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THE BRIDGES OF AMBIVALENCE
Australian-Hungarian discourses after 1989

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ABSTRACT

In this book, I examine the ways in which the cultural logic of Hungarian identities in Australia was transformed after the collapse of Eastern European dictatorships in 1989-90. The structural changes after 1989 not only affected the citizens of the Hungarian Republic but had also repercussions for those Hungarians who live outside of the country. The changed political conditions after 1989 enabled new structural possibilities for transnational bridges between the homeland and the diaspora, and opened up new avenues for dialogue between Hungary and Hungarian émigré communities. Three interrelated aspects are scrutinised with regard to the changes and transformations the democratisation of Hungary eventuated in the Australian-Hungarian community. First, I look at the ways in which the new structural possibility opened up new avenues in the dialogue between homeland and diaspora. Second, I examine how the democratisation of Hungary changed the ways Australian-Hungarians think and feel about their identity, belonging and sense of home. Third, I scrutinise the ways in which the repercussions of the regime change transformed Australian-Hungarians' directions for collective action, and sense of agency and empowerment. I argue that the issues associated with the transformation of Australian-Hungarians' sense of self cannot be explained only from particular configurations of global and regional politics, and that some examination of emotions can shed light on previously neglected aspects of identity, identification and belonging.

Notes

All citations from research participants and from Hungarian texts, documents and publications are translated into English by the researcher.

All names of Hungarians and Hungarian research participants are written in Hungarian order, that is surname first.

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INTRODUCTION

They [Hungarians in Australia] are in a fever, when Hungarian politics is concerned. Certainly they *want* to be connected, some even work on it, still, you will see yourself, there is no bridge between us and Hungary. (Field notes, June, 2004 Melbourne)

I. The bridges of ambivalence

My first day of fieldwork was a great disappointment. In June 2004, I arranged an afternoon meeting with a Melbourne-based Hungarian intellectual. I knew he would be a great starting point, as he spent much of his time among Hungarian community members in Australia. After I had explained that my research topic was concerned with the emerging transnational connections between the Australian-Hungarian community and Hungary after 1989, I impatiently *in medias res* turned to the question I was most interested in, ‘So tell me, what kind of connections did the community established to Hungary after the fall of communism?’ He looked at me and started laughing, ‘Nothing! They do not have any.’ I was shocked and could not hide my surprise, so I continued, ‘But, what do you mean, are people here not interested in Hungarian current issues, politics for example?’ He sighed and said, ‘Of course they are, *they are in a fever*, when Hungarian politics is concerned. Certainly they *want* to be connected, some even work on it, still, you will see yourself, there is no bridge between us and Hungary.’

As our conversation unfolded I became more and more convinced that I would have to reconsider my project. Nevertheless, I continued to carry out fieldwork on the same topic with Hungarian communities in Melbourne. After a couple of months in the field, I realised that my first participant’s insight had been correct, the transnational bridge was missing. I found myself in a small community, which lacked both strong organizational infrastructures and substantial political and economic connections to Hungary. However, slowly I realised that the Hungarian community happened to be a fertile ground for examining transnationalism, despite the acknowledged lack of transnational connections. Soon, I found in the Hungarian community myriad instances of the *desire* and *yearning* for transnational connectedness. I realised that the urge to ‘*build the bridge*’ has been a major theme in the community narratives. It was one of the most important issues around which debates and discussion revolved, as well as it was a trigger for actions. In a very short while however, it became apparent that the notion of the ‘transnational bridge’ was not always viewed positively within the community. Often, a sense of *disdain* or *anxiety* was attached to the idea of relationship with Hungary. Thus, the idea of connectivity has served as a projection screen for conflicting and often ambivalent visions of identity, belonging, historical role and agency after 1989. This ambivalence towards connectedness inspired the title ‘The

Bridges of ambivalence’ and it is the major trope which runs along in each chapter. Throughout my book, I deploy the idea of ‘transnational bridge’ as an analytical device to focus on Australian-Hungarians’ hopes, fears and ambivalence around questions of belonging, agency and their relationship to Hungary in the post-1989 era.

II. The research question

Revolutions swept across Eastern Europe in the autumn of 1989 and overthrew the Soviet-style dictatorships. The subsequent negotiated transitions were quick, easy, and non-violent. In several Eastern European countries, including Hungary, liberal democracy ensued after the forty years of communist dictatorship. The legislation in 1989 transformed Hungary from a People’s Republic into the Republic of Hungary, guaranteed human and civil rights and created an institutional structure that ensured separation of powers among the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of government. This transformation from dictatorship to democracy is popularly referred to in Hungarian as the *rendszer váltás* (‘system change’).

The structural changes after 1989 not only affected the citizens of the Hungarian Republic but had also repercussions for those Hungarians who live outside of the country. The transformation in Hungary entailed that socialist history was rewritten and the ideas of nation and Hungarianness rethought. This reorientation in Hungary implied a new official policy towards Hungarians residing outside of the Republic. This entailed the granting of citizenship, to Hungarian émigrés and the reconfigured official relationship with the émigré organisations. Hungarian passports enabled émigrés to move back to Hungary or engage in frequent border-crossings. The reworked official relationship impacted on the opportunity to carry out transnational political activities from the diaspora, and enabled unconstrained contact and cooperation between organisations in the Australian-Hungarian community and Hungary for the first time after forty years of official segregation. Hungary’s newly won freedom and the expanded possibilities for transnational connections after 1989, raised new questions about what it meant to be a Hungarian in Australia (see: Satzewich 2002:190). These new structural possibilities opened up the research questions this book poses.

While the construction of ‘new cultural landscapes’ (Berdahl 2000:1) in Eastern Europe following the *annus mirabilis* (extraordinary year) of 1989 has gained plenty of scholarly attention (see: Lemon 2000; Ries 1997; Verdery and Burawoy 1999; Wanner 1998), the impact of the collapse of communism on Eastern European émigré communities has been much less documented. The Hungarian diaspora in particular has been more or less ignored. By investigating the impact of the tumultuous events of 1989 on the Hungarian émigré community in Australia, this book contributes to filling that gap in the literature.

The key topic of this book is the transformation of the cultural logic of Hungarian identities in Australia after the *rendszer váltás*. I scrutinize three interrelated questions with regard to the transformations of the cultural logic of

Hungarian identities in Australia post-1989. These questions are the followings: Firstly, in what ways did the new structural possibility open up new avenues in the dialogue between homeland and diaspora? Secondly, how did these transformations change the ways Australian-Hungarians think and feel about their identity, belonging and sense of home? Thirdly, in what way did these new structural possibilities transform Australian-Hungarians' directions for collective action, and sense of agency and empowerment?

The first research question is important as the official communication between Hungary and the Hungarian community in Australia greatly impacts on Australian-Hungarians' sense of home and agency. As seen from the story in the first section, the aftermath of the *rendszerváltás* produced a sense of *ambivalence* in discourses about Australian-Hungarians' relationship with the homeland. In Chapter II, I talk about how the new situation gave way to discourses in which the *hope* for dense connectedness to the homeland and the *anxiety* and the *disdain* of such links are dialogically intertwined, indicating a tension between the competing desires for connectivity and isolationism. In order to analyse these 'double voiced' discourses (Bakhtin 1981:324), I deploy the concepts of exile and diaspora. While the term exile is understood as a condition of involuntary displacement which entails the sense of eternal loss, disconnection from the homeland and deliberate disengagement with the homeland regime (Said 1992; Tabori 1972), the term 'diaspora' indicates 'doubled relationship or dual loyalty that expatriates have to places – their connections to the space they currently occupy and their continuing involvement with "back home"' (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996:14; Gilroy 1992; Rafael 1993).

These post-1989 'double voiced' discourses index a mixing of pre-1989 voices of *exilic separation* with post-1989 hopes and desires for *diasporic connectivity*. Prior to 1989, the dominant '*discourses of exile*' emphasised the exile's struggle against the communist dictatorship and most importantly the exile's institutionalised disconnection from the homeland. After the changed political orientation of Hungary post-1989, the concept of national unity and the wish for taking part in the process of democratisation gained significance in the Australian-Hungarian discourses, which resembles diasporic discourses. Nevertheless, the structural possibility for transnational connectedness after 1989 did not instigate an exclusively '*diasporic discourse*' of dense connectivity and cooperation with the homeland. As a result of the disappointments over the 'unfinished transformations' in Hungary, and the mutual misunderstandings between the homeland and the diaspora, an ambivalent and contradictory discourse developed, where the new '*diasporic*' narratives of connectedness and co-operation are infused with, and/or juxtaposed against '*exilic*' elements of separation. These 'double voiced' narratives index an ongoing negotiation to come to terms with a 'new and yet paradoxically historic homeland' (Uhling: 2004:401). In Chapter II, I analyse the thresholds of the newly emerged relationship between the émigrés and the homeland and track down the development of the 'double voiced' narratives. In later chapters (Chapters III, IV, V, VI) I look at the ways in which these post-1989 narratives impact on Australian-Hungarians' sense of home and agency.

The second major research question this book investigates is how first generation Hungarian migrants' physical and social conceptions of *home* have been reconfigured by the changing political settings in Hungary. During the time of the dictatorship, disconnection from the mother country was a determining factor in migrants' sense of belonging and being at home. The homeland was an abstract image, diluted by what Skrbis (2002) calls 'distant view'. In Chapter III, I pose the question whether the meanings of home have changed as a result of the collapse of the dictatorship. I examine whether transnational media and facilitated border crossings enabled Australian-Hungarians to re-territorialise their sense of belonging to Hungary and to shift their perception of the homeland from an abstract image to homeland as a lived experience.

This second research question responds to broader calls among several scholars who, as a reaction to the celebration of fragmentation, movement and fluidity, analyse the importance of places in migrants' lives. In order to do this, in Chapter IV, I focus on the return visits of Australian-Hungarians, and scrutinize the importance of these journeys, and the ways they affect returnees' perception of self, home- and host land. Examining return visits after a long period of disconnection is important as these visits are the main intersections of imagination and reality (Muggeridge and Dona 2006:426). It is mostly during the acts of these visits that Australian-Hungarians compare their memories and imagination of the past with the developments of the present. I pose the question whether 'homecoming' is possible in the face of the transformations their homes and communities – and also the émigrés themselves – have undergone. I investigate the ways in which individuals elaborate and develop their own renewed 'subjectivities' on home, homeland and belonging vis-à-vis the 'double voiced' Australian-Hungarian narrative structures. The experiences of individual community members provide a unique lens through which we can see how the feelings of ambivalence, and the mix of desire, fear and disdain towards belonging to Hungary manifest themselves.

The third main research question investigates the transformation of Australian-Hungarians' sense of agency after the *rendszerváltás*. The events of 1989 also opened up a new opportunity for collective action for the Australian-Hungarian community. In Chapters I, V and VII I explore how the community rewrote its missions from fighting against the communist dictatorship and preserving the real essence of Hungarianness in exile. Again, I deploy the notion of diaspora to comprehend the shifts in the community's sense of agency and urge for action. Postmodern interpretations of diasporas not only stress the existence of transnational links, (Boyarin and Boyarin 1993; Clifford 1994; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990:235), but also the importance of empowerment and economic and political agency (Coundouriotis 2001; Butler 2001; Clifford 1994:311; Tölölyan 1991, 1996, 1992; Boyarin and Boyarin 1993; Clifford 1994; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990; Klimt and Lubkemann 2002). Thus, I attempt to document the community's attempts to transform into a 'mobilised diaspora' (Sheffer 1995; Werbner 2002:121), a collective identity characterised by agency and empowerment, through their rewriting the old historical tasks and missions. Although the desire for diasporisation is a result of the *rendszerváltás*, this desire is further informed

and, thus, complicated by the ‘double voiced’ discourses that has emerged post-1989. Consequently, the new historical missions, and the positionality of the ‘mobilised diaspora’ itself, are differently imagined within the Australian-Hungarian community. I attempt to demonstrate the tensions revolving around the concepts of mission, agency and empowerment. By doing so, I investigate how the urge for mobilisation and action to fulfil the new historical tasks clashed with both anxiety and disdain towards their relationship with Hungary.

By focusing on the ambivalence and contradictions that characterise the desire for diasporisation (and generally the post-1989 discourses), it is possible to examine how multiple narratives operate simultaneously and compete for public acceptance (see: Bridger and Maines 1998; Aaltio-Marjosola 1994; Boje 1995). In Chapters II, V, and IV, I attempt to show the ways in which community members have attempted to legitimise and naturalise new ‘diasporic’ discourses of identity, belonging and agency as well as to highlight how emergent grand narratives are continuously debated, contested and reinterpreted. In doing so, I also scrutinize the different factors that play a determining role in the public acceptance of competing narratives.

III. Theoretical framework

Interpreting the altered situation of Australian-Hungarians requires a transnational perspective on migration. Therefore, the major theoretical frameworks which underlie this book are that of diaspora studies, and works on immigrant transnationalism which have recently been fused (for example: Glick Schiller et al 1992, 1995; Basch et al 1994; Portes 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999). Issues of identity, home and belonging have been reconfigured in the current age of massive social and economic transformation. The processes of globalisation and transnational migration are highlighting the instability of established definitions of identity, home and connection to place (Ang and Symonds 1997:vi). Studies on diasporas and transnational migration challenge these conventional understandings by recognising the possibility of multiple identities and by disentangling the traditional spatial-temporal units of analysis like nation and culture (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996:14; Rouse 1991; Basch et al. 1994).

There are some significant advantages of applying these frameworks in my book. First, unlike earlier theoretical perspectives, such as assimilation and cultural pluralism, which concentrated only on the ways in which migrants relate to their ‘host’ society, the concepts of transnationalism and diaspora place emphasis on the ongoing relations migrants forge with their homeland (see: Faist 2000; Itzigsohn 2000; Portes, Guarnizo et al 1999; Vertovec 1999, 2001, 2003, 2004; Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002). In earlier conceptualisations of migration, discrete peoples were seen to belong to specific, bounded territories hence, cultural difference and territoriality were taken as the starting points of analysis (Stepputat 1994:176). Consequently, displaced and uprooted people were automatically perceived as being at risk of a ‘loss of identity and moral integrity’ (Stepputat 1994:176). The transnational perspectives perceive migration as an ongoing cultural process and break down the

‘sedentary imaginary’ (Malkki 1995) of national rootedness by challenging the categorical separation between ‘here’ and ‘there’ and ‘home’ and ‘away’ (Baldassar 1998:88; Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Basch *et al.* 1994; Labelle and Midy 1999). This focus on the ties and connections is particularly relevant here as this book attempts to document the initiation and the rebuilding of the links between the Hungarian community in Australia and the ‘new/old’ homeland, which was possible for the first time after 1989.

The second advantage of applying the theories of transnationalism and diaspora studies is that both theories communicate ambivalence and point to the contingent and contextual aspects of identity. These theories may therefore provide helpful analytical tools in capturing the dualisms, contradictions and ambivalence found in the post-1989 Australian-Hungarian discourses. For example, transmigrants are usually described in the literature as migrants ‘who are in transit, whose identities are unfixed, destabilized and in the process of changing’ (McDowell 1999:205). Similarly, Stuart Hall states that the ‘diaspora experience [...] is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of ‘identity’ which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*’ (Hall 1990:235, italics original). Drawing on insights from contemporary diaspora studies and works on immigrant transnationalism, I attempt to supply a satisfactory interpretation of the prevalence of these contradictions, ambivalences and dialectic tensions found in the post-1989 Australian-Hungarian identity-narratives.

By focusing on the ambivalences and tensions, through these conceptual tools, I can highlight and preserve the complexity of Australian-Hungarians’ experiences in my writing (see: Uhling 2004:404). In turn, it is by examining this dualism and ambivalence – the simultaneous prevalence of desire, disdain and anxiety around connectedness – that this study can provide particularly fertile interpretive ground for considering ideas about migrants’ sense of self and belonging (see: Uhling 2004:391).

These theories can provide assets for analysis nevertheless, they hide certain assumptions. Stefansson (2004:185) states that transnational theory has enabled the eradication of the ‘[f]ormerly dark visions of fragmentation, meaningless alienation and the homeless mind’. However, he points out that these approaches, in a revolt against the former theories, have given way to a ‘conceptualization of mobility and uprooting as a *deliberating* and *empowering* condition’ (Stefansson 2004:185, my italics). Several scholars have pointed out that the celebration or romanticisation of diaspora, movement and hybridity can be just as problematic as the idealisation of homeland, essence and rootedness (Malkki 1995:514; Lavie and Swedenburg 1996:17; Stefansson 2004:184).

It is therefore important not to approach ‘homelessness’, ‘hybridity’ and ‘mobile livelihood’ as a taken for granted phenomenon and not to expect that Australian-Hungarian community members would embrace such dissipated notions of belonging after 1989 (Stefansson 2004:184). It would be a mistake to prejudge the outcome of the structural possibility created by the *rendszerváltás*, through unquestioned reliance on these dogmatic views. We should seek, rather, to place

greater value on the negotiations of identity and belonging without presupposing that they will eventuate in a fragmented, hybridised and transnational form.

The mounting literature on 'immigrant transnationalism' sets the context and scene within which my research topic on Hungarians in Australia emerged. However my research takes a particular direction. In contrast to major works on transnationalism which examine ongoing transnational connections between the expatriate- and the home-communities, this book is concerned with the desire for and anxiety of transnational connections. The particular nature of the relationship which was forged between Hungary and the community in Australia directed my research to unexpected and yet undiscovered routes of transnationalism and opened up new avenues for investigation.

My research is also informed by the ongoing debates on the relationship between structure and discourse. Several researchers, within transnational migration and diasporist studies, have recently emphasised the importance of exploring the connection of the 'so-called real and the so-called metaphorical' (Keith and Pile 1993:17) relationships between space, power and identity (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:147; see also: Harvey 2002:3). They call for connecting consciousness, and imagination to material conditions and institutional context. Approaching the post-1989 Australian-Hungarian discourses as 'interactively produced social understanding illuminates the interplay of institutional, cognitive, and emotional forces that make them up' (White 2000:508; see also: Holquist 1981; Wertsch 1985). I look at how the new structural possibility opened up new avenues for community members to think and feel about their homeland and their sense of identity, belonging and agency. In other words, I provide a broad historical and political context and look at how the macro-structure has shaped the post-1989 Australian-Hungarian narratives. Complicating this picture, I analyse how these emerged 'double voiced' discourses of desire, anxiety and disdain towards relationship with Hungary informed community members' actions and impact on the processes of negotiating the relationship with Hungary, and their identity and sense of agency.

An issue which closely relates to the relationship between discourse and structure is the role of emotions on identity-formation. The powerful emotionality, which characterises identity discourses in the Australian-Hungarian community, struck me as important from the start of my fieldwork. My diary was quickly filled with documentations of long laments of sorrow regarding the future of the community, embodied stress, anger and joy relating to homeland issues. I argue that the issues associated with the transformation of Australian-Hungarians' sense of self cannot be explained only from particular configurations of global and regional politics, and that some examination of emotions can shed light on previously neglected aspects of identity, identification and belonging. An increasing amount of research shows that emotions play a major role in the construction of post-socialist Europe (see for instance: Svašek 2002, 2006; Golanska-Ryan 2006; Leutloff-Grandits 2006; Mihaylova 2006; Skrbis 2006). These works document how the tumultuous political and economic transformations have generated strong emotional responses, ranging from hope and euphoria to disappointment, envy and nostalgia

(Svašek 2002:9, 2006). The emotional landscape which developed in the Eastern European diasporas after 1989, however, has remained an unexplored field in the literature. By examining the emotionality underpinning Australian-Hungarian discourses post-1989, this book contributes in filling this gap in the literature.

The collapse of the state socialist dictatorships, and the prospect of freedom and often irrational expectations of rapid prosperity, evoked in many Eastern European countries the feelings of joy and euphoria (Svašek 2006:9). However, after the harsh confrontation with post-socialist reality the initial feelings of hope for a better future have, in many cases, been replaced by disillusionment, scepticism and the nostalgia for the communist past (Svašek 2005:12). The Australian-Hungarian community went through a similar drastic change in emotionality with regards to the *rendszerváltás*, although it does not represent a linear development of disillusionment. Rather, it is the ambivalence and the fluctuation between positive and negative emotions which is interesting here. In particular, I demonstrate how swings between feelings of utopian hope and desire for empowerment and inclusion in the homeland on the one hand, and the feeling of anxiety, distrust, disdain and the sense of total powerlessness on the other, characterise the Australian-Hungarian narratives in the post-1989 era (see: Werbner 2002:183).

In this book I place ‘emotions’ in the cultural, political, and socio-historical contexts in which they are evoked, felt, framed, expressed, and contested. Emirbayer and Goldberg (2005), drawing on Bourdieu’s (1985) and Dewey’s (1988) works, argue for conceptualizing emotions in transpersonal and relational terms, that is considering the relation between emotions and structure as ‘dynamic, ongoing, dialogic processes-in-relations’ (Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005:507). Accordingly, neither the emotions nor the structural context are fixed or singular, but usually in play, being made up through interaction (see: Desjarlais and O’Neill 2000). Thus, instead of assuming that different contexts create specific emotions, I rather look at how these contexts are interpreted and emotionalised by various actors in various settings.

IV. Book outline

In Chapter I, I give a short overview of the Hungarian community in Australia. I describe the history of the Hungarian migration to Australia including a description of the community organisations that have operated pre- and post-1989. I then compare the Australian-Hungarian diaspora with other Eastern European diasporas. In Chapter II, I provide a comparative analysis of the pre- and post-1989 Australian-Hungarian homeland-related discourses. Firstly, I investigate the pre- 1989 discourse and its significant themes. Then, I scrutinise the thresholds and tensions of the newly emerging relationships between the *emigráció* and Hungary after 1989. In doing so, I examine the ways in which the homeland-related discourses among Hungarians in Australia shifted as a result of the fall of Berlin Wall. In Chapter III, I examine the ways in which the concept of ‘home’ is understood by the first generation Hungarian

migrants' after 1989 and discuss the impact of the newly emerged structural possibility for transnational connections on migrant's sense of home and belonging.

In Chapter IV, I ask the question of what happens when the exilic dreaming of homeland and return gives place to practical homecomings. The focus of this chapter is the evaluation of the changes that the returnees encounter during their journeys to their homelands. I pose the question whether 'homecoming' is possible given these transformations. In Chapter V, I investigate a demonstration organised by Hungarians which took place on the 4 June, 2005 in Melbourne's CBD to mark the 85th anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon. Through this case study, I investigate the ways in which the conflicting emotions of the 'desire for inclusion', and the 'anxiety of exclusion', that characterise Australian-Hungarian discourses in the post-1989 era, played a role during the mobilisation period and in the protest itself. Finally, in chapter VI, I explore how an immigrant community, with great diasporic aspirations for empowerment and transnational connectedness, is struggling with cultural survival. I discuss the anxiety, which developed in the community as a result of the rapid rate of assimilation and the aging of the émigré population. I examine how community leaders have attempted to create a new mission to save the diaspora from complete degradation. I also examine how the transnational possibilities to Hungary influenced the strategies for survival.

V. METHODOLOGY

V. 1. Methods of data collection

In conducting my research, I have used mainly ethnographic methodological approaches to data collection. The 'field' was to be found within the Hungarian communities in Melbourne and Sydney. I did not conceal the fact that I was conducting fieldwork and tried to make the research as transparent and accessible as possible. Informants' and often groups' anonymity has been protected as much as possible by the use of pseudonyms in the book.

The information and data presented in this book derives from a variety of sources collected during my fieldwork undertaken between June 2004 and June 2005. These sources include:

1. Field notes I recorded during participant observation.
2. 45 semi-structured interviews, ranging from 1 hour to 3.5 hours.
3. Archived and contemporary printed materials, as well as personal and group-emails.

1. Participant observation: A substantial portion of the data derives from participant observation, which has been described as the basic constituting experience of anthropology. Probably the most important information I was able to obtain was revealed in actions, non-guarded conversations and less-formulated articulations. Being drawn into the community or the group and being involved in day-to-day activities was a very important element in my fieldwork. My close association with the Hungarian research-participants gave me access to data that

would otherwise have been unattainable. In the presence of those Hungarian community members whom I frequently encountered, I often found myself moving between being an ethnographer and a friend (or a grandchild).

The information collected on these occasions came to form the building blocks of my ethnographic data. During meetings written notes were taken. However, in more informal settings notes were written immediately after the occasion. Early on, I consciously extended my group of Hungarian contacts in order to avoid the problems associated with the snowball approach, where informants can be traced back to a nuclear group of people. I established good relationships with the leaders of different community centres and the 'local elite', deliberately forging links with conflicting groups and individuals. This enabled me to avoid to unproductive degrees of association with a particular faction within the community.

2. *Semi-structured interviews*. The interviews were conducted at the second stage of my fieldwork. It was a conscious decision to collect data at this stage, as I believed that a clearer interest in well-grounded, specific topics can lead to focused semi-structured interviews. Further, I considered that familiar respondents, with whom I already established relationships, would be able to express themselves with more ease and comfort in front of the tape recorder. In this way, I managed to record in-depth interviews and avoided a great amount of undesired information which often accompanies semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, I was also able to circumvent the other great disadvantage of semi-structured interviews, namely the considerable amount of time needed for the comparison of the often complex data.

Having established trust and intimacy through my participant observation in the earlier phase of my fieldwork, most interviews were open-ended dialogues, where the presence of the tape recorder did not create an unnatural atmosphere. I believed that using a tape recorder is less intrusive than taking notes during an interview. It enabled me to concentrate on the participants and react and respond more readily. Furthermore, with a recorded interview it is possible through repeated listens to discover information that may not have seemed relevant previously (Everke-Buchanan 2005:63). The interviews were mostly two hours long (ranging from 1-3.5 hours) and were conducted in informal settings such as the informants' homes, after dinner or lunch.

3. *Archived and contemporary printed materials*: During the three years of PhD research, I collected numerous paper articles, personal letters, transcripts of community speeches and other archived information. In the collection of such material I found the help of my participants invaluable.

V. 2. Question of subjectivity and nativeness

Until the mid-1960s, it was widely assumed that anthropologists remained fairly objective observers of the culture in which they did research. Since then, anthropologists have increasingly questioned and criticized the notion of absolute objectivity (Ram 1991). Simultaneously, there has been a tendency to move away from a scientific, supposedly dispassionate approach to one of self-reflexivity. This new approach suggests that doing fieldwork is not only about observation and the

recording of facts; but it is also a complex interpretive practice. Consequently, instead of claiming a universal validity for representation of the cultures in hand, anthropologists today acknowledge that the relationship between the observer and the observed significantly influences the emerging results. Within these discussions particular attention has been given to the phenomenon of 'indigenous' or 'native' anthropologists. On the basis of these debates, in this section I revisit the issue of nativeness and subjectivity.

Michael Agar (1996:102) cautions: 'You might think that doing ethnography in one's own society would be less stressful. I find it more so'. During my field work, I had several immensely pleasant moments and forged many substantial trusting relationships with my informants. However, I also lived through a 'culture shock', emotional disturbance and was often viewed with suspicion. I assume that a non-Hungarian anthropologist engaged in a project such as this would similarly have both enjoyable and terrible moments; however, they would certainly be different ones. Clifford and Marcus (1986:90) write that 'insiders' studying their own cultures offer a distinctive prism for interpretation and understanding; their accounts are empowered and restricted in unique ways. Clearly, the fact that I am Hungarian opened up several doors and closed others.

From the beginning, I found myself in a particular 'insider-outsider' position. I was born in Hungary and lived most of my life there. I arrived to Melbourne in 2003 to start my PhD. I was a Hungarian researching Hungarians in a foreign continent and brought with me expectations of what being Hungarian means. Indeed, I initially had difficulties relating to the surroundings, programs, activities, and to the general taste of the community. Rather than finding myself in what I expected to be a 'Hungarian island' overseas, I found that the activities in the community centres did not reflect my imagination, memories and perceptions of my homeland. We all identified ourselves as Hungarians (or partly Hungarians); however, our life stories differed greatly: I saw myself exclusively as a temporary resident, whose future lies somewhere in Eastern Europe. They saw themselves as Australian-Hungarians. I, personally, instructed my own sense of Hungarianness as a territorially-bounded phenomenon, while they did not.

Initially, this discrepancy in expectations resulted in some difficulty relating to this community. For instance, my participation in the celebrations of the 1948 and 1956 revolutions did not have the emotional effect I was used to from similar celebrations in Hungary. Although I greatly appreciated the work and enthusiasm that the participants invested in the staging of the performances and programmes, I could not feel emotionally connected to the events. This could be explained by my 'professional' approach to the event (i.e., I approached every community affair as a fieldwork site, and tried to be fully aware every minute), however, I believe this was more to do with the discrepancy between my expectations of an 'Hungarian Island' in Australia and reality. Again, this does not mean that I do not appreciate Australian-Hungarians' identity as Hungarian and their endeavours to retain their sense of being Hungarian. This is far from being true. My point is rather different. I want to emphasise that the Hungarian site in Australia did not make me feel as though I was a 'native' anthropologist.

While the setting and the programmes were unfamiliar, the close connection I later forged with some of the participants established a sense of solidarity between us as Hungarians and made me feel at home. Good conversations and discussions about Hungarian history, politics and contemporary Hungary, with the participants who shared similar beliefs to mine, created a sense of proximity and a kind of intimacy. I was also deeply moved, as an Hungarian, by narratives about participants being politically persecuted during the time of the communist regime. I felt connected to these participants as I believe(d) that only people from Eastern Europe can truly understand the suffering that the victims of the communist dictatorships endured, and that sharing and comprehending this suffering creates a strong bond between us. Interestingly, this sense of connection was based on events which took place in Hungary and not in Australia. For example, sad stories about discrimination in Australia against the Displaced Persons (hereafter DPs) in the early period, while touching me, did not create the bond of national intimacy between us. I could not personally, or through my family history, relate to these sorts of sufferings. Nevertheless, I often found that establishing shared friendly connections with several participants with whom I did not feel much common ground, also resulted in fruitful work-relationships and great friendships. I found that while the Hungarian environment in Australia did not make me feel like a 'native' anthropologist, a sense of connection to people resulted in the feeling of working with my own group.

Despite the lack of complete identification, studying Hungarians in Australia, as an Hungarian, had several advantages. My ability to speak the language of the researched community was an invaluable asset in approaching people and understanding their lives. Indigenous anthropologists have argued that their familiarity with the culture enables them to attribute meaning to social phenomena more readily and in greater depth than a non-indigenous researcher can (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Agar 1996). They further claim that sharing the same social and cultural world as their subjects ensures that they can interpret things more sensitively. As a Hungarian, I was able to understand some culturally embedded codes and references of my informants that could have sounded meaningless and even bizarre to other researchers. For example, when the participants gave voice to their anxiety that 'communist' spies tried to demolish their community and power, it was clear to me what they were talking about. This familiarity with the cultural codes became more obvious to me when discussing my research and field work findings with colleagues. While I easily related to these anxieties, my colleagues expressed bewilderment about my participants' fear of 'communists'. More importantly, I could genuinely relate to the emotions certain political memories or current events in Hungary evoked among Hungarians in Australia.

The other side of the coin is that outsiders are able to maintain a social distance with the researched group that insiders perhaps could find difficult to establish or maintain. Certainly, I would have found it enormously problematic to distance myself from the emotionality of the topic, and write about it in a dispassionate manner if it dealt with émigrés' histories of persecution during the time of the communist regime in Hungary. I deliberately chose a topic where my

personal emotions would be less intrusive. While having a more in-depth knowledge of the cultural, historical and emotional landscape of Hungary and Hungarianness than a non-indigenous ethnographer, I must have taken certain practices as given and assumed that they did not need further exploration and interpretation. Consequently, I must have failed to document and analyse several of those experiences which I shared with the community.

From the beginning, I found that I was as much the observed as the observer, which overturned the classical anthropological assumption about the fundamental distinction between the researcher and the researched. It was not only me who set the parameters for my own sense of finding a home, but also the participants' attitude towards me. The fact that I am Hungarian, who received a scholarship from Australia to conduct a PhD about Australian-Hungarians, often aroused serious suspicion within the community. People frequently asked to see the criteria of the scholarship and they wanted to know why the university and the government ('or we really do not know who') *requested a report* on Hungarians. Although I always clarified the misunderstandings, my arguments were often discarded or forgotten. Further, people often enquired about my past, where I had worked or studied before, and what kind of links I have in Hungary. They were obviously highly suspicious that the study is written 'in response to a political directive' from a Hungarian 'ex-communist-friendly' organisation. My political identity and preferences became one of the keys for exclusion or inclusion for many people. In this particular research setting, I could not rely on the conventional ethnographic practice of 'cultivating strangeness' (Coffey 1999:23), where the role of an ignorant outsider would serve as an advantage. My nationality was a fact, and within this configuration the only way to proceed was to ensure my participants that we shared similar political beliefs. Ironically, and sadly, suspicions were raised, despite the fact that we shared the same basic political background. Several of my informants had been political refugees during the time of the dictatorship and most of the people I frequently encountered expressed intense disdain for, and antipathy against the communist (and, indeed, any kind of) dictatorship. I come from a family whose members were labelled as class enemies, and were victimised and traumatised during the communist regime. Although I personally did not experience the hardship and persecution that my parents and grandparents suffered, a strong sense of dismay towards the regime is carved into my personal history. I assumed that this very basic shared belief would lead to an immediate trusting relationship between me and my informants, and open up the doors for my investigation. Certainly, on several historical and contemporary issues our opinion differed greatly, which I attempted to downplay and gave voice to my counter opinions as little and in as subtle way as possible. Despite the fact that I deliberately revealed the traumas my family had to bear, my political identity was often questioned.

The fact that a Hungarian was writing about the community inevitably raised distrust. It would be an exaggeration on my part to claim that the suspicion was an everyday phenomenon. Rather, suspicion was always somewhere hanging in the background, often raised in certain sensitive situations. I was shocked when, in a

conflict situation between one participant, half a year after establishing a good relationship with her, refused to talk to me and said: 'I know there is more to that than a simple scholarship from the university. Also other people warned me about you.' In the case of the majority of the people, with whom I established friendships, it is inaccurate to talk about feelings of suspicion or distrust towards me. However, even those who fully trusted me were conscious about the potential consequences of my printed work. While I was writing up the book, several people called and asked me not to include this or that detail. They were concerned that the current ex-communist Hungarian government would use it against them or others in the community. Although the suspicion and distrust occasionally upset me, the controversial setting in my fieldwork was not a negative influence, as conflicts often shed light on issues that would otherwise have been unseen or unrecognised.

V. 3. The female anthropologist

While some participants did not trust me, others perceived me as a slightly trivial phenomenon, based on the fact that I was a female researcher in my mid-to-late twenties when conducting the fieldwork. Several older Hungarians referred to me as the 'young lady' or even the 'little girl'. Again, such an approach affected my potential for gaining inclusion into certain circles. Being a young female perhaps communicated a non-threatening identity, which might have eased or counter-balanced the suspicions of many of the participants. However, this image also hindered the data-collection, as some respondents did not consider my research important enough for them to participate.

V. 4. The urban setting

Geographic setting of the field site was a further challenge. Several anthropologists have pointed out that ethnographic research in urban contexts has its specific complications. As Grillo and Rew (1985: 16-17) put it for instance: '[a] life style that on weekdays encompasses work-meal-TV- bed encapsulated within the work place, on the other hand, and the apartment on the other, implies great frustration for an anthropologist pursuing traditional methods of inquiry'. It was obvious that participants in Melbourne could not have a researcher accompany them all day. In such a context it seemed impossible to establish a daily routine of intense participant observation. Instead, I had to construct the field-site much more consciously. I had to forge stable and ongoing relationships with people in order to be around them as much as possible. At the very beginning, I established substantial ties to about 25 people in Melbourne, which resulted in frequent dinners and programmes together. I made sure to include retirees among my key informants, as they have more free time for an anthropologist. Further, taking advantages of modern technologies, I had long telephone conversations with my participants and exchanged several e-mails per week.

As much of the transnational political activities are rooted in Sydney, it was crucial to conduct fieldwork there also. I visited Hungarians in Sydney on five occasions, for about a week each time. As I stayed with various families during my visits, this enabled me to get an intimate view of their everyday life and it provided several opportunities for long and heated debates.

CHAPTER I. HUNGARIANS IN AUSTRALIA

I. Introduction

The 'external' Hungarian diaspora comprises 62,000 Hungarians in Australia along with 270,000 Hungarians in Western Europe, 1.4 million in the U.S., 140,000 in Canada, and 50,000 in South America (Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad, 2005). It is important to distinguish between the 'external' diaspora whose members migrated from Hungary and the 'internal' diaspora residing in the Carpathian Basin¹ (mainly in Romania, Serbia and Slovakia).²

In Australia, the 2001 Census recorded 28,000 people who were born in Hungary and lived in Australia: 9322 Hungarian residents New South Wales; 7380 in Victoria; and 3151 in Queensland (ABS 2001; ABS 2003:114; Hatoss 2003a:3). Collectively, these people make up between 0.1% and 0.2% of the non-English speaking population in these states. A great proportion of Hungarians arrived from the internal diaspora, namely from the former Yugoslavia, Romania and Czechoslovakia. Prior to the 2001 Census, they were mistakenly classified as Slovaks if they migrated from Slovakia and Romanians if they were born in Romania (Hatoss 2003b:3; Clyne 1991). The 2001 Census corrected this problem by including a question about ancestry, which enabled a better estimation of the trends within the Hungarian community in Australia.

II. Literature review on Hungarians in Australia

The present study seeks to fill a gap in the research concerning Hungarians in Australia. Despite the fact that immigrants and multiculturalism are highly researched subjects in Australia, very little has been written on the Hungarian community as such. The literature extends to a small number of historical and sociological works produced on Australian-Hungarians, on issues such as assimilation and historic patterns of migration.

The literature extends to a small number of historical and sociological works produced on Australian-Hungarians, on issues such as assimilation and historic patterns of migration. The most prominent work on Hungarians in Australia was written by Egon Kunz, an Australian scholar of Hungarian origin. *Blood and gold; Hungarians in Australia* was published in 1969, and provides an encompassing description of Hungarian migrants in Australia from the mid 1880s. The book was updated and published again in 1985 under the title: *The Hungarians in Australia*.

¹ The term is used by Hungarians to depict both a historical and geographical territory, where Hungarians have lived since their settlement.

² The 'internal' Hungarian diaspora is a result from the migration of borders over people after the First World War (See Panossian (1998) and Tölölyan (1991) for similar categorisation of the Armenian diaspora).

Assimilation of Hungarian migrants is addressed in some of the existing works on the community. Anna Ambrosy, a community member herself, dedicated two sociological studies to the investigation of assimilation processes among Hungarians in Victoria. Her first work: *New lease on life: Hungarian immigrants in Victoria: assimilation in Australia* was published in 1984, the second updated version in 1990. Assimilation of intellectual refugees, particularly Hungarians, in Western Australia is discussed in the study of by Ronald Taft and Gordon Doczy. Further a Ma book by Elizabeth Weisz (1970) examines the problems associated with assimilation of Hungarians in Adelaide.

The topic of the 1956 Revolution in Hungary with reference to Hungarians in Australia is investigated in two studies. Attila Somogyi (1997) writes about the migratory experiences of the fifty-sixers in Australia and New Zealand. Rodger Winfield Hein in his PhD dissertation (2004) scrutinizes the humanitarian work of the Red Cross with the arriving Hungarian refugees after the Revolution. The political aspects of the Australian-Hungarian community is only directly addressed by Stephen Lovas (1969) in his study: *Politics of Hungarian migrants in Australia*. With the exceptions of Ronald Taft and Rodger Winfield Hein all the authors are of Hungarian origin.

As seen from the list above, most of these studies were written and published before the collapse of Communism in Hungary. In that sense this book is filling a gap in the literature, as none of these above mentioned works address the question of how the Australian-Hungarian community was transformed after 1989.

III. Hungarian migration in Australia

Deák (2002:9) writes that Hungary has produced the ‘largest number of political exiles and, among them, those who were politically the most prominent’ in Eastern Europe in the 20th century. Between 1944 and 1956, but particularly between 1944 and 1947, a great part of Hungary’s political and intellectual elite was forced into exile (Deák 2002:10). Between 1944 and 1947, two heads of the state, the Regent Admiral Horthy Miklós and the fascist National Leader Szálasi Ferenc, as well as ‘five active or former prime ministers, one deputy prime minister, nearly all the members of several ministerial cabinets, and the leaders of most of Hungary’s political parties, hordes of parliamentary deputies, generals, landowning aristocrats, bureaucrats, gendarmes, and policemen’ were exiled (Deák 2002:11). While the early migration waves of Hungarians to Australia comprised a high proportion of the intelligentsia, the prominent political elite stayed either in Western Europe or emigrated to the U.S.

The first large wave of Hungarian immigration to Australia (about 15,000 people) arrived in Australia Displaced Persons (hereafter DPs), between 1948 and 1954. This wave consisted of two main groups of immigrants. The ‘Westwarders’ (Nyugatosok) fled from the oncoming Soviet troops in 1945 (Kunz 1985:77). The ‘Border Jumpers’ escaped from Hungary during 1948-1949. Both the Westwarders and the Border Jumpers migrated to Australia as one wave after 1949 (Kunz 1985:78).

Both groups contained an unusually high proportion from the intelligentsia (Kunz 1985:78), for whom there was obviously no future in a Russian-occupied Communist Hungary (Kunz 1985:77). The Westwarders were mostly men occupying higher positions in the public service before Second World War or professional army officers. The Border Jumpers were 'men of various professions, especially from those fields where giving vent to one's opinion was part of their daily activity: clergymen, teachers, journalists, lawyers' (Kunz 1985:79). Many of them were connected to the dissolved political parties or other resistance movements that had existed before Hungary became permanently occupied by the Soviet army (Kunz 1985:79). Unlike the Westwarders, who mostly arrived with their families, the Border Jumpers were generally young single men, many of them university students. In these years, men outnumbered women by a ratio of seven to four, which became the basis for a high rate of intermarriage with Australian-born women (Kunz 1988:538).

The situation of these early émigrés was particularly difficult in Australia. They experienced humiliation and exclusion in Australia as DPs. Despite the fact that a great number of them had higher education, their qualifications were disregarded and they were categorized as labourers on their identity cards and had to sign a two-year working contract as physical workers (Kunz 1985:82). During my fieldwork, I collected several sad memoirs from former doctors, journalists, academics who worked on railway construction for years. The following bitter-sweet anecdotal evidence illustrates the bizarre situation faced by immigrant Hungarian intellectuals and specialists of other kinds in the initial years in Australia. In the Bonegilla Detention Centre in the early 1950s DPs had to indicate the type of physical work they were familiar with. A former Hungarian academic answered that he was a fencing master. The next day he was given paint and a brush to paint the fences.

The second large wave of Hungarian immigration to Australia occurred after the 1956 Revolution. Roughly 250,000 'fifty-sixers' fled Hungary after the Revolution (Huseby-Darvas 2004:77); and around 15,000 arrived in Australia as political refugees. Many of them escaped from the bloodbath that followed the repression of the Revolution. Others simply took advantage of the sudden chance to leave the Stalinist dictatorship behind and start a new life under democratic conditions. Although, in this wave of immigration there was a considerable proportion of tradesmen and the proletariat, the well-educated were again over-represented (Kunz 1985:83). The 'fifty-sixers', partly due to the world-wide sympathy for the Revolution of 1956, were in a much better position on arrival in Australia than their former countrymen. Also, they were not bound by the two-year contract as were the Hungarians who had been classified as DPs. They had a better chance to find employment which would match their qualifications (Józsa-Demián 2001:423). Borbándi (2006:239) suggests that the 'fifty-sixers' showed a much wider range of political affiliations than the rigorous anti-communism of previous émigrés.

During the 1960s, a group of 8000 Hungarians arrived from the former Yugoslavia. These so-called 'Southern Hungarians' arrived from the Voivodina region, which prior to 1920 had been a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

This group was drawn mainly from small villages and small towns and consisted predominantly of peasantry and proletariat (Józsa-Demián 2001:423). After the Revolution, no other clearly defined waves of Hungarian refugees arrived in Australia. Between 1958 and 1980, around 100 so-called 'Defectors' migrated each year, however between 1980 and 1983 this number suddenly rose to 3000 in total (Kunz 1988:538). The increasing number of emigrants reflected the worsening economic conditions in Hungary and the Hungarian government's increasingly liberal attitude to granting passports to its citizens (Kunz 1985:87). As with previous waves, this group of Hungarians migrating to Australia from Hungary was officially labelled 'political refugees'. Due to more liberal policies towards immigrants in Australia, those arriving in the 1980s were not subjected to systematic exclusion and demands for assimilation. After 1989, Hungarian migration to Australia practically ceased (Józsa-Demián 2001:423).

IV. The situation of Hungarians in Australia

According to Kunz (1988), the number of Hungarian associations that have been formed in Australia since Second World War is between 100 and 200. However, only about 10 % of the Hungarian population has regular contact with these groups. Kunz (1988:539) notes that Hungarian associations are traditionally fragmented along educational lines; intra-Christian differences are almost unknown in the *emigráció*. Most of the existing associations in Melbourne and Sydney are apolitical, aim to maintain Hungarian culture, and are mostly visited and sustained by low- to middle-class Hungarians. Different social, sport, folk-dancing and singing clubs belong to this category.

There are some political organisations both in Melbourne and Sydney. The memberships of these organisations have middle- and high-middle-class background. The *Magyar Harcosok Bajtársi Szövetsége* (Association of Hungarian Warriors), for example, which operates both in Sydney and Melbourne, was set up in the early years of the exile (early 1950s) still comprises emigrants from the early migration waves, and had a strong anti-communist character pre-1989, and even afterwards. Similarly, some umbrella associations, such as the *Hungarian Association of New South Wales* (est. 1955) and the *Federal Council of Hungarian Associations* (est. 1952), have had clear political aims, which was to bring closer the day of the Soviet Army's departure from Hungary (Kunz 1985:93). The core members have developed transnational connections to Hungary since 1989 and have been the main advocates for the transnational bridge. Some human rights and historical organisations were established before the collapse of communism in Hungary. These advocate for the rights of the minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. These include organisations such as the *Action-Transylvanica* in Sydney (est. 1987), which continued after 1990 as the *Magyar Kisebbségi Alap* (Hungarian Minority Fund of Australia), the Sydney based *Szent Korona Társaság* (Sacra Corona Society) (est. 1971), the *Hungarian History Association* in Melbourne, the *Forum of History*, in Sydney and the *Ausztráliai Erdélyi Magyar Szövetség* (Transylvania Association) which operates in both cities (est. 1962).

These organisations regularly sent petitions and memoranda to different sections of the United Nations, the Australian Parliament and different Australian universities. Some, such as the Transylvania Association, were politically motivated and through events such as annual picnics and dinners, they raised funds for Transylvanian Hungarians. Others, such as the *Vajdasági Magyarokat Támogató Szervezet* (Vojvodina-Hungarian Fund) (both in Sydney and Melbourne) (est. 1992), were primarily occupied with fundraising activities and comprised a more low-middle class membership. These organisations have been operating also after 1989. Some other associations, with explicitly political agendas, were established after 1989, such as the local branches of the transnational organisations, for example *Magyarok Világszövetsége* (Federation of World Hungarians) and *Trianon Társaság* (Trianon Society).

In Melbourne, the main gathering place for Hungarians is the *Magyar Központ* (Hungarian Community Centre), or popularly the *Magyar Ház* (Hungarian House), in Wantirna. The community centre was established in 1978 when two Hungarian families bought the land. The building of the large complex was financed through fundraising within the Hungarian community in Melbourne. The construction work was done by Hungarian volunteers and was finished in 1982. The *Magyar Ház* is run as a joint-stock-company, where several Australian-Hungarians are shareholders. The *Magyar Ház* houses mostly apolitical associations such as the *Kézimunkakör* (Embroidery Club), *Magyar Iskola* (Hungarian Language School), *Knox Hungarian Senior Citizens Club Inc.*, and the *Ausztráliai Erdélyi Magyar Szövetség* (Australian Transylvanian Association) and some politically oriented human rights organisation such as the *Transylvania Association* and the *Magyar Kisebbségi Alap* (Hungarian Minority Fund).

