A Review Of The Social Memory Literature: Schools, Approaches And Debates

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Abstract: *The parties of a substantial number of the present-day ethno-national conflicts base their claims on the assertion of victimhood based on past wrong-doings. As such, understanding the roots, continuation and allegation of the victimhood claims is a compulsory step for the comprehension and the resolution of the contemporary conflicts. The sense of victimhood often grows out of the social memory of the ethnic/national groups. Social memory also helps to sustain the victim identity of the group and also utilized by the group to evidence its victimhood. Therefore, the first step to understand the dynamics of sense and claim of victimhood is the comprehension of the dynamics of social memory. This study is a lengthy review of the social memory literature. It seeks to display the major conceptualizations of social memory and the main schools, approaches and debates in the literature.*

Keywords: *social memory, socio-politics of social memory, memory agents, collected memory, collective memory, new structural memory, history*

Sosyal Bellek Literatürünün Eleştirel Bir İncelemesi: Okullar, Yaklaşımlar Ve Tartışmalar

Öz: *Günümüzde süregiden pek çok etno-ulusal ihtilaf ve çatışmanın tarafları iddialarını geçmişte karşı karşıya kaldıkları haksızlıklardan kaynaklanan mağduriyet iddiaları üzerinden kurmaktadırlar. Bu nedenle, mağduriyet iddilarının kökenlerinin ve bu iddiaların devamlılığını sağlayan nedenlerin anlaşılması çağdaş etno-ulusal*

çatışmaların anlaşılması ve çözümü için gerekli adımlardır. Çoğu kez, etnik ve ulusal grupların mağduriyet algılarının şekillendiği mecra sosyal bellektir. Sosyal bellek aynı zamanda mağdur kimliğinin devamını ve kanıtını sağlayan da bir araçtır. Bu nedenlerden dolayı, mağduriyet algı ve iddiasının altında yatan dinamiklerin anlaşılması, sosyal belleğin dinamiklerinin anlaşılmasına bağlıdır. Bu çalışma, sosyal bellek literatürünün uzunca ve eleştirel bir incelemesidir. Bu sayede, sosyal bellek literatüründeki temel kavramsallaştırma, okul, yaklaşım ve tartışmaların açığa çıkartılması hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *sosyal bellek, sosyal belleğin sosyo-politikası, bellek ajanları, derlenmiş bellek, kollektif bellek, yeni yapısal bellek, tarih.*

INTRODUCTION

Jewish, Christian and Islamic canons narrate Cain's murder of his younger brother Abel as the first manslaughter in the history of the mankind. These canons also tell that Cain and Abel were the sons of Adam and Eve, the first humans on the earth. Certainly, theologians and historians of religions are in command of interpreting the story of Cain and Abel. Still, this story, as well as the first records of wars that date back to the Bronze Age, tell us that violence, strife, battles and wars are the substantial elements of the history of mankind and undesirable yet inherent realities of the human existence. The present day is no exception. International and civil wars, non-state military organizations, terrorism, frozen conflicts, disputes between states and peoples have been the realities of the recent past and today.

As history book record more conflicts, wars and massacres, past conflicts and wars become the cause, trigger and/or justification of the present-day conflicts and wars. Ideas of revenge and justice render individuals and peoples more disposed to accept new wars as a way to correct past wrong-doings. Today, it is generally accepted that what motivated Nazi Germany to wage the World War II was partially a sense of injustice as regards to the consequences of the World War I. It is also generally accepted that self-perception of being subjected to injustices and the accompanying lust for revenge and 'justice' were to a considerable extend the motivations of the young Armenians that launched a terror campaign in the ranks of the secret organizations of Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide-Armenian Revolutionary Army (JCAG-ARA) between 1975 and 1985 against the Turkish state. There are many more examples of the same sort. As such, whether the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would have been as severe and relentless as it has been if it was not nourished by the stories of the past wrong-doings is not an idle question. In fact, the recently popularized term "historical justice" reveals the importance of the perception of past crimes and injustices as a factor of the present-day conflicts. The self-perception of being a victim and the supplementary 'lust for revenge of the defeated' is an unignorable cause of the emergence and/or intensification of the recent conflicts. Moreover, feeling of victimhood is a factor that impedes rational debate for the resolution of the conflicts.

Present-day global socio-cultural context ensures a kind of legitimacy to those who claim victimhood. Put it differently, being a victim gives the

individuals and groups a kind of leverage to claim rightfulness. This results in the glorification of 'victimhood'. One of the socio-cultural consequences of this is rise of the "culture of victimhood". In such a socio-cultural context, more individuals and groups claim victimhood rooted in the past calamities and enviably embrace the victim identity. It seems that in the present-day there is a race among individuals and groups as to who has suffered most from calamities, who was been the most severely victimized, who has been the first victim and so on. 'Victimhoods' are quantified, compared and contrasted. Even a hierarchy of 'victimhoods' are created. This is so because the "culture of victimhood" allocates moral superiority to the victim. As Tzvetan Todorov observes:

> If it can be convincingly shown that a group has been the victim of a past injustice, the group in question obtains a bottomless line of moral credit. The greater the crime in the past, the more compelling the rights in the present—which are gained merely through membership in the wronged group

Moral superiority is not important to correct the past wrong-doings *per se*. It becomes a tool of the victimized for revenge against the victimizer. As Nietzsche in his *On the Genealogy of Morality* ([1887] 2007, 42-43) states, the victim gets pleasure from victimizer's suffering, yet, more than that, from making the victimizer suffer. The victim feels satisfied for having power over the victimizer and making her suffer just as she made the victim suffer. This reveals the politico-psychological dimensions of the claim of victimhood.

Given the significance of victimhood in the formation of individual and group identities within the socio-cultural context of the "culture of victimhood" and its political uses and abuses, investigating the dynamics of the formation and fixation of the self-perception and identity of victimhood and its transmission to future generations is an imperative to understand conflicts that are rooted in history and the accompanying victimhood claims. Popular and scholarly historical research is one of the means of the formation, transmission of the sense and claim of victimhood. However, as discussed in this study, history in its ideal form is a 'cold-science'. With its truth claim, it is obliged to observe the imperatives of the scientific research. As a detached and analytical scholarly endeavor, history as a science does not always provide findings that those claim victimhood seeks. Moreover, the reliable and valid data that historical research shall base itself on is not always available in the

archives. Therefore, often, not scholarly historical studies but stories told by mouth and memoirs published, both of which are often a blend of the truth and fiction serve to generate, maintain and claim victimhood. At the same time, by the transformation of the historical science from 'history writing' to 'history making' that threw the objectivity and truth claims out of the focus by the postmodern and linguistic turns by the 1990s, the boundaries between history as a science and social memory blurred. This generated new methodological questions. For these reasons, the recent scholarship on what can generically be called conflict resolution needs to comprehend the phenomenon of social memory. This requires a theoretical re-examination of the social memory literature. The purpose of this study is to be a step in this direction.

The scholarly interest in social memory[1] dates back to the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it has become a popular topic in sociology, anthropology, social psychology, political science, and cultural studies since the last two or three decades, (see, Olick and Robbins 1998, 106-108). As social memory rapidly became a popular topic, the number of publications multiplied. This rapidly created its own problems. One of these problems is the terminological and definitional anarchy. The first section of this study explores the principal conceptualizations of social memory not just to reveal terminological differences and diverse definitions, but also the main frame of the literature and the phenomenon that it deals with. Maurice Halbwachs is the pioneer of the sociological research on memory. Among the contemporary scholars of social memory, Jan Assmann, Marita Sturken, Marianne Hirsch Maurice Halbwachs, and James Fentress and Chris Wickham are the ones who assert authentic conceptualizations of social memory. Therefore, in the following section, the conceptualizations of these six scholars are investigated. This is followed by the review of the main schools, approaches and disputes in the literature in order to provide a full account of the current state of the art of social memory

1 In the literature on the sociological research on memory different terms such as collective memory, cultural memory, postmemory, social memory are used to signify the phenomenon. At intervals, different terms are utilized for substantial theoretical reasons. However, this is not the rule. Employment of different terms without any ample reason is not an exception. Consequently, the literature, in addition to the already mentioned ones, is populated by terms such as collective remembrance, popular history making, myth, national memory, public memory, vernecular memory, countermemory (see, Kansteiner 2002; Olick and Robbins 1998; also for other examples see Bal 1999, Connerton 1999, Le Goff 1992). In this study, while referring to specific scholars, specific terms that they use are used in inverted commas. This study argues the best available term for the phenomenon social memory. Therefore, in other instances the term social memory is used.

research. In the conclusion, the main points of the review of the literature are summarized.

