Collective Memory and the Stranger: Remembering and Forgetting the 1918 Finnish Civil War

PIOTR M. SZPUNAR¹ University of Pennsylvania

Collective remembering is central to forming the bonds that constitute a group's identity. This identity is not only communicated between group members but also projected outward. That is, a group displays or stages its past for strangers who find themselves in a foreign country or context. These stagings are interesting and important because they are often a stranger's only glimpse into how the group collectively remembers important events of its past. Contemporary societies are enthralled by memory, in part out of concern with how their memory and identity are communicated to outsiders. Using the case study of Tampere, Finland, and its collective remembering of the Finnish Civil War of 1918, this article addresses the stranger's position in examining a collective's efforts to project its identity through memory. It thus highlights the challenges and advantages (methodological and other) of studying the workings of memory from outside the group that is the focus.

Finns wishing to commemorate the civil war of 1918 have long struggled with the question of what to remember and why. The war, which began in January 1918 and lasted three and a half months, left the Finnish people bitterly divided. In 1933, General Mannerheim decreed that it was no longer important to ask which side one had fought on, thus instituting an official policy of forgetting that for

Piotr M. Szpunar: pszpunar@asc.upenn.edu

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decades discouraged any public remembrance of the event—albeit unevenly across groups and locations.² The 90th anniversary of the conflict occasioned initiatives for public remembrance in Tampere—the site of the war's most decisive battle—that aimed to bring the fighting of 1918 "back into the streets." To make sense of these practices of memory, this article attempts to examine them from the vantage point of the outsider. In so doing, it demonstrates the value of this perspective in the study of memory, particularly in cases where memory is itself fragmented, contradictory, and unstable.

The first section of this article outlines the complexities of collective remembering and forgetting—inextricably linked processes, taking place in multiple locations and temporalities, that are always partial and contested. The second section provides a brief synopsis of the events of 1918 and the parameters of remembrance practices in Finland. The third examines practices of forgetting and remembering the 1918 civil war in the city of Tampere. The essay concludes by considering the challenges and advantages that arise from taking up the vantage point of the stranger in order to examine these practices and the material a collective projects outward.

Collective Remembering and Forgetting

Researchers characterize a group's shared memory with a wide variety of labels: public, collected, cultural, social, and collective memory as well as collective remembering (see Kansteiner, 2002; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Sturken, 1997; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Young, 1997; Zelizer, 1995). This variance also reflects the way "collective memory" is "conceptualized in the literature as lying on the continuum running from a collection of individual expressions of memory at one end . . . [to the] property of a group, culture or nation, *beyond* the individual level" (Wessel & Moulds, 2008, pp. 289–290, emphasis in original) at the other. The term "collective memory" was coined by Maurice Halbwachs (1992), who emphasized the social nature of all memory. Following Halbwachs, Hutton defines collective memory as an "elaborate network of social mores, values, and ideals that marks out the dimension of our imaginations according to the attitudes of the social group to which we relate" (1993, p. 78). However, collective memory is more than a "body of knowledge" (Dudai, 2002): it is "processual" (Zelizer, 1995); hence the

² Mannerheim is an important and controversial historical figure in Finland: a former officer of the Russian Czar's army, he headed the (victorious) Whites in 1918 and was commander in chief of the Finnish army from 1939 until 1944, when he became the president of Finland. His decree, issued at a remembrance ceremony for the victors, has been interpreted variously, even as a slip of the tongue (Peltonen, 2003); the interpretation above is a common one (Finnish historian Vesa Vares, personal communication, August 4, 2008). Mannerheim's legacy is contested. In 2004, the word *lahtari* (butcher) was spray painted on the Mannerheim monument after he had been voted "Greatest Finn of All Time" in a Finnish Broadcasting Company poll.

³ This point distinguishes memory from history. The relation between these two concepts is much debated. Nora (1996) views them as conflicting and antithetical; others see them as entangled (Sturken, 1997; see also Werstch, 2009; Winter, 2009).

term *remembering* is preferred to *memory* (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). Collective remembering as such is a process of communication—social, interactive, and performative (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Mitchell, 2006; Winter, 2008)—"among memory makers, memory users, and the visual and discursive objects and traditions of representation" (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 197) that simultaneously uses and reconstructs the elements in Hutton's network. In short, it is "mediated action" (Wertsch, 2002). Central to such action is fostering/maintaining a collective identity (Olick & Robbins, 1998), which is also projected outward. Mediated action involves what Pierre Nora (1996) calls "lieux de mémoire" (places of memory) and what Halbwachs refers to as "landmarks," that is, "particular figures, dates and periods of time" (1992, pp. 175, 222–223) that localize a society's mores, values, and ideals. These landmarks are often material (texts, monuments, parades, etc.); some of them are accessible to outsiders (e.g., monuments erected in public spaces visited by foreigners, or museum exhibits set up in a variety of languages), while others are not. In this sense, collective remembering "exists in the world" (Zelizer, 1995). As a process it is partial (Zelizer, 1995), contested, and rarely if ever unitary across either the individuals in a collective or the locations, objects, and texts that the collective remembering depends on (Singer & Conway, 2008; Wertsch, 2002; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Zelizer, 1995).