The other main gathering site for Hungarians is the *Independent Hungarian Reformed Church* and *Bocskay Club* in North Fitzroy, close to the city centre. The *Bocskay Club* is mostly attended by older, first-generation, male Hungarians. They host meetings of some political organisations, such as the *Trianon Társaság*. After the Sunday Mass, lunch is provided in the club, and celebrations and commemorations are held on Hungarian national days. Otherwise, the centre is mainly unattended and closed. Recently the Honorary Consul established his office in the club and renovated the building, aiming to revive a sense of Hungarian life. Besides these two main centres, an elderly home (*Árpád öregek otthona*), three Hungarian language schools and some smaller community houses, for instance the Southern-Hungarian House in Bayswater, operate in Melbourne.

In Sydney, the main Hungarian centre is much smaller than the one in Melbourne. It is situated in Punchbowl, in outer Sydney, and occupies the first floor in a building. It houses several apolitical and political organisations.

Hungarian newspapers have existed in Australia since the 1950s. The prominent *Dél Keresztje* (Southern Cross) continued as the *Független Magyarország* (Independent Hungarians) and ceased in 1967. Since then, the Melbourne-based periodical, *Magyar Élet* (Hungarian Life), which was established in 1958 took its place. Today it is the only weekly Hungarian newspaper in Australia. The Special Broadcasting Service Radio (SBS) broadcasts four hour-long Hungarian language

programs in Victoria and New South Wales (Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday). Further, several other Hungarian community radio programs exist in Australia with limited broadcasts. SBS television provides a Hungarian news program on Sunday and the Mournian Hungarian Television Association shows its program on Channel 31 twice a week. These television programmes predominantly focus on local Hungarian events and issues. Since 2003, Australian-Hungarians have been able to access the *Duna Television*, a Hungary-based cultural channel.

Membership in Hungarian community organisations had its peak in the 1960s and 1970s. However, with the aging of the first migrant generation, the active membership started to decline in the 1980s (Józsa-Demián 2001:423). With each passing generation, people of Hungarian descent participate less in the organisations that support and form ethnic community life, such as ethnic churches and traditional cultural organizations. Most clubs and associations have only a few members, and Hungarian community centres are closing down countrywide. With the exception of Hungarian national days (such as the 15 of March, 20 of August, 6 of October, and 23 of October) and various balls, concerts and festivals such as the *Hungarofest* in Melbourne, the attendances at the community houses are very low. The decline has endangered the vitality of the communities and became an alarming problem for Australian-Hungarians.

The Hungarian community in Australia shows low ethno-cultural retention rates. The vast majority of Hungarians have become culturally, structurally and maritally assimilated, to use Milton Gordon's (1964) terminology. This tendency is largely attributable to demographic factors, such as the rapidly aging and declining population. According to the latest Census, the median age of Hungarian-born Australians was 62.3 year and the average annual change in the number of Hungarian-born residents between 1991 and 2001 was -0.4% (ABS, 2003: 94; Hatoss 2003a: 2). The current low migration rates from Hungary do not compensate for the decline. A total of 56 new migrants were registered in 2000 and 2001 (ABS 2003:49; Hatoss 2003a:2).

Second and third generation Hungarians are also less likely to speak, read, or write Hungarian, and tend to have a higher rate of intermarriage. Clyne and Kipp (1997) report that the Hungarian community in Australia shows an overall tendency to shift to English from the Hungarian language. The rate of shift in the first generation increases from 24.4% in 1986, to 26.7% in 1991 and 31.8% in 1996. These figures represent the percentage of people who were born in Hungary and who now speak only English at home (Hatoss 2003b:2). According to the 2001 Census, 24,485 people spoke Hungarian at home in Australia in 2001. Clyne and Kipp (1997:8) further demonstrate that Australian-Hungarians show a high rate of intergenerational shift. That is, a large proportion of Hungarians do not transmit the Hungarian language to the next generation. In endogamous relations, the current rate of intergenerational shift is 64.2%, while in exogamous relations this figure is 89.4% (Hatoss 2003a:3).

Part of the problem can be traced back to the gender-composition of the early emigrant waves. In the first major emigrant wave men outnumbered women

by a ratio of seven to four, which resulted in high rate of intermarriage with non-Hungarian women. This meant that only few children of foreign-speaking mothers learnt Hungarian (Kunz 1985:99). Further, according to some socio-linguistic studies (Hatoss 2003a, 2003b), Hungarian migrant parents who arrived during the time of the assimilationist policy used Hungarian language at home with their children significantly less than did the more recently arrived Hungarian migrants. The high level of intergenerational language shift possibly reflects the effects of the assimilationist policies and practices of Australian society at the time (Hatoss 2003b:1). Multicultural policies seem to have created a more positive environment for minority language maintenance, as evidenced by those Hungarians, who arrived in the 1980s or later and were more optimistic about maintaining and transmitting their language to the next generation (Hatoss 2003b:1).

Contemporary Australian multicultural policies (DIMIA 1999, 2003; DIMIA 1989) and language policies (DEET 1991; Lo Bianco 1987) authorise the maintenance of migrant languages and cultures. However, as Hatoss (2005) shows, language policies have had a weak impact on the maintenance of languages spoken in relatively small migrant communities. As the Hungarian language does not belong to the 'economically beneficial languages' in Australia, the language maintenance efforts of this community are barely subsidised by state authorities (Hatoss 2005:381). For instance, the government-sponsored Hungarian language schools in Melbourne receive \$89 per student per year.

Importantly, we need to acknowledge the role of the homeland in the acculturation process. Until the 1980s, the idea of return to Hungary seemed both unattainable and far from beneficial. Since the collapse of communism, the Hungarian citizenship of émigrés has been reinstated and the democratic transition has enabled Hungarians to nurture transnational linkages. Consequently, the possibility of transnational connectedness has increased the advantages of transmitting the Hungarian language to the next generations. However, neither the possibility for transnational connectedness nor multicultural policies have managed to reverse the rapid assimilation of Hungarians in Australia.

V. The Hungarian diaspora in a comparative perspective

As already mentioned, it is 'axiomatic that each empirical diaspora must be analysed in its historical specificity' (Brah 1996:183). This should include a brief comparison with other diasporas. Considering some of the parallels (and divergences) between the Hungarian diaspora and other Eastern European diasporas sets the analysis in a broader cultural and political context, and provides a platform upon which to build new theoretical insights. Satzewich (2002:10) argues that the first similarity among the Eastern European diasporas is that their ancestral homelands were all dominated by the Soviet Union and this set the stage for a number of common experiences for the émigrés. First, they were physically disconnected from their homelands, as return was in most cases dangerous. The fear of arrest or repression for having left the homeland, particularly among those

who escaped during the chaos of Second World War, acted as a strong brake on any return movement (Satzewich 2002:10).

Second, from the start of the Cold War, Eastern European exiled communities were politically active. They quickly set up political organizations in their host countries, calling for the liberation of their respective homelands from communist rule (Magocsi 2005). The political activities of Eastern European émigrés were mostly unsuccessful (Shain 1989, 1995; Magocsi 2005). As several scholars have noted, in many cases, dialogue with Eastern European exile organisations acted as window-dressing for U.S. foreign policy (Deák 2002:19; Borbándi 2006; Shain 1989, 1995).

Third, a feeling common to Eastern European diaspora groups was that their authentic language, culture and traditions could only be preserved in the diaspora as it was repressed in the homeland (Satzewich, 2002; Panossian, 1998). This claim is especially valid in the case of Ukrainians, Armenians and other diasporas from the Soviet Union, where the efforts to create *Homo sovieticus* seriously threatened the ethnic cultures and languages. Indeed, as I later demonstrate, maintaining and saving ‘authentic Hungarian culture’ was seen by the Hungarian exile as one of their main tasks.

Finally, Satzewich (2002) emphasises that the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Iron Curtain provided new opportunities for members of these diasporas to reconnect themselves with their ancestral homelands. Large numbers of people in each Eastern European émigré community hoped to play a role in the momentous events that began to unfold in Eastern Europe in 1989, ‘either directly, through political activities or military service, or indirectly, by providing economic support’ (Magocsi 2005:176). However, after decades of separation, the free movement of goods, people, ideas and information to and from the homeland may be having unintended and negative consequences, such as exacerbating the feelings of alienation and estrangement instead of creating renewed connectivity (Satzewich 2002:11). Magocsi (2005) emphasises that these problems emerged because the diasporas were politically out of step with their homelands and their political ideals seemed to get stuck in an earlier version of the ‘ethnic nation-state’, which did not fully take into account developments in Eastern Europe in the years of their absence.

Despite the similarities, there are also differences between the Hungarian case and those of other East- and Central-European groups. One feature stands out: the Hungarian diaspora have been less successful in becoming involved in the politics of the homeland than other diasporas.³ Despite the widely reported miscommunication between the new democracies and their respective diasporas, it appears that in several cases the involvement of these diasporas in homeland politics has been welcomed in the mother countries. In a number of post-socialist

³ Satzewich argues that the Ukrainian diaspora was unsuccessful in becoming involved in democratic Ukraine’s political life. Rubchak (1993: 363) on the other hand claims the opposite, saying that the ‘Ukrainians in the diaspora have become a substantial source of support – financial, intellectual, ideological, and political – for the burgeoning national movement in Ukraine’.

countries, émigrés were offered key economic positions, and even emerged as leaders of political parties, such as Vaira Vike-Freiberga (Latvia) or Vaclav Hável (Czech Republic) (Winland 1995; Shain 1995; Skrbis 2002). The examples of Croatia, Lithuania and Slovenia also suggest a dramatically greater level of social acceptance of diaspora involvement in the politics of the homeland (Winland 1995; Skrbis 2002) than is the case for Hungary.

CHAPTER II. FROM EXILE TO DIASPORA?

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1990 the first democratically elected prime minister, Antall József (1990–1993) declared himself to be Prime Minister ‘in spirit’ of 15 million Hungarians. The notion of ‘15 million Hungarians’ embraced 10 million Hungarian citizens, ‘minority-Hungarians’ who are citizens of states which neighbour Hungary, and Hungarians émigrés all over the world. This statement indicated a significant paradigm shift towards Hungarians outside the Republic, as émigrés were labelled derogatorily and were seen as traitors by the authorities during state-socialism. In this chapter I pose the question of how the homeland-related discourses among Hungarians in Australia have shifted as a result of the fall of Berlin Wall and as a result of Hungary’s redefined ‘discourses of the national’ (Niedermüller, 2002). In answering this question, I investigate the renewed connection between the *emigráció* and the homeland authorities. While until 1989, there was no institutional connection between Hungary and the Hungarian community in Australia, after the *rendszer váltás* (system changing) due to the changed political conditions, new institutional bridges have been initiated and relationships remade and reinvented between the émigrés and Hungary. I analyse the thresholds of the newly emerged relationship between the émigrés and the homeland and track down the development of the post-1989 narratives.

The structural transformations have enabled Hungarians in Australia to replace the pre-1989 ‘*exilic*’ discourses emphasising the themes of *loss* and *disconnection* from the mother country, with ‘*diasporic*’ discourses indicating potential empowerment and *connection* to and *inclusion* in the homeland. However, by analysing the transformations in Hungary and the communication between homeland and the emigrant group, I show that despite the encouraging structural possibility this potential did not result in a sense of diasporic connectedness and empowerment. Instead, a mixed discourse developed which, though it centres around the desire for inclusion, is characterised by the legacy of the ‘*exilic*’ discourses and by feelings of distrust and disappointment.

It is important to note that the adoption of *exilic* and *diasporic* narratives is not only influenced by structural forces on the macro level but also by representational regimes within the Hungarian community, which encourage(ed) ‘selective emphasis, invention, or suppression’ of specific experiences and social actions (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:147). When writing about the Eastern European émigré politics in Canada and the United States, Magocsi (2005:175) warns that the political exiles who made up a large proportion of community leaders ‘may at best have spoken on behalf of organizations but hardly represented the views of the vast silent majority of their compatriots who likely had no political views at all’. Similarly, according to my findings, in Australia the main propagators and disseminators of the *exilic*-discourses were those Westwarders, Borderjumpers

and fifty-sixers, who referred to themselves as ‘political émigrés’. The term ‘political émigré’ does not necessarily imply that these Hungarians have faced more persecution in Hungary or had political positions prior to emigration. The term rather suggests political activism and membership in anti-communist associations in the hostland. The voice of the ‘political émigrés’ dominated the pre-1989 Australian-Hungarian homeland-related discourses. The apolitical organisations similarly maintained the disconnected from the homeland, however their primary aim was to create and preserve Hungarianness in Australia and they did not have political representation. I demonstrate how the representatives of the political émigrés aimed to vulgarise identity discourses by the stimulation of elements which stirred strong emotional responses within the audience.

While it is useful to distinguish between predominantly exilic and predominantly diasporic discourses pre- and post-1989, it should be noted that these terms are not used by the Hungarian community in Australia. Instead of the term ‘exile’ (száműzetés), Hungarian community representatives have preferred to depict themselves as forming the so-called ‘*emigráció*’. The term explicitly indicates the state of being in exile and designates a strong political opposition to the homeland political regime. As I explain later, *emigráció* is a strongly loaded term in Hungarian. It draws parallels with previous historical émigré groups and ultimately stands for loyalty, heroism, and non-opportunism. It is possible that Hungarians in Australia prefer the term ‘*emigráció*’ because of these associations instead of the term ‘száműzetés’ (exile), although this term is also used. It should also be noted that the term ‘*emigráció*’ is mainly used by the ‘political émigrés’. The apolitical community organisations and their members refer to themselves simply as ‘Australian-Hungarians’, or the ‘Hungarian community in Australia’.

Since 1989, some members have argued for a shift in the label; however, the term *emigráció* is still widely used, even by those who articulate clearly diasporic stances. Even if a great deal of contemporary discourse reflects diasporic arguments, the term ‘diaspora’ has not gained any ground in the community. This is probably due to the fact that most Hungarians are familiar with the common, more old-fashioned connotations of the word, meaning sporadic, non-organised, scattered communities.

I. 1. Theoretical considerations

A short theoretical explanation regarding the terms ‘exile’ and ‘diaspora’ is needed prior the discussion. Being in exile is most often described in literature as a condition in which although banishment may last a lifetime, exiled individuals often consider their plight temporary. They hope to return to their homeland when circumstances permit, but are unable and/or unwilling to do so as long as the factors that made them exiles persist (Grinberg and Grinberg 1989:157; Tabori 1972:27). Traditional connotations of diaspora showed similarity to that of exile, as the term was associated with ‘force displacement, victimisation, alienation, [and] loss’ (Vertovec 1996:278). However, the current usage diverted greatly from the classic definition, which was *defined* with reference to the Jewish diaspora (Sheffer

2003:9 emphasis in original). New postmodern interpretation has challenged the early paradigms of diasporas as scattered communities yearning for a lost national homeland, whether real or imaginary (Werbner 2002:120). New interpretations stress the dimensions of transnational existence, links both to the home and host societies and cosmopolitan consciousness (Boyarin and Boyarin 1993; Clifford 1994; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990:235). In this sense, while the term 'exile' most often indicates the sense of eternal loss and involuntary disconnection from the homeland, 'diaspora' frequently signifies empowerment, transnational connections, and relationship with the homeland (Coundouriotis 2001; Butler 2001; Clifford 1994:311; Tölölyan 1991, 1992, 1996; Boyarin and Boyarin 1993; Clifford 1994; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990; Klimt and Lubkemann 2002). It is exactly this distinction between emphasis on disconnection and connection which demarcates the discourses in the pre- and post-1989 periods in the Australian-Hungarian community.

I do not regard the concepts 'exile' and 'diaspora' as clear-cut, bound entities, designating a type of social formation. These terms are not fixed categories, which can be applied to every individual in the community at all times. A number of scholars have recently explored the analytical avenues of theorizing 'diaspora' as a category of practice (Brubaker 2005:12), as a discourse (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002), as a script (Noivo 2002:257), as a type of consciousness (Vertovec 1996) as opposed to a specific category of 'social formation' (see also Anthias 1998; Clifford, 1994). Following these scholars, I see the terms of exile and diaspora as framing devices that specify particular issues and set the terms and parameters of the identity discourses (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:147). Conceptualizing exile and diaspora as particular dimension of displaced ethnic groups reveals that these are never temporally and socially fixed categories that exist at all time in all segments of the community (see Clifford 1994:310 and Anthias 1998). Further, approaching diaspora as a specific master-narrative gives us opportunity to examine the *process* of diasporisation in the context of the Australian-Hungarian community. This line of thinking productively encourages questions regarding the ways in which narratives of diasporic connectedness and empowerment were introduced, legitimized, discarded and interconnected with other self-narratives after 1990 (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:149). In addition, such an approach emphasizes that exilic and diasporic narratives are only two of several other 'practices of social identification and performances of self' (Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:149) that constitute the Australian-Hungarian narrative-structure. In fact, as will be apparent throughout this book within various power and social settings community actors often combine various frames simultaneously in complex ways for different reasons (see: Klimt and Lubkemann 2002:152).

II. THE PRE-1989 PERIOD

In order to understand the post-1989 developments in the Australian-Hungarian community, in this section, I give a detailed overview of the pre-1989 exilic discourses. I scrutinise the important themes of the discourses and the ways in

which they were utilised in various political and community actions, and provide a description of the institutional background in which it developed. The Australian-Hungarian discourses, which developed prior-1989 were mainly characterised by the ambivalence of *loss* and *hope*. In this section, I also look at the ways in which the simultaneous feelings of hope and futility are interwoven in these discourses.

II. 1. Historical circumstances

Over a period of over 40 years, while Soviet-style communism dominated Eastern Europe, the Hungarian community in Australia enjoyed no formal or institutional links with Hungary. During the 1950s and early-1960s communist propaganda in Hungary labelled refugees as fascist criminals, class enemies, and useless, workshy rabble (Kunz 1985:102). In 1963, an amnesty for the freedom fighters of the 1956 Revolution was declared, however negative connotations still persisted. Hungarians leaving the country as late as the 1980s were labelled ‘Defectors’ by the Hungarian state. The only attempt by the Hungarian government to have connection with the expatriates abroad was the Magyarok Világszövetsége (MVSZ) or World Federation of Hungarians (WFH). The organisation was set up in Budapest after the 1963-amnesty was declared. It operated under close party control in order to monitor Hungarians and their organisations in exile (see Borbándi, 2006). The MVSZ offered ‘help’ for language and culture maintenance, disseminated Hungarian-published books, and organised residential seminars and courses for former refugees (Kunz 1985:102). The MVSZ was responsible for the ‘*Szülőföldünk*’ (‘Our homeland’) radio programme, the magazine ‘*Magyar Hírek*’ (Hungarian News), and the annual ‘*Anyanyelvi Konferencia*’ (Mother-Tounge Conferences), which were held in Hungary for Hungarians living in the West. However, such actions by no means indicated inclusion in the nation of all segments of the population in exile. After the amnesty, the Kadar regime officially differentiated between ‘good’ and ‘harmful’ émigrés (Borbándi 2006:272). Szántó Miklós, one-time head of the MVSZ, describes Hungarian emigrant waves in the following terms: “...after the second World War bloody fascists, a group of bandits are marching off. [...] After the start of the proletarian regime in 1948 right-wing politicians, criminals, smugglers and traffickers are scrambling out of the country...later the counter-revolution⁴ opened up the doors of prisons and again criminals were floating out and augmented the enemy in exile” (cited in Csapó 1991:1).

Magocsi (2005:177) describes the possibilities for return of Eastern European émigrés: ‘Theoretically, they could return and would even be welcome: to be put on trial, imprisoned, or exiled for allegedly or actually having supported a wartime “fascist” regime, for having engaged in anti-communist activity, or simply for having left the homeland illegally’ (see also Satzewich 2002). While this view is certainly valid for political émigrés, return visits for the majority of Hungarians

⁴ During the period of the Communist dictatorship, the 1956 revolution was labelled ‘counter-revolution’.

living overseas to Hungary were possible, though not unproblematic. Each of the emigrant waves was deprived of their citizenship. Travel to Hungary was only possible with a visa, which was granted by the Hungarian government only to those with ‘excellent behaviour’, which implied non-participation in exile-politics (Borbándi 2006:273).

II. 2. The term: ‘*Emigráció*’

The term that the political émigrés, (often also other community members) used to depict the Hungarian population in Australia was ‘*emigráció*’. This term can give us important insights, as the concept encompasses the two main constitutive elements in the exilic narratives, namely that of *loss* and *hope*. The term ‘*emigráció*’, literally translated as the ‘emigrant group’ is heavily loaded with historical significance as it draws a link with prominent Hungarian émigré groups from the past. In Hungarian history there are three distinct *emigráció*s. The first is named after Rákóczi Ferenc, Prince of Transylvania, who lived in exile in Turkey after the fall of his uprising against the Habsburgs (1703–11). The ‘second historical *emigráció*’ is associated with Kossuth Lajos, who was one of the main leaders of the anti-Habsburg revolution of 1848-1849, and who emigrated to the United States when the revolution failed. The ‘third historical *emigráció*’, of which the Australian-Hungarian elite saw themselves to be a part, is named after Varga Béla, but it is also associated with a large number of prominent politicians who were exiled to the West between 1944 and 1947. A common feature of these *emigráció*s, is that their leaders were political leaders prior to their exile and lobbied for Hungary’s liberation after they were expelled.

Several scholars have pointed out that names are ‘powerful symbols of identity and that the process of naming is inextricably linked with the process of identity formation’ (Danforth 1995:154; Bourdieu 1991). The political émigrés used this term *emigráció* because of its historical, political and moral connotations. The term consciously implies both a political statement and a sense of struggle, which has already been started in the mother country, and which has been interrupted and forced out (see: Borbándi 2006:75). As one of the leading Sydney-based figures in the exile put it: ‘The *emigráció* is a product of a defeated struggle [in dictatorial Hungary]’ (Csapó, undated manuscript). The term ‘*emigráció*’ also implies an ‘unnatural’ condition, as the freedom fighters are forced from their natural battlefield and carry on their struggle on foreign soil. Deprivation of the ‘natural environment’ to exile is often described in the literature on various communities in exile, as an experience leading to fundamental *discontinuity* (Breytenbach 1991:75; Said 1991:360-361). However, in the Hungarian case, being in exile is not entirely seen as an exclusion from history (see: Slobin 2001). Both the narratives and the term ‘*emigráció*’ simultaneously emphasise a continued political struggle along with the tragedy of discontinuity. That is, while one had to bear banishment, many believed that being an exile would save their aspirations for liberating the homeland from oblivion. In the Australian-Hungarian context, the *emigráció* was strictly distinguished from other types of emigrant groups. First, it

explicitly suggested forced displacement from the home country to exile. Second it embodied a native hierarchy which placed it higher on the ladder of classification (see: Al-Raseed1994:210). The Australian-Hungarian political émigrés refer to the *emigráció* as a noble experience, which has to be endured (see: Slobin 2001).

II. 3. East versus West

The ambivalence of loss and hope is frequently signified by an East-West opposition which became an important trope in exilic discourses. According to the discourses from the pre-1989 period, escape from the *East* and immigration to the *West* was presented as the only way to save both Hungary and Hungarianness from ‘complete devastation’. The assumption of East-West as a pair of linked, oppositional spaces, one of destruction, the other of possibility, is central to an understanding of the exilic-narratives. Political émigrés framed their objections to the Communist dictatorship, their imagined mission and consequently their position within the domain of Hungarianness in the East-West opposition. This imagined spatial division, however, is not merely the invention of the émigrés. It is rather a reinterpretation of a powerful and longstanding debate, which has deep roots in the Eastern European historical and political narratives (see: Jansen 2000, 2001; Norris 2000). In particular, the symbolic terms of East and West helped to frame Hungarian national identity and permeated Hungarian political life for at least 200 years (Gal 1991:440). In these discourses the West symbolises civilization, efficiency, and modernity, in contrast to the East, which has been characterised as savage, inflexible and backward. Australian-Hungarian discourses pre-1989 reshaped and reinterpreted exactly this ambivalent dichotomizing discourse of Hungary’s and Hungarians’ place in the world.

The West carried moral overtones of liberal democracy and human rights and the East took on an extra, negative symbolic load of brutality and national death in the Australian-Hungarian context (see: Gal 1991:454). According to the exilic narratives from that period, the homeland was *lost*, not only to the exile but to everybody, as it was occupied and governed by Communists from the *East*. Communism was always portrayed as a destructive, soul-killing power. Hungary was referred to as the prisoner’s home, where history had been taken away from the people, the Hungarian language had been degraded, and folkloric culture was dying out. In the exilic narratives Communist Hungary was no longer the ‘true homeland’ (see Malkii 1995). In order for Hungary to again become a ‘homeland’, it needed to be purged of the ‘*Eastern* pollution’, transformed and restored (see also Borbándi 2006:81). A powerful element in the narratives was that the émigrés had the requisite knowledge and ‘moral purity’ to participate in the transformation of Hungary into a ‘true nation’. The fact of living in a *Western* democracy was portrayed as affording a great opportunity to do something for Hungary’s sake, which could not be done by those still inside Hungary. The narratives positioned expatriates living in the West as being able to redeem the homeland. A detail of a community-conference talk in Australia, dating from 1981, demonstrates this East-West dichotomy and the claimed potential of the émigrés:

The emigrant Hungarians need [...] to make altruistic sacrifices in order to compensate the devastating and soul-killing influence of bolshevism which threatens to engulf our homeland. Our faith and willingness to embrace each other in a free land are the only things which can give hope to our brothers in Hungary. (Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook 1981:3).

II. 4. Saviours of the dying homeland

The perception that the nation is dying under communist rule was widespread among the Eastern European diasporas (Satzewich 2002). Eastern European emigrant groups felt that the communists' efforts to create *Homo sovieticus* in a Russian fashion, seriously threatened ethnic cultures and languages (Satzewich 2002). In order fully to comprehend the belief that Hungarian culture was dying out in the homeland, a historical perspective needs to be adopted. The metaphor of 'nation-death' is deeply embedded in the wider Hungarian national discourse. The *emigráció*'s discourse of saving the homeland needs to be located and examined in this broader context.

The fear of extinction, epitomised in the Romantic vision of '*nemzethalál*' (death of the nation), is an integral element of the Hungarian (and generally Eastern European) national imaginary. The '*nemzethalál vízió*' (nation death vision) is best exemplified in Hungarian poetry since the Romantic period. In the Eastern European region, in the age of Romanticism and still long after, there has been an absence of the middle class and citizens in the modern sense. As a result, artists and intellectuals became the forerunners, if not the apostles and political repositories of modern spiritual tendencies. Thus, the artists and intellectuals became key drivers in the building process of the nation-state (Berend 2001; Czigány 1993; Géfin 1997). Consequently, literature in Eastern Europe became the main vehicle of national ideology (Czigány 1993).⁵ The 'nation death vision', this 'quasi-existential angst' (Géfin 1997:210), became a central topos in the poetry of the Romantic period produced in Hungary, most prominently in the writings of Kölcsey Ferenc (1790–1838) and Vörösmarty Mihály (1800–1855). Both Kölcsey's poem 'Himnusz' ('Hymn'), which was adopted later as the national anthem, and Vörösmarty's poem 'Szózat' ('Appeal'), which became a sort of second national anthem for Hungarians, invoke the tragic doom of the nation.

Through its popularisation during the time of 'nation-building', and their adoption as official songs of the nation, the '*nemzethalál vízió*' became a recurring nightmare in the Hungarian national imaginary. The vision was fuelled by insecurities arising from the fact that Hungarians had existed without independent statehood since the early sixteenth century and had been surrounded by (often

⁵ The 'nation death vision' was also internalised by other Eastern European national ideologies. Similarly as in the Hungarian case, it is most prevalent in the regions literature. Probably the most prominent example is the *Forefathers' Eve*, by Adam Mickiewicz, the well-known Polish poet and writer, in which he declares Poland to be „the Christ of Nations”, crucified, as it was, between Prussia, Russia, and Austria. The symbolism of the 'nation death' can also be found in the lyrics of the Croatian poet Mihanovic, the Slovenians Jenko, Matúška and Tomášik and the Rumanian Muresanu and Alecsandri (Kiss 1993).

hostile) Germanic and Slavic populations. The pessimistic vision was further darkened by the so-called ‘Herderian prophecy’. Herder, (1791) in *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, claimed that Hungarians would probably disappear altogether in the sea of German and Slav peoples (Géfin 1997; Czigány 1984). However, the vision of an impending national holocaust also provided a strong stimulus to Hungarians’ determination to survive (Czigány 1984). This determination has most often been linked to the call for unconditional loyalty, commitment and struggle for the nation. The *nemzethalál vízió*, with its emphasis on sacrifice and loyalty, framed the nation-saving rhetoric of the *emigráció*.

II. 5. Exile politics and Nation-preservation

Satzewich (2002, see also Hein 2004) documents that the urge for freedom from Communism and Soviet hegemony among many Eastern European exiled communities, led to external political mobilization against Soviet domination of their homelands. Further, Eastern European emigrant groups felt that in many ways their authentic language, culture and traditions were preserved only in exile (Satzewich 2002; Slobin 2001). Similarly, in the case of Hungarians in Australia, narratives from the pre-1989 period claimed that their mission was to fight communism, and to keep alive the ‘purity’ of Hungarian culture.

Accordingly, exile politics and nation-preservation became key phrases in the pre-1989 period (see Tölölyan 2001). In the Australian-Hungarian context, exile politics refers to a range of political activities, addressed to Australian and international NGOs and various political bodies. According to the available sources, in Australia, Hungarian exile politics were limited to memberships in organisations such as the Assembly of Captive European Nations, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, and the Joint Baltic Nations, and to grass-roots activities aiming to challenge communist propaganda generated within the Eastern Bloc.

Compared with the Australian community, émigrés in Western Europe and particularly in the United States were part of a more active and better organised political exile movement. For instance, former prime ministers Varga Béla and Nagy Ferenc, together with other prominent Hungarian exiles, such as Eckhardt Tibor, Pfeiffer Zoltán, and Sulyok Dezső, leaders of parliamentary parties in Hungary and Dombay János, Fábrián Béla, Közi Horváth József and Auer Pál, ex-members of the Hungarian parliament, established the *Magyar Nemzeti Bizottmány* (*Hungarian National Council*) (Borbándi 2006:81). The *Magyar Nemzeti Bizottmány* was only one of several prominent exile organisations in the United States, which contained Hungarian ex-politicians, and which nurtured close ties to the American decision-making institutions. As already mentioned, the Australian *emigráció* was more modest both in terms of membership and organisational infrastructure. Still, the idea of ‘historical task’ via émigré-politics became a prominent element in the identity-discourses. A Hungarian, who was an active participant in such activities in Australia, summarised the goals of exile politics in a retrospective essay:

[our task was] to bridge the gaps in the knowledge about Hungarians and to correct the mistakes and malign views on our history. Further, to educate the public about the tragic consequences of Trianon, and to disseminate the message about their discrimination and to forward their cries. [...] This was our historical task. We published pamphlets and books. Individuals responded to articles in the newspapers. We vigorously invited Australian politicians to our national holidays. We sent letters and memoranda to different institutions... trying to promote and publicise famous Hungarians. (Csapó 1993:6)

Although ‘exile-politics’ and ‘nation-preservation’ had different connotations, they were still closely aligned. According to the exilic narratives propagated by the political émigrés, Hungarians in the West had not only the legitimate right but also the moral obligation to constitute the ideological opposition to the socialist dictatorship in their mother country. The right to claim this position was also based on the perception that Hungarians in the ‘free land’ were the only remaining true representatives of Hungarianness (see: Satzewich 2002; Skrbis 2002). The concept of nation-preservation related to the local practice of Hungarian culture, such as folklore and historical festivals, however with a broader implication for the ‘lost homeland’, which was imagined to benefit from the local practices, when the time was right. Some telling details from the *Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook* in 1981 exemplify the importance of nation-preservation:

Our history is stolen from the youth of our subservient country. Our mother tongue is on the course of deterioration. Roots of our folk culture are doomed. Their purity might be saved only by Hungarians living in a free country... (*Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook*, 1981: 10).

... we make special efforts to preserve and ascertain our attitudes, notions and our moral and historical justice in order to enable the next generations, which hopefully will be free to delve into an objective justice about these decades, to know about Hungary something else than pure lies. This will be our homecoming! (*Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook*, 1981: 9).

Again, what was perceived as nation preservation, was practiced at much higher level in the Hungarian *emigráció* in Western Europe and the United States. Several papers, periodicals, publishers, and literary societies were founded during the four-decade-long history of emigration in these countries. One such periodical was the München based periodical entitled *Új Látóhatár* (New Horizon), a highly respected forum of Hungarian intellectual life in the West. It gave publicity to the works of several well-known Hungarian émigré writers such as Határ Győző, Gombos Gyula, Illyés Elemér, Czigány Lóránt. Other examples for high-quality literary periodicals were the *Katolikus Szemle* (Catholic Review) edited in Rome, the *Irodalmi Újság* (Literary Gazette) edited in Paris. Along with literary periodicals there existed also several intellectual and literary societies in these *emigráció*s. The most important of these were the Bornemissza Society in Vienna, the Mikes Kelemen Circle in the Netherlands, The Hungarian Literary and Art Circle in Switzerland, the Catholic Pax Romana, and the European Hungarian Protestant Free University. These achievements were seen by the Hungarian émigrés in the West as the preservation of Hungarian values and traditions. Pomogáts Béla, a Western émigré himself writes about these literary and intellectual achievements:

It is a great merit of émigré literature (and of the institutional framework of emigration) that it was able to preserve those literary values and traditions, which the literary culture at home could not preserve [...] because of censorship, that is, harsh political necessities. The safeguarding of interests and the preservation of traditions included also preservation of the spirituality of the 20th century Hungarian literature. For who could deny that the restricted and artificially mutilated intellectual traditions were maintained in part and completely freely by the emigrants (Pomogáts 2002:76-77 English in original).

Although practiced at low level, these activities fulfilled several functions in the Australian-Hungarian *emigráció*. Exiles are often described as being in limbo, in ‘betwixt and between’ whose lives are put ‘on hold’ in exile (Eastmond 1997:12; Munoz 1981). In this liminal state, where the present ‘does not exist’, the future seems to extend directly from the idealised and romanticised past (Eastmond 1997:144). As émigrés were disconnected from the reality and developments in Hungary, Hungarianness for them only existed in the past and in the future. By preserving the ‘real Hungarian values’ of the past and by working towards the future – attempting to liberate the country by means of exile-politic – émigré Hungarians could create a ‘bridge of continuity’ between their disrupted past and insecure future. The conscious dedication to the continuity of national culture (i.e. ‘nation-preservation’) could compensate for émigrés’ sense of loss, while the attempts to liberate Hungary signified a hope of return (see: Graham and Khosravi 1997:118). Through these activities, the dialogical struggles of home and away, and loss and hope, that have marked émigrés’ existence in exile, were lessened (Ortiz 1997:63).

Further, the practices of ‘nation-preservation’, which were far more popular than the practices of exile politics, also had restorative and purifying effects on émigrés sense of Hungarianness. Via these practices individuals managed to recall a positive version of Hungarianness which prevailed over the memories of violence in the homeland (see: Zaitsev, cited in Slobin 2001:516).

As pointed out in a previous section, Hungarian émigrés saw their exile as a collective fate inflicted upon a group of people who share similar ideological and political persuasions (see: Al-Raseed1994:210). Consequently, exile politics and nation preservation helped to defined the *emigráció*’s collective mission. By working towards the alleviation of the tragedy inflicted on their nation, émigrés attempted to retain the heroic interpretation of their exile (see: Al-Raseed1994:211).

While émigrés claimed that their exile signifies a moral choice nevertheless, being the ‘guardians of the national tradition’ and working towards the ‘resurrection and renewal’ of the crucified Hungary was also a readily available means of easing what Hage calls the ‘migration guilt’ of not participating in the homeland-suffering (Hage 2002; see also: Graham and Khosravi 1997:118).

II. 6. The sense of futility

As I pointed out in the previous section, several émigrés were driven by the ‘myth of missionary election’ (Smith 2000a:67; 2000b:804) and presented themselves, as

‘chosen people’, who were both able to preserve the sacred values of Hungarianness and to liberate Hungary. However, these great hopes, and the highly emotional rhetoric on the liberation of the homeland and on the preservation of Hungarianness often faced disenchanting reality. The status-quo oriented political climate of the period on the one hand, and the internal divisions and the passivity of the silent majority of the Australian-Hungarians on the other, undermined the hopes of the political émigrés.

De Santis (2001:2) writes that exiles are simultaneously accepting and critical of their new culture. As Australia came to symbolise the West in the exilic discourses, the ‘last resort’ for saving the ‘true Hungarian spirit’, the new country was generally interpreted in positive terms. In this way, exilic narratives tended to de-emphasise the actual experiences of exclusion and discrimination in Australia. However, the symbolism of Australia and the West was not always constructed as being something entirely positive. The perception that the West symbolised ‘hope’ was frequently complicated by the West’s ambivalent reaction to the exile’s attempts to demolish the Communist dictatorship in Hungary. The ‘West’ was presented as a means for liberation; nonetheless it was also believed that it had failed to help occupied Eastern Europe during the 1956 Revolution. As one of the key political émigrés put it:

Although the 1956 Revolution managed to call the Australian politicians’ attention to the horrors of the Soviet occupation, after the first sympathetic remarks, the Australian political circles kept silent or, even worse, they reported about the success of Eastern European Socialism (Csapó 1993:5).

Émigrés themselves claimed that the exile’s anti-Communist agendas were well-received during the Cold War years both by international NGOs and in Australian political circles. It was obvious, however, that international and Australian encouragement were little more than verbal expressions of support. Yossi Shain (1989, 1995) claims that the Eastern European émigré groups’ anti-communism was welcomed in the United States during the Cold War period. The United States did not demand their abdication of loyalty to their home country; rather it encouraged their patriotism by supporting the vision of freedom and democracy (Shain 1995). However, Shain adds that despite their outward loyalty and patriotism, Eastern European lobbies were unsuccessful in their attempts at liberating their countries. Similarly, Magocsi (2005), referring to the West’s lack of intervention during both the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, emphasises the inability of Eastern European exile communities to influence the American government. Likewise, Deák (2002:19) emphasises that the influence of émigré Hungarians on Western politicians and politics was insignificant, and that émigré organisations acted as window dressing for US foreign policy. Deák (2002) further emphasises that in countries other than the United States, the exile’s impact on the governments of their respective receiving country was even more negligible. Both the French and the British governments made it clear that they would not endanger their relationship with Eastern European countries, by actively supporting exiles’ political movements (Borbándi 2006:80). Australia’s limited role in the Cold War in Europe also denotes limited support for

the anti-communist endeavours of Hungarian émigrés'. The lack of concrete political support, both from Australia and from elsewhere, is particularly evident during the détente after the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in Helsinki in 1975, which was seen as a significant step toward reducing Cold War tensions between the super-powers (Borbándi 2006:356).

The futility of the aspirations and actions of the politically active members of the community is further underscored by tension between them and the silent majority. First, the fact that the *emigráció*'s goal to liberate their country fell short often created a sense of pointlessness of the self-sacrificing hard work. While this tension was variously expressed within the politically-oriented elite, it bestowed on exile politics a kind of absurd or anachronistic flavour in the eyes of many. Egon Kunz for instance, a well-known Australian intellectual of Hungarian origin, who did not participate in the political activities of the *emigráció* expressed his disdain for them. According to Kunz the programmes of several Hungarian associations were almost 'pathologically concerned with politics' (Kunz 1985). Second, the rapid assimilation of Hungarians into Australian society further underscored the ambivalent feelings that permeate the exilic discourses. Borbándi (2006:179) writes that, due to the harsh immigrant policies, particularly in the 1940s, integration and establishing wealth was the main aim of those Hungarians who migrated to Australia. This hindered them from being active participants in émigré politics. To achieve the political aims, ceaseless crusade was needed to keep morale high among Hungarians in Australia, as the conference talks below document:

The wealth and comfort [of the Australian life] have more and more victims, [i.e. those who do not actively take part in community activities] it is impossible to stop or make this tendency slower but it is our duty to make attempts to do it... (Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook, 1981:38).

I do believe that that part of the Hungarians which is present here today will not defer to apathy and resignation by the hardship everyday life. This is the group which wants to maintain the Hungarian ethos and continue with the exile politics (Hungarian Cultural Festival Yearbook, 1981: 10).

My data shows that the continuous efforts of mobilisation for the sake of the homeland were often ignored or ridiculed in the community. A community member, who disapproved of the efforts of mobilisation, similarly commented on the limitations of the Hungarian population in Australia in the Australian-Hungarian newspaper *Ausztráliai Magyarország*:

These are people who literally ran away and left their country for dead when their fortunes were at their lowest ebb. You are talking about people who form institutions and organizations which boy scouts could run more effectively and less selfishly, you are talking about people mesmerized by Western consumerism and in fact caring for nothing except to live a comfortable life with fat wallets. These people, I am afraid are neither politically, economically, intellectually, nor in fact morally equal to the task you set them (*Ausztráliai Magyaróság*, 1983:12).

The tension between the different emigration waves also fed into the sense of futility of exile-politics. One of my participants, who left Hungary in the 1980s, described his first interaction with the politically-active older émigrés:

I have always been a fierce anti-communist. And I highly valued people who fought for our liberation in the West, instead of just being pre-occupied by their own life. So in the first month

after we arrived we went to have a dinner with the valiant organisation. Such a disappointment: I felt like under inquisition: ‘What did your father do during the Second World War?’ ‘Who did you meet in Hungary?’ ‘You abandoned your country, we were forced out, but you could have stayed!’ etc. etc.... And of course I realised that all this big patriotism and idea of liberating Hungary are just lip service. Since then I stay away from all these ‘patriotic’ organisations (Field notes, June 2005).

II. 7. Disconnection from the homeland

The homeland was an ambivalent object in the exilic discourse. Most Hungarians in Australia maintained a dichotomy between their homeland on the one hand, and the regime on the other. This separation of national culture from the state became an important principle in the exilic discourses (see: Slobin, 2001: 516).

Hungary remained the authentic cultural *origo*, the cradle of Hungarianness, for the émigrés which was often seen through the ‘distant view’ (Skrbis 1999). This view involved both the feeling of nostalgia and the mythologisation of the past (Ahmed 1999:342) and the desire to return. Several Hungarians reported a feeling of ‘*permanent temporariness*’, when talking about their early years in Australia. Until the fall of the 1956 revolution many immigrants seemed to live in a *myth of return*. Typically, the immigrants of the first wave arrived with one suitcase, and hoped that their exile would be short one (Kunz 1985; see also Borbándi 2006:87). The classic anecdote in the community contains the archetype of the exiled expatriate who would not even open his luggage while waiting for repatriation. The explicit feeling of temporariness that was characteristic of the first wave of émigrés faded along with the *myth of return* after the arrival of fiftysixers. The fall of the revolution reinforced the fear in the Hungarian community in Australia that Communism was going to last for an indefinite, but long time. This fear was underpinned every day by the fact that, although hard core Communism was slowly transformed into what was labelled ‘Goulash communism’, the dictatorship regime still persisted.

The antagonistic dichotomy of ‘ad infinitum separation’ and the ‘indefinitely postponed drama of return’ (Said 1992:361) suggests a symbiosis of loss and hope. In this way, the conviction about the ‘lost’ homeland continued to exist in a paradoxical symbiosis with the belief that it was possible to liberate Hungary from thousands of miles away.

Not even in their nightmares did they [émigrés] think about leaving their beloved country...Not even when they arrived to the shores of Australia did they realise that this is the place where they will be when the day comes... Only the 1956 revolution made them realise that the exile is going to be a long one. However they never gave up the hope of Hungary’s liberation. This hope gave them energy to fulfil their tasks here (Csapó 1993:5).

While émigrés desired to return to the homeland, disconnection from communist Hungary was a cardinal constitutive element of the exilic discourses. Exile is often described as a long and cold winter in which expatriate Hungarians are waiting for the breaking of the ice. Maintaining the isolation, for as long as the dictatorship remained in power in Hungary was propagated as a ‘moral duty’ of the

émigrés. Although it is true that after the amnesty, travel was, in principle, safe for the vast majority of expatriates, the possibility of going home was under-communicated and attempts by expatriates to establish any kind of relationship with Hungarian authorities were stigmatised. Being able to seal the boundaries and not communicating with the Communists was a primary source of pride for Hungarians in exile. The level of a person's prestige within the community was partly based on the level of hostility the Communist regime expressed towards that person. A curious story was told by a leading Sydney-based community figure, Kovacs István (pseudonym has been used), which illustrates this pride in being characterised as undesirable by the Communists:

I am not sure at what year it happened, it was probably in the 1970s, when the [Hungarian community] radio recorded an interview with the current ambassador. Of course as usual, the ambassador tried to convince everybody that travel is safe for the members of the '*emigráció*' and everybody is welcome in Hungary, the country is waiting for us with open arms, blah, blah, blah... he kept on saying all the rubbish, they always say. Then the reporter asked him: 'Excellent! So can Kovacs István travel as well?' The ambassador flushed, started to sweat and cried out: 'He should not even go near Vienna.' Obviously the reporter was teasing the ambassador, he wanted to provoke him (Field notes, 2004).

The earlier mentioned MVSZ, which was an avowedly political organisation (see Borbándi 2006:392), was perceived by many Hungarians in Australia as a 'communist spy organization, trying to destroy the political activities of the exile and convert the weak spirits' (Kardos 1998). However it was explicitly stated by the émigrés that the efforts of MVSZ fell short of 'damaging' the *emigráció*. Another well-known 'exile-story' deals with a man who accepted the invitation of the MVSZ to the *Anyanyelvi Konferencia* (Mother-Tongue Conference). Another prominent member of the elite told me the anecdote:

They [Hungarian authorities] knew very well, that they can't entice us! We were a strong and proud '*emigráció*'. The strongest of all of the Western '*emigráció*s'. Nobody accepted their invitations, we disdained them, and it was pathetic how they tried to manipulate us. However one poor devil fell into their trap once. He was a teacher, and those in Hungary, really tried to appeal to cultured and home-sick exiles. So he went to Hungary to a MVSZ-staged conference. Poor man, when he came back nobody wanted to talk to him, everybody excluded him. They said he was a traitor and a communist spy. So at the end I had to write an article to defend him (Field notes, 2004).

According to the ruling community elite, there was a wide consensus and agreement among Hungarians in Australia about the need for disconnection from the Communist dictatorship. The *emigráció* in Australia often referred to itself as the 'best of all *emigráció*s' (Field notes, 2004, 2005), as it rigorously isolated itself from the 'damaging influences and resisted the siren songs of the Communist Hungarian government' (Field notes, 2004). In reality, however, it is impossible to detect public support for these isolationist views. Two things were certain. First, the geographic distance and the lack of political power of the Australia-based *emigráció* resulted in relatively few efforts on behalf of Hungarian state institutions to communicate with the exiles in Australia (Borbándi 2006:293). Second, voices of dissent, which were effaced from mainstream isolationist discourses, were rarely publicised. The supporters of the socialist Hungarian government or expatriates

who were in favour of establishing close ties with the mother country did not manage either to reach the media or to form counter-institutions within the community, thus their narratives became marginalised. The newspaper *Ausztráliai Magyarság* (Australian Hungarians) published a letter to the editor, which exemplifies the opposing opinion:

Instead of working against, denouncing and perpetually condemning our motherland, we should strive to more objectively familiarize ourselves with the condition prevailing therein. The little we can do from abroad we should undertake in the spirit of cooperation with the government of our country to try to improve the quality of life which our relatives are destined to lead. I emphasise cooperation because the government of the Hungarian People's Republic is truly worthy of this (*Ausztráliai Magyarság*, 1983:12).

