DOI: 10.24193/subbtref.71.1.13
Published Online: 2026-06-25
Published Print: 2026-06-25

Szabolcs KOVÁCS[1]:

Trauma, Memory, and Spiritual Care: Pastoral Psychological Perspectives on Collective Healing

Abstract.

This study examines the intricate relationship between trauma, memory, and spiritual care through a pastoral-psychological and theological lens, focusing on how collective and individual wounds can be integrated into a redemptive framework of meaning and healing. It argues that trauma is not merely an individual psychological disruption but a communal and theological experience that deeply affects faith, identity, and relational structures. The collapse of meaning, the silence of God, and the sense of abandonment represent the most profound dimensions of spiritual crisis. Yet, interpreted through the theology of the cross (Moltmann), this crisis can become the transformative site of faith's rebirth, where suffering is re-inscribed into the salvific narrative of resurrection and renewal.

Drawing on psychological, narrative, and theological models, the paper situates trauma within the broader context of transgenerational memory (Hirsch, Assmann, Yehuda) and explores how unresolved collective suffering – such as war, persecution, and political violence – continues to shape communal identity and relationships. The psychodynamic and cultural transmission of trauma highlights that memory is not static but performative: it lives through ritual, storytelling, and symbolic action.

[1] Lecturer, Faculty of Reformed Theology and Music, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; e-mail: szabolcs.kovacs@ubbcluj.ro.

©2026 Studia UBB Theologia Reformata Transylvanica. Published by Babeş-Bolyai University.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Following Jan Assmann's theory, memory becomes a space of healing when the past is re-narrated and re-interpreted within the community's present horizon of meaning.

The study also engages with the role of the church as a mediating community of healing. The ecclesial body carries unique resources – liturgical practices, theological reflection, prayer, and narrative reconstruction – that enable the transformation of trauma into a shared journey of reconciliation. Within this framework, the act of testimony is more than communication: it is a spiritual act of re-inscription, allowing the wounded self to re-enter God's story and the communal narrative. The meeting of the "small story" and the "great story" generates identity transformation: the victim becomes the healed, the excluded becomes the embraced, and despair gives way to hope.

Furthermore, the paper highlights the ritual dimension of healing as a complement to rational peacebuilding. Rituals of penitence, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation – whether in the form of the Eucharist, memorial services, or national days of repentance – offer structured, symbolic, and embodied forms of expression for the "unspeakable". They restore social bonds, provide safe space for truth telling, and mediate divine forgiveness as the archetype of human reconciliation. Case examples such as the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the German Buß- und Bettag, and Dutch ecclesial remembrance liturgies illustrate how liturgical and communal memory can foster truth, accountability, and healing after historical trauma.

Finally, the study emphasizes that healing from collective trauma is a multidimensional process involving psychological integration, theological reinterpretation, and communal transformation. True reconciliation – both personal and societal – emerges where truth and forgiveness intersect, and where the memory of suffering becomes an agent of renewal rather than repetition. For Central and Eastern European faith communities, this perspective offers a constructive framework for addressing historical wounds, promoting social responsibility, and cultivating a theology of restorative remembrance that binds together faith, justice, and communal healing.

Keywords: trauma theology, pastoral psychology, transgenerational trauma, cultural memory, meaning-making, narrative identity, testimony, reconciliation and forgiveness, liturgy and ritual, restorative justice, theology of the cross, ecclesial healing, collective guilt and responsibility, spiritual care, memory and hope

Introduction

The topic formulated in the title directly aligns with the conceptual framework of the international and inter-confessional conference *Healing of Memories*. Within this context, religion and pastoral psychology appear as healing and reconciling forces whose contribution is indispensable, especially in the communal processing of trauma following war, ethnic, or religious conflicts.

This study examines how collective and individual trauma, memory processing, and the practice of pastoral care are interconnected. Conflicts – religious, ethnic, or political – leave deep marks on both individuals and communities, whose effects extend beyond the generation immediately affected, shaping the life stories and well-being of those that follow. Pastoral psychology approaches these realities from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing on theology, psychology, and spiritual care to explore pathways of healing. Reconciliation is not merely a political or social process; it also carries profound spiritual and psychological dimensions.

The paper discusses the theological and psychological boundary questions of trauma and the impact of lived suffering on the image of God. This process is intensified by the psychodynamics of transgenerational memory (for example, memories of the Holocaust, genocide, and persecution), which require theological interpretation and clarification. The role of pastoral care is indispensable here. Processes of mourning, guilt, forgiveness, and reconciliation touch both the psychological and the spiritual layers of human experience on individual and communal levels. Acts of remembering and storytelling, the practice of testimony, exert a healing influence on the dynamic of personal and collective development.

The re-living of narratives requires an appropriate context (the community) and an adequate form (ritual). Religious ceremonies and rituals – such as those of repentance and reconciliation – possess a distinctive healing power. What communal conditions are necessary to optimize trauma processing? What ritual practices may be adapted from the reconciliation traditions of various peoples? This study seeks alternative, pragmatic approaches to community-based trauma healing within the Christian communities of Central and Eastern Europe.

1. The Theology of Trauma: How Suffering Affects Faith and the Image of God

The psychology of trauma – as observed by psychotherapist Judith Herman[2] – shows that under the impact of threat and terror, the individual's previous worldview disintegrates. The fundamental assumptions of life – predictability, safety, self-determination, social belonging, and physical well-being – collapse. The frame that once enabled orientation and movement in the world falls apart, the reflective surface in which the self could recognize itself disappears, and the social mirror that once shaped identity ceases to exist. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning.[3] The individual's sense of safety is shattered, destabilizing the integrity of the personality. Alienation from the self and the breakdown of interpersonal relationships often follow. Constant vigilance and suspicion – the fear that terror may return at any time – become encoded at the cellular level, producing attachment and emotional regulation disorders.