This contestation is due partially to the nature of remembering, in that an inherent part of remembering is forgetting (Erdelyi, 2008; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994): "in order to remember, something must be forgotten" (Klein, 1998, p. 301). The causal agent of forgetting is not time but "interference"—the learning of new materials or experience of new phenomena (Bartlett, 1932, cited in Erdelyi, 2008, p. 274).⁵ In the collective context, interference is a social and political phenomenon resulting from contestation. Because locations and narratives of remembering are always multiple and often conflict, attempts at forgetting are rarely absolute (Singer & Conway, 2008). Nonetheless, as the cases below highlight, "forgetting" continues to be a useful concept describing the nature of some political initiatives tied to collective memory-even if forgetting is best thought of in terms of "accessibility," which is determined by a multitude of manipulable factors (Singer & Conway, 2008, pp. 280-281). Most simply, to be accessible, all memories require appropriate cues. Collective remembering "relies extensively on semiotic means provided by cultural, historical, and institutional contexts" that are often material (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008, p. 322). The semiotic memory cues that make public remembrance possible (Singer & Conway, 2008) or, in their absence, impede it, take a multitude of forms across various locations. Indeed, physical and imagined landscapes play an "extraordinary constitutive role . . . in human affairs" (Said, 2000, p. 180) anchoring collective remembering itself (Zelizer, 1995). This role is examined here through the concept of "place" and its distinction from, and relation to, "space."

A place is a "locus"—a center "of felt value" (Tuan, 1977, p. 4)—that embodies a group's identity (Hubbard, Kitchin, & Valentine, 2004). Place can be constructed by furnishing a physical area with

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⁴ In a more extreme position than that of Wertsch and Roediger (2008), Kansteiner (2002) argues that an individual "might subscribe wholeheartedly to certain historical interpretations, but . . . would not be able to identify their origins even if one undertakes the cumbersome task of asking [the individual] directly" (p. 194).

⁵ Memory is a reconstructive process in which new phenomena can interfere, causing past memories to be forgotten or altered.

landmarks such as monuments to formulate, guide, and restrict particular "rhythms of being that confirm and naturalize" them (Lefebvre cited in Hubbard et al., 2004, p. 7). The Washington Mall in the United States exemplifies such a construction of place: Feplete with museums, monuments, streets named after important concepts and figures, and so forth, the site is one of significance where many groups gather to voice opinions on issues deemed important to the American collective.

Space is not a binary opposite of place; it too is a constructed landscape involving power relations (Massey, 2005). The difference is that space is free of the type of markers that populate place. In other words, place is overtly constructed through landmarks, while any attempt to keep a physical location as space, by either not placing landmarks in an area or never constructing others, is itself an inherently political act of construction aimed at preventing the development of an area into a place—a locus of common meaning (Tampere in relation to 1918 is a case in point). Therefore, the construction of place provides the cues that guide collective remembering, whereas the construction of space signals an absence of these cues and is an aid to forgetting. Space and place are hardly mutually exclusive, however: no space is completely free of control and no place is absolutely prescriptive (Casey, 1996). Rather, place and space are overlapping practices enacted onto physical areas (Szpunar, 2010). The landscapes onto which these practices are enacted are "ever-shifting constellation[s] of trajectories" (Massey, 2005, pp. 141, 151), which are unstable, necessitating invention. And they are sites of contestation, locations of protest (Sturken, 1997), places where counter-memories are formed (Young, 1997). This reinforces the idea that collective remembering is partial and that any process of remembrance can involve a "memory struggle" (Peltonen, 2003) as one invention often, if not always, silences another (Said, 2000).

Using these concepts, this article analyzes three sites of remembrance in Tampere that are accessible to the stranger: the monumental geography of urban Tampere; the 2008 "Day of Friends," when parade and performance brought the fighting of the war back into the streets; and the "Tampere 1918" exhibit at the Vapriikki museum, which created an illusionary place that allowed visitors to experience the memory of the war. The broader methods applied in this study include semiotic (Saussure, 1983) and social semiotic analysis (Hall, 1980; Hodge & Kress, 1988), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2006), ethnography (Geertz, 1973), and most evidently, historiography (Tosh, 2000). Critical discourse analysis highlights the role of language and its connection to a wider range of cultural practices (e.g., the civil war has had many names—outlined below—each of which is tied to a particular group and promotes a particular version of the past). Social semiotic analysis is central to understanding remembrance practices (see also Wertsch, 2002), which in the given context are bound to ethnographic and historiographical methods. Each of the three sites investigated here requires a close semiotic reading. The latter two, given their recency, provide an opportunity to examine how the events were encoded and decoded. Interviews conducted with people involved in creating the events (Timo Malmi and Kimmo Antila,

⁶ A single landmark, too, (e.g., a museum) can be a "place" of remembering.

⁷ The use of these various methods and the multiplicity of locations and narratives suggest that any comprehensive study of collective remembrance (if at all possible) would require a geneaological approach as pioneered by Nietzsche (1887/1997). Such a study is far beyond the scope of the essay format, but here I incorporate an element of that approach: the rejection of constants, origins, and linear histories.

respectively) provided the means to analyze their encoding. Decoding involved close observation (e.g., of how subjects experienced the museum) and analysis of the components of each site, which in the case of the 2008 "Day of Friends" relied on media coverage of the event. To keep from analyzing these phenomena outside of their historical and social contexts, I referred to supplemental historical, academic, and archival documents. Studies either published or translated into English exist, but many more are available in Finnish only, so interviews and exchanges with Finnish historians such as Vesa Vares, Timo Malmi, and Tuomas Hoppu were indispensable, as was as the use of translators.