Hungarian exile communities in the United States and Europe showed a more diverse range of attitude towards the homeland regime. While some émigré groups in Canada, the United States and Western Europe opposed institutionalised connections with the homeland, others found the idea of connectivity important enough to communicate with the MVSZ. The Paris-based Hungarian journal, *Magyar Műhely* (Hungarian Workshop) for instance, arranged annual conferences from the 1960s in France in close co-operation with the MVSZ and the Hungarian government (Borbándi 2006:320).

While the Australian-Hungarian community was completely detached institutionally from the motherland, it maintained ties with similar Hungarian exile communities all around the world. Political and historical texts, journals, information about Hungary, and propaganda passed from one community to the other. Such connections further underscored their claim to be the 'third historical *emigráció*' and reinforced their feeling of detachment from the motherland.

II. 8. Conclusion

Sussner (2004:10) points out that Sudeten German expellees developed a double narrative, which 'on the one hand, [...] was a story of their heroic reconstruction in the new host society, and on the other hand, [...] was a story of victimization in an unsympathetic host society'. In a different way, Hungarian émigrés in Australia constructed a double narrative. I have argued that the ambivalence of loss and hope, which is a primary characteristic of exilic narratives, is frequently signified by an East-West opposition. However the ambivalence of loss and hope exceeds, and is more complex than, the opposition of East versus West. These terms also stand for 'suffering' and 'heroic struggle'. Heroic struggle, which denotes the practices of exile politics and nation-preservation, transformed the experience of living in exile into a moral state of being (Wise 2004:35). The interrelated practices of exile politics and nation-preservation signify that Hungarianness was conceptualised as a de-territorialised and essentialised phenomenon during this period. It was de-territorialised in the sense that exilic narratives denied the geographic specificity of Hungarian identity and essentialised, as national belonging was justified through intensified importance of the ethno-national imaginary. Al-Rashid (cited in Ray 2000:406) points out that there is a 'double

nostalgia' that is constructed in exile; 'one that is fixed in the past in space and time and one that is fixed in the future in space and time'. While the practices of nation-preservation attempted to conserve an 'authentic' Hungarianness, based on memories from the past, exile politics points towards the imagined utopian future.

The literature suggests that there is always 'an element of *despair*' (Panossian 1998:160) in exile, as it suggests 'to be engaged with an elsewhere that cannot be reached' (Brechtenbach 1991:75). Edward Said, the famous Palestinian exile, describes the state of exile as the '*unhealable rift* forced between a human being and native place, between the self and its true home' (1992:357, my italics). However, I argue that despite the physical disconnection, and the sense of futility a sense of security-in-identity characterised the exilic narratives. This security was based on a sense of reassurance that despite the homeland being enslaved, Hungarianness was still being preserved and nourished in the *emigráció*. In the next section, I demonstrate that, ironically, the widely welcomed democratisation of Hungary, and thus the start of transnational connections between expatriates and the mother country, undermined this feeling of security.

III. THE POST-1989-PERIOD

In the next section, I outline the transformations in homeland-related discourses within the Hungarian community in Australia as a result of the changed structural possibilities. I demonstrate that, despite the positive opportunity structure, diasporisation remained a problematic and complicated process which can be identified and traced in the émigrés' discourses. In order to do this, first I analyse the ways in which émigrés have imagined their role in the democratic transformations in Hungary. Later I look at the thresholds and tensions that characterize diaspora-homeland relations after 1989.

III. 1. Structural transformation

One of the key factors in post-1989 transformation processes entailed that, as part of the moral and political reconstruction of the post-communist societies, history was radically rewritten in Eastern Europe (Kalb et al. 1999; Niedermüller 1999). The communist image of the working people as an undifferentiated mass was replaced by the revised discourse of the nation (Kalb et al. 1999:11). The other key factor in the democratisation processes consisted of a reorientation of foreign policy toward the West (Kalb et al. 1999:11). This reorientation implied a re-worked relationship towards émigré communities in Western societies. Newly elected Eastern European leaders such as Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel and Vytautas Landsbergis, made patriotic appeals to their overseas communities by offering them citizenship and encouraging their economic and political support (Shain 1995).

Similarly in Hungary, the official policy towards Hungarians residing outside of the Republic had changed. After Antall József (1990–1993) declared himself to be Prime Minister 'in spirit' of 15 million Hungarians, citizenship, the most important instrument of inclusion in a society (Kivisto 2001:572), was offered to émigrés by the Hungarian government as a powerful symbol of inclusion in the nation.⁶ The Hungarian passports enabled them to move back or engage in frequent bordercrossings. Further, the changed political structure in the homeland impacted on the opportunity to carry out transnational political activities from the diaspora, and enabled unconstrained contact and cooperation between the '*emigráció*' and Hungary (see: Faist 2000; Vertovec 1996; Itzigsohn 2000; Guarnizo 1998; Louie 2000; Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003).

III. 2. 1989: the starting point

Yossi Shain (1991:8) argues that, after 1989, Eastern European exiles become 'no more than a literary metaphor or a psychological state of mind' as the collapse of dictatorships and the process of democratisation rendered their political work pointless outside the home country. The Hungarian community elite in Australia however, perceived the regime change as an opportunity to enhance and strengthen

⁶ The granting of citizenship was not extended to minority Hungarians in the 'internal diaspora'.

its own political activity. The fall of the Berlin Wall was seen as the start of a new period in the history of Eastern Europe, not only in the former Soviet Block but also among Hungarians in Australia. For Hungarians in Australia, 1989 was perceived as the moment when they could be re-incorporated into the reformed Hungarian national body, but not necessarily to return permanently. Hungarians compared their comfortable and settled existence in Australia with the employment opportunities and political, economic and social insecurity in the new democracy in Hungary (see: Oxfeld and Long 2004:10; McSpadden 2004:38). Thus, instead of actually returning, Australian-Hungarians hoped to be recognised as important political and social actors in the transformations in Hungary, while remaining in Australia.

After the collapse of the Communist regime, Hungarians in Australia have articulated a definite claim for inclusion in homeland societies. In these utterances we can trace the emergence of distinctly diasporic narratives and representations. A passage of a speech on 15 March, (Hungarian National Day) 1989 indicates both the importance of the occasion and the renewed relationship to Hungary:

We live in a never to be repeated historical period. (...) Our homeland wants to climb out of the dark grave of 40 years long communist dictatorship and claim its rightful place among the European nations. It is a difficult task and we, Hungarians, who live in the West should do everything we can to assist our country. (...) In order to rebuild the country we need to make enormous sacrifices.

As communism collapsed in Hungary, the Australian expatriate community elite called for a resurrection of national identity. After the Soviet troops left Hungary, more than 3000 Hungarians gathered to celebrate the event with a mass in St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. At that time, several mobilising speeches were given. In 1989, the president of the Hungarian Council of New South Wales said the following:

We have to wake up those who are sleeping, those who are tired, apathetic, and indifferent, and those who do not have any hope. As the free Hungary and the Hungarians in the Carpathian basin in the dismembered territories are looking at us with hope and the expectations of help from us (Kardos 1992).

At another occasion in 1990, Kardos said:

We have to take steps in favour of the Hungarian economic revival. I am considering setting up an Australian-Hungarian commercial syndicate. I would like to invite all Hungarian merchants and industrialist to join it (Kardos 1992).

It is important to emphasise, that the process of paradigm change in the Hungarian 'community' was not synchronized. Even though we can trace the starting point of the new diasporic discourse to a specific time in history, the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, its urgencies were not felt and responded to uniformly in the émigré community as the new diasporic narratives emerged unevenly and inconsistently. As diasporisation is a process rather than an event, these dynamics cannot be studied as if they existed at one point in time.

III. 3. The new mission of the *emigráció*: The figure of the ‘ambassador’

We hope that the new democratic government together with us will start to rebuild the new Hungary (Kardos speech, 15 March 1990, National Day celebration, Hungarian Community Centre, Punchbal, Sydney).

Such appeals were common in the diaspora at the time of the regime-change in Hungary. The *emigráció* saw its own incorporation into nation-rebuilding as crucial in Hungary’s transition to democracy. It envisaged itself as an ‘ambassador’ in the reconstruction of the homeland, a medium between the *fresh democracy* in Hungary and the *well-established democracy* in Australia (see also Huseby-Darvas 2004; Shain 1995; Pomogats 2001). This claim was based on the belief that the *emigráció* possessed ‘double cultural competencies’ (Vasta 1993:220) or as Edward Said (1984:172) calls it, ‘plurality of vision’. By portraying themselves as both well-educated Western citizens, familiar with the system of democracy, and as ‘authentic’ Hungarians, the *emigráció* saw a facilitating role for themselves in the rebuilding of the Hungarian nation. This double identity, was not seen as emerging in a space ‘somewhere between the host land and the homeland’ (Panossian 1998:158-59), but claimed to be deeply rooted in both of them.

The representatives of the *emigráció* presented themselves for the democratic homeland authorities as a professional and integrated group in the political system of the host country, capable of campaigning, networking and lobbying for Hungary’s sake. As one of my participants put it in a publication: Hungary had never ever had so many potential ambassadors and foreign agencies as she has now. She has a diplomatic army (Csapó 1990).

The representatives of the *emigráció* stated that they had the ability to monitor foreign policies all over the world, based on their familiarity with another successful democratic country (e.g., Australia), its social and political circumstances, its trade, industry, language, and other features. Previously, these benefits could only serve individual purposes, however, now this ‘dead capital’ could be channelled into the rejuvenation of Hungary (see also Huseby-Darvas 2004). A letter written by the editor of *Magyar Élet* to Pordány László, Hungarian Ambassador, on the 15th March, 1991, emphasised the efficiency of the diaspora: I want to draw your attention to the fact that the Hungarian community enjoys a good reputation in the eyes of Australian authorities and governments. They [the Australian government representatives] are familiar with our institutions and media, we have official relationship and they consult us in Hungary-related issues (cited in Csapó 1991:4).

Another prominent member of the elite said:

For the Hungarian Associations in Australia it always has been immensely important to put Hungary in a favourable light abroad. To this end, we have actively produced several publications in English drawn from trustworthy sources. We have continually emphasised our Europeanness, and the inequity of Trianon Treaties. We edited actual disclosing studies and booklets on regular basis in order to advocate for the rights of Hungarians living in dismembered territories and we sent them to every single member of the Australian Federal Parliament: to senators, ministers, public figures and so on. And we continuously furnish state and university libraries with books and document which can raise Hungary’s reputation (Kardos 1992).

The discourse also emphasized the lack of Hungary's intellectual resources, as Hungarians were unable to establish connections with the West, and were deprived of access to foreign media under Communism; therefore they lacked a sense of foreign politics. This argument utilised the passionate *decommunisation* discourses, which emerged in Hungary (and generally Eastern Europe) after 1989. While those promoting *decommunisation* argued that getting rid of the old *nomenklatura*, who hold important positions is morally desirable, those opposing *decommunisation* argued that there won't be anybody in the country to replace (see Rupnik 1995). Hungarian diaspora representatives in Australia attempted to solve the dilemma by advocating its own members for the new positions. As an anonymous contemporary document reveals:

Hungary doesn't have ready intelligent diplomats who know how to deal with the West, how to behave.

At the same time, contemporary discourses in the diaspora underscored the view that the '*emigráció*' is not more disconnected from 'real Hungarianness', than people in Hungary. The representatives argued that the diaspora is only geographically separated from the territorial location, however via 'nation-preservation' it managed to keep alive the 'real Hungarian spirit', while this was not possible in Hungary under communist rule. The 'moral purity' of the émigrés was also emphasised. While in the homeland virtually every adult could be suspected of collaboration with the Communist regime, émigrés remained above suspicion. Further, representatives were also eager to emphasise their rigorous engagement in anti-communist exile-politics and its benefits for Hungary, which also aimed to underscore their rightful belonging to the nation. The *emigráció* representatives in Australia often made comparisons between other Hungarian *emigráció*s in the West and themselves. Such comparisons served further to underscore their anti-communist character, and thus, their moral purity. In October, 1990 the representatives of the first democratic Hungarian government were invited to the commemoration of the 1956 Revolution in the Sydney-based Hungarian community house. The president of the New South Wales Hungarian Association said the following:

The Australian-Hungarian *emigráció* was the only one in the world which never acknowledged the dictatorial governments, not even during the detente. Accordingly, we never kept in touch with their embassies either.

The task the *emigráció* imagined for Hungary was to *activate* this 'army', to be the coordinator and to centralise the information and duties that would provide the institutional framework for their mission. Building bridges between the community and the homeland has since become a major theme in diasporic discourses, indicating the desire for connectedness.

III. 5. 'Great hopes – great disappointments'

As Milena Veenis (1999:83) notes in the post-socialist Eastern European context '[d]esire and disappointment go hand in hand'. It is widely documented that the euphoria that accompanied the fall of communism was soon followed by disappointments in Eastern Europe (Rupnik 1995; Svašek 2002, 2006). Václav Havel paints a disenchanting picture of post-communist political life:

... [b]razen demagoguery; deliberate scheming and lying; political chicanery; wild and shameless squabbling over purely particular interests; naked ambition and lust for power; every kind of fanaticism; new and surprising forms of swindling; Mafia-style machinations; and a general absence of tolerance, mutual understanding, good taste, and a sense of moderation and reflection (Havel, cited in Rupnik 1995:61).

A similar emotional transformation took place in the Hungarian *emigráció* in Australia. A general sense of bitterness and disillusionment followed the early initiatives of Australian-Hungarians, and has remained a powerful issue in the diaspora even 16 years after the change of regime. Satzewich (2002:11) notes that after decades of separation, the embrace between Eastern European diasporas and the homelands often had unintended and negative consequences, such as further feelings of alienation and estrangement instead of renewed connectivity. Winland (2003) demonstrates that the involvement of the diaspora in Croatian politics was often greeted with scowls. Croatians in Croatia often criticized the right-wing nationalist views of diaspora Croatians as 'anachronistic, jingoistic, and damaging to Croatia's image abroad' (Winland 2003:701). Panossian (1998, 2003) reports similar tensions between the diaspora and homeland Armenians.⁷ Panossian (1998; see also: Tölölyan 1992, 1996, 2000) found that the historical experiences, political mentality, priorities and the appreciation of the problems facing the nation differ greatly between the two groups, leading to mutual disappointment and critical judgments of the other. When discussing the great disillusionments that the 'meeting at the Elbe' generated, Magocsi (2005:175) argues that Eastern European political organizations in exile, after decades of hermetic separation, 'grew to be out of touch with the political reality in Communist-ruled Central and Eastern Europe and, in particular, unaware of the changed civic, economic, and moral values of those at home' (see also Cohen 1999). Magocsi (2005) also emphasises that those in exile had few concrete political plans, as they did not really expect that the collapse of the communist system in Eastern Europe would occur during their own lifetimes.

Despite the widely reported miscommunication between Eastern European homelands and their diasporas it seems that in several cases the involvement of these diasporas in homeland politics was welcome in the homeland. In several post-

⁷ Such problems are no way specific to post-communist countries and their diasporas. Scholars report similar cases from other countries such as India and Cyprus, with homeland populations who are ambivalent about the political influence from the diaspora, because they feel that those who left have lost touch with the everyday reality of their homelands and focus on more emotive political issues only (Demetriou 2003).

socialist countries émigrés were offered key economic positions, and even emerged as leaders of states or political parties, such as Vaira Vike-Freiberga in Latvia, Ante Beljo, Marin Sopta and Gojko Susak in Croatia, Vaclav Havel in the Czech Republic or Valdas Adamkus in Lithuania (Shain 1995; Skrbis 2002; Magocsi 2005; Winland 1995). In Hungary, some of the political exiles returned to, and gained symbolic positions within politics and civil society. These are for instance Varga László, who was the head of the Parliament between 1945 and 1947, and Pongrátz Gergely freedom fighter during the 1956 revolution. Still, the Hungarian diaspora has been less successful in becoming involved in the politics of the homeland than other Eastern European diasporas (Satzewich 2002:12; Deák 2002; Magocsi 2005).

The major source of the disillusionment, in the case of Australian-Hungarians, was that the community representatives felt that the establishment of the desired bridges between the diaspora and Hungary was not initiated by the Hungarian authorities. In particular, the expatriates felt that their offers of political help seemed not to be appreciated in Hungary and the Hungarian government failed to provide professional help to organize the diaspora for the ‘new mission’.

Following the new disappointments, a new form of anxiety, which I term ‘*diasporic anxiety*’, referring to the fear of non-inclusion in the national body, developed. As one of the community leaders put it in 1992:

We hope that all these promises are not empty balloons for mesmerizing the ‘*emigráció*’, and the great working network is not a false hope we indulged ourselves with (Csapó 1992).

This anxiety was intensified by the frequent visits of politicians who made promises in the domain of the diaspora, which were forgotten upon their return to Hungary. An famous example was the 1992 visit of the then Foreign Minister Jeszenszky Géza. Jeszenszky promised institutional connection and continuous cooperation between the homeland and the diaspora in Sydney:

Let’s toast... that this relationship [between diaspora and homeland] will be institutionalised and won’t only be constituted by such friendly meetings such as this one, but that it becomes a continuous ongoing relationship [...] ...there is a deep agreement between the aims and goals of our newly elected government and your aspirations (Csapó 1993:7).

Great hopes were raised by his words. As the promises failed to eventuate and hopes started to fade away in the diaspora, one of the prominent people from the community went back to Hungary to remind the Foreign Minister of his promises. This member of the community claimed that the encouragement of the minister were only ‘nice verbal expressions’, as the authorities in Hungary did not know about the plans announced during his visit (Csapó 1993:8). He later wrote:

At that time we trusted these words; we had great hopes and started to prepare for the new tasks. The hope was that now finally we will build strong diplomatic links, which hopefully will be able to redeem the enormous losses in the information dissemination about Hungarians. It seems as if the co-operation remains a fallacious dream of the *emigráció* (Csapó 1993:8).

This diasporic anxiety is rooted not only in the unfulfilled promises made by Hungarian politicians, but also in the non-appreciation of the *emigráció*’s abilities

and political views within Hungary. The belief that the *emigráció*'s abilities were not recognised in the new democratic country was fed by both rumours and facts. Hungarian authorities often argued against the incorporation of the diaspora into homeland politics by emphasising the great divide between the contemporary Hungarian society and the émigré community. As the first post-1990 Foreign Minister, Jeszenszky Géza, is quoted as saying:

Although every emigrant community was watching the course of events in Hungary [in the last 40 years], it caused problems for them to live through them as much as the ones who lived there during the decades of Communism. Accordingly, they couldn't take part in the struggle for liberation. Something has stopped inside them when crossing the borders [i.e. when emigrating]. [...] In a democracy with old traditions, internal political affairs are not brought outside the borders (*Új Magyarország*, 18 August, 1991 p. 5).

Göncz Árpád, the president of Hungary between 1990 and 1998, was even bolder in a speech, delivered to the Melbourne based Hungarian community:

Everybody has that image of the country which he left. Time goes by, the country is changing. I would like you to know that I respect your loyalty to a country which doesn't exist in practice any longer. It's gone with the wind of the history... You got far away from your homeland. I repeat, I feel empathy with you and I am truly sorry for you. I owe that to 10 millions who are in Hungary... (*Demokrata*, 1999: 9/25).

After the President delivered his speech in Melbourne, several disappointed community members commented sadly on his words. One of them published an article in a Hungary-based journal, *Demokrata*:

The latest speech of the President of the Hungarian Republic just confirms us in our concerns. We got to know on the best authority that the country to which we are so loyal vanished. Where it is now? What is there instead of it? Also those, who expected from the President a soul-stirring, optimistic speech, which would inspire us to act for our homeland were disappointed (*Demokrata*, 1999/9:25).

Magocsi (2005) emphasizes that Eastern European leaders in exile were politically out of step with the times. He suggests that émigrés held onto a more outdated vision of the nation-state as the ideal mode of political organization, which characterized the political vocabulary of the past. Even those politicians and prominent figures who expected political help from the diaspora, for instance the famous Transylvanian reformed bishop Tőkés László, found the political radicalism of certain segments of the *emigráció* objectionable. Tőkés warned of the nationalistic extremism of 'hero-Hungarians' and 'wild-Hungarians', who had been disconnected from reality in Hungary for 40 years. Antall József the first democratically elected prime minister, who claimed to be the prime minister 'in spirit' of 15 million Hungarians, was accused of saying in an informal setting that the members of the '*emigráció*' are venomous, extreme right-wing, impossible to talk to, and that time had passed over their heads (Field notes, 2004). A key initiator of the transnational bridge confessed in one of his pessimistic writings:

Our connection with the liberated Hungary, after the short initial period of hope became fruitless, and later completely pointless. The current political elite in Hungary could still not get rid of the socialist reflexes and still doesn't realise that firstly, the Western *emigráció* is an incredible loss for

the country, secondly, that after establishing its position in the West, it represents a fantastic diplomatic and economic opportunity for Hungary (Kardos 1991).

The same person bitterly concluded in a speech which was presented on the *Magyarország 2000* (Hungary 2000) meeting in 1997, where representatives of the Hungarian external and internal diasporas discussed the future of the Hungarian nation:

The financial remittances of the Hungarian diasporas have always been welcomed in the homeland. However, our suggestions with regards to the democratic transformation were entirely disregarded. We have been completely excluded.

The *emigráció* representatives in Australia particularly resented that while the new democratic government did not devote enough attention to them, they showed interest towards other Hungarian diaspora organisations in Canada and in the United States, such as the *ITT-OTT Kör* (Here and There Circle) and the *Magyar Baráti Közösség* (Hungarian Fellowship). These diaspora organisations have shown willingness in initiating connections with the Hungarian government before the fall of the communism. A resentful voice was published in *Magyar Élet* in 1991:

The Magyar Baráti Közösség was one of those organisations, which approved of Kádár's dictatorship and regularly visited Hungary to co-operate under the cover of participating in the Anyanyelvi Konferencia. [...] I know their newspaper very well, [*Nyugati Magyarság* (Hungarians in the West)]. It has been eagerly attempting to propagate the Kádár government in the West. [...] I have no idea how the foreign minister can propagate this journal which represents a minority and actively attacks the national *emigráció*. (Cited in Amerikai Magyar Ertesítő, November, 1991, XXVII./11. p. 2).

These examples reveal that the negative or negatively perceived judgments of the Hungarian authorities precisely touched on sensitive points for the '*emigráció*'. Representatives of the diaspora felt that neither their 'self-sacrificing' political efforts for the sake of the homeland, nor their fierce anti-communism, not even the hard work of the expatriate community to preserve Hungarianness were recognised in Hungary. Further, the well-known negative labels, such as 'extreme-right wing', used by the communist propaganda to depict the '*emigráció*', were still in usage.

Moreover, while émigrés utilised the fact that they could not fall under suspicion of collaboration and complicity with the former regime, it is documented that stayees ascribed the guilt of desertion to the émigrés, emphasising that those who fled the country during hardship could not be regarded 'real' Hungarians any more (Géfin 1997; Huseby-Darvas 2004). Göncz Árpád, the president of Hungary between 1990 and 1998, delivered a speech to the Melbourne-based Hungarian community house that underscored this turn against the émigrés. While the president was delivering his speech, several Hungarians in the crowd whistled, screamed and accused him of being a traitor, based on his activities as an informer in Kadar's prison after the 1956 Revolution and his current co-operation with the ex-Communists. As a reaction, the president turned the crowd's accusation against them:

...So who is the traitor here? The ones who stayed at home and endured the life-sentence? Or others...? Each can judge for himself! (*Demokrata*, 1999/9:25).

A disappointed community member reacted as follows:

We received his words with scalding tears. So that would be the base of the loving relationship between the *emigráció* and the homeland? (*Demokrata*, 1999/9:25).

III. 6. The short life of trust

The collapse of trust within the *emigráció* in the freshly elected government fed the underlying emotional climate, in which these newly born anxieties were conceived. The emergent distrust towards homeland institutions played an important part in the perception and shaping of homeland relations and the orientation of diaspora politics (Kalb and Tak 2006:209). Trust is essential to stable collective life, and its absence ‘prevents cooperation and destroys community’ (Kalb and Tak 2006:197). Several scholars have argued that distrust is one of the most widespread emotions in the Eastern European post-socialist political climate (Kalb and Tak 1999, 2006; Kalb et al. 1999; Mitszal 1996; Sevenhuijsen and Brinkgreve 2002; Sztompka 1996). In Eastern Europe, distrust is directed particularly towards the state and its institutions, which are perceived as inherently dictatorial and alienating (Kalb and Tak 2006:198; Kalb et al. 1999; Sztompka 1996).

Part of the syndrome, Sztompka (1996) writes, can be attributed to the legacy of the Communist dictatorship. The idea of ‘anti-politics’, which is rooted in a key *topos* of Eastern European nationalism, namely the vision of ‘the people against the state’, had been vastly popular in the Eastern European opposition under communism, and has ‘grown into a founding myth for the new democratic state after 1989’ (Kalb and Tak 2006:208).

However, the situation post-1990 also played a role in further eroding the public’s trust in the state. First, the widespread insecurity, the dramatic rise in the levels of unemployment and the increased feeling of social deprivation that followed the initial euphoria after the fall of communism, contributed to the widespread breakdown of trust (Sevenhuijsen and Brinkgreve 2002; Sztompka 1996). Second, several scholars argue that it is the ‘thick line’, which played a major part in the development of the ‘low trust society’ (Kalb et al 1999:17). A so-called ‘thick line’ was drawn under the communist past, strictly separating it from the present (Kalb et al. 1999:16). Unfortunately, with the exceptions of the Czech Republic and East Germany, in no Eastern European country was the collapse of the Communist regime accompanied by expelling the nomenclature from their positions (Kalb et al. 1999:16). The thick-line implied that those who were responsible for inhuman and brutal actions, including the murder and imprisonment of hundreds of thousands, would be forgiven by the new government and would face no sanctions (Elster 1996; Kalb et al. 1999:16). The ‘thick line’ also enabled ex-Communists to regain political power and to appropriate common public goods. Further it hampered both the process of reconciliation and the establishment of civil society. It is thus not surprising that after the initial period of hope and optimism in the early 1990s a large segment of society began to lose faith in their new political leaders.

Disappointment in the new democracies was not only felt in Eastern Europe but also by the Hungarian diaspora in Australia. Beyond the resentment felt towards the newly elected governments for not including the diaspora into the democratic transformations, their utterances of distrust and disappointment also targeted the incomplete transformation. The diaspora representatives felt betrayed by the facts that the Hungarian government did not call to account the individuals who were responsible for political crimes during the time of Communist rule, did not provide justice for the political victims, and did not deal with the consequences of the Treaty of Trianon. The incomplete transformation also entailed the tabooisation of irredentist voices regarding the Treaty of Trianon in the Hungarian political arena in the eyes of the diaspora. This became a particular resentment among many Australian-Hungarians. This sense of resentment, and thus the growing distrust, is palpable in the passage below, which I draw from a resignation speech of one of my participants from his position in an Australian-Hungarian grass-root political organisation:

In 1990 joint countries like Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia are collapsing like house of cards... Aeroplanes getting off from Taszár [NATO station in Hungary during the Balkan War in the 1990s] are bombarding, interrogating Milosevics, Ceausescus are riddled, European borders are being shifted, every country becomes independent, everybody is privatising and scrounging... only one is not taking part in the dog-fight. And as a gentleman gives again and again... airports, back-supports all that is needed without asking anything in change. Not even a tiny independence of Vajdaság [Hungarian populated region in Serbia, part of 'Historical Great Hungary'] ...nothing... Stupid child of Europe. In the subject called 'Utilising great historical occasions' Antall József [First democratically elected prime minister in Hungary after 1989], Horn Gyula [Prime minister between 1994 and 1998 in Hungary] and their governments absolutely failed (Anonymous Resignation speech, Manuscript, 2002).

The incomplete transformation from dictatorship to democracy was also seen as a cause of the miscommunication between the homeland and the diaspora. It was seen as the reason that the government did not utilize the sources of the diaspora and continued to use the same labels, such as 'fascistic'. The disappointment undermined the freshly elected government's claim to be 'true democrats' in the eyes of the diaspora. Even if community members were aware that communism was dead as a system of rule in Hungary, they nevertheless felt haunted by its encumbering legacy. A popular fear rose, fed on the climate of distrust towards the new authorities that 'seemingly-democrats-in-reality-communist' forces would spy on the diaspora and try to destroy its homogeneity and power. In the book, I refer to this phenomenon as the 'wolf- in-sheepskin' syndrome. Previous attempts on behalf of Hungarian authorities during Communist rule to 'manipulate' the expatriates abroad, fuelled the exile's sense of pride. Such attempts were ridiculed and reinforced the feeling of importance of the *emigráció*. However, after 1990 the suspicion that the new/old political forces would try to monitor and destroy the overseas community, distressed the diaspora elite and fed into their feelings of disappointment, distrust and sense of exclusion. Interestingly, the disappointments created an emotional climate in which different kind of fears and anxieties developed. As noted earlier, the 'diasporic-anxiety' refers to the fear of non

inclusion, to the fear of eternal separation. However, the ‘wolf-in-sheepskin’ syndrome refers to the anxiety of connection and proximity, revealing the fear that transnational connections may destroy the emigrant community. In Chapter V and VI several examples will be given with regards to this fear. Interestingly, and sadly even I was suspected during my fieldwork to be a ‘communist’ agent who collects material of the community.

III. 7. Back to Exile?

After the loss of trust in the newly emerging state and due to the different anxieties the disappointments generated, certain voices in the diaspora called for the continuation of the comforting moral community of exile by regenerating the exilic narratives of separation. As one of the main figures in the diaspora put it:

Unfortunately we still need to fight for the same issues *alone*, as Hungary didn’t manage to resolve these problems. (Csapó, cited in *Amerikai Magyar Értésítő*, November, 1991 p. 5)

Another disappointed voice:

I am eliminating my ample archives and counting the number of the dead horses we were riding on with all of our energy and effort. [...] How many bitter disappointments we lived through during the last 10 years since the invader has got out of the country. [...] Our ‘brothers in arms’ *have stabbed us in the back several times*...[...] It is hard to write down these lines but it seems to me that we old émigrés are the only ones who build the things and care about issues. We are building bricks by brick but somebody, often one of our allies, destroys everything. Our national leaders shrink away and subside into silence. [...] One of my friends who worked and did a lot for national issues told me the shocking news that among Hungarians living in the West an epidemic, called ‘*Aversionitis Hungaricus*’, is raging. (Manuscript, written for the Trianon Day commemoration, Melbourne, 1998).

Several émigrés’ insistence on using the old term ‘*emigráció*’ to label the Hungarian community in Australia indicate a similar stance of exilic separation. Foreign Minister Jeszenszky Géza suggested in the Hungary-based newspaper *Új Magyarország* that the term ‘*emigráció*’ had become old-fashioned and lost its validity, thus it should be replaced with the term ‘Hungarian communities outside Hungary’s borders’. However, this suggestion was not well received, as the diaspora elite insisted that the term ‘*emigráció*’ referred to commitments for which unfortunately they alone were still responsible. Reinvented exilic voices called for non-communication with and segregation from the ‘seemingly democratic’ governments, and promoted independent action. A striking example is the emergence of a widely distributed pamphlet prior the visit of the then State President Göncz Árpád. The pamphlet tried to convince people to not attend the visit of the president to the Hungarian community centre in Melbourne. The pamphlets emphasised the president’s shadowy past, and claimed that he had arrived with hidden intentions. The anonymous pamphlet stated:

Let’s not go to his welcome, let’s be absent from his celebration, let’s not accept awards from him. If in any case we get around him, let’s not celebrate him, let’s not clap, let’s not approach him. He and his sycophants should be followed by cool silence and reticence. That’s what they deserve! (Anonymous pamphlet, 1999)

Another example is the declaration of the Ausztráliai és Új Zélandi Magyar Szövetség (AUZMSZ), the (Federal Council of Hungarian Associations in Australia and New Zealand), in October, 2003. The declaration became both the accumulator of, and the springboard for exilic voices and fear. At the Federal meeting, a decision was made by the representatives from all over Australia that Hungarian associations would cease all communication with the current Hungarian government, after ex-communist parties were re-elected in Hungary in 2002. The dilemma of whether or not to communicate with the ‘democratically elected, but in reality non-democratic’ governments had remained a powerful and passionate debate within the community since 1990. However, the conflict did not create established ‘diasporic’ and ‘exilic’ fractions within the community. Instead exilic narratives often compete with diasporic dreams of connectedness.

To sum up, the great hopes were followed by great disappointments. Although the emigrant community claimed the ability – material resources, ideological basis, connections, and the moral stance – to intervene effectively in Hungary’s political, economic and cultural life, the desired bridge between the two communities did not eventuate. I interviewed a prominent Sydney based community figure number of times. During our third in-depth interview, he suddenly interrupted my question and said me:

You don’t understand? They don’t need us, they look right through us! We offered help, had the solution, still they simply don’t want us! (Interview with Ede, March, 2005)

His disappointed outburst was the result of 15 years of unsuccessful attempts on behalf of the *emigráció*’s elite to gain inclusion in Hungary’s political body. The Australian–Hungarian experience is far from unique. The London-based Hungarian literary critic, Czigány Lóránt, for instance, articulated the disappointment of émigré writers: ‘After the initial euphoria of a kind of “meeting at the Elbe” syndrome, émigré writers soon found themselves truly excluded, outsiders for the first time, crashing against an invisible wall erected by the previous regime yet still standing in the new free Hungary’ (cited in Géfin 1997:209).

However, the Sydney-based participant’s argument does not represent a line of unremitting disappointment. Even after 15 years, the ‘*emigráció*’ lives disillusionment, anxiety and aspiration as defining tension and new organizations are set up and fall apart each year with similar attempts of inclusion into the national body. The tension between connectivity and isolationism becomes particularly heated at important historical moments of Hungary’s political life. Some for example saw the negotiations between the European Union and Hungary about Hungary’s admission to the Union, as a moment of opportunity for connectedness. A prominent community member who has been working on the building of the transnational bridge since 1989 wrote in 2000:

Now, that Hungary is at the threshold of entering the European Union, the hundreds of Hungarian professionals who live in the West could be enormously useful in the negotiation processes. However, first we need to bind the ties together. (Kardos 2000)

In the last 5 years, the emphasis on the first-generation as ‘ambassadors’ shifted to the second-generation as the ‘professional saviour’ of the *global* Hungarian nation. This paradigm shift will be discussed in Chapter VI.

IV. CONCLUSION

The experience of the *rendszerváltás* closed down a chapter and opened up a new one in the life of the *emigráció*. The Hungarian case illustrates that the *rendszerváltás* gave voice to uncertainty and desperation in the diaspora after the 40 years of exilic security. While the *emigráció* had great expectations from the new democratic governments, the continuous disappointments defused the initial aspirations for unity. The secure ambivalence of loss and hope, which characterised the exilic narratives, did not give space for a truly diasporic narrative of empowerment and inclusion. Instead an unbalanced and ambivalent discourse developed in which the anxiety of non-inclusion and the aspiration for unity, but also distrust and the anxiety of connectedness constitute the core elements. This uncertainty and the switching between and the intertwining of the different emotions will be highlighted in all chapters. By pointing out the ambivalence of the post-1989 discourses I also highlighted that there is no one-to-one relationship between certain forms of discourses and structural settings. For example, the exilic narratives of displacement and disarticulation, which were developed in the period of the Communist dictatorship in Hungary, were often reinvented and replanted in the new post-1989 context.

CHAPTER III. PERCEPTIONS OF HOME AND BELONGING

I. INTRODUCTION

I met Australia twenty years ago [...] Since then much has happened. We [Hungarian émigrés] are over the mourning phase. [...] Our children grew up, our small daughters became Misses wearing fashionable mini-skirts, our sons are bearded intellectuals, and they are still wondering why the faraway look in mummy's and daddy's eyes when they listen to 'Gypsy' music. [...] My migrant life is similar to that of the others [Hungarian émigrés]. After the period of promises: factory work, more promises: more factory work. Finally I arrived. [...] Finally I could build a new existence on the ruins of my broken life: I became a high school teacher. [...] I collected the bitter-sweets of daily life as a teacher... [...] Through the blackboard, the wall of the school and the unscented Australian spring, I saw the spring from a long-lost world, and I was ruminating about the scents of the lilac bushes, there in the Nagyboldogasszony Street in Buda... [...] Now, twenty years after my arrival I don't even notice that this strange place, Australia, and I the former DP [displaced person] are getting closer and closer. Nothing really hurts me anymore, the fall, the ruins, and the memories, only I wish the lilac bushes on the Nagyboldogasszony street in Buda did not fade away more and more every day. (Csapó 1991:3)

The memoir from which this nostalgic excerpt is taken was written in the late sixties by a Hungarian émigré living in Australia. At that time, transnational linkages with Hungary, even at the personal level, were limited by structural constraints, most importantly the communist dictatorship, but also the high cost of travel and the lack of improved transnational communication systems. During that time, in Australia in particular, where the *emigráció* was more isolated than elsewhere, the sense of disconnection from the mother country was a determining factor in migrants' sense of belonging and being at home in a new country. After the collapse of Communism in Hungary, the previously unreachable Hungarian homeland 'of the mind' (Rushdie 1992:10) became accessible again for Hungarian émigrés. After the regime-change, new transnational links enabled Hungarians – 'haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim' (Rushdie 1992:10) – to attempt to close the gap of 20, 30 and even 50 years, to re-territorialise their identities and to seek recovery or rejection in the newly rediscovered homeland.

In this chapter, I raise the questions of how the physical and social conceptions of 'home' of first generation Hungarian migrants' have been reconfigured by the changing political setting throughout the last 18 years, which enabled them to engage in 'transnational modes of existence'. Did the structural transformation after 1990 enable Hungarians in Australia to re-sense the 'spring of the long lost world'? Or did it disrupt their sense of comfort and belonging in Australia? What

strategies do Hungarians use to find a balance between their home in Australia and their sense of belonging to Hungary? What does nostalgia, ‘the most lyrical of feelings’ (Hoffman 1991:115), turn into? On the other side of the coin, do traumatic historical memories from the period of the dictatorship vanish in the age of transnational connectedness? How do Hungarians relate to Australia, now that the homeland is free? These are the major questions I pose in this chapter.

Before focusing on Hungarians’ sense of ‘home’ and ‘belonging’, I first review and critically reflect on the ways in which the concept of home is understood and discussed in the literature. By doing so, I outline the theoretical perspective taken here and point to the specific research questions I raise in this chapter.

II. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The term ‘home’ is densely laden with passionately conflicting meanings. It might be the site of both intense longing and bitter rejection; it can be related to house, family, haven, self, gender, and journeying. It can also be thought of as a space ‘where affections centre’ (Parker 1993:67) or as a symbolic space of nostalgic memories. At other times, it might be conceived as the sum of everyday practices and rituals such as ‘words, jokes, opinions, gestures, actions, even the way one wears a hat’ (Berger 1984:64).

Research on the meaning and experience of home has proliferated over the past two decades, particularly in the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, and architecture (Mallett 2004:64). The main theme around which discussions on ‘home’ revolve has been the relationship between home and place. In earlier anthropological conceptualisations, discrete peoples were seen to belong to specific, bounded territories, which demarcated their distinct cultures (Stepputat 1994). In that vein, earlier scholarly definitions of home emphasised stability, fixed boundaries and embeddedness in a single physical place (see for instance, Relph 1976). However, with the new focus on globalisation, transnational migration and diasporas in the last decades, the semantic ‘place-identity’ unit has been challenged by ‘representations of the relationship between identity and movement’ (Rapport and Dawson 1998:27; Kibreab 1999; Appadurai 1988; Clifford 1998).

Several scholars argue that defining home as synonymous with the Durkheimian notion of solidary communities is out of date and provides no conceptual purchase in the contemporary mobile world, where people’s self-perception is no longer limited by territorial assumptions (Basch et al. 1994; Baumann and Sunier 1995; Giddens 1991; Hannerz 1989; Kearney 1995; Malkki 1992; Chambers 1994a; 1994b; Rapport 1997, Rapport and Dawson 1998). Among theorists of transnationalism, the notion of ‘home’ is increasingly understood as mobile, ambiguous and individualised, and it is found in everyday practices, habitual social interactions, and in stories carried around in one’s head ‘that can be taken along whenever one decamps’ (Rapport and Dawson 1998:27; Rapport 1994b). The concept

of 'home' has thus been transformed into a kind of metaphysical, imagined space instead of an actual physical, geographical locality.

In this chapter, I investigate, through a series of case studies, whether transnational connections might also have re-territorialising effects. Until 1989, Hungarian migrants could only develop a de-territorialised sense of Hungarian identity, as the homeland was all but inaccessible. The sense of connection to Hungary was almost entirely formed by memory and imagination. The homeland was an abstract image diluted by what Skrbis (2002) calls the 'distant view'. After the collapse of communism, border crossings enabled some Australian-Hungarians to forge relatively dense transnational connections and re-territorialise their sense of belonging to Hungary. Therefore, I pose the question of whether transnational connections allowed Hungarians to shift their perception of the homeland from an abstract image to the homeland as a lived experience. In response, I argue that the structural possibility of transnationalism did not facilitate equal access to the homeland for everybody in the emigrant community. Memories, connection to and integration into the host land, individual's economic situation and changed values all play a great role in the conceptualisation of home.

Migration always involves, according to Ahmed (1999:341), 'a splitting of home as place of origin and home as the sensory world of everyday experiences'. This rupture was maintained for decades among Hungarian expatriates as home in Hungary was nurtured by nostalgic memories and only home in Australia served as the physical home. Scholars argue that the act of engaging in transnational practices results in an expression of multiple belonging, by which migrants 'construct and reconstitute their simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society' (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1999:73). Here I show, however, that such 'ambivalent allegiances and questioned commitments' (van Hear 1998:250), do not always lead to empowerment. Transnational practices can be alienating, disorienting and sometimes they can even further reinforce the sense of schism (see: Smith 2003; Tsuda 2002).

During my field work I was continually amazed to hear the various understandings and interpretations of both 'home' and 'belonging' articulated by different Hungarians in Australia. They expressed a wide spectrum of narratives of, and attitudes towards, 'home', which revealed that the concept needs to be contextualised not only within the framework of political, economic and social transformations (Svašek 2002:514; McSpadden 2004) but also must be analysed against the background of individual subjectivities. As Shields (1991:6) claims: '[s]ites are never simply locations. They are sites for someone and of something'. Both places, Hungary and Australia, can evoke positive and negative feelings. Both may create a feeling of belonging, relaxation and security but they can also be associated with a sense of marginalisation and estrangement, and even with tyranny and persecution (Mallett 2004:84; Rapport and Dawson 1998:8). Pre-migratory experiences in the homeland, ties to local Hungarian associations, and transnational linkages all influence the feeling of belonging. However, instead of a focus on single variables, there are always complex varieties of circumstances and belief

systems that influence the individual's interpretation of the migratory experience (Cohen 2001; Ostergaard 2003).

I am also interested in the ways in which individuals elaborate and develop their own 'subjectivities' in relation to broader Australian-Hungarian narrative structures. Hungarians, when constructing their own positionality within the Australian or Hungarian context, always carry the mental baggage of Australian-Hungarian grand narratives, which themselves are already influenced by a number of historically, socially and culturally founded discourses (Elsrud 2001). Influential narratives such as 'East versus West', 'gratitude for Australia', the feeling of 'betrayal by Hungary', and the aspiration for 'double embeddedness' recur in individual accounts. Focusing on the individual allows me the ability to also position subterranean voices in the forefront, which may conflict with community discourses.

III. NEUTRAL EFFECTS OF TRANSNATIONAL POSSIBILITIES

III. 1. Feeling at home in the community

In this section, I demonstrate that the sense of home of several Hungarians living in Australia was not significantly affected by the new transnational possibilities. Several community members still exclusively enjoy the Hungarian culture which is locally offered by the community. Márta and Géza are typical figures of the Melbourne-based Hungarian community centre. They are working class migrants, who emigrated at a young age after the 1956 Revolution. According to them, their emigration did not really have a political motivation; although they disliked the communist regime, they sought the opportunity for a better life. Here in Australia, they established friendships with several other Hungarian families and were active participants in the Melbourne Hungarian community life. The community, for them, as for several others, eased the feeling of loss and yearning for familiarity. They found ease and the feeling of being at home in these 'arenas' of ethnic activity, which offered enjoyment, warmth and familiarity. In the decades of their life in Australia, they did not forge significant relationships with non-Hungarians and their English language skills remained at a low level. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, they travelled to Hungary once in the 1970s to visit Márta's family. The next visit took place in 1992. Márta and Géza were delighted by the political changes, but never become engaged in frequent border-crossings and never considered moving back to Hungary.

Márta told me:

We never longed to go back to Hungary. We have a good life here in Australia. What should I miss? Our children and grandchildren are here. We have many Hungarian friends and the *Magyar Ház* is five minutes drive from where we live. [...] We go there for various activities, I sometimes help out. It is good that Hungarians can have a place to come together, it is very important. Without the community we would feel more isolated. We have always been quite active; it was always a part of our life. We don't really have any more relatives in Hungary; we do not really have a reason to visit anymore. Our life is here, friends, family are here, we like it here in Australia, we have a good life

here. And the [Hungarian] community centres offers us enough... we do not need more. (Field notes, January, 2005)

The experiences of Károly and József reveal a similar importance of activity, meaning, friends and prestige in the Hungarian community. The centre of home, namely their homes and communities in Australia, remained the same also in their case. Károly and József are both older male migrants, who arrived in Australia with the early migration waves and have been disconnected from Hungary from most of their adult lives. They relate to Hungarianness as a deterritorialised phenomenon, which they enjoy and cultivate locally in Australia also after the *rendszerváltás* in Hungary. While Márta and Géza found homeliness and comfort in the Hungarian community in Melbourne, for Károly and József occupying prestigious positions within the community and working for the 'Hungarian case' in Australia created the sense of Hungarianness, which they needed in order to feel at home in their adopted country.

Károly had to escape Hungary after 1956 as he was sentenced to several years of prison. He became a prominent member of the Melbourne Hungarian community. He is currently engaged in Hungarian pre-historical studies and has published several works in Hungarian in this field. Károly is committed to writing as he believes illuminating the public about the real history of Hungarians serves the Hungarian national interest. He says that Hungary is his only true homeland, but he established a stable life in Australia, which he would not leave, even now that the homeland is free. After a long conversation, he told me:

Look around! You see!? You can't find a brick on this wall (his family house) which I did not touch. I myself built up this house, slowly...every single brick.... My kids grew up here and my grandchildren play in the bushes which I planted twenty years ago... how could I leave this place behind? (Interview with Károly, 2004, December)

The association between home and the house is commonly acknowledged in the literature; however, several researchers argue that such a conflation reductively represents home as one-dimensional (Rapport and Dawson 1998; Porteous 1976). For Károly, the house became synonymous with the decades of everyday life spent there, with the transformative dimensions of work, and with the process of 'making' a home. It is a site which has been engraved with his personal history and signifies 'stability and rootedness' (Bachelard 1969:17). Despite this, he experiences the feeling of belonging as a multi-layered phenomenon, comprising both the concrete house and the homeland, the latter being fulfilled by working for the 'Hungarian case' from Australia.

József was a prominent figure in a Sydney-based Hungarian association for decades. József is now retired and similarly dedicates himself to the 'Hungarian case'. He nurtures links with both Hungarian and Australian-Hungarian associations, and works towards the realisation of transnational bridges between the homeland and diasporas world-wide. However, he made it clear to me that he likes working for Hungarian issues from Australia, as he disdains contemporary Hungary and he could never imagine living there:

Let's face the facts. Two-third of the Hungarian population is still uneducated and primitive. In the buses, in the shops...the imprints of the dictatorship are still prevalent. Look around here, polite neighbours, cultured environment. I have been involved in Hungarian issues since I arrived in Australia, I am committed to the Hungarian case however, I could never live in Hungary. (Field notes, August, 2004)

Several other prominent community leaders and Hungarians who have been active in exile- and later diaspora-politics express similar dualities between the home as a lived experience and the homeland as a source of identity, which has not changed after the *rendszerváltás*. Attachment to the homeland in these cases is 'expressed through various types of narratives and other forms of symbolic interchange' (Olwig 1998:235). It is forged through 'hard work' and 'self-sacrifice', that is, through being engaged in Australia-based political or/and historical organisations which deal with Hungarian issues. My conversation with Károly, József and others who have been active in community activities reveals that Hungarianness for them is still conceptualised as a de-territorialised and essentialised phenomenon. It is de-territorialised in the sense that their narratives deny the geographic specificity of Hungarian identity and it is essentialised because national belonging is justified through the intensified importance of ethno-national imaginary (Skrbis 2002).