Conceptualizations of Social Memory

Maurice Halbwachs and 'Collective Memory'

Maurice Halbwachs, a disciple of the Durkheimian sociology, is the pioneer of the sociological literature on memory. His main question is "how individuals remember". Although this problematic, at the first sight, seems to be psychological or neurological one, Halbwachs argues that there is no individual memory *per se* and all that individuals remember is shaped by norms, values, beliefs and expectations of the society in which the remembering individual lives. With this perspective, Halbwachs discloses the sociological relevance of remembering and memory. Halbwachs argues that although it is the individual who do the remembering, what and how she remembers is bound to and determined by the social frameworks for memory. He sustains that remembering is not pure, unmediated, unaltered, "photographic" recollection of the past, but a process of pairing up the reminiscences of the past into a meaningful unity through interpretation, organization and integration of the singular images. Memory is the end result of the process of remembering. As such, memories are mediated constructs.

According to Halbwachs, it is the very process of remembering, which results in "individual memories" that gives all the "individual memories" their collective nature. This is so because, the individual constructs her memories, that is, she interprets, organizes, integrates the past experiences in the process of remembering via the social frameworks for memory, i.e., social norms, values, beliefs and expectations, that she internalized as a member of a society. Because the social frameworks for memory are the properties of society that individuals as members of society possess and memories are constructed via these frameworks, what individuals remember are collective in essence. In a nutshell, it is the individual who does the remembering, but she does that through collective social frames. In Halbwachs (1992, 38) words:

> It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection.

Halbwachs (1992, 53) states:

> To be sure, everyone has a capacity for memory (*memoire*) that is unlike that of anyone else, given the variety of temperaments and life circumstances. But individual memory is nevertheless a part of or an aspect of group memory, since each impression and each fact, even if it apparently concerns a particular person exclusively, leaves a lasting memory only to the extent that one has thought it over- to the extent that it is connected with the thoughts that come to us from the social milieu. One cannot in fact think about the events of one's past without discoursing upon them. But to discourse upon something means to connect with a single system of ideas our opinions as well as those of our circle. It means to perceive in what happens to us a particular application of facts concerning which social thought reminds us at every moment of the meaning and impact these facts have for it. In this way, the framework of collective memory confines and binds our most intimate remembrances to each other. It is not necessary that the group be familiar with them. It suffices that we cannot consider them except from the outside-that is, by putting ourselves in the position of others-and that in order to retrieve these remembrances we must tread the same path that others would have followed had they been in our position.

Halbwachs substantiates his argument by contrasting dreams and memories. He argues that dreams are irregular, piecemeal, chimerical, meaningless and un-memorial, because dreams, in contrast to memories, are truly individual properties and for this reason lack unity and meaning. Halbwachs (1992, 41) states:

> …if the series of images in our dreams does not contain true memories, this is because, in order to remember, one must be capable of reasoning and comparing and of feeling in contact with a human society that can guarantee the integrity of our memory. All these are conditions that are obviously not fulfilled when we dream…

He (1992, 172) also asserts:

> When we are awake, on the contrary, time, space, and the order of physical and social events as they are established and recognized by the members of our group are imposed on us. From this comes a "feeling of reality" that opposed to what we still dream but is the point of departure for all our acts of memory. We can remember only on condition of retrieving the position of

> past events that interest us from the frameworks of collective memory.

Halbwachs highlights that, the fact that all the remembering (the process) and memories (the products) are collective does not mean individual memories are identical. Certainly, different individuals hold different memories. However, the way in which individuals recollect their own experiences, the 'tools' that they use in recalling and reordering those experiences, the path they follow during this process are determined by the same social frameworks for memory. It is in this sense, individuals remember as the members of the society, not as independent abstract individuals *per se*. Because collective frames determine individual memories, Halbwachs coins the term 'collective memory' and theoretically argues "…group in itself as having the capacity to remember" (Halbwachs 1992, 54).

Halbwachs argues 'collective memory'' is the dynamic and *au courant*. He (1992, 47) states:

> We preserve memories of each epoch in our lives, and these are continually reproduced; through them, as by a continual relationship, a sense of our identity is perpetuated. But precisely because these memories are repetitions, because they are successively engaged in very different systems of notions, at different periods of our lives, they have lost the form and the appearance they once had.

Social frameworks for memory evolve with the transformation of the societies. As social frameworks for memory evolve, what individuals remember also evolve. In other words, societal changes transform what is remembered and how it is remembered.

Halbwachs argues social frameworks for memory render the group cohesion and social identity possible. Therefore, one can assume that transformation of social frameworks for memory that leads to the transformation of remembering and memory would negatively impact the group solidity. However, according to Halbwachs rather than the temporal, the spatial continuity of the social frameworks for memory is important for the coherence of memories and, therefore, of the group.

> What makes recent memories hang together is not that they are contiguous in time: it is rather they are part of a totality of thoughts common to group, the group of people with whom we

> have a relation at this moment, or with whom we had a relation on the preceding day or days. To recall them it is hence sufficient that we place ourselves in the perspective of this group, that we adopt its interests and follow the slant of its recollections (Halbwachs 1992, 52).

Yet, Halbwachs also acknowledges the temporal dimension of the collective memory. He argues social frameworks for memory have a double character in the sense that they are both the results of historical accumulation of traditions and recollections, and ideas and conventions of the present-day. At the same time, Halbwachs claims in order the traditions and recollections to be accumulated, they must be processed and transposed into a teaching, a notion, or a symbol and given on a meaning. Only after that, traditions and recollections can become elements of the present-day society's system of ideas (Halbwachs 1992, 188). Such a transposition, however, is possible only if traditions and recollections are not in contradiction to present-day needs and concerns.

Jan Assmann and 'Cultural Memory'

According to Assmann, transmission of the self-knowledge of a society in time and space is the prerequisite of the societal unity, particularity and identity. However, as societies enlarge, personal face-to-face communication falls behind to enable this transmission. At that point, a need for an external intermediate memory to record, store, conserve and retrieve society's self-knowledge emerges. In other words, when the self-knowledge of the society cannot be carried and transmitted by the members of a society, necessity for an 'artificial' memory arises. This external mediate artificial memory that objectifies society's self-knowledge is what Assmann calls 'cultural memory'. In Assmann's terminology 'cultural memory' is the externalized, mediated, artificialized, and objectified self-knowledge of the society.

Assmann (1995, 126) defines 'cultural memory' as "a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation". He adds, reusable texts, images, and rituals specific to each society in each epoch compose 'cultural memory'. 'Cultural memory' is highly organized,

formalized, institutionalized and it necessitates specialized bearers and carriers such as priests, teachers, bards, mandarins and so on. (Assmann 2001, 57). As such, by 'cultural memory' Assmann refers not to an inner faculty of the humans, but to the capacity of the society to record, store, conserve and retrieve its self-knowledge by using artificial means, such as writing and archiving. Assmann (2001 29& 34) adds what is at stake with respect to 'cultural memory' is the advanced mode of bracketing together the knowledge from different epochs and perpetuating them by utilizing artificial means. 'Cultural memory' stabilizes society's self-image and self-knowledge and transmits it through generations (Assmann 1995, 132). The transmission of the self-knowledge of the society to its members both in time and space is an imperative for the preservation of the culture that gives a society its unique identity. Therefore, as a form of collective knowledge, largely but not exclusively of the past, 'cultural memory' provides a basis for particularity and unity of a society. It helps the society and the individuals as members of society to say "we are this" and "that is our opposite". In Assmann's (1995, 125-126) words:

> The specific character that a person derives from belonging to a distinct society and culture is not seen to maintain itself for generations as a result of phylogenetic evolution, but rather as a result of socialization and customs. The "survival of the type" in the sense of a cultural pseudo-species is a function of the cultural memory (Assmann 1995, 125-126).

Because 'cultural memory' is the self-knowledge of the society, it has a normative significance. It also "engenders a clear system of values and differentiations in importance". In other words, it creates a hierarchy among its components in terms of importance and centrality that is determined by the functions of each component in production, representation, and reproduction of the self-image of a given society (Assmann 1995, 131).

Assmann conceptualizes 'cultural memory' by delimiting it with what he calls 'communicative memory' and 'science'. According to him (1995, 126) science is the least relevant one among the three for not having a collective self-image. The truly important distinction Assmann makes for analytical purposes is the one that is between 'cultural memory' and 'communicative memory'. In Assmann's point of view (1995, 126-127) 'communicative memory' is exclusively based on everyday communication. It is related to the field of oral history and characterized

by a "high degree of nonspecialization, reciprocity of roles, thematic instability, and disorganization".

> Its most important characteristic is its limited temporal horizon. As all oral history studies suggest, this horizon does not extend more than eighty to (at the very most) one hundred years into the past, which equals three or four generations or the Latin *saeculum*. This horizon shifts in direct relation to the passing of time. The communicative memory offers no fixed point which would bind it to the ever expanding past in passing of time. Such fixity can only be achieved through a cultural formation and therefore lies outside of informal everyday memory (Assmann 1995, 127).