Finland 1918

The Finnish Civil War began on January 27, 1918, following the Bolsheviks' recognition of Finland as an independent state (Alapuro, 2002; Upton, 1980). The war was fought between two factions—the Red and White Guards—divided along class lines, the Reds representing the working class and the Whites the upper/upper-middle class of landowners. The extent, development, and intensity of this class division varies in academic accounts (see Alapuro, 2002; Haapala, Hoppu, Kaarninen, Suodenjoki, & Tikka, 2010; Manninen, 1978; Puntila, 1975; Upton, 1980). At the onset of hostilities, Finland was divided in two, with the Reds controlling the (industrial) south and the Whites dominant in the north. The conflict occurred in the broader theater of World War I, and foreign troops backed each side, Russians aiding the Red Guard and Germans, the White.

The Battle of Tampere was the bloodiest and most decisive battle of the war (Hoppu, 2007; Upton, 1980). General Mannerheim, leading the White army, was convinced by a fellow officer that capturing the Red stronghold of Tampere "[w]ould make such an impression on the enemy leaders, and mood of the Reds in south Finland,' that the war might be ended quickly" (quoted in Upton, 1980, p. 451). Mannerheim, whose plan was to cut off any possible reinforcements or retreat to Helsinki (headquarters of the Reds) by first surrounding the areas around Tampere, reached the city in late March (Upton, 1980). Urban warfare ensued in the Kalevankangas graveyard, at the railway station, and from home to home in the streets. The city center was taken on April 5, and the next morning, faced with the Whites' continuing advance, the Reds hoisted a white flag over Pyynikki (a neighborhood to the west of the city center), officially ending the battle (Upton, 1980). Entire areas of the city had been demolished. By May 15, 1918, when the war officially ended, 5,324 Reds and 3,279 Whites had perished in battle. More than 7,000 Reds and 1,000 Whites were executed in purges known respectively as the Red and the White terrors; 11,785 Reds and 6 Whites died in prison camps (see "Cause of War Death 1918," 2002).

⁸ The indiscriminate execution of Russians and Red prisoners flouted Mannerheim's command that "in no circumstances may prisoners be shot out of hand, but they must be legally investigated and condemned" (cited in Upton, 1980, p. 469). In one such instance, "[i]n May 1918, after the Red forces had lost in Lahti, more than a hundred young women [the Reds had a contingent of female soldiers] were executed . . . [at] Mustakallio" (Peltonen, 2002).

⁹ Figures are provided by the National Archives in Finland. However, sources differ on the death toll (e.g., Alapuro, 2002, p. 169). Including the Russian and German dead, the total number of casualties stands at around 35,000.

The war and the subsequent atrocities "rent the fabric of Finnish society severely" (Puntila, 1975, p. 109), so disagreement over how the civil war should be remembered is unsurprising. The discord is evident in the various names different groups gave the conflict: *luokkasota* (class war), *vapaussota* (the War of Freedom or Liberation, preferred by the White victors), *punakapina* (the Red Rebellion), *vallankumous* (revolution), *veljessota* (war between brothers), and *kansalaissota* or *sisällissota* (civil war) (see Alapuro, 2002; Hamalainen, 1979; Posio, 2008). Many argued that the war should be forgotten altogether.

The practices of remembering and forgetting 1918 vary within and across texts, narratives, locations, media, and generations, making study particularly arduous. The history of the remembrance of the Finnish Civil War has centered on several different material "landmarks" and "lieux de mémoire": monuments, museums, parades, and archives, each of which has been the subject of study relating to collective memory (Bennett, 1995; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Kansteiner, 2002; Nora, 1996; Olick & Robbins, 1998; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008; Winter, 2009; Zelizer, 1995). Ulla-Maija Peltonen (2002) divides the practices of remembering the civil war into four phases. In the first phase, from 1918 to the 1930s, the White interpretation prevailed over the Red, and commemorators made wide use of monuments, which "house memories in a durable fashion, anchoring the transient and variable nature of memory itself" (Zelizer, 1995, p. 232). For instance, "[m]ore than 350 towns had erected statues commemorating White victims of the war by the 1930s, but only 5 for Red side" (Peltonen, 2002, p. 192). Some Red memorial stones were destroyed; others were scarcely visible and held little text, in contrast to their White counterparts (Peltonen, 2003). Memorial collections published underground acted as proxies for monuments to the Red side in these years (Hoogendoorn, 1999). The Whites also held an annual victory parade, an essential act of collective remembering (see Mitchell, 2006).