Survivors of the Auschwitz death camps often reported feelings of shame towards those who did not survive. Adriana Cavarero,[4] following Primo Levi, interprets this as the extreme dehumanization in which a person no longer perceives themselves as a human being in an ontological sense. The dissolution of personality and the disappearance of human vulnerability create an *invulnerable human*, one who has nothing left to lose. Similarly, Jörg Baberowski notes that the experience of pain in the death camps abolished both past and future; only the consuming presence of suffering remained.[5] The sense of utter abandonment and isolation that accompanies pain undermines the fundamental trust rooted in existence itself. This rupture of existential trust represents the deepest disturbance of personality structure – what psychology designates as *trauma*.

---

[2] HERMAN, Judit (2003): *Trauma és gyógyulás. Az erőszak hatása a családon belüli bántalmazástól a politikai terrorig.* Budapest, Háttér Kiadó – Kávé Kiadó – NANE Egyesület. 34–43.

[3] ORVOS-TÓTH Noémi (2022): *Örökölt sors.* Budapest, Jelenkor Kiadó. 103.

[4] CAVARERO, Adriana (2009): On War. In: *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence.* New York, Columbia University Press. 4. See as: PRIMO, Levi (1988): *The Drowned and the Saved.* New York, Summit. 83–84.

[5] BABEROWSKI, Jörg (2019): *Az erőszak terei*. Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó. 170.

In summary, trauma can be understood as a situation in which the aggressor, exploiting the vulnerability of the victim, exercises power over their suffering, life, or death. The victim's asymmetric position – defencelessness, helplessness – leads towards ontological annihilation. The perpetrator deconstructs and depersonalizes the victim, stripping away dignity, freedom, and agency.[6] These processes of fragmentation and disintegration of identity can reach such depth and intensity that their reversal may no longer be possible – a phenomenon captured by the notion of *traumatization*.

1.1. The Crisis of Faith and the Trauma of Unbelief

For the believer, trauma is not only physical or psychological suffering but also a theological crisis. It provokes the anguished question: *Where was God when this happened?* Post-Holocaust Jewish and Christian reflections have shown that suffering is often inscribed in collective memory as the experience of *God's silence*.[7] According to Jürgen Moltmann's theology, divine silence is not abandonment but participation – God's sharing in human suffering. On the cross, Jesus experiences abandonment: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Moltmann interprets this not as a human cry to an indifferent God but as the radical tension within the love between Father and Son.[8] In that moment, God experiences God-forsakenness within Godself; divine being bears within it the pain of human desolation. This experience may, however, become so shattering that it leads either to the rejection of faith or to a profound reinterpretation of God's power and goodness.

1.2. The Transformation of the Image of God

Abuse and violence wound not only the body and psyche but also faith itself; they distort one's image of self, others, and God.[9] Every act of abuse is inherently spiritual,

---

[6] See the brief summary of Kovács and Kovács: KOVÁCS, Szabolcs – KOVÁCS, Réka Rozália (2024): Az erőszak interperszonális vetületei. A terror, az ontológiai megsemmisülés, a sebezhetőség, az öldöklés gyönyöre. Teológiai-antropológiai vizsgálódás az erőszak dinamikájának tárgykörében. In: Lészai, Lehel (ed.): *A tudás ösvényén*. Vol. 5. Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitara Clujeana. 17–35.

[7] MOLTMANN, Jürgen (1993): *The Crucified God. The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press. 58–60.

[8] Op. cit. 146–152, 242–245.

[9] LANGBERG, Diane (2015): *Suffering and the Heart of God. How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores*. Greensboro, New Growth Press. 81 ff.

for it corrupts the fundamental capacity for trust – the foundation of any authentic relationship with God. Victims frequently experience God's silence as abandonment or rejection. Consequently, their image of God often mirrors the abuser's power: God appears distant, indifferent, or even violent. Many survivors internalize guilt, believing themselves responsible for what occurred.[10] This distorted inner narrative is spiritually paralysing, closing off the path towards genuine reconnection with God.

Trauma may radically alter a person's image of God. A woman raped by her husband suffers not only physically, emotionally, psychologically, and cognitively, but also spiritually. Such experiences challenge the very foundations of trust – in self, in God, and in the meaning of life. Healthcare professionals are not always equipped to address these spiritual dimensions,[11] as their professional boundaries often discourage discussion of religion, and their worldview may differ from that of their patients.

Empirical pastoral-psychological research shows that childhood trauma and insecure attachment patterns are correlated with a less positive image of God.[12] Individuals with traumatic histories are more likely to describe God in negative terms and less likely to use affirming ones. A similar pattern is found among those experiencing relational anxiety or avoidance.

Pastoral psychology observes that traumatized individuals often live with a double experience: God as both *absent* and *sustaining*. One woman who suffered childhood sexual abuse recounted that although she prayed for divine intervention, the abuse did not cease. She interpreted God's silence as betrayal. Yet later, through therapy and spiritual accompaniment, she discovered that God's "silent presence" had, in some way, been with her: "Only now do I see that God was there even when I could not feel it. If He had not been, I might not be alive today."[13]

---

[10] Ibid.

[11] GLANVILLE, James A. – DREYER, Yolanda (2013): Spousal Rape: A Challenge for Pastoral Counsellors. In: *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*. 69, 1. 1–12. Available at: AOSIS OpenJournals. DOI: 10.4102/hts.v69i1.1935.

[12] KOSARKOVA, Alice – MALINAKOVA, Klara – DIJK, Jitse P. van – TAVEL, Peter (2020): Childhood Trauma and Experience in Close Relationships Are Associated with the God Image: Does Religiosity Make a Difference? In: *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 17, 23. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17238841.

[13] LANGBERG 2015, 345 ff.

According to Frederick Vieth, in the deepest phase of crisis, a person does not question God's *power* but God's *goodness*.[14] The experience of the *silent God* casts the believer into existential uncertainty: the very faith that once provided stability becomes the source of doubt. Suffering, as a test of faith, purifies belief – stripping it of its naïve, reward-based forms and reducing it to sheer trust. Vieth calls suffering a spiritual fire in which formal religiosity is separated from the authentic trust-structure of faith.[15] In divine silence, the believer is compelled to reinterpret the very object of faith. The loss of meaning and the ensuing spiritual emptiness represent one of the most severe consequences of crisis. Suffering thus becomes not only physical and psychological but existential: theological explanations fail, giving way to the *theology of the cry of dereliction*.[16] Here, theological reflection itself becomes an expression of sheer survival.

