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About the Book

This volume deals with a number of case studies in continuities and discontinuities, global, regional and local approaches to memory and memorialization in 20th century Hungary. The point of reference is the emergence, power control and decay of communism as the longest chronological period of this country during the most turbulent century of world history, the 'age of extremes'

The book would like to generate public discourse on what connects and separates Europeans and how "European" factors (values and burdens alike), rooted in the deepest layers of our history, shape our present and future. Keeping the significance of history teaching in mind and, of course, keeping it on our agenda, we should not forget that we also have to reach those segments of the European population who have not yet had the privilege of experiencing any element of the European spirit. For many of them communism as an experience or a decisive element of collective memory is still essential, this book would like to modestly contribute to shifting the point of reference from communism to Europe.

About the Author



Prof. Attila PÓK is deputy director of the Institute of History at the Research Centre for Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, vice-president of the Hungarian Historical Association, senior researcher of the Institute of

Advanced Studies Köszeg, recurring Visiting Professor of History at Columbia University in New York.

His works include: **The Politics of Hatred in the Middle of Europe. Scapegoating in Twentieth Century Hungary: History and Historiography.** Savaria University Press, Szombathely, 2009, editor with Randolph L. Braham: **The Hungarian Holocaust after Fifty Years.** Columbia University Press, New York, 1997, editor with Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca: **The Oxford History of Historical Writing**, Vol. 4. Oxford University Press, 2011.

From the Preface

In the late 1980s, less and less efficient and archaic Communist rule peacefully melted, or so it seemed at that time, into capitalism and democracy. The real reaction to Communism and to anything smacking of leftist, even of liberal, moderately conservative and Europeanist thought, is taking place in our days, as Attila Pók so well explains. He is, after all, not only an expert on Communist rule but lived through a substantial part of that much changing system.

István Deák, Professor Emeritus, Columbia University in the City of New York

Internationally renowned for his writings on the complex relationship between collective memory and historical scholarship, Attila Pók demonstrates once more in his new book his superior ability to put Hungary's development into the larger framework of the European experience after 1945. This is a study full of fresh insights not only for the expert on East Central Europe, but also for the general reader interested in Hungarian society's difficult predicament under Communism and its post-Communist quest for a better democratic future.

V.R. BERGHANN, Columbia University

Prof. Pók's book, written with a real literary talent, systematizes a huge historical bibliography, and also clarifies key issues for the history of Hungary and provides answers for the past of the Central Europe. The subject of the book is not only interesting but also important for understanding the world we live in.

FLORIN ABRAHAM

Member of the Board of the Romanian National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives

A famous quip says historians are more powerful than God. God is not able to change the past, but historians are. But historians often complain that they are powerless in shaping the collective memory of the society. Is it really so? Please read this book by Attila Pók. Your knowledge of politics of remembering and politics of forgetting will certainly become deeper.

DUŠAN KOVÁČ

Head of the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (1990-1998).

Excellent, captivating and uncompromising book about us and our past, one of the most significant restatements of our thinking. Pók provides a compelling analysis of the major themes of Central European history. The essays challenge our views and stereotypes and they are a pleasure to read. If any work has a chance to correct the distortions of our memory, this is it.

ROMAN HOLEC, senior researcher of the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences



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ATTILA PÓK

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Studies on Collective Memory and Memory Politics in Context

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