III. 2. The role of traumatic memory

In this section, I show that traumatic memories from the dictatorship play a pivotal role in some Australian-Hungarians' sense of belonging even now in the post-1989 era. The communist regime in Hungary collapsed 18 years ago, and most Hungarian émigrés, many of whom were traumatised during Communism, have been living in Australia for many decades. Still, the memories of persecution or discrimination have been so pervasive, in terms of some individual's evaluation of home and belonging that in many cases renewed transnational connections cannot diminish them.

The following incident shows the role of traumatic memories in individual Hungarian's conceptualisations of home. For the 50th commemoration of the Revolution of 1956, Hungarians in Melbourne prepared a multimedia exhibition. Amongst other exhibits, the exhibition contained black and white posters of local Hungarians, who lived through the Revolution. The subjects were photographed and some of their words accompanied their pictures. One of them was particularly interesting. The text was the following:

It was the best thing in my life that I ended up here. I am really grateful for the country; it gave me the chance to succeed, to achieve what we achieved as a family.

I was slightly shocked, but soon after, I realised that it is probably only in the context of the Revolution that these sentences sounded a little inappropriate to me; as I had been hearing them from Hungarians in Australia since the start of my fieldwork.

Massey (Massey 1992:14; see also Hooks 1991) suggests that the significance of memories lies in their ability to 'illuminate and transform the present'. Despite the new transnational connections, the perception of homeland for many Hungarians is often diluted by memory. Aranka travels to Hungary each year with her husband. Theoretically, she could be described as a genuine transmigrant. However, her example demonstrates that, in certain cases, individual Hungarians' sense of being at home is not affected by frequent border-crossings. Aranka has been back to her mother country several times since she emigrated, so she is familiar with its contemporary reality. Still, her memories of traumatic experiences in Hungary colour her perception of belonging and as a result she exclusively regards Australia as her home and her homeland:

You cannot imagine what we had to go through: prison, dictatorship, revolution... I cannot forget it. I was 18 when the ÁVH arrested my husband. All the suffering I went through. My husband was followed everywhere...they also kept an eye on me, who I talked to, what I talked about....But at the end of the day we are here, and I simply love Australia, I would never live anywhere else. I love this country so much. We arrived without a penny, but we were happy that we managed to escape from the dictatorship. And this country accepted me and gave me a new home and provided education to my son. That's the greatest reimbursement we got from life. And our beautiful grandchildren. I am always happy to go back to Hungary, but after four weeks I am counting the days. I miss my home. (Interview with Aranka, November, 2004)

The stability Aranka experiences in Australia is derived not only from financial achievements, possessions and familial continuity, but it is also related to the traumatic historical experience of Hungary. Australia signifies a place from where her children will not be forced to move elsewhere unlike her and her husband. From Australia, she can carry forward her hopes and plans, can protect her rights and care for family (see McSpadden 2004:47). In that sense, Aranka has forged an emotional attachment to the abstract notion of the Australian state, first of all in the form of gratitude. This is a common feature among Hungarians in Australia. In most cases, it is linked to, and derives from, traumatic and upsetting historical experiences in the home country and from positive early migratory experiences in the host country. It is often coupled with a feeling of betrayal by, or even emotional detachment from, Hungary. Several scholars argue that the affective power of home is not always positive, but it can be associated with conflicts, violence and restrictions (Massey 1994; Leavey et al. 2004; Wiborg 2004). Leavey et al.'s study (2004), of older Irish migrants in London, demonstrates that Irish migrants described as 'brutalising, rejecting and hard', the old Ireland which was unable to provide them with emotional and material security (Leavy et al. 2004:777). Similarly, some Hungarian migrants, arriving from Communist Hungary, expressed a feeling of betrayal by their homeland.

Tamás is a researcher in chemistry in his fifties, who arrived in the late-1970s to Australia. His confessions about his career explain the difficulties the dictatorship raised for the intelligentsia who were not aligned with the regime. After several years of struggling with bureaucrats at different levels, he decided to leave from Hungary. His narrative about the journey of immigration to Australia suggests relief, joy and thankfulness:

I made the decision to emigrate, because I saw that roads in Hungary lead nowhere. Here I had only positive experiences. I went for a job interview. The boss said, he was very sorry but at the moment they don't need my profession, however he arranged two interviews for me at other places. In Hungary they would have thrown me out immediately: 'Sorry, I have a meeting! Mancika⁸, serve him a coffee and show him the way out!' Then I found a job in Melbourne at a university. They inquired about my educational background and experiences, but they did not require my papers. They simply believed me. I even asked why they did not ask for my documents. They told me: 'Listen; if you can do the job, you are hired. If you can't, your papers won't help'. (Interview with Tamás, February, 2005)

Leavey et al. (2004:777) state that the Irish migrants' negative feelings towards Ireland were imbued with a mixed sense of pride and envy, after realising that the new Ireland had arrived too late for them. In contrast, Tamás claims that the new democratic Hungary did not ease his feelings of betrayal by his homeland. The remaining experiences of rejection further fuel his bitterness towards the mother country:

Even today I feel bitterness, when I think about that: why? [...] I mean how is it possible that I arrived in a country at a relatively old age, in a new country with a new culture, different people and a different language, which I don't fully master... and still, I received so much more professional help here than in my homeland? I simply can't comprehend it! It is simply wrong! This should not happen! It is simply ridiculous! After the Russians left Hungary I started enquiring about some job possibilities at some universities in Budapest. Nothing! They either said I am too old or did not even reply! (Interview with Tamás, February, 2005)

Although he established a new family in Australia, his children and grandchildren create strong ties with his birthplace. Further, via frequent return visits, Tamás reinforced his position in the Budapest artistic and intellectual circles, thus for Tamás Hungary still remains the source of personal and social attachment. His example shows again that 'home' needs to be understood as a multidimensional concept, constituted by multiple layers of meanings (Bowlby et al. 1997; Somerville 1992; Rapport and Dawson 1998; Tucker 1994). Hungary, as an abstract entity, is conceptualised as rejecting, and however as a locus of personal ties, it signifies warmth and belonging:

I mean Hungary, precisely Budapest, is still my home. I often go home, so I have kept all my friendships. Nothing changed between us. These relationships make me feel at home. That is if I go to my friend, Nagy Zoli, his wife still cooks the same delicious thing... (Interview with Tamás, February, 2005)

It needs to be added however, that traumatic experiences, do not affect everybody in the same fashion. While Aranka's husband shares her enthusiasm for their host country, for him Hungary represents a source of pride due to his active contribution in the 1956 Revolution. Since the collapse of Communism, he has established close ties with different historical and political organisations in Hungary and during his visits he activates himself in these circles. Thus, in his case, his traumatic experiences have been transformed into pride and social capital, which have helped him to re-imagine Hungary as a part of his home place.

⁸ Stereotypical names for secretarial women in Hungarian jokes.

IV. STABILISING EFFECTS OF TRANSNATIONAL LINKS

Both my next examples, Vera and Csilla found that transnational links to the homeland stabilise their sense of home and belonging. They show some similarities with the previous cases, in that they can comfortably access Hungarianness in Australia. However, the Hungarianness that they enjoy here is not entirely locally produced. They are both employed at Sydney-based Hungarian radio stations, which since 1989 offer the possibility of dense transnational connectedness with colleagues and other nationals from Hungary. Through their work, both Vera and Csilla forge satisfactory links to their homeland without the need for actual border crossing. Via their mediated connections, both women claim a deterritorialised Hungarian identity, in which the actual geographic place plays limited importance. Vera feels that through her job she manages to negotiate between her two homes:

I am still here because the radio keeps me here. Otherwise I would miss Hungary enormously. In that way I am in daily contact with Hungary, I know everything. The radio is the reason why I do not feel homesick. It makes me feel balanced in a way that I am a Hungarian but I live in Australia. [...] I would really miss the culture, the folk music, the literature. But now I have all those with the radio. Am I far away from anything? No, here I can listen to Hungarian music, via the radio culture and current affairs are easily accessible... [...] It is exactly this fantastic feeling that I am here! And I tell myself, how good that I am here and I have the possibility to observe everything from here. I mean I would hate to live at home in Hungary... But the distance helps me feel connected to Hungary. I feel more aligned with my country from this position. I have a much clearer picture in that way. If I lived at home, for sure I would have ended up in the psychiatric clinic. Hungary changed so much. It has transformed into something I could not live in anymore. They do not watch good films anymore; they do not listen to folk music anymore in Hungary. I tell you, I listen to more Hungarian music than an average person in Hungary... in Hungary all these values are not important anymore somehow. [...] I am afraid that my memories are so much more positive than contemporary reality itself. I assume even my favourite place, the Margit Bridge, has changed since. (Interview with Vera, May, 2005)

As Stefansson (2004:11) put it, in a paradoxical way the experience of living away from home can lead to a discovery of a new sense of attachment to one's place of origin (see also: Hobsbawm 1991:63; Rapport 1994a; Rapport and Dawson 1998: 9; Kateb 1991:135; Sarup 1994:96; Tuan 2001). Vera, similar to other Hungarians, is alienated by the changes and the everyday banality in Hungary. Mediated and filtered culture and information, which is accessible for her through the media, manages to ease her feelings of nostalgia for the motherland, and also helps her to feel balanced as a Hungarian in her new country.

Csilla's experiences and feelings point in a different direction. She arrived in Australia slightly earlier than Vera, but she is of similar age and also holds a university degree. Csilla is one of the few first generation Hungarians who comfortably and proudly inhabits a hybrid form of national identity. I visited her in Sydney during the 2004 Olympic Games. While I was talking to her husband in the kitchen, she suddenly ran in and interrupted our conversation. She happily cried out: 'We won a new gold medal!' I ran to the television euphorically, but then I

realised that 'we' meant 'we Australians' for her. After sensing my disappointment, she explained:

I live here, I am equally happy for Hungarian and Australian achievements. (Field notes, June, 2004)

Later that day, Csilla said:

I never longed for Hungary; I never wanted to return... but still... I'm feeling at home there as well... I always say that one can only be a good Australian if one is a good Hungarian. If you are not a good Hungarian, you'll never be good Australian either. [...] For me the 15th of March is just as important and moving as Anzac Day. And I acknowledge the heroes at both places equally. [...] I feel at home here and there as well. I have two homes, which makes me a happy person. Because as you might have noticed there are many Hungarians, who belong neither here nor there. They only feel good on the aeroplane, when they fly from one place to the other. ...The small things are important, the every days, that I got out of the bed and I'm happy...or I'm thinking about that I need to arrange this and that today... I look around and say to myself: we arrived with two suitcases and we achieved this. And yes, this is very important for me. Not the economical aspects, but the fact that we established a home. The feeling that from two suitcases we built a house and we sent the kids to the best possible schools. (Field notes, June 2004)

Although Csilla has hardly ever visited her home country, she feels that she is fully informed about the political, cultural and social situation in Hungary, and she does not express any loss or ambivalence with regard to her sense of home. Although rarely crossing the borders herself, she and her husband are responsible for a program at a Sydney-based ethnic community radio station. Further, in the last few decades they have opened their home to dozens of temporary guests arriving from Hungary. Working with current issues in Hungary and frequently encountering Hungarians actually living in Hungary reinforces their attachment to the mother country. Csilla explained:

Since we have been doing this radio programme we are in a way forced to keep an eye on what's happening in Hungary. The Internet helps us very much. And of course the people who stay with us for couple of days or weeks. We spent fantastic time together with athletes, journalists, actors and students. There were two sweet girls here last week from Hungary, they were so sweet... All these people open a window for Hungary. You know everyone has different opinions, different perspectives, and we got to know all of these. These visits mean very much for us...And the fact that I am doing this little radio thing gives me courage to call people who I never met before, famous and interesting people, such as Papp Gabor, the historian or an architect called Csete Gyorgy, or Wittner Maria [National heroes of the 1956 Revolution]. Talking to these people gives us a unique perspective on the Hungarian reality. (Field notes, June, 2004)

For Csilla, the sense of connection with her country of origin is based on her access to information and knowledge of contemporary issues in Hungary. For her, being updated about the events in present-day Hungarian political, cultural and social life forms a solid sense of belonging to her country of origin.

The experiences of the two women are similar; they are both middle aged relatively recent migrants, now with a job in a Hungarian-language radio programme. However, their sense of attachment to Hungary is different. In contrast with Csilla, who feels at home in Hungary due to her ongoing connections through the media and through her up-to-date knowledge of contemporary Hungarian issues, Vera's sense of attachment and ease derives more from the accessibility of

essentialised Hungarian culture, such as folk music and literature, through her job. Consequently, while Csilla is happy to return to Hungary for occasional trips, Vera expresses an ‘anxiety of return’, an anxiety about facing the changes and the reality in her homeland.

V. UPROOTING EFFECTS OF TRANSNATIONAL POSSIBILITIES AND LINKS

V. 1. Split sense of attachment

Open borders and transnational possibilities can also to various degrees uproot individuals’ sense of feeling at home in Australia. Some Hungarians have difficulties finding a balance between their two countries. For Barna the *rendszerváltás* in Hungary opened up a great possibility for accessing Hungarian culture, produced in Hungary. However Barna feels this possibility did not eventuate. He is a middle-aged intellectual, who is dissatisfied with the cultural repertoire these community centres provide. He feels the cultural repertoire is outdated and old-fashioned and does not offer up-dated Hungarian cultural programs and activities at these community centres. Nor can he afford frequent return trips to Hungary. As a result, he experiences a ‘slippage’ between his practical needs and his sense of belonging.⁹

In the context of migration, Avtar Brah (1996:192) asks, ‘Where is home? On the one hand, “home” is a mythic place of desire in the community’s imagination. In this sense, it is a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of “origin”. On the other hand, [home] is also the lived experience of a locality’. The example below show similar distinctions with Hungary serving as a cultural and spiritual *origo* while Australia is often seen as a kind of practical home. However, in most cases, this distinction tells us more about Hungarians’ feeling of fragmentation and the constant need for negotiation between the two sites, than about embeddedness in two homes. These cases question the dual and multiple characters of ‘homes’, and underline the point that for some migrants home is one single imagined unit, a mental picture that no single place can satisfy, and is therefore fragmented across different geographical locations (see: McSpadden, 2004).

Barna’s narrative demonstrates that the feeling of being at home can be interpreted simultaneously as the frame of everyday life and as emotional attachment. For Barna, Australia is a place that provides him with safety and the comforts of everyday life. He prefers to live here, and in certain aspects he feels more at home in Melbourne than in Hungary, even if Melbourne lacks the emotional and spiritual attachment for him. At the same time, Barna feels a sense

⁹ Although Barna’s opinion is not unique, I decided not to include any material from other participants in this section. The reason behind this is Barna’s ability to express himself in a highly sophisticated manner. None of my other interviews would compare to his elegant and complex confession.

of spiritual connection to Hungary that requires no further proof (see: Holsey, 2004: 168). Hungary represents an imaginary landscape for him, his contradictory emotional and spiritual *origo*, wild and scary on the one hand, amazing on the other. It encapsulates 'memories and longings, spatialities and temporalities, immediate family and ancestors long-gone, the local and the global, and physical sensations with the intangible and that which cannot be spoken' (Markowitz 2004:22; see also: Rapport and Dawson 1998:8). While both countries provide the sense of belonging, though differently construed, for Barna, home is not completely identified with either country. At the start of the interview Barna exclusively emphasised the advantages of living in Australia. In the later parts his narrative became more ambivalent.

What keeps me here? The organised life, the established home, my web of relationships, my working place...I enjoy my job and I doubt that I could do it under the same circumstances in Hungary. I'm feeling good here. I love being at home, I enjoy what surrounds me, the environment which we built up slowly, slowly...it makes me feel good if I can spend some time in the garden, just to do this and that or to take a walk with Szonja [his wife] in the neighbourhood. All these small things make up a quality of life. Nothing extraordinary, small everyday things, I can really value these, they make me feel secure. And I have to admit that the Australian society is a very stable one, it gives me a sense of security as well. And it keeps me here and makes me feel good. (Interview with Barna, February, 2005)

In Barna's case, decent living standards and feeling of being home do not constitute a one-to-one relationship, in other words there is no implication that home is exclusively 'where you make it' (Graham and Khosravi 1997, cited in Stefansson 2004:178). Rather, Australia has become what Magat (1999) calls 'partial home', as living exclusively in Australia engenders a feeling of constant loss. Barna's example demonstrates the *schism* that several Hungarians experience. Barna continues:

There are so many cultural values in Hungary...amazing...so good to see them, when you feel it's yours...to feel that Hungarians are capable of these things... when I feel that it belongs to me, that my roots are there and that's what builds me...I'm proud of it, it's special. You know I feel it's mine, it's like when some people faint if they see some foreign cultural treasures, Paris, Vienna or whatever...they are secondary compared to my own cultural treasures. (Interview with Barna, February, 2005)

However, Barna's narrative emphasises that home is not primarily an abstract discursive space either. While Barna appreciates aspects of Hungarian culture, certainly feelings of frustration and estrangement are typical reactions against the lack of development. His ambivalent opposition of Hungarian high culture versus Hungarian backwardness both reinforces and contradicts the mental divisions between the educated, democratic modern West that is Australia, versus the primitive and backward East that is Hungary (see: Bringa 1995:58-60; van de Port 1998; Stefansson 2004:181). In his conceptualisation, Hungary did not change it is still part of the Balkan, which he fled. He finds that he is unable to live in Hungary,

as he cannot revert to his former lifestyles since his level of comfort has changed as living in the West transformed his expectations. Barna continues:

...however there is also the grey, dull everyday life [in Hungary].... The snow is dirty, your shoes are wet...the naturalistic every days.... And managing to live from your salary...tolerating the arrogant clerks in the offices....you see that's it, we don't want to see the unpleasant aspects only the good ones... so it's easy to say from the armchair in my comfortable room, that I miss the Hungarian culture, how good it would be to sit in the Opera in Pest. [...] What do I call home? This is a very complicated issue...my heart lies there, my feelings are there, but you know that's not the whole life. That's not the whole picture, it's a very important element of our life, but it's not the whole life. There are quite many things I don't like about Hungary. I don't like that Hungary's still a bit a part of the Balkan. The style of administration is a bit different. They value things a bit differently and value life, each other, human relationships differently. And other things, credibility for instance...But I still miss it... you know that's our real home, our homeland. However, our home is here....I feel at home here, still, my true home, my roots or homeland, or whatever I call it, is there. (Interview with Barna, February, 2005)

V. 2. Transnational dreams

Barna and many others with similar problems feel that the promising opportunities of the *rendszerváltás* did not deliver their hopes in terms of accessing Hungarian culture more easily.

Their longing for Hungary materialises itself first of all in the desire for Hungarian high culture, and they feel that the community institutions with 'their low level of cultural repertoire' cannot fulfil their yearnings. Further, a multitude of constraints severely limit Barna's and others' freedom of movement, that is the ability to travel regularly to Hungary to try to find an equilibrium between the two home places (see: Stefansson 2004). People like Barna claim that either a well-resourced Hungarian cultural institute, which has dense transnational ties to Hungary and thus is able to offer contemporary Hungarian culture, or frequent visits to Hungary could resolve their feelings of unsettledness.

The idea of the transnational bridge does not only imply political connections to the homeland, but also stands for a desire for being able to consume up-to-date Hungarian culture in Australia. Several Hungarians, mostly those who arrived in the 1980s and later, are disenchanted with the cultural programmes of the community organisations.

Erzsi, one of my participants said:

Since 1989 nothing changed in the *Magyar Ház*. Now, that we finally have the possibility to ask for some artists from Hungary. These people there are unable to see these possibilities, or I don't know. They got completely stuck. Just listen to them: they already forgot how to speak Hungarian but still haven't learned English. (Field notes, July, 2004)

Several of these disenchanted Hungarians plan to, or occasionally, try to set up alternative cultural links with the homeland. During my fieldwork, I witnessed several attempts to invite artists and historians to Melbourne. Mariann, a participant of mine, has been trying to invite Pap Gabor, a Hungarian historian, to Melbourne: The *Magyar Ház* offers nothing for me. They eat, drink and dance and listen to this old fashioned Hungarian proletarian rock and roll. That is not what I am looking for. I want to listen to

contemporary Hungarian artists, watch good Hungarian films whatever... So therefore I have been trying to get some intelligent people together maybe they would be interested in Pap Gabor and we could arrange an Australian trip for him. There must be many Hungarians in Melbourne who are hungry for quality Hungarian culture. It is easy to be Italian or German in Australia they have well organised institutions offering updated repertoire. I simply don't understand how it is possible that we still have to listen to the same crap in the community houses, as we listened until the *rendszerváltás*. Then it was understandable, there was nothing else. But now we have the possibility! (Field notes, April, 2005)

A 'transnational mode of existence' – that is frequent border-crossing and, thus, double embeddedness – is also a dream that several Australian-Hungarians nurture. One day, when I was waiting for the train with Sanyi, a male participant of mine, we met one of his Hungarian friends, Zoltán. We talked about Zoltán's experiences in Hungary during his last visit. He said:

It was very good, but man! I would be the happiest person if I could afford a return trip every year. Just for a month every year! It would satisfy me completely!

Sanyi shook his head:

No, that's not enough. My dream is to spend the summer here and the summer there. To live here and there. To come back here when politics pisses me off completely, and to go back any time, when I feel the urge. That's my dream. (Field notes, August, 2004)

'Transnational modes of existence' as a desire is conceptualised and imagined in multiple ways among Hungarians. Many Hungarians cultivate the dream of being a 'seasonal migrant', or to use Myklebost's (1989) expression, a 'snowbird', who escapes the winters in both Australia and Hungary. For others, a long annual holiday would be sufficient. 'Transnational modes of existence' is imagined to serve adequately the hybrid form of identity that Hungarians inhabit and help them to find equilibrium in their feelings of belonging. They imagine that this dream will replace the feeling of unsated desire for home, by creating a sense of double embeddedness in both places.

V. 3. Home in the future

Although a mobile livelihood is a dream that several Hungarians nurture, transnational connections can also alienate individuals in their host land. While for several participants Australia offers a comfortable space for everyday life, neither Kinga nor Szabolcs value their host land. They arrived in Australia in late-1970s and early-1980s. The first decades of their attempted assimilation were followed by the current period of transnational links. As a result, their perception of home changed significantly and they have come to regard Hungary as their exclusive home.

Both Szabolcs and Kinga use unhomely metaphors of their homes in Australia (Uhling 2004:400). They emphasise the feelings of solitude and transition when talking about Australia, and they both consider it a 'non-place' – 'space without history, identity, or any possibility of being appropriated by social groups'

(Hiernaux-Nicolás 1999:131) – in contrast with Hungary, which embodies the character, meaning and credibility that is homeliness.

Several Hungarians I talked with surround their environment with characteristic Hungarian interior decor and elements of continental flora which aim to symbolise the home country. By doing so, they attempt to call forth sensory memories and transplant ‘the original home’ into the new surroundings. This phenomenon can be described as homing desires: ‘desires to feel at home achieved by physically or symbolically (re)constituting spaces which provide some kind of ontological security in the context of migration’ (Brah 1996:180). Kinga often expressed her aversion to the gum tree, saying that it was dull and grey. After an interview, I was sitting with her in her lush garden in an elegant Sydney suburb. She pointed to the young oak trees in the middle of the garden and said:

I planted these oaks a couple of years ago. It reminds me of home. I hoped it would ease my longing for home. (Field notes, September, 2004)

However, the oak trees could not create the sense of homeliness in Kinga’s case. She is a middle-aged woman, who immigrated to Australia in the early-1980s. After the first ten years, her attempts at integration into the new country were interrupted by her personal and family-related problems. Her divorce from his Hungarian husband was a kind of ‘fateful moment’, a moment of insecurity and opportunity signifying a point of transition (Giddens 1991:112-114). After the divorce, she re-established her connections to Hungary through transnational linkages. She discovered a long-lost world, which she had abandoned. However, neither engaging in political and cultural transnational activities, nor surrounding herself with familiar artefacts and elements from the mother country, nor even regular return visits, could provide her with a sense of balance between her two homes. She explained:

I could leave this place any moment. *Nothing* good happened to me here during these 25 years. There is *nothing* for me here..... I wait until the girls grow up and I move home. (Field notes, 2004, my italics)

Kinga lacks any emotional attachment to her country of residence; for her Australia represents a non-place, devoid of personal memories and chronological connections to a broader emotional context (Arefi 1999:183). However, Australia did not always lack meaning for Kinga. On the contrary, it represented homeliness and everyday life prior to her divorce and the establishing of new transnational linkages. For Kinga, her family represented home, and her surroundings were an extension of the happiness she experienced while being married. After the break-up, the surroundings ceased to have meaning for Kinga. Walking on the streets of Coogee, a Sydney beachside suburb, she explained to me:

I used to come to this Antique shop every week, talk to the owner, buy some stuff, I really liked coming here... it was you know like a nice weekly routine. I haven’t been here for a long time... I got bored of it; I got bored of the whole place... (Field notes, September, 2004)

Her case underlines the point that the concept of home is dynamic and changes in meaning over one’s life course (Lam and Yeoh 2004; Wikström 1995). Since she

was divorced a few years ago, she has bought a property and has been travelling to Hungary each year. Still, transnational ties do not satisfy Kinga. And she lives in the ‘myth of return’. On another occasion she said:

When the girls were small we hardly ever went home [to Hungary] ...we used to travel much around Australia, we thought if we live here we need to get to know the place... it can't move me anymore... I just want to go home... I have great plans. I already planned everything. I'm going to open a kind of open house, a kind of library or something similar in the village where I bought the house. Ok, first I have to renovate it. I want to open my house to the people in the village, I feel I have a task, I want to bring life and education, and of course I also want to learn. (Field notes, February, 2005)

Rapport and Dawson (1998) claim that the meaning of home gains its importance through the absence or denial caused by mobility. Kinga describes Hungary as an idealised, even sacred place, as her emotional *origo*.

At home even the air is different.... It's silky and tender. (Field notes, February, 2005)

Szabolcs, a Melbourne-based participant, feels a similar sense of alienation in Australia, and is likewise fascinated by the idea of moving back to Hungary. One day, I was driving with him to his house in the lower-middle class suburb of Dandenong in Melbourne. While driving through the uniform streets, he explained to me:

You see?! *Nothing!* Look around, Australia is *nothing!* There is no culture here, no history...simply *nothing*, nobody on the streets, everybody is depressed.....it's a cold place. (Field notes, March, 2005)

For Szabolcs, the suburb of Dandenong, characterised, in his view, by the lack of diversity, significance, and meaning, stands for the whole of Australia. Similarly to Kinga, Szabolcs and his family are living in the ‘myth of return’ and regard Hungary as their profound home. In contrast with Kinga, Szabolcs is an active figure in Hungarian community life in Melbourne, and close friendships tie him and his wife to several Hungarian migrant families. Again, Kinga and Szabolcs show a similar rediscovery of their ‘true home place’, after their attempts to find a sense of home in Australia. Furthermore, they both minimise and disregard their positive experiences in Australia prior to the opening of their transnational connections. He said:

We were vegetating here for years and years ... I mean it was good and I worked a lot... and at the start you put an effort to in it...I changed my name, it was totally normal for me, ‘I have to assimilate’ I thought. And then we went home for 3 month in 1994 and we were full of energy, did so many things...it was minus 10 outside but we did not feel it at all....we were so happy and it also influenced other people's mood. The kids were so happy as well, and when we came back my daughter got depressed. There is nothing here in these suburbs for her, everything is grey. In Hungary she had so many friends and she was also very successful in singing. She was elected in a very good choir. And then coming back it was like...it was like coming back from three dimensions to two dimensions. (...) I don't know exactly what will happen when we go home. But we talk about it all the time. We want to visit the lectures, there is so much to do at home, and we are full of plans... (Interview with Szabolcs, April, 2005)

The importance of native language in the evaluation of space is often documented (see for example: Valensi 1990). Szabolcs's perception of Australia as a ‘non-

place' and Hungary as a home, was clearly articulated when Szabolcs emphasised the pleasure of hearing the Hungarian language everywhere in Hungary. For him, the sound of the mother tongue filling up the space signifies protection, warmth, and the 'security of the ever-familiar' (Valensi 1990:92).¹⁰ Szabolcs:

It was only after couple of days that I realised that I turn to the right, turn to the left, I can turn any direction and I hear people talking Hungarian. It was a joyous moment! I suddenly felt that here I don't have to explain myself... and I also understand things! I felt alive, I felt: 'this is my place, this is my home, my homeland'. I understand things... I realised that a whole country is thinking the same way as you do. (Interview with Szabolcs, April, 2005)

Interestingly, nostalgia and the myth of return did not fade away with the new structural possibilities for transnational connectedness. Jankélévitch (1974:346; see also: Nosco 1990) argues that it is the banality of the 'here and now' that provides the stimulus for the nostalgic longing for the 'there and then'. In the narratives of Kinga and Szabolcs, the nostalgic feelings for Hungary are juxtaposed against the feelings of alienation in 'pedestrian Australia', and the nostalgia for Hungary provides a critical foil to present dissatisfactions. However, the nostalgia in both narratives is directed to the future. The feeling of being at home is removed or, more precisely, postponed into the *future* in Hungary. Both Kinga and Szabolcs are living in the 'myth of return', they are full of more-or-less-elaborated plans of how they will create and enjoy the real feeling of homeliness. They both imagine that in Hungary their life will regain the meaning which was lost in what they see as the cultural and emotional vacuum of Australia. In that sense, planning and fantasising about the future is a strategy which helps them to endure their current life in Australia.

V. 4. Loving and hating Hungary

My last case study is particularly interesting. András, an elderly gentleman, fled Hungary after the fall of the 1956 Revolution as his life was endangered. In his case, transnational ties did not erase his traumatic memories however, shattered his nostalgic memories of the homeland. András is an important figure in Hungarian community life in Sydney; he feels strongly committed to the 'Hungarian case' in Australia, in Hungary, and in the Carpathian Basin. He is an active member of several NGOs, clubs and organisations which deal with Hungarian political issues. He experiences an 'inexpressible sense of spiritual affinity' (Nash 2003:189) with Hungary and, at the same time, he feels thankful and loyal to Australia. András' confessions illustrate the overtly emotional and complicated connection to the motherland. András wrote in a private note:

Sometimes I start crying when I check the news [about Hungary] on the Internet. It's hopeless, it's so sad...but if I read about positive issues I'm so happy...I really wish things would go well... [...] I love this country [Australia] I love living here; this country accepted me and gave me everything I needed. All those things Hungary deprived me of. [...] But I can't help it, I am still Hungarian, I

¹⁰ This point underscores Feld's and Basso's (1996: 94) suggestion that we should move beyond the tendency of European visualism toward a 'multisensory conceptualization of place', which lays emphasis on the acoustic dimension in sensing place, involving sound, hearing, and the voice (see also Smith 2003:345-346).

was born Hungarian and [...] this can't be changed. [...] I'm happy here, but Hungary is my homeland and I will always feel for it. [...] I was a refugee but have been living in this wonderful country for 50 years. I don't believe how lucky I am. I still ask myself: Is it also possible to live like this? In peace, quietude, comfort, security, [...] and in a true democracy. [...] I was a refugee, with no hope to return, and that influenced my way of thinking. I wanted to be Australian. It's better than being in my deteriorated country, which abdicated me. [...] It's a love-hate relationship with my mother country. Loyalty, nostalgia, pride, tears, impotent anger, often almost hate...these emotions change each other every day, often every hour... This is our relationship to the mother country. Being a first generation migrant is a lottery. We won't be home anymore, anywhere, neither here, nor there. (Unpublished note-1 of András, related to me in 2005)

In another written piece he gave me, the feelings of abandonment and disappointment overwhelm his feeling of belonging to Hungary as a geographical site. Here, András' interpretation of being Hungarian takes a deterritorialised form. Indeed, disregarding Hungary as a source of his Hungarian identity results in proud resentment. Such formulations are aligned with isolationist voices in the diaspora, which continue to claim a deterritorialised Hungarian identity:

But no, I can't go 'home' to Hungary. It's not my homeland anymore, only theoretically. I do everything I can for her, even though she never did anything for me. Neither did her inhabitants. I'm sad to say that. I rather stay here. And live here as a backboned Hungarian. Yes, it is possible to be Hungarian outside Hungary, and not longing for going back. (Unpublished note-2 of András, related to me in 2005)

András' narratives highlight an important tension inherent in the Australian-Hungarian discourses, namely the simultaneous loving and hating the homeland. (see: Uhling 2004:400). András' feelings towards Hungary derive from the traumatic historical experiences; however, they are simultaneously nostalgic. Nostalgia, as a form of memory, is an important defining feature in migrants' conceptualisation of home (Lam and Yeo 2004). While in Aranka's case, (section III. 2) transnational connections did not alter her feelings of belonging, transnational ties further complicate András' sense of home. Due to his old age he is unable to travel home, however he manages to access contemporary Hungarian reality, through transnational media. The image of contemporary Hungary, instead of being liberating and affirming, was severely disorientating for András. It undermined the nostalgic reminiscences nurtured in the period of exile, but did not dilute his memories of the dictatorship. After not having had links with his homeland for decades, András' image of the 'land of memory' (Hureau 1987:86, cited in Smith, 2003) was disturbed and unsettled by the banality of the Hungarian reality that the Hungarian media offered. He writes:

For me it's painful and bitter to see that let alone terms like 'homeland', 'faith', 'honesty' and 'honour', but also words like 'please', 'thank you', 'Sir', 'Madam' and 'sorry' disappeared from the dictionary in Hungary... Instead we hear and read f...you, sh...t and similar Balkan expressions everywhere. Not only in the underworld, but in theatres and in the 'literature'. [...] I don't long for this... It would be nice not to know all these things, but today at the age of information we can't hide anywhere. I can see and hear it here! (Unpublished note-1 of András, related to me in 2005)

As Aksoy and Robins (2002:11) put it in their paper on transnational Turkish television 'the key to understanding transnational [...] television is its relation to

banality'. The ordinary, banal reality of contemporary Hungary, the 'here and now', disturbs András' imagination of a 'there and then' Hungary, and leads to cultural demythologisation (Aksoy and Robins 2002:11). In that sense, András shares the aversion to the everyday reality in Hungary with Barna with other participants (see later in Chapter IV). The media transcends physical boundaries and reaches and penetrates the nostalgic images of András and others in Australia. In that way, not even the in his guarded 'self imposed exile' can András hold on to the image of Hungary filtered by the 'distant view' (Skrbis 2002). Refusing the everyday picture of present-day Hungary further reinforces exilic narratives of separation.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I scrutinised how individual Australian-Hungarians relate to Australia and Hungary, now that the homeland is free. At the start, I posed the question whether transnational connections allowed Hungarians to shift their perception of the homeland from an abstract image to homeland as a lived experience. In conclusion I found that connecting to modern-day Hungary after 1989 can often be problematic and complicated, sometimes overtly emotional and painful process for Australian-Hungarians.

My first finding is that the imprint of the long-term separation still affects Australian-Hungarians' sense of belonging. For Hungarians in Australia, feeling at home in their country of origin is often equated with strong emotional links to an essentialised symbolic space, comprising elements of 'high culture', memories, historical nostalgia and familiarity. The sense of 'home' in Hungary is most often equated with the abstract idea of homeland. Hungary, as a physical place, however, is most often associated with the chaos, underdevelopment and filth of the Communist legacy, thus rendering it an intolerable site for everyday life. Further, in many cases, traumatic historical experiences in Hungary still affect Hungarians' sense of feeling at home.

Another finding of my investigation is that the structural possibility for transnational connectivity did not necessarily eventuate in double embeddedness. Transnational connections can be empowering, alienating, disorienting, or have no significant impact. Nevertheless, transnational dwelling is imagined by several Hungarians as a means which could adequately serve the hybrid form of identity that they inhabit and help them to find equilibrium in their feelings of belonging.

CHAPTER IV. REDISCOVERING THE OLD/NEW HUNGARY

I. INTRODUCTION

He [Josef] rings, and his brother, five years older than he, opens the door. They grip hands and gaze at each other. These are gazes of enormous intensity, and both men know very well what is going on: they are registering – swiftly, discretely, brother about brother – the hair, the wrinkles, the teeth; each knows what he is looking for in the face before him, and each knows that the other is looking for the same thing in his. (Kundera 2002:56)

The above quotation is from the exiled Czech writer Milan Kundera's novel *Ignorance* (2002). Josef, a Czech émigré, returns from Denmark after the collapse of Communism, after being away from his homeland for decades. At their first encounter, both Josef and his brother are looking for changes in the other, they are measuring the transformations that took place during the period of their disconnection. After a couple of days of residence in the Czech Republic, Josef decides to return to Denmark, as he is unwilling and unable to cope with the changes that occurred while he was away.

In this chapter, following Kundera, I ask the question 'what happens when the exilic dreaming of homeland and return gives place to practical homecomings?' Is the result a shattering of the nostalgic illusions nurtured in the safety of exile, social marginalization or divine feelings of rediscovering the lost homeland and rebuilding old bonds? In other words, I examine whether it is possible for Hungarian migrants to overcome the experiences of cultural separation via emerging transnational border-crossings since 1990. The focus of this chapter is the evaluation of the changes that the returnees encounter during their journeys to their homelands. These return visits are the main ways in which Australian-Hungarians compare their memories and imagination of the past with the developments of the present. I look at the ways in which different changes in the former homeland, and in the émigrés themselves, influence returnees' perception of self and belonging. I demonstrate that while certain changes often alienate returnees, the lack of changes can also be viewed as undesirable. This seeming contradiction illuminates the distinction between the 'desired/nostalgic past' that returnees nurtured during the decades of separation, and the 'disdained past' of the communist dictatorship which they fled. I pose the question whether 'homecoming' is possible given these transformations.

In the face of changes Hungarian returnees need to re-define their relationship to their new physical environment, as well as to the altered social and political order and tailor their expectations accordingly. I examine how returnees deal with the emerged changes and outline the strategies they deploy to facilitate deeper immersion with their home societies. It is also important to acknowledge that it is not only the returnees who measure the transformations, but as the

interaction between Kundera's fictional brothers suggest, so do the stayees. I look at the ways in which returnees dismantle, combat or eventually accept the stayees' negative perception of the changes which émigrés in the West have undergone.

II. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

II. 1. Rethinking transnationalism and repatriation theories

Assimilation theory, which dominated the approach towards migration until the late-1960s, considered the immigrants' home country and receiving country as two separate societies. The assumption was that immigrants had to choose between the two countries and come to stay in their host countries where they would cast off their homeland habits (Gordon 1964). The majority of the research treated migration as a one-way process, with no return (King 2000:7) and focused on the effects of uprootedness and processes of assimilation in the host country (Markowitz 2004:22). The idea of return was most often conceptualised as the 'myth of return' (Al-Raseed 1994; Anwar 1979; Dahya 1973; Zetter 1994), the 'return illusion' (Brettel 1979) or the 'ideology of return' (Rubenstein 1979) (see: Stefansson 2004:6). Thus, assimilation theory was unable to identify the multi-stranded ties, interactions and sentiments linking people across the borders of nation-states (Glick Schiller et al. 1992:5-12; Basch et al. 1994:30-34). The great advantage of the concept of transnationalism is that it moves towards an understanding of migration as an ongoing process (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Basch et al. 1994; Labelle and Midy 1999; Baldassar 1997).

However, the idea of multiple connections across national borders hides the assumption that through transnational ties immigrant communities manage to close the gap between their place of origin and the receiving country. I demonstrate that transnational inquiry is brought to a premature halt with the ready acceptance of the assumption that transnational connections support the long-distance cohesion of migrant groups and sending state communities (Aksoy and Robins 2002:10). Drawing on Hungarian travel narratives, I show that transnational border crossing is not always empowering. It can produce emotionally disorientating experiences of disappointment and social alienation, which may result in further rupture (Portes and Rumbaut 1996:158-159; Tsuda 2004:140).

New waves of refugee repatriation studies move in the same direction as does the literature on transnational migration, namely, questioning and disentangling the essentialised unity of place and people. Previous studies within the field advocated the easy and natural homecoming that brings uprooted people back to their natural homes and habits (Eastmond 2001). The contemporary wave of refugee studies challenges the notion of 'glorious homecomings' based on assumptions of primordial ties between certain people and certain territories. In doing so, current researchers often provide rather pessimistic pictures of homecomings, that of unhappiness and dissatisfaction (King 2000:19; Stefansson 2004:8). Recent research emphasises the 'impossibility of return', as the result of

various changes, both in the former homeland and in the identities of the returnees (Allen 1996; Allen and Morsink 1994; Black and Koser 1999; Gmelch 1995; King 2000; Long and Oxfeld 2004). As Sepulveda (1995:84) formulates it: 'return may be more traumatic than the experience of flight and exile itself'. The act of homecoming has recently been labelled a 'reverse culture shock' (Graham and Khosravi 1997:126), or a travel to 'an unknown wilderness' (Pilkington and Flynn 1999:190). According to this approach, returnees feel like 'strangers at home' (Steffansson 2000).

Steffansson (2004:173; see also Jansen 1998:85) emphasises that the one-sided, negative portrayals of homecoming offered by contemporary scholars lead to the fundamental assumption of the 'impossibility' of the homecoming and, thus, this conceptualisation hides similar dangers to the 'glorious homecoming' approach. Therefore, following Stefansson, I examine whether the various changes and transformations in the homeland that have taken place during the émigrés' absence are incompatible with the returnees developing a sense of feeling at home in Hungary (Steffansson 2004:173). I argue that it is more fruitful to examine how the different changes influence the way Hungarian expatriates feel during their return visits. In this chapter I show that while certain transformations alienate returnees, often it is the lack of changes that is upsetting. With all the scholarly emphasis focusing on the emerged changes, the agency of the returnees and their efforts for reconnection are overlooked in the literature. In order to fill this gap, I highlight how returnees attempt to discover and reintegrate themselves in their 'new/old places' (Casey 1993:294). I look at the practices/strategies that returning Hungarians deploy both to fight the prejudices they experience from the stayees and to alleviate the 'unhealable rift' between them and their home-places (Said 1992:357).

II. 2. Embracing tourism studies

In this chapter, I argue that the area of migration research will benefit from applying the concepts and theories that have been developed in tourism studies. As recently pointed out in social sciences, the emergence of new 'transnational ways of life' (Pries 2002) means that people may move around in ways that question traditional identifications and categorizations such as tourist, migrant, or returnee (see: Gustafson 2002). This blurred continuum, or as Karen O'Reilly (1995a:29, cited in Basu 2004) has called it, the 'vast grey area between residence and visiting, migration and sojourning' has gained some attention lately in scholarly circles. For example, the phenomenon of diasporic 'homecoming-journeys', 'in which, members of diasporic communities "return" to lost homelands as heritage-tourists and pilgrims' (Basu 2004:27), has gained popularity among researchers (see: Basu 2004; Smith 2003). However, several scholars have noted that studies of migration, transnationalism, and diasporas still 'fail to acknowledge the significant role of tourism in contemporary migration processes' (Hall and Williams 2002:277). Therefore there have been calls for greater integration between tourism and migration studies (Hall and Williams 2002; Duval and Hall 2005; Williams et al.

2000; Gustafson 2002). The travel experiences of Australian-Hungarians demonstrate this blurred continuum between migrants and tourists in different ways. First, throughout this chapter it will be apparent that experiences and interpretations of returnees are often similar to those of tourists and travellers. Aspects of commercial, heritage, cultural, political and health tourism can be found in almost all travel narratives. Secondly, stayees' and returnees' perception of their tours to Hungary, as 'a visit to' or as 'going home', are also inextricably linked to the issues of identity and belonging. For example, stayees often negatively portray returnees as tourists who do not belong to the nation anymore. In turn, several returning migrants, who make serious attempts at reintegration, distance themselves from the typical returnee, and thus from the tourist role. The urge for demarcation and dissociation again underlines the blurred boundaries that exist between categories such as tourist, visitor and returnee.

II. 3. Positioning travel narratives

My third theoretical consideration is the problem of subjectivity. It is very important not to think of diaspora members in substantialist terms, that is, as members of essentialised and bounded entities. The experience of return is not the same for all Hungarians. There are a small number of Hungarians who have travelled back and forth extensively between Australia and Hungary as the collapse of Communism enabled them to reclaim their Hungarian citizenship and to buy property in Hungary. The vast majority of Hungarian-Australians, however, cannot afford yearly visits and they travel to Hungary at most every three to five years. Hungarian returnees also spend different amounts of time in their home country. Further, the structural changes that were brought about with the democratisation of Hungary did not result in the simultaneous establishment of transnational connections across all segments of the Hungarian community in Australia. Further, trips to the homeland have various functions, different individuals desire different experiences in the homeland and engage in different activities during their trips. Similarly, Hungarians have various and often contrasting images of their homeland and its inhabitants after the trips. The stories range in their descriptions of home places from the idyllic to the narrow-minded, and the experiences range from the rejuvenating to the disappointing.

In order to avoid the traps of the 'celebrity of subjectivity', the analysis of these stories needs to be anchored in the context of political and social transformations. Throughout this chapter, I explore how individual travel narratives are embedded in, and shaped by, the broader Australian-Hungarian narrative-structures focusing specifically on the conflicting discourses of belonging and suffering (see: Elsrud 2001; Murray 1989; Eastmond 2001; Stefansson 2004).

III. THE EFFECT OF CHANGES

III. 1. Dealing with the past-1: The lost past

Several Hungarian returnees, who I introduce in this section, realised that the specific experiences during their return trip often contrasted with their memories from the past and dreams of return (see: Oxfeld and Long 2004:10). They painfully discovered that in their period of absence the homeland, their homes and communities have undergone significant changes (see: Stefansson 2004). These changes negatively affected their ability to reclaim a sense of belonging during their visits. In these cases, return can be characterised by disappointment, further rupture, and, often, disillusionment (see: Stefansson 2004; Tsuda 2004; Huseby-Darvas 2004). Here, I illustrate that both the transformation of the concrete and symbolic places, the changed social relations, and the divergent discourses on belonging, suffering and Hungarianness can lead to an alienating and often humiliating return experience.