The second phase, the 1940s and 1950s, encompassed the travails of World War II, and more particularly the Winter War fought between Finland and Russia, which healed some of the wounds of 1918 (Alapuro, 2002; Kirby, 2006; Peltonen, 2003). Practices of remembrance reflected this shift: more statues were erected in honor of the Reds, oral histories spread through families and labor groups, and the Reds were increasingly represented in literature (Peltonen, 2002, 2003). Also, the Whites' annual parade was shifted to Mannerheim's birthday and from 1940 onward was framed as a military parade divorced from the civil war, according to Finnish historian Vesa Vares (personal communication, 2008). Despite these efforts, the Whites' narrative of 1918 remained dominant.

In the third phase, the 1960s, a large archival project collected tens of thousands of pages of firsthand accounts of the war, representing both sides (Heimo & Peltonen, 2003; Peltonen, 2002, 2003). Archives, as the "traditional guardians of documentary evidence" (Irwin-Zarecka 1994, p. 104), are vital to collective remembrance. Also in this phase, Vaino Linna's acclaimed book *Under the North Star* helped to popularize the Red perspective of the war. The fourth phase, from the 1980s to the present day, has seen the equalization of the number of monuments to each side throughout the country (Peltonen, 2003) and the establishment of a permanent exhibit to the war, in 2000, at the National Museum of Finland. Museums, designed to impart certain elements of the past (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004), are "repositories of the sacred" (Winter, 2009; see also Said, 2000) that help articulate group identity

(Bennett, 1995) and project it outward (as in the case of the exhibit at Vapriikki in Tampere). Alongside these initiatives, the government of Finland began another archival project called "War Victims in Finland in 1914–1922." Notably, all of these phases involved numerous additional locations of memory, such as oral history, narrative, folklore, and local initiatives (Heimo, 2007; Peltonen, 1996, 2003, 2007).

This brief outline of remembrance practices highlights the difficulty of studying collective remembrance from the vantage point of the stranger, to whom some sites are inaccessible. The following sections focus on three sites that are accessible to outsiders, and the final section discusses the value of this approach in memory work.

Forgetting 1918 in Tampere

The first site of interest is urban Tampere and the monuments found therein (see Figure 1 below). At this site the stranger may move freely and may, in theory, encounter important markers of Finnish collective remembrance. However, this site well represents the government's official policy of forgetting in that it purposefully hinders such encounters in regard to civil war memory. Paul Connerton's (2008) seven types of forgetting offer one strategy of particular relevance for examining collective forgetting through the concepts of place and space at this site: "repressive erasure." To be sure, forgetting is not necessarily negative; it is useful and signals the adaptive capacity of groups (Connerton, 2008; Singer & Conway, 2008): "without forgetting, we cannot effectively attend to new experiences" (Erdelyi, 2008, p. 275). However, even when forgetting is posited as something done "in the interests of all parties to . . . [a] dispute" (Connerton, 2008, p. 61), the practice is rarely neutral, as the outcome of Mannerheim's 1933 decree highlights (for other critiques of Connerton's typology see Erdelyi, 2008; Singer & Conway, 2008; Wessel & Moulds, 2008). Ostensibly exhorting all Finns to forget their divisions, a call that resonated even within families¹⁰ and established a long-standing taboo on speaking about the war (Antila, personal communication, 2008), Mannerheim's decree effectively silenced only the Red side, allowing the Whites' accounts to dominate official state history (Peltonen, 2002, 2003).

Repressive erasure consists of the removal of all remnants of groups and/or individuals considered enemies (often of the state) by destroying images, razing statues, and removing inscriptions (Connerton, 2008)¹²—in other words, eradicating all memory cues attached to these threatening entities to make their memory less accessible. In Finland's immediate post–civil war period, many monuments to

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¹⁰ Divulging one's family allegiances was an extremely sensitive topic. One contributor to the 1960s archival project stated, "I could never tell my relatives that my husband had been a Red" (cited in Lehto, 2002).

 $^{^{11}}$ Reds were often referred to as "traitors" or "Lenin's wretched henchmen" (Lehto, 2002, p. 201; Manninen, 1978).

¹² History is rife with examples. Soon after his death, the name of Akhenaten, Pharaoh Amenophis IV, who had established a monotheistic counter-religion in Egypt, was removed from kings-lists; his monuments were dismantled, and other markers of his existence destroyed (Assmann, 1997, p. 23; cited in Wertsch & Roediger, 2008). A more recent example is the toppling of a statue of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

the Reds were destroyed (Peltonen, 2002). In Tampere, the one monument to the civil war in the city's center illustrates such erasure (A in Figure 1; Figure 2 below). *Vapaudenpatsas* (Liberty Statue), created by Viktor Jansson, was erected in 1921 to commemorate the victors. The figure atop the structure is popularly interpreted as lifting his sword or shaking his fist at Pispala, a traditionally working-class (Red) neighborhood. Unsurprisingly, Tampere's left-wing politicians, protested its creation and installation (Haapala et al., 2010). The site itself holds no indication of what the statue actually signifies, no plaque or signage providing the historical story of the statue or any other context. The statue itself lacks any inscription; its plinth is as bare as the figure atop it. Tourist maps give little information: as a stop on a walking tour, the statue receives passing mention of its name and creator. The lack of designating features is not inconsequential. According to one scholar, most residents of the city, especially youth, have no idea what the statue is or what it commemorates (Vares, personal communication, 2008)—precisely the point of repressive erasure.

