

# ‘When the body speaks back’: Socialization of body-mind dualism in body memories of Cold War childhoods

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**Abstract:** Studies focusing on East Central Europe have generously explored collective memory (lieux de mémoire, monuments, ceremonies) and nostalgia for a past regime, but rarely have they examined memories as carried in child bodies. In this paper, we analyze selected Cold War childhood memories to explore events in which children’s bodies seemingly act out of control. As a part of socialization, children are taught to consciously control their bodies to fit in the societies they have been born to. With learning to control the body, children also learn that bodies are separate from their minds and that their minds can govern and regiment their body. However, bodies also slip up, avert, or simply remain unaffected by these attempts, in a way ‘speaking back’ to regulating forces, thus troubling the modernist assumption of the separation between the mind and body. The aim of the paper is to show the complexities and limits of socialist or any modern(ist) forms of socialization in which the concerted efforts of the mind are mobilized to govern the body. Moreover, the discussion of body memory and the highlighted mechanisms of how socialization efforts create bodily memories adds to our understanding of the effects of pedagogical intentions in education.

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## Introduction: ‘Listening’ to Disobedient Bodies

What do we listen to? Sounds, words, music, and much more, including any vibrations and resonances that give a sense of the world, arouse emotions, and create memories. But what if the vibrations and resonances came from within ourselves as opposed to the outside world? Do we hear and listen to the ‘voices’ of our bodies? And if so, how do our bodies ‘sound’, as part of a social group or political epoch, such as childhood and modernity under socialism? Such were the questions that stood at the beginning of our multidisciplinary academic experiment, triggered by a collective biography workshop, where we could all experience that “there are more ways to remember the past than speaking about it” (Shaw, 2020, p. 2). About 30 interdisciplinary researchers and artists spent five days together in this workshop in 2019, recalling and sharing memories of childhood experiences in socialist and post-socialist contexts. As memories are not simply mental processes, our bodies were indispensable in our memory work as well. Rooted in habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), memories are also a polyphony of bodily senses, twitches, movements, tension in our muscles. In some of the recalled memories, the body ‘sounded’ with force, taking dominance over quieting attempts. We thus realized the body needed to receive central attention. In this paper, we explore childhood memories that were created during this workshop to explore childhood socialization, especially ideology directed to children’s bodies.

Although previous studies focusing on East Central Europe have thoroughly examined processes that aimed at building a collective memory (lieux de mémoire, monuments, ceremonies) and nostalgia for a past regime (Georgescu, 2015; Kašparová, 2018; Silova et al., 2018), only recently - and still rarely - have they begun to explore childhood memories, and memories as carried in child bodies (Henschel, 2020;

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Roubal, 2020). As children living in socialist societies, the authors of this paper were socialized into a discourse based on a dichotomy between the mind and body. Research on the Cold War has presented the education systems in former state socialist countries as overtly ideological, moulding and disciplining children (see more in Silova et al., 2018). These observations are somewhat true. As children, we were also taught that we can learn to rule our bodies. We were made to stand in the sun for hours-long school meetings (<https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/not-going-to-faint/>) or perform in complete unison with hundreds of others after grueling practices (<https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/moving-with-the-crowd/>). Failure of the body to function or work as instructed aroused fear and relief, embarrassment and joy, or even bullying. However, no ideology is omnipotent.

Bodies also slip up, avert, or simply remain unaffected by these attempts, thus troubling the modernist assumption of the separation between the mind and body. These processes become noticeable when the body 'speaks back to the mind' and reveals 'bodily feelings' or memories that present themselves non-verbally as visceral sensations, sounds, lights or feelings of warmth or terror, perhaps unrecognized by the mind. These actions give away the body's relations to the world, which are not fully controlled by our mind. The acting, feeling and sensing body makes itself more easily 'hearable' during 'dys' time, meaning times of disobedience, or dis-funcion, with 'dys' being a Greek prefix for 'bad', 'ill', 'hard' (Leder, 1990, p. 84). We usually cannot help but to notice the action of our body at times of disharmony: it feels pain, falls ill or even collapses. Recognising these bodily actions represents a first step towards conceptualizing the body as having a 'voice' (Evans et al., 2009). Thus, our aim here is to make space for ways of memory analysis that draw on body memory as a visceral and muscular choreography with the world. More than mere muscle memory, or remembering how something is done unconsciously, the body remembers our experiences of the world, and these past experiences live in our bodies (Bourdieu, 1990; Fuchs, 2012; Simpkins, 2016).