Ahmed (1999:342) claims that the act of holding on to the lost culture involves the invocation of a 'mythic past'. As Eva Hoffman (1991:115) puts it in her autobiography, *Lost in Translation*, '[loss] is a magical preservative. Time stops at the point of severance, and no subsequent impressions muddy the water you have in mind. The houses, the garden, the country you have lost remain forever as you remember them. Nostalgia – that most lyrical of feelings – crystallises around these images like amber'. Edina and András, the returnees on whom I focus in this section, nurtured such undisturbed nostalgic images for many years in Australia. Edina and her husband, both artists, emigrated from Transylvania in the 1980s. They decided to visit their homeland, after living in Melbourne for six years, but found that the beloved Transylvania they once knew had changed. Their experiences during their first visit highlighted the difference between imagination and reality, past and present (Muggeridge and Dona 2006). Because of the mismatch between their nostalgic memories and the present on the one hand, and their imagined and actual homecoming on the other, the act of return turned out to be an emotionally destabilising event. Edina said:

After emigrating, for us it was an ultimate priority that we can go home to visit as soon as possible. That was the reason why we came to Australia, as to get the citizenship here took only two years, compared to other places like Austria. So after we went home for the first time, six years after the emigration, a week later we said to each other: 'Let's go back to Australia'. [...] In the meantime there was a regime change. Everything changed. They changed, and we changed as well, but not into the same direction. We believed people were still living under very bad circumstances, and during these six years here, we have been trying to collect everything we could. We sent 120 kg before our journey. The best stuff you can imagine, the most beautiful clothes, only new stuff. So we arrived to each friend with millions of presents, and they did not show it explicitly but you could feel that they did not appreciate it. Apparently in our imagination these people lived as they used to live when we left them. And we thought that let's say we remember that Gyula was dreaming about a leather jacket and we bring him one, he would be the happiest man ever. However, Gyula already had three leather jackets. (Field notes, September, 2004)

The migration literature documents that expatriates returning from more developed countries often perceive their old homes as ‘narrow and old-fashioned’, characterised by a lack of economic or social development (Oxfelds and Long 2004:10; see: Gmelch 1995:290; Useem and Useem 1955:42-57; Huseby-Darvas 2004; Pattie 2004; Stefansson 2004; Tsuda 2004). Contrary to this, one of the reasons that turned Edina’s return trip into a fiasco was the unexpected enrichment of her home community. In Edina’s imagination, the level of poverty in Transylvania, which she left behind, was equated with a sense of selflessness and a sharing community, which she could not find upon her return. She continues:

We started having a conversation and we had to realise that the person is not interested in that stuff anymore, and that basically he is not the same person as the one we left behind. [...] And these expectations everywhere, that simply because they stayed there they should be reimbursed. Instead of helping themselves, they were hoping for someone to help them, and I could not relate to that. And they were asking for money for this charity and that charity. And we looked at each other: ‘Hang on, and who will help us if we are in trouble?’ And then we realised that nobody will. People changed, they became selfish, and I did not feel the same selflessness among friends anymore as in the old times. Everybody was running after her own business. They did not ask us about what we think, how we live, how we see the developments... (Field notes, September, 2004)

Stefansson (2004) points out that the conflicting discourses of suffering served to widen the social distance between returnees and stayees in post-war Sarajevo. Similarly, Edina and her husband felt that they were confronted with envy, expectations to assist the stayees financially in return for their homeland suffering, and they were met with a lack of empathy for their own problems and needs. As in Kundera’s novel, both sides, returnees and stayees, had difficulties relating to the suffering of the other. These experiences shattered Edina’s perception of ‘home’ and indicated the reversal of the idea of home from the country of origin to the country of reception.

András, an elderly gentleman who fled in the aftermath of the Revolution in 1956, faced a similar lack of curiosity from the stayees. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, he and his wife returned to Hungary for the first time, on the basis of their profound nostalgia for the historic homeland, only to find that their social circles and personal relationships had changed beyond recognition during their years of absence.

We arranged the trip so that I would be able to go to my secondary school reunion. I was so excited! However it was such a disappointment! Nobody asked me: ‘So how do you live so far away from home?’ It was a huge disappointment. Everybody was empty and depressed. I expected good laughs. I didn’t find my place; I just couldn’t find my place. [...] Later the organiser of the class meeting came to me and wanted to whisper something into my ear. I was very happy, I thought finally he asked me to say some words about my life; I was a big talker at school. But the man told me: ‘András, I am in trouble, I am short of money. Would you be so kind to pay for the champagne?’ Of course I paid for it. (Field notes, 2005, March)

For both Edina and András the return trip was ‘no homecoming but a grotesque distortion’ (Rubinstein 1991:62 cited in Long and Oxfeld). It was less about re-exploration and re-integration and more about rupture. In these cases, as

Valensi (1990:97) writes, 'there is exile but no possibility of redemption; only mourning remains'.

These examples show that the feeling of being strangers in a well-known place can be an effect of the transformations that have taken place in the returnees' personal relationships with stayees in the homeland. However, other Hungarians have experienced difficulties relating to the current social and physical circumstances of the homeland. Lívia described her one week holiday in her beloved Budapest as upsetting and disenchanting. She emigrated in the 1970s and visited her home-city once before the collapse of Communism. In 1994, she went home with her children, to show them where she came from. While she found that she can easily relate to her relatives and friends, she had difficulty seeing the beauty in her former city.

I talked so much about the charm of Budapest to my kids. I told them it was so different from Australia, everything was old and you can smell history on the streets. And we walked around, and ok the old buildings and famous sites are still there, but the atmosphere was missing. Stuff written in English on the shops, full of Western super-market chains, like a bad copy of an American city. I did not understand why it is necessary, why do people need to run after the West? Why don't they appreciate what they have? Now, that finally they are allowed to appreciate it! I was always so proud of my heritage in Australia, but there I felt, my Budapest, my Hungary is gone! Ironically, it disappeared with the communism... it is really ironic, considering how much I hated the regime...[she laughs] Budapest is too international now... the kids still liked it, the relatives were very nice. Since then we went there couple of times, I kind of got used to the changes and rather concentrate on other things. (Field notes, December, 2004)

III. 1. Dealing with the past -2: The legacy of the past

The examples I have given so far suggest that continuity is desired for the feeling of belonging, and that the lack of continuity may lead to alienation and estrangement. However, as the following cases show, the undesired legacy of the hateful aspects of the past may also negatively colour returnees' experiences. A great majority of returnees complained about the irrevocability of the 'communist legacy' in Hungary. For example, common irritations to Australian-Hungarians returning to Budapest are the dirty streets, the packed garbage bins, the traffic jams, the rudeness and the 'residual, backward mentality'. Returnees report being frustrated at the lack of improvement in the cleanliness of the cities and the environment and the service sector. This kind of dissatisfaction fits nicely with the East versus West axis. Critical comments about 'backwardness', dirty streets, the lack of development and 'grumpy and impolite' stayee Hungarians are wrapped into the category of Balkanness, which is frequently juxtaposed with Australia's (and, thus, the returnees') 'Western' and 'civilised' standards. Returning expatriates often conclude that Hungary and Hungarians could still not overcome the Communist tradition of improper language, littering and negligence, which is in this case equated to 'Balkanness' and are still behind the (Western) European standards. The literature documents that return can be experienced as a 'culture shock' or a shocking revelation (Graham and Khosravi 1997; Majodina 1995;

Pilkington and Flynn 1999; Stefansson 2004). Experiencing the lack of development however, is also associated with frequent visitors, who complain that the legacy of the undesired past is still present each time they visit. A returning older couple angrily remarked:

We are used to living a peaceful life, to be quite honest. And we have a more quiet life here [in Australia]. The neighbours are further from us, and they are more correct people. There is no noise here [Australia]. In Zalaegerszeg [town in Hungary] people wake up at five a clock a.m, and bluster. There is no such a silence like here. There was someone who as early as 6 o'clock am started to tenderise the meat for lunch. We were living in a semi-detached house, and he wanted to prepare the meal before going to the early morning mass. The upper neighbour used to come home at late night and used to pull out his bed so loudly... It's really sad that people in Hungary *still* did not *learn* to respect each other. (Field notes, October, 2004)

The difference in the level of privacy is obviously due to the different housing conditions that the returnees experience in their homes in Australia and Hungary. However, the couple automatically attributed the level of noise to the lack of advances in good manners in Hungary and the silence in Australia to the civilised communication between people.

Sanyi, who visits Hungary each year, complained about Hungary's slow transformation to an operable democracy and welfare state.

What always pisses me off at home is that that there has been free life since long, everything is allowed, but all the roads are in miserable state, transport is terrible, there is no development in that sense. The roads in the Western part of the country are not in such a bad state, because Austria is nearby, but on the others you can go ahead but sluggishly. [...] We are building a house in the village, and one of the assistants of the local craftsman, although I had told him that I would pay a nice sum, he did not come. When finally he came, he did not do good work, and it is was difficult to arrange stuff with him... he left after two or three days, without finishing the work. I don't like this kind of behaviour, I'm used to something else here... we can talk about a slight improvement going on, but the moralities are *still* so... (Field notes, January, 2005)

Tamás, another frequent visitor concluded bitterly:

I have to say, Hungary is not developing but underdeveloping! Nothing has changed, things are even worse. [...] In the early 1990s I said to myself: 'be patient the country is just awakening.' But 15 years have passed. [...] Take a look at the streets, the roads, the parking possibilities, cleanliness! But the mentality does not change in a good direction either! Look at people in Budapest: they bring in their cars to the city centre, and then suffer in the traffic jam. They *still* have this cult of cars! Unbelievable! They *can't learn* from the West at all. Why don't they take a look at how civilised, developed countries do things? Here for instance, we do not take our cars to the CBD, but leave them in the parking place and take the train! Also parking in Hungary is a catastrophe! Further everything is dirty, grey and dull. Dogs shit everywhere, nobody picks it up. It's still very Balkan! And of course the mentality, discrimination against ordinary people in the work place... seeing all these things make me very sad. Why can't they finally learn? (Field notes, January, 2005)

Stefansson (2004), while providing a critique of contemporary repatriation theories that advocate the 'impossibility of return', points out that after the first disappointments, returnees to post-war Sarajevo were happy to find that the 'mentality' of the people was still the same. Stefansson argues that this pleasant discovery helped returnees to find a sense of homeliness under the otherwise changed circumstances. My field work indicates the very opposite. When returnees

talk about an ‘unchanged mentality’ they are usually referring to a ‘tenacious Balkanness’, which is perceived as being the legacy of the communist dictatorship. Thus, in the Hungarian case, the ‘unchanged mentality’ undermines rather than reinforces returnees’ feelings of homecoming. Iván, another frequent returnee, holds similar views:

I love Hungary; however it is a small, miserable country. I feel sorry for it. As there are many things in Hungary which are very sad, and I am unable to accept them. And usually these are things which could be easily helped: dirty streets, neglected playgrounds, cleaning and repairing these would not cost much. But you see the mentality at home is *still the same*. The communist legacy... And the roads are unbelievable. These things take away from the beauty of staying there. Those dirty streets are humiliating. As a Hungarian I feel ashamed of it. What does a German or Swiss tourist say when he sees garbage on the streets and smells the piss on the train stations. And again it would not take much effort to help it. But they don’t want to work; it’s *still the same mentality*... (Field notes, April, 2005)

According to several returnees, the ‘same mentality’ syndrome also includes stayees’ inability and unwillingness to adopt ‘the new, civilized, Western ways’ that the returnees offer. Several returning Hungarians felt not only authorised (as Westerners) but also obligated (as fellow-Hungarians) to provide help in the form of advice and guidance. In most cases, these initiatives met with a lack of interest, ridicule or indignation from the homeland communities. Such individual rejections and disappointments echo the experiences of the encounters between homeland and diaspora representatives after the collapse of Communism (see Chapter 1). These findings are similar to those of Nešpor (2002: 803), who found that while returning Czech émigrés intend to help the country, they not only face a lack of interest, but also a clearly negative reaction of the majority of the stayees. Iván continues:

Another unpleasant memory: At one occasion we went to see the grave of Mindszenty prince-primite. It is written in Latin who he was and what he did. I asked for the e-mail address of the episcopate and I wrote four e-mails suggesting that they should write it in English, German and French, as it is important that foreign tourists also understand it. They never replied! They did not even honour me with a short answer! So I wrote another one, saying that here in Australia the habit is that we answer letters and thank the effort if somebody is trying to help us. That’s what I’m talking about, these small annoying things, still the same attitude! Understand? I’m happy to help, but no, no, they don’t want to learn. (Field notes, April, 2005)

Another returnee, Gáspár, told me a story, that I heard retold in several versions by my research participants:

When I went home I offered to teach English, even for free! You know what, they did not want it, did not even call me back... nothing! These people there *still don’t understand* that now they have to live up to the European standards, no they are *still stuck*... (Field notes, January, 2005)

Tamás arrives back each year with similar experiences:

I always grab the possibility to give good suggestions to people at home. However, unfortunately during all these years I had to realise that people still don’t want to learn. Somehow they *still resist learning*. I have background in media and in economics; they could use me if they wanted to. But no, they resist stuff which comes from the West. And they accuse me, how do I dare to come from another country and teach them. (Field notes, January, 2005)

III. 3. Dealing with the present

The previous section demonstrated the importance of the past in the process of homecoming. It shed light on the tension between the ‘desired/nostalgic’ and the ‘disdained/Communist’ past, which during the return visits often translates into the dichotomy of the ‘imagined’ and the ‘real’ past. While several returnees wanted to reconnect with their roots and revive pleasant past memories, instead they often encountered the ‘repulsive’ legacy of the former dictatorship.

In another cultural context, Tsuda (2004:140) writes that due to alienation from the ethnic homeland, which is the result of the traumatic experiences of homecoming, Japanese Brazilians cannot relate to Japan anymore as the idealized ancestral land on which to base their sense of ethnic rootedness. Similarly, Barnes (2001) shows that after Australian-Vietnamese refugees’ first return visits, their dreams about home in Vietnam shattered and feelings of belonging to the host country consolidated. Some Australian-Hungarians never go back to Hungary again following the unpleasant experiences of return. However, the trauma of a negative homecoming does not always have long-lasting effects, nor does it always lead to de-ethnicisation. In this section, I examine the strategies that returnees deploy in order to facilitate immersion into the home land. I show that while some returnees search for nostalgia and attempt to recreate the past, others try to accept and embrace the present, the everyday banality of life in Hungary. These two major strategies function as means for dealing both with the changes and lack of changes in the home land.

III. 3. 1. ‘Pilgrimages of nostalgia’

Nostalgia is a core element in most Hungarians’ return visits; however for several Hungarians trips to Hungary represent entirely a ‘pilgrimage of nostalgia’ – ‘a confused search, a sentimental and nostalgic journey for a lost time and space’ (Mallett 2004:69). To deal with the loss, and with the changes and the lack of changes, these Hungarians tend to romanticise certain places or phenomena in Hungary and/or their past prior to emigrating. These pilgrimages of nostalgia comprise two main components: the search for authenticity, which is often not based on personal experiences, but anchored in the Hungarian national imaginary and/or the desire to return home to a familiar cultural atmosphere, which is equated with one’s past. The section poses the further question whether or not the search for ‘nostalgic past’ can facilitate reconnection and reintegration.

Erika and her husband Endre, an elderly couple living in Melbourne, rediscovered their home-places decades after they emigrated. Since they retired they have fewer obligations and more time to engage in annual journeys to Hungary. During their travels, they prefer visiting the countryside and, if they can, they try to avoid going to Budapest. Erika and Endre are working-class migrants, who originate from the countryside in Hungary. For them the rural landscape triggers strong emotional responses as it represents something they can relate to

and appreciate, it is, basically, a nostalgic home place, infused with elements of national imaginary. The return visits, in Erika's and Endre's case, form a bridge to the time and place of their childhood from which they are removed and assist them to ignore any undesired changes or lack of changes in Hungary.

Erika:

In the country people are nicer, I feel I can find a voice with them... You walk through the streets of a village and it is very easy to start a conversation with village people... (Field notes, December, 2004)

Endre:

Or even in small towns. I feel like I arrived home. Even if I visit other places than my village of birth... especially if there are some relatives there. These sites are pure, stable, people managed to keep their Hungarianness... it is so good to go back in our old age to our roots. (Field notes, December, 2004)

Erika:

It's like going back in time... as I said; it feels like home... Budapest, on the contrary, is a hellhole. When I was young [while she was still living in Hungary] I visited it couple of times. It used to be a splendid city! Now I don't even want to go near. (Field notes, December, 2004)

Kata is a middle-aged librarian who spent her childhood and youth in Budapest, and immigrated to Australia in the 1980s. Similarly to Erika and Endre, she also makes frequent visits to the countryside in Hungary. For her, these trips bring relaxation and rejuvenation in her busy life. It is often stated in both migration and tourism studies that rural villages are often perceived by tourists and return migrants as unchanging landscapes and lifestyles, which fit the idealized middle-class myths of a lost, but highly desirable, rurality (Hoggart and Buller 1994; Williams et al. 2000). Kata's desire for the provincial landscapes and lifestyles fits with this middle-class idealisation of picturesque rurality, but it also sheds light on the importance of the countryside and peasantry, as the representatives of 'real Hungarianness', in her search for authentic Hungarianness.

We bought an old village house near Pest [Budapest]. So relaxing... the landscape is beautiful. The house is at a kind of hidden spot, surrounded by big trees and bushes... so you know we can have our privacy... sunbathing etc... not that I don't like the people there. I love them. They are the real Hungarians, they remained the same, and they are not spoiled by the communist regime, neither by the contemporary wild capitalism and consumerism. It is rejuvenating to be around them, like going back in time... I learned so much there... you know about the gardening and stuff. (Fieldnotes, June, 2005)

At another occasion she said:

I go there to relax, the traditional atmosphere make me feel so calm and relaxed. It's good to go in to Budapest sometimes for a concert or so, but the city became so Western, it lost much of its charm, too many tourists, too much traffic, too fast and too loud for me... (Fieldnotes, July, 2005)

For Kata, the village provides a picturesque setting unspoilt by the negative influences of current Westernisation. The villagers are portrayed as both the 'real' representatives of resistance against 'foreign powers' – both Eastern and Western –

and the quintessence of 'roots', both important components in the Hungarian national imaginary. Thus, for Kata, nostalgia is found in the 'authenticity' of the village and the peasantry, in a symbol of a wider national discourse on roots and traditions rather than in places, which resemble pre-migration experiences.

While Erika, Endre and Kata found new sites in rural areas in Hungary where they can find redemption for their nostalgic feelings, Sanyi and Béla return to their birthplaces and former circles of friends. Sanyi's 'pilgrimage of nostalgia' leads him to Lake Balaton where he grew up. In his case, it is a hyper-locality which encapsulates the essence of stability and continuity with an earlier time in Hungary.

Yes, Hungary has changed much, but when I'm at Lake Balaton I don't feel it. [...] I grew up there, I go there every year, it's always the same. I know more about the Balaton than anyone else, we always talk about it, and I can say I am equal to the Balaton, ha ha ha...[laughs] I kayak, visit the old places of my childhood with my real friends. Our grandfathers have always been friends, we are four or five. Every summer we get together, all of them are from Pécs, since my mother came from there. When we get together, we do the same things as we did before...we go fishing, have friendly conversation at the pub... [...] But also, two weeks are basically enough, maybe three, but then I get bored, there is nothing to do really. (Fieldnotes, February, 2005)

Sanyi's narratives underscores the point that mourning for a place is also a mourning for a lost time, be it the site of childhood or an imagined mythical place, but always 'an idealised world, a place of happiness and contentment' (Leavey et al. 2004:7, 77; Smith 2003). What makes Sanyi's experience valuable is the feeling of roots and belonging, exemplified by the 'unchanging' setting of his childhood and the stability of his relationships with his childhood friends. His account gives substance to view (1994: 52-53; see also: White and White 2004) that feeling 'at one with the land' is related to feeling 'at home with oneself'. However, Sanyi's next claim, that he nevertheless easily gets bored after two weeks, brings into question Richards' equation and reinforces the blurred boundaries between returning and visiting, migrants and tourists.

This feeling of returning home from Australia to a familiar and unchanged cultural atmosphere is also exemplified by the statement of Béla. Similarly the feeling of belonging is limited to periodic visits.

Among my friends and relatives the atmosphere is the same as what I left behind [before emigrating]. [...] It was amazing, I left when I was 38, and when I went back I went back to the same everything! It was as if I left Hungary for couple of month! I did not feel that 18 years I spent somewhere else.... Amazing! However, I am not sure you know if I was to stay there for ever, and struggle for food etc, and live life from day to day...I am not sure I would feel the same... and not only that: outside of my circles I can feel that things changed, and I'm not sure I can deal with them. The beauty of it was exactly that everything was the same... but it was the there and now, and I have to admit, I felt a bit nostalgic, about the snow and old friends, as if time did not pass, I have to admit it to myself.

This section has highlighted the experiences of several frequent returnees who feel anxious about losing their past imagination about Hungary, or their life in Hungary, and attempt to re-create the former atmosphere by avoiding sites which do not match their expectations. These narratives shed light on important contradictions of transnational belonging. The literature on transnational lives emphasise the simultaneous belonging in both the host and home societies. Yet, all

the returnee narratives emphasise the yearning for stability and calmness of the imitation/illusion of the frozen past. Accordingly, returning to the same cultural environment or social or familiar relationships or exploring the 'authentically preserved' Hungarianness is highlighted as the reason for the feeling of belonging. However, returnees are often aware of the liminality of their sense of belonging, and the illusion of stationary memories and/or imagination. Quoting Slyomovics' (1998:347) words: 'the pilgrimage is a temporary substitute or consolation for loss, at the same time as it is continually preoccupied with rupture'. These examples also make it clear that return trips cannot simply be analysed in the 'transnational migration' framework. The narratives elucidate the touristic aspects of these visits, such as the search for authenticity, the celebration of rurality and the limited feeling of being at home.

III. 3. 2. The search for reality

Several of the examples above illustrate the point that some migrants attempt to create an atmosphere in Hungary that echoes their memories and, thus, helps them to revive the 'desired' past during their visits. Others find different means to deal with the present conditions and to revive the feeling of ease and belonging. Engaging with everyday reality in Hungary during return visits is a common strategy among Hungarian migrants, by which they aim to enhance their feelings of inclusion and reconnection. These frequent visitors embrace the current conditions (the undesired changes and the lack of changes) in an attempt to both facilitate deeper cultural connection with the inhabitants of Hungary and to find 'authentic experiences' (see: Cohen 1988 for similar results among 'budget travellers'). The underlying assumption behind these strategies is that Hungarians in Australia have been disconnected from the reality in the homeland, and have been living in a nostalgic dream world for decades. Consequently, inclusion is only possible by embracing the contemporary Hungary. It is through such practices that returnees attempt to reclaim and reinforce their Hungarianness, both for themselves and for the homeland community. Gusztáv admitted the following after returning to Hungary after several decades of separation:

I had a very good time at home. And one of the reasons for this was that I trained myself before my trip. You know we all have a picture about our home in our heads. I decided I am not going to suffer from the same 'disease' as most of the Hungarians here. That they go home after decades and expect that everything is as they left them. But it can never be the same. So I said to myself: 'I want to get the real picture, I want to know what is really happening at home'. (Fieldnotes, March, 2005)

Several Australian Hungarians emphasised that they tried to immerse themselves in Hungarian everyday life. For example, in Hungary, they never take taxis and try to live simply while at home. Walking on the dirty streets, travelling on buses and shopping at the market are some of the ways in which returnees try to disassociate themselves from those returnees who are desperately searching for the past and are not willing to keep up with the present. Tamás told me:

These people here [fellow-émigrés in Australia] have no idea about the real Hungary. They have this idealised romantic picture about the Castle Hill and the Chain Bridge in sunset. Right, very pretty, but this is not Hungary! This is not real Hungary! Therefore these people feel so alienated when going home, because they don't want to engage with the contemporary reality! And the reality is that people are grumpy, the streets are dirty and the buses are stuffed. If you have never travelled a winter afternoon on a stuffed bus, you do not know the real Hungary. (Fieldnotes, March, 2005)

Another frequent returnee, Csaba, similarly remarked:

I have no idea how Hungarians here [Australia] can demand to have a say in domestic issues in Hungary. If you don't live through the life and rhythm of the contemporary Hungarian society then you cannot claim you know anything. You have to live through things; you have to embrace things in order to feel them. But these people when they visit Hungary they don't go around with open eyes, they don't try to understand problems and reality. No they run after their nostalgic illusions and criticise the rest. But I tell you, how can we be a part of the nation, how can we have a say if we do not understand reality? (Fieldnotes, May, 2005)

Several Australian-Hungarians who stayed for a longer period, at least one month, pointed out that their life in Hungary was full of everyday routines – cooking, shopping, cleaning, and washing – just as it was in Australia. This strategy was perceived by them as an effective means of forming positive links with locals, friends and family. Re-integrating into everyday reality was a means to ease the troubled sense of cultural loss, disconnection and difference that they faced as returnees. Béla, a working-class male, found short-term healing for his mid-life crisis in the routines of everyday life in Hungary, through which he managed to reintegrate into his former circles. Béla:

I said to myself I want to get the real picture. If I go to the butcher and ask for one slice of salami, he is going to swear at me. I have to accept it. Here it's different there it's different. Exactly therefore, I felt at home after two days. I felt there were no 15 years in my life when I was not living here. I went to my cousin in Dömsöd [Village near Budapest], he was delivering bread. I sat next to him and helped him in the delivery. It was so much fun! We were telling jokes in the bakery, laughing. We had so much fun... It was so liberating and rejuvenating being at home. [...] I was living with my female cousin and her family. They said I became an integral part of the nuclear family. I really tried not to be different, to keep their everyday rhythm... we made the breakfast together for the kids; I washed the dishes after we eat. I helped wherever I could. I went to pick them up from school... I accustomed myself to their everyday life; I did not want to be a guest. 'No don't prepare breakfast for me, I can do it myself, and you know what? I prepare for you as well! What would you like?' That's how it went. I found the rhythm. And it was the best feeling ever, that I am the part of the family! In the evenings we sat and discussed the current problems, we gave suggestions to each other. It worked fantastic. (Fieldnotes, March, 2005)

Teri and András, an older working-class couple, reported similar efforts to reconnect and reintegrate during their return visits. Teri:

We walked out to a restaurant, so I felt more connected to my environment there than here. With relatives and friends we often discussed Hungarian life. We were living in a very similar way as they are living now. We used to be busy with doing the shopping at the market, what costs what, and then in the weekends we usually used to go the church and got together. We deliberately had a kind of lifestyle like my sister has. (Fieldnotes, October, 2004)

By emphasising that equal rights for returnees' can only be achieved through everyday life experiences, such accounts question the hegemonic émigré discourse on the de-territorialised nature of Hungarianness. These narratives reinforce the anxiety of several older émigrés that their knowledge of Hungary and Hungarian culture is old-fashioned, outdated and romanticised and cannot serve as a solid base for equal belonging to the nation. Further, these narratives also claim that the 'desired past', that is the authentic Hungarianness for many, is a mere memory which cannot be reverted again. Indeed, the respondents claimed to have gained access to the authentic Hungary, while engaging in ordinary life – indeed *because* they appreciated and embraced the ordinariness in their homeland. Thus, these accounts also point to the fact that some returning Hungarians associate normality with *authenticity* and regard it as superior to the 'superficial' extraordinary, thus nostalgic, and hence inauthentic, images of other returnees, who are accused of engaging in conventional tourist activities (see: Urry 1990; Muzaini 2006; Riley 1988 for similar findings among 'budget travellers').

III. 4. 1. The cool welcome: perceived changes in the returnees

When I went home some years ago, I cannot tell you how much I wanted to meet my friends I left behind! The joy while I was packing and preparing, I can't describe you! And it was not how I imagined! My best girlfriend was there. [On a social occasion in her village] I wanted to meet her so much! She was there; she saw me and turned her back! I could not take it! I went to her and shook her shoulders! 'I know you saw me! Why did you turn! What did I do? I wanted to meet you so much!' I told her. And she said something like that: 'Yeah, well, you know, I heard that those people who emigrate, they are not the same anymore. They change. They became like snobbish; they are not the same anymore' (Field notes, June, 2005)

This dramatic piece of conversation was related to me by Amalia, a friendly Hungarian lady who arrived in Australia from the Voivodina region in former Yugoslavia. Amalia's account of conversation with her friend suggests that stayees assume, and/or critically reflect on, the changes that have taken place in the émigrés. This makes the process of homecoming even more problematic, as the returnees' identification with Hungary is easily upset by any suggestion that undermines their claims for equal belonging. This section attempts to explain the ways in which returnees react to the stayees' observations about them.

The literature suggests that one of the most disillusioning aspects of homecomings is the cold welcome that homecomers often receive from those who stayed behind (Gmelch 1995; Hirschon 1989; Kibreab 2002; Stefansson 2004b, 2004c; Tsuda 2003; Huseby-Darvas 2004). Huseby-Darvas writes (2004:79) about the disappointment that returning American-Hungarians face in Hungary: For their part, the "natives" – those who had remained in Hungary – perceived the returnees as strangers who were unable to understand contemporary Hungarian ways and often rejected the western expertise that the returnees were so eager to offer. Thus, instead of the warm homecoming imagined by the émigrés, they often descended into an abyss of mutual misunderstanding with their Hungarian counterparts.

Cross-cultural research indicates that stayees may 'envy and nurture exaggerated images of the living conditions and the "easy" life that the returnees are supposed to have enjoyed abroad' (Stefansson 2004:61; Gmelch 1980). Further, returning migrants often carry with them new codes of social behaviour and outlooks from their host countries, which make them stand out in the home community (Habib 1996; Stefansson 2004b, 2004c). These factors lead to frequent accusations of the returnees being arrogant and bumptious (King 2000; Wyman 1993:195) and results in stigmatizing collective labels. These accusations, in turn, often hinder returnees' desire to reintegrate (Stefansson 2004:53). Stefansson demonstrates that returnees to post-war Sarajevo were often labelled as 'svabe' ('people from Schwaben'), or 'amerikanci' (Americans), who had only returned to show off their newly acquired Western wealth and mannerisms.

My research similarly indicates that returnees often evoke negative responses from their compatriots in the homeland. The negative assumptions and/or observations of the changes in the émigrés are exemplified in the stereotype of the 'Amerikas Magyar' (Americanish Hungarian). The term 'Amerikás Magyar' originally referred to the approximately 1.5 million Hungarian citizens who went to the United States between the 1880s and the outbreak of WWI. However, the term has also gained a secondary, derogatory slang-meaning and is often deployed as a negative label for all émigrés and returnees. Similarly to the Bosnian variation 'Amerikanci', the term 'Amerikás Magyar' is also used as a deterritorialized categorization of returnees from Western countries in general, regardless of whether they had actually lived in America (see: Stefansson 2004:64). Thus, the simple experience of emigration often transforms Hungarians into 'Amerikás Magyarok' (plural version) in the eyes of those who stayed behind.

The 'Amerikás Magyarok' are pictured by stayees as returnees who think they are superior to their non-migrant countrymen simply because they have lived in the West, and who do not make any effort to assimilate into society during their return visits. The 'Amerikás Magyarok' are also portrayed as talking in Hungarian with heavy English accents, which is often believed to be intentionally put on (see: Baldassar 1998; Gmelch 2004). Another important component of the stereotype is cowardice and betrayal. Several Hungarian returnees talked about being accused, either openly or covertly, of betraying Hungary by fleeing from the hardship to the rich West, where 'dollars are hanging on the trees, and all you have to do is to reach your hand to get them', as one of my participants formulated it (see: Huseby-Darvas 2004; Stefansson 2004). While émigrés utilised the fact that they could not fall under suspicion of collaboration with the former regime, stayees projected guilt towards the emigrés, by emphasising that those who flee the country during hardship cannot be regarded as 'real' Hungarians any more (see: Géfin 1997; Czigány, cited in Géfin 1997; Huseby-Darvas 2004). Further, the label 'Amerikás Magyar' also aims to ridicule returnees. The underlying assumption is that the dandified returnees 'could not make it' in the West and by showing off their new Western manners, they are actually compensating for the continuous humiliation and exclusion they experience in their new country. The perception that they have not managed to become real 'civilised' Westerners does not mean that they have

any claim to belong to Hungary. The term implies that returnees cannot be regarded as real Hungarians any more as they have lost connection with the present-day reality of the country and live in a dream-world of nostalgic memories. The returnees are usually degraded as ‘tourists’ who are not part of the nation. Referring to returnees as tourists also highlights important aspects of the practices of inclusion and exclusion, and the boundaries that are erected between stayees and diaspora members. The myth of the ‘Amerikás Magyar’ originates from Hungary; however, it has become a part of the transnational Hungarian narrative structure, as it is also reproduced in the discourses of the Australian-Hungarians. The image of the ‘Amerikás Magyar’ is particularly powerful, as it stands exactly opposite to the ‘ambassador’, as popularised in diasporic discourses (see Chapter 1).

III. 4. 2. Targeting the stereotype

Here, I examine the ways in which returnees attempt to break through the ‘wall’ that is formed by the stereotypes applied to them. Many expatriates feel offended and defensive about the negative returnee images stayees have created. These returnees find it annoying that Hungarians in Hungary believe that they, as stayees, have a ‘monopoly on suffering’ (Stefansson 2004:179) having suffered through the dictatorship. Facing the current difficulties of the political, economic and social changes further legitimises their claims to exclusive ownership of the homeland. Several people I talked to emphasised their confrontations with fellow Hungarians during return visits. These returning Hungarians attempted to combat the negative stereotypes by explaining their situation in the West and correcting stayees’ exaggerated conceptions.

Viktor, an older male Hungarian, told me:

The misunderstanding lies in the fact that there are still many people at home who think that we live here in a kind of fairytale world where you lie on the beach all year. I don’t want to complain, however everything you see here we worked very hard for it. We arrived with a small suitcase, in which now we keep Christmas decorations. We had a hard life here, facing racism and exclusion. I could not speak English, and I had the same pair of shoes for years. And trust me Australia before the 1980s was not the same ‘Paradise’ you see now. You could buy two types of suits, one kind of bread and the same cake with differently coloured toppings. They [Hungarians at home] do not have a clear picture of how much life costs here. They don’t know how much a hair cut is, and how much I earn. I always try to explain, but without much success...they want to believe it, so that they can hold to their ‘victim’ position. (Field notes, July, 2004)

Returnees often feel that stayees played down the hardships that the émigrés experienced and considered those stories as mere bagatelles in comparison with their own suffering. Vera, a female middle-aged Hungarian returnee, claims that she is not willing to accept the hierarchy of the discourses of suffering and the accusation of treachery. Vera, similar to several other returnees, attempted to shift the image of the émigré as the ‘Great Traitor’ to the ‘Great Victim’ (see: Kundera 2002:30).

When I go home and hear that I left Hungary, I skipped ship that just freaks me out. Please! Ok, I can now afford to travel to Hungary every second year, but I had to start everything from the start at the age of 45! I left everything behind, and started from the bottom again. They believe they are the only ones who suffered; they don't even want to consider that life in the West is not honeymoon. And what can you do? Start talking to them! [...] they laugh at you....(Field notes, August, 2004)

Individuals often framed their arguments by discourses of 'forceful emigration' and 'moral stance in exile'. Many returnees regard their emigration and time in exile as confirmation of moral rectitude, a 'form of categorical purity' (Malkki 1992:35). Accordingly, returning Hungarians often try to combat the negative returnee images by emphasising their sacrifice for the nation in their adopted country. Several participants reported, rather disappointedly, that stayees do not appreciate the exile community's efforts during the Cold War to expose the crimes of the Communist dictatorship, and thus their efforts in the struggle for the liberation of the homeland. Endre, a male returnee, lamented:

It is always disappointing when I go home and they comment on everything I say: 'You don't understand, you don't live here, so don't put your foot in it!'. Of course then I tell them that I know it, maybe even better than they do! Because here in the West we had the possibility to know about things, and to talk about them freely, while they were deprived on information. And we also actively contributed to the collapse of communism, with all the lobby-work we did! But no, they don't recognise it! They are still brainwashed. I tried... (Field notes, December, 2004)

Kálmán claims that he frequently points out the 'hypocrisy' of the 'Amerikás Magyarok' myth to the stayees. He claims that keeping Hungarian culture alive, far away from the protection of the mother country, deserves respect. Nevertheless, he claims that instead of recognising and honouring the efforts, stayees belittle their 'hard work' in the *emigráció*. Kálmán told me:

On the one hand they insinuate that we are traitors because we left them in 'big shit'. On the other hand they always try to appeal to our sentimentalism and nostalgic longing for the mother country to get some money out of our pockets. That we also have to do something for the nation! We also? So what does a fellow-Hungarian from Balassagyarmat [small Hungarian town] do for the nation? Now tell me, does he do anything beyond paying tax? Of course not! It's so hypocritical! Because when I want to explain how much effort we put in to preserve Hungarian culture in Australia, they cynically brush it away and say: 'Well, well it's easy to play the Hungarian in a welfare state...'. (Field notes, July, 2004)

Kálmán's claims echo Edward Said sentences when, in a very different context, he returned to his birthplace, Jerusalem: 'I have found myself repeating to myself that I did have a right to be here, that I was a native' (Said 1994:177).

As stated in the first chapter, after the collapse of Communism the diaspora's great hopes of being acknowledged, and thus fully included in the newly reborn Hungarian nation, were followed by great disappointments as the émigrés' offers of help and calls for equal belonging were disregarded in the homeland. The émigrés' claims of self-sacrifice, struggle and being the last bastions of 'authentic' Hungarianness were not appreciated at the state level. Similarly, individual returnees' attempts to refute the 'Amerikás Magyar' stereotype and dispel competing discourses of suffering and sacrifice are often ridiculed and disdained by stayees.

While many expatriates feel offended and defensive about the negative returnee-images, others claim that certain types of returnees are responsible for the judgments that 'mainland' Hungarians have formed about expatriates in general. Steffansson (2004:67-68) claims that a way for returnees to pay 'the price of admission' (Softing 2002:152) into post-war Sarajevo involved displaying a submissive attitude toward those returnees with less moral and cultural capital than one's own group. This meant acknowledging the hegemonic stayee discourse of belonging (Stefansson 2004). Several of the returning Hungarians that I talked to were similarly critical of their fellow expatriates inadequate and snobbish behaviour which, they claim, has resulted in the negative labelling of Western returnees in general. During my conversations with Hungarians, I heard several versions of the myth of the 'Amerikás Magyarok' visiting Hungary. Some participants were quick to point out that this phenomenon exists first of all because of returning American Hungarians, others perceived it as an 'universal epidemic' among Hungarians in the West. Their criticism targeted the 'false' behaviour of the returning 'Amerikás Magyar', and emphasised the importance of showing modesty toward stayees (see: Stefansson 2004). This strategy is used by those returnees who feel disaffection from the typical returnee role and who feel that being perceived as a returnee may carry a social stigma. Unlike the above-mentioned abortive efforts to dismantle stayees' discourses on the right for belonging, this strategy is claimed to be more successful. Peter, a Melbourne-based interviewee, pointed out:

There are many people here, who stand in front of a BMW on the street and ask someone to take a picture of them. And in Hungary they act as if it was theirs. They go home and act like barons! It's really harmful; no wonder Hungarians have such a bad picture about émigrés. (Field notes, September, 2004)

Another version of the same story was recounted by László (male):

There are many who go home and play around...they pretend as if they were 'someone' there. They criticise everything, go to the best restaurants and criticise the food and the service, and the dirty streets...act like sensitive aristocrats...I find them pathetic... (Field notes, November, 2004)

Feri underlines the importance of showing modesty during visits:

When we go home I am always generous, but I don't do it to show off, when we go out to eat I always pay and then I say it costed much less, or say that my company pays for it... You have to be modest, otherwise they get offended...they are very sensitive, you have to put much effort into the communication. Keyword: Never criticise anything! (Field notes, December, 2004)

Sándor, another frequent returnee:

I never show off. On the contrary. My wife likes jewels and she wears three gold necklaces and who knows how many rings. So I told her: 'Please take them off, you can wear one that's enough. They will envy us, it's not good.' (Field notes, July, 2005)

Márta, after her husband died, started to engage in transnational political activities. Her example demonstrates that despite their serious efforts, returnees' inclusion in the homeland is often limited. Márta:

I travel home every year and spend a couple of months to work for an organisation. I live there just like any of them, I have a small flat, I am like a totally normal Hungarian. I'm completely aware of

what is going on in politics; I deal with it every day in my job. And I tell you, you can do anything, be the most modest and updated person, there are always some, who simply want to exclude you. That I should not 'lecture' them about politics and history, because I don't live there. 'I live here', I say, and it's true. 'No, but you don't pay tax! You don't have responsibility here', they reply. (Field notes, March, 2005)

Other participants told me that 'acting local' often had the opposite effect (see: Muzaini 2006 for similar findings in tourism studies). Some pointed out that in the service sector emphasising one's foreignness is more beneficial, in terms of obtaining faster and more polite service, while 'acting local' often results in certain discriminatory practices. An entrepreneur, who wished to establish business connections in the early 1990s in Hungary, told me:

I always disdained people who went back to Hungary and played the Westerners. 'I talking Hungarian no' (Már nem beszélni jól magyar) kind of thing, talking with heavy accents and so on. So when I went home I was very eager to talk like a local, be modest etc. And they didn't appreciate it at all. Ironically when I started to talk like those 'Amerikás Magyarok', then they respected me! Then I was Western enough for them. (Field notes, January, 2005)

The literature demonstrates that conflicts associated with homecomings may result in the development of a separate 'returnee identity' (Cornish et al. 1999: 275) and the creation of returnee enclaves (Byron 1999:299; Eastmond 2001; Wyman 1993:197; Levy 2004; Markovitz 2004; Steffanson 2004; Tsuda 2004). Tsuda, for instance, describes how Japanese Brazilians, who are 'ethnically excluded and socially marginalized as foreigners in their ethnic homeland', develop their 'Little Brazil' where they continue to speak Portuguese, eat Brazilian food, and access Brazilian media (Tsuda 2004). It is not realistic to talk about returnee enclaves in Hungary, however several returning Hungarians pointed out that they often escape from the difficulties mostly associated with the encounters with the stayees to their returnee circles. For these returning Hungarians, feeling at home and feeling at ease in the homeland often takes place among these fellow-returnees from different Western countries, who share similar experiences and views on homeland issues. Jenő, a frequent returnee, admitted:

I go to the swimming pool all the time where I meet my former sport club partners. No way can you survive there if you are showing off. They exclude those immediately. I'm not up-stage, on the contrary, I make pictures of everybody, invited them for lunch... [...] But the truth is you can't avoid criticising things in Hungary. But we do it secretly between each other, with ex-club member returnees from Canada, Sweden, Paris: 'look this building has been like that for 40 years, impossible'. We talk about it; we feel we can talk about things like that to each other... Of course you can't tell the same things to local Hungarians, they get offended, they get hurt. (Field notes, February, 2005)

Anita had similar observations:

The only time when I really felt at home during my visit was my secondary school reunion. It is amazing that from my class at least half of us, if not more, live outside of the country. So people came home from Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, US etc... and it was different. Meeting these people was different because they were friendly, they were interested in you, and they did not try to make you feel bad that you left. They saw me as I was 20 years ago. Or you know what I mean; they could recognise the young Anita in me. Obviously we had the same experiences. And we could discuss our sorrow regarding our cold welcome in our village. I felt one with these people. They

were the only one with whom it was possible to revive the feeling of my childhood and youth!
(Field notes, April, 2005)

IV. CONCLUSION

Edward Said observes: ‘as any displaced and dispossessed person can testify, there is no such thing as a genuine, uncomplicated return to one’s home’ (Said 1999, cited in Oxfeld and Long 2004:15). Hungarian travel narratives also suggest often unexpected difficulties and complications. Analysing Hungarians’ accounts of their journeys home has provided new understandings and interpretations of identity, belonging and sense of home. By concentrating on the reactions towards changes and transformations in their former homeland and in the émigrés themselves, I have gained information on individual Hungarian émigrés’ sense of self and belonging after 1989. Individual experiences in the homeland both reinforce and question Australian-Hungarian narratives. The accounts support the diasporic discourse on disappointment in the encounters with those who stayed behind. This is exemplified in several returnees’ abortive efforts to dismantle stayees’ negative stereotypes by emphasising their suffering and struggles for the homeland in Australia. On the other hand, the desire to take part in everyday Hungarian banality and the successful reintegration achieved in this way, contradicts the diasporic discourse on the equal stance between homeland and diaspora. Returnees’ acceptance that they have to pay ‘the price of admission’ (Softing 2002:152) and have to live the ‘reality’ in Hungary in order to be re-incorporated into the homeland, further undermines diasporic claims for inclusion on the basis of political and ethnic activities in Australia.

The tension between both different versions of the past and between past and present is apparent throughout the whole chapter. While many of the émigrés aspire to reconnect with their past memories, others claim that inclusion can only be realized by immersing themselves in the present reality. Interestingly, both sides claim to search for, and find, the essence of authentic Hungarianness. Both those who avoid cities and keep to the countryside and those who travel on packed buses in Budapest claim to be reconnecting to the ‘real’ Hungarian culture, which they can embrace and enjoy, and which in turn will reinforce their Hungarian identity.

Answering the question of what happens when the exilic dreaming of homeland and return gives place to the practical homecomings for Australian-Hungarians, has provided material for critical reflection on theories of both repatriation and transnationalism. While continuing ‘the trend of moving migration studies out of the restricting binary of emigration/immigration’ (Markowitz 2004:29), this chapter offers a critique of the fundamental assumptions of transnational migration studies. The chapter has shown that transnational movement across borders is not always empowering. By drawing on Hungarian travel narratives, I highlighted that visiting can produce emotionally disorientating experiences, such as disappointment and social alienation, which result in further rupture (see: Portes and Rumbaut 1996:158-159; Tsuda 2004:140). For example, as

several case studies demonstrated, transnational movement often undercuts the abstract nostalgia of migrants' imagination. Moreover, this chapter also challenges the emphasis on transmigrants' simultaneous belonging in both the host and home societies. Hungarian returnees' travel narratives showed that the imitation/illusion of the 'frozen past' is often equated with the feeling of belonging.

Although this chapter does not deal with repatriation, the insights drawn from the material can assist us in critically reflecting on current repatriation discourses. In contrast to current repatriation theories, certain transformations in the place of origin are often needed in order for Hungarian returnees to feel familiar. I also showed that researchers need to take notice of returnees' efforts to reconnect during the act of return.

CHAPTER V. TRIANON PROTEST

I. INTRODUCTION

We give hope to our homeland! We are important, the demonstration is widely discussed on the Internet the information is disseminated everywhere. (Field notes, June, 2005)

The quote above is drawn from a community meeting in Melbourne following a demonstration which took place on the 4 June, 2005 in Melbourne's CBD. The demonstration was organised by Hungarian community members to mark the 85th anniversary of the Treaty of Trianon and to draw attention to the 'injustices' of the Treaty. By doing so, community members intended to transform the lives of Hungarians in the post-Trianon states by means of diaspora politics. This case study offers an opportunity to examine how narratives of the 'historical mission', 'homeland' and 'host land', are articulated through conflict and public performance. I investigate the ways in which the conflicting emotions of the 'desire for inclusion', and the 'anxiety of exclusion', that characterise Australian-Hungarian discourses in the post-1989 era, played a role during the mobilisation period and in the protest itself. This case study also offers an opportunity to examine how the demonstration came to be assessed as a success by the demonstrators despite the fact that the demonstration was neither followed by any political change with regards to the Treaty of Trianon and the lives of minority Hungarians, nor by intensified transnational connections. I draw on ethnographic research which followed Hungarians in Melbourne through the process of preparation for the demonstration, participation in the rally, and the group's own evaluation of the success of the protest.

I. 1. The 'Trianon issue' in post-socialist Hungary

The Trianon protest in Melbourne needs to be analysed within the framework of the specific political and social transformations that took place in Hungary after the fall of communism. In this section, I provide a brief summary of the historical importance of the Treaty of Trianon in post-socialist Hungary.

On the 4 July, 1920, the Treaty of Trianon legitimated a 'land grab' that Romania, Serbia and Czechoslovakia had carried out after the First World War. As a result of the Treaty, Hungary formally lost two-thirds of its territory. Further, the Treaty redrew Hungary's borders so that more than 3 million ethnic Hungarians were excluded from Hungary's borders and incorporated into other nations. Over time, these displaced Hungarians faced racial discrimination in their new countries to varying degrees. Currently, there are approximately 2.5 million Hungarians

living in Hungary's neighbouring countries. Australia was one of the Allied countries, which signed the Treaty of Trianon.

During the time of state socialism, any mention of these Hungarian minorities and their treatment in the countries of the Carpathian Basin was omitted from the official historiography (Gal 1991:448). However, after the fall of the communist regime, the re-evaluation of the historical importance of the 'Trianon-tragedy' became a significant element in the Hungarian 'discourse of the national' (Niedermüller 1999). Niedermüller argues that the reconstruction of national history has been an important strategy in the re-establishment of the 'new' Eastern European national imaginaries. The motive for reconstructing national history is grounded in the perception that 'history [was] not just damaged but totally ruined by socialism' (Niedermüller 1999:30). In this sense, the act of restoring and reconstructing national history implies the re-creation of the 'historical truth' and, often, the return to the 'original' historical or social conditions (Niedermüller 1999:30). This is often achieved by the re-exploration and re-evaluation of historical experiences which were ideologically stigmatized and politically marginalized during the time of the socialist dictatorships (Niedermüller 1999:29). On the one hand, after 1989, the Treaty of Trianon gained a new position in the official history. On the other hand, its consequences, namely the future of minority Hungarians in the neighbouring states, became a central subject in the political manoeuvres of contemporary Hungary. In this sense, Hungarian national history and national perspectives are integrated and enmeshed in the phenomenon of Trianon. As I demonstrate in the following paragraphs, the historical and political meaning of the issue is widely contested in contemporary Hungary and the Treaty and its effects are represented and evaluated in various ways by different political parties.