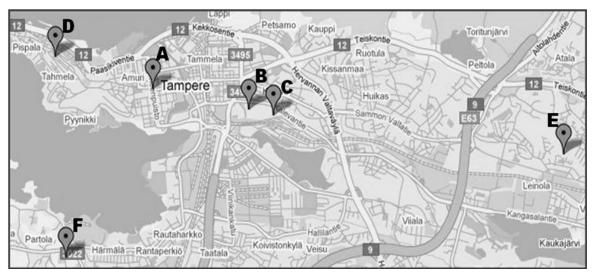


Figure 1. The monuments in and around Tampere.

Source: Google Maps

Legend: A: Vapaudenpatsas (Liberty Statue); **B**: White Cenotaph in Kalevankangas; **C**: Red Souls Memorial in Kalevankangas; **D**; Red Guards Memorial; **E**: The Mannerheim Monument; **F**: Jäger Memorial

Another means of affecting memory is to manipulate accessibility, or aid forgetting, by (dis)placing landmarks in the construction of areas as space. "Displacement" often refers to the way individuals displace memories into imagined and material places (writing, museums, computers, etc.) (Hutton, 1994; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Klein, 1998); thus any material manifestation of memory, any lieux

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¹³ Available at http://www.tampere.fi/tourism

de mémoire, is a displacement of sorts. However, displacement is also conceptualized as a defense mechanism that sufficiently distorts unacceptable memories (Erdelyi, 2008). This conceptualization has a material counterpart. Landmarks are often placed in landscapes featuring other memory markers (e.g., the Washington Mall), at spaces historically tied to an event being depicted or commemorated (from a cross on the side of the highway to the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France), or at places of symbolic importance, such as the center of a city (Tuan, 1977)—visibility is essential for remembrance (Peltonen, 2003). Hence, forgetting may not necessarily entail a landmark or memory cue's erasure, but rather its (dis)placement away from other landmarks (hence constructing space rather than place), from the historical site to which it is tied, and from symbolically important centers of an urban area. This is the most prominent strategy of forgetting in Tampere. It signals that city planners have avoided making the memory of the civil war accessible, to both native Finns and strangers, within and through urban space.



Figure 2. Vapaudenpatsas (Liberty Statue).
© Tampereen kaupunki 2006/Tampereen nykytaiteen museo (used with permission)

The Kalevankangas graveyard—site of some of the most intense fighting during the Battle of Tampere—houses two cenotaphs (B and C in Figure 1; Figure 3 below): the White Cenotaph and the Red Souls Memorial, created by Evert Porila and Jussi Heitanen, respectively. The subject matter of these cenotaphs is explicit, but they are located away from the symbolic center of the city and within a place of solemn and private remembrance.¹⁴

¹⁴ While cemeteries are at times used for public or state ceremonies, Kalevankangas, whether because of a conscious choice or simply its layout and location, is not.

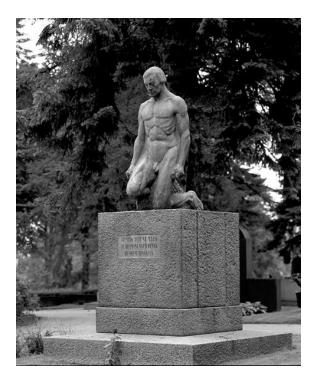




Figure 3. White Cenotaph in Kalevankangas (left) & Red Souls Memorial in Kalevankangas © Tampereen kaupunki 2006/Tampereen nykytaiteen museo (used with permission)

In the neighborhood of Pispala, on a hill in a tiny park with a few benches and a playground, stands the Red Guards Memorial (D in Figure 1; Figure 4 below). Representing one "side" of the war, the monument has significant meaning for the historically "Red" neighborhood in which it is located; however, it is a good distance from both the urban center of Tampere and any other civil war markers. Displacing it further is the fact that, despite the claims of the small black monument's inscription, the site is not the historical location of the Reds' last defense and surrender in the Battle of Tampere. The actual site is Pyynikki, about a kilometer away, which a Tampere tourist brochure simply promotes as "Tampere in Panorama," referring to the tower built there in 1929. Thus, while it represents an important locus for a neighborhood, it simultaneously plays a role in silencing a broader public memory of the civil war.¹⁵

The monument to Mannerheim (E in Figure 1; Figure 4 below), the war's most (in)famous general, is located in Leinola, approximately five kilometers outside of the city. Completed by Evert Porila in 1939, it initially was slated to stand in the center of Tampere, a plan that met with objections as Mannerheim was, and still is, a controversial figure—a hero to some, a killer to others. The monument was then moved to Leinola, where Mannerheim began his march on Tampere, and installed in 1956. The base,

¹⁵ This speaks to the multi-modality of "lieux de memoire" as well as their simultaneous and often conflicting roles across various narratives.

which was already built and had stood idle for years (Haapala et al., 2010), was moved from Tampere and used for a monument to the Jägers (F in Figure 1), an elite group of White fighters trained in Germany (Antila, personal communication, 2008). The location of the Mannerheim statue is historically accurate, but the monument is far from the city where the fighting actually took place, and from any other markers.