This paper seeks to engage in a more complex understanding of ideological socialization and its limits. We do not aim to provide a new theoretical approach to memory, nor bringing more analytical information about socialism. We aim to draw attention to childhood memories that trouble the modernist assumption of the separation between the mind and body, the possibility of complete control of the mind over the body, while illuminating processes of minding (the body) and bodying (the mind) (Gunderson, 1975). Moreover, the discussion of body memory we develop in this paper and the highlighted mechanisms of how socialization efforts create bodily memories seek to add to our understanding of the effects of pedagogical intentions in education.

### **Methodology: Collective Biography**

Collective biography is a group method to explore the constitution of a subject through systematically recalled individual memories, which are then discussed in the group and collectively analyzed (Davies et al., 2006). In practice, exploring memory with collective biography includes an understanding of an individual's feelings and actions, within a socio-political context (Davies et al., 2006; Gannon et al., 2021), by leaving aside possible adult interpretations, personal bias, presumptions or romanticisation of childhood or nostalgia. What remains is a memory story, which arouses feelings as people relate to the memory shared and feel the sensations the narrator felt. The analysis of memories seeks to disclose collective practices, social processes, and structures that formed the subjects the memories speak of (Davies and Gannon, 2009). Collective biography was originally used by feminist scholars to shed light on the constitution of women selves by societal norms and expectations (Haug et al., 1999). Since its feminist genesis, which can be traced back to Germany in the 1980s, the method has been used in numerous research fields and disciplines, ranging from the study of female-gendered subjects, such as schoolgirls (Davies and Gannon, 2006; Davies et al., 2006), to neoliberalism (Gannon et al., 2014), or (post)socialism (Silova et al., 2018).

For this paper, childhood memories were recalled, shared, written and rewritten after discussions that sought to bring in more details of memories, including how we felt in our bodies at that moment. In this type of memory work, the collective sense of the memory arises as part of the discussion. The group's

questions do not only aim to create a richer description of a past experience but also seek to understand commonalities, connections and differences in these experiences. Collective biography (Davies and Gannon, 2009), in this way, has no relation to collective memory, except that collective memory might inform some of the sense-making that happens when personal memories are shared with others.

We came together in Berlin as a group of artists and academics (including the authors of this paper), and shared memories about boundary crossing and childhood experiences where the body gained a prominent role. Participation in the project was voluntary, as well as the consent to use the individual stories in a memory archive available freely on the internet, and as a material ('data') for further analysis. The workshop was part of the international memory research project Re-collect/Re-connect.<sup>4</sup> The outcomes were memory stories that recounted events of reality-constitutive social facts, such as 'fear', 'secrets', or – for the purpose of this paper – 'mind/body control and dis/obedience', as experienced in former state socialist countries. The analysis of such memories do not only expose the mechanisms which connect the individual with the collective in the processes of identity formation and belonging, but also uncover power relations and cultural and ideological assumptions that nest in its very center. Drawing upon our multidisciplinary background and, using the Thinking-with-Theory approach to qualitative research by Jackson-Mazzei (2011), we borrow and reconsider concepts of each other's disciplines, that "create assemblages that demonstrate a range of analytical practices of thought, creativity and intervention" (Jackson-Mazzei, 2011, p. 717), that speak both broadly and in particular about childhood, socialist modernity and its utopian projects of childhood, and children's bodies as an object of socialization, discipline, politicization, power, and resistance.

## Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

### Mind and Body Duality

The pair of mind and body walk through history and space as body and soul, material shrine and abstract spirit, contemporary and eternal, flesh and energy. This dualism, an entity made of two halves - yin and yang, male and female, nature and culture, anima and animus, body and mind - has become rooted in the sacred and profane symbolism and, most importantly, in language, in which we communicate ideas about ourselves. Due to a long history of the mind-body dualism, we were socialized under modernity to believe we are a composition of a (separate) physical body and an abstract mind, which science locates into our brain (Lind, 2001; Westphal, 2016).

This dualism is more of a modern epistemology than a reality: "Often the mind is identified with the brain, but minding [thinking, feeling, imagining, reflecting, analyzing] is a function of the brain (and the rest of the body). Similarly, running is a function of the legs, but running and the legs are not identical. If we were to say that we do our running with our run, we would be reasoning similarly to the way we do when we say that we conduct our minding with our mind. In the former case the incorrectness of the statement is obvious" (Gunderson, 1975, p. 317). Gunderson further argues that, while the body is a descriptive symbol of an observable entity, the mind is a word only, an abstraction without existence in the non-verbal world. Thus, to bring the two terms on the equal level of abstraction, we should speak about the minding-body relation, or more precisely minding-bodying processes, to reflect upon the dynamic nature of both ends of the life-living spectrum. The two are inseparable. "When minding ceases, we no longer have a living body and we call it a corpse" (Gunderson, 1975, p. 318).