An excellent example of these contested meanings, which illustrates the different interpretations of the importance of minority Hungarians, can be found in the speeches given by the incoming and resigning prime ministers on the night of the 2002 parliamentary elections. The incoming socialist Prime Minister, Medgyessy Péter, informed his listeners that he would be the Prime Minister for all 10 million Hungarians, referring to the inhabitants of the Hungarian Republic. The same evening the resigning right-wing Prime Minister, Orbán Viktor, countered this view by drawing an imaginary Hungarian nation which extended to the Hungarian diasporas in the Carpathian Basin.

We have supported Hungarian culture to a degree not yet seen and we have begun the process of national reunification, so it is not as you heard just now from the seat of another party, it is not that the future of Hungary lies in the 10 million Hungarians but in the 15 million Hungarian nation. Let me repeat, so that it can be heard everywhere where it should be heard: the future of Hungary lies not in the Hungary of 10 million but in the Hungarian nation of 15 million.¹¹ (cited in Stewart 2002:2)

¹¹ Although the notion of 15 million Hungarians also include the Western diasporas, based on his governments orientation, it is more than probable that Orbán first of all referred to the 'internal diaspora'.

In the following, I give a brief summary of the post-1989 political achievements and continuing debates in Hungary about the future of the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin. Irredentist fantasies have gained popularity amongst the newly emerged far-right political parties in Hungary, however none of the post-1989 governments' rhetoric was characterised by such fantasies, even if some like to suggest so. There is some sporadic evidence for irredentism, in the early years, such as for example, the prime minister Antall József's proposal to the president of Italy during the Balkan Wars. The prime minister briefly suggested that 'since the border had been agreed at Versailles with a state that would no longer exist if Yugoslavia broke up, Vojvodina should not be "treated automatically as part of Serbia"' (Stewart 2002:16).

After the European Union (EU) declared that no country could expect to proceed towards admission into the EU without resolving its territorial and historical disputes with its neighbouring countries, the idea of border revision became completely unrealistic in Hungary (Stewart 2002:16). Following the EU's declaration, Hungary signed the 'basic treaties' which dealt with the inviolability of the borders, first with the Ukraine in 1992, with Slovakia in 1995 and then with Romania in 1996 (Stewart 2002:16). In signing the 'basic treaties', the 1994-98 administration led by the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) prioritized good interstate relations in the Carpathian Basin over the claims of the Hungarian minorities for stronger minority rights guarantees from their host-states (Fowler 2002:45). The MSZP-led administration also refused to grant the minorities a right of veto over Hungary's interstate treaties (Fowler 2002:45).

However, the signing of the 'basic treaties' was, by no means the end of the re-ordering of international relations (Fowler 2002:16). In 1992, a Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad was set up. The Office's basic task is 'the coordination of governmental activities related to Hungarian minorities abroad' (<http://www.htmh.hu> accessed 5 April, 2005). Further, the right-wing government, led by the Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ), that took office in 1998 has repeatedly called for 'national reunification' or 'national integration' 'across' or 'without changing' the borders (Fowler 2002:60). Prime Minister Orbán Viktor declared in March 2000 that his goal was to organise political space in such a way that territorial borders became 'just like lines drawn on a map' (cited in Fowler 2002:42). In 2001, the Foreign Minister told the Hungarian Radio programme 168 Hours: In the future it won't be the territorially defined state that determines everything. Its role will remain important, but alongside it national communities, for example, will also strengthen. For me, in the future there won't be minorities, only communities. And I believe that our continent will become a community of communities. (cited in Fowler 2002:5)

On June 19, 2001, Hungary's parliament passed the so-called 'status law' 12, giving entitlements to members of the Hungarian minority communities in

¹² Law 2001: LXII, 'A szomszédos államokban élő magyarokról', *Magyar Közlöny*, No.77, July 7, 2001. An English translation of the law can be read on the website of the Hungarian Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad, at <http://www.htmh.hu/law.htm>

some of Hungary's neighbouring states (Fowler 2002:6). In opposition since 1998, the MSZP voted for the status law. Soon after the agreement, however, the MSZP denounced the status law as a threat to Hungarian jobs and a betrayal of the national interest (Stewart 2002:19). In 2004, the World Federation of Hungarians initiated a country-wide vote to grant dual citizenship to minority-Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. While the right-wing opposition supported the initiative, the socialist President warned the country of the 'horrific' impact of external Hungarian co-ethnic employment on the Hungarian labour market if minority Hungarians gained dual citizenship, and called for a 'no' vote. On the 5th of December, 2004 the citizens of Hungary voted against the proposed dual citizenship.

To sum up, 'Trianon' is a complex and widely debated phenomenon in the contemporary Hungarian political scene. While the integration of minority Hungarians is a central subject in the political disputes, it is strictly imagined without contesting the validity of the existing borders. Irredentist voices exist merely on the fringes of the political spectrum. Commemoration protests take place each year on the 4 June in Budapest, which are continuously stigmatised as fascistic and irredentist in the Hungarian media. The Trianon-demonstration in Melbourne needs to be positioned and analysed against this background of contested interpretations on the one hand and agreement on inviolability of Hungary's borders on the other.

I. 2. Theoretical Framework

Throughout this chapter, I demonstrate that standard social movement theories, namely political opportunity theory and resource mobilisation theory, do not adequately account for the emergence of the Trianon rally. Political opportunity theory and resource mobilisation theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977), which have dominated the scholarship on social movements until recently, adopt a structural approach, thus they place emphasis on instrumental rationality, strategic planning and the role of organisations (Britt and Heise 2000:260). Several researchers have claimed that these theories, given their highly cognitive orientation, have relegated the study of emotions to the fringes of the field (Taylor 1995; Scheff 1994; Jasper 1998; Groves 1995; Britt and Heise 2000). I argue that in order to find the key to the logic of this example of collective Hungarian action, and its success, I need to outline the role and dynamics of emotions and their expressions both during the mobilisation period and the demonstration. In adopting a focus on emotions, I join a growing number of scholars on New Social Movements (hereafter: NSM) (Groves 1995; Taylor 1989, 1995; Jasper 1998; Berezin 1999; Collins 2001; Rupp and Taylor 1987) who have reacted against the entirely 'rationalist' approach of the previous theories.

According to the political opportunity model, the Hungarian protest in Melbourne emerged at a particularly '*inopportune moment*' (Gould 2001:136, my emphasis). The Hungarian public voted against dual citizenship for minority Hungarians, on 5 December, 2004. The Hungarian ex-communist government at

the time opposed the idea of the dual citizenship. Furthermore, no government of the post-Trianon states received significant attention in the international media in relation to suppressed minority rights. Accordingly, the political opportunity model could hardly explain the emergence and the perceived success of the Trianon protest. Similarly, using resource mobilisation theory would not be sufficient to explain why Hungarians participated in the process, without relying on a cognitive belief that their action would be successful (Wood 2001). Pnina Werbner (2002:126-7) in the context of Manchester Pakistanis writes: 'Diasporic political influence on Western international policy depends on the existence of organised diasporic political lobbies. Political lobbies test the skills of diaspora activists to the limit. They require clear agendas, sophisticated diplomacy, large sums of money, access to the media and an ability to influence public opinion through ethnic mobilisation in a united front'. The Hungarian diaspora in Australia, lacks these strong organizational infrastructures, agendas, diplomacy and funding and thus is in these terms unable to bring about any political change.

In order to understand why and how the protest could develop in the context of these restricted political opportunities, we need to turn to the dynamics of emotions during the mobilisation period and the protest. On the one hand, I investigate the 'libidinal economy' (Goodwin 1997) of the mobilisation period and the protest, that is the ways in which collectively experienced emotional energy stimulates action (Melucci 1996). On the other hand, I look at 'emotional labour' (Jasper 1998), which refers to the ways in which emotions are deployed by actors in order to motivate people to take political action or to frighten members of the community. I demonstrate how feelings enabled and constrained possibilities of action and thought. For example, I highlight how the emotional benefits derived from 'pleasure in agency itself' (Wood 2001:268) and the feeling of collective empowerment during the demonstration turned the protest into a event that was perceived as successful by the participants, despite the fact that no political change was achieved in relation the Trianon issue.

It needs to be emphasized that emotions here are understood as 'intersubjective collective experiences' (Goodwin and Pfaff 2001:283), not simply as the reactions of isolated psyches (Barker 2001:193). Further, emotions cannot be approached as free floating or disconnected phenomena, independent of social, structural, and cultural factors, but need to be anchored in historical, social, institutional and cultural context. In other words, emotions, even those which are transitory and context-specific, derive from the pre-existing 'emotional climate' (Barbalet 1998:159-161) of the Hungarian community, and are reinforced by collective action.

II. MOBILISATION PERIOD

II. 1. The origins of the demonstration

The perceived injustices of the Treaty of Trianon, its consequences for the present and future of minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, are one of the most frequently discussed and contested issues among Hungarians in Australia. Despite the popularity of the topic in casual conversation, the issue mostly occurs at the level of narratives and discourses, rather than in political action.

There are a small number of Hungarian organizations in Australia, such as the Transylvania Association, Minority Foundation, Trianon Society and Federation of World Hungarians,¹³ which have been trying to ease the economic problems and discrimination that Hungarians face in the post-Trianon countries. The Transylvania Association is a charity, which collects money each year for different Hungarian projects in Transylvania, such as the establishment and maintenance of orphan homes, schools and churches. Further, they work to mobilise the diaspora to collect and send much-needed aid to the Carpathian Basin on the occasion of natural disasters. The Trianon Society and Federation of World Hungarians in Australia claim to be responsible for watching and reporting human rights violations. However, it is important to point out that all these organizations lack the necessary institutional power to bring about any change. Most of them have only a couple of active members and lack the material resources, knowledge and connections to have any significant impact on the situation of minority Hungarians.

The successful political mobilisation of a relatively large proportion of the Hungarian population in Australia occurred after the infamous village destruction under Ceausescu in the late 1980s and during Ceausescu's visit to Sydney in 1988. At these times public protests took place in Sydney and Melbourne. These protests were organised by a large variety of Australian-groups and institutions, including those above, and enjoyed the support of most of the Hungarian community leaders both in Sydney and in Melbourne.

The Trianon rally in 2005 was not initiated by established organisations or social movements. It was organised by a young second-generation Hungarian female, Amy, who had never belonged to any of the Australian-Hungarian political or social organizations. Amy was born in Melbourne, but spent her teenage years in Hungary. She returned to Australia in 1985 with her Hungarian-born husband. She has a high school education, and has been a full-time mother since her first child was born 19 years ago. Since she moved back to Australia, she and her family have been continuously living in the myth of return; however, they do not nourish any substantial transnational connections with the homeland. In an interview with the Hungarian bi-weekly newspaper *Magyar Élet*, she commented on the idea of the demonstration: I turned 40 and I realized I have to do something for my homeland.

(*Magyar Élet*, 19 May, 2005 p. 8)

¹³ Both the Trianon Society and the Federation of World Hungarians transnational umbrella organizations, with their head-quarters in Budapest.

Later, in the same interview she said:

85 years passed since the awful Treaty of Trianon [...] If we don't do anything now, we will lose [...] solidarity among Hungarians forever (...) which [this solidarity] is stronger than any international law... (*Magyar Élet*, 19 May, 2005 p. 8)

The examples above indicate the ad-hoc nature of the idea. Similarly, there was no programmatic unity or specific political goal behind the plan, as neither Amy nor the sympathisers were able to articulate their aims and goals in a precise way. They claimed that the demonstration would draw the public's attention to the injustice of the Treaty of Trianon, which hopefully would result in Australia's withdrawal of its signature of the Treaty. They expected that changes would follow accordingly. Amy several times expressed her hopes in an ambiguous and vague way:

If we stand up for ourselves things will happen. Nothing happens because we are afraid and keep silent. We need to act, and things will change. (Field notes, April, 2005, my italics)

Amy continuously claimed originality and breaking the political taboo of Trianon by organising the demonstration. She referred to the silence surrounding the Trianon issue as a kind of illness, which hinders national revival. In an interview, she said:

I started something, which seems untouchable for many. I hope that following this [the demonstration] everybody will be cured from this [silencing the issue of Trianon]. (*Magyar Élet*, 9 May, 2005, p. 8)

In a preparation meeting, she said:

Finally we talk about it [injustices of the treaty]; finally we are going to get cured because we talk about it. (Preparation Meeting, May, 2005)

After she decided to break the 'conspiracy of silence' of the 'Trianon tragedy' and bring discussion into the wider public space, Amy started the preparations for the demonstration in early 2005. The mobilisation process comprised three components, on three different platforms. First, the strategy needed to be discussed and elaborated with the broader Melbourne-Hungarian community. Amy invited the leaders of different Hungarian organizations, prominent Hungarians and other interested members of the community to negotiate and discuss the plans for the demonstration and the petition that she intended to send to the Victorian Parliament. Second, Amy visited Hungarian clubs and elderly persons' homes for three months, trying to mobilise people and to raise money to meet the costs of the demonstration. Third, in the latter stages of the mobilisation, the discourse spiralled out of the 'official' meetings and mobilisation rituals into the media, in particular to the pages of the Hungarian bi-weekly newspaper, *Magyar Élet*. This enabled a wide range of the Hungarian community to get involved in discussions and dispute about the protest. As a response, Hungarians in clubs, associations and friendly circles became involved in the discursive construction of the demonstration plan. Amy contacted the heads of Hungarian organisations all over Australia, and even several prominent community leaders in the Western diaspora. She also established relationships with organisations in Hungary, for example Trianon Society, World

Federation of Hungarians, which explicitly address the situation of minority Hungarians. Amy hoped that her initiation would result in simultaneous demonstrations worldwide on the 4 July, 2005. Amy received positive feedback from some of the US-based Hungarian organisations and from the Trianon Society and the World Federation of Hungarians.

Amy's role in the mobilisation was multi-layered. She did not possess any significant resources, neither did she occupy a privileged social-structural or cultural position within the Australian-Hungarian community. Further, as she clearly lacked both a clear agenda and well-articulated aims, several sceptical Hungarians questioned her intellectual merits and referred to her as an 'uneducated, ignorant housewife' who might be dangerous for both the community and for the entire Hungarian nation. Simultaneously she acquired great emotional power within the community, and became a powerful moral resource for the supporters' side.

II. 2. Supporters and opponents of the demonstration

The proposal for the protest did not receive unanimous support from the Hungarian community in Melbourne. The preparation for the demonstration was characterised by internal dissent informed by a wide range of motivations and interpretations, and numerous discourses between several groups and individuals, all claiming to share a commitment to the Hungarian minority outside the borders of Hungary. Both the supporter and the opponent camps comprised mostly individuals and fragments of organisations. The level of support and disagreement varied within the groups; there were extreme, moderate and alternative voices on each side. The boundaries between the two groups (supporters and opponents) were not clear-cut. Numerous people expressed their dismay about the non-structured and 'loosely organised' nature of the plan. Many people claimed, after several serious revisions, they that would promote the idea of demonstration. Several Hungarians questioned Amy's abilities to lead such a protest and argued that the protest should be organised by a committee, containing all the leaders of the Hungarian community. In that sense, local conflicts and interpersonal relations played a great role in the disputes and individuals' involvement in either side often depended on personal preferences and/or micro-political alliances. The existence of this level of disagreement does not clearly reveal the different fragmentations in the community. Rather, it shows how the various emotionally-laden tropes in the Australian-Hungarian discourses, which were stirred up during the mobilisation period, are utilised in different ways for gaining support for, or blocking, political actions.

I would argue that the 'desire for inclusion' and claims for empowerment, and the quest for visibility were among the prime motivational factors for the supporters to organise and participate in the demonstration. Those who fully supported the protest articulated an urge to redefine their social positioning not only in Australia but also transnationally. Sympathisers argued for a need to transform from being passive Hungarian immigrants to being active citizens, while simultaneously claiming a 'place and voice' (Werbner 2002:121) in the transnational Hungarian public sphere. Proponents of the protest called for a move

from 'incipient diaspora' to 'mobilised diaspora' (Sheffer 1995; see also Werbner 2002:121). They argued that organising and participating in the protest could be the first step to achieve this change of positionality and modality.

However, several community members warned the organizers and the enthusiastic Hungarian supporters of the rally of the possible destructive outcomes of the demonstration. These people did not agree that the event would lead to the positive reformulation of Hungarian positionality. Their rhetoric was characterised by the feelings of the 'anxiety of exclusion', as they expressed intense anxieties about the potential negative consequences of the rally. Generally speaking, they felt more vulnerable to being discredited both in Hungary and in Australia if they participated. They argued that undertaking 'reckless and self-defeating actions' might jeopardise the 'well-established' position of Hungarians in Australia, cut off the possibilities of ever being acknowledged in Hungary, and worsen the situation of minority-Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. Further they claimed that these political agendas are untenable in even the most optimistic analysis of Eastern European regional politics.

Despite their differences, both groups display common features. First, the arguments from both sides were framed in, and derived meaning from, the Australian-Hungarian narrative structure. Further, organisers and those who opposed the protest engaged in 'emotional labour' and used affects and emotions to mobilise loyalty and collective action, or to frighten members of the community (Jasper 1998:405). Both sides were using 'informative' or 'justifiable' emotional claims, and evoked emotions in strategic ways (Golanska-Ryan 2005:174). Despite the intense debate that the proposal of the demonstration provoked, neither side was able to articulate their arguments and claims in a clear fashion. The dispute over the importance of the rally was characterised by vagueness and confusion and a lack of programmatic unity.

II. 3. Negotiating the orientations of diaspora politics: Protest or lobby?

The preparation meetings and the exchange of articles in the pages of the local newspaper were sites of meaning contention and clashes of visions for change. Although Amy invited community leaders and members of the community to discuss the plans, these meetings were often characterised with explicit conflict rather than negotiation. In the following, I elaborate on some of the different interpretations of the direction of diaspora politics and the different imaginings of an empowered diaspora that emerged during the lead-up to the Trianon protest.

Della Porta and Diani (1999:170) have argued that 'protest is a political resource of the powerless' as it remains outside the conventional political arena (see also: Missingham 2003; Wood 2001; Turner 1995). For the Hungarians who fully supported the idea of demonstration, the rally represented the last resort and the only possible way to bring change. These Hungarians perceived themselves as politically marginalised people, who had been excluded from institutionalised avenues of decision-making processes and had a very limited number of political

strategies available to them (see: Missingham 2002:1648). A general sense of disillusionment about conventional politics had been partly generated by the émigrés' low level of trust towards the institution of the 'state' in general. In this sense, for many, the idea of demonstration evoked the vision of 'the people against the state', a powerful image in the Eastern European opposition movements during the rule of Communism (Kalb and Tak 2006:208). As one of the women put it: If the television comes the ordinary people here in Australia will see how we ordinary Australian-Hungarians are trying to fight for an issue. They will see us, they will start to think, and they will feel bad and they will support us. All these paper issues, the petition and all that stuff which will be given to the Parliament is going to get lost, politicians don't care about it, it is the everyday people we need to convince. The things, which happen on the low level, are important. (Field notes, April, 2005)

Many of my informants related their doubts about the usefulness of 'grand politics' regarding the Treaty of Trianon to their pain over the lack of popular recognition of the crimes of the communist regimes. As one of the elderly male participants complained:

We can't expect anything from anybody. We have to do it ourselves. What can we expect from this world where Marx was elected as the philosopher of the last century according to the BBC survey? No-one supports us, if we want something we have to fight for it. (Field notes, March, 2005)

Simultaneously, others expressed their scepticism about the power of conventional politics by drawing parallels between the Hungarian minority in the Carpathian Basin and the situation of other minorities or stateless people. As one of the female sympathisers put it:

This 'new world order' is full of similar injustices. Just take a look at the Palestinians, the Kurds, or the Catalans, etc. We can't expect anything from world politics. (Field notes, March, 2005)

However, those Hungarians who opposed the demonstration stressed the importance of conventional politics. They approached protests as volatile, irrational and dangerous, in contrast to political lobbies, which for them stood for professionalism and cooperation at the state-level. They argued that a well-written petition would help the cause much more than a potentially dangerous demonstration. They emphasised that change can only be achieved through conventional politics. Many of them nurtured the dream of a powerful Hungarian lobby in Australia, which would operate at the level of professional politics. In the diasporic narratives, the Jewish diaspora is often viewed as the role-model for the political ambitions (see: Satzewich 2002). I heard several remarks during the mobilisation period, which were replete with references to the agency and achievements of the Jewish diaspora:

We need to do it as the Jews do. If somebody says anything about them they immediately jump. We need intelligent young Hungarians here who know about our history and are constantly watching the media. (Field notes, April, 2005)

Mr Szabó, an older Hungarian who opposed the idea of demonstration, wrote several articles in *Magyar Élet* trying to influence public opinion. He emphasised that the Treaty of Trianon was established at the level of grand politics and change could be achieved at that level only. He wrote:

I prepared a well written letter to the Victorian senator asking for the withdrawal of Australia's signature on the Treaty of Trianon. In turn I offered him the votes of 55,000 Hungarians. (*Magyar Élet*, 21 April, 2005 p. 8)

Again, Mr Szabó wrote in one of his 'warnings' in *Magyar Élet*:

The truth is that Trianon was established by the United Nations, and only they will change it. (*Magyar Élet*, 21 April, 2005 p. 8)

An interesting interchange of articles highlights the difference between the conflicting imaginations. A supporter of the demonstration responded to Mr Szabó's article:

You don't need bow-tie and evening-dress for the protest, just come along my Hungarian brother. [...] Trianon was established by people, this crime has to be corrected by people. (*Magyar Élet*, 26 May, 2005 p.8)

The conflicting imaginations also reveal the contrasting emphasis on emotions and rational arguments. This dichotomy has gained some attention in the social movements literature. For instance, Groves (1999) demonstrates that both animal rights activists and biochemistry researchers try to appeal to 'reason,' while simultaneously depicting each other as being 'irrational' and therefore unworthy of negotiations or compromise. Similarly, Heatherington (2005) illustrates that emotional claims embedded in the Sardinian anti-park movement were primitivized and marginalised by Italian politicians as being unsuitable to civilized political negotiations. The 'protest-opposition' in Melbourne often used the term 'emotional' negatively to portray the organisers as unprofessional, feminine, idealistic, fanatic and acting contrary to the common good. The opposition claimed that the display of emotions makes diaspora politics look subjective, amateurish and impulsive (Groves 2001). For them, moral authority rests on substantiating feelings about the fate of minority Hungarians with rational and politically correct arguments, drawing on the moral vocabularies of the international human rights discourse. The brief dialogue below illustrates the clash of emotionalism and professionalism:

Amy: We are doing it with all our hearts....

István (opponent, prominent community leader): That's not enough!! We need professional work!! We need to make it accepted by others! You're amateur and inexperienced. (Preparation Meeting, May, 2005)

By emphasising the need for professional work, the 'opposition' wished to demonstrate a sense of political responsibility, which aimed to justify their moral righteousness (see: Golanska-Ryan 2005:160). This distinction between professionalism and emotions covers the contrast between 'Western civilisation', based on Cartesian rationalism, and 'Balkan irrationalism'. However, the opposition between emotional and rational arguments is itself a political construct, and 'ratio' and 'passion' are not mutually exclusive categories in politics (Golanska-Ryan 2005:160; Svašek 2002). While those opposed to the demonstration tried to minimize their use of emotional rhetoric in order to appear

as responsible political actors, they played on emotionally sensitive themes, used emotional language and actively encouraged people's feelings of distrust and anxiety (see: Golanska-Ryan 2005:160).

II. 4. The two platforms of debate: Hungary and Australia

In this section, I highlight how imagined positionality in Australia and Hungary became the crucial point of disagreement between the opposing fractions. The supporters perceived the idea of the protest as an opportunity to break out of the condition of invisibility that Hungarians occupy in Australia, and also to escape the negative labels applied to émigré such as 'Balkan' and 'Fascistic'. In contrast, opponents imagined that the protest would reinforce these undesirable associations. However, each side claimed that their arguments, plans or warnings were motivated by the desire for empowerment and 'compassion' and 'responsibility' for the co-diasporas living in the Carpathian Basin.

Those who fully supported the demonstration wanted to redefine their positioning within the Australian multicultural realm. They claimed that the only way to break out of the role of invisible immigrant is to exhibit the real side of Hungarianness, that is, the '*real Hungarian history*'. Invisibility is often coupled with the anxiety that Hungarians have about being categorised as Eastern/Balkan immigrants. One of the sympathisers claimed:

What do Australians know about us? Goulash, chicken paprika, stuff like that... and the falsified communist historical propaganda... no wonder they can't differentiate between us and those from the Balkans. We have to show who we are! We have to show our history! (Field notes, April, 2005)

Their opponents highlighted the necessity of compromise and accommodation to the 'Australian perspective'. By doing so, they underlined the power differences between 'mainstream Australians' and Hungarian immigrants in Australia. They drew attention to the invisibility of the Hungarian diaspora and to their inability to bring about change from this position. As one of the opponents formulated it:

This is an issue for us, but it isn't for the Australians. What do you think? Just because it hurts us, it should also hurt the Australians? First we have to push the issue to the media for several months. We have to create an issue. We have to explain that this is a problem. (Preparation Meeting, April, 2005)

Further, the notion of the 'uncompromised historical truth' did not gain much popularity as the basis for representing Hungarianness amongst those who opposed the protest. The fact that the sympathisers wished to present the Hungarian diaspora as a highly politicised social formation created significant tensions in the community. The opponents expressed anxieties about the potential negative consequences of the demonstration and argued that the demonstration would damage the reputation of the Hungarian community in Australia. Interestingly, they feared that the demonstration might reinforce the 'Balkan' attributes of Hungarians:

I am really afraid that the Australians are going to say: 'These Hungarians are just like Serbians and Croatians who made that scenario at the footy match, and the policemen had to separate them. They are just causing trouble.' I want us to be famous in Australia for our delicious food, nice music and

culture. I feel we should give something to Australia and not demand from her. Especially not demand things which are far away. Australians don't like things like that. (Field notes, May, 2005)

Another opponent said on a preparation meeting:

I'm afraid the demonstration won't elicit sympathy, but antipathy and dismissal and disdain. (Field notes, May, 2005)

Mr Szabó expressed similar fears in *Magyar Élet*:

I would like to ask the ignorant persons not to dishonour the excellent reputation of the Hungarian community and the Hungarian nation which we have built in the last 50 years for a dead issue. (*Magyar Élet*, 2 June, 2005 p. 2)

While the supporters believed that Hungarians should revise their image according to their own *diasporic* needs, opponents adhered to the status which Hungarians had gained as an *immigrant* community. While the sympathizers aimed to gain greater inclusion in the multicultural domain by emphasising their '*otherness*', which in this context refers to the notion of '*uncompromised historical truth*', the opposition feared to lose the already established, 'insider' position in Australia by doing the same.

The discussion about the different texts which would appear on placards, to be carried during the demonstration, illustrates the difference between the emphasis on the '*uncompromised historical truth*' and the need for accommodation to the Australian perspective. The opponents to the demonstration believed that international human rights discourse should provide the normative frame of reference to advocate minority agendas in the Carpathian Basin. They argued that the 'Trianon issue' must be countered with legal arguments derived from the liberal discourse on human rights, as this is the only framework that is socially and politically accepted both in Australia and also internationally. I recorded the following piece of conversation at a preparation meeting in early May:

Attila (male, opponent): We need posters with homogeneous texts. I'm afraid somebody would write something stupid. We should be very careful. There shouldn't be any slip ups or errors with these texts. We should only write things about human rights issues because it can't be misinterpreted.

Female (supporter): For instance: 'Treaty of Trianon, Hungary is the true victim of the First World War.'

István (prominent community leader, opponent): It's not good!!! Hungary is perceived as an ex-enemy here. There are certain things we have to accept. We have to choke it down. Only about human rights!!!!!!!

Tamás (prominent community leader, opponent): Exactly! We're here in Melbourne, and here in Melbourne they don't agree. What about 'Trianon: Hungarian cultural genocide'? (Field notes, May, 2005)

The difference between the desire to exhibit and the urge to hide this sense of *otherness* is probably best exemplified in the case of the 'Árpád flag'. The sympathisers argued for the flag to be carried in the demonstration, while the

opponents vehemently resisted the idea. The *Árpád* flag is the traditional Hungarian flag, with red and white stripes, however, it is not used as the national flag. After the Germans took over Hungary in 1944, the Hungarian Fascist party slightly altered and appropriated the flag. Since then, the *Árpád* flag carries the stigma of fascism. The 'flag dispute', which rippled through the community and became the subject of passionate discussions, points to a major anxiety among Hungarians in Australia. Based on their country's orientation during Second World War, Hungarians in Australia fear and resent that they are collectively associated with the taint of Nazism and Fascism (see: Satzewich 2002; Winland 2003). This fear is closely linked to the 'anxiety of exclusion' in both the Australian and the transnational domain.

The sympathisers planned to carry the *Árpád* flag in the demonstration arguing that: first, this is the genuine, ancient Hungarian flag; second, that Australians do not know about the connection between the flag and the Hungarian Fascist party. The opponents, however, while acknowledging the value of the flag, expressed severe anxieties about its connotations. They argued that the Hungarian community in Australia needs to accommodate itself both to Australian and to Hungarian expectations. They feared that the display of the flag would provide a pretext for the media both in Australia and Hungary to portray Australian Hungarians as Nazis. The opponents also tried to call upon the community's anxiety about 'traitors', the possibility that there were people in the community who would ensure that the negative association was conveyed to both the Australian and Hungarian media. I would argue that while supporters of the protest expressed anxieties about the possibility of Hungarian demonstrators being linked to their Fascist history, they claimed that exhibiting the *Árpád* flag, a genuine Hungarian symbol in a civilised protest, was an opportunity to break out of the undesirable category. Below, I provide an extended interchange that I witnessed during a meeting, which is indicative of the issues at stake in the 'flag-dispute':

Attila (male, opponent): We have to make sure that there won't be any provocation. None should carry the *Árpád* flag, due to its fascist connotation.

Amy: We have had this flag for more than thousand years. We have to wash this flag white. Just because Szálasi [Nazi collaborator during Second World War] used it for three months, that doesn't mean anything.

Béla (Amy's husband): And anyway, who cares what they say at home [in Hungary]?

Attila (male, opponent): We have to be careful. They will pick on it! We shouldn't bring elements in, which we can't defend. We have to be very careful. They will think we're fascistic and they will show it in the television. We won't be able to wash it off.

Andor (male community leader, opponent): Let's not give them ground to criticise us. Unfortunately the brainwashing at home works very well.

Béla (Amy's husband): And anyway, if in Hungary you can't carry the *Árpád* flag so why does it automatically mean that we can't have it here either? (Fieldwork, April, 2005)

The flag affair brings the discussion to the next point. The supporters of the demonstration hoped that by organising the protest, Australian-Hungarians would gain more visibility and prestige in the transnational Hungarian domain. In order to justify their claims, organisers and supporters traded on the feeling of responsibility and drew on the narratives of historical mission of the diaspora. The sympathisers' disappointment over the direction of Hungary's national politics also prompted them to articulate an urge to position themselves in the role of the saviour of Hungarianness. Amy started her speech before one meeting with such sentences: At home [in Hungary] we have to put everything into place...we will open the gates for someone who comes and rescues Hungary. (Fieldwork, April, 2005)

Once, when driving together to a meeting Amy told me:

Couple of weeks ago we met a tourist couple from Hungary and we told them about the plan for demonstration. Their reaction was really negative: 'Are you're completely crazy? You can't achieve anything from Australia, and anyway things are not like how you think from here!' You see, Petra, therefore we need to organise it [the demonstration] and enlighten all the brainwashed people, also in Hungary, as they have no idea about anything. (Field notes May, 2005)

As one participant said in a public forum:

It is not only our right, but also our duty and obligation to sympathise with those who are innocently prosecuted in the Carpathian Basin! (Field notes, 2005, May)

The participant's supposedly ironic remark sought to draw attention to the perceived lack of attention to minority Hungarians by the Hungarian government. Another sympathiser expressed similar emotions in a preparation meeting:

Should our brothers still fight for their rights alone? No, we have to stand up for our brothers. We have the skills and possibilities! (Field notes, May, 2005)

The opponents of the demonstration often questioned, and even ridiculed, the moral legacy of the diaspora to act for co-diasporas in the Carpathian Basin. They warned the supporters of the demonstration that such 'heroic' acts would only cause additional trouble to minority-Hungarians. An article, written by Mr Szabó, in *Magyar Élet* expresses this sense of dis May:

It is very easy to act Hungarian at the place where it is allowed. Try to be Hungarian in Romania or Slovakia! I'm absolutely certain that with such a demonstration we would only make the life of minority Hungarians more difficult. (*Magyar Élet*, 5 May, 2005 p. 5)

The opponents also challenged the supporters' claim of acting in their own right. Some opponents stated that they were willing to deal with the problem if the Hungarian government, or at least Hungarians in Hungary, supported the issue. A Sydney-based Hungarian told me:

...the idea is completely ridiculous! How can you organise a Trianon demonstration after December 5? Can't they see that even people in Hungary voted against the incorporation of Hungarians outside of the borders? (Field notes, April, 2005)

Another member of the Melbourne-based community, who opposed the demonstration, said:

And anyway, from the news we already hear that the ice is breaking between Hungary and Romania. The situation is much better. Those who are organising this, did they ever ask the minority Hungarians in Transylvania etc what do they think? What do they want? At the end of the day it is organised for them, right? (Field notes, April, 2005)

II. 5. Introducing ‘Emotion work’: Hope and anger as mobilising factors

In this section of the chapter I investigate the ways in which both the opponents and the supporters turned their rhetorical arguments – on diaspora politics, the homeland and the hostland – into emotional weapons to frighten or empower the potential demonstrators. Amy and her supporters could not be the representative of, and did not have links to, a wide range of the community. Due to the lack of a formalised communication structure, personal relationships among Hungarians played an especially important role in the mobilisation process (see: Goodwin and Pfaff 2001:287; Snow et al. 1980, 1986). Further, as already pointed out, the debate concerning the Trianon protest was taken up by the local Hungarian media, giving the chance to the wider public to be involved in the ‘emotion work’ (Britt and Heise 2000:265). In that sense the private and public discourse in the media played a major part in bringing ‘emotional capital’ (Britt and Heise 2000:264) to the discourse. In this way, attitudinal affinity was turned into real participation (Ohlemacher 1996:197; Britt and Heise 2000).

Jasper (1998:414) claims that it is almost impossible to mobilise masses in the absence of strong emotions. Several scholars have investigated the ‘emotion work’ that social movement organizers engage in to appeal to potential protesters (Britt and Heise 2000; Jasper 1998). Britt and Heise (2000:252) show that numerous social movements, for instance the civil rights movement and the gay rights movement, were created with the purpose of changing social responses to stigmatised sections of the community and to replace shame with pride. While the Trianon demonstration had explicit political purposes, transformation at the emotional level was among the organizers’ and supporters’ implicit goals. As illustrated by the example of the Árpád Flag, the supporters believed that, in order to achieve their goal, one of the preconditions was to overcome their shame and fear and develop a new collective consciousness characterised by ‘confidence, determination and collective solidarity’ (Missingham 2003:158; see also Goodwin and Pfaff 2001:282).

On the one hand, Amy and her supporters were able to ignite positive emotions and appealed to a sense of agency and responsibility by focusing on the difficult situation of minority Hungarians. Several researchers, including Hardin (1982:108-112) and Hirschman (1982:89-90), suggest that the idea of making history may motivate participation by the excluded and powerless. The supporters of the protest used the notion of ‘making history’ to evoke and reactivate the romantic ideal of Hungarian national rebellion (see: Golanska-Ryan 2005; Kalb and Tak 2006). A

supporter attempted to mobilise the community by positioning the diaspora in the role of the saviour of minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin:

If you join, you can have an effect on history. Why couldn't this demonstration be a start of a movement, which will lead to 100,000 protesters demonstrating next year on the Hősök Tere (Hero's Square in Budapest). Don't wait for someone else to do it! (*Magyar Élet* 26 May, 2005 p.8)

The pamphlet Amy distributed in the community aimed to activate and empower the individual in a similar way:

Together at the same time against Trianon! You are not just a member! You are taking a stand! You are the voice demanding a hearing for human rights and JUSTICE for Hungary. You are the Voice! Be there! (Capital letters in original)

On the other hand, Jasper (1998:414; see also Britt and Heise 2000) claims that while protests gain some power from the positive emotions – such as hope, joy, and compassion – negative emotions, such as anger, a sense of threat or outrage are indispensable resources for social movements. The literature on NSM suggests that anger at the opponent is a necessary component of mobilisation as it replaces hitherto felt insecurity and other negative feelings about both oneself and the actual issue (Jasper 1998; Gamson 1992). Amy and the supporters were unsuccessful in transforming ambiguous negative emotions about the tragedy of Trianon 'to provide a target against which these can be vented' (Jasper 1998:409). In the above cited pamphlet, the line 'Against Trianon' strongly implies a sense of struggle and enemies; however the target – 'Trianon' – has a mercurial character. In the case of the 'Trianon-issue', it is enormously difficult to direct blame toward concrete policies and decision-makers or to seek redress. The Treaty of Trianon was signed by the victors of the World War I, 85 years ago. Thus, those who could be held responsible for the problems have left the scene. Further, suppressing minority rights in the post-Trianon states has not resulted in significant attention in the international media.

Gamson (1992:33) points out that the target of the outrage is often 'misplaced and directed away from the real causes of hardship'. I similarly argue that supporters of the protest managed to focus blame and find the appropriate object for their indignation. Those who publicly opposed the protest, particularly Mr Szabó, came to embody a sense of 'anti-Hungarianness' ('Magyar ellenesség') and were made the target of blame for the transgression. Thus, the incitement of negative emotions – particularly anxiety and shame – on behalf of the opponents, created the 'indispensable' sense of moral outrage in the community, and in that way contributed to the relative success of the mobilisation process. The public outrage is exemplified in the lines written by a sympathiser, who replied in the pages of the *Magyar Élet* to the 'major opponent' Mr Szabó:

Mr Szabó, reading your little articles makes me sick! (*Magyar Élet*, 16 May, 2005 p. 13)

Again, I need to emphasise that anger and outrage grew out of the existing 'moral climate' (Furedi 1997), in which 'specific modes of emotionality are widely practised, actively traded upon, and routinely expected by members' of the Hungarian diaspora (Tudor 2003:243, emphasis in original). The labelling of

opponents as secret agents and communist spies indicates the activation of the 'wolf-in-sheep's-clothing' phenomenon, referring to the anxiety that 'seemingly-democrats-in-reality-communist' forces would spy on the diaspora and try to destroy its 'homogeneity and power'. Thus, the sense of anger grew out of an emotional climate characterised by widely spread distrust of the Hungarian state and state organisations (see: Kalb et al. 1999; Mihaylova 2005; Kalb and Tak 2006; Sztompka 1999; Misztal 1996; Sevenhuijsen and Brinkgreve 2002; Svašek 2005).

There are several reasons why the opposing newspaper articles and the rumours spread about the opponents created moral shocks in the Hungarian community and by doing so, became for many the first step towards recruitment into action. It has been suggested that mobilisation typically requires the magnification of the opponent's power (Vanderford 1989:179) and encouragement of a collective fear of the other (Brubaker and Laitin 1998:442). By linking the opponents to the current ex-communist government, supporters managed to incite anger. On the other hand, the fact that the 'enemies' were familiar faces, everyday people from the community, who directly exposed themselves in the local media, simultaneously undermined the threat they supposedly posed. This certainty gave confidence to the potential participants. In one of the articles Mr Szabó wrote:

The Australian authorities don't like if immigrants bring their political problems with them. I don't like it either. (*Magyar Élet*, 2 May, 2005 page 4, my italics)

Several people commented in an ironic manner on this remark. A supporter of the demonstration, for instance, responded:

This powerful gentleman tries to enlighten the Hungarian Community in Australia what we might do and what you might not. (*Magyar Élet*, 16 May, 2005 p. 13 my italics)

The other important feature which further amplified the anger of the community was the occurrence of occasional comments belittling the importance of the Trianon issue. On one occasion, Mr Szabó claimed that the issue of Trianon was 'from way back' and 'dead' and he advised the minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin 'to accept their fate in those foreign countries' (*Magyar Élet*, 2nd of June, 2005 p. 4). The comments caused moral outrage in the community as several people believed that questioning the importance of Trianon betrays the minority Hungarians who suffer and keep their Hungarian identity despite the nationalising policies of post-Trianon states.

The third feature which aggravated anger among potential supporters was the amplified anxiety of the opponents. Several opponents used anxiety and fear as a discouragement mechanism, drawing on highly emotive language and pointing to the damage the demonstration would cause. By doing so they unintentionally magnified the power of the supporters. Below are extracts from a group email one of the main opponents sent to many Hungarians in the community:

The Demonstration in Its Original Form Is Going to Cause Enormous Harms the Entire Hungarian Nation... You have to see the potential danger... we have to be strict... a juridical committee needs to negotiate immediately... (group-e-mail, sent 7th of May, capitals in original).

Similarly, Mr Szabó warned diaspora members in an emotional fashion.

If the organisers don't understand the sophisticated warning, I'm afraid we have to keep them away *with other means* from the danger. (*Magyar Élet*, 2 June, 2005, p. 4. My italics)

Hungarians interpreted the heightened levels of anxiety and warnings as threats, which further augmented their anger. Several people told me in a similarly anxious fashion: They go around and threaten people. They behave exactly like the ÁVH in the 50s. (Field notes, May, 2005)

To conclude, the mobilisation period proved that the urge to improve the situation of minority-Hungarians was not sufficient to activate a wide range of the community. On the contrary, it was the level of outrage that the opponents caused that managed to mobilise people into action. The Hungarian diaspora became mobilised by misdirecting its anger at easy and inappropriate targets, i.e. the visible opponents of the protest. I refer to the opponents as 'misplaced targets' for although they did not agree (or fully agree) with the idea of demonstration, they still claimed responsibility for minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin.

III. THE PROTEST

In this section, I draw on ethnographic research carried out during the actual protest during which demonstrators acted out a 'tragic drama in the public' (Werbner 2002:15, my italics). The dramatic quality of the ritual provoked emotional responses and provided a powerful sensory experience that created an affective collective identification with minority Hungarians (Wise 2004:27). I demonstrate the complex emotional dynamic of the demonstration in which pathos, joy, the feeling of empowerment, anxiety and anger, as well as scepticism and criticism co-mingled.

The demonstration was scheduled to commence at 12 noon. I arrived at Parliament House half an hour before that. By that time, several Hungarians, mostly old people, were waiting in front of Parliament House. A truck carrying a huge bell made of cardboard and covered with silver paper was parked near the building. Hungarian community members seemed to be very excited about the protest and tried to anticipate the number of people that would be coming. The entire visual setting of the crowd aimed to evoke a sense of Hungarianness. Many people were dressed in Hungarian costumes or wearing some kind of Hungarian symbols, such as the tricolour or the sacra corona badge. Most of them were carrying Hungarian flags or posters that tried to describe the tragedy of Trianon and the horrible consequences that minority Hungarians faced: 'Trianon = Attempted Murder of a Nation' and 'Trianon 4 June 1920: Justice for Hungary Denied' or 'Peace Treaty 1920 Human Rights Denied'. Although the majority of the crowd comprised first generation migrants, some of my second generation friends also arrived, a few of them in national costumes, others in everyday clothing. Most of them communicated the same sense of excitement that I had noticed among the elderly people.

The crowd was getting larger and larger, when finally Amy and her enthusiastic friends arrived. While it was obvious that they were pleasantly

surprised by the size of the crowd, they simultaneously expressed distress and frustration. Amy said:

Everybody let us down. The politician doesn't want to come, he has just advised me. [Amy invited a member of the Victorian Parliament to give a speech to the audience at the demonstration.] This morning while I was driving to Federation Square the father of the boy who is supposed to give one of the speeches called me and said that his son is not going to give the speech unless it will be seriously revised. He wanted to cut out all the important parts. And he calls me this morning! (Field notes, June, 2005)

One of her supporters whispered to me:

They don't dare to stand up for the cause. Everybody withdraw from the performance, they are frightened. We're surrounded by traitors, who frighten the people. Now I just hope there won't be any more trouble or provocation. You never know... (Field notes, June, 2005)

While the sense of enthusiasm was already noticeable at the beginning of the rally, many protesters started out with much anxiety and caution. With all the emphasis on anger in the social movement literature, the lack of analysis on anxiety is striking (for exceptions, see: Barker 2001; Ost 1990; Petronijevic 1998; Flam 2004). Flam (2004:174) argues that as the repressive Communist regimes made people fear for their lives, the act of protest in Eastern Europe during the time of communist dictatorship was characterised by anxiety rather than anger. I would argue that although the setting and the time is different, the narrative of fearsome and powerful Communism penetrated the emotional climate at the start of the protest. It was a cloudy winter's day, however, many people, even older first generation migrants, were wearing sunglasses that provided the advantage of relative anonymity. János, a young Hungarian from Serbia, told me:

Why the sunglasses? Don't be surprised; my family is still in Serbia and I also have a house there. You know about the newly emerging violations against Hungarians. I'm here and making a stand, but you have to understand that I have good reasons to be afraid. (Field notes, June, 2005)

Csilla, a middle-aged woman who had also emigrated from Serbia, was there with her children. She told me:

...this day is very important for me, I'm here. But also understand those who are afraid and did not dare to come. You know you can never know who is here and who is making pictures. You can never know. You know that they ['secret agents'] are capable of anything. I'm responsible for the rest of my family who is still in Serbia. (Field notes, June, 2005)

Another participant, who had emigrated from Hungary, was also wearing sunglasses. He told me:

Yes I am here, but you see I am wearing sunglasses. Protesters in Hungary are monitored and then kicked out from their jobs. Communists have a long arm. I don't want to risk anything, you know. (Field notes, June, 2005)

While the crowd was gathering in front of Parliament House, Mr Szabó was watching the crowd from the other side of the street. Confronting the embodiment of the 'enemy' had a positive effect on the crowd. The contrast was visible between the old man standing at the other side of the street alone, leaning on his stock, and the expanding group of Hungarian protesters. The non-threatening presence of the

‘enemy’ relaxed the crowd and transformed the initial sense of anxiety. The appearance of the single ‘lonely enemy’ also eased the initial worries of many that Rumanian, Serbian or Slovakian pro-Trianon ‘gangs’ would aggressively provoke the demonstrators. Demonstrators around me claimed that Mr Szabó was ridiculous and pitiful in his attempt at ‘anti-protest’; at the same time he was described as a shameless traitor.

As a demonstrator said:

Look at the traitor! He dares to come out! For sure he is a spy! Shame on the bastard... miserable though... standing there alone. (Field notes, June, 2005)

At the same time as the presence of the ‘enemy’ eased the early sense of anxiety it also affirmed a powerful sense of group solidarity. The geographical setting, that of the crowd on the one side, and the ‘enemy’ on the other, transformed the space into a ‘terrain of resistance’ (Routledge 1996; see also Jansen 2000). The fact that Mr Szabó was watching the crowd from the other side of the street evoked, on the one hand, the image of the undercover communist secret agent; on the other hand, it produced the sense of revolting against a dictatorial regime, a powerful historical symbol in Hungarian national imagery. While the powerlessness and loneliness of the ‘anti-protester’ eased the fears of the crowd, the image of the spy incited outrage and determination; and the idea of making history resulted in increased group solidarity. People yelled at Mr Szabó, calling him, for instance: ‘traitor’, ‘communist’, ‘shameful’. According to some, a few demonstrators even spat when marching by him. A female protester close to me said:

It's not enough that our poor brothers in Hungary are monitored by the government during protests. They [ex-communists] are even here. Look at him!