Mannerheim Monument (right)
© Tampereen kaupunki 2006/Tampereen nykytaiteen museo (used with permission)



While each landmark is displaced in differing ways, their collective significance lies in their distance to one another. Their positioning maintains space, manipulates the landscape to make the memory of the civil war less publicly accessible, and discourages public performance of collective remembering in the heart of the city. It also limits the accessibility of the group's past to the stranger. The monuments are neither located in the city center nor defined on tourist maps, and the one monument in clear view is unmarked. Still, as the ability to collect the information here shows, they are not absolutely inaccessible.

Collective memory is always contested and expressed in multiple locations. A strategy of displacement cannot "cause" absolute forgetting. The practices of displacement in Tampere did not erase the memories of 1918; instead, commemoration occurred via different avenues, such as smaller local communities (Heimo, 2007; Roselius, 2011), and local and broader sites of memory overlap and interact (Heimo, 2007). Both the archival project begun in the 1960s and the studies carried out regarding narrative and the civil war (Heimo, 2007; Peltonen, 1996, 2002, 2007) highlight the persistence of these memories. The loci of remembrance practices were numerous. For instance, Reds often went to their monuments to leave flowers on 1 May (Vares, personal communication, 2008). Monuments have a long, complex history, not just in Tampere but throughout Finland, and such landscapes are not static but ever-

changing (Fingerroos, 2008; Peltonen, 2003). Another locus was Tampere's two soccer clubs (cities not uncommonly have more than one soccer club in Finland), which were informally divided along civil-war lines; the two teams eventually merged into "Tampere United." There are also two theaters in Tampere: the Tampereen Tyovaen Teatteri, literally the "worker's theater," and the Tampereen Teatteri, known to cater to the Whites. Each theater lost its partisan function some time ago, but the point is that practices of remembrance persisted despite displacement, highlighting the multiple locations of memory and the impossibility of a singular history of remembering 1918.

The persistence of remembrance does not, however, reduce the importance of the government's attempt to silence a particular form of performative (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004) or mediated action (Wertsch, 2002). Given visibility's singular importance to remembrance (Peltonen, 2003), the construction of space via the displacement of the monuments was crucial to keeping public space silent regarding the memory of the civil war, effectively aiding public forgetting. It also makes the memory of the civil war inaccessible to the stranger in urban Tampere. The initiatives of 2008 explicitly reversed this.

90 Years after the Civil War: Remembering 1918 in Tampere

On the 90th anniversary of the Finnish Civil War in 2008, the urban space of Tampere became a site of public remembrance. One question of utmost importance is "Why now?" The elapsed time is significant because, as one scholar put it, it is the third generation that forgets (Vares, personal communication, 2008). Indeed, few people are left to tell the story firsthand (Wacklin, 2008), and those born in the 1990s are unlikely to know much as even their grandparents may not have been born until after the war (Björksten, 2008). The possibility of the war being completely forgotten in the small groups and private spheres to which it was long relegated led many to call for open discussion of it. The related issue of handling death, which was central to remembering this event, had been subject to repression at the hands of the victors (Peltonen, 2003). Repression requires great energy and ends once a memory is no longer a threat (Erdelyi, 2008). With the emotional, first-person ties to the conflict all but gone—that is, with most of those who witnessed or were directly affected by death in the civil war now being dead themselves—remembrance was no longer a significant threat to social cohesion. This allowed treatment of civil war death to become more "diversity-minded" (Haapala et al., 2010, p. 198) and to occur in public sight. In other words, the elapsed time, which has ended the once-dominant practices of remembrance in Tampere (those who practiced an oral tradition have died), is the very thing that allows the possibility of public remembrance.16

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¹⁶ Another factor allowing for the new initiatives of public remembrance was the end of the Cold War (Antila, 2008, personal communication). Communists were Mannerheim's main concern and enemy (Upton, 1980), and class division was salient in Finnish society at the time (Haapala et al., 2010). Until the 1980s, Tampere itself was a locus of right-wing social-democratic power; Communists and other left-wing groups were left in the margins or the opposition. Meanwhile, Finland's tense relationship with Russia always stalled remembrance (Alapuro, 2002). For much of Finland's post-WWII history, any issues involving the Soviet Union were handled very delicately. This concern, which goes back centuries to when

These initiatives were hardly bottom-up phenomena, as not all Finns supported them (Otsamo, 2008) and some, on the political right, opposed them in principle rather than simply because of their content. Instead, the projects were the work of elites: academics, media contributors (especially to the large special issue in *Aamulehti*, Tampere's largest newspaper), and intellectuals. The invented, elitist nature of these initiatives is most evident in a two-page photo taken after the "Day of Friends" that ran in the *Aamulehti* Sunday supplement *su asiat* (30 March, pp. 14–15). It shows thousands of people (one per victim of the battle) in front of the city hall in Tampere. But because attendance was below the number needed, the photo was digitally altered before publication: many individuals appear multiple times within the photo. Such invention is an inherent part of any collective remembering. Against this background two initiatives are of interest: the "Day of Friends," which brought the memory of the battle back into the very streets from which markers of memory had so long been absent; and the 1918 exhibit at the Vapriikki museum, which created a place (re)presenting and (re)constructing urban Tampere circa 1918 to make the memory of 1918 a lived experience, however illusory.