Following Moltmann, Vieth argues that the one who suffers without apparent reason first feels abandoned by God.[17] Prayer meets silence; the relationship seems broken. The cry "Why have you forsaken me?" marks the extreme boundary of faith – yet, paradoxically, this very cry is also the sign that the relationship endures.

1.3. The Crisis of Faith: The Silent God

Summarizing the previous reflections, it can be stated that in traumatized believers, God often appears as a *punitive judge* who inflicts suffering, while for others, the image of the suffering Christ becomes central – the One who participates in human pain. For the traumatized person, trauma constitutes such a profound rupture that it breaks through existing frameworks of meaning, including those of religious faith. This rupture within the belief system radically questions the person's previous image of God, sense of security, and trust in the meaningfulness of the world. The former religious narrative can no longer contain or interpret what has happened. For some, this leads to the complete loss of faith – "God cannot exist, for if He did, He would not have allowed this." –, while for others, it results in prolonged anger, protest, or a deep spiritual crisis.

[14] VIETH, Richard F. (1988): *Holy Power, Human Pain.* USA, Meyer Stone Books. 40–41.
[15] Op. cit. 46–48.
[16] Op. cit. 70–74.
[17] Op. cit. 107–109.

Yet, transformation remains possible: for some, the same collapse of the belief system leads to the emergence of a new, deeper form of faith, in which God is no longer seen as the omnipotent protector who prevents suffering but as the God who is present within suffering, the co-suffering God (*Deus patiens*). Theological reflection here often uses the expression "unbelief within faith" – for the person broken by trauma, doubt and lament are not necessarily the opposites of faith but rather its rebirth through crisis. The experience of God's abandonment – "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" – and God's suffering is not central only to Jesus's story but to the life of every suffering human being. Precisely this shared experience becomes the theological foundation of solidarity and compassion.[18]

In the experience of the suffering person, God's presence is mirrored – often in the very forms of silence and abandonment. Vieth emphasizes that suffering is not the absence of faith but the very space in which God is mysteriously yet truly present. Divine compassion is not weakness but the power of love that confronts evil and pain while continuing to generate life in their midst. Compassion is God's holy power that heals – not by circumventing suffering but through it. The one who feels abandoned by God encounters God precisely at the point of God's apparent absence.[19] The cross thus becomes the meeting point of divine silence and divine love: God's silence is the silence of compassion.

Hence, trauma does not necessarily lead to the loss of faith; it may also lead to spiritual growth. In the process of working through suffering, one may find new meaning and enter into a deeper relationship with God. Within Christian tradition, this dynamic is exemplified by the theology of the cross, which proclaims that God does not remain external to human suffering but, in Christ, participates in it. The cry from the cross becomes the key to the spiritual interpretation of suffering: God does not observe human pain from a distance but enters into its very centre. The experience of crisis and divine abandonment is therefore not the absence of faith but its deepest form – where trust in God is no longer a feeling but a sacred act of clinging to the God who is silently present.

[18] VIETH 1988, 86 ff.

[19] Ibid.

2. Trauma, Memory, and the Communal Dimension

From the perspective of pastoral care, the theology of trauma reminds us that healing is not merely a psychological process. The bearing and narration of wounds occur within communal and spiritual space. Pastoral theology underscores that trauma is not only a psychic injury, as psychology tends to define it, but also a disturbance that deeply affects personal identity and one's spiritual relationships.

One of the fundamental tasks of pastoral care is to enable the sufferer to tell their story – not through repression but within a safe and accepting environment. Yet the context and mode of narration matter: within community and spiritual framework, wounds can be interpreted not as isolated traumas but as part of a larger story. According to Moltmann, the theology of the cross precisely performs this reframing: suffering is not a solitary experience but becomes inscribed into the broader narrative of Christ's suffering.

Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory provides an illuminating parallel: healing involves not forgetting but reframing memory.[20] For Assmann, memory does not simply preserve the past but continuously reinterprets it within the horizon of the present. Individual and collective remembering always take place in social and cultural contexts: memories are reinterpreted and transmitted through language, symbols, rituals, and narratives. Assmann distinguishes between *communicative memory*[21] – bound to lived, everyday experience spanning roughly three generations – and *cultural memory*,[22] which preserves and reconfigures the past through symbolic forms such as texts, rituals, and art. Healing, whether personal or collective, does not arise from the repression or erasure of memory but from placing past events within a new field of meaning. Memory is thus dynamic: not a closed archive but a living process in which the past acquires new significance, contributing to the renewal of both identity and communal reconciliation.

Traumatic events begin to heal when the individual can narrate them not merely as sources of shame and pain but as part of a broader, intelligible story. In pastoral practice, this means that the believer learns again to connect their life story to God's

---

[20] ASSMANN, Jan (2006): *Religion and Cultural Memory. Ten Studies.* Stanford, Stanford University Press. 8–23.

[21] Op. cit. 1–8.

[22] Op. cit. 18–23.

story – that is, to rediscover the conviction that despite divine silence, God remains present, and that suffering, too, has a place within salvation history. Trauma often isolates the individual – "No one can understand what I have gone through." Communal listening (within congregations, support groups, or bibliodrama settings) breaks this isolation and allows the wound to become a shared story. The community thus becomes the guardian of memory, bearing suffering together and helping to discover meaning within it.[23]

Trauma processing, therefore, does not end with psychological healing. Reconciliation becomes complete only when the person can once again see themselves as part of God's redemptive narrative – not merely as a survivor but as one whose suffering is inscribed into the story of the cross and resurrection; not only as a victim but as a person whose life bears meaning for the community. In other words, the theology of trauma in pastoral care shows that the narration of suffering is not merely a psychological but also a spiritual act, through which the wounded person re-inscribes themselves into the story of God and the community. This is the *healing of memory* – not forgetting but reinterpreted remembrance, from which hope and reconciliation can emerge.

2.1. The Psychodynamics and Theological Interpretation of Transgenerational Memory

Transgenerational memory refers to the phenomenon by which traumatic historical events – such as the Holocaust, genocides, or political persecutions – affect not only those who directly experienced them but also subsequent generations. This inheritance is transmitted not only through genetic[24] but also through psychodynamic and cultural

[23] Op. cit. 24–27.

[24] Yehuda's study demonstrates that severe parental trauma can leave a lasting epigenetic "imprint", which may be biologically transmitted to offspring, influencing their stress responses and psychological vulnerability. This form of "biological memory" complements the concepts of psychological and cultural memory: trauma is not only narratively transmissible but also measurably inheritable. YEHUDA, Rachel – DASKALAKISA, Nikolaos – BIERERA, Linda M. – KLENGELC, Torsten – HOLSBOERD, Florian – BINDER, Elisabeth B. (2016): Holocaust Exposure Induced Intergenerational Effects on FKBP5 Methylation. In: *Society of Biological Psychiatry.* 80, 5. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsych.2015.08.005.

processes: through family narratives, silences, rituals, and communal remembrance.[25]

Marianne Hirsch's concept of *postmemory*[26] illuminates this process. Members of the second generation carry their parents' trauma so powerfully that they experience it almost as their own, even though it is a *mediated memory*. It is neither communicative (directly transmitted through first-hand narrative) nor purely cultural (institutionalized and symbolic), but it occupies the space between the two. Postmemory represents an emotionally charged, mediated, and reflective relationship to the past – a *living connection* that bridges personal and collective memory, trauma, and identity.

Why is this effect so strong? Hirsch explains postmemory through the notion of the *living connection*:[27] the children of survivors, though they did not endure the trauma themselves, remain deeply shaped by it through partial parental narratives, images, and artistic media. This is a secondary, inherited memory – not experiential but transmitted, yet emotionally real and often life-shaping. The paradox of "remembering what one has never lived" defines this intergenerational linkage. Through cultural media – stories, images, rituals –, the next generation re-engages with the silenced experiences of the past.[28]

The nature of trauma ensures that it can never be fully narrated; there always remains an unspoken residue. Children absorb trauma through the emotional climate of the family, through their parents' behaviour, anxiety, and silence. Thus emerges a form of psychological and spiritual inheritance, not chosen but absorbed through relational transmission. For pastoral care, the phenomenon of postmemory means that healing must often address not only the individual's own experiences but also the traumas inherited across generations. Transgenerational trauma persists as an invisible psychological legacy:

- in *family communication patterns*, where trauma is often transmitted through silence ("we do not talk about this"), paradoxically intensifying anxiety in descendants;
- in *identity and loyalty conflicts*, as the children of survivors feel a moral obligation to "guard" the memory of trauma, as if forgetting would constitute betrayal;

[25] WOLYNN, Mark (2023): *Örökölt családminták. Félelmek, érzések és viselkedésminták, melyeket a tudatunkon kívül átvettünk.* Budapest, Édesvíz Kiadó. 64 ff. TÓTH, Borbála (2006): *Családfánk. Sorsunk rejtett mintázata*. Budapest, Kairosz Kiadó. 60–67.

[26] HIRSCH, Marianne (2012): *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust (Gender and Culture Series)*. Columbia University Press. 30–35.

[27] Op. cit. 32–33.

[28] Op. cit. 33–34.

- in *unconscious transmission*, where unprocessed grief, fear, and guilt reappear in descendants' behaviour, decisions, and relationships;[29]
- through *unresolved parental affects*, manifested in silence, overexposure, identification, or repetition.[30]

2.2. A Theological Framework for Interpreting Transgenerational Inheritance

Theology approaches transgenerational memory from several angles.

2.2.1. The Collective Dimension of Sin and Retribution

Scripture speaks of the consequences of sin reaching beyond a single generation: "I punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation" (Exod 20:5b). In systematic-theological terms, human sin is not merely an individual act; it is bound up with the "spirit of the age"[31] confronting humanity as a whole. Sin constitutes active resistance to God's address and takes shape not only in individuals but also within social, political, and cultural systems. Following Barth, sin is not simply the absence of God's goodness; it is a formative and dangerous power – a force that shapes institutions and communal structures, distancing humanity collectively from God.[32] This does not imply strict determinism; rather, it names the long-term consequences of communal sins. Sin is a personal but also a collective and historical reality that feeds back into the life and identity of the community.[33] Accordingly, liberation from the

---

[29] NADER, Kathleen Olympia (1998): Violence – Effects of Parent's Previous Trauma on Currently Traumatized Children. In: Danieli, Yael (ed.): *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.* New York, Springer Science+Business Media. 573–574.

[30] ANCHAROFF, Michelle R. – MUNROE, James F. – FISHER, Lisa (1998): The Legacy of Combat Trauma: Clinical Implications of Intergenerational Transmission. In: Danieli, Yael (ed.): *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.* New York, Springer Science+Business Media. 257 ff.

[31] THOMAS, Günther (2019): Sin and Evil. In: Jones, Paul Dafydd – Nimmo, Paul T. (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of Karl Barth.* Oxford, Oxford University Press. 358.

[32] Op. cit. 361.

[33] VOLF, Miroslav (2006): *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World.* Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 118–123.

bonds of sin extends not only to individuals but also to communities, enabling them to release the sins of the past rightly and to find their place anew within the order of reconciliation.[34]

2.2.2. Memory and the History of Salvation

Within Christian theology of memory, communities heal when they integrate past traumas *liturgically and narratively.* Biblical Israel understands itself through the story of suffering (Egypt, exile, persecution) and discovers a renewed identity in God's saving acts. As Pfoh's analyses suggest, biblical narratives – myths and stories – function in part as cultural memory, offering communities an interpretive framework for past traumas.[35] Thus, the liturgical–narrative integration of trauma is not a modern invention but a concept already pertinent to the biblical tradition (and its reception).