All bodies, even those apparently created by science, are simultaneously both natural and social (Douglas, 2020; Fox, 2012; Turner, 1995). The body is both fixed and real, as well as constantly changing or constructed. The phenomenological tradition of embodiment (Merleau-Ponty, 1962/2013) points towards a non-dichotomous ontology, where every act and observation come from the perspective of the particular lived body of a culture, society, time, class, age, and gender, shared with others (das Leib, the body-for-

<sup>4</sup> <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/>, accessed on 12.11.2021. To learn more about the research method, follow ABOUT and then HOW WE WORK WITH MEMORIES. See more on methodology in Millei, Z., Silova, I., & Piattoeva, N. (2022). Kollektiivinen biografia: Lähestymistapa kylmän sodan lapsuuskien tutkimiseen. In K. Vehkalahti, E. Jouhki, S. Lipkin, J. Sitomaniemi-San, & T. Kuokkanen (Eds.), *Matkaopas lapsuuden historian tutkimukseen : Monitieteisiä näkökulmia ja menetelmiä* (pp. 162-188). (Historiallisia tutkimuksia; No. 288). <https://doi.org/10.21435/ht.288>

itself, each one of us is a body). At the same time, and in the same physical place, the body is of an individual human being, a 'real' body (der Körper, the body-in-itself, each one of us has a body) (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Turner, B., 1992). Human embodiment is thus characterized by the ambiguity of being both personal and impersonal, subjective and objective, natural and social (Simonsen & Koefoed, 2020). Along this tradition, it is our aim to engage with the materiality of our bodies, and at the same time pay attention to understanding the ways in which bodies are simultaneously always interpreted, culturally represented, and positioned. We consider the acknowledgement and appreciation of this ambiguity central to understanding the experience of a lived body and embodiment.

Social science gives us rich evidence of different cultural practices related to a lived body, where the mind is perceived as embodied and the body as mindful (Bateson, 2000; Csordas, 2002; Lock and Farquhar, 2007). The evidence highlights the cultural relativity of human experience, shaped by culturally different schemes of classification, while also challenging the seemingly natural division of mind and body, rooted in the western mode of thought. Examples of this may be found in various forms of rituals and transpersonal spiritual experiences. In one classic anthropology, Edith Turner (1992) shows in detail how other cultures allow or even rest within the unity of the two. The Ihamba ritual is central to healing processes of the Ndembu people, in which the coexistence and co-operation of mind and body, which do not appear as separate entities but as a continuum of one another, is the vital ingredient. If one is blocked or restricted, emotions leak through alternative channels, taking an undesirable route, upon which a disbalance occurs, causing the body to ache, or the mind to wander into excitement, sensation or even insanity. To achieve healing processes, body and mind must be a unity (Turner, 1992). Drawing on our childhood memories of moments, when the separation of mind and body is no longer enforceable or possible, we highlight how the imaginary hierarchy between mind and body is disrupted and even transcended into the action of the lived body.

### **Transcending the Mind and Body Duality in Memories**

A memory is the product of a lived body. It is always relational, never stands on its own, while at the same time, it is conceived as very individual and unique because it stores our private experiences, thoughts, emotions, and sensations. Memories construct our sense of self through a holistic approach of experience being imprinted in flesh. The body lives through the episode portrayed in the memory, it is affected, shaped, moved and altered through the experience, but it also remembers and stores the memory into the future for further use, association, identity recollection and reconnection. This is what Bourdieu calls *habitus*, "an active presence of the whole past" (Bourdieu 1990, p. 56) lived in each and every body. This process happens in an environment controlled by culture, ideology, time, and space. Memory is thus contextual, culturally and historically relative, incorporating all aspects of our existence (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995; Roediger and Wertsch, 2008; Sansi, 2017). The matrix of interpretation of memories is thus not ambiguous but very concrete and shared. Therefore, for people of the same time, space, and culture, a memory often connects to similar bodily sensations, poses, and actions, such as stiffness, tightness, absence of motion, bodily warmth, or butterflies in the stomach (Koch et al., 2014). As such, the memory is a mirror of totalising human experiences.

Memory has often been discussed as a predominantly cognitive process. Scholars have, however, been supporting the adoption of a more holistic approach to memories to overcome and move beyond the Cartesian dualism of mind and body (Fuchs, 2012). After Bourdieu (1990), memory is discussed as *habitus* and theory of practice under which it no longer makes sense to separate the body and mind (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1992; Shaw, 2020). As Kleinman and Kleinman (1994, p.716-717) further explain, "Bodies transformed by political processes not only *represent* these processes, they *experience* them as lived memory of transformed worlds. The experience is of processes sedimented in gait, posture, movement, and all the other corporal components which together realize cultural code and social dynamics in everyday practices. The memorized experience merges subjectivity and social world."

In psychology and psychiatry, memory is widely discussed especially in relation to experiences of violence, trauma, abuse, and loss/grief (Fuchs, 2012; Hirsch, 2002). Body memory is the "embodied

information storage function of the body" (Pylvänäinen, 2012, p. 289) or, differently said, it is what and how: what the body remembers from the past until the present and how the body remembers the past in the present (Koch et al., 2012). According to Koch and colleagues (2012), body memory can be habitual/procedural, situational, intercorporeal, incorporative, pain and traumatic. The division between them was created as an analytical tool and the types of body memory can and do overlap one another. While all of these analytical angles are illuminating, for the purpose of this paper we concentrate on the three types that are most prevalent in our childhood memories.

First of all, there is the incorporative memory. It consists of experiences with others that influence our future interactions. They are the "interiorization" of the gaze upon others. Both culture and family play an important role in this interiorization process, as the gaze of the child needs to be oriented towards the values and rules of the specific social environment through socialization. Progressively, incorporative memory becomes a form of collective memory, or what Assmann and Czaplicka call communicative memory (1995). Young (2002) demonstrates that the body of the child inherits and integrates family traditions, practices, corporeal dispositions: children devise their own presentation of the self in relation to not only family stories, but also bodies, because "bodies are judgements about how to relate to the world" (Young, 2002, p. 26). The body presents itself as a version of the family body, as "memory made flesh" (ibid).

The second type of body memory is related to pain. Painful experiences impact our behavior in the present and in the future. While grief can cause one to withdraw from life (Koch et al., 2014, p. 276), the body maintains a memory of the connection with people once lost, expressed as embodied reactions of "stiff, painful bodies" (Simpkins, 2016, p. 6). This stiffness is frequently present in the childhood memories we analyze. As Hentz (2002) demonstrates, the memory of painful events is, to a large extent, re-lived as it was lived the first time, thus enduring into the future.

The third type of body memory is traumatic memory. It can exist both consciously and unconsciously and be re-experienced without the person understanding why the feelings and sensations surface (Koch et al., 2014, p. 276). These events "manifest themselves in behavior patterns into which a person repeatedly blunders" (Fuchs, 2012, p. 70), thus attempts to forget consciously or subconsciously are doomed to fail. Contrary to this, a conscious re-living of such a memory can have a healing effect upon the individual (Csordas, 2016; Shaw, 2020; Skultans, 2008), as some of us have experienced during our memory workshop.

We have argued so far that all memories are stored as sensual experiences lived through individual bodies (Scheffer-Hughes, 1992) and amalgamate a person's individuality with the collectivity of a particular epoch and its ideology (Humphries, 1995; Kleinman & Kleinman, 1994; Poole, 2008). The final part of our theoretical anchor will set the scene in which the memorized events took place.

### **Socialist Modernity and Childhood**

The modern notion of childhood is understood as distinct from adulthood (Ariès, 1996; deMause, 1995; Fass, 2013). What a child is and what childhood is supposed to be are strongly shaped by adult perceptions and, as Sorin and Galloway (2006) argue, children learn 'a way of being' different from adults, in worlds created by others before they were born. As such, childhood is a social construction - both as an idea and as a period of life (James & Prout, 2005) - specific to time and space (Stearns, 2011). Cultures and societies have been and still are devoting a great deal of time and effort to developing elaborate norms and rules, methods and avenues to train children, to capacitate, discipline, and control them (Hochschild, 1979; Lancy, 2008).

Modernity, accompanied by technological expansion, war, and post-war conflicts, brought about destruction and despair, in which countries, societies, ideologies, and cultures had to re-build themselves (Wagner, 2008). Children were seen as the best hope of recovering and prospering. They became the backbone of new political orders (Fürst, 2010; Kucherenko, 2016; Taylor, 2006). In modern nation states, the purpose of children's regulation is to "instill into the young people the values that would enable them to be proper citizens of their nations in the future" (Schumann, 2010, p. 1). A child-citizen was trained not

only to absorb the ideology of the time (Millei & Imre, 2015; Teszenyi et al., 2022), but also to learn and embody the culture, a process synonymous with civilizing the child's actions and body (Millei, 2011; Roubal, 2020).

In the second half of the 20th century, following the Soviet example, East Central European state socialist societies - in which our memories are situated - implemented a series of measures aimed at creating a new society and 'new person' with a particular understanding of individualism and collectivism (Klumbyè & Sharafutdinova, 2013). Children and youth played an essential part in this process. Through self-fashioning/self-realization, children were supposed to develop a "nature-given, unique, and personalized socialist self" that consciously wanted to be useful to society and felt a responsibility to the collective (Krylova, 2017, p. 336).

An important part of socializing children was their correct bodily discipline, self care and appropriate public conduct (Roubal, 2020; Tesar, 2018; Teszenyi et al., 2022). In a socialist society, the lives of most children and parents were separated early on. As mothers went to work a few months after giving birth (and fathers never stopped working), the state provided professional and ideologically oriented institutionalized care, to which the children were expected to be entrusted and where they spent a lot of their time. In East Central European countries, disciplining children's bodies was thus mainly in the hands of institutions, including kindergartens, schools, the health system, sport and youth organizations, such as the pioneers and socialist youth, as well as its ideologically driven leaders. It is these institutions that would mold and shape the 'dis/obedient' body during the Cold War, socializing children along the desired ideals and ideological prescriptions (Georgescu, 2015; Millei, 2011; Rehak, 2014).

Despite the focus on the collective and homogenizing tendencies, the role and responsibility of individuals to comply, to discipline, and to transform themselves consciously, including their own bodies - for example through the civic duty to work, to exercise, to comply with vaccination schemes, to select appropriate hairstyles - were also emphasized and valued (Horvat, 1973; Oates-Indruchová, 2003). Under the modernist project of socialism, the body was idealized and standardized as healthy, strong, amiable, dis-personalized but most of all controllable by the individual's mind. Failure to do so was never interpreted as a failure of the system of thought but rather as a failure of an individual teacher, or that of the child her/himself, having to bear the punishment that followed (Georgescu, 2010; Henschel, 2020; Oates-Indruchová, 2003; Roubal, 2003).

Disobedience to societal norms and rules, and civilizing efforts, are occasionally in social science discussed as a matter out of place, a deviation, a moment of losing control, which will preferably be restored soon. Along this thinking, the body is expected to behave, to fall into place, while the mind is expected to try harder, relentlessly and more systematically to govern the body. As children of socialist modernity, we remember striving to obey and to discipline our bodies, as well as the fear of failure, punishment, embarrassment, and often even humiliation if not successful. We also remember situations when our aim to discipline our body was well beyond the capacity of our mind, no matter how hard we tried. During our childhood, socio-political circumstances made us believe this inability was due to us being an anomaly, showing inadequate effort, inadequate self-discipline and training. The body, however, cannot be colonized by the mind indefinitely since, as we propose in this article, these are not two separate entities, despite the culture we were brought up in.

While studies of socialist childhood during the Cold War have seen a growing interest, as illustrated by the recent special number "Re-Imagining Socialist Childhoods: Changing Narratives of Spatial and Temporal (dis)Orientations" (Teszenyi et al., 2022) published in the *Journal of Childhood, Education & Society*, much of the scholarship on the topic focuses on the practices and policies which aim to nurture and shape future socialist citizens. With this article we aim to contribute to this growing scholarship. By drawing on body memories, we will not only reflect on the impact of attempts at controlling the body, but

also on how the body (re)acts, with the objective of better understanding the embodiment of the mind-body dualism during childhood.

In the following sections, we explore our childhood memories and those of our colleagues, recounting how children's bodies negotiated and struggled under socialization efforts and how they gained, re-gained, and lost control, while at the same time trying to make sense of the embedded and embodied nonsensuous duality between the mind and body they have been socialized into.

## Body Memories

### **Stereotypes Re-affirmed: Childhood Bodies as an Object of Power - Growing up by Gaining Control Over the Body**

Our bodies remember being, as children, a vessel of control, measurement, care, observation, socialization, discipline, alteration, and many other dysfunctions-to-be-corrected (Leder, 1990; Hörschelmann & Colls, 2009; Henschel, 2020). Children's bodies have been an object of power on which others exercise their will. This need not be a criticism. While we will address power abuse later in the text, what we want to bring forward at this point is the false but firmly rooted assumption about disconnection between mind and body (Simonsen & Koefoed, 2020). Our stories expose a number of occasions in which childhood bodies were made the object of some common vision, idea or ideology, regardless of time and space. This happened through explicit regimentation that targeted children's bodies through shaping their mind to develop self-control of bodies. Bodies, in this regulatory way, were shaped, dressed, and restricted according to the aesthetics and norms of the occasion, determining children's clothes, hairstyle but also limiting movement and emotions.

It was the first day of school. The young girl was seven and brimming with excitement at the thought of all the new things that awaited her. She feels full of energy, like it will burst out of her body. The school supplies and backpack had that specific new smell that she loved and amplified her emotions. Her heart was speeding. She wanted to move but needed to be careful with the clothes. She was wearing a brand-new blue and white uniform, with new cuffs and collar, perfectly white, well ironed and adorned with embroidery. Her hair had been carefully combed by her mother into two ponytails adorned with big white bows. Her mother had even taken her to a photographer that morning, in order to take a picture of her dressed like this. She hoped she would make many friends among her new classmates. She also felt a bit intimidated by the whole thing. Everything was new and the young girl wanted to make a good impression... <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/alone-in-the-classroom>

The girl goes to school for the first time in her life. Dynamic bodily energy - such as excitement, heartbeat, urge for movement - is mandated to be restrained to adhere to the occasion both materially, in the form of a new school uniform that is not tailored for exercise, and symbolically - sitting still at the photographer, having her hair neatly combed (see hair bows and school uniforms also in Dussel, 2005; Millei et al., 2018). From now on, this will be her daily reality for the next ten years, she will need to retrain extra energies, untidy hair and uniform. The girl complies with the expectations and procedures of this rite of passage, exerting self-discipline and restraining her body within the material constraints (clothes, hairpin etc) along with her emotions. At other times, the self-restraint that is demanded to be exercised by her mind over her body is unsustainable.

...The teacher is talking to the students. The girl starts talking to her classmate whispering "What is your name?", already trying to make new friends, at least get to know them. The next thing the girl remembers is being asked to show her palms to the teacher who hits her with a long wooden stick as a punishment for speaking. The girl feels a faint stinging sensation in her palms... <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/alone-in-the-classroom/>

In our memories, adults are an authority, because they act as masters of children's minds and therefore bodies, making their minds do things prescribed by social expectations. Discipline and punishment are used to teach children that only by conforming to the rules and properly controlling their bodies can children grow up to be desired persons. Self-formation, self-control and forms of civility are

sought to be developed and governed by children's minds, teaching children that their mind can be in control over their bodies, and hence separated from their bodies.

Frequently, however, power is used for an individual's pleasure or interests and exerted over the child. This behavior ranges from violation of law to self deception on the side of adults. Children in these situations often feel that something is wrong but cannot fully work out what is in their power to do, as we will see in the next two memories.

...On this particular occasion, the teacher was standing behind her and put his hands on her shoulders. It did not feel comfortable but just about bearable. After a while, his hands slipped onto her breasts. She felt shock and horror and her whole body froze. She stopped playing the guitar and her body tensed curling against his touch. The teacher just said 'carry on' and she carried on playing. She did not know what else to do. She knew that this was not right, he should not be touching her. She was a 'good girl' and did not want to offend the teacher by telling him to stop or walking away.... <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/only-god-protected-her/>

...All his childhood, he had to have his hair shaved. His mother didn't like long hair on boys. His mother didn't like ginger hair. So she thought if the hair is shaved very often, it will get darker. Almost every week he was at the hairdresser. It was like a curse loop. Over and over again, his mother would monitor the hair, how long it was and that it was time for shaving. It was getting harder and harder to convince him to do so, so she had to invent new excuses and reasons. She started blackmailing him, saying she won't walk with him on the street because it was embarrassing. Afterwards they purchased a shaving machine and they were doing it at home, in the bathroom... <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/the-boy-with-ginger-hair/>

The children struggle to conform to the learned ideals of 'good'/'appropriate' child behavior, of letting the adult control their bodies. In the first memory snippet above, the child is trained in the gendered practice of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1979), as well as learning to exist in multiple consciousness, a product of state socialism. She learned the need to suppress (the expression of) certain feelings in public spaces, for example dissenting feelings towards socialist ideology in large scale socialist celebrations, and tries to pretend and regulate her body by suppressing the bodily expression of her emotions. The child body fails to completely follow the learned patterns of behavior and freezes, tenses and curls in an unsuccessful attempt to slip out from the adult's domination. In the second memory, the child's hair is an unwanted color, perhaps a sign of unwanted difference or even stigma. The mother does not even engage the child to control his body, the hairdresser is recruited to exercise this control and cut the hair regularly. In light of increasing resistance from the boy, the mother enlists forms of emotional violence in her quest to control the child's body. In both memories, adults seem to effortlessly slide over such tension and expect the child to exercise the control over their bodies the adults themselves seek to exert, to quiet the rebellion of the child. As long as the control endures, and no matter of what price, everything is labeled all right.

A socialist child is a development project, a semi-finished product, a tabula rasa (deMause, 1995; Silova et al., 2018), which only through education, discipline and training will reach full humanity. Under socialist modernity, children strive to grow up, since adulthood is presented to them as the real world, the time that matters, the time when life gains sense and meaning by being able to participate and contribute to the common goal of building the happy state and happy future (Georgescu, 2015). Under socialism, children are valued not for their immediate contribution but for their future possibilities (Fürst, 2010; Kucherenko, 2016, Taylor, 2006). Only occasionally, they get the taste of the adult world.

She is in the hospital bed, waiting for tonsil extractions. There was no room in the children's ward, so they admitted her to the ladies' room. She felt privileged, she felt special . ...The buzzing of the neon lamps is only interrupted by soft conversations about knitting patterns and strawberry pesticides. She feels lonely. The ladies quickly run out of short informative polite questions to which she gives short polite informative answers. Nobody to talk to. She is terribly lonely. She wants to cry but nobody cries around here. Not here. Here are only adults. She was placed here, because she looks like an adult...<https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/adult-hospital-ward/>

The child strives to control the body with her mind, as she was taught - it is an 'adult' thing to do. Mastering emotions and restraining the body accordingly gives a child a ticket into the adult world - not only symbolically throughout school attendance, all tuned into this idea, but also - on some occasions - in reality, as if getting a taste of the adult world. Despite being unhappy and uncomfortable, the situation is not interpreted as a threat but as a distinction, an honor. Despair, discomfort, dys-function of the body



(Leder, 1990), the bodily signal of 'something being wrong' is re-interpreted and consecrated as a necessary step into adulthood.

### **Stereotypes Dys-affirmed: Childhood Bodies as a Subject of Power - When the Body Overpowers the Mind**

Collected childhood memories are full of stories where we as children try to behave, comply, teach, and force our bodies but the results simply do not arrive. The body can refuse, resist, and 'speak back', thus leaving the child in confusion, not being able to make sense of it, imprinting it in body-memories.

...A nurse comes in the evening, handing each person a thermometer and medicine, asking each and everyone: "Did you have your stool today?" The girl panics. What on earth is she talking about? What is a stool? Surely, she does not mean the chair to rest one's feet after a long and tiring day!?... She is helpless, shy, ashamed for not knowing, not being the big girl. Apparently, 'yes' is the correct answer to the nurse's question, every woman answers yes, so will she. But what if she misses something vital? What if the stool is some kind of a pill necessary for her operation? ....She dares not to ask, not to betray the trust of all those who have chosen for her to be among the adults. She wants to comply, to keep up the facade, the mask, to stay in control. The mind is determined but the body betrays her. She develops diarrhea and fever and receives a pill to cure both. In the morning, they move her downstairs to the children's ward. She feels she is allowed to be a child again; she allows herself to cry.  
<https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/adult-hospital-ward/>

A taste of the adult world, originally perceived as a treat by the child, may soon turn into a nightmare. The child perceives the adult world as remote and obscure, with unknown words and attitudes difficult to copy, where feelings are not freely expressed, where everyone seems to be in control and their bodies behave as prescribed: a stool a day. The child is convinced of not belonging to this world to which she does not have the codes. She is terrified of the idea of being discovered as an impostor. Despite the child's best efforts and emotional labor to behave as expected, as 'a big girl' or a 'woman', body symptoms express the turmoil and pressure she is experiencing. These symptoms expose the child's lack of belonging in the adult sphere. The balance between training and harming the body is very difficult to determine, once Cartesian dualism is upheld and the mind is trained to reign over the body.

Sporting activities are some of the other fields where these battles are often performed.

...The regional competition took place the day before. She did her usual combination: javelin, discus, shot put and long jump. She already felt the pain as she pushed off during the long jump and then on the way home sitting on the bus she could hardly bear the pain. By morning she could not move. Even the tiniest of movements came with shooting pain. As she was lying in bed motionless, she slowly buried her dream of becoming an Olympic champion.  
<https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/backpain/>

When symptoms are ignored, pain overpowers the senses. The mind wishes to push aside, to bury the messages, it keeps training and regain control over the pain, in an attempt to dismiss a reality the mind is not ready to accept, which is inappropriate, not in line with wishes, ideologies or expectations. Distress expressed through illness, injury, and overwhelming pain, makes the child facing an undesirable reality, the loss of a dream.

Childhood is also a world of incomplete knowledge (Brown, 2003; Postman, 1994), especially when it comes to sexuality and bodily functions. In order to preserve ideals of childhood innocence, children were at some historical point envisioned by adults as in need to be isolated from all that pertains to the constructed adult world, such as war, violence and sexuality. It was achieved by isolating children spatially from the world of adults (through schools, children's rooms, etc.) and establishing the written word as a main channel of communicating information, encoded in books rather than transmitted orally as local knowledge or gained by keen observation. Such a modernist idea of a child as incomplete goes hand in hand with schooling and appropriate socialization on their way to complete humanity - complete adulthood.

In such a childhood, the body is sought to be controlled but not completely known or understood. Partial knowledge leads to panic and anxiety.

...The girl was at home all alone. In pain. Something was wrong, but she was not quite sure what. An unfamiliar pain in the stomach - extending into her lower back - the pain she had she never felt before. It started earlier in the day

when she was at school. She tried to ignore the pain then, counting the minutes until the classes were over and hoping that she would feel better after coming home. But the pain was only getting worse. And her anxiety was growing. Then the blood. Both on her panties and on the toilet paper. The feeling of horror that something is really really wrong. What was happening to her? Was she dying? Life cut so short. Her parents' expectations never met. Panicking, she tried to call her mother at work, but there was no answer... <https://coldwarchildhoods.org/portfolio/not-going-to-die-period/>

As in the previous memory, the ignored bodily expression does not go away but subjugates all else. Information and explanation may help but it does not suffice to overcome the pain and distress. In the end it is by acknowledging the reality and aiming to understand what is happening with her body that the crisis is averted.

### Some Concluding Thoughts

Stories of childhood about everyday spaces and experiences of state socialism are instances of constant re-interpretation and re-positioning woven together during the collective biography workshops. With the analysis of these memories, we reflect critically on the cartesian mind/body separation, the ontology in which modern western humans are dominantly socialized, taught to think and understand their experiences. In unison with other theorists, we proposed that this is one possible interpretation of human existence that has particular consequences for children's everyday lives. As it has been pointed out many years ago by Gunderson (1975), the mind and body dualism is more of a modern epistemology than a reality. The two are inseparable, yet we keep teaching children about their separateness and demand that once learned they can exert control over their body with their mind in line with societal expectations of civilized behavior. Moreover, because these bodily memories are less spoken about, how socialization efforts create bodily memories as effects of pedagogical intentions are less discussed yet have long lasting reverberations.

Childhood under state socialism was characterized by a belief in standardization, normativity, universalism and discipline, based not only on physical punishment as during pre-modern times but also on compliance to ideological norms. Institutions used specially developed pedagogies to lift the community needs over those of the individual, to teach equality through universalism, and paid special effort to teach children to internalize the norms associated with the social and socialist ideals, and to comply with them, including body regulations and a primacy of will over the body. Different state socialist countries and in different time periods applied varying levels of force to enact this type of socialization, towards the shared aim to turn children into the new socialist 'man', disciplined and with a steel will on improving himself to improve society (Millei, 2011; Silova et al., 2018). When children failed to succeed, it was predominantly interpreted on the grounds of insufficiency of training, knowledge, age and time investment. Growing up into adulthood under state socialism was therefore closely connected with mastering the body with the mind, despite its dys-comfort, dys-agreement or simply dys-function (Leder 1990). While we are aware that in other non-state socialist countries then and today the mind-body dualism is also taught and learned, and discipline and control are applied as part of school practices, we wanted to show how these efforts specifically translated into everyday experiences of socialism that childhood memories narrated. Our memories, however, also tell about numerous occasions when events did not run as intended, when the body resisted being governed to the extent that it 'spoke back', it was heard and listened to, or even took over the situation. Thus, full control has never been possible and the symptoms often eclipsed these powerful efforts to completely instrumentalise children for socialist ideals.

With this article, we did not seek objective truths of childhood or of state socialism, simply, we wanted to understand better how an idea of mind-body division becomes embodied during childhood taking this particular case where ideology and its socialization received great importance. However, our exploration connects with experiences in other parts of the world showing the similarities of socialization in schools and everyday life. Drawing on body memory, which is a visceral and muscular choreography with the world (Koch et al., 2014), demonstrates the necessity of creating new ways to understand our being in the world in which mind, body, and emotions are never separated. New theorizing could also help in identifying new methods of analyzing and teaching ways of being and becoming. Since childhood and

growing up are interwoven processes of *mind*ing and *body*ing, we argue the interest of a change of vocabulary, theory and pedagogical practices by focusing on processes rather than outcomes (Jackson and Mazzei, 2011).

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