Introduction

It was late summer when I visited Novi Sad for the first time.[1] I found a city full of young, joyous people. In the late evening, it was still very hot, and the street cafés and restaurants that filled the old inner city were populated with laughing families, playing children, flirting adolescents, and seniors taking their ease. Music was everywhere and a warm wind blew over the scene. Even the beach at the Danube, a popular place for recreation and swimming, was full of life until late into the night. Many were wading or swimming in the warm, shallow water. Boats hung with lanterns and loaded with happy parties floated on the river. Others were enjoying the many sports facilities around the university, playing basketball, jogging, or just having fun.

In winter, however, the atmosphere in the city is very different. It can get bitterly cold with temperatures below freezing, and snow and ice are abundant. Each year in that very season, around the January 23, the city commemorates a gruesome event that took place in 1942. Over three days, unarmed civilians, about one thousand men, women, children, old and young, were taken to the Danube and shot, or murdered in the streets, or in their own homes. The massacre became known as the Cold Days. The same beach that is so popular today and attracts thousands during the summer season was the scene of horrific crimes: Hundreds of people were brought in vans from the city and forced to undress and wait on the ice to be shot and thrown into the frigid Danube. When they resisted, they were beaten with rifle butts or kicked with heavy military boots. It was said that some children suffered so dreadfully from the icy cold that they begged to be shot. The soccer field near today's university sport facilities was another site where scores were executed during those days, seventy-five years ago.

This book studies the Novi Sad massacre and tries to answer the question of what exactly happened during the Cold Days of 1942. How was the incident understood at the time, and how has it been remembered since then? What

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was distinctive about this particular act of mass killing in a time when similar atrocities were taking place all over Eastern Europe—in Poland, the Baltic states, the Soviet Union, and, closer to Novi Sad, in occupied Yugoslavia, in the Independent State of Croatia, and in many areas occupied by the German Wehrmacht and its allies? What was its context in Novi Sad, and what historical developments made it possible? In what way did local, regional, national, and international actors work together to execute this war crime? How did the people who witnessed the massacre, who survived it, or who were in some other way involved in it try to forget it or to remember it afterward? The central focus of this book is on this last question. How did the story of the massacre, the way it was remembered (and the way it was forgotten), change between 1942 and 1989? And how do these changes reflect political, social, and cultural changes in Hungarian society. But first we should explain why this particular event was selected for such an investigation.

One peculiarity of the 1942 Novi Sad massacre was the fact that the atrocities happened in a city that had a civilian administration. The town was considered part of the Kingdom of Hungary, as it had been for decades prior to 1918. In 1943–44, the Miklós Horthy regime ordered a trial of some of the commanding officers at Novi Sad. This was unique. By that date no other country allied to Nazi Germany had yet taken legal steps against its own officers who were involved in war crimes. Nor did the Allies inquire into atrocities committed by their own armies. Why did the Horthy regime investigate and prosecute some of those who were responsible for the 1942 massacre? What was the background of this trial?

This book further investigates how postwar governments attempted to punish the officers who were responsible for the 1942 massacre and what effect the changing political context had on the postwar trials. At the end of 1944, when Yugoslavian partisans conquered the area around Novi Sad, they murdered thousands of Hungarians and others whom they had branded as "collaborators." They justified these atrocities, at least in part, by referring to the Hungarian crimes of 1942. Tito's triumph also resulted in a trial in Yugoslavia. As a result, more than a dozen officers and others who were suspected of participating in the 1942 massacre were executed in 1946. What effect did the Yugoslavian revenge have on the remembering of 1942?

Other officers and soldiers involved in the Novi Sad atrocities were imprisoned in Soviet prisoner-of-war camps, and later, during the Stalinist period, in Hungarian labor camps. How did Stalinist propaganda portray the 1942 massacre? What happened when the Revolution of 1956 broke out, leading to the temporary collapse of the Communist dictatorship? How did the events of 1956 influence the forgetting and remembering of Novi Sad?