'Communicative memory' comprises the memories of the recent past that are shared by the individuals living in the same historical period. It is a generation-specific memory. 'Communicative memory' appears and disappears by the appearance and disappearance of its carriers. It has a limited duration just like generations. On the other hand, 'cultural memory' is fixed and stable. It is not composed the remembrance of daily events (Assmann 2001, 61-62). Assmann (1995, 128-129) states:

> Just as communicative memory is characterized by its proximity to the everyday, cultural memory is characterized by its distance from the everyday. Distance from the everyday (transcendence) marks its temporal horizon. Cultural memory has a fixed point; its horizon does not change with the passing of time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past, whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance). We call these "figures of memory".

So, according to Assmann, 'communicative memory' is the group memory that is shaped by everyday communication, which is not fixed, but still fluid. On the other hand, 'cultural memory' is fixed, stabilized, objectified, crystallized, institutionalized and ritualized form of self-knowledge of society. According to Assmann (1995, 129), in certain situations cultural objectification stabilizes 'cultural memory' for thousands of years. This forms what he calls binding structure that functions both in space and time (Assmann, 2001, 21). While, on the one hand, members of a cultural unit are linked to each other horizontally in the present-day by symbolic meaning worlds, on the other hand, they are linked to the past and future generations. This allows individuals to

have a sense of "we-ness", common identity and belonging. Assmann uses the term canon to define the principle that fortifies the binding structure of a culture in terms of resistance to time and immutableness; societies construct their self-images, record and store them as canons and transmit them to new generations (Assmann 2001, 23). Accordingly, 'cultural memory' might be thought as the canon of the society.

	Communicative Memory	**Cultural memory**
Content	History in the frame of Autobiographical memory, recent past	Mythical history, events in absolute past (*in illo temporo*)
Form	Informal traditions and genres of everyday communication	High degree ceremonial communication
Media	Living, embodied memory	Mediated in texts, icons, rituals, performances, classical or otherwise formalized language
Time Structure	80-100 years, a moving horizon of 3-4 interacting generations	Absolute past, mythical, primordial time
Participation Structure	Diffuse	Specialized carriers o memory, hierarchically structured

Table 1.1) Assmann's (2008, 117) schematization of the contrasts between communicative and cultural memory.

Assmann conceptualizes the 'cultural memory' as a truly stable and fixed self-knowledge of the society. Yet, he leaves room for a more dynamic understanding of 'cultural memory' by the idea of 'cultural memory in the mode of potentiality', i.e., "in the mode of potentiality of the archive whose accumulated texts, images, and rules of conduct act as a total horizon" (Assmann 1995, 139) and 'cultural memory in the mode of actuality', i.e., "whereby each contemporary context puts the objectivized meaning into its own perspective, giving it its own relevance" (Assmann 1995, 130).

Marita Sturken and 'Cultural Memory'

Marita Sturken in her *The Vietnam War, The AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (1997) elaborates popular history writing. She examines the ways in which history is told in the public sphere through popular cultural products, media, public images and memorials (Struken 1997, 5). Doing that, Struken develops the term 'cultural memory' as follows:

> I use the term "cultural memory" to define memory that is shared outside the avenues of formal historical discourse yet is entangled with cultural products and imbued with cultural meaning…Employing the term "cultural memory" thus allows me to examine how, for instance, popular culture has produced memories of Vietnam War and how these film and television images have moved between cultural memory and history. The self-consciousness with which notions of culture are attached to these objects of memory leads me to use the term "cultural" rather than "collective".
>
> I therefore want to distinguish between cultural memory, personal memory, and official historical discourse (Sturken 1997, 3).

With this definition, Sturken draws attention to popular cultural products such as movies, comics, public art works as the media through which socially relevant meanings are created. Inspired by Foucault, she emphasizes meaning making processes outside of the avenues of formal institutions. She draws attention to 'unauthorized' popular processes of meaning making that take place at the 'peripheries' of the society by those at the margins of the mainstream. Notably, at the same time, she rightly highlights that boundaries between 'authorized' and 'unauthorized', 'official' and 'unofficial', 'elite' and 'popular' are not too solid; there are interactions and exchanges between the two spheres. She prefers the term 'cultural memory' over collective memory in order to indicate volitional acts over spontaneous happenings in the meaning making processes through cultural products.

Sturken (1997, 9) stresses that "cultural memory is produced through objects, images, and representations", and adds "these are technologies of memory, not vessels of memory in which memory passively resides so much as objects through which memories are shared, produced, and given meaning". Therefore, she claims exploration of objects, images and representations as memory production tools is an integral part of the 'cultural memory' research. Consequently, Sturken's research agenda includes the investigation of memorials, images, commodities and also bodies as means of 'cultural memory' production (1997, 9-13).

Marianne Hirsch and 'Postmemory'

Marianne Hirsch in her chapter *Projected Memory: Holocaust Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy* (1999) explores how

camera images mediate between the private and public memories of the Holocaust survivors and the second and subsequent generations. She investigates the role of camera images in later generations' acts of remembrance, identification and projection. Although not a book-length work but a chapter in an edited book, Hirsch's work is of great importance for the question it asks which is mentioned, but not overtly expressed in other studies on social memory. Hirsch's (1999, 9) question is "a question of adopting the traumatic experiences-and thus also the memories-of others as one's own, or, more precisely, as experiences one might oneself have had, and of inscribing them into one's own life story". In other words, she asks how people internalize the memories of the others and make them their own. To define the internalization of others' memories Hirsch (1999, 8) coins the term 'postmemory' as the following:

> I use the term *postmemory* to describe the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experience of their parents, experiences that they "remember" only as the stories and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memories in their own right. The term is meant to convey its temporal and qualitative difference from survivor memory, its secondary or second-generation memory quality, its basis in displacement, its belatedness. Postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through projection, investment, and creation. That is not to say that survivor memory itself is unmediated, but that it is more directly connected to the past. Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events that they can neither understand nor re-create.

In brief, Hirsch distinguishes the individuals' memories of their own past experiences and their internalization of the memories of others. Hence, in Hirsch's framework postmemory refers to the phenomenon of transmission of memories to succeeding generations and the process of internalization of those memories by these generations.

Fentress and Wickham, and 'Social Memory'

James Fentress and Chris Wickham in the foreword of their *Social Memory* (1994) explain why they choose the term 'social memory' instead of the more conventional term 'collective memory'. Although authors neither elaborate sufficiently nor construct a theory of 'social memory', their short explanation points out a very central issue in the literature.

Fentress and Wickham (1994, ix) clarify that they are not interested in individual memory. They add, it is actually individuals who do the remembering and ask what is social about remembering. By referring to Halbwachs, they claim that remembering and memory is an effect of the membership to a social groups. They write:

> Thus, an important problem facing anyone who wants to follow Halbwachs in this field is how to elaborate a conception of memory which, while doing full justice to the collective side of one's conscious life, does not render the individual a sort of automaton, passively obeying the interiorized collective will. It is for this reason (as well as to avoid the image of a Jungian collective unconscious) that we shall normally use the term 'social memory' rather than 'collective memory', despite the greater recognizability of the latter phrase (Fentress and Wickham, 1994, ix).

What Fentress and Wickham hint at is the issue of reception of social memory by individuals. Fentress and Wickham state 'social memory' is the memory which is talked about, shared with others and communicated. According to the authors, communication makes the memory 'social memory'. In other words, only communicable and communicated memories are 'social memories'.

The Counters of the Social Memory Literature

Halbwachs, in his *avant garde* scholarship, deals with the ways in which individuals recollect past events that they themselves witnessed. As such, Halbwachs is interested in individuals' remembering of their own past experiences. Contrary to Halbwachs, most of the scholars of social memory focus on phenomena other than individuals' recollection of the past events that they themselves encountered and memories of one's own self. This is one of the major points that differentiates Halbwachs

in the literature. Besides that, several criticisms have been raised against Halbwachs' framework that Mizstal (2003) summarizes. Halbwachs sustains that the subject of the remembering is the individual, yet he argues that an individual does the remembering via the social frameworks for memory and underlies the dependency of the remembering individual to the group. Accordingly, Halbwachs denies autonomy to the individual vis-à-vis the society. In Hakbwachs' framework the individual is reduced to a means of the collective memory to realize itself and she is conceptualized almost as an automaton without initiative or power over the remembering process. Halbwachs does not discuss the ways in which individual internalizes the social frameworks for memory and simply presupposes it (Misztal 2003, 54). Despite the centrality of the concept of social frameworks for memory in his framework, Halbwachs leave them insufficiently elaborated. Halbwachs is criticized for failing to provide a satisfactory and full definition of 'collective memory' (see, Elam and Gedi 1996; Osiel 1997 cited in Misztal 2003, 54). For example, Elam and Gedi (1996) argue that Halbwachs' collective memory is indeed not different from the old concept 'myth'; Halbwachs neither brings anything new in the literature nor provides the scholarship with new analytical tools. Lastly, Halbwachs does not provide any explanation about the dynamics of societal processes and the emergence of the group identity. This, Mizstal (2003, 55) argues, gives an impression that according to Halbwachs group identities as relatively unchanging.

The obvious problems in Assmann's account are its highly static understanding of 'cultural memory' and the metaphysical character he appoints to it. Assmann's account is highly, but not completely, static because he conceptualizes "cultural memory' as the canonic self-knowledge of the society, which persists in the artificial memory of the society for ages with little alteration. Only his analytical distinction of 'cultural memory in the mode of potentiality' and 'cultural memory in the mode of actuality' leaves room for a more dynamic interpretation. Secondly, Assmann's account carries Durkhemian faults as he mentions the self-knowledge of the society that implies a self-acting, self-regulating society. Although, Assmann mentions carriers of memory such as priests, teachers, bards and mandarins, who help to store in texts, icons, rituals and help to it reshape and transmit the 'cultural memory', he does not do that strong enough to help to ease Durkheimian faults in his framework. Thirdly, Assmann does not elaborate the constitution of the 'cultural memory'. This results in an understanding of monolithic and harmonious 'cultural memory'.

Sturken uses the term 'cultural memory' to emphasize temporary popular culture instead of crystallized enduring canonical self-knowledge of the society, in opposition to Assmann. By the term 'technologies of memory', Sturken highlights the importance of media of memory in its production, which Assmann does not elaborate. Overall, what distinguishes Sturken from Assmann is her focus on every-day practices contrary to Assmann's focus on canonical artifacts. In that sense, it can be thought that Sturken's 'cultural memory' is more congruent with Assmann's 'communicative memory'.

Hirsch by the term 'postmemory' underscores an intergenerational dimension. Although same kind of intergenerationality can also be abstracted from Assmann's account, his is more about a "binding structure" between the ancestors and the contemporaries, rather than generations. On the other hand, while Assmann mentions the metaphysical self-knowledge of the society, Hirsch stand on firmer grounds as she refers to internalization of the memories of the children or grandchildren of the Holocaust survivors, which can be thought of 'not-yet-canonized communicative memory' in Assmann's terminology. In contrast to Halbwachs, who explores the remembering of personal past, Hirsch asks 'how one can remember what she has not experienced, but her parents or grandparents did'. With this question Hirsch puts the emphasis on a radically different point, namely, internalization of other's past experiences as her own.

Fentress and Wickham's greatest contribution is their emphasis on the extra-individual social character of memory without trapping themselves in a metaphysical understanding of memory that reminds Jungian understanding of collective unconscious. In other words, Fentress and Wickham, while mentioning the collective character of the memory, are cautious not to overlook the individual. It can be argued that, Fentress and Wickham try to reach a point where the collective and the individual can be met. They find this meeting point in social communication and the intersubjective sphere by arguing that what makes memory social is its communication among individuals. In this sense, for example, Fentress and Wickham deny what Assmann calls 'cultural memory in the mode of potentiality' a social character since it is not communicated until it is transferred to the actual mode. Likewise, according to Fentress and Wickham's understanding, Halbwachs' 'collective memory' lacks the social character unless people tell each other what they remember. Struken's and Hirsch's 'cultural memory' and 'postmemory', on the other hand, are social memories since by definition they are

communicated memories. By bringing the term 'social memory' to emphasize the intersubjectivity and communication of the memory, Fentress and Wickham emphasizes social memory as a social deed.

Schools, Approaches and Debates in the Social Memory Literature

In addition to different conceptualizations of social memory, there are different schools and approaches and points of dispute in the social memory literature. This section, through a review of these schools, approaches and debates demonstrates the current state of the art of the social memory research.

Social Change and Social Memory

David Gross (2000) argues that until the seventeenth century intergenerational transmission of practical knowledge and moral and spiritual guiding principles were believed to be possible only through remembering. Moreover, noticing one's own individual continuity as a person, consequently attaining a sense of identity, and accordingly, a feeling of ontological security was thought to be the effects of remembering. Thereof, remembering was perceived as a virtuous act and associated with religiosity, ethical personality, spirituality, and creativity (Gross 2000, 25-30). However, by the seventeenth century a new kind of perception about remembering started to replace the old one. By that time, not the virtues of remembering but the virtues of forgetting was started to be uttered as a result of the erasure of the presumed connections between the continuation of the social life and individual identity, and remembering. Gross elucidates this transformation from a functionalist point of view. He claims, by the introduction of modernity, as the flow of history gained momentum and societies dodged stagnation, knowledge of the past ceased to be functional.

Besides other possible criticisms that could be raised against Gross, his conclusion of the dysfuntionality of remembering during the periods of rapid change is explicitly contradictory to the conclusions of many other studies. David Thelen (1989, 1125), referring to James C. Scott and John Bodnar's studies, argues in the face of rapid, alien and imposed change people seek refuge in unchanging, incorruptible and

harmonious memories to resist the obscurity of change. Thelen (1989, 1125) writes:

> James C. Scott argues that villagers "collectively created a remembered village and a remembered economy that served as an effective ideological backdrop against which to deplore the present." "Their memory," wrote Scott, "focuses precisely on those beneficial aspects of tenure and labor relations that have been eroded or swept away over the last ten years. That they do not dwell upon other, less favorable, features of the old order is hardly surprising, for those features do not contribute to the argument they wish to make today." In this issue John Bodnar shows how the same process took place in more familiar settings. On the basis of interviews with former Studebaker employees in South Bend, Indiana, many years after they lost their jobs in the plant's 1963 closing, Bodnar shows how individuals constructed a chronology in which a stable past defined by a friendly workplace gave way to a contentious time of change and conflict that ended in the plant's closing.

Hobsbawm in his introduction to *The Invention of the Tradition* (2006) argues in modern times when social change and transformations rip off societies' real ties with their pasts, elites, either to restore their socio-political status or, and more importantly, to realize their political and social prospects, invent new 'traditions' to fix and stabilize some aspects of the social life, create a sense of group belonging, legitimize relations of authority and transmit values (Hobsbawm 2006, 3&12).

Thelen and Hobsbawm advert the same idea, i.e., increasing concerns over the past and construction of useful memories during the periods of change by mentioning two different agents of memory. Whereas Thelen points out the non-elites as the memory agents, Hobsbawm specifies the elite at the same role. Moreover, Thelen stresses the construction of the past for reactive reasons, i.e., to conserve the old structures and relations in the face of social change, whereas Hobsbawm, although not excluding the possibility of reactionary goals, mentions the functions of the invented tradition for the making of the new socio-political context.

Memory agents are important factors in the construction of memories. Yet, this must not lead to a failure to notice the possibility of "agent-less lust for memory" rooted in the society itself and quasi-*ipso facto* processes. Michael Roth (1995, 177) explains this as follows:

> In the face of insatiable lust of modernization, one turns not to self-conscious, playful impotence of modernists and postmodernists but rather to powerful "grip of the past" on communities and families. The forms in which the past is preserved over time are supposed to show us the sacred limits that bourgeois capitalism and state socialism are out to mystify with the opiate of development. If we only look back to the heart or haven of our modern, routinized world, so it is said, we might find that we already possess one of the key defenses against inhumanity of progress. Beneath the appearance of incessant change should lie the roots of essential continuity, which nourish our ongoing beliefs and practices.

According to Roth (1995, 181), as solidarity and the sense of common identity wane, interest in the past grows. The lust for a landing mark, an anchor drives people to search for a usable past. "In other words, a sense of history becomes important only at the moment when group memory is no longer providing continuity essential to community life" (Roth 1995, 183). Similar to Roth, Carrier (2005, 176) argues:

> The memory boom sustained since the 1970s should therefore not be understood as a form of cultural pessimism compensating for a sense of loss, or a collective flight into the past, but as a rearticulation of shared memories of the past which are designed to consolidate the cohesion of contemporary society. Hence the need to examine how memory cultures emerge out of the artistic narrative, rhetorical or ritual forms of this rearticulation within the field of political communication.

One thing noteworthy in Carriers's argument is that, just like Hobsbawm, he views the search for memory not as an act directed toward the past, but toward the present and future. Other than that, Carrier, like Roth, points out *ipso facto* process in the emergence of "memory cultures".

Thelen, Hobsbawm and Ranger, Roth, and Carrier are joined by many other (see for instance, Hamilton (1994), Olick and Robins (1998), Said (2005), Todorova (2004)). All in all, it can be seen that there is almost a consensus on the functionality of social memory in the periods of rapid change and modernity, in general, which refutes Gross' dysfunctionality thesis.

Socio-political Dimension of Social Memory

Presentist School of the Social Memory Scholarship

The relationship between social change and social memory instinctively signals the relationship between socio-politics and social memory and. This relationship is principally explored by the presentist school[2] of the social memory scholarship that focuses on social, political, cultural, economic contexts of the remembering. The main idea of the presentist school is that social memory is the outgrowth of the present-day than the past; it reflects today more than yesterday. In every historical era a particular social memory emerges contingent to social, political, cultural, economic characteristics of that era. Consequently, presentist studies focus on the relationship between the emerging social memories and the contemporary context.

Misztal (2003, 56-61) argues, Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* mentioned above is the inspiration of the presentist school. Hobsbawm (2000, 1-2) in his introduction to this edited volume states:

> 'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seeks to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past…
>
> …However insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition. It is the contrast between the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant, that makes the 'invention of tradition' so interesting for historians of the past two centuries.
>
> 'Tradition' in this sense must be distinguished clearly from 'custom' which dominates so-called 'traditional' societies. The

2 Mizstal (2003) names it "interest theory" what I call presentist school. Likewise, Mizstal uses the term "dynamics of memory approach" whereas I prefer the term accumulationist school, as shall be seen below. Nonetheless, in both clusters both terms refer to the same approach.

> object and characteristics of 'traditions', including invented ones, is invariance

Hobsbawm (2006, 12) argues invented traditions target 1) social coherence and sense of group belonging, 2) legitimization of the existing institutions and the relations of status and authority relations, and 3) socialization, instilment and transmission of beliefs and value judgments. In fact, these three are the functions that presentist scholars attribute to social memory. At the final analysis, Hobsbawm and the presentist school's main concern about the construction of the past and social memory is their politico-ideological functions and its use (and abuse) by socio-political actors. That is the reason why presentist school is criticized for carrying a politico-ideological reductionist bias.

Presentist social memory studies focus on states, elites and non-elites as the agents of memory that construct 'useful pasts and memories'. Those studies that draw attention to the states often reflect on educational institutions, state radio and televisions, cultural policies that are possessed or controlled by the states as the tools of memory construction (see, for instance, Carrier 2002; Gur-Ze'ev 2001). They focus on domestic socio-politics or international politics, or both (see, for instance, Herf 1997; Zerubavel 1995; Ram 2000). Studies which address international politics expand the scope of social memory studies and reveal the wide-range of the factors that impact construction of the social memories. At the same time, state-centric studies for their emphasis on states and macro-politics tend to neglect peripheral actors, struggles going on among these actors, and between these actors and states. As Misztal (2003, 59) argues, putting the state at the center and overlooking other agents of memory can hold only for those societies with authoritarian/totalitarian state apparatuses. In rather democratic societies, different social, cultural and political actors carry out struggles over social memory and at times non-state actors gain an upper hand. Still, apparatuses of memory-construction such as museums, monuments, school text books require large financial investments and states might be the primary actor that can make these investments. Accordingly, even in democratic societies, states may remain the primary memory agent. Nevertheless, as access to communication technologies such as internet becomes easier and wide spread, peripheral actors find a larger space of action vis-à-vis states.

The second set of memory agents that presentist social memory studies focus on is the elites. As examples of these studies, Funck and

Malinowski (2002) explore German nobility's rediscovery and improvement of "techniques of memory in order to reinvent their gravely imperiled cultural and political identities" in the twentieth century. Wiesen (2002) examines the efforts of the German firms, which cooperated with the Nazi regime to restore their images by constructing new memories. By virtue of having access to and control over different resources, elites hold an advantage in constructing their preferred version of social memory. Yet, as popular memory studies display, theirs is not an unrestricted potency.

Popular memory studies, which employ terms like counter-memory, public-memory, unofficial memory and so on address the non-elites as memory agents and examine the below-to-top processes. These studies are more perceptive to different memory agents and stress more boldly the multileveled and conflictual aspects of social memory construction (Misztal 2003, 61-67). Popular memory studies acknowledge the possibility of existence of multiple memories in a single society, as well. For example, Todorova (2004) argues that public memory that is constructed by politicians and intellectuals might be quite different from the memories constructed in the private sphere.

Misztal (2003, 62) rightly argues that Foucault's works are one of the inspirations of the popular memory studies. Foucault sustains that memory is a substantial tool for social control and 'popular memory' is the asset of those who are at the margins of the society. In the same spirit, Milan Kundera in his *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1999) writes "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting". Assmann (2001, 75), too, argues that under repression remembering might take a form of resistance. All these accounts unite in arguing that remembering might be the strength of the oppressed to resist the oppressor. Accordingly, popular memory studies focus on the dialectics and discord among the hegemonic discourse(s) in the society and peripheral popular memor(ies) in their diversity. Overall, popular memory studies provide more complete and complex accounts of memory construction processes and analyses of struggles among different actors.

It is important not to overlook to the fact that not all the scholars adopting a presentist perspective overtly focus on memory agents. In other words, there are studies conducted from within the presentist framework that focus on structural/contextual dimensions rather than specific actors. Young (1993) argues monuments are erected in certain

political and economic contexts. However, once they are erected, those monuments, or other "technologies of memory" are perceived and interpreted by the people according to new contextual conditions. This reveals that memory agents do not have total control on the meaning making processes and context is a significant factor in this regard. For example Stojanovic (2004) and Ten Dyke (2002) argue that the fall of the Soviet Bloc rendered the "old memories" extraneous. This point is also mentioned by Hobsbawm. He (2006, 305-306) argues that traditions can be invented on purpose by various actors. Nevertheless, they can be "invented" through undeliberate processes, too. Overall, those studies that address structural/contextual factors contribute to the presentist research agenda by widening its scope. Moreover, these studies contribute to the scholarship by calling more boldly to contextualize the volitional acts of memory agents.

Chronopolitics: The Politics of Social Memory

Perceptiveness to multiple memories and memory agents calls for attention to interactions between different memories and memory agents, and dynamic, engaged, unstable, fluid, conflictual relations not only between the hegemonic bloc and the marginal sections but also within these two. This perspective enables reading social memories as texts revealing power relations in a given society (Mizstal 2003, 64-66; also see Confino 1997, 1393-1395). On the other hand, conflict among memory agents must not be taken for granted. As Canefe (2004) demonstrates in her study on the perception of history of the Turkish Cypriots, the gap between the official narrative and private accounts may not always be big. Last but not least, Gur-Ze'ev's (2001) study on the Israeli and Palestinian educational systems displays that struggles over memory may also take place between nations. All these call for attention to 'politics of social memory', or to use Canefe's (2004, 80) term "chronopolitics", which stands for "the elements of choice, negotiation and contestation that come into play for the ultimate determination of what is remembered"[3]. Literature on chronopolitics contributes to the field by seeking answers to the questions; social memory 'by whom', 'for whom', 'against whom', 'for what', 'against what', 'why', 'how', 'when', and 'where'.

3 Fraizer's (1999) "memory as praxis" is also another term which nicely signifies the politics of social memory.

The literature on chronopolitics can be un-categorically divided into two as those studies focusing on high-politics and international context and those studies focusing on domestic contexts. Herf's (1997) study on the construction of different social memories of the Nazi past in two Germanys after the World War II by the anti-Nazi German politicians is an example of the studies focusing on high-politics and international context. Herf argues a combination of belief, interest, ideology and lust for power shaped the social memory and public narratives of the Nazi era and contextualizes his analysis within the international realm. He shows how the same past was represented differently in two Germanys. He also demonstrates as East Germany approached to the USSR, the theme of the Soviet heroism moved towards the center of the East German historiography, and after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, the theme of Holocaust replaced the theme of Soviet heroism. As such, Herf's study displays the factor of the "international context of changing alliances" (1997, 1-2) in the construction of social memory.

Wolf's (2004) study, too, is a noteworthy example revealing the relationship between high-politics, international context and the social memory. In his book *Harnessing the Holocaust: The Politics of Memory in France,* Wolf observes that only after the Six-Day War in 1967 French Jewry started to talk about the Holocaust as a trauma. This observation demonstrates the effect of the international politics in the construction of social memory. Whereas Wolf uncovers the effects of the international politics on the social memory, Said's (2005) study displays the impact of social memory on international politics by arguing that the memory of Holocaust impedes Germany to perform a balanced policy with respect to the Israel-Palestine conflict. In fact, Said's study is worthwhile to better understand why manipulation of social memory is important for the socio-political actors to legitimize their political agenda. Comparing the arguments of Herf and Wolf on the one hand, and Said's argument, on the other, one can grasp the two aspects of social memory with respect to politics; the impact of the political context on social memory and vice-versa. In other words, taken together, these studies uncover the reciprocal relationship between politics and social memory.

The best examples of the studies on chronopolitics with respect to domestic politics can be found in the literature on Zionism. For example, Kenan in his *Between Memory and History: The Evolution of Israeli Historiography of the Holocaust, 1945-1961* (2003) explores the exclusion of the theme of Holocaust from the Israeli historiography until the late 1960s. According to Kenan, close proximity in time and the

consequent emotional involvement, ideological and intellectual climate in Israel dominated by the Zionist ideology, guilty conscience of Israelis for failing to help the European Jewry during the Holocaust, and Israeli intelligentsia's sympathy to Germany had been the reasons of denying a place to the Holocaust in the Israeli historiography until late 1960s. Until that time, in Israel, not the Holocaust victims and survivors but the Jewish fighters in WWII were publicly discoursed upon to create a myth of heroism as a constituent of the Zionist project of creating the "New Jew". Only by the 1970s, when Zionist ideology lost its intensity the Holocaust found a place in the Israeli historiography. Uri Ram, in *National, Ethnic or Civic? Contesting Paradigms of Memory, Identity and Culture in Israel* (2000) explores the construction of the Israeli identity through exploring the Zionists, post-Zionists, and neo-Zionists politics. He displays the attempts of the socio-political actors to manipulate the social memory to manufacture a certain Israeli identity according to their ideologies and political goals.

There are many more studies on chronopolitics in different contexts (see for instance, Campana 2006, Zerubavel 1995, Zimmer 2000). Yet, to keep it brief, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* ([1949] 1992) can be mentioned as the paradigmatic example. In this novel, the Big Brother erases people's 'authentic' memories and installs new ones. The Big Brother continuously re-constructs as a way to carry on his power over the society. Orwell's novel, although a fiction, is a work that manifests the relations among forgetting, remembering and politics in all its conspicuousness.

Either by focusing on memory agents or *ipso facto* processes, presentist school of social memory draws attention to the socio-political dimensions of social memory. By revealing that the past is never the past *per se* but an offshoot of the present, a result of the conflicts and struggle of the contemporary socio-political actors, presentist school makes significant contributions to our understanding of the construction of social memory. However, presentist school also has its weaknesses. The most vulnerable aspect of the presentist school is its politico-ideological reductionist perspective[4]. That is to say, presentist school, at the final analysis, equates memory to ideology and reduces it to false consciousness. Mizstal (2003, 60-61), rightly argues presentist school has this problem as a consequence of its focus on the voluntary, planed, informed practices of the memory agents and indifference to

4 As an example of the politico-ideological reductionist studies see, Achugar (2008)

psychological, social, linguistic, and political processes which are beyond the control of the memory agents. To substantiate her point, Mizstal (2003, 60) asks why some of constructions of the past by politically powerful actors gain acceptance by the society, whereas some do not. Consequently, Mizstal (2003, 61) concludes that politico-ideological reductionist and functionalist analyses of social memory are stricken by serious limitation. In fact, this criticism lies at the very core of the argument of the accumulationist school that shall be explored below. Although presentist social memory studies that investigate the *ipso facto* processes of social memory construction are more receptive to psychological, social, linguistic, and political processes beyond the control of memory agents, they do not openly put attention on those factors in their analyses.

Secondly, presentist school fails to distinguish ideology and interpretation. It does not question whether social memories are always constructed according to ideological perspectives of the memory agents or social memories are constructed in a certain way because memory agents interpret the past in that way. In other words, the question is to what extent memories are constructed with ideological purposes and to what extent memory agents construct memories without any ideological purpose. Is it all ideology or does it include undeliberate and/or apolitical reasons on the side of the memory agents? Are the differences in constructed memories results of ideological differences or different interpretations?

Despite these points open to criticisms, presentist school provides important insights into the social memory research. First, presentist studies bring high politics and international context in the research agenda. This is an important contribution to sociological literature on memory for bringing new perspectives and widening the horizon of the sociological discipline. Secondly, by focusing on different memory agents, their relations and *ipso facto* processes, presentist social memory studies provide insights on multi-level and multiple social memories in a single society. Lastly, presentist studies reveal the fact that indeed all memory construction processes are also the processes of memory destruction. As new social memories are reconstructed, the already existing ones are modified or eradicated. Moreover, powerful memory agents while implementing their preferred memories in the social life, denies the same thing to other memory agents. What presentists rightly suggest, therefore, is to examine the social memory processes as a sequence of construction, deconstruction, destruction and reconstruction.

The Baggage of the Past and the Continuity of the Memory

Accumulationist School of Social Memory Scholarship

Much of the social memory literature is dominated by presentist studies. However, there are also studies that belong to another school, which can be called the accumulationist school that contrasts the limits of the presentist school in addressing some of the fundamental questions mentioned above. The main argument of the accumulationist school is that certain factors impede the power of the memory agents. The main impeding factor is the past itself[5]. Past resists instrumentalization. Past stands manipulation firm. Therefore, memory agents' power to construct a coherent memory is imperfect. That is so because memory agents construct memories on the raw material, that is, the past itself. Mizstal (2003, 68-69) explains this as follows[6]:

> The dynamics of memory approach argues that 'the past is highly resistant to efforts to make it over' (Schudson 1989: 105). According to this perspective, although it cannot be denied that many groups use the past for instrumental reasons, nor that we should be grateful for all works done by 'interest theory', nonetheless, such a vision denies the past as purely a construction and insists that it has an inherent continuity. Not only do groups not have equal acess to the material available for the construction of the past, but the available materials are far from infinite. As Schudson (1989) argues, conflicts about the past among a variety of groups further limit our freedom to reconstruct the past according to our own interests. Finally, taking into account that groups can choose only from the available past and that the available past is limited, it can be asked: are they free to choose as they want? According to Schudson (1989: 109), they are not: 'Far from it. There are a variety of ways in which the freedom to choose is constrained'. Among the many factors constraining people's choices are traumatic events that make 'the past part of us' as their impact and importance commit us to remember them.

Importantly, accumulationist school does not deny the constructed nature of social memory, but remarks the limits of construction, which are drawn mainly by the past itself. As such, accumulationist school is

5 For an overview of the accumulationist school see, Mizstal (2003) and Olick and Robbins (1998).

6 See, footnote 2.

more perceptive to the interactions between the past *per se*, memory agents and their politico-ideological prospects, as well as, social, linguistic, artistic, cultural and ideological baggage of a society that memory agents can selectively utilize, and the existing social memor(ies). This is the strength of the accumulationist school over the presentist school; accumulationist school is analytically richer than the presentist school.

The interactional perspective of the accumulationist school is well demonstrated by Yael Zerubavel in her important book *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of the Israeli National Tradition* (1995). In this study Zerubavel investigates utilization of the history by the Israeli state to create the "New Jew" out of the multitude of immigrants. Zerubavel, similar to the studies carried out from within the presentist approach, argues construction of social memory is performed around and in relation to the contemporary social and political matters. Yet, diverging from the presentist approach, she adds this process is constraint by, or in other words not totally independent of, the real events occurred in the history. Zerubavel argues, social memory emerges as a result of the interactions between the real events in history and the contemporary social and political concerns.

> Collective memory continuously negotiates between available historical records and current social and political agendas. And in the process of referring back to these records, it shifts its interpretation, selectively emphasizing, suppressing, and elaborating different aspects of that record. History and memory, therefore, do not operate in totally detached, opposite directions. Their relationships are underlined by conflicts as well as interdependence, and this ambiguity provides the commemoration with the creative tension that makes it such a fascinating subject of study (Zerubavel 1995, 5).

Michael Schudson, one of the most important advocates of the accumulationist school, in his *Watergate in American Memory: How We Remember, Forget, and Reconstruct the Past* (1993) explores how the Watergate Scandal is remembered in the American society. Schudson's conclusion is that because the Watergate Scandal had real and lasting consequences in the American society, it persists in the vessels of the society. According to Schudson (1997, 6, cited in Mizstal 2003, 71) the past,

> continues into and shapes the present personally, as it is

> transmitted through individual lives; socially, as it is transmitted through law and other institutions; and culturally, as it is transmitted through language and other symbolic systems.

Schudson (1997, 15, in Mizstal 2003, 72) argues that the presence of the past in the present neither necessarily requires nor is a result of planned and conscious operations of the memory agents. The past exists in the present and shapes it. Therefore, Schudson insists people may rewrite the texts of history, but they cannot decide which texts to work on.

Barry Schwartz provides another perspective to the question of the past. Schwartz (1990; 2000, in Mizstal 2003, 72-73) argues that although there have been changes in the image of Abraham Lincoln in the American society throughout the years, a fundamental continuity also persisted in this image, even though Lincoln's image has been worked out for decades. Schwartz explains this continuity not by denying any role to memory agents. On the contrary, he explains the continuity via the memory agents. He argues elites are socialized in the society onto which they seek to impose a certain image of Lincoln. Therefore, elites' constructs ultimately reflects society's already existing conception of Lincoln. Accordingly, elites reflect society's conception of Lincoln on the same society through their own lenses. That is the reason why there is an essential continuity in the succeeding constructs of the image of Lincoln and the new constructs do not dramatically differ from the already existing constructs, since they are rooted in them. Moreover, Schwartz and Schuman (2005) argue that there are limits to society's acceptance of the new constructs; not every construct is unconditionally received by the society. What sets the limits of reception is the existing cultural baggage of the society. This is another reason of the continuity, which is also an evidence of the existence of the past in the present.

Accumulationist school's emphasizing on the 'resistance of the past to manipulation and the limits of the capability of the memory agents does not mean to roll back to a naïve realist position and an argument that social memory is an unmediated one-to-one representation of the past. Accumulationist school does not deny the constructed nature of the social memory, either. Rather than an opponent, accumulationist school is a corrective to the presentist school by its emphasis on the relevance of the past to social memory. It is a reminder that social memory construction is not an unbounded process as some presentist studies may imply by overstating the "presentism" of the social memory

construction. However, just like overstatement of the present leads to wrong conclusions, overstatement of the influence of the past would also result in a kind of naïve realist understanding of social memory.

Having contrasted presentist and accumulationist schools, it has to be underlined that the boundary between presentist and accumulationist schools is not too rigid to prevent changeovers. In other words, presentist and accumulationist schools are not radically incompatible. In fact, the difference between the two schools is more a matter of emphasis than a matter of substantial discrepancy. For this reason, two perspectives can be brought together in a single study, which would promise a better grasp of processes of the social memory construction. The following quotation from Fentress and Wickham (1994, 87-88) reveals this point.

> We have seen that social memory exists because it has meaning for the group that remembers. But the way this meaning is articulated is not a simple one…What sorts of things are remembered in the first place, and why, is an equally important issue, however. Events can be remembered easily if they fit into the forms of narrative that the social group already has at its disposal…But they tend to be remembered in the first place because of their power to legitimize the present, and tend to be interpreted in ways that very closely parallel (often competing) present conceptions of the world. Memories have their own specific grammars, and can (must) be analysed as narratives; but they also have functions, and can (must) also be analysed in a functionalist manner, as guides, whether uniform or contradictory, to social identity… These two procedures are not really distinct, but each of them needs to be analysed on its own terms before they can be combined…

Collected or Collective? The Individual and the Collective in the Social Memory Literature

Olick (1999), more than ten years ago, stated that social memory literature grew in two distinct tracks, which he tagged as ‘collected memory’ and ‘collective memory’. ‘Collected memory’ approach addresses social memory as an aggregate of individual memories and grants the individual an eminent ontological and epistemological status. Consequently, ‘collected memory’ approach remains mostly indifferent to supra-individual factors. For the same reason, psychological and psychoanalytical explanations occupy a significant place in studies

conducted from within this approach. At the same time, 'collected memory' studies do not exclude the possibility of alteration in the process of aggregation of individual memories. Likewise, it does not invalidate the existence of social frameworks that shape individuals' memories. Still, 'collected memory' approach remains radically critical to elevating supra-individual conceptions over the individual and giving them a central place in the social memory research. It sustains that social frameworks, shared symbols, deep structures are real only insofar individuals perceive them as such or endorse them in practice. Moreover, 'collected memory' approach warns that too much emphasis on the supra-individual conceptions would lead to metaphysical ideas like group mind. All in all, only individuals do the remembering, alone or jointly, and any public commemorative event or 'collective memory' can be understood only via individual (Olick 1999).

Olick (1999, 338-340) indicates several strengths of the 'collected memory' approach. He argues 'collective memory' studies mostly focus on the most visible social memory in a society which is almost always the construction of the dominant groups with access to and control over resources. 'Collected memory' approach by challenging the idea of a unitary all-encompassing memory opens room for finer research agendas. Secondly, 'collected memory' approach does not presume a 'collective memory' shared by all the members of a society. This renders 'collected memory' research more sensitive to individual differences. Finally, 'collected memory' approach's individualist perspective enables it to engage in a constructive dialogue with psychological and neurological sciences that results in a fruitful cooperation among physical, behavioral and social sciences.

The second approach, which Olick calls 'collective memory' treats social memory as a *sui generis* collective phenomenon. Quite the opposite of 'collected memory' approach, 'collective memory' approach while emphasizing the supra-individual socio-historical processes turns aloof to the individual as it holds that certain supra-individual factors cannot be reduced to or explained with reference to individualistic/psychological processes. Therefore, 'collective memory' approach is critical to individualism/ psychologism of the 'collected memory' approach. This criticism is furthered by arguing that social groups, not the individuals, provide the "social frameworks" for constructing accounts of events and cognitive and, even, neurological processes are influenced by and are part of wider social processes. The most radical rupture between the 'collected' and 'collective' memory

approaches, however, is that 'collective memory' approach insists symbols, identities, ideas, styles, genres, discourses and their systems of relations are independent from the subjective perceptions of the individuals. For this reason, they cannot be reduced to individual subjectivities or their aggregation. Scholars who advocate 'collectivist' approach insist empirical research confirms the existence of collective factors that cannot be explained by individualist explanations (Olick 1999, 342-343). They also argue that there are certain forms of memories that persist more or less stable over long periods of time, which reveal there is something more than the aggregation of individuals that is collective in nature. 'Collective memory' approach adds, the fact that collective finds its instantiation in individual utterances does not downscale the independent existence of the collective frames from the individual.

'Collectivist' scholars challenge the very idea of an opposition between the collective and the individual. They argue that there is no abstract individual totally detached from the society. Mnemonic technologies such as photography or computers enable extra-individual storage of social memories that also stimulate neurological processes. Social memory is stored in extra-individual spaces and, hence, individuals are not the only carriers of memory. This undermines the central status given to the individual by the collected memory approach. Over and beyond, however, Olick (1999, 343) states:

> Perhaps the clearest demonstration of the genuinely collective nature of remembering is the degree to which it takes place in and through language, narrative, and dialogue. Language, for instance, is commonly used as the quintessential example of a supra-individual phenomenon. And it is not merely that individuals remember in language, coding their experiences as language and recalling them in it. Language itself can be viewed as a memory system.

Olick published his masterful article *Collective Memory: The Two Cultures, Sociological Theory* in 1999. More than ten years after Olick's article, the split between the two approaches has not been narrowed down. In fact, this is not unanticipated because what lies behind the split between 'collected' and 'collective' memory approaches, is, indeed, an ontological and epistemological divide.

The New Structural Memory

Kansteiner (2002, 180) indicates one of the fundamental problems of the social memory research as follows:

> Collective memory studies have not yet sufficiently conceptualized collective memories as distinct from individual memory. As a result, the nature and dynamic of collective memories are frequently misrepresented through facile use of psychoanalytical and psychological methods.

Kansteiner adds "most newer studies on memory tend to reduce collective memory to an effect of human agency" (2002, 182). As such, Kansteriner draws attention to the "individualistic bias" in the literature. This is ironic because 'collectivist studies' utilize psychoanalytical methods and concepts, while being critical to same methods and concepts when used in 'collected memory' studies. The problem that the usage of psychoanalytical methods and concepts to examine collective phenomena creates is most evident in social memory research, which focuses on extra-individual spaces as the sites of social memory.

The 'collectivist approach' when referring to supra-individual processes calls attention to mnemonic technologies, i.e., extra-individual recording and storage spaces of social memory. This call is founded on the idea that what is called social memory can be found in the spaces of recording and storage. However, scholars such as Klein (2000), and Schwartz and Schuman (2005) stress the defects of such research.

Schudson (1992, 51, in Klein 2000,130) argues that memory is not only fundamentally social but it is also to be found in rules, laws, standardized procedures, records, books, holidays, statues, souvenirs. He adds social memory is a compilation of material artifacts and social practices. Funkenstein (1993, cited in Klein 2000, 133), too, argues,

> Collective memory…., like "language," can be characterized as a system of signs, symbols, and practices: memorial dates, names of places, monuments and victory arches, museums and texts, customs and manners, stereotype images (incorporated, for instance, in manners of expression), and even language itself (in de Saussure's terms). The individual's memory that is, the act of remembering-is the instantiation of these symbols, analogous to "speech"; no act of remembering is like any other.

In addition to Schudson and Funkenstein, scholars like Pierre Nora (1997), Olick and Robbins (1998), Richard Terdiman (1993), James Young (1993) (see, Klein 2000, 130-136; Schwartz and Schuman 2005, 184-185) insist focusing on extra-individual spaces, such as sites, material artifacts, symbols, rituals, texts and propose hermeneutical analysis of these spaces.

Klein (2000) names this perspective "new structural memory" and provides an artful criticism. He argues that "new structural memory" which assumes the extra-individual spaces as the site of collective memory is problematic for transforming memory to "Memory" by ignoring the nuances in constructed social memories, memory construction processes and memory agents. Klein claims "a memory that threatens to become Memory with a capital M" (2000, 135-136) is problematic also because this perspective renders the transformation of memory to something similar to the Foucauldian field of discourse, which means that social memory is perceived as a "thing" that is self-sustainable, "a subject in its own right" having an existence of its own, even a historical agent with a capacity of remembering and forgetting on its own. In fact, this very conceptualization is what enables scholars to employ psychoanalytic jargon and methodology in social memory research as they elevate social memory to a status of a conscious and capable agent. It can be argued that "new structural memory" approach while erasing the individual, personifies the memory spaces[7].

Social Memory and History

Klein (2000, 130) argues when history claimed a status as science in the nineteenth century, it also claimed objectivity. However, as early as 1970s the objectivity claim of historiography was started to be questioned. Today, many scholars acknowledge that rather than history writing, historical scholarship is about 'history making' in the sense that while historians 'discover' and 'write' the historical facts, they always do it from within a subjective framework; they arrange events in a certain order, answer certain questions, include or exclude certain events in their accounts, stress certain events and subordinate others, and answer the questions by different types of explanations, each of which also has different modes (White, 1973). Post-modern and linguistic turns

7 For further criticisms see, Confino (1997), Cranel (1997), Fentress and Wickham (1994), Schwartz and Schuman (2005).

in 1990s not only strengthened but also legitimized the 'history making' of the historians (see, also Iggers 1997, Novick 1988, Veyne 1984). As a result, today the objectivity claim of the science of history is less valid than before. This is one of the reasons of the blurring of the boundaries between history as science and social memory.

Maurice Halbwachs (1980), Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1982) and Piere Nora (1989; 1997) decisively distinguish social memory and 'history as science'. Olick and Robbins (1998, 110) summarize this point as clearly as the following:

> The third, and perhaps most contested, boundary for social memory studies is its relation to historiography. Halbwachs was very decisive about his solution: History is dead memory, a way of preserving pasts to which we no longer have an "organic" experiential relation. On the surface, this understanding of the distinction negates the self-image of historiography as the more important or appropriate attitude toward the past: History's epistemological claim is devalued in favor of memory's meaningfulness. At a deeper level, however, the distinction is the same that traditional historians would draw between history and memory: Only the former is engaged in a search for truth. In this vein, Yerushalmi (1982, p. 95) draws a sharp contrast between Jewish memory and Jewish historiography, arguing that until the eighteenth century, the former excluded the latter. On the one hand, he laments this condition because, as he writes, "...collective memory... is drastically selective. Certain memories live on; the rest are winnowed out, repressed, or simply discarded by a process of natural selection which the historian, uninvited, disturbs and reverses." On the other hand, he critiques history for its sterile posture of distance from meaning and relevance: "...Jewish historiography can never substitute for Jewish memory.. .. A historiography that does not aspire to be memorable is in peril of becoming a rampant growth" (Yerushalmi 1982, p. 101).

According to Halbwachs, which also holds for Nora and Yerushalmi, history is the product of the scholarly investigation of the records of the past. It is a science. It is not under the pressure of the instant sociopolitical actuality. Therefore, history has a superorganic relation with the present. On the contrary, social memory is organically linked to the social life, hence sensitive to the 'needs' of the society and responds to those "needs" by transforming itself accordingly (Zerubavel, 1995, 4; see also Olick 1999, 335). Nora (1989, 8) puts it as follows:

> The "acceleration of history," then, confronts us with the brutal realization of the difference between real memory -social and unviolated, exemplified in but also retained as the secret of so-called primitive or archaic societies -and history, which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies, propelled by change, organize the past. On the one hand, we find an integrated, dictatorial memory-unself-conscious, commanding, all-powerful, spontaneously actualizing, a memory without a past that ceaselessly reinvents tradition, linking the history of its ancestors to the undifferentiated time of heroes, origins, and myth and on the other hand, our memory, nothing more in fact than sifted and sorted historical traces. The gulf between the two has deepened in modern times with the growing belief in a right, a capacity, and even a duty to change. Today, this distance has been stretched to its convulsive limit.

Nora adds (1989, 8-9),

> Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. Memory, insofar as it is affective and magical, only accommodates those facts that suit it; it nourishes recollections that may be out of focus or telescopic, global or detached, particular or symbolic-responsive to each avenue of conveyance or phenomenal screen, to every censorship or projection. History, because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism. Memory installs remembrance within the sacred; history, always prosaic, releases it again. Memory is blind to all but the group it binds-which is to say, as Maurice Halbwachs has said, that there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual. History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one, whence its claim to universal authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative.

Parallel to Halbwachs, Yerushalmi, and Nora's reasonings[8], several other scholars also reflect on the differences between social memory and history. Klein (2000, 130), for example, argues that in the nineteenth century, when historians labored to found history as a professional academic discipline, they preferred written documents over memories as more reliable sources and they viewed memories as suspicious sources for the discovery and confirmation of the historical facts. Moreover, academic historians' attempt of building history as a secular discipline in contrast to cultural religiosity also intensified the tendency to discredit memories. As a result, history as an objective but 'cold' science was put against the subjective but 'warm' memory. Klein (2000, 130) states:

> If history is objective in the coldest, hardest sense of the word, memory is subjective in the warmest, most inviting senses of that word. In contrast with history, memory fairly vibrates with the fullness of Being. We all know these associations, and yet we like to pretend that they have no effect upon our new uses of memory.

Whereas Klein provides an account of the difference between history and memory by explaining the emergence of history as an academic discipline, Schwartz and Schuman (2005, 185) contrast history and memory in terms of their functions by referring to commemorative events that are regarded as a significant factor in shaping the collective memory.

> History and commemoration perform different functions. The job of historian is to enlighten by revealing causes and consequences of chronologically ordered events. The job of the commemorative agent is to designate moral significance by lifting from historical record the events that best exemplify contemporary values. Historian aim to describe events in all their complexity and ambiguity; commemorative agents, to simplify events into objects of celebration and moral instruction.

In brief, according to those scholars who argue that there is a difference between social memory and history as science, the latter ideally seeks to discover the facts in their detailed causal relations with other facts. It aims at universally valid knowledge about the past through scholarly

8 See Koslofsky (2002) for a very interesting differentiation between memoria and memory through an investigation of the relocation of the cemeteries outside of the towns after the Reformation, which fits to Halbwachs, Yerushalmi and Nora's differentiation of social memory and history.

investigation and utilization of scientific methods. As a result, history as science holds a truth claim for its objective and independent scientific status free of the impositions of the society that demonstrates its inorganic relationship with the society. For this reasons, history as science also claims superiority over social memory for being scientific and the only truthful source of knowledge about the past. In contrast to history as science, it is argued that, social memory is selective and simplistic. That is to say social memory is not about facts but meaningful historical stories that would touch the hearts of the group members and help them to create meanings for today. Having a meaning-making function gives social memory a moral significance. This reveals the organic relationship between social memory and the society. Because social memory functions to provide meaning to the society it is group specific and not universal. This means every society has its own social memory and social memory is subjective, contrary to objective history as science.

Nevertheless, categorical distinction between social memory and history as science is challenged in the literature. Schwartz and Schuman (2005, 185) just after emphasizing the functional differences between social memory and history as science state these two are significantly interrelated and empirically not separable. This is because:

> Just as history reflects the values commemoration sustains, commemoration is rooted in historical knowledge. Commemoration is intellectually compelling when it symbolizes values whose past existence history documents; history is morally and emotionally compelling when it documents events that can plausibly commemorated.

Olick and Robins (1998, 110-111), too, insist categorical difference between memory and history is contestable. They claim, first of all, as historiography widens its scope from official to social and cultural, memory becomes central evidence. Secondly, growing recognition of the political instrumentalization of historiography disputes history's claim of objectivity. Thirdly, postmodernists' critique of the distinction between knowledge and interpretation was followed by questioning of the truth-claim of professional historiography (see also, Canefe 2004). This blurs the distinction between history and social memory. Fourthly, as mentioned above, increasing number of scholars argue that historiography does not discover the 'truth', but constructs it. Moreover,

a greater awareness of the arbitrariness of selection and interpretation of the data has grown. Likewise, there are many more evidences that show history is written by individuals with and for particular purposes. Lastly, history is written from within the existing narrative frames, which means writing history is not an unmediated process (see also, Bakic-Hayden 2004; Hamilton 1994; Hess 2002). Apart from these, Hutton (2000) argues 'collective memory' may guide historical research by providing it with topics of interest. Yet, as Connerton (1999, 26-27) asserts historian can unearth a past event which is totally absent in the 'collective memory'. For these reasons, it is argued that "the distinction between history and memory in such accounts is a matter of disciplinary power rather than of epistemological privilege" (Olick and Robbins 1998 110; see also, Kansteiner 2002, 184; Sturken 1997, 3-5). Zerubavel (1995, 5) argues, it is this knotted relation between history and collective memory what makes collective memory studies so intriguing.

> Collective memory continuously negotiates between available historical records and current social and political agendas. And in the process of referring back to these records, it shifts its interpretation, selectively emphasizing, suppressing, and elaborating different aspects of that record. History and memory, therefore, do not operate in totally detached, opposite directions. Their relationships are underlined by conflicts as well as interdependence, and this ambiguity provides the commemoