SZILVIA TÓTH

INDEPENDENT INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCHER · EDUCATOR · WRITER · ARTIST · HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE

Founder, T.S. Evita Artworks

RESEARCH &PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

Building bridges between cultural memory, human experience and belonging

CENTRAL INQUIRY What holds the world together through rupture, conflict and cultural difference?

01 PROFILE & INTELLECTUAL DIRECTION

Researcher and Intellectual Background

My work explores the human being at the meeting point between the individual and the collective, psychological experience and social structures, cultural memory and identity, and rational thought and symbolic knowledge. I draw on psychology, philosophy, sociology, art and lived experience to illuminate these relationships.

My intellectual journey spans Law, international aviation, Psychology and Education, alongside approximately twenty years of international professional experience and more than a decade of engagement with the Middle East through human-rights advocacy, independent research and cross-cultural exploration. These experiences have shaped my inquiry into identity, social influence, power, cultural difference and the conditions through which individuals and communities sustain meaning and belonging. Through T.S. Evita Artworks, I bring these perspectives together in research, writing, advocacy, visual expression and dialogue.

A central concern throughout this work is how people and communities sustain dignity, memory, relationship and belonging through periods of disruption. My current doctoral research develops this inquiry through a comparative study of the Levant and Nusantara, with Ireland as an intellectual and historical point of departure.

RESEARCH ARCHITECTURE

1. Social Influence
↓
2. Individual Development & Identity
↓
3. Control & Power
↓
4. The Grail Principle
↓
5. Wholeness

Academic qualifications

Juris Doctor (J.D.), Law	University of Szeged · 1999–2006
Aviation/Airway Management and Operations	Emirates Aviation University · 2008–2010
Aviation Security Management	Edith Cowan University · 2008–2010
MSc Psychology	Coventry University · 2016–2018
Professional Diploma of Education (2nd class Hon. Gr.1)	University of Galway · 2020–2022

Law → Aviation → Middle East → Human Rights → Psychology → Cross-cultural Experience → Art → Philosophy → Research

Research areas

Collective memory and heritage transmission · Transitional justice · Peacebuilding · Colonial and patriarchal power · Gender and authority · Cultural identity and belonging · East–West intellectual dialogue.

THE CENTRAL INTELLECTUAL CALLING

At the centre of this developing work is the Grail Principle, an original conceptual framework developed over approximately two decades. In the current doctoral research, it is understood as a possible relational principle of holding, protecting and nurturing life, memory and belonging, thereby sustaining connection across difference without erasing that difference or reproducing domination.

Can difference be held without domination?

The Grail Principle is treated in the doctoral research as an empirical proposition rather than a predetermined universal theory. Its explanatory value is to be examined, refined or challenged through scholarship and comparative research across distinct cultural and intellectual contexts. It also opens a critical inquiry into the relationship between authority and domination, and into whether forms of resistance can challenge oppressive structures without reproducing them.

BUILDING THE EAST–WEST BRIDGE

The second dimension of this intellectual calling is the East–West Bridge: a space for dialogue between distinct philosophical, psychological, religious, cultural and symbolic traditions. The work has drawn on Jungian psychology, Perennial Philosophy, sociology, philosophical inquiry and diverse religious and cultural perspectives. These provide points of intellectual engagement rather than a claim that different traditions share an identical origin or worldview.

The intention is not to establish a single answer or collapse cultural differences into one system. It is to explore what becomes visible when different forms of knowledge enter genuine dialogue and remain distinct while illuminating one another. The Grail Principle identifies the relational question of what holds and sustains connection; the East–West Bridge provides the comparative and dialogical space through which that question can be explored.

FROM INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY TO COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

This development now informs the doctoral research, *What Holds the World Together? Memory, Heritage, Power and Belonging Across Conflict and Cultural Difference*. The research brings the conceptual inquiry into dialogue with Memory and Heritage Transmission, Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding, with power as a cross-cutting analytical lens.

