of the comparative political, cultural, and religious history. However, it should not be stuck in the “politically-ethnically-coloured historian’s quarrel”.

From 2004 to 2007, the “*Interdisciplinary researching of the history of the Nation, Cultures and Religions and/or Communities*” was realized in Romania as a first step of the Macro Level of Healing of Memories as a society-oriented reconciliation process between religions, cultures, nations, and within communities. This step was still realized in cooperation and on behalf of the CPCE and the CEC and was defined as an interdisciplinary research in cooperation with Faculties of Theology, History, and Sociology.⁷⁹ During this process, a synopsis of the different views of history of the different denominations, religions, and cultures was elaborated.⁸⁰

Since 2004, nine conferences were organized in nine historical regions of Romania: *Transylvania* in Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár in May 2005, *Moldova* in Iași/Jászvásár, and *Bucovina* in Suceava/Szucsáva in May 2006, *Banat/Bánság* in Timișoara/Temesvár, and *Bihar/Bihar vármegye* in Oradea/Nagyvárad in June 2006, *Muntenia (Țara Românească)* in Bucharest, and *Dobrogea* in Constanța in November 2006, *Maramureș/Máramaros* in Baia Mare/Nagybánya in March 2007, the historical region *Satu Mare/Szatmár vármegye* in Satu Mare/Szatmárnémeti in November 2007.

A “*Healing of Memories European International Conference*” took place in Bucharest in June 2007⁸¹ in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

HoM in Romania was also present with two presentations at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly (EEA3) between the 4th and 9th September 2007 in Sibiu/Nagyszeben:

- Healing of Memories: Church and Cultural Minorities regarding *Charta Oecumenica 4* and 8.
- Healing of Memories: Reconciliation between churches in Europe regarding *Charta Oecumenica 3*.

⁷⁹ The author was requested to carry out this process. Scientific assistant for the Protestant side was Olga Lukács and for the Orthodox side Daniel Buda and later Vasile Grăjdian.

⁸⁰ As a result of the “International Conference Healing of Memories in Romania” of June 2007 in Bucharest, the “different views of history” are published in Dieter BRANDES – Olga LUKÁCS: *Geschichte der Kirchen Rumäniens in Zeittabellen*, in: *Reconciliatio nr. 2, 2.* 353–468.

⁸¹ The results of the conference were published in *Reconciliatio nr. 2. 2.*

In April 2008, an ecumenical foundation called “*Reconciliation in South East Europe – RSEE*” was created in Sibiu/Nagyszeben/Hermannstadt, in which the Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic churches in Romania were represented, as well as the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE), the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC).

The Foundation pursued the objective “*to support the reconciliation between churches, cultures, and religions in South Eastern Europe*” (§1 of the constituting document). The Foundation continued Healing of Memories processes for Romania and border-crossing processes for the Balkan region focusing on Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Hungary, and Ukraine.

The following conferences/processes were realized in responsibility of the RSEE: *Bihor/Bihar vármegye* in Oradea/Nagyvárad and Biharkeresztes in December 2008, *Dobrogea*⁸² in Constanța in June 2009, *Bucovina*⁸³ in Czernowitz, (German Tschernowitz, Ukrainian Чернівці, Romanian Cernăuți) in December 2010 in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, *the Republic of Moldova/Basarabia* in *Chișinău* in 2012 in cooperation with the World Council of Churches WCC.

In *Budapest* 2011 a first international conference “Healing the wounds of Trianon”⁸⁴ took place in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

In cooperation with the World Council of Churches (WCC) three international conferences were organized:

- in May 2009 an „International Consultation on Healing of Memories” in the Sâmbăta de Sus monastery in Transylvania;
- in May 2010 a “European Interreligious Consultation on Healing of Memories” in Sarajevo Bosnia-Herzegovina;
- in September 2010 a „Healing of Memories Reconciliation between People, Cultures and Religions Conference” in Cape Town, South Africa.⁸⁵

⁸² Cross-country Romania and Bulgaria.

⁸³ Cross-country Romania and Ukraine.

⁸⁴ With participation of representatives of churches of all afflicted countries.

⁸⁵ This conference was organized together with the Institute for the Healing of Memories in Cape Town.

In 2008, the RSEE Foundation began trainings for facilitators of Healing of Memories as ecumenical courses in collaboration with the faculties of Theology of the Universities of Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár,⁸⁶ Alba Iulia/Gyulafehérvár,⁸⁷ and Sibiu/Nagyszeben,⁸⁸ initially focusing on⁸⁹:

(A) Training in Pastoral Care, Communication and Coordination of Group Work (HoM1)

- Healing of Memories as a challenge for the churches in Transylvania.
- Life stories and identity.
- Basics of communication in church and society.
- Exercise of group leadership in an interreligious and intercultural context.
- Intercultural and interreligious identity and perception.

In October 2009, the second part of the training began with the following priorities:

(B) Training for Intercultural Communication and Mediation (HoM2)

- Healing of Memories in the intercultural context of Transylvania.
- Identity and foreignness as relationship associated.
- Mediation and mediation techniques to acquire mediative competence.
- Solution-oriented techniques for moderation and communication.
- Life stories in relation to one's own and foreign cultural identity.
- Practical experience with techniques of moderation in intercultural and interreligious seminars of Healing of Memories.

In 2011/2012, the courses were expanded to become a Master's course, which was accredited by the Ministry of Science in Romania and has since been offered as a Master's Course at the universities of Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár, Alba Iulia/ Gyulafehérvár, and Sibiu/Nagyszeben.

⁸⁶ The main responsible for the course was Olga Lukács.

⁸⁷ The main responsible for the course was Mihai Himcinschi.

⁸⁸ The main responsible for the course was Vasile Grăjdian.

⁸⁹ One training was realized at the Greek Catholic Department in Blaj.

In 2010, a special training for facilitators in the Roma-Gadje reconciliation work first began in Oradea. In 2011 and 2012, further trainings followed in Mukatschewo (Мукачево)/Munkács, Ukraine, and Novi Sad (Нови Сад)/Újvidék, Serbia.

3.4. The Church Dealing with Genocides – the Holocaust as an Example

3.4.1. The Protestant Churches of Germany

The initial statements of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) after the end of the war, such as the Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt⁹⁰ in October 1945 and the Darmstädter Wort in 1947⁹¹ did not verbally mention the Holocaust, but spoke of a complicity of Christians in the World War and the crimes of National Socialism.

In a “*statement on the Jewish problem*” of the Reichsbruderrat council of the Confessing Church in April 1948,⁹² in Darmstadt it was admitted: “*We have offered our hand to Christians on all the injustice and suffering that happened to Israel among us.*”

Firstly, from April 23rd to April 27th, 1950 in Berlin-Weissensee, the synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany adopted a statement on “*Blame Israel*”:⁹³ “*We state that through neglect and silence before the God of mercy we have become accomplices in the injustice committed by the people against the Jews.*”⁹⁴

⁹⁰ „Through us, infinite suffering has been brought upon many peoples and countries.” *Die Stuttgarter Erklärung*, Verordnungs- und Nachrichtenblatt der EKD, Nr. 1, January 1946.

⁹¹ „The Church’s alliance with conservative powers has yielded terrible consequences.” in: *Darmstädter Wort des Bruderrates der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland – Zum politischen Weg unseres Volkes vom 8. August 1947*, in: *Kirchliches Jahrbuch 1945-1948*, Gütersloh, 1950. 220 ff.

⁹² Hartmut LUDWIG: *Darmstädter Wort*, in: *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart 4., 4th edition volume 3*, Tübingen, 1999. Column 581f.

⁹³ *Kirchliches Jahrbuch für die Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland 1950*, Gütersloh, 1951, 5f.

⁹⁴ The version originally submitted by Heinrich Vogel “*We profess the Germans’ guilt in the mass murder of the Jews...*” However, the Synod rejected this version.

In 1980, the Rhinland Synod Declaration stated in the “*Synodical Resolution on the Renewal of Relations between Christians and Jews*”: “*We affirm the responsibility and guilt of the Christians in Germany for the Holocaust*”.⁹⁵ Other German Synod Declarations followed.

3.4.2. *The Catholic Church of Germany*

The behaviour of Pope Pius XII concerning the crime of the Holocaust has been controversial and discussed within and outside of the Catholic Church. On the one hand, he fought for the salvation of the Roman Jews, on the other hand, he was silent concerning the Holocaust, although he had known about the proceedings, as Rolf Hochhuth had also researched for his theatre play.⁹⁶

A prayer of penitence of John XXIII in 1963 reads: „*We recognize that Kain’s sign is on our forehead... Forgive us, that for the second time we nailed You to the cross.*”⁹⁷

Through its statement, “*Nostra Aetate*”,⁹⁸ the Second Vatican Council of 1965 condemned – for the first time – the “*Deicide Theory*”.

The Joint Synod of the German Dioceses declared on November 22, 1975: “*We were a church community that lived too much with their backs turned to the fate of this persecuted Jewish people... and were silent regarding the crimes committed against Jews and Judaism.*”⁹⁹

On March 12, 2000, Pope John Paul II asked God for forgiveness for the hatred against the Jews:

“*We apologize and seek to promote genuine brotherhood with the people of the covenant.*”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ *Landessynode der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland*, Protocol from 12th January 1980.

⁹⁶ Rolf Hochhuth: *Der Stellvertreter. Ein christliches Trauerspiel*, Reinbek, 1963.

⁹⁷ “*Wir erkennen...*” in *Galil.com: Jüdisches Leben online*. www.hagalil.com/nizza/johannes-23.htm, viewed on 13th October 2018.

⁹⁸ Cf. Hans Hermann HENRIX (ed.): *Nostra Aetate – Ein zukunftsweisender Konzilstext. Die Haltung der Kirche zum Judentum 40 Jahre danach*, in: *Aachener Beiträge zu Pastoral- und Bildungsfragen 23*, Aachen 2006. 233–237.

⁹⁹ Alexander GROSS: *Geborsame Kirche – ungehorsame Christen im Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz, 2000. 80f.

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/dokumentation-das-schuldbekenntnis-im-wortlaut-a-68778.html>

**4. Healing of Memories as a Way to Overcome Wounds
and Misunderstandings Passed Down Between Churches,
Cultures and Religions¹⁰¹**

Healing of Memories (HoM) is a methodology “to help overcome frozen history” by putting emphasis on voices that were not heard, were ignored, or not acknowledged so far.

Healing of Memories is a process for dealing with current injuries after oppression, as well as for overcoming century-old injuries that were passed down between peoples and cultures. In this way, HoM is an interdisciplinary approach for dealing with deeply rooted painful, frozen history on cultural, religious and ethnic level, and within personal relationships.

Originally, Healing of Memories has been developed in South Africa as a counselling process in pastoral care and in community reconciliation development. However, during the course of the HoM process in South Eastern Europe, it was soon quite clear that in dealing with tensions and painful experiences between religions and cultures, it is very important to also address “*deep historical streams*”.¹⁰²

Ordinarily, HoM has been subordinated to the processes of Conflict Transformation and Transitional Justice. With reference to different target groups, two levels of the HoM processes are mainly developed:

- Micro Level: Healing of Memories as a counselling process in pastoral care and community reconciliation development
- Macro Level: Healing of Memories as a society-oriented reconciliation process between religions, cultures, nations, and within communities

The two levels of Healing of Memories were realized in the following steps:

- (1) Micro Level: Healing of Memories as a counselling process in pastoral care and community reconciliation development;

Healing of Memories as a counselling process is a “*process of the generations*” that includes:

¹⁰¹ For more detailed information cf. BRANDES: *Reconciliation through Remembering*, loc.cit.

¹⁰² BRANDES: *Reconciliation through Remembering*, 272.

- (a) Process part A: “*walking together through history*”;
- (b) Process part B: “*sharing the pain of others*”;
- (c) Process part C: “*preparing the future together*”.

(2) Macro Level: Healing of Memories as a society-oriented reconciliation process between religions, cultures, nations, and within communities;

Healing of Memories as a society-oriented reconciliation process is realized in four steps:

- (a) Interdisciplinary researching of the history of the nations, cultures and religions, and/or communities;
- (b) Training of regional facilitators of Healing of Memories;¹⁰³
- (c) Organizing local seminars of Healing of Memories (Micro Level);¹⁰⁴
- (d) Finding national, intercultural/interreligious and/or community processes in common responsibility to create the future together.

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¹⁰³ Cf. 3.3. above.

¹⁰⁴ These seminars require “very sensitive pastoral care” and need a very large process depth. Therefore, this part of the process will be co-moderated by professionally educated priests and teachers of the churches involved in the process.

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