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In 1964, the Hungarian writer Tibor Cseres published his novel *Cold Days*, the fictional story of four soldiers involved in the 1942 raid and their struggles with memories and feelings of guilt. Cseres's book had such an enormous effect on the remembering of Novi Sad that its title became a synonym for the 1942 massacre: the Cold Days. Two years later, a film was produced based on the novel. Both the novel and film received national and international acclaim. The remembrance of Novi Sad 1942 changed after the appearance of these literary and cinematic treatments and yet again in the context of political changes wrought by the Communist regime under János Kádár during the 1960s and 1970s. The question of the role of "ordinary Hungarians" in the war and during the Holocaust, which had been silenced in the 1950s, was raised once again. A decade later, in the 1980s, victims of the Holocaust came to be increasingly remembered internationally. How did the transnational wave of Holocaust remembrance influence thinking about the 1942 massacre? This is a difficult question because the relationship between the Holocaust and the Novi Sad raid is a complicated one—but this makes a study of the massacre even more interesting.

PART OF THE HOLOCAUST OR NOT?

The 1942 mass murder at Novi Sad was and was not part of the Holocaust in Hungary. It was a part of it because the army soldiers and the gendarmes (a militarized police force) who carried out the raid and the executions of unarmed civilians targeted people who were defined as "Jews" according to various anti-Jewish laws introduced since 1939.[2] During the raid, rumors spread throughout the city that the Germans were killing the Jews in Belgrade (south of Novi Sad in German-occupied Serbia) and distributing their wealth, and that the Hungarians would follow this example. There were also speculations, during and after the Novi Sad massacre, that the commanding Hungarian officers involved were motivated by a desire to demonstrate their ability and willingness to execute mass violence on a par with that carried out by German troops. The fact that in 1944 four of the main defendants in the military trial escaped to the Reich, where Hitler granted them political asylum, also speaks in favor of subsuming the Novi Sad atrocities to the German slaughter of millions of Jews all over Europe.

However, there are also a number of solid arguments for distancing the 1942 massacre from the Holocaust. First of all, what became known as the Holocaust in Hungary took place two years later, in the spring of 1944, with the deportation of almost half a million Jews from Hungary to extermination camps in Poland. In the spring of 1942, immediately after the massacres in the

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Bačka, the Hungarian government decided to suspend similar operations in the region.[3] There were also attempts to improve the situation of the Serbian minority.

One and a half years later, in the summer of 1943, the government even put some of the officers involved in the massacre on trial. In fact, until the German occupation in March 1944, Hungary remained the last country in Central Europe where large numbers of Jews (800,000) had survived the murderous years since 1941, when most of the Jews in other European countries, West and East, had been killed. Only then did the "Holocaust after the Holocaust" begin, the deportations and mass killings that Hungarian Fascists, gendarmes, and civil servants carried out quickly and with extreme efficiency during a few weeks between April and June 1944.[4] In May of that year, Jews who had survived the massacre of 1942 were deported from Novi Sad. But these deportations were *not* a logical consequence of the raid of 1942. Even if the 1942 mass murder was somehow related to the Holocaust, it might be more profitable to study the two events in a wider context.

BLOODLANDS, THE SECOND WORLD WAR, AND BORDERLAND MASS VIOLENCE

Most recently, Raz Segal, who has studied the mass violence of the Hungarian army in the Carpatho-Ukraine, has claimed that the "the ideological and emotional meanings of the terms 'Holocaust' and 'antisemitism' have obstructed their use as analytical concepts in Holocaust scholarship."[5] Segal claims that it was "the drive to realize 'Greater Hungary' with a marked Magyar majority [that] generated multi-layered mass violence against non-Jews as well as Jews."[6]

The same is true of Novi Sad, where Hungarian soldiers and gendarmes murdered hundreds of Serbs together with Jews, Roma, and others whom they suspected of supporting the partisan movement or Communism. Some of the victims were just non-Magyars who did not speak Hungarian, such as members of the small Russian community that had fled the Russian Revolution in 1917 and settled in Novi Sad. For the next decades, as we shall see throughout the course of this study, it tainted the relationship between Hungary and Yugoslavia, and later Serbia.

It should also be taken into account that Yugoslavia's record of mass violence during the Second World War was an extremely complex one.[7] Ideological civil war, for example, that of the monarchist-nationalist Četniks against the Communists, was entangled with interethnic or ethnicized conflicts involving Croats, Serbs, Bosniaks, and others, while the brutalities of occupying armies (Germans, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Italians) had connections with the

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Ustaša regime in Croatia or the collaborating Nedić government in Belgrade. The above-mentioned bloody revenge of the partisans in 1944–45 against Germans, Hungarians, and others, is also a part of this history of mass violence.

In a wider context, the massacre of Novi Sad was just one of countless similar episodes that marked the Second World War, or, if we view it from an even broader temporal perspective, the murderous time between the First World War and the end of the 1940s.[8]

When Timothy Snyder defined the "bloodlands" of Eastern Europe as the "lands between Stalin and Hitler," where between fourteen and seventeen million people were murdered between 1933 and 1945, he left out the southeastern areas. When the Balkans are included, we can speak of, in the words of Mark Mazower, a "zone of genocide . . . stretching from the Baltic through the Black Sea to Anatolia and the Mediterranean."[9] Snyder also did not include the earlier phase, when the large empires disintegrated at the dawn of the First World War. Aviel Roshwald spoke of a "genocidal crisis" in Europe after the fall of the empires that began with the Balkan Wars in 1912.[10] Cathie Carmichael explained the genocides in the areas where the Ottoman Empire (and later the Habsburg Empire) retreated as a consequence of weak states governed by elites obsessed with ideas of ethnic homogeneity and, consequently, panicked over minorities, particularly in insecure borderland regions.[11] Novi Sad is a classic example of a borderland town, a place at the crossroads between Habsburg and Ottoman, then Hungarian, Yugoslavian, German, and later Soviet imperial ambitions. Atrocities committed since 1941 by Hungarians against Serbs, Jews, and Roma happened in the context of mass violence and mass expulsions of "unwanted" ethnic groups all over the Balkans. Bulgarians, Croats, Italians, Germans, and Romanians were also trying to rid themselves of ethnic groups they could not tolerate in the territories they had occupied or that they dominated.[12]

Omer Bartov and Eric Weitz have defined the Borderlands as "a large multiethnic swath of territory where these states, their successors, and national and racial movements have competed fiercely with one another for power and influence—while ethnic groups in these areas . . . coexisted peacefully when conflicts were not purposely stirred up and politicized."[13] Bartov's and Weitz's reminder that borderlands are places of conflict *and* coexistence is important. Although the Yugoslav state attempted to create an ethnic South-Slav majority in the former Habsburg regions, with the expulsion of a few thousand Hungarians and the resettling of Serbians and other South Slavic groups, Novi Sad remained a peaceful place until 1941.

After 1918, the borderland syndrome took on added momentum with the rise of politically active military leaders and strategists. In the territories re-

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gained by Hungary since November 1938, officers of the Hungarian army were among those who imposed harsh restrictions on minorities, which resulted, in extreme cases, in mass deportations and executions.[14] In the summer of 1941, Hungarian gendarmes and the army rounded up Jews and Roma in the Carpatho-Ukraine and in Northern Transylvania and deported them to the German-occupied Ukraine, where *Sondereinsatzkommandos* murdered more than twenty thousand of them in one of the first mass killings of Jews.[15]

Some witnesses later alleged that the commanding officers of the Novi Sad raid recruited a gendarmerie officer who had played an important role in these deportations in the Carpatho-Ukraine. It was said that they selected him for the operation *because* he had distinguished himself there for extreme brutality.[16] The first mass deportations of 1941 only came to an end because the German occupying troops across the border would not allow further expulsions, and not for humanitarian reasons.[17] This was also the case in the area Hungary had reoccupied in 1941 after the collapse of Yugoslavia. There Hungarian army officers' far-ranging plans to "ethnically cleanse" the territories by deporting Jews, Serbs, Roma, and other "unreliable elements" were again obstructed by German authorities in the bordering regions and by the Croatians in the south.[18]

The massacre of January 1942 was thus an example of both borderland violence and countless acts of mass violence that took place during the Second World War. On the first day, it began as a raid, a military operation that targeted partisans who had been attacking and killing Hungarian soldiers and gendarmes since the beginning of the Hungarian reannexation of the Bačka in 1941. But on the second day, and more intensively on the third, the soldiers and gendarmes began to randomly arrest and kill "suspects" without even the appearance of any legal proceedings.

A raid, or *razzia*, is a "combing operation" that attempts to search out and destroy resistance fighters who hide among and are also somehow supported by a civilian population. The word stems form the Algerian Arabic (ġaziya) and was adapted by the French army when operating in Algeria in the nineteenth century. The term spread and eventually was adopted in most European languages, in Serbian as *racija*.[19] Razzias, or raids, were originally a tool in colonial counterinsurgency warfare, one of many forms of "asymmetric" conflicts.

The German philosopher Wolfgang Sofsky has attempted to categorize raids in his theory of violence.[20] According to his definition, razzias begin with armed troops imposing temporary, harsh restrictions on the civilian population of an area they have defined as their "operational zone." Vans arrive and armed soldiers assume control, apprising the inhabitants of the new situation in which the soldiers now possess next to unlimited power: Civilians

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are neither allowed to leave the zone nor to move freely within it. They cannot leave their homes or communicate with each other. Soldiers knock at doors with the butts of their rifles, carrying lists with the names of suspects. The tenants have to react quickly, follow orders, and prove that they are innocent, or they must pack their things within minutes. Raids are "fast destructions" in contrast to the "slow, systematic terror" of camps.[21]

A raid is an assault, a sudden violent attack, and a means to demonstrate the absolute power of the occupying forces. During the operation, soldiers have access to every room and can search through even the most intimate spaces within a home normally protected by law. The rights and liberties of the population are completely abolished. Troops have, for the moment, absolute dominance over civilians, a tense situation that gives them strong feelings of empowerment while the inhabitants easily lose all self-confidence. Their loss of safety, freedom, and trust is inversely proportional to the rising sense of license that emboldens the soldiers to act arbitrarily.

Raids, according to Sofsky, "create an excess of violence which often goes beyond the official mission" of the military operation. In 1942, even conservative supporters of the regime criticized this spillover of violence in Novi Sad and its surroundings.[22] Raids, Sofsky concludes, often lead to random killings, looting, robbery: "In its most radical form," a raid "results in executions in a forest" or, as in the case of Novi Sad, on the shore of the frozen Danube. The extreme violence that often characterizes raids has its

> causes in the destruction of the symbolic distance between armed troops and unarmed civilians, in the insensitive exercise of arbitrary violence, in the vagueness of orders, in the effective organization of those tasked with persecution, and in the situative decentralization of power. Although the raid has been planned, and the zone, time frame, and target groups defined, . . . at the location and in the moment of the operation, soldiers have a large amount of liberty to act. They have to be flexible, to improvise, to adapt to the specific circumstances. The executors act as an independent raiding unit, unified not by hierarchy but by cameraderie.[23]

Sofsky's description of a raid contributes to our understanding of this form of mass violence. However, it tells us nothing about the specific political, social, and cultural context of the raid at Novi Sad.

A MASSACRE LIKE THE OTHERS? NOVI SAD COMPARED TO BABI YAR

In contrast to most other acts of mass violence committed during the Second World War, the Novi Sad raid was *not* carried out by "occupying" troops in

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the strict sense of the word, but by the regular army and gendarmerie in a territory that had been part of Hungary and was under civilian administration. The city's civilian leaders, including the mayor and the county high sheriff, protested the raid, complaining that the operation had gone completely out of control and that even loyal, honorable citizens had been among the victims. Two years later, in January 1944, a military trial sentenced the commanding officers of the raid to imprisonment.

This marks a strong difference between Novi Sad and other Second World War massacres. If we take, for example, the single most notorious massacre, that of 33,771 Jews at the Babi Yar ravine near Kiev, committed by German police, army, and SS units on September 29, 1941, the singular nature of events at Novi Sad becomes evident.[24]

When the German Sixth Army conquered Kiev, the Soviet secret police destroyed parts of the city with explosives and arson.[25] As retaliation, German army and SS Einsatzgruppen leaders decided to exterminate all Jews in the city, blaming them for acts of sabotage. In the morning, the Jews had to gather at a street crossing, prompted by notices that were posted all over town. Under the guidance of an SS Einsatzgruppe, a German police regiment, together with Ukrainian police, forced them to the ravine of Babi Yar, where soldiers and police with machine guns, rifles, and pistols awaited them. A few hundred German shooters forced the victims to stand on the edge of the ravine or lie on the corpses already piling up below.

There are numerous differences between Novi Sad and Babi Yar. First of all, the operation in Kiev was not a raid. No verification committee was set up to identify "suspects" who were unable to prove their identity. In Novi Sad, thousands were released after they had convinced the committee of their innocence. In Kiev, German officers simply decided that *all* Jews were guilty of sabotage. No local administration existed in Kiev, only German military units. The German troops merely reported to their superiors that they had eliminated the Jews of the town who had resisted.[26] In Novi Sad, not only the civil administration but also representatives of the population *protested* against the executions.

Second, Babi Yar was not a singular event, but part of a series of atrocities against Jews and others committed by the same German units since the beginning of the invasion of the Soviet Union. It was only the number of victims that was unprecedented. Moreover, the massacres did not stop, but continued afterward, in the Baltics and in other parts of occupied Eastern Europe. By contrast, Novi Sad was, to some extent, unusual. Although there were a few raids before and even after Novi Sad in January 1942, during which about 3,400 Serbs, Jews, and others were killed, the new Hungarian government,

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which tried to sever ties to its ally Germany, refrained from similar raids after spring 1942.

This is related to the third and most important difference: inside Hungary, questions about the raid were raised in newspapers and in parliament, where Novi Sad was represented by a Serbian lawyer. A new Hungarian government ordered a thorough investigation of the events a few weeks afterward, and a military trial against fifteen commanding officers was launched in late 1943. Outside the country, the Yugoslavian government in exile in London held a press conference protesting the massacre, and the British government, which began secret talks with the Hungarians at the end of 1943, asked for strict punishment of the officers involved in the raid. Nothing of the sort happened after Babi Yar or in the aftermath of similar crimes by the German SS and army, their special troops, and their local helpers. The character of the authoritarian regime of Horthy differed markedly from the totalitarian systems of Germany and the Soviet Union, where mass murder was not and could not be discussed in public.

There is also another significant difference: a decade before the German invasion, the Ukrainians had been victims of a mass murder committed by Stalin that is now sometimes called the *Holodomor*, the man-made famine that killed millions of people during 1932–33.[27] This horrific experience of mass dying can explain why the murderous invasion of the Wehrmacht was met with a certain indifference, and in some cases was even supported by Ukrainians. They considered the mass murders of the NKVD "Jewish" crimes, particularly during the pogroms in the the summer of 1941, and wanted to take revenge on "Judeo-Bolshevism."[28] In spite of discrimination against minorities by the Yugoslavian government and expulsions in 1919, the population of Novi Sad had not experienced comparable mass violence before the raid of 1942. Although anti-Semitic sentiments were surely present in the city and in the region as a whole, the population of the city for the most part did not participate in acts against Jewish neighbors during the operation, but was rather shocked and appalled by the brutality of the Hungarian army and gendarmes.

The mostly passive or hostile behavior of Novi Sad's civilian population is a further difference when compared to other massacres of the time. In places like the Polish town of Jedwabne, some non-Jewish inhabitants were involved in the mass killing of Jewish inhabitants, assisted by the German occupying forces.[29] In Novi Sad, civilians played a more marginal role, serving on the "verification committee," which in fact released most of the "suspects" brought before it. They did not actively kill their Jewish neighbors as Poles did in Jedwabne or the Lithuanians and Estonians in the Baltics. The main reason for this difference was that all these regions had experienced the brutal terror

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the Soviets had inflicted in 1939, two years before the German invasion, and many shared in the Ukrainian belief that a "Judeo-Bolshevik" conspiracy was directed against their nations. Only a few Hungarian civilians in the villages surrounding Novi Sad allegedly participated in violent acts against their Serbian or Jewish neighbors.

As this discussion has shown, we should not easily conflate the various forms of massacres of civilians that took place in the Second World War.[30] Each act of mass violence is unique and needs to be understood and explained in its very specific local, national, and international context. For Novi Sad, this will be done in the first chapter of this book. Most of the book, however, deals with the afterlife of the event.

NOVI SAD 1942 AS A *LIEU DE MÉMOIRE*

While the first three chapters of this book deal with the massacre, the trial during the Horthy period, and Titoist retaliation, the second part is about how the Cold Days were portrayed during the different phases of the Communist regime: during the Stalinist years and the early and late Kádár period. It was in the second half of the 1960s that the 1942 massacre became an important *lieu de memoire*, a "site of memory," a moment for public remembrance by Hungarians, Serbians, and Jews alike. Pierre Nora has defined a "site of memory" as a place, a symbol, or an event that allows narratives of the past to be articulated, negotiated, represented, and crystallized.[31]

This is not a book about "collective memory," a term that has been used frequently, but that often leads to misunderstandings. Debates about past events are generally the province of experts and witnesses; they may be remembered in public ceremonies, but almost never are they shared by a national "collective."[32] Each social group, in fact each individual, remembers differently, not necessarily coherently, and certainly not constantly. Memories are always contested, constantly changing, and they are, by their very nature, fragmented. In the first chapter, I explain how different witnesses *experienced* the massacre very differently.

If we use the term *site of memory* instead, we approach the process of remembering by an alternate path. We acknowledge that a *site of memory* has a variety of meanings for those doing the remembering. There is no consensus on how the past is interpreted.

The bulk of this book looks at how different political regimes in Hungary attempted to manage, to restrict, or sometimes to use representations of the Novi Sad massacre. By the 1980s, the focus of public commemorations of the massacre turned toward victims, and public "politics of regret" were adopted

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by representatives of the reform wing of the Communist Party, whose ideas were beginning to turn westward, especially toward West Germany, which had become a model for successfully dealing with the Second World War and the Holocaust, whatever one may think of this development.[33]

ARCHIVAL MATERIALS, RESEARCH LITERATURE, AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The history of remembering the Cold Days of 1942 is a story of lost documents, just as the story of the 1944 partisan retaliation is about a shortage of documents. The most important missing document is the report of the detailed investigation provided by military court prosecutor Colonel József Babós. Assigned the task by the Hungarian chief of staff two months after the massacre, Babós submitted a 705-page report based on the statements of hundreds of witnesses given in April 1942.[34] In 1957, during a trial related to the massacre, a provincial court recorded that "earlier court documents have disappeared."[35] In 2011, when the Capital Court of Budapest (Budapest Fővárosi Bíróság) examined the case of Sándor Képíró, the last trial related to the 1942 massacre, the Babós report was still missing.The prosecutor and judges had to rely on other documents, mostly produced in the course of war crime trials of the late 1940s and after,[36] and on the additional testimony of a few witnesses and historians.

From the beginning, the 1942 atrocities were viewed in the context of the Holocaust. The journalist and historian Jenő Lévai, who published no less than a dozen books on the mass murder of Jews in Hungary between 1945 and 1948 alone, mentioned the Cold Days in his *Black Book*, one of the first historical accounts of the Shoa.[37] Even without the Babós report, the Novi Sad massacre was among the most widely publicized war crimes because of the investigations carried out during the Horthy period. In his 1945 biography of Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky, who was killed by the Fascist Hungarian Arrow Cross government because of his anti-German activities, Lévai included a detailed account of the 1942 atrocities.[38] Bajcsy-Zsilinszky had vehemently protested the atrocities in letters to Regent Horthy and Prime Minister Bárdossy, and on several occasions in parliament. He also had a prominent role in the 1943 trial against the commanding officers of the raid (chapter 2).