The comparative research focuses on the Levant, particularly Palestine and Lebanon, and Nusantara, particularly Malaysia and Indonesia, with Ireland as an intellectual and historical point of departure. It provides an opportunity to examine the Grail Principle critically: whether it can be identified across these contexts, what its limitations may be, and whether it can contribute to understanding cultural continuity, solidarity and resistance to domination.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND INVITED ACADEMIC EXCHANGES

The development of this work has been accompanied by international dialogue and cross-cultural engagement, including contributions and invited academic exchanges in Ireland and developing conversations in Malaysia, Indonesia, India and the Netherlands. These engagements continue to inform questions concerning power, femininity, consciousness, cultural knowledge, wholeness, belonging and the human search for Home.

02 CURRENT DOCTORAL PROPOSAL

WHAT HOLDS THE WORLD TOGETHER?

Memory, Heritage, Power and Belonging Across Conflict and Cultural Difference

The research investigates how societies sustain human and cultural continuity, belonging and relationships through rupture, conflict and domination, and how relationships and belonging may be reconstructed under these conditions. It also asks what conditions enable movement from domination and resistance towards solidarity, coexistence and renewed relationships.

PRIMARY QUESTION How do communities sustain cultural continuity and relationships through rupture? Can an underlying relational principle be identified in these processes, and can this principle illuminate forms of resistance to patriarchal and colonial domination without reproducing domination itself?

Three interconnected pillars

MEMORY & HERITAGE TRANSMISSION	TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE	PEACEBUILDING
How cultural knowledge, values, relationships and heritage are transmitted across generations, sustaining continuity and resisting epistemic erasure.	How truth-seeking, accountability, reparations and restoration address past violence, preserve memory, restore dignity and rebuild relationships.	How protection, intervention and social relationships can sustain solidarity and mutual responsibility, including where institutions prove inadequate.

Power as a cross-cutting analytical lens

Patriarchal, colonial and political power are examined across all three pillars: how relational practices are suppressed, transformed, sustained or mobilised in resistance; who controls or transmits memory; whose experiences and knowledge are recognised; and how authority may be distinguished from domination.

The comparative contexts are the Levant, particularly Palestine and Lebanon, and Nusantara, particularly Malaysia and Indonesia. The study explores selected Islamic and Indigenous traditions without presuming common origins, identical histories or interchangeable experiences.

03 THE GRAIL PRINCIPLE

The Grail Principle is the conceptual centre of the doctoral research. It proposes a relational principle of holding, protecting and nurturing life, memory and belonging, thereby sustaining connection across difference without erasing that difference or reproducing domination.

CENTRAL QUESTION Can difference be held without domination?

This requires distinguishing authority from domination and examining whether relationships can endure across differences in power, identity and worldview without one group erasing, silencing or subordinating another.

The Grail Principle is treated as an empirical proposition rather than a predetermined universal theory. The research investigates whether a shared relational principle can be identified across Eastern and Western traditions while preserving their distinct histories, cultures and worldviews. It also examines whether expressions of this principle in selected Indigenous and religious traditions illuminate forms of resistance to patriarchal and colonial domination.

Two interconnected lines of investigation

- Whether and how the Grail Principle can be identified across Memory and Heritage Transmission, Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding, drawing on selected Islamic and Indigenous traditions.
- Whether, and in what ways, expressions of the Grail Principle illuminate forms of resistance to colonial domination that challenge oppressive power without reproducing its structures.

The findings will be used to assess, refine or challenge the Grail Principle as a conceptual framework. Its explanatory value is therefore open to examination rather than assumed in advance.

The East–West bridge

The research seeks to build a conceptual bridge between East and West through dialogue across distinct cultural, intellectual and symbolic perspectives. The aim is to explore possible common ground without imposing sameness or erasing difference.

04 RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

The doctoral proposal adopts a reflexive qualitative comparative methodology, combining theoretical investigation with empirical research and drawing on sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, transitional justice and peacebuilding.

Critical reflexivity examines how the researcher's experiences, assumptions and engagement influence the research process and its interpretation. Creative reflexivity will be explored through reflective writing, a reflexive research journal and conceptual mapping. Personal reflection will remain distinct from participant testimony and empirical findings.

Four interconnected stages

1. Theoretical and Documentary Investigation Review scholarship on collective memory, heritage, colonial power, gender, Indigenous and Islamic epistemologies, transitional justice and peacebuilding; examine selected historical documents, oral histories, testimonies, cultural records, public narratives and digital documentation.

2. Empirical Research Subject to ethical approval and feasibility, conduct semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires with participants who possess relevant cultural knowledge or lived experience. Observation and selected case studies may complement participant accounts where access permits.

3. Comparative and Thematic Analysis Identify recurring relationships, differences and contradictions across the three pillars and selected contexts, using colonial and patriarchal power as cross-cutting analytical lenses.

4. Reflexive Synthesis Consider findings alongside reflexive records and assess whether the evidence supports, challenges or requires refinement of the Grail Principle.

Ethical approval will be obtained before primary data collection. Informed consent, confidentiality, participant safety, the right to withdraw and sensitivity to conflict, displacement and traumatic experiences will guide the research.

05 RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL SCOPING

The doctoral proposal has developed through conceptual refinement, comparative scoping and exploratory academic dialogue. The current research contexts are Palestine and Lebanon in the Levant, and Malaysia and Indonesia in Nusantara, with Ireland as an intellectual and historical point of departure.

Research and advocacy foundations

- T.S. Evita Artworks — an independent research, creative and advocacy platform developed over more than a decade.
- Palestine / Gaza Diary — ongoing advocacy, documentation and reflective research examining conflict, power, narrative, human rights, resistance and memory.
- The Silver Lining in the Power Dynamic: From Individualism towards Solidarity — abstract submitted to the Sociology Association of Ireland Annual Conference, 2025.

Developing academic dialogue

Exploratory academic conversations and research scoping have extended across Ireland, Malaysia, Indonesia and India. These include dialogue concerning cultural philosophy and the *budaya/buddaya* tradition, contacts within Indonesian academic and philosophical networks, and engagement with North-Eastern Hill University in India, including an invitation to contribute to a future academic conference.

These are developing academic relationships and exploratory discussions, not claims of formal institutional partnerships or signed collaboration agreements.

06 T.S. EVITA ARTWORKS | COLLABORATION

T.S. Evita Artworks is an independent platform for research, dialogue and creative collaboration at the meeting point of psychology, philosophy, sociology, symbolic traditions, human experience and art.

RESEARCH & ACADEMIC COLLABORATION
Interdisciplinary inquiry, comparative research, conceptual development, writing and project participation.

SPEAKING & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP
Conference contributions, panels, interviews and invited discussions on identity, power, belonging and cultural difference.

WORKSHOPS & CREATIVE EXPLORATION
Facilitated exploration of identity, symbolism, storytelling, cultural conditioning and meaning.

ART & VISUAL PROJECTS
Visual expression and symbolic storytelling as forms of research, reflection and cultural dialogue.

Potential professional contributions

Research contributions · Research coordination · Comparative and documentary research · Academic seminars and roundtables · Workshop facilitation · Conference contributions · Research communication and public engagement · Creative and interdisciplinary projects · Consultancy and commissioned conceptual contributions.

Professional fees for commissioned or contracted work are agreed according to scope, responsibilities, preparation and project requirements. Formal research collaboration requires clear agreement on roles, ethics, intellectual property, authorship, data management and financial arrangements.

WORKING PRINCIPLE Academically meaningful, ethically grounded and mutually beneficial collaboration, with respect for cultural difference, research integrity and the contribution of each participant.