A man next to the woman commented:

He is alone, we are many! This time we have the power. Look at the growing crowd!

Prior to the commencement of the march, Amy and her friends distributed black cloaks among the participants. At noon, Amy asked the crowd to organise themselves into lines and start walking down Collins Street – in the respectable and decent manner of civilised citizens who are at the same time proud of their Hungarianness – to Federation Square where the performers and the immobile elderly were waiting for them. Amy asked the participants to put on their black cloaks, which signified the tragedy of Trianon. As the crowd started marching, the cars and the trams stopped. On one side of the street, an enthusiastic supporter organised the protesters and watched for any kind of unpredictable incident. He continuously gave signs to Amy who was on the other side of the street trying to ignite the emotions of the crowd. Simultaneously, she gave strategic advice to the marching Hungarians, for instance, to walk more slowly or to lift up the flags and posters. She shouted loudly and with strong emphasis to the protesters:

Don't be afraid! Lift up your heads, be proud Hungarians! Don't be ashamed, we have nothing to be ashamed about, march proudly! (Field notes, July, 2005)

After the crowd arrived at Federation Square, an hour-long program of speeches, folk and ‘irredentist’ songs and poems, addressing the ‘tragedy of Trianon’ followed each other. The design of the subaltern drama aimed to influence the Australian public and at the same time to incite emotions among the Hungarian demonstrators. The speeches, which were given by Amy and her teenage son, who volunteered instead of the Australian politician, were ‘inflammatory and uncompromising’ (Turner 1995:201), but the formulations of the political agendas were modified in order to comply with the internationally accepted discourses of human rights. The fact of the tragedy was brought front-and-centre and was connected strongly with contemporary political arguments. By integrating inflamed emotions and the narrative of human rights, the speeches sought to involve both the Hungarian and the Australian audience. Amy’s speech made frequent references to the historical tragedy and victimhood that the Treaty of Trianon brought about for Hungary. For example:

... the most devastating single tragedy in the history of Hungary, a state existing for more than 1,000 years, was not the advance of tanks or armies or bombers – but a document. [...] This insidious document did more damage to Hungary, than any armed conflict in her history. [...] The country was ‘butchered’... [...] This Treaty is widely seen in the world as one of the most shameful, cruellest and absurd treaties of modern times – and is without doubt the greatest tragedy in Hungary’s more than 1,000 year history. (Amy’s speech, 4 June, 2005, in English in original)

Depictions of individual and communal suffering were used further to emphasise the emotional underpinnings of the national tragedy and to justify the moral legitimacy of the protesters’ claims:

Families were separated from their loved ones as the new borders ran through their ancestral lands. (Amy’s speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

However, in accordance with the globally accepted human rights discourses, the speech used the standard political jargon to describe the tragedy that the treaty brought about:

... ethnocide, deportations, expulsions, transfers, dispersion... (Amy’s speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

By embedding Hungarian experiences in a global discourse of ‘human rights’, the organisers aimed to legitimate their demand for justice. Although the speech mentioned that Australia signed the Treaty of Trianon, the country was portrayed in a positive light, its humanitarian, civilised and democratic aspects were strongly emphasised. The speech referred to Hungarians in Australia as auto-assimilated Australians, who were emotionally connected to their historical homelands. Thus, it linked the community into the realm of Western nations.

We Australians are fortunate to live in a country that loves peace and has democratic values – and as Australians, of Hungarian origin and descent, we ask the Australian government to intervene in righting a wrong, to which she herself, remains a signatory. [...] We Australians have an opportunity and with that come an obligation to use our democracy to bring to the attention of the world the atrocities that minority races still face to this very day. We surely can be proud to call ourselves Australians, as the freedom we live in sets an example to the world we share. (Amy’s speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

Further, Hungarians in Australia were also portrayed as a victimised people, who feel in danger even as they are protected Australian citizens:

Many Australians of Hungarian descent, who fled these regions, are still scared today. They are still scared to voice their concerns, scared to sign the petition, scared to come here today in fear that someone will recognize them, and hurt their loved ones they left behind. (Amy's speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

Similarly, Transylvania, the emblem par excellence of 'Greater Hungary' and of 'authentic' Hungarianness, was portrayed as an integral part of Western civilization. Although Amy did not explicitly say it, her speech suggested that after the Treaty of Trianon Transylvania was devastated by 'Eastern barbarism':

Transylvania has a long heritage of religious freedom. It was here that freedom of religion was written into the law for the first time in history on 1568. It is indeed a shame that 400 years later the very country and the very nation which achieved the first victory over medieval bigotry is being thrown back into the dark ages. (Amy's speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

To sum up, the speech argued that Australia as a civilised country was obliged to support a fellow Western nation from Eastern destruction:

It is the moral obligation of all civilized societies on earth to cure the ills caused by hatred, ignorance, and to eliminate unnecessary human sufferings as much as possible. (Amy's speech, 4 June, 2005 in English in original)

Following Amy's speech, an amateur rock band played national songs and community members recited Hungarian poems concerning Trianon. After a couple of songs, poems and speeches, young children symbolically put together the paper version of the lost pieces of Greater Hungary, forming a big map on a wall in the Square. At the same time, people were asked to take off their black cloaks. The two acts combined to visualise the dream of a united Hungarianness. The songs, the map and other 'ritual objects' contained emotional and historical sediments that elicited sensory and affective responses from participants and assisted in the process of intensifying the emotional response of the crowd (Hage 2002; Wise 2004:29). The performance aimed to address different senses through a range of devices and tactics: tangibly, through the occupation of public streets and public space by human bodies and the dignified slow walk through the City; visually, through the use of black cloaks, the vivid Hungarian symbols, emotionally charged Christian signifiers; and acoustically, through the bell-tone and the national songs – all meant to dramatise the tragedy of Trianon (Jansen 2000; Turner 1995). The dramatisation of the protest and the physical co-presence of the protesters in a highly orchestrated ritual context provoked positive emotions in the crowd. The images of victimisation and suffering and the sense of taking a stand and 'reconstructing history' were intertwined in the ritual and produced an emotional climate where many people cried and expressed deep awe.

Jansen (2000; see also Routledge 1996) points out a problematic aspect of the literature on public rallies. Namely, that such events are often viewed by researchers as homogenous, where all protesters identify 'with the words that fill

the air or with the flags that assert their claim over that place' (Jansen 2000). In the Trianon rally, despite the 'emotional contagion' (Parkinson 1995) of the protest, several Hungarians expressed their scepticism about the effects of the demonstration and many articulated a kind of resentment. Protesters, variously accepted, celebrated, and resisted the consciously constructed representations of the 'Trianon Tragedy'. Even some of those who expressed enthusiasm conveyed doubtful, pessimistic, and even sarcastic views. A female protester said: It's all nice and good and I'm totally touched, but I know that we won't go too far with this demonstration. So what's the point? (Field notes, June, 2005)

A man, who was deeply moved during the march said to me during the performance:

This demonstration shouldn't be here. Why do we need to organise this demonstration, when it should be the duty of Hungarians in Hungary? (Field notes, June, 2005)

Others argued that the target of the demonstration was misplaced and that Hungarians should rather demonstrate for Szeklerland's (Hungarian-inhabited part of Transylvania) independence. Others ridiculed the eagerness of the demonstrators and expressed cynicism. Kinga, a second generation university student, said to me: Crazy isn't it? The only reason I came is because I'm curious. I mean, I think it [the demonstration] is a stupid idea, these people have really no idea what's going on in the Carpathian Basin. They live in a dream world, things like this is a substitute for them. They act like heroes, they talk and do nothing. (Field notes, June, 2005)

At the end of the performance, Amy informed the crowd that according to the police one thousand Hungarians had marched along Collins Street. Except for some Asian tourists, no one seemed to be interested in the Hungarian performance. Next to the Hungarian stage, a juggler enjoyed a large audience. Further, the demonstration did not capture the attention of the Australian media, whose presence the organisers were eagerly seeking.

IV. REFLECTIONS

Two weeks after the rally, Amy invited all the people who were involved in the preparation process and others who participated in the protest to get together and reflect on the demonstration. Only two of the people who opposed the rally participated in this process. The group consisted of about twenty people, who had participated in the demonstration and originally supported the idea. According to the people at the meeting, the protest had proved to be an extraordinary experience. For them, it became a magical event, a transformative moment in the history of Australian Hungarians. This section draws on the material from this last meeting and on the several enthusiastic articles, which were published in *Magyar Élet* after the protest.

By constructing social movements as interest groups, proponents of the resource mobilisation theory identify 'success' primarily in terms of concrete political achievement and tend to overlook the importance of cultural

transformation (Zald 1992:330-31). Missingham (2002:1648, see also Turner 1995) argues that 'protests are often intense and moving experiences for participants, which may influence their political consciousness, sense of solidarity and identity'. In this part of the chapter, I argue that, despite the fact that no political change followed the demonstration and despite the disappointment caused by the absence of the Australian media, the protest contributed to the reconstruction of the diasporic identity by translating negative emotions, such as shame and anxiety and a sense of powerlessness, into positively valued self-definitions (Taylor 2000:271; see also McAdam 1988). One of the participants told me a month after the demonstration:

You know, I called the two major newspapers yesterday regarding the press releases about the protest. I got so angry.... Even though I should have known how they are. They denied that they received it! I know they got it! I know! ... But being there [at the rally]... marching there it was fantastic... it was beautiful... (Field notes, July, 2005)

I claim that the main reason for the positive re-evaluation of diasporic identity following the Trianon demonstration derived from the feelings of empowerment that were generated during the protest. More precisely, the source of the transformation is to be found in the feeling of *victory* over 'communist forces', the sense of *solidarity* with Hungarians in the community and transnationally, and the sensation of positive *visibility* in Australia, which all derive their power from existing diasporic grand narratives. In order to comprehend this emotional transformation, the geographic dimensions of the protest need to be considered. In the following section, I demonstrate that the emotional energy felt during the protest – that is, the 'collective feeling of unusual energy, power and solidarity' (Collins 2001:29; see also Goodwin and Pfaff 2001) – is intertwined with the geographical aspects of the event. The sense of *victory*, *solidarity* and *visibility* emerged from the feeling of the control over the space. As Missingham (2002:1648) argues, the literature on social movements has neglected 'the role of space and place in the construction of the political meanings and symbolic expressions of protest' (For exceptions, see: Jansen 2000, 2001; Routledge 1996, 1997). I argue that during the Trianon protest the symbolic geography of Melbourne's CBD was reconceptualised (see: Jansen 2000, 2001). By controlling and re-organising space, the demonstrating Hungarians transformed the meanings of space and converted Melbourne's CBD to a Hungarian '*temporary autonomous zone*' (TAZ) indicating 'action in the here and now' (Davenport 1998:81; Bey 1991). The Trianon protest re-articulated the relationship between place, politics and identity, as the demonstrators temporarily stepped 'out of place'. In doing so, they transgressed the boundaries of invisibility, subordination and Balkanness and stepped 'into place', affirming their 'right' to be seen in the context of Australian multiculturalism and among the civilised Western nations (see: Jansen 2000, 2001).

By addressing the geographical aspects of the protest, I show how the event came to be assessed as a success. The first explanation of the success is to be found in the simple act of filling up the space, that is, in the act of the physical assembly of people. Collins (1981) and Britt and Heise (2000) maintain that collective public

displays of feelings and ‘observing others and by knowing others are observing the self’ is one great step towards attaining pride among the protest participants. Certainly, for the protesters, being able to overcome the feelings of fear and shame was one of the most often mentioned reasons for the ‘magical’ character of the demonstration. Despite all the negative reactions of the ‘traitors’ in the community, the threats of the ‘third hand’ and ‘communist spies’, and notwithstanding the fact that ‘everybody’ abandoned the organisers at the last minute, more people than expected participated in the rally. In that sense, it was presented as a victory over communist and ‘anti-Hungarian forces’. Due to the level of internal dissent and the great level of anxiety for many participants, a sense of solidarity was invisible until the actual protest. The simple fact of physical assembly of people, their bodily awareness of co-presence and the shared focus of attention during the demonstration (see: Collins 2001:28) transformed the initial emotions of outrage, anger, and the urge for change (which brought these Hungarians to the rally in the first place) into different collective emotions: solidarity, agency and courage (see: Collins 2001:29).

One of the women said during the evaluation meeting:

We did it! We were there! Despite all the stream of abuse! (Field notes, June, 2005)

An article in the *Magyar Élet* expressed similar relief:

[We were there] despite all the pessimistic, opportunistic and anti-Hungarian opinions (*Magyar Élet*, 16 June, 2005 p.1)

The second explanation lies in the act of overcoming of fear during the protest itself. As elaborated in the previous section, the memory of fearsome Communism penetrated the emotional climate at the start of the protest. The confrontation with the embodiment of the ‘enemy’, Mr Szabó, had a positive effect on the crowd. Again, the power of this effect derived from the geographic setting. The contrast between the ‘lonely enemy’ and the expanding group of Hungarians, by evoking culturally and historically embedded icons of resistance and revolution affirmed the protesters sense of solidarity. This sense of ‘making history’, by claiming victory over ex-communist forces, also narrowed the symbolic gap between diaspora Hungarians and home communities.

Third, the dramatic ritual of the march and the performance in the public similarly increased the solidarity both within the demonstrators and also transnationally. The feeling of solidarity with Hungarians in the homeland drew power from the sense of sharing the suffering of minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. As indicated previously, in the Hungarian ‘hierarchy of suffering’ minority Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin are considered to be the ultimate icons of moral victimhood. Taking part in the protest also generated affective collective identification with the suffering of minority Hungarians (see: Wise 2004:27). The protest permitted Australian-Hungarians to forge emotional connections with the victims, this channelled the emotions of the protesters ‘into the warmth of a moral community of suffering’ (Werbner 1997:238; Wise

2004:29). Going further, the protest provided not only inclusion of the participants into the domain of suffering, but it also positioned the protesters as the active saviours of minority Hungarians, which also enhanced the sense of solidarity. Furthermore, the demonstration also provided a means through which Australian-Hungarians were able to ease their ‘migration guilt’, thus narrowing the gap between them and the homeland communities (Hage 2002:203; Wise 2004:25).

As a female participant said in the meeting following the demonstration:
Finally we did something for our brothers. It is fantastic that we took part in their struggle... (Field notes, June, 2005)

In a published interview, a protester confessed:
It was elevating to be there. I feel we owe our grandparents, who suffered so much, to do something for them. And it makes me feel very good that we are doing something. (*Magyar Élet*, 16 June, 2005 p.1)

In the same article, another Hungarian expressed similar thoughts:
Despite the mournful atmosphere we felt happy that we can unite and do something for our brothers... (*Magyar Élet*, 16 June, 2005 p.1)

The identification with the suffering of minority Hungarians was also expressed in a concrete physical way:
There were some, who limped along, others left their sick-bed behind, and they all said it was their duty; they had to take part because they are Hungarians. (*Magyar Élet*, 16 June, 2005 p.4)

What provided particular weight to the demonstration is that the ‘identification’ and the ‘struggle’ did not take place, as it usually does, in Hungarian community centres, but in an ‘Australian’ setting. The rally achieved significant symbolic meaning and power from the fact that it took place outside Hungarians’ own domains and neighbourhoods (see: Missingham 2002). I would argue that the pre-existing attributes of the CBD – a place ‘where power is institutionalised, practiced and symbolised’ (Missingham 2002:1649, my italics) – is the central geographic factor that contributed to the emotional transformation and thus to the re-imagining of the diasporic identity. In order to understand the significance of Hungarians’ presence in Melbourne’s CBD, a brief description of the actual protest site is needed. The protesting crowd assembled in front of the Victorian Parliament Building. This Building comprises the Queen of Australia, Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of Victoria. As such, this place has great symbolic and political importance. It embodies the power of the democratic state and the right of its citizens to influence the decision making process of the state. From the Parliament the protesters marched down Collins St. This Street has long been recognised as the centre of financial power in Melbourne such that it is the home to the stock exchange, banks and insurance companies. The final place of assembly was Federation Square. Federation Square occupies roughly a whole urban block and is frequently used as a place for political demonstrations and other public events. It is also considered as the centre of Melbourne’s cultural precinct.

By 'taking over' 'Australian' spaces which do not 'belong' to them, the protesters disentangled and re-entangled power relations, and this proved to be an empowering experience for the protesters. As the opinions expressed at the final meeting show, controlling space became an articulation of empowerment:

It was fantastic, nobody ever saw so many people marching with Hungarian flags *in the middle* of Melbourne. (Field notes, June, 2005, my italics)

It was unbelievable how we were marching *in the middle* of the city, in the biggest traffic. (Field notes, June, 2005, my italics)

... the cars were standing and we were marching...(Field notes, June, 2005)

Additionally, the CBD has been a 'conventional site to rally and protest' (Missingham 2002:1649), as the presence of two other demonstrations on the 4 June 2005 indicates. Missingham (2003:140, my italics) points to the fact that 'streets represent democratic public spaces, which everyone can claim a right to congregate in and occupy'. Therefore, the act of embracing 'the streets' and carrying out a protest action was a pivotal step for the protesters in leaving behind the image of submissive immigrants and entering the realm of Australian citizens - in control.

The CBD also provided visibility for the actions of the protesters. Being seen in a positive light by the Australian community is perceived as an important step in the transformation from being a passive immigrant group into a proud Hungarian diaspora. The demonstration also validated the initial hopes of the organisers, that through the exhibition of 'real Hungarianness', the community would be able to abandon the negative associations with the Balkan. Thus, Hungarians would, finally, be able to take up their 'right' place in Australia. The fact that the Trianon demonstration was peaceful and free of trouble was seen as a positive factor contributing to the abandonment of 'Balkanness' (see: Jansen 2000, 2001). The enthusiastic comments from the meeting and the fragments from newspaper articles, written by the demonstration participants, mirror this emotional transformation.

The best was that we did it in front of strangers. Because so far we were only showing to ourselves what it means to be Hungarian. Now we showed ourselves to the Australians, we proved who we are and what we know. (Field notes, June, 2005)

Australians are not interested in our politics. They only want our food and music. They want us to leave our politics at home and get assimilated as soon as possible. Here they don't know anything they don't even know where is Hungary. They don't know that our capital is called Budapest and not 'Budapeszt'¹⁴. However now we showed our history. (Field notes, June, 2005)

It wasn't a radical it wasn't a nationalistic demonstration we can be proud in front of Australians. (Field notes, June, 2005)

¹⁴ Hungarian 'sz' is the English 's'. In Hungarian Budapest is pronounced with 'sh' not with 's'.

I'm very happy that we attracted Australians' attention with our peace- friendliness, spiritual sophistication. (Field notes, June, 2005)

We weren't loud; there was no aggressive behaviour, no swearing! We are not Balkan, primitive hordes. (*Magyar Élet*, 30 June, 2005 p.9)

While feelings of joy about the affirmation of the positive image of Hungarians in Australia dominated the meeting, the commentators also expressed enthusiasm about their reassertion of Hungarianness in the transnational domain. Given the potential for visibility afforded by global communication technology, the demonstrating Hungarians also expected to be received with appreciation in Hungary and in the Carpathian Basin.

...how fantastic you go on to the Internet and we are everywhere, our voice is disseminated everywhere (Field notes, June, 2005)

...when the DVD about the demonstration is ready we have to send it everywhere. I'm going to send it to Canada and to Serbia (Field notes, June, 2005)

Wherever we live, we are Hungarians, that's what we proved now... (Field notes, June, 2005)

Patrubány [President of MVSZ in Hungary] and Kiss Dénes [President of the Trianon Society in Hungary] were supporting us from behind and didn't try to take over our project. They supported us as 'small people'. (Field notes, June, 2005)

We give hope to our homeland. We are important, the demonstration is widely discussed on the Internet the information is disseminated everywhere. (Field notes, June, 2005)

The importance of a sense of redemption, which the demonstration offered to those protesters who originated from the Carpathian Basin, should not be overlooked. The protest served as an opportunity for those who experienced severe discrimination in Slovakia, Romania or ex-Yugoslavia, 'to reintegrate their trauma into the wider meaning of the homeland struggle' (Wise 2004:33). A moving account of a man, who emigrated from Transylvania (Romania), is an excellent example, showing how individual narratives of suffering feed into collectively shared narratives of homeland struggle. It shows how individuals, through the acts of protest, managed to 'rescript traumatic memories into a broader collective project' (Wise 2004:34). This short story was told by the Transylvanian man at this final meeting which reviewed the protest. Sharing the man's personal adolescent experience of humiliation in Romania, enabled participants further to intensify their sense of solidarity, belonging and commitment:

You know, while I was there [at the demonstration] I was thinking about this story, which happened to me...and now I want to share it with you. When I was a teenager I had a sticker of the Hungarian tricolour on my motorcycle. One day, when I was driving the policeman stopped me. 'Take it off!' he said, pointing to the sticker. 'No', I said. 'Take it off, otherwise you can say good bye to your license!' replied the policemen. I took it off, I had to. It was so humiliating, I was a teenager. And marching there [at the rally], for me it was... you know that I can do it, that I can demonstrate against Trianon... it was unspeakable. (Field notes, June, 2005)

Britt and Heise (2000:255) state that 'turning shame to pride is no simple matter, and social movements must be involved in several different kinds of processes in order to get the job done'. Notwithstanding the many reports of those involved in the protest of its powerful transformative impact on their sense of empowerment, Hungarian community members sensed the limitations of the occasion. The last meeting gave an opportunity to Hungarians to express their wishes and future plans for a well-organised, highly institutionalised Hungarian diaspora in Australia. Participants hoped that after the demonstration they would have a better chance to transform their visions of a powerful diaspora into explicit plans and proposals. A general claim for visibility and efficiency was widely expressed. However, the resulting configurations were highly contested and unstable. People gave voice to their scepticism and resentment and expressed controversial views about the potential of the diaspora. The uncertainty and disagreement resulted in the eclipse of feelings of hope and unity that had dominated the first part of the meeting.

A last point that should be made is that the success of the demonstration led to the redefinition of Amy. During the mobilisation period several community members questioned her capability and intellectual merits. However, after the unexpectedly high number of demonstrators, Amy (now referred to as a 'flamboyant leader') came to be seen by many as the key to the triumph. The increase of Amy's prestige is proved by the fact that after the demonstration, István, one of the main opponents of the rally, invited Amy and her husband to the 1956 Revolution Memorandum Committee, despite the long-standing conflict between them.

V. CONCLUSION

By providing a detailed ethnographic account of the disputes and debates that the idea of the demonstration generated, I have underlined the important role of the emotions that characterise diasporic discourses among Hungarians in Australia, in particular the 'desire for inclusion' and the 'anxiety of exclusion'. I have highlighted how these emotions were strategically used by both sympathisers and opponents, to encourage or discourage participation in the protest.

I also demonstrated that the protest gained much of its power from the strong emotions that the 'protest-opponents' evoked among Hungarians in Melbourne. I revealed that the moral outrage and anger created by the differently imagined positionality are the key motivational factors responsible for a relatively high level of participation in the event. Further I illustrated, how organizers and those who opposed the protest engaged in 'emotional labour' and used affects and emotions to mobilise loyalty and collective action, or to frighten members of the community (Jasper 1998:405).

The protest served as an excellent opportunity for diaspora-Hungarians to increase their affective engagement with the homeland and to repay the moral debt owed by those who fled (Hage 2002; Wise 2004:30). The sense of affective

intensification was achieved by the symbolic sharing the suffering of minority Hungarians and taking part in their 'struggle' (Hage 2002). This sense of empowerment helped the demonstrators to redefine their imagined positioning in Australia as members of the Hungarian diaspora and Australian citizens, as well as members of the Hungarian transnational domain.

By focusing on the emotions, which characterised the protest throughout the chapter, I demonstrated that studies of social movements benefit from incorporating the study of emotions into their analysis.

CHAPTER VI.
STRUGGLING FOR CULTURAL SURVIVAL:
Hungarian Identity discourses in the face of assimilation

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite our heroic struggles to preserve the second generation it is impossible to save them from assimilation. The Hungarian club in Canberra was sold last week and the owners shared the money between each other. This Tuesday they sit for the Last Supper and say goodbye to each other. The Hungarian radio and the Hungarian school ceased to exist in Canberra. These are facts. (Sydney-based community leader at the 2002 *'Megmaradásunk Konferencia'* [Our Survival Conference], held in Melbourne)

This chapter explores how an immigrant community, with great diasporic aspirations for empowerment and transnational connectedness, is struggling with cultural survival. Despite the efforts of Hungarian community leaders towards 'nation-preservation', the Hungarian community in Australia faces assimilation. As a result of the rapid rate of assimilation and the aging of the émigré population, Hungarian community centres in Australia are experiencing declining membership. The general decline in community participation and the lack of interest of the young Hungarians in community institutions causes intense anxiety among Hungarian community leaders and members of the first generation. Being on the threshold of disappearing has become a powerful discourse in the last decade.

During the period of exile, 'nation preservation' was one of the key missions of the *emigráció*. Community members argued that Hungarianness had to be preserved in the West as the Communist dictatorship in the homeland endangered its existence in the homeland. Since the collapse of the dictatorship however, these rhetorical formulas, underlying the practices of 'nation preservation' have lost their importance. In this chapter, I examine how community leaders have attempted to create a new mission to save the diaspora from complete degradation, by re-directing the pre-1989 narratives of nation preservation. I look at the ways in which the various conceptualisations of these newly emerged narratives of 'death and survival' and the survival strategies that Hungarians need to implement, are debated in the community. I examine how the transnational possibilities of connections with Hungary influenced these strategies for survival. For example, I discuss how some community leaders use these new narratives of 'death and survival' as political tools to bring homeland-based institutions' attention to the problem. In particular, I show how narratives of 'death and survival' are connected to and intertwined with diasporic objectives of empowerment and transnationalisation.

The Australian-Hungarian 'discourse of survival' needs to be located and examined in the wider Hungarian national discourse of *'nemzethalál'* (death of the nation) (see Chapter I). The vision of *'nemzethalál'* – with its emphasis on sacrifice

and loyalty – which influenced the nation-saving narratives in the exile-period, often frames the rhetoric of the Australian-Hungarian anxiety of ‘diaspora death’. ‘Diaspora-death’ is often portrayed as being a part of the ‘global’ *nemzethalál* of Hungarians, that is Hungarians in the homeland and in the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ diasporas.

In order to find solutions and to retain a sense of Hungarianness, community leaders in Sydney and Melbourne have organised an annual conference, called ‘*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*’ (Our Survival Conference). This conference has been held since 2001 and it seeks to bring community members together to discuss these concerns and to find ways of addressing them. This series of ‘*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*’ forms one of the key contexts in which Hungarian Australians have debated what it means to be Hungarian in the face of anxieties about assimilation and the changing cultural values of Australian-born generations, and visions for the future. Therefore, in this chapter I draw upon participant observation both during and after the conferences in 2003, 2004 and 2005 and draw upon published materials from the previous conferences in 2001 and 2002. A further aim is to shed light on the relative failure of the conferences to mobilise the community in any meaningful way. I discuss the disintegrative impact of emotions and illustrate the ways in which negative emotions, in particular distrust and blame, can lead community members away from participation and hinder the process of revival.

The chapter also aims to contribute to the existing academic literature on ‘cultural survival’ in a meaningful way. The question of cultural survival has been popular since the 1980s in the social sciences; however it has almost exclusively discussed the survival of indigenous people, or ethnic minorities (Hostettler and Restall 2003; Tedlock 1992; Dharmadasa 1986; Sponsel 2001; Eder 2001; Nuttal 1998). In recent years, the diasporist literature has dealt with the question of assimilation and greatly contributed to the issue of generational identity shift (Bakalian 1993; Satzewich 2002). However, with all the emphasis on empowerment, hybridity and transnational dwelling, the diasporist literature rarely hints at the importance of cultural/ethnic survival, and in-depth analyses of the issue have so far been absent (For exceptions, see Bakalian 1993; Satzewich 2002; and Fortier 1998). In attempting to fill this void, I demonstrate the ways in which the vision of ‘diaspora death’ can be entangled with the ideal of a powerful, ‘mobilised diaspora’ (Sheffer 1995; see also Werbner 2002:121).

I. 2. Introducing the ‘survival conferences’

In 2001, the Sydney community elite announced the first *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*. The invitation to participants for the 2001 conference, the terms of which have been repeated in invitations to subsequent conferences, reads as follows: The meeting is held in order to find solutions for the maintenance of Hungarian identity in Australia. We would like to discuss with the presenters and the audience our future, the future of our children, and our grandchildren in the multicultural Australia. How can we preserve our language our culture and identity in this faraway continent? In what respect can we rely on the help of the Australian and the Hungarian governments? [...] We are first of all interested in the opinion of those who actively participate in the education of the later generations, leaders of dance and scout groups, Hungarian language teachers, those who have positions in the clubs and community centres

and those who take care of the old generation in the elderly homes. We look forward to meet our priests, journalists, our colleagues from the Hungarian radio and television, and everybody else who is concerned about the future of Hungarianness. Let's be honest to each other and talk about our difficulties and try to find solution for them. Let's try and find common ground. Let's listen to each other and learn from each other. Of course we would also like to hear about the danger Hungarians face in Hungary and in the Carpathian Basin, AS THE NATION IS ONE. (2001 *Identity Conference Yearbook*, p.1 Capitals in original)

The *Megmaradásunk Konferencia* is held each year in June, on the Queen's Birthday long weekend. It is held in a Hungarian community centre, either in Punchbowl in Sydney or in Wantirna in Melbourne, and invites Hungarian participants from all over Australia. The conference was founded by the president of the New South Wales Hungarian Association, and it is largely funded by the Hungarian Embassy. This three-day conference, which includes cultural, political, and religious ceremonies, forms a focal point for the emotional and political discourses of survival.

The conferences start with a prayer and a blessing from a Hungarian priest. The blessings are followed by keynote speakers, who are typically the conference organisers, the Ambassador, or invited guests from Hungary. The conferences also give space for community members to present their work and detail their struggle to maintain Hungarianness in the capital cities of Australia. Individual presentations are followed by various workshops, which are designed to discuss and find solutions for different aspects of the problem of survival. *Kulturális Munkacsoport* ('Cultural Workshop'), *Ifjúsági Munkacsoport* ('Youth Workshop'), *Magyar-Magyar Kapcsolatok Munkacsoport* ('Homeland-diaspora connections Workshop'), *Magyar Iskolák Munkacsoport* ('Hungarian schools Workshop') are a few of the titles of workshops, which occur each year. During the evening, folk dance, folk music and other programs of entertainment are provided for the participants.

At the first conference, Arthur Karpatzian from the Ethnic Communities Council of New South Wales was invited to be one of the keynote speakers. At subsequent conferences, however, no representatives from the Australian authorities took part. The general lack of reference to Australia or to Australian authorities as potential sources of help has been a common feature of all the conferences, notwithstanding the stated aim of the conferences to address the problem of survival in the Australian context.

Several invited guests from Hungary have contributed to the conferences. These guests have typically been Ambassadors, consuls, government representatives, delegates of Hungarian foundations, and Hungarian media. For example, invitations have gone to the head of *Balassi Intézet* (Balassi Institute), which was described as 'rescuing each year 30 young overseas Hungarians from the deep sea of foreignness for the living Hungarian nation' (Field notes, 2003 *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*), and which is responsible for organising courses in Hungarian language and culture in Budapest for young second- and third-generation overseas Hungarians. Also, the head of *Magyar Kultúra Alapítvány* (Hungarian Cultural Foundation), a representative from the Hungarian Academy of

Sciences, the president of the Duna Television,¹⁵ lecturers from the Hungarian Language Department of Pecs University, and delegates from the Hungarian Department of Education have all spoken at the conferences. The guests are invited by the head of the local Organising Committee. They provide information about cultural and exchange programmes, language courses and funds Australian-Hungarians can apply for to maintain Hungarianness in Australia.

Although the fear of disappearance is a powerful discourse among Hungarians in Australia, the conference-organisers have not managed to channel the communal anxiety into a functioning social movement. The conferences are unable to attract an audience other than the minority who dominate institutions and representational regimes. That is, while the vast majority of people who are routinely involved in the community life are part of the discursive field, it is mostly those who are actively involved in the life of the institutions who are regular guests and speakers at the conferences. The number of the participants is usually between 50 and 70; this consists mostly of local members, and a small number of additional participants, mostly from Melbourne or Sydney, and few from Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide. The participants are mainly first-generation migrants, many of them are pensioners. The succeeding generations usually only participate if they are called on to give a speech, recite a poem, sing or dance; they seldom take part in the debates.

II. STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL

The general decline in Hungarian community life causes severe anxieties and fear among the community members as it is followed by negative social and economic consequences. During my field work, I heard many complaints about the insecure economic situation of the associations, empty and closing community houses, non-integration within the community of the second- and third-generations, and the moral and intellectual decline within the community. In this context, community members have created a rhetoric of devastation, which suggests a general sense of powerlessness and subordination on the one hand, and urge for action on the other. There is a general level of agreement within the community that something has to be done. As one speaker on the conference formulated it:

We all know that we are in the 24th hour. Our youngsters don't know the way. They don't know whether they should be Hungarians, Australians, Hungarian-Australians or Cosmopolitans. To help them is not only our duty it's a command. It brooks no delay! (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2001 published material p.15)

The need for action seems to be urgent and widespread; however, the answer to the question of survival is differently imagined among Hungarians in Australia. The 'survival conferences' are sites of meaning contention and a clash of visions for change, where participants present a number of solutions for cultural maintenance. What exactly needs to be preserved? How do members imagine the future of the

¹⁵ A Hungarian cultural television channel, established with the aim to reach the Hungarian minorities in the Carpathian Basin and to provide Hungarian programs for them.

diaspora in Australia? What are the means to achieve the goal of survival? These are the questions that Hungarians both inside and outside the *Megmaradásunk Konferencia* answer in various ways.

Some imagine survival as the preservation of existing community centres; others call for a shift from 'traditional' to 'symbolic' Hungarianness. Again, the role that Hungary is meant to play in the survival movement is differently imagined. Some see the survival of Hungarianness in Australia as an internal affair; others connect survival narratives to diasporic narratives of empowerment and global Hungarian revival. While representing a diversity of opinions, these accounts also clearly demonstrate the centrality of ideas of struggle, self-sacrifice, chosenness, the quest for visibility and suffering, which have roots in the exilic and diasporic discourses. The boundaries between the various imaginings are not clear-cut. They are overlapping and intertwined, and often identification with either of them depends on personal alliances and communal micro-conflicts. In the following section, I give a detailed analysis of the three main sets of survival narratives, their implications in terms of strategies, and examine how they interrelate.

I. 1. Cultural preservation through voluntarism

The yearning for the former images and surroundings of Hungary guided several first-generation migrants to set up Hungarian associations and community centres. For several Hungarians, the sensations associated with being Hungarian (food, music, faces, smells) became attached to particular spaces, such as the churches, social and sport clubs, language schools and community centres, which Walter Zenner (1987:140) calls 'arenas' of ethnic activity. Such sites helped to ease the social and emotional costs of geographical, linguistic, and cultural displacement. Hungarian culture is simplified in these institutions to strong and recognizable cultural elements. These are usually associated with folklore, such as folk dances, folk songs and typical Hungarian food. They offer enjoyment, consumption and community. These sites attract their audience mostly from the middle and lower middle classes. These community centres function even after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, when transnational connections could have potentially replaced, or at least complemented, their tasks (see: Noivo 2002:260). However, the founding generation is rapidly aging and numbers of the active participants are declining.

Among these people, who either have positions in these institutions or are frequent visitors, a particular line of argument has developed regarding the 'survival' issue. They express nostalgia for the days of the active community life and refer to the current situation as a fall from the 'golden age'. Accounts from the conferences tell of several thousand people visiting football cups, national days, balls and summer camps even as recently as the 1980s. The decline is associated with the lack of noise and lack of images and colours, which is epitomised in the absence of young people, the 'lack of life' (see: Mihaylova 2005:57). Colours and movement from the *past* stand for visibility, celebration and active community life, and this is juxtaposed against the silence and the lack of movement of the *present*,

which is a signifier of loss and decline. A key element in the sense of loss of power is the declining participation in community affairs and the disappearance of the visible, communally practiced traditions and customs that serve as the defining content of Hungarianness in these institutions. Some telling sentences from the conferences articulate this sense of loss:

Female conference participant:

I remember the time when our children were dancing at Sydney Harbour in colourful national costumes. It was beautiful and everybody stopped to watch them. And look around, now there are so few people here... (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2001)

We used to have several folk dancing groups, now there are only a couple. The youngsters are not interested in the Hungarian culture anymore. The community houses are empty...nobody is there; the whole place is hollow... (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

Another female conference participant:

Everything is deteriorating, nobody is coming. The whole atmosphere is depressed. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

For these active participants, the question of survival lies in the preservation of the existing institutions, or more precisely, on the revival of the former vigorous community life. They would argue that as the extent and degree of one's Hungarian identity is measurable through the intensity of activity within the community organisations, the decline is the result of the erosion in Hungarian consciousness and commitment and individual laziness. Thus, the representatives and members of these organisations call for selflessness, hard work and unity within the community in order to maintain and revive Hungarian community life. This call for voluntarism is the outgrowth of the fact that the Hungarian clubs and organisations are not professionally led, but rely on the members' selfless willingness to contribute. Tölölyan (1991:178) notes, when writing about the Armenian diaspora: In diasporas as elsewhere, daily life for the vast majority of people is not so much a matter of attending meetings and performances staged by organizations as of earning a living, raising a family, enjoying entertainment, and so on. [...] As in every national society, so also in every diasporic community, the majority of the population is *not* [...] engaged actively in the production of culture.

For several community representatives, hard work, voluntarism and self-sacrifice are the only strategies which will ensure the survival of Hungarianness in Australia. Some opinions from the conferences are included:

We need this conference to wake up the consciousness of the pessimists, the sceptics and the lazy Hungarians. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

It [maintenance of Hungarian identity] needs struggle, commitment, patience and very hard work. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

We all have to take the issue seriously this is the only way we can achieve something. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

II. 1. 1. Community versus individualism

Such statements as those above suggest that the idea of maintaining Hungarianness is closely associated with the idea of the community. The idea of a unified 'community' is presented in the conferences and in various settings both as a means for survival – as regaining the 'golden age' – and also as a goal for the future. However, at present the 'community' is seen as something that is characterised mainly by personal intrigues, mutual suspicions and, most importantly, a lack of enthusiasm and willingness to sacrifice (see: Cohen 2001). These contemporary narratives are preoccupied with internal conflicts and suggest that the reason for degradation is to be found in the disintegration of the community. As one of my participants put it:

Selflessness is the answer for survival. That you see more than your own needs, and notice that there is a community... for example I don't like folk music, but if there is a band, which plays folk music in the Hungarian House, I go, because I know otherwise the Hungarian House can't be maintained. And next time, you don't like jazz for instance, but you say, 'you know what I go to this jazz concert [in the Hungarian House] so there will be enough people'. If everybody did that, if people were more selfless, there would be no problem. (Field notes, 2004)

In contrast, individualism is equated with laziness and the loss of Hungarian identity. It is juxtaposed, in an often angry manner, against the paramount obligation to the community. An older man who was an active community member in Sydney commented:

The Hungarian house is 'far away', 'not good enough' everybody complains. If one's heart is Hungarian one comes. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

20 years ago people cared about each other. And the place flourished. Now they don't give a damn. No wonder things go as they go. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

In 2004, I celebrated the anniversary of the 1848 revolution in the Hungarian community centre in Sydney. I was living with a family who actively participated in my research. On the day of celebration the husband went to the community centre very early in the morning to decorate the place. When he came back, I enquired about the preparation. He said he did everything alone. In response to my astonishment, he commented:

What do you want? They don't give a shit. Nobody gives a shit! [...] Being Hungarian is not about nice words and beating one's chest. It is about what you do! (Field notes, 2004)

The supporters of this narrative line approach the issue as an internal problem in the community and try to redress it by relying on the resources co-members can offer. Some suggestions from the 2005 *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*:

We need to integrate the groups and associations Australia-wide, which have similar interests and programmes to create viable groups. (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2002 printed material p.20)

I think a great solution would be if we exchanged cultural programs with each other in different states in Australia. (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2002 printed material p.20)

II. 1. 2. Relationship with Hungary

Despite approaching the idea of ‘community’ as an internal issue, Hungarian Australians constantly negotiate relationships to the homeland in the urge for institutional survival. These types of discourses talk mainly of the desire for the revival of the former lively community life from the times when there was no institutional relationship between the homeland and the Hungarian community in Australia. Accordingly, transnational connections in these narratives do not gain central importance. Community leaders, who concentrate mainly on cultural preservation and the maintenance of community institutions in the existing forms, see the homeland as a domain of resources. For example, they constantly express their wish that the mother country would help them in their ‘struggles’ by sending artists, folklore teachers, priests to the community, who would refresh the cultural repertoire of the institutions and would educate the young generations. However, personal transnational connections are not identified as means for survival.

The story of Steve exemplifies this tendency. Steve, a young, third-generation Hungarian, participated in a one-year programme organised by the Ballasi Institute in 2001. The Ballasi Institute arranges ‘Hungarian Studies’ courses for young overseas people of Hungarian descent. Steve gave a speech about his experiences at the Ballasi Institute in Hungary at the 2002 ‘*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*’:

Budapest is a modern, cultural, exciting city... Now I really understand the Hungarian youth culture and also the Hungarian politics.... I had the possibility to drive a Trabant on the countryside, I ate crunchy lángos [scone, a Hungarian speciality], and I drank much beer at the Lake Balaton... I had a fantastic time in Hungary. Now I speak Hungarian fluently, and I write in Hungarian to my relatives, and I plan to go back again. For me this is the answer for survival.... connections with Hungary are the answer for our survival!

Kinga, one of the heads at Melbourne Hungarian Community Centre, told me later: You know I was listening to Steve and I thought to myself: ‘What are you talking about young man? This is not survival, we are not going to maintain Hungarianness and our institutions in that way.’ (Field notes, 2004)

Géza, an important member of the New South Wales Hungarian Association, was similarly critical of some students who attended a short course in ‘cultural management’ at the Ballasi Institute. He said:

We had a couple of candidates, but I have to tell you many of them are not really good candidates. They go home to have fun, come back and *do nothing here*. (Field notes, 2004)

Thus, for both Kinga and Géza, Steve’s transnational connections, up-to-date knowledge about Hungary, and newly emerged Hungarian identity are seen as individual pleasures and cannot be regarded as contributing to the survival of the Hungarian community in Australia. Instead, local actions in the community centres are considered as useful means. In order to be constructive in the revival process, Steve would need to convert his newly gained symbolic capital into volunteer work at the Hungarian association.

Personal transnational connections can even be viewed as harmful, as they result in the loss of interest to participate in the community organisations. As one of the Melbourne-based community member told me:

Before, people came here [Magyar Ház] if they wanted to hear Hungarian music, or entertainment, or companionship. Now you just turn on the Duna TV or switch on the Internet. And it's also easy to travel home. It's all good, even fantastic, but we are disadvantaged! (Field notes, 2004)

Others called for more emphasis on the local community and a redefinition of the homeland. A Melbourne-based community leader said:

We need to investigate the point of sending charity and remittances to Hungary and to the Carpathian Basin. The money we send there can be used their however we could use it for our survival. [...] We shouldn't interfere with issues in Hungary which we can't resolve from here. (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2001 printed material pp. 76-77).

II. 2. Identity shift: the idea of symbolic Hungarianness

'Where are the young Hungarians? Where are the young Hungarians?' [Ironically referring to the constant complaints] If we want them to come to our programs we have to offer them something which they appreciate. Why do they [community elite] force their old fossilised way of thinking and habits on them? They finally have to understand that we need a paradigm shift. (Field notes, 2005)

The citation above points toward a different direction than narratives that aim to preserve Hungarianness in its current form. Several Hungarians have called for a shift from 'traditional' to 'symbolic' Hungarianness. They claim that Hungarian identity can only be maintained in that way.

The discourse of 'symbolic Hungarianness' marks a clear distinction between culture and identity. A number of authors in the field of ethnic studies have argued that even if descendants of immigrants disassociate themselves from the culture of their parents and grandparents, they nevertheless maintain their ethnic identity.

Satzewich (2002) documents the identity shift which emerged among Ukrainians in Canada and the United States. Several organizations in the Ukrainian diaspora have become bilingual or even use English only, as they do not consider the Ukrainian language to be central to either group identity or the maintenance of group boundaries. Instead, they put more emphasis on the 'symbolic and emotive aspects of ethnic attachments as a way of drawing and maintaining group boundaries' (Satzewich 2002:216). Satzewich (2002:217) claims that despite the language loss, succeeding generations still 'consider themselves to be Ukrainians, feel an attachment to Ukraine and continue to hold onto the symbolic aspects of Ukrainian ethnic culture'.

Bakalian (1993) in her book similarly documents that American-born descendants of Armenian immigrants have undergone significant assimilation in the United States and their sense of Armenianness has acquired a 'symbolic' rather than an 'actual' status. The succeeding generations no longer use the Armenian language as a means of communication, only infrequently attend Armenian religious services, and participate less frequently in community activities. Yet,

Bakalian affirms, 'the majority of Armenian-Americans, even the great-grandchildren of the immigrant generation, continue to maintain high levels of Armenian identity, fierce pride in their ancestral heritage, and a strong sense of we-ness or peoplehood' (Bakalian 1993:6). Thus, Armenians in the United States have moved from the ascribed identity of the first generation to the voluntary identity of the succeeding generation, that is, from 'being' to 'feeling' Armenian (Bakalian 1993).

'Voluntary' identity refers to what Gans (1979, 1994, 1999) conceptualised as 'symbolic ethnicity'. 'Symbolic ethnicity' is an expression of one's ethnic identity without adopting the 'traditional' behavioural and cultural characteristics that make up the identity of the first wave of immigrants. Gans (1979:9-10) writes: 'Symbolic ethnicity [...] does not require functioning groups or networks; feelings of identity can be developed by allegiances to symbolic groups that never meet [...] Symbolic ethnicity does not need a practiced culture, even if the symbols are borrowed from it.' Similarly, Gitelman (1998:8) differentiates between 'thick' and 'thin' culture, the latter referring to 'values, understandings, and interpretations shared by the group'.

The work of Satzewich, Bakalian and Gitelman documents the shift from 'traditional' to 'symbolic' identity. What I am documenting are some arguments, which some first generation Australian-Hungarians deploy to embrace these invisible Hungarians as a strategy for survival. There are calls for the Hungarian institutions set up by émigrés to accommodate a Hungarian 'spirit', reflecting a more secure and hybrid Hungarian identity, rather than a Hungarian 'lifestyle'. The integration into the community of the succeeding generations is seen as a primary means of protecting the community from 'diaspora-death'. These new narratives call for the abandonment of some highly visible elements of 'traditional ethnicity' and emphasise the invisible ethnic elements that are part of the claimed Hungarian belief and value system. Much of these discussions revolve around the role of Hungarian language, the power-shift within the institutions, the community's visibility within Australia, and modernisation.

As some scholars (Smolicz and Secombe 1999; Hatoss 2003b:2) have indicated, Hungarians in Australia are language-centred, that is, they consider their mother tongue to be among their core values. As Smolicz and Secombe (1999:29) writes, for such groups the value of their first language 'transcends any instrumental consideration, and represents a striving for self-fulfilment that makes the language a symbol of survival, and hence of autotelic significance'. The aspiration to keep the native language alive is also fed by the strong socio-historical heritage of Hungarian culture (Hatoss 2003b:2). As Hungary adopted the German model of *Kulturation* during the nineteenth century, the Hungarian language has always been regarded as the *origo* of the native culture (Hatoss 2001, 2004a, 2004b). Further, since the Trianon Treaty resulted in a large number of Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary, the maintenance of the mother tongue acquired an extra weight in the arguments for national survival.