The "Day of Friends" was held on April 6, 2008, the anniversary of the Reds' surrender at Pyynikki. The events of the occasion, organized and scripted by the Finnish historian, writer, and journalist Timo Malmi, included a parade through the streets where the battle had taken place, the participants in historical uniform, many portraying roles aligned with family histories. The marchers then poured into the Finlayson area of Tampere, where some performed a number of "living pictures," depicting war scenes in a stop-and-go manner (e.g., http://www.tampere1918.fi/www-1918) without shying away from the atrocities of the war. One "living picture" in particular showed two White Guards killing a Red and then standing over his body, one of the Whites stepping on the corpse. Another featured a horse-drawn wooden cart filled with bodies. These spectacles effectively brought the battle back into the streets and made urban Tampere a locus of meaning in regard to the memory of the civil war.

The exhibit at Vapriikki accomplished these aims in a rather different way, one more accessible to the stranger because it was more permanent in nature and was staged in multiple languages. The museum houses a large amount of well-researched material and archived testimonies, the product of two years of research, collection, and dialogue with politicians on right and left, other museum curators, and academics (Antila, personal communication, 2008). (See http://zonear.com/portfolioentry/tampere-1918-exhibition-guide for a virtual tour.) The museum space, littered with rubble, blood on the floors, bodies, uniforms, flags, documents, cannons, and other artifacts, effectively recreates urban Tampere circa 1918. Entering the exhibit, the subject finds herself in a typical room in a typical apartment of the time. Immediately she sees herself in a mirror, which brings her body into the imagined place: she is (re)placed into Tampere 1918. Moving through the exhibit, she almost instantly finds herself reflected in another mirror that is dirty and cracked, distorting her view of herself. This type of interpellation is found throughout the exhibit. The sound of cannon fire greets her in the next room, and she hears (via audio) a cannonball whizzing over her head and hitting its target in the distance. The next room is perhaps even

Finland was a grand duchy of the Russian Empire, has eased over time; nowadays many eschew the idea of a class society.

¹⁷ Anonymous source.

more startling. Upon entering, the subject notices 12 rifles (not visible from the previous room) on her left, pointing directly at her. A voice barks, "Ready! Aim! Fire!" and the rifles—again through audio—begin unloading rounds of ammunition. Not all the interpellation is so violent: in the same room stands a large cutout of two soldiers with holes through which individuals can poke their heads and have their pictures taken "as soldiers." The exhibit ends with a display panel that describes other civil wars in history, effectively and explicitly depicting the "Events of 1918" as less an extraordinary historical occurrence than one manifestation of something that has victimized many peoples. In 1918, everyone was a victim.

The words victims and friends highlight the nature of the forgetting involved in these remembrance projects. In the "Day of Friends" parade, Reds and Whites marched together in a way that made them part of the same experience. Like the final panel of the 1918 exhibit, an Aamulehti article maintained that the Finnish Civil War was an occurrence not unlike others in world history, although it stands out in at least one respect: compared to the conflicts in Korea, Somalia, Sudan, and the former Yugoslavia, it is the shortest in duration (Pulkkinen, 2008). All of this adds up to an attempt to remember the civil war as a shared experience with historical causes, rather than a cause attributable to one side or the other. Timo Malmi, who organized the "living pictures" and the parade, contends that discourses of blame are based in emotional ties and need to be rationally overcome (personal communication, 2008), a view other Finnish scholars share (Haapala et al., 2010; Mikkola, 2008). The label "the Events of 1918," which contrasts sharply with the various names applied to the civil war in years past (see above), reflects and amplifies this call for rationality. Similarly, the parade was seen as a way to get over what some considered an "inherited trauma" (trauman perintö) (Havia, 2008). The metaphor of victimhood extends this attempt to remember the civil war as a shared event. The strategies of interpellation within the 1918 exhibit are intended to invoke feelings of empathy and cause visitors to ask themselves, "What would I have done?" (Antila, personal communication, 2008), thereby fostering the understanding that the crimes perpetrated by individuals were induced by the particular historical situation, one not unique to Finland. Thus, everyone fell victim—to both the violence of war and the vicissitudes of history.

In the Aamulehti supplement su asiat of March 30, 2008, a two-page image of a bloodstained wall riddled with bullet holes is captioned "1918 Ikuninen Jälki" (1918, an everlasting mark). While the civil war's mark on Finnish collective memory has indeed persisted over the last 90 years, by no means has it had a "life of its own" or a singular form and content not susceptible to manipulation. Tampere's complex history of remembering 1918 has oscillated between rhetorics of remembering and forgetting, in places characterized by various, simultaneously existing narratives. Mannerheim's 1933 decree solidified an official policy of forgetting, as the displacement of civil war monuments (mnemonics) in and around Tampere attests, but the mark of 1918 nevertheless persisted within private (individual) and other collective spaces (theaters, oral histories, etc.). As those who carried the burden of remembrance died off, the sites where the memory of the civil war had persisted began to fade. Not only did this lead some Finns to call for explicit public remembrance of the civil war in Tampere, but it is what allowed such remembrance to occur: without the first-person emotional ties to the war and the death therein, remembrance of the crimes or events of 1918 was no longer as great a threat to social cohesion. The subsequent initiatives were not only dependent on and enabled by forgetting, but promoted it as well. Everyone was a victim, and what was to be forgotten were the feelings of bitterness dividing the two sides—in other words, the particularity of the Finnish Civil War. Ironically, while the focus on the shared experience of victimhood embodied in these remembrances reverses the historical practice of (physical) displacement, it also acts as an extension of Mannerheim's 1933 call to forget. It is no longer important to ask what side anyone fought for—even if it is no longer taboo to do so—for both sides were part of the same experience. In other words, even in bringing the fighting of 1918 back to the streets of Tampere, a modified form of Mannerheim's 1933 decree persists.

The Stranger in Memory Studies

The complex nature and variance of memory practices, as reflected above, bring into focus the value of the stranger's vantage point vis-à-vis memory work and the difference this vantage point makes in the examination of collective remembrance. The case presented here is not an authoritative or comprehensive interpretation of Finnish collective remembrance. Given the multiple locations, narratives, and temporalities of collective remembrance, such an interpretation is neither a possibility—especially in a single article—nor the aim of a study undertaken from the stranger's point of view. Such a study instead offers an interpretation of a group's remembrance practices from a vantage point that, although unavailable to any member of the collective, is often taken into account or imagined by the collective when structuring and making its past accessible.

Who is this stranger, and where does her particular advantage lie? The stranger is one who is physically near and yet culturally distant (Cressey, 1983), one who seeks not to be assimilated, but only to understand (Weinberg, 2002). The stranger is not significantly bound up in local ties, which affords her a particular perspective (Simmel, 1908). This perspective is not one of objectivity¹⁸ but rather of interpretation—tied up in its own interests and having its own orientation. Its focus is a group's practices of collective remembrance that are accessible to the stranger either residually (e.g., via monuments in public areas) or purposefully (e.g., in the multilingual 1918 exhibit at Vapriikki). Because the stranger initially has little to no connection to the group she is examining, she begins her study from first principles and her interpretation is free of the social ties, norms, and customs that entangle one who is part of the collective. It is a position that a group member cannot occupy. 19 The stranger's insights thus do not equate with local knowledge (Weinberg, 2002)—but this is precisely the advantage of the stranger (Simmel, 1908). It is a perspective of concern to the collective, as is evident in groups' often-purposeful outward projection of their memory. The 1918 exhibit, for example, was staged, and accompanied by an audio guide, in English. This also suggests, perhaps ironically, that the stranger is not and cannot be completely strange (Weinberg, 2002). First, in purposefully staging its memory for outward projection, a collective considers or imagines those outside of the group, making the stranger in some way an inherent part of the collective. Second, in order to gain the access needed to formulate an understanding of a

¹⁸ While Simmel (1908) uses this term, he warns of the "dangerous possibilities" attached to such a lack of ties—one need only think of colonial and orientalist writings. The stranger is not a universal unmarked position; the stranger is always *a stranger*.

¹⁹ This is not to essentialize group membership. Every collective contains subgroups, and each individual may experience membership in several divergent ways. However, the particular standpoint concerned here—being completely outside the group—is by definition impossible for any member to occupy.

collective, the stranger's position (in this case, as an academic with particular institutional accreditations and ties) must be recognizable to the collective (Cressey, 1983).

Being a stranger has its limitations as well. Discussions with Finnish scholars provide insight, but the stranger is still unable to critically engage with the full body of scholarship available in the group's native language. Furthermore, the use of translators to decipher media coverage of such events as the "Day of Friends" limits the critical discourse analysis possible in such a study. While the connotation of a particular word (e.g., *victims*) can be deciphered, the stranger cannot then connect it to a broader discourse with certainty. Most importantly, the position of the stranger renders some loci inaccessible—for example, the archives, local narratives, oral histories, and so forth that the Finnish scholars cited above were able to examine—which also limits the conclusions and connections that the stranger can make.

Although the stranger's limitations make a difference in the examination of collective remembrance, they are not weaknesses. The primary point of the stranger's work is not to "inform" a collective of some fact or phenomenon of its past that its members may have not previously noticed, though this is a possibility. Rather, the stranger, in a limited capacity and *not* despite it, lays out how an outsider comes to understand a particular collective's past—an interpretation that may or may not mesh with local or national interpretations (which themselves may not agree). Herein lies the value of the stranger's work. The interpretation the stranger's position affords is at once unavailable to group members, and taken into account or imagined by them. This position—perhaps best described as *productive estrangement*—allows a collective to adjudicate both how the memory it projects outward (or residually makes accessible to strangers) is understood, and whether (given that collective memory is always partial, contested, and multiple in narrative and location) the stranger's interpretation privileges one version over another. In other words, it provides a unique opportunity for critical engagement with a collective's remembrance practices and both the group's and outsiders' experience of them.

Contemporary societies are enthralled by memory (Olick, 2003). Part of this obsession is how a group is to communicate its collective memory and identity to outsiders and how these strangers come to understand these phenomena. Most generally, the position of the stranger vis-à-vis memory work is complex. By shedding light on how a stranger may understand a group's collective remembrance and demonstrating the value, methodologies, advantages, and limitations of such a project, the case study here offers insight into issues that have largely been overlooked in contemporary memory studies.

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