During this time, it was not only Lévai, a Holocaust survivor himself, who was actively documenting the Holocaust. Until the establishment of the Stalinist dictatorship in 1948–49, Jewish national and international organizations were busy collecting hundreds of interviews with survivors and documents related to deportations or mass killings of Jews in Hungary.[39] This was

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quite exceptional for Europe. It had to do with the fact that approximately 200,000 Jews had survived the war in Budapest. At the same time, memoirs, reports, and documents related to the 1942 Novi Sad massacre were published in newspapers in relation to the postwar trials. It was only when the Stalinist regime and the international climate during the early Cold War brought Holocaust-related discussions to a halt that these activities ceased.[40]

Since 1941, the Allies and, most of all, the Yugoslavian authorities—first the conservative government in exile and later the partisan movement under the leadership of Tito—had been collecting evidence of war crimes committed by the occupying powers, including Hungary. The first publications documenting the "Crimes of the Fascist Occupants" appeared in Yugoslavia immediately after the war.[41] In the Vojvodina, a provincial commission gathered and published information on war criminals and their deeds in order to compile lists of individuals the new Yugoslavian government wanted to have extradited and put on trial.[42]

Because the mass killings in Novi Sad had become a national and international scandal during this period (1942–48), numerous archival materials cover the postwar trials of 1945–46, but this is not the case in regard to most other atrocities committed in Eastern Europe at the time. During and after the establishment of a Communist regime in Hungary (1948/49–1989), Novi Sad turned into a "site of memory." This forty-year period was characterized by various attempts to integrate the story of the horrible mass murder in a city that no longer belonged to Hungary into a new framework of national history in a new socialist state. The first half of this period, between 1949 and the early 1960s, was marked by Stalinist propaganda based on a future-oriented narrative in which the Second World War, its victims and crimes, had only a marginal place.[43] The political uses of the memory of the massacre during this time can be reconstructed based on archival materials from the Budapest military court (Hungarian Military Archive) and the Historical Archive of the State Security Services and on the recollections of some army and gendarmerie officers.[44] Immediately after the revolution of 1956 was crushed, and in the context of the harsh persecution of oppositional forces in 1958, new trials against officers involved in Novi Sad were opened to "prove" that the anti-Stalinist uprising in the fall of 1956 had been a coup staged by "Fascist war criminals."[45] A few former gendarmes were even executed. These cases have been much studied since the 1990s, when Hungarian contemporary history began to focus intensely on the history of Stalinism and 1956.[46]

The 1960s marked a turning point in the long development that transformed the memory of the 1942 massacre from a mostly judicial and political topic to a catalyst for broad debates about Hungarian responsibility and

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the question of how far "ordinary Hungarians" had been involved in the war crimes committed during the Horthy regime. Questions silenced during the Stalinist period were raised anew. In recent studies, Kata Bohus and Laura Csonda have demonstrated that although the Communist Party leader János Kádár had intended to use the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem mostly for anti–(West) German propaganda, preventing it from becoming "a Jewish question," the sheer volume of horrible details about Nazi war crimes against Jews, and the coverage of Jewish victimhood in Hungarian newspaper and other media, had a different effect.[47] Lévai was now allowed to publish a collection of documents in English, titled *Eichmann in Hungary*, with the purpose of assigning blame to West Germany, where many Nazis had made successful postwar careers. In the same year, 1961, Yevgeny Yevtushenko published his famous poem remembering the Babi Yar massacre, which upset Soviet authorities.[48] Shortly after the twentieth anniversary of the Novi Sad massacre, a first historical monograph, written by a young archivist, appeared in 1963 in Budapest.[49]

Changes in the ideology and propaganda of the Kádár regime and the (cautious) critique of the Stalinist era made this possible. In the early 1960s, historians and other scholars debated, for the first time since 1949, the problem of nationalism, which was charged with being at the root of the 1956 "counterrevolution" and a profound ideological deviation from the Leninist understanding of socialism. In this debate, initiated by the Communist Party in 1959, leading historians of the Stalinist period were attacked for having used "bourgeois" nationalist ideas and ignoring a Marxist class-based perspective.[50] In another debate, historians began to criticize simplistic anti-Fascist narratives of the Horthy system ("Horthy Fascism"), which allowed for a more complex understanding of the interwar regime and the Second World War.[51] Such discussions made it possible for the 1942 massacre to become a topic of historical inquiry. The author of the 1963 monograph, however, still had to give prominence to the role of brave Communist partisans and anti-Fascists like Bajcsy-Zsilinszky over studying in detail the perpetrators and victims of the massacre. Not until ten years later was the first rigorous academic study on Novi Sad published by a historian: Randolph Braham's 1973 article on the massacres of Kamenets-Podolsk and Novi Sad as a "prelude to the Holocaust."[52]

However, it was not historical scholarship but the work of an outstanding writer and one of the most innovative Hungarian film directors who brought the 1942 massacre back to the attention of the Hungarian public. In 1964, Tibor Cseres published his novel *Cold Days*. Two years later, András Kovács made a film with the same title based on a screenplay written by Cseres. The book and the film brought the 1942 massacre to the attention not only of the

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Hungarian public but also of hundreds of thousands of readers and moviegoers around the world.[53]

Beginning in the late 1970s, victims of the Holocaust slowly entered the focus of Hungarian intellectuals, historians, museum curators, and the broader public. In 1989, as Hungary's Communist dictatorship collapsed, the government and parliament officially commemorated the victims of the Holocaust for the first time. Their recognition both in public debates and in official commemorations during the 1980s sparked broadening discussion of other victims of mass violence. There was an outpouring as well of Holocaust survivors' memories all over the world, which prompted the French historian Annette Wieviorka to proclaim these years the "era of the witness."[54]

The 1980s was also a time when research into the history of Hungarians in the former "Southlands" (Délvidék), the territories occupied by Yugoslavia after 1918, intensified. The most important scholar in this field has been Enikő A. Sajti, recently followed by Judit Pihurik of the University of Szeged. Sajti and Pihurik have authored a number of excellent studies of the area during the decades between the end of the First World War and the early Communist period.[55] Most recently, Sajti provided an overview of research on the anti-Hungarian atrocities in 1944. Most of this work was done by local historians beginning in the 1990s.[56] The topic had previously been silenced by the Yugoslavian state. Sajti has also been active in the Hungarian-Serbian committee of historians and sociologists that began a few years ago to study the common history of the two nations.

The epilogue of the book looks briefly into developments since 1989, especially the trial of Sándor Képíró in 2011. How did the Yugoslavian wars of the 1990s and the engagement of Serbian nationalists in the remembering of the Novi Sad massacre influence the memory of 1942? Since the end of Communism in Hungary, excellent studies on the complex history of the Second World War and Holocaust memory have appeared. Among the most important are the books written by Krisztián Ungváry and Regina Fritz.[57] We still know much less about remembering in Yugoslavia, although Emil Kerenji and Heike Karge have delivered preliminary studies in this field.[58] István Rév wrote a masterful study on the complexities encountered when dealing with the past in the Communist and post-Communist periods, and on how perpetrators were selected based on political considerations.[59]

THE ARGUMENT OF THIS BOOK

This book is the first monograph that studies the memory of the 1942 massacre in the context of Hungarian political and social history. It aims to show

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that remembering the Cold Days was complicated, and that the evolution of public discourse on the massacres did not fully coincide with political changes. While the shift from political and juridical attention to the mass murder to remembering in the sphere of culture (via novel and film) occurred in the mid-1960s, the transformation from a perpetrator- and nation-centered reckoning to a victim-centered discourse does not take place until the late 1970s and early 1980s, before the historical caesura of 1989.[60]

However, I argue that the peaceful transition of 1989 can be better understood in the context of ongoing changes in Hungarian society and its attitudes toward mass violence. A society that had participated in the Nazi war of extermination, and had endured the violent introduction of the Stalinist system and the brutal suppression of the 1956 revolution, would become a post-heroic society that remembered and mourned the victims of these crimes and traumas.[61] The story of remembering the Novi Sad massacre can help us to better understand the complicated nature of this profound transformation.

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