In Christian communities, healing is not achieved by forgetting but by relearning the past.[36] The theological aim of remembrance is not the conservation of pain but its transformation within liturgical and narrative forms, whereby wounds become story and sin and suffering become the lived experience of divine reconciliation.[37] Liturgy is the sacred narrative in which, through the community's imagination, God's story and the human story converge; faith is not merely proclaimed but embodied, continually shaping communal identity.[38] Volf argues that communities heal when they learn to "release rightly" the past – not by suppression, but by reinterpreting it in God's presence. This reform of memory transpires in the communal spaces of liturgy and narration, where forgiveness does not entail amnesia but the co-presence of truth and grace.[39]

---

[34] Op. cit 121.

[35] PFOH, Emanuel (2023): Some Observations on Cultural Memory, the Hebrew Bible and the History of "Ancient Israel". In: *Old Testament Essays.* 36, 3. Available at: https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2023/v36n3a3.

[36] VOLF 2006, 207–210.

[37] The return of wounds signifies the surfacing of repressed pains from the past. These wounds cannot be closed or forgotten, for both memory and the body repeatedly bring them to manifestation within communal life. RAMBO, Shelly (2017): *Resurrecting Wounds: Living in the Afterlife of Trauma.* Waco (TX), Baylor University Press. 150–153, 245–249.

[38] WHITLOCK, Michelle L. (2024): Liturgical Narrative and the Imagination. In: *MDPI Journals, Religion.* 15, 8. 993. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15080993.

[39] VOLF 2006, 209.

2.2.3. The Theology of the Cross

In theological engagement with the Holocaust and other genocides, the image of the suffering Christ becomes paramount. God does not stand outside transgenerational trauma but participates in suffering, thereby opening the possibility of reconciliation and healing.[40] A theology of trauma rejects purely explanatory theologies of suffering and recognizes that the bodily, identity-related, and communal dimensions of trauma become constitutive theological questions.[41] The cross and resurrection take on heightened significance: the mystery of the cross is the place where God risks Godself in human suffering and becomes present therein. Trauma theology thus privileges re-creation (post-traumatic remaking) over classical theodicies: God does not remain distant but assumes uncertainty and pain.

In sum: the psychodynamics of transgenerational memory show how unprocessed past traumas weave invisibly through subsequent generations, while theological interpretation indicates that healing is possible only when memory is processed within spiritual and communal frameworks.

3. Memory and Narrative: Storytelling and Testimony – Restoring Continuity

Human identity is fundamentally narrative in nature: we understand ourselves, and render ourselves intelligible to others, through stories. Traumatic experience, however, often ruptures narrative: suffering remains *unsayable* or tears apart a coherent life story.[42] Storytelling is therefore not merely a communicative act but a psychological and spiritual reconstruction, helping to restore continuity within the story of a life.

At the psychological level, testimony enables trauma to cease being an isolated, unspoken experience. Survivors need witnesses willing to acknowledge that a traumatic event has occurred and to bear witness on behalf of the victim.[43] Through narration,

---

[40] See above Moltmann's theological exposition on the theology of the cross.

[41] O'DONNELL, Karen (2023): Trauma Theology. In: Wolfe, Brendan N. et al. (eds.): *St Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology*. Available at: https://www.saet.ac.uk/Christianity/TraumaTheology.

[42] HERMAN 2003, 81 ff.

[43] Op. cit. 89.

trauma receives an external frame; the community becomes a witness, breaking the power of silence and isolation. At the spiritual level, testimony within religious communities unfolds in the horizon of God's presence: the believer's story is not only about personal fate but also about how God was present in the life event; therefore, it is also a story of faith. Testimony thus often carries both missional and healing forces.[44]

3.1. The Relationship between the "Small Story" and the "Great Story"

Narrative therapy posits that each human life is a story shaped by experiences, relationships, cultural discourses, and social expectations. People often become trapped in problem-saturated stories (e.g. "I am a failure", "I am unlovable"). This constricted perspective frequently intensifies in crises. The therapeutic task is to reconnect the small story to the larger story:[45] *My life feels like failure now – but how does this episode belong to my whole life story? How can it become part of a larger narrative?* This reframing demands a shift in perspective for the protagonist.

The healing power of stories is evident in Scripture. The Bible itself functions as a narrative therapeutic repertoire, recounting the stories of people wrestling with loss, shame, failure, and sin – who nevertheless encounter redemption and healing. Examples include Joseph (from abandoned brother to saviour), Ruth (from widow to matriarch), Zacchaeus (from outcast tax collector to host), Peter (from denier to shepherd), and Paul (from persecutor to apostle). The specificity of the biblical narrative – especially the economy of salvation (creation–fall–redemption–restoration) – offers an alternative frame for interpreting human life stories. Within this frame, every life begins as a valuable story created in the image of God; fracture, sin, and suffering are part of the story but not its end; redemption, new beginning, hope, and healing are possible; suffering is not purposeless but may serve a larger telos. Such reframing enables individuals to author a more hopeful and dignified story about themselves. This thesis connects with the earlier motif of "faith within unbelief" amid traumatic experience.

---

[44] RICOEUR, Paul (1984): *Time and Narrative*. Chicago – London, The University of Chicago Press. 99 ff.

[45] Op. cit. 85–101, 150–152. See as: BRUNER, Jerome Seymour (1990): *Acts of Meaning (Four Lectures on Mind and Culture – Jerusalem–Harvard Lectures)*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 56–58, 81–83. Such as: PENNEBAKER, James W. (1997): *Opening Up: The Healing Power of Expressing Emotions*. New York, Guilford Press. 86–92.

At the intersection of stories lies identity transformation. When individuals begin to see their own stories in the light of the biblical narrative, the following changes may occur: a new identity is born[46] ("lost" becomes "found", "outsider" becomes "welcomed", "victim" becomes "healed"); events acquire new meaning (e.g. suffering becomes a meaningful turning point); hope and future orientation are strengthened ("If there is a place for me in God's story, then I am not cast off."). The story does not end with trauma or failure – there is continuation, forgiveness, a "new chapter". Thus, the intersection between personal narrative and biblical narrative is the place of new identity. The story of suffering (or sin) becomes part of the resurrection story – it does not end with trauma, because there is continuation.