As indicated in the introduction of this book, with succeeding generations the importance of Hungarian language is decreasing in Australia. Several Hungarians in

the conferences call for an accommodation to these changed circumstances. Some typical statements from the conferences which express this view are:

The third generation doesn't speak Hungarian any more but they feel that they are Hungarian. They want to know what they are. We have to be open to, and appreciate their interest. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

According to the official census there are more than 62 thousand Hungarians in Australia. Most of them we know nothing about. It is irresponsible not to include those Hungarians who don't speak the language anymore. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

I'm sorry, but we have to accommodate ourselves to the new generation. They are also Australians! So we have to forget the statement: Nyelvében él a nemzet [The language is the cradle of the nation]. No it's not, not here! (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

These narratives gained popularity not only among the community elite, who realised that a paradigm shift is needed if they want to maintain the existing organisations, but also among those, who do not occupy any positions and/or have a hostile relationship with the representatives of the local Hungarian institutions. For the latter, the call for a shift for 'symbolic Hungarianness' is entangled with feelings of resentment against the older generation, who dominate the institutional regimes. Some of the accusations target the authoritarian and exclusionary manners of the first generation Hungarians:

Now they are wondering, why the younger generations do not come. They did come, because the only thing they heard was: 'Put these chairs here', 'Arrange the tables' 'Do this, do that'. They treated them like kids, no respect. Who wants to do stuff like that? These youngsters are not stupid; they have other options than serving these old men. (Field notes, 2005)

The other common allegation the ruling older generation faces is that it did not manage to establish 'fame' in Australia. That is, the reason why Hungarians have no fame in Australia is due to the isolationist, intolerant, conservative and atavistic nature of the institutional leadership. Consequently, the invisibility of the Hungarian community within multicultural Australia is often seen as a reason for the decline in community. That is why, in order to maintain Hungarianness in the host country, some argue that they need to redefine their positioning and gain more inclusion within the Australian multicultural sphere. However, they argue that this can only be achieved by acknowledging and celebrating the hybridity of the later generations.

The first generation couldn't establish any Hungarian roots here, from which the second generation could nurture its Hungarian identity. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

Our children know nothing about Hungary, about Hungarian history, only negative things. They hear something about Hungarians in Australia [at school, in the news etc.] about pagan hordes, fascists etc. Families here are not that strong that they could complement this. We need to educate them about Hungarianness, we need to change the negative images. The only way out is to present the Hungarian culture in a positive light. We are completely unknown and invisible here. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

These narratives call for the creation of a heterogeneous, dynamic ‘in-between’ space, where the younger generation feels comfortable and included. A mother of two teenage daughters contributed to one of the workshops during the 2003 *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*. She emphasised:

My daughters don’t come because they can’t find their place here. There is nothing here for them. And you know I agree with them. I also want a community centre which is more Australian... and which is clean which is shiny which is modern but still I could feel at home in it because it is still Hungarian. We shouldn't try to create a complete Hungarianness that is too much... (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

Hungarians often point out what they see as the older émigrés atavism and preoccupation with nostalgic images of the past in Hungary. However, instead of calling for extended transnational connections with the homeland, these narratives emphasise the importance of embracing Australianness in the community institutions. In the same workshop another Hungarian said:

Unfortunately the greater part of the community elite lives ‘in the past and from the past’. They don’t notice that they can’t feed the young generation with the same repertoire that they like. These kids are also Australian, we have to accept it and arrange programs accordingly. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

The urge to create a more hybrid space is often linked to the argument that professional leadership and a commercial attitude should replace voluntarism. Voluntarism is equated with the low quality of both the cultural repertoire and the facilities of the institutions and is associated with what the proponents of modernisation see as the conservatism and atavism of the current leadership. As one participant remarked, reflecting on the amateurism of the community elite:

The Hungarian centre is not working because people like Mariska and Jolánka¹⁶ know how to clean the dishes very well, but that's it. It needs professional management. (Field notes, 2004)

Consequently, modernisation is perceived as a pivotal step towards both survival and the inclusion into the Australian multicultural domain. Some professional entrepreneurs are frequent speakers at the conferences. They emphasise that a professional leadership would pave the way to inclusion in Australian multiculturalism:

The Hungarian community centre in Melbourne is not directed by professionals. It's not possible to do anything there are a too many directors and heads. They have no idea how to apply for scholarships and grants because they're amateurs. These associations and clubs are circumlocution offices, they are not registered, thus can't apply for grants. You only need one professional manager for all Australia. (...) We heard several nice plans today. However, they will remain nice plans if amateurs and devoted and passionate volunteers, try to do it again. We need professional work, professional plans and professional solutions. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

The crucial aspect of these narratives is that the symbolic ethnicity of the third-generation is not imagined as a characteristic which ‘takes on an expressive function in people's lives’ (Gans 1999:177), or as a leisure time activity which can

¹⁶ The participant wanted to emphasise the amateurism of the current community elite by referring to ‘typical rural’ female names.

be enjoyed without the involvement in organized ethnic groups. Instead, these narratives emphasise the utilisation of the re-emerging identity in the succeeding generations. The account below indicates this speculation behind the call for paradigm shift. Nevertheless, the shift is strongly linked with the preservation of the localised Hungarian culture offered by the existing institutions; as it is imagined that shift will lead the so-far invisible Hungarians to join and contribute to the organisations.

Young Hungarians will come back to the community if they know something about their Hungarianness. We have to explain Hungarianness in English. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

II. 3 Young Australian-Hungarians as the saviours of the nation

Again others take another step further away from the bounded idea of community. As a community leader told me:

So what if there are 5000 young Hungarians who speak Hungarian well here in Australia? It doesn't mean that anything will happen. Here everybody is emphasising the language but how can the child benefit from it and how can the community benefit from it? And how can the nation benefit from it? I don't believe that here the community is going to survive. That is the normal way of life, the Hungarian house is going to die out and we will need to sell it. All those attempts are only prolonging the death. We should rather work on the connection between young Hungarians here and Hungary. That's the only thing we can do: to orientate our children towards Hungary. We should establish professional circles, so that children from here, from this paradise, this bonanza should go home and revive the nation. Hungary, which is in such a bad situation should use this possibility. And this should be generated by the state. It costs a lot, however the main question is organisation. Somebody should establish a centre here in Sydney and a nice woman should be the coordinator and she should map all the young Hungarians who could be useful for Hungary. This is the only way we can survive here. And this road is beneficial for everybody! (Field notes, 2004)

As the citation above shows, the tropes of survival and death can be linked to narratives of diasporic empowerment. In this section, I demonstrate that the segment of the community elite which had been engaged in the (more-or-less unsuccessful) bridge-building efforts between the community and the homeland have embraced the discourses of extinction and channelled them into the discursive frame of diasporisation. I show how the anxiety of assimilation became a strategic device in the diasporisation project. According to these narratives, the 'converted' (and integrated) third generation has the potential to raise the Hungarian community to the level of a 'mobilised' diaspora. In that sense, the theme of decline and loss is not concerned only with sorrow, lament and passivity. 'Diaspora death' visions are closely intertwined with visions of a new, powerful Hungarian diaspora in Australia and the revival of the globalised 'Great Hungarian nation'. As one conference participant said:

We need to do something so that the tens of thousands of Hungarian origin can have a valuable effect on the global Hungarian nation. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

After the Second World War, Japan sent young professionals to every corner of the world to learn. They travelled and copied everything and came back and built a successful industrial society.

Hungary doesn't need to send young people out to the world they are already there. We just need to bind the connections together. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

As argued in Chapter I, the *emigráció* during the 'exile' has internalised the idea of chosenness in its identity narrative, although it has never been articulated as a 'divine election'. The belief that the *emigráció* is the last preserve of the real values of Hungarianness, and the last bastion, from where struggles for liberating the mother country can be carried out, strongly this sense of chosenness. Later, during the 'diasporic' period, while the belief in chosenness has remained, it has acquired a new form and shape, which manifests itself in the image of the hybrid 'ambassador', who would elevate Hungary from the Balkan grave. In his study of nationalism, Smith (1992) claims that ethnic survival is closely connected to the sense of 'chosenness'. Smith states that chosenness is the supreme guarantor of ethnic durability, since to be chosen means that one's group is placed under moral obligations (Smith 1992:441; Cauthen 2004:22). Claims for being chosen are also closely intertwined with the Australian-Hungarian 'survival discourses'. In the current narratives, the emphasis shifts from the aging first generation to the succeeding generations, who are portrayed as the 'professional saviours' of the global Hungarian nation. The diaspora- and nation-saving second and third-generations are depicted as self-confident, educated professionals. They are the potential transnational elite, who are capable of campaigning, lobbying, and networking as an integrated group in the political system of the host country. Their mission is explicitly presented as transnational *rather* than being located only at the local-communal level. This concept ironically implies that an *assimilated* elite of Hungarians descent can better serve Hungarian interests and has the potential to rescue the community from disappearance. In that sense, assimilation is actually being celebrated; assimilated young Hungarians are seen as the source of the renewed and reconfigured diasporisation plans. Importantly, some of those Australian-Hungarians who have been subjected to exclusion from the democratic transformation in Hungary attempt to gain inclusion into the social, political and cultural realm in the homeland by advocating the potentials of the later generations.

One of the main plans of some community leaders has been to set up a database of the professional Hungarians living country-wide that can be utilised for diasporic and transnational needs. The idea is so popular that even those who are not actively participating in the 'nation saving' narratives refer to it as a potential strategy for maintaining the community institutions. The idea of the database is often replete with references to the Jewish diaspora, which as indicated previously has been the model for Hungarian diasporisation strategies (see: Satzewich 2002). A telling statement from the conferences which express this idea:

Hungary should realise that its elite is here. It is in Hungary's interest to survey the Australian Hungarian population how many are they, what are they doing. Similarly, how the Jews do it. The do a survey, who is where, in what position, and if they need someone, the open the computer files and they find them. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

II. 3. 1. 'Politics of blame, suffering and promises'

In these transnational-oriented narratives, unlike in the others, the homeland plays a pivotal role in the struggle against 'diaspora death'. It is imagined that Hungary will provide economic and administrative aid to help in the 'conversion' and 'activation' of the succeeding generations. As it did in the early 1990s (as discussed in Chapter 1), Hungary is expected to be the coordinator of these efforts and provide the institutional framework for the 'mission of the new transnational elite'. By entangling local anxieties of death with visions of a global Hungarian revival active members of the Hungarian community in Australia have created a combined 'politics of blame, suffering and promises' to appeal to homeland institutions and demand material, financial and administrative help for their 'survival'.

Similar to Fortier's (1998:198) observations among Italians in England, a striking feature of these narratives is that it is the Hungarian government and authorities, and not the Australian, which are challenged for their lack of political will to protect Hungarians from the need to assimilate in Australia. While blame is never directed toward Australian policies and decision-makers, survival narratives often voice resentment towards the homeland for failing to provide them support for survival.

The communist dictatorship is often mentioned as a key reason for the current deprivation. The community elite, while still emphasising the heroic attempts of nation preservation, admit that without institutional help from the motherland the project to transmit Hungarian knowledge to the later generations is always doomed to fail. Such accounts undermine the claims that through the practices of 'nation preservation', Hungarians could conserve the 'essence' of Hungarianness on which a de-territorialised but authentic Hungarian identity could be based. However, by emphasising the failure of Hungary to provide help to the isolated but devoted first generation, the community elite directed all the blame towards the dictatorship.

We tried everything to save the second generation from assimilation. They have been a part of a blossoming community life. We taught them Hungarian, arranged picnics, camps, balls etc. However our children couldn't live with the possibility to see the homeland of their parents as did the second generation of other emigrant groups. The brutal dictatorship behind the Iron Curtain simply inhibited it. For them Hungary and the Carpathian Basin remained only an illusion. The regime change came too late for them. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

I believe our difficulties are partly rooted in the lack of institutional help from the mother country. The Hungarian community overseas have been isolated during communism, not like other emigrant groups such as the Greeks, Italians who have received institutional help from the mother countries. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

The politics of blame however is not confined to past failures. The ruling first generation further channelled its resentment against the democratic Hungarian authorities for the non-inclusion of the *emigráció* into homeland affairs and for Hungary's failure to assist in the building of the transnational bridges.

Hungary is preoccupied with his own problems. They don't have future perspectives. They still didn't realise that they lost millions of people in the last 60 years or more. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

As one of the key conference organisers said:

You can change your shoes and your coat every four years however you can't fool around with national strategy. Especially a country like Hungary, in which one-third struggles for survival in captivity [referring to Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin] or in exile. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

Interestingly, sometimes disappointment in democratic Hungary is so powerful that it challenges the hegemony of the deep antagonism between the *emigráció* and the communist regime. One of the conference attendees in 2005 reflected on the communist government in Hungary in a nostalgic fashion. She said:

...during the communism the MVSZ sent us Sinkovics [famous Hungarian actor] to keep up the Hungarian spirit. Now we have to beg all the time. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

The quotations above show that the politics of blame is intertwined with the representation of the diaspora as a suffering community in need, thus righteous blame is often enmeshed with an emotional cry for help. Accounts of the 'diaspora in need' attempt to compete with (or at least to gain inclusion into) the homeland-based narratives of suffering. Such claims emphasise the forced displacement of the people into exile, the sacrifices made by the *emigráció* for the homeland and the moral responsibility of the homeland to look after the diaspora's needs. By portraying the diaspora as a suffering community in need, the narratives also aim to reverse the 'migration guilt' (Hage 2002) and turn it into a kind of 'homeland guilt'. At the opening ceremony at the 2005 *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, the president of the New South Wales Hungarian Association summarised the *efforts* that the *emigráció* had expended for the mother country.

Our community had a large role in the destruction of communist dictatorship. We have been part of the Anti-Bolshevik Block of Nations, Captive Nations Week Committee, Joint Baltic Nations. We organised protests, marches, rallies etc. We wrote petitions to the Australian governments and international NGOs. We published books and pamphlets. We have been actively supporting the democratisation of Hungary and economically promoted the educational and social institutions in the Carpathian Basin. However now we have arrived at the point when we have to concentrate on our own survival. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

Another representative, by emphasising the suffering of the community, similarly trying to instigate 'homeland-guilt' and inferring that it is now Hungary's *obligation* to care for a *declining* diaspora:

Hungary is a brood hen who needs to take care of her chickens [Hungarian communities worldwide]. Because these people here didn't come away from Hungary because they wanted but because they had to. We need moral support. (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, printed material 2002 p.54)

At another time, the same person said:

After the first generation says goodbye it will be Hungary's duty to keep the young generations Hungarian. We have nothing to be ashamed about, we simply need to admit that we need help. However, no doubt the help will carry good interests and investment will flourish. As the engaged

and integrated Hungarian youth will enrich the whole Hungarian nation. (*Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, printed material, 2001 p.32)

As seen from the last quotation the narratives of suffering can be often intertwined with the 'politics of promises'. Current discourses on the nation-saving potential of the second generation emphasise the lack of Hungary's intellectual resources. The narratives *still* claim (see Chapter 1) that as Hungarians could not climb out of the grave that the communist dictatorship forced them into, they lack a young professional elite. The community elite who advocates this view often switches the emphasis from the *diaspora in need* to the image of the *homeland in need*. They emphasise the benefits and the advantages of the investment in the diaspora along with the moral obligation of the Hungarian state to help Hungarian diasporas around the world.

The survival of the second generation is a national interest. It is Hungary's national interest to establish an institutionalised, juridical and constitutional relationship with the diaspora. Even if some great powers don't like it. This small country can't survive without the global reintegration of the diasporas. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

To reconnect all the Hungarians around the world to be utilised by the nation is a historic task at the moment. The mother country can't ignore this enormous national treasure represented by the many tens of thousands well educated Hungarians all around the world in high positions. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

Why is [our survival] important for Hungary? We often complain that the world doesn't know anything about us, they don't know our values, and they don't know what Hungarians gave to the world. In the Habsburg Empire we [Hungarians] were isolated, during Horthy¹⁷ we were an outcast, the Soviet occupation again isolated us from the world. We should present ourselves now when we can, before we will be dissolved in the European Union. We have to do something so that they wouldn't search for us in the mountains of the Balkan, or in the 'Slavic Sea', and wouldn't look at us surprised when we try to lobby for the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

As seen from the citations above, the survival of the diaspora is often closely linked with the survival of the global Hungarian nation. These narratives, by drawing on the long-standing Hungarian discourse of '*nemzethalál*' (nation-death), evoke the vision of the impending national holocaust that Hungary and Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin face. These narratives claim that Hungary could not recover from the communist devastation, Hungarians in the post-Trianon states still face discrimination, and the active members of the diaspora in Australia are rapidly decreasing in numbers. Therefore, Hungarian survival can only be achieved if the homeland and the various Hungarian communities around the world emerge from fragmentation. Some telling sentences from the conferences demonstrate this point: Nobody will help the nation to survive only the united will of the nation and the belief that we are one nation. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

¹⁷ Regent of Hungary during the interwar years and throughout most of World War II.

Currently the key word is survival for all the dismembered parts of the [Hungarian] national body. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

Finally we have to learn to think globally. Let's create the globalism of Hungarianness. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

The nation which was torn apart in the tragic history of twentieth century finally wants to rejoin together. We are still struggling against the historic of forces in Europe. We need to establish a bridge which keeps the dismembered parts together. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

We have extraordinary duties. Hungary suffered enormous losses, however this trauma enabled a fantastic possibility which needs to be utilised, so that Hungary's enormous loss can be reconciled, and so that all the lost national parts could be reconnected in the virtual Hungarian nation. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

Even if the homeland is portrayed as the core activator of the professional saviours, there is no straightforward centre-periphery relationship between the diaspora and the homeland, since all communities face the impending danger of death and since power, and the potential of power, remains diffuse (see: Pattie 1994; Clifford 1994).

We all [homeland, Carpathian Basin, diasporas] need to survive. Since Trianon the torn away body parts have been struggling against assimilation and foreign rule. Even the mother country couldn't avoid its tragedy. So where is the base to which the torn apart body parts could return to? (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2003)

III. 'CONVERSATION BETWEEN DEAD PEOPLE': The stagnation of the movement

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the community elite did not manage to channel the anxiety of 'diaspora-death' into an organised and institutionalised movement. One of the reasons behind the failed endeavours is that the community elite was unable to mobilise the Hungarian population in Australia. In this section, I investigate the reasons behind the failed efforts of mobilisation by pointing to the disintegrative emotions, in particular distrust, within the community.

Klatch (2004) argues that most studies of new social movements, tend to romanticize the role of emotions by focusing only on the positive affective bonds within movements and the ways emotions contribute to building solidarity and reinforcing commitment. She argues that the possibility of negative affective ties is underestimated in the current literature on social movements. Similarly, Goodwin et al. (2000) suggest that the emphasis should be not only on disagreements on strategy and tactics within groups, but also how envy, discontent, and demonisation encourage schisms within movements. McAdam (1982, 1988) also implies that emotions such as terror, guilt, and disillusionment are an important part of the experience of movement membership. In this subsection, I discuss the disintegrative impact of emotions, and illustrate the ways in which negative

emotions, in particular distrust, can lead community members away from participation and hinder the process of survival and revival.

I argue that the lack of trust within the community and mutual accusations are the primary non-structural explanatory factors for a lack of effective, collective action. The lack of trust can be observed in two unrelated narratives. First, I show how the utilisation of emotively constituted rhetoric can cause apathy, boredom and annoyance among participants. Second, I show that both the expectations from the homeland and the diasporic aspirations of a globalised Hungarian nation are challenged and destabilised by isolationist voices, which resemble exilic stances from the past.

Even though I place the emphasise on the disintegrative emotions, it is necessary to highlight that the structural barriers, that is the low level of institutionalisation in the community, the ineffectual transnational ties, the lack of substantial resources which diaspora entrepreneurs could mobilise, play a great role in the stagnation of the movement.

III. 1. Distrust within the community

Distrust within the community largely hinders the mobilisation process. In an emotionally charged climate, that is characterised by a lack of trust, the emotionalised rhetoric of the organisers and presenters is often received negatively within the audience, showing that calls for ‘emotional work’ can have undesired counter-effects. For example, mourning and laments, further emotionalised calls for sacrifice, responsibilities and selflessness, often generate suspicion in the community and isolate the conference organisers. Calls for ‘emotion labour’ can also be unsuccessful; instead of resulting in mobilisation or in change, they might even force the community into a state of social paralysis. Gabor, a first generation migrant in his forties, told me in the lunch break during the 2005 conference:

I came because I am interested in the question. But it’s a total turn off. All this lament and mourning, and nationalist rhetoric, these cheap appeals to our patriotism and such... They really think that they can squeeze some money or free labour out of us in this way? (Field notes, 2005)

Csaba, a Melbourne-based participant, argued that he is absent from the conferences because the emotionalised atmosphere frustrates and alienates him:

You think I don’t have anything better to do than to listen to these self-elected oligarchs? All that talk about the death of the community, this exaggerated fear, panic, and nothing happens! They don’t have any ideas whatsoever...only mourning, that’s what they do. I mean I’m interested but the approach is wrong... less talking more action. (Field notes, 2005)

Another male participant said:

I don’t participate anymore [in the conferences]. They cannot appeal to me, as if we talked different languages. It’s lip-service, talking, crying and at the end what? Never anything comes out of it. (Field notes, 2005)

Such accounts reveal that the emotional climate of the conferences is often linked to, or even equated with amateurism, inefficiency and impotence. These claims echo the opposition to the Trianon-rally, which was critical of the emotionality of the rally-organisers as being unprofessional, idealistic, even fanatical, and contrary to the common good (see also: Groves 2001). More importantly, the criticism in this case also reveals the lack of trust towards the diaspora's representatives. Emotionalised rhetoric is often perceived as wheedling, employed to gain economic contributions from the audience. Similarly, the calls for voluntarism, hard work and sacrifice meet severe critique within the community. The distrust is linked to what many perceive as the autocratic leadership and lack of transparency of the clubs and organisations. An older man at one of the conferences whispered: You know why nothing happens? Because this whole place is mouldy! It's stagnating! No steps will be made towards the goal [survival] if there are no changes in the hierarchy. The only thing they want is to hold on to the power, they are not interested in the survival of Hungarianness, only in the survival of their positions! (Field notes, 2003)

A community leader in Melbourne presented a proposal at the 2004 conference for an intrastate Hungarian financial base which would finance social and cultural activities, and by doing so it would help the existing clubs and associations. The plan implied that each Hungarian family and association should donate a low yearly sum. The idea was sceptically received by many attendees. One of the participants said:

I am fed up with these cries. They cry for money, cry for help, and you know what? I want to know where that money goes. (Field notes, 2004)

Another Hungarian remarked on another occasion:

Talking about selflessness: I hate that the Hungarian community centre is a joint-stock company, they collect the money and make everybody work for free. (Field notes, 2004)

Envy, jealousy and personal intrigues similarly undermine the level of trust within the community. The 2004 Melbourne-based conference gave the presenters an opportunity to express private grievances and direct blame towards each other. The conference setting also gave people the opportunity to fan their disagreements with some of the community leaders. Community organisers often give voice to their resentment, in an emotional manner, complaining about the general lack of altruism and communal feelings within the wider Hungarian population. The audience responds by criticising the representatives for their atavism, despotism and low level of organisational skills.

III. 2. Distrust towards the homeland institutions

I have previously discussed the fact that distrust became an entrenched emotional feature not only in contemporary Eastern Europe, but also in the Hungarian diaspora in Australia. The distrust in the diaspora is directed particularly towards the Hungarian state and its institutions, and its expression results in anxiety among

Australian-Hungarians (see: Kalb and Tak 1999, 2005; see also: Sztompka 1996; Misztal 1996; Sevenhuijsen and Brinkgreve 2002). Here, I demonstrate again this distrust in the Hungarian state organisations, and especially the current post-communist government, hampers the mobilisation process for the survival problem.

The dispute over the nature of the cooperation with the current Hungarian government also penetrates the 'survival discourses'. Several organisations and community leaders do not share isolationist views and refuse to cease their communication with the Hungarian government. The main organisers of the *Megmaradásunk Konferencia* believe that in order to achieve their goal, they cannot afford not to communicate with the contemporary administration. This resulted in internal disputes and fractures, which led the supporters of isolationism to further intensify their anxieties about the 'communist forces' – now joined by several leaders of the diaspora – trying to demolish the community. While I was preparing for the 2005 Sydney-based *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, I asked several of my participants in Melbourne why they were not planning to attend the conference. Some argued that they did not see the point of listening to the already too-familiar laments and sorrows. Others made it clear that they do not wish to contribute to any movement that 'collaborates' with the current ex-communist Hungarian government. As one of my participants put it:

Survival? How can you even take it seriously that the current gangster government is going to assist us in anything? Even the blind can see that they work against us! (Field notes, 2005)

Mark, another key participant in the research, has not attended the *Megmaradásunk Konferencia* since ex-Communist parties in Hungary were re-elected in 2002. Along with others, he claimed that he is unwilling to listen to the delegates of the Hungarian government. He portrayed the organisers as communist spies who are paid by the government in Hungary to break down the community. At the 2004 conference, lecturers from a Hungarian university were present, and gave a speech about Hungarian language teaching methods. Most of the criticism pointed out that the lecturers bored the audience; however several attendees' narratives showed signs of anxiety. One of my participants claimed that the keynote speaker from the university, by referring to Hungarian as a 'foreign language', was spreading 'black magic' around the audience. He and several others also believed that the speech was prepared maliciously to bore the listeners on behalf of the ex-communist government organisations. The representative of the Balassi Institute was similarly received with suspicion by several of my participants. These people were concerned that the Hungarian ex-communist government was setting a trap for young overseas Hungarians, in order to deform their knowledge about Hungarian history and culture. One of the participants, who has two teenage daughters, answered my question, whether he would send his children to the Balassi Institute:

No, I have heard stories, they brainwash the children. Last year one of the teachers said to the students that Orbán Viktor¹⁸ was a gipsy! That's what they preach there! Propaganda! It is obvious... but here people don't know and they fall into the trap! (Field notes, 2004)

¹⁸ Centre-right wing prime minister of Hungary between 1989 and 2002.

Prior to the 2003, 2004 and 2005 conferences, several group-emails were circulated which warned people about the potential dangers of the conferences. Iván, an otherwise strong anti-communist, found the problem of survival crucial enough that he did not boycott the conference and presented a paper.¹⁹ Later, he was accused of conspiracy and of being involved in espionage. Thus, isolationist narratives, through the ventilation of anxiety, manage to alienate a segment of the politically-oriented population. The spread of anxiety operates at different levels. It appeals to peoples' sense of dignity and pride, by calling for the refusal of the charity that the ex-communist government, which Hungarians have been fighting for forty years both in the homeland and in the exile, 'generously' offers. It also might alienate potential participants, as they fear that rumours will damage their reputation, by linking them to the 'wrong' side of the Hungarian political platform. But, most importantly, such narratives generate the feeling that the *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, intentionally or not, result in damage to the community.

On the other side of the debate, several community representatives argue that solutions for survival can only be found if political preferences are set aside. The president of the New South Wales Hungarian Organisation is one of the main advocates for partnership with the current Hungarian authorities. He said:

I as the president of the New South Wales Hungarian Organisation, I need to keep cultural connections with the contemporary Hungarian government. I do it for the survival of our grandchildren. However, some always misinterpret it and accuse me of fraternising with the communist government. They simply don't understand that I as the president can't afford not to communicate with them. I am responsible for the continuous development, but without communication we won't get any help. [...] The Constitution says that the contemporary Hungarian government is sympathetic to all the Hungarian diasporas all over the world. We have to demand it from the communist as well. I tell you an example: Szili Katalin [Socialist Party member, Head of the Hungarian parliament (2002–2006)] visited Sydney and nobody wanted to go and meet her at the embassy. I went and asked her about the Duna Television. And I got promising feedback from her. [...] We need to separate politics and the community issues. We have couple of hard core organisations which are still preoccupied with Hungarian politics. During the exile period we didn't communicate with the homeland government either, however exile is over. They [referring to the 'hard core organisation'] can do whatever they like, however our task is different. We need to step over it, time has passed over it. We can't do nothing but cry. We are at the victims of the Trianon syndrome. We need to concentrate on the future. It is impossible to have Hungarian-Hungarian connections if we communicate with them for four years and then we don't communicate with them for four years again. We can't work like that towards a global Hungarian nation. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2005)

Several members of the Hungarian community centre in Melbourne also favour close relationship with the contemporary government.

Individual opinions and political ideologies can't hinder national interests. Regardless of the political ideology of the contemporary government we have to keep continuous relationship in order to establish sufficient connections and receive help to the education of the second and third-generations. (Field notes, *Megmaradásunk Konferencia*, 2004)

¹⁹ The year of the actual conference is not indicated to protect the identity of the well-known Hungarian.

The accounts above call for a final and absolute paradigm shift. They utilise the compelling claim that certain segments of the community live in the past, that isolationist stances are atavistic, past-oriented and destructive to the future of the community. Interestingly, those who use such claims frequently face the same charges. However, by embracing the accusations, and by distancing themselves from the isolationist voices, community leaders try to appeal to the depoliticised but populous segment of the community. These examples illustrate how discourses of relationships with the homeland are utilised for local issues.

It would be misleading to describe the *Megmaradásunk Konferenciák* as sites that are characterised exclusively by negative emotions. On the contrary, positive emotional energy, excitement, enthusiasm and willingness, can often be felt during the three days. Despite the disagreements and the lack of concrete outcomes, participants often report that they experienced a passionate and meaningful time during the ritual. While a state of conflict is often more apparent than a state of consensus, the collective ritual experience reinforces the urgency of the problem. As Kertzer (1999:5) noted, ‘far from always creating solidarity by reinforcing shared values, one of the crucial functions of ritual is to produce solidarity in the absence of any commonality of beliefs’ (see also: Svašek 2000:122). For many participants, the conferences form a focal point for the emotional and political discourses of survival, as the speeches, interactions, and symbolic acts *intensify* their affective engagement with the topic of survival (Hage 2002).

IV. CONCLUSION

Immigrant assimilation, adaptation, social integration and the redefined identity of the third generation have been central themes in migration studies in the last thirty years. Instead of taking the usual path of identity studies and analysing the generational identity shift within Hungarians in Australia, I chose to approach the issue from a different angle. Rather than analysing the processes of assimilation, I examined reactions within the Australian-Hungarian community to their assimilation.

Throughout the chapter, I explored how elements of the exilic and diasporic moral vocabularies (Lowe 2002), such as struggle, sacrifice, the quest for visibility and chosenness (Smith 1992, 2000a, 2000b), are recast and implanted in the ‘diaspora death’ discourse. I demonstrated how a segment of the community elite, which has been striving for transnational connectedness between the community and the homeland, have embraced the discourses of extinction and channelled them into the discursive frame of diasporisation and in doing so entangled the vision of ‘diaspora death’ with the ideal of a powerful, ‘mobilised diaspora’. Analysing the survival narratives provided an excellent opportunity to explore and reveal the symbiosis of the feelings of powerlessness and invisibility and ambitious desires for empowerment, which is exemplified in the idea of ‘struggle’.

I investigated the supposed role of the homeland in the survival project, and revealed how diaspora members create a ‘combined politics of blame, suffering

and promises' to appeal to homeland institutions and demand material, financial and administrative help for the 'survival'. In doing so, I demonstrated how the Hungarian national narrative of '*nemzethalál*' (death of the nation), with its emphasis on sacrifice and loyalty, frames the rhetoric of the Australian-Hungarian anxiety, and pointed out how the diaspora elite portrays the phenomena of 'diaspora death' as a part of the 'global' extinction of Hungarians.

I argued that despite the widely shared anxiety of 'diaspora-death', the lack of trust within the community and structural constraints prevent the diaspora elite from channelling the anxiety into an operating and successful social movement. In particular, I demonstrated the ways by which, arguments for separation and distance from the homeland alienate potential supporters from engaging with the issue.

VII. CONCLUSION

I. The bridge which has never been built

At the start of this book I asked the question of how the cultural logic of Australian-Hungarians has been transformed after the fall of Communism. I considered new structural possibilities for both transnational connectedness and reinvented relationships with the homeland as key factors which demarcated the post-1989 period from the pre-1989 one. Consequently, I looked at the ways in which these factors influenced the ways in which Australian-Hungarians feel about their connection to the mother country, their sense of home and their political and cultural role in the new democracy.

My first research question asked in what ways did the new structural possibility open up new avenues in the dialogue between homeland and diaspora. A dichotomy which several Hungarians in Australia maintained until 1989, that is a division between their homeland on the one hand, and the regime on the other, was broken down by the *rendszerültás*. After decades of separation, expatriates in Australia saw the moment of 1989 as a grand possibility which would open up ways for their reconnection and reintegration. The euphoria and great hopes for change in Hungary, were prominent new elements of Australian-Hungarian discourses. However, soon after 1989 the feeling of disappointment overshadowed the initial joy and enthusiasm. While the symbolic return to the nation and the actual homecoming have been ways to reconcile, reintegrate and heal the scars of the past, they have also given rise to new tensions and boundaries (see: Oxfeld and Long 2004:13). Hungarians living in Australia feel disappointed not only because the past decade of democracy scarcely fulfilled the enthusiastic expectations regarding the transformations, but also because the newly enshrined authorities in Hungary ignored them or treated them with indifference, and access to and influence on these powers remained almost as remote for Hungarians in Australia as they had been formerly.

As a result Hungarians in the diaspora have internalised a ‘double voiced’ discourse, in which the *hope* for dense connectedness to the homeland, and the *anxiety* and the *disdain* occasioned by such links are dialogically intertwined, indicating a tension between the competing desires for connectivity and isolationism. This tension of connectivity and isolation became a defining tension of Australian-Hungarian homeland-related discourses in the post-1989 era, and it penetrated the discourses of identity, home and agency. Throughout this book, I looked at how this tension is played out in different performances, settings and encounters and investigated how Hungarians in Australia have come to terms with the present situation. This has involved looking at how they have negotiated their identity, sense of home and agency within this specific post-1989 framework of opportunities, restrictions and differing visions for the future.

The Hungarian community in Australia was a winner and a loser at the same time with respect to the political transformations after 1989. Winner, because their status as *émigrés* officially moved from the non-accepted/neglected to the accepted/neglected status; and they were free to return and settle in Hungary, or be engaged in frequent border-crossing. At the same time, several community members feel that their self-sacrificial work of decades in exile has been forgotten, their potential role as active participants in the life of the new democracy dismissed and ridiculed and their Hungarianness questioned after the *rendszerváltás* in Hungary.

While the economic and political importance of transnational diasporas is rapidly growing worldwide, the structural possibilities for the diasporisation of the Hungarian *emigráció* in Australia did not eventuate in success. The transnational bridge is not built between the homeland and the Australian-Hungarian community. The change of political regime resulted – contrary to the *émigrés* expectations – neither in the development of a productive dialogue between the diaspora and the homeland institutions, nor in the formation of constructive and cooperative forums based on this dialogue. The reasons for these are manifold. First, while representatives in Australia saw the construction of the bridge as an inevitable first step in the process of diasporisation, the homeland administrations obviously regarded the community's potentials as the main decisive factor in the initiation of the transnational bridge. A small community, which lacks substantial political or economic connections to influential allies in Australia, and which does not contribute to Hungary's GDP via remittances or investments (<http://siteresources.worldbank.org>, accessed 10 May, 2007), has not appealed to any homeland governments. While *émigrés* and their descendants were granted citizenship, Hungarian governments and other institutions within the new Hungary have not perceived it to be sufficiently in their interests to further build on and embody the potential for relationships and interactions theoretically enabled by moves such as inclusive citizenship. In this sense, the infrastructure remains gestural only. It has offered a promise which, for Hungarians in Australia, has mostly delivered bitter disappointment.

Second, the official connections between the *emigráció* and the homeland administrations have been characterised by misunderstandings since 1989. What is at the heart of this misunderstanding is the divergent discourses of rightful belonging. *Émigré* representatives saw, and presented, their activities during the exile period (nation-preservation and exile politics) as a sufficient basis on which equal belonging to Hungary could be claimed. Furthermore, based on these activities they saw their own reintegration into the nation as a necessary component in the processes of democratisation of Hungary. Nation preservation and engagement in exile politics alone, however turned out to be an unstable guarantee of the legitimacy of community representatives' claims to engagement in the democratisation of the homeland. Homeland authorities approached the *émigrés*' decades of being in exile of Australian-Hungarians as an absence of engagement with the temporal rhythms of life and the developments in Hungary. Through this prism, *émigré* representatives appeared outdated and idealistic. In this sense, what in the community context was an indicator of achievement and sacrifice turned out

to be an insignificant factor in the context of *rendszerváltás* in Hungary (see: Stefansson 2004:182). In addition to the conflicting discourses of rightful belonging, the visions for the Hungarian nation-state and the discourses on the problems the nation was facing further augmented the gap between homeland and diaspora. However, what is interesting here is that homeland authorities never entirely rejected the endeavours of the *emigráció*. This in turn, gave space for community leaders and individuals to continue to maintain their aspirations and hopes for connectedness.

Third, the ‘unfinished transformation’ and the drawing of the ‘thick line’ did not only create tensions, dissatisfaction and distrust in Hungary and in Eastern Europe generally, but also in the diaspora. Beyond the resentment felt towards the newly elected governments for not including the diaspora in the democratic transformations, émigrés’ utterances of distrust and disappointment also targeted the incomplete transformation. The diaspora representatives felt betrayed by the facts that the Hungarian government did not call to account the individuals who were responsible for political crimes during the time of Communist rule, did not provide justice for the political victims, and did not deal with the consequences of the Treaty of Trianon.

Fourth, it is important to emphasise that intra-communal fragmentations and conflicts and the lack of strong organizational infrastructure also greatly undermined the building of the transnational bridge. For example, conflicting visions for the diaspora’s role in the new democracy created tensions within the community. Several Hungarians in Australia believed that the *emigráció* could serve the ‘Hungarian case’ better from the outside. Others however, persist on the importance of connectedness. Along with these tensions, the ambivalence and the fluctuation between desire for, and anxiety of connectedness has also negatively impacted on community members’ abilities to voice their claims in a united front.

The transformation in Australian-Hungarians’ sense of agency following the *rendszerváltás* was another important research question. The new structural possibility for transnational connectedness allowed Hungarians to rethink their sense of belonging and agency. The *emigráció* leaders during the ‘exile’ – by relying on the belief that they are the last preserve of the real values of Hungarianness, and the last bastion from where struggles for liberating the mother country could be carried out – internalised the idea of ‘chosenness’. I asked the question how the Hungarian community in Australia perceives its own political agency as an emigrant group now that the homeland is free. I found that the community’s perception of its own agency is closely linked to its desire for connectivity. In fact, emphasising the *emigráció*’s agency and ability was used as a rhetorical device to gain inclusion into the social, political and cultural realm of the homeland. What is interesting here is that agency was presented less as actual deeds they carried out, and more as a moral stance – drawing on émigrés’ ‘sacrifice’ and ‘struggle’ for the nation – on the one hand, and as a future potential – such as the potentials of the first generation ‘ambassadors’ (Chapter II) and the later generation ‘professional elite’ (Chapter V), on the other.

However, the perception of being a possible ‘saviour’ of Hungary can also be related to the disappointments over the *rendszerváltás*. The organisers of the Trianon protest, for example, aimed to ‘liberate’ minority-Hungarians from the *outside*, as they believed that the Hungarian government was not willing to act on their behalf. At the same time, the organisers and the participants wished to gain inclusion into the symbolic domain of Hungarianness through the demonstration (Chapter IV).

Being a saviour of Hungary was based on the perception during the exile-period that Hungarians in the communist Hungary were suffering and did not have the agency to act for themselves. While community members and the elite maintained a distinction between the ‘suffering East’ and ‘competent West’ after 1989, they simultaneously attempt to share, and compete with, the suffering of the stayees. For example, by emphasising their endeavour in combating communism in the past, and their current problems of rapid assimilation, émigrés often claim mutual responsibility by instigating the feeling of ‘homeland guilt’ (Chapter VI).

My other main research question was concerned with individual Australian-Hungarians’ sense of home and belonging after 1989. Open borders and free travel after the collapse of communism opened up new avenues for individual Australian-Hungarians to negotiate their sense of home and belonging. I found that emerging transnational connections had created ambivalent consequences for Hungarians in Australia (Chapters III and IV). The simultaneous prevalence of delight and desire for reconnection on the one hand and disappointment and disillusionment on the other was also a defining feature of individual Hungarians’ encounter with the new/old homeland and its inhabitants. Individuals often framed their return by discourses of national reintegration yet, often experienced the homeland and the encounters with the stayees through feelings of difference. This sense of difference between past and present, imagination and reality and émigrés and stayees frequently created a troubled sense of cultural loss, disconnection and often further rupture (see: Nash 2003:198-199).

Until 1989, travelling to Hungary was restricted even for the so-called ‘good’ émigrés (Borbándi 2006:272). One of the main consequences of the long term separation was that during this time only Australia could serve as a physical home-place; belonging to Hungary was mostly based on memories of the homeland, diluted by the ‘distant view’ (Skrbis 2002). I posed the question whether transnational connections after 1989 allowed Hungarians to shift their perception of the homeland from an abstract image to homeland as a lived experience. It emerged throughout the chapters (III. IV) that memories of the homeland (be they nostalgic or traumatic) greatly impact on Australian-Hungarians’ reaction towards contemporary Hungary and often hindered the possibility of reintegration and thus of experiencing the homeland as a physical home-place. Facing contemporary Hungary through personal experiences, or through transnational media often undermined Australian-Hungarians’ nostalgic memories, or augment and/or revive the traumatic ones, frequently leading to disillusionment (Chapter III and IV).

The long-term separation had another consequence. During the decades of dictatorship in the homeland émigrés de-territorialised sense of Hungarian identity has not been challenged and questioned by frequent encounters with the stayees. In the eyes of the émigrés, the fact that ‘anti-Hungarian’ communist propaganda in Hungary labelled them derogatorily, only underscored their own sense of ‘real Hungarianness’. At the ‘meeting at the Elbe’ however, individuals often received an unexpectedly cool welcome. Their claimed deterritorialised Hungarian identity often provoked disdain, belittling and ridicule instead of embrace and inclusion.

These ambiguous situations of joy and disappointment created a need for Australian-Hungarians to develop strategies which they could deploy both to recreate their sense of belonging and feeling at home in Hungary and also to defend and reinforce their Hungarian identity in these new encounters with the stayees. The strategies ranged from complete rejection resulting in the reinforcement of de-territorialised Hungarian identity, which can be nurtured in Australia; to the urge for re-integration and embrace of contemporary Hungarian reality. After decades of separation, the sense of home and Hungarianness are re-produced for many through a continual ‘process of adjustment, transformation, negotiation, [and] redefinition’ (Ankori 2003:84). These processes show that the experiences of ‘home’ and ‘migration’, ‘uprootings’ and ‘regroundings’ do not form dichotomic oppositions but are linked to one another (Ahmed et. al 2003:2) much more fluidly.

Again the ambiguous conflict between the desire for inclusion and the anxiety and disdain of connectedness is apparent in Hungarians’ new perspectives on home and belonging. Open borders and transnational flows are experienced by many as disappointing, which in turn strengthens their de-territorialised Hungarian identities and/or results in the recalling and idealisation of the pre-migration past in Hungary (see: Chapter III and IV) or pre-1989 decades in Australia (see: Chapter VI) (see: Stefansson 2004:182). However, transnational connections are also desired by community members, who see them as potential devices – either in the form of the transnational bridge between homeland and diaspora, or in the form of mobile livelihood – which could bridge the gap between them and the mother country.

It becomes obvious towards the end of this book that these dualisms, contradictions and ambivalences of hope, desire, anxiety and disdain found in the post-1989 Australian-Hungarian discourses are further complicated by the sense of *futility*. Instead of connectivity and inclusion, what we saw throughout the chapters is a *desire* for relationship and inclusion on behalf of the diaspora. The recurring metaphor of the transnational bridge, the dream of mobile livelihood and the anxiety of non-inclusion, are prime examples for this desire. However, throughout this book it emerged that it is a futile desire, just as it was during the dictatorship to liberate the occupied homeland.

After a prominent community member died in Melbourne, he left several boxes full of letters, articles, and other documents concerning the *emigráció*. The Hungarians who kept the documents gave me permission to go through the boxes. Among other interesting documents I found one which particularly struck me. On three separate pieces of paper, which dates from 1961, 1984 and 1997 respectively,

a line was quoted from Deák Ferenc a prominent Hungarian politician from the 19th century, quoted below.

To serve the good cause is always a moral duty, even if chances for success are none. (My translation)

The recurrence – or ongoing currency – of these words from Deák at these different points in the history of the Australian *emigráció* reveal the continuity of ambivalence between hope, desire and futility as a cultural logic of the Australian community.

II. Theoretical contribution

Through exploring these issues for the Hungarian Australian community, some theoretical implications emerged. First of all, this analysis is valuable for a broader understanding of migration. It has been apparent throughout the book that transnational connections do not always empower and do not always manage to alleviate the divide between societies in the home- and the host land. Emerging transnational connections since 1989 often created anxiety, disappointment and also what Aksoy and Robins call cultural de-mythologisation among Australian-Hungarians (Aksoy and Robins 2002:10). In other words, instead of transcending the distances that have separated Hungarians in Australia from their ‘communities of origin’, transnational connections have also alienated people and made these distances seem ever greater.

Further, while some theorists see movement, transnational border-crossings, hybridity, fluidity, and fragmented identities as the central motifs for the ‘journeying modern consciousness’ (Nkosi 1994:5; Rapport and Dawson 1998; Castells 1996; Bauman 2000; Robertson et al. 1994; Urry 2000; Chambers 1994) the possibility for transnational connections did not eventuate in movement being the dominant form of social life for Australian-Hungarians.

Second, it became obvious throughout the analysis that some focus on emotions could shed light on previously neglected aspects of identity formation. Emotions are essential elements of the sense Australian-Hungarians have made of the emerging post-1989 situations. Certain feelings, such as desire, disdain, and anxiety have enabled and constrained possibilities of action and thought. This is evident, for example, in the way the feeling of anger towards what many saw as ‘communist agents’ mobilised masses for the Trianon demonstration (Chapter IV). Similarly, the feeling of symbolic victory against these ‘communist agents’ generated feelings of success among the demonstrators, despite the fact that no political change took place after the demonstration. Likewise, the high level of distrust towards the homeland administration has been one of the main factors which hinders the mobilisation process for the survival problem (Chapter VI). In general, throughout the book, I showed the ways in which both the desire for inclusion, both into Australia and Hungary, and anxiety of connectedness have informed and motivated initiations within the diaspora.

Another theoretical contribution, which is related to that above, has been to show that the relation between emotions and structures needs to be approached as a

dynamic process, constructed through interaction (see: Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005; Bourdieu 1985; Dewey 1988). Through the analysis it appeared that particular emotionalised sub-narratives which have developed within Australian-Hungarian identity discourses influence the ways in which diaspora subjects perceive and interpret historical and social changes and developments. For instance, the ambivalent reception of the diaspora by Hungarian authorities post-1990, augmented diaspora-Hungarians' sense of distrust towards the state and resulted in severe anxiety. Later on, these feelings became embedded in the identity discourses and determined and shaped the diaspora's connection to the homeland.

III. Future research directions

While the growing economic, political, social and cultural importance of transnational diasporas have triggered massive research interest within social sciences, the current study might represent the last opportunity to document the *emigráció*'s attempts to be acknowledged as a player in the Hungarian political and social arena. The aging of the transnationally- and politically-oriented first generation and the rapid assimilation of Australian-born generations further undermines the possibility of the dream of becoming a powerful diaspora. So what might then be the future directions for researching the Hungarian community in Australia, within the field of transnationalism? An interesting focus could be the transnational connections of the further generations. How do community-narratives influence the ways in which young Australian-Hungarians view Hungary? How do these narratives change in turn? In what way do these transnational experiences impact upon the life of these young Hungarians in Australia? Investigating questions like these could give us further insights on the future of the Hungarian community in Australia for which my work will, hopefully, form a useful foundation.

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