3.2. Story Sharing and Communal Healing

Biblical stories are often told in communal contexts (worship, small groups, family), and narrative therapy likewise affirms the shared telling and hearing of life stories. This strengthens: empathy and connection ("Others have gone through this – I am not alone."); testimony, which confirms the reality of positive change ("God did this for them – perhaps God will do it for me."); shared faith, in which individual stories are woven into salvation history.

Religious communities are particularly well suited for the healing integration of memory because their identity is grounded in remembrance. The communal life of biblical Israel likewise rested on the ritual remembrance of deliverance and suffering ("Remember that you were a slave in Egypt…" Deut 5:15). The liturgy of the Christian Church is also a space of memory and narrative: the Eucharist's central injunction – "Do this in remembrance of me" – signifies that a traumatic event of the past (the crucifixion) endures as a transformed, salvific story.

Stories told within religious communities – whether of personal experience or of collective trauma – have a healing function:

- *new meaning-making*: the community helps embed personal suffering within God's story, allowing it to acquire significance;
- *communal solidarity*: the narrated story draws others in, enabling collective mourning and processing;

[46] ROOT, Andrew (2013): *The Relational Pastor*. Downers Grove, Inter Varsity Press. 115–120.

- *Testimony as a source of hope*: surviving and sharing trauma can become evidence of perseverance and divine presence for others.

In summary, storytelling and testimony in religious communities are not merely exercises in memory but active healing processes in which individual and collective trauma may acquire new meaning in the light of God's story. In contemporary narrative therapy, the relationship between the individual life story and biblical (or other spiritual) master narratives is increasingly central within Christian psychotherapy and pastoral psychology. This relationship can catalyse change and healing by offering an alternative narrative for understanding and rewriting a life. In therapeutic conversations, such stories can inspire clients to see their own stories in a new light.

4. How Can an Ecclesial Community Assist in Processing Collective Trauma?

Collective trauma[47] is not merely an aggregation of individual symptoms: a community's memory, narratives, rituals, and institutions also carry, shape, and transmit either the trauma itself or its healing. The church occupies a distinctive place in this process because it simultaneously possesses spiritual resources (liturgy, theology, prayer), organizational structures (sanctuary, networks of care), and cultural authority (commemorations, education). The aim of communal pastoral care is therefore twofold: to support individual healing and at the same time reshape the community's narrative and norms so that confronting the past leads to social reparation, reconciliation, and preventive learning.[48]

Within Christian tradition, *memoria* is a liturgical and communal act: remembrance is not mere retrospection but identity-forming presence (Eucharist: "Do this in remembrance of me."). This entails a triadic relational horizon – person–community–God – with both spiritual and spatial embodiment. Scripture and theology acknowledge not only

[47] ERIKSON, Kai (1991): Notes on Trauma and Community. In: Gliserman, J. Martin – Kaplan, Louise J. – Moss, Donald – Birckmayer, Katherine (eds.): *American Imago. Studies in Psychoanalysis and Culture*. 48, 4. 455–472.

[48] VOLF, Miroslav (1996): *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville, Abingdon Press. 133 ff.

personal sin but also corporate sin: communities, peoples, and institutions may be guilty (e.g. unjust social systems, oppression, racism, war crimes, economic exploitation).

The community – whether church or nation – must assume a dual vocation in parallel:

- First, it must recognize its own historical sins and cannot hide behind the claim that *these were the deeds of the ancestors*. Responsibility pertains not only to past personal transgressions but also to ongoing structures that still harm today (institutional injustice, the marginalization of the poor, environmental destruction). The collective dimension of sin requires owning historical and structural responsibility and shaping practices of reparation ("I punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation" Exod 20:5).
- Second, it must provide spiritual and liturgical space for processing individual and communal trauma – i.e. a theological and practical framework for reconciliation. Reconciliation does not mean overlooking sin, injustice, or suffering. Mere indulgence would leave the wound untouched and relationships unhealed. In Christian theology, reconciliation is rooted in God's action: "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2Cor 5:18–19). This is not "cheap grace",[49] but the meeting of truth and forgiveness at the cross. Hence reconciliation always bears a spiritual dimension: a new relationship is born among God, persons, and communities.

4.1. Political and Social Implications

As Miroslav Volf and Desmond Tutu have argued, reconciliation carries social and political consequences. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (under Tutu's leadership) demonstrated that reconciliation requires: (1) truth-telling (uncovering past crimes), (2) processes of forgiveness and conciliation, and (3) building new structures to prevent the recurrence of injustice.[50] Genuine reconciliation not only

[49] BONHOEFFER, Dietrich (2007): *Követés*. Budapest, Luther Kiadó. 59 ff.

[50] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 1995 in South Africa, following the fall of the apartheid regime, under the government of Nelson Mandela and the leadership of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Its goal was to uncover human rights violations, provide an opportunity for victims to be heard, and promote social reconciliation through the acknowledgment of truth. At the heart of the Commission's work stood not retribution but a

brings closure to the past but restores relationships (person–person, community–community, person–God) and reconfigures the future – fostering new communal forms, a more just society, and healed human relations.[51] Reconciliation is thus a dynamic process, not a single gesture. The theology of reconciliation understands conciliation as a God-given, transformative power: not mere leniency but a theological and social act in which truth, forgiveness, and new beginnings together generate healing and change.[52]

4.2. Religious Rites as Instruments of Healing

Trauma is often accompanied by unsayability, a shattered narrative, and a loss of control.[53] By contrast, ritual offers structure, communal framing, and a symbolic language that enable the re-interpretation and working-through of suffering.[54] Religious ceremonies are distinctive in that they introduce a transcendent horizon: healing is construed not only psychologically but also spiritually and theologically.[55] Ritual practice – both personal and communal – provides form and sequence for acts oriented towards confession, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace.[56] Rites help dissolve enemy images, re-found

---

theological and ethical paradigm of remembrance, forgiveness, and learning. The TRC became a paradigmatic example of collective trauma processing and restorative justice: through the acknowledgment of the past and the act of testimony, a new social narrative emerged that formed the political and spiritual foundation of reconciliation. GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA (1998): *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa. Final Report.* Vol. 1. Cape Town. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/trc0.pdf.

[51] TUTU, Desmond Mpilo (2000): *No Future without Forgiveness.* New York, Doubleday. 195–221.

[52] VOLF 1996, 147 ff.

[53] KOLK, Bessel van der (2014): *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma.* New York, Penguin Group. 50–58.

[54] SCHREITER, Robert (2012): Public Forgiveness at the Boundary of the Secular and the Religious. How Do We Read the Terrain? In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing. 252–253.

[55] SCHREITER, Robert J. (1992): *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Boston Theological Institute Series). Maryknoll (New York), Orbis Books. 15–18. See as: SÖLLE, Dorothee (1973): *Leiden.* Stuttgart, Kreuz-Verlag. 25–26; MOLTMANN 1993, 228 ff.

[56] VERAART, Wouter (2012): Forgetting, Remembering, Forgiving, and the Mundane Legal Order. In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing. 65–66.

communal bonds, release internal pressure, and restore self-regard.[57] In Catholic practice, confession, while in Protestant traditions, services of penitence provide structures for individual and communal reconciliation. After collective traumas (persecution, ethnic conflict), reconciliation rites can enact apology, forgiveness, and the making of a new covenant.[58] The formalized character of ritual creates safety: reconciliation is embodied not only in words but in symbolic acts (handshakes, candle-lighting, breaking bread).[59] Rites make it possible for the unsayable to be expressed in another register – gesture, silence, song, movement. The paradigm is always the divine forgiveness that inspires and empowers human reconciliation.[60]

Pastoral practice can integrate ritual means into liturgical frameworks (memorial services, reconciliation liturgies, services of prayer) while attending to local cultural traditions. Rituals are most effective when they fit communal identity – e.g. by incorporating folk customs or local liturgical heritage.

> **Excursus.** In South Africa's TRC, hearings unfolded with prayer and song, testimony, apology, and reconciliation – placing the process within a quasi-liturgical frame.[61] In Germany, the Buß- und Bettag practice linked penitential worship with the acknowledgment of historical responsibility and diaconal (reparative) action, allowing the collective rite of penitence to become a spiritual pathway for processing historical trauma. In the Netherlands, ecclesial remembrance liturgies functioned not only as services of mourning but as rites of collective penitence and responsibility – woven from prayer, silence, hymnody, candle-lighting, the reading of names, and communal confession –, enabling communities to face their past and seek forgiveness for historical wrongs.

Religious ceremonies and rites are thus key instruments for processing collective trauma. Their symbolic language enables the working-through of what cannot yet be spoken; communal participation strengthens the sense of being held; and the transcendent

[57] TUTU 2000, 82–90.

[58] STOKKOM, Bas van – DOORN, Neelke – TONGEREN, Paul van (2012): Public Forgiveness: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives. In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing. 2–8.

[59] SCHIRCH, Lisa (2005): *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding.* Bloomfield, Kumarian Press. 60–61.

[60] SCHREITER 1992, 53–54.

[61] TUTU 2000, 61–62.

dimension offers hope and new meaning amidst suffering. Rites of penitence and reconciliation therefore have psychological, spiritual, and social functions, contributing to both personal and communal healing. Yet ritual does not replace rational, discursive methods of peacebuilding; it complements them. By engaging the body, senses, and emotions, ritual "outwits the dragons of hatred and violence", re-animating the human dimensions necessary for the work of peace.[62]

Summary

This study argues that trauma is not merely an individual psychological injury but an experience of theological significance that reshapes identity and community. Suffering, the experience of the "silence of God", and abandonment destabilize the believer's basic trust and narrative coherence; yet – viewed through the theology of the cross – crisis can also become the locus of faith's rebirth. Healing turns on embedding the individual life story within the broader soteriological narrative, where wounds acquire meaning: suffering becomes part of the story of resurrection rather than its terminus. Memory is the arena of healing: not forgetting but – following Assmann – reframed remembrance that orders the past within the horizon of the present. The psychodynamics of trauma show how an unprocessed past binds subsequent generations through invisible strands; theological interpretation adds that healing begins when a community assumes its past in liturgical and narrative forms. Narrative and testimony restore continuity: telling one's story is not merely communicative but a spiritual act by which the self is reinscribed into the stories of God and the community. At the intersection of the "small story" and the "great story", identity is transformed: the outsider becomes welcomed, the victim becomes healed, and hope and future orientation are strengthened.

In this process, the ecclesial community is not only a companion but a formative agent. Its spiritual resources (Word, liturgy, prayer), institutional networks, and cultural authority enable it to provide safe space for individual and collective processing while shaping communal narratives towards reparation, reconciliation, and preventive learning. Reconciliation is not "cheap grace" but the meeting of truth and forgiveness – with social and political entailments (truth-telling, accountability, new structures).

[62] SCHIRCH 2005, 61.

Ritual complements rational peacebuilding by giving structure, symbolic language, and communal framing to the unsayable. Rites of penitence and reconciliation, by engaging body, senses, and emotions, rehabilitate human relationships and – through a transcendent horizon – confer hope and new meaning on suffering. Their effectiveness depends on fitting local identity and memory. A theology of collective sin and responsibility underscores that sin is not only personal but structural. Owning the past and practising reparation (learning, remembrance, diaconal action, institutional reform) are conditions of reconciliation. Models such as the TRC demonstrate that ecclesial language – prayer, song, testimony – can offer a quasi-liturgical frame for social healing.

The processing of collective trauma does not end with the mitigation of psychological symptoms. It reaches fulfilment when persons and communities find a home again in God's story: the past gains meaning not through erasure but through redemptive remembrance; truth and grace together restore relationships; and ritual and narrative inscribe healing into the community's identity. This is both the task and the promise of a pastoral-psychological perspective for the churches of Central and Eastern Europe.

References

ANCHAROFF, Michelle R. – MUNROE, James F. – FISHER, Lisa (1998): The Legacy of Combat Trauma: Clinical Implications of Intergenerational Transmission. In: Danieli, Yael (ed.): *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.* New York, Springer Science+Business Media.

ASSMANN, Jan (2006): *Religion and Cultural Memory. Ten Studies.* Stanford, Stanford University Press.

BABEROWSKI, Jörg (2019): *Az erőszak terei*. Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó.

BONHOEFFER, Dietrich (2007): *Követés.* Budapest, Luther Kiadó.

BRUNER, Jerome Seymour (1990): *Acts of Meaning (Four Lectures on Mind and Culture – Jerusalem–Harvard Lectures).* Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

CAVARERO, Adriana (2009): On War. In: *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence.* New York: Columbia University Press.

ERIKSON, Kai (1991): Notes on Trauma and Community. In: Gliserman, J. Martin – Kaplan, Louise J. – Moss, Donald – Birckmayer, Katherine (eds.): *American Imago. Studies in Psychoanalysis and Culture.* 48, 4.

GLANVILLE, James A. – DREYER, Yolanda (2013): Spousal Rape: A Challenge for Pastoral Counsellors. In: *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies.* 69, 1. Available at: AOSIS OpenJournals. DOI: 10.4102/hts.v69i1.1935

GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA (1998): *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa. Final Report*, Vol. 1. Cape Town. Available at: https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/trc0.pdf.

HERMAN, Judit (2003): *Trauma és gyógyulás. Az erőszak hatása a családon belüli bántalmazástól a politikai terrorig.* Budapest, Háttér Kiadó – Kávé Kiadó – NANE Egyesület.

HIRSCH, Marianne (2012): *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust (Gender and Culture Series).* Columbia University Press, Gender and Culture Series.

KOLK, Bessel van der (2014): *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma.* New York, Penguin Group.

KOSARKOVA, Alice – MALINAKOVA, Klara – DIJK, Jitse P. van – TAVEL, Peter (2020): Childhood Trauma and Experience in Close Relationships Are Associated with the God Image: Does Religiosity Make a Difference? In: *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.* 17, 23. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17238841.

KOVÁCS, Szabolcs – KOVÁCS, Réka Rozália (2024): Az erőszak interperszonális vetületei. A terror, az ontológiai megsemmisülés, a sebezhetőség, az öldöklés gyönyöre. Teológiai-antropológiai vizsgálódás az erőszak dinamikájának tárgykörében. In: Lészai, Lehel (ed.): *A tudás ösvényén.* Vol. 5. Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universiatara Clujeana. 17–35.

LANGBERG, Diane (2015): *Suffering and the Heart of God. How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores.* Greensboro, New Growth Press.

MOLTMANN, Jürgen (1993): *The Crucified God. The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology.* Minneapolis, Fortress Press.

NADER, Kathleen Olympia (1998): Violence – Effects of Parent's Previous Trauma on Currently Traumatized Children. In: Danieli, Yael (ed.): *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma. Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.* New York, Springer Science+Business Media.

O'DONNELL, Karen (2023): Trauma Theology. In: Wolfe, Brendan N. et al. (eds.): *St Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology.* Available at: https://www.saet.ac.uk/Christianity/TraumaTheology.

ORVOS-TÓTH Noémi (2022): *Örökölt sors.* Budapest, Jelenkor Kiadó.

PENNEBAKER, James W. (1997): *Opening Up: The Healing Power of Expressing Emotions.* New York, Guilford Press.

PFOH, Emanuel (2023): Some Observations on Cultural Memory, the Hebrew Bible and the History of "Ancient Israel". In: *Old Testament Essays.* 36, 3. Available at: https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2023/v36n3a3.

PRIMO Levi (1988): *The Drowned and the Saved.* New York, Summit.

RAMBO, Shelly (2017): *Resurrecting Wounds: Living in the Afterlife of Trauma.* Waco (TX), Baylor University Press.

RICOEUR, Paul (1984): *Time and Narrative.* Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press.

ROOT, Andrew (2013): *The Relational Pastor.* Downers Grove, Inter Varsity Press.

SCHIRCH, Lisa (2005): *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding.* Bloomfield, Kumarian Press.

SCHREITER, Robert J. (1992): *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order* (Boston Theological Institute Series). Maryknoll (New York), Orbis Books.

(2012): Public Forgiveness at the Boundary of the Secular and the Religious. How Do We Read the Terrain? In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing.

SÖLLE, Dorothee (1973): *Leiden.* Stuttgart, Kreuz-Verlag.

STOKKOM, Bas van – DOORN, Neelke – TONGEREN, Paul van (2012): Public Forgiveness: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives. In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing.

THOMAS, Günther (2019): Sin and Evil. In: Jones, Paul Dafydd – Nimmo, Paul T. (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of Karl Barth.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

TÓTH, Borbála (2006): *Családfánk. Sorsunk rejtett mintázata.* Budapest, Kairosz Kiadó.

TUTU, Desmond Mpilo (2000): *No Future without Forgiveness.* New York, Doubleday.

VERAART, Wouter (2012): Forgetting, Remembering, Forgiving, and the Mundane Legal Order. In: Stokkom, Bas van – Doorn, Neelke – Tongeren, Paul van (eds.): *Public Forgiveness in Post-conflict Contexts.* Cambridge – Antwerp – Portland, Intersentia Publishing.

VIETH, Richard F. (1988): *Holy Power, Human Pain.* USA, Meyer Stone Books.

VOLF, Miroslav (1996): *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation.* Nashville, Abingdon Press.

(2006): *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World.* Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

WHITLOCK, Michelle L. (2024): Liturgical Narrative and the Imagination. In: *MDPI Journals, Religion.* 15, 8. 993. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15080993.

WOLYNN, Mark (2023): *Örökölt családminták. Félelmek, érzések és viselkedésminták, melyeket a tudatunkon kívül átvettünk.* Budapest, Édesvíz Kiadó.

YEHUDA, Rachel – DASKALAKISA, Nikolaos – BIERERA, Linda M. – KLENGELC, Torsten – HOLSBOERD, Florian – BINDER, Elisabeth B. (2016): Holocaust Exposure Induced Intergenerational Effects on FKBP5 Methylation. In: *Society of Biological Psychiatry.* 80, 5. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsych.2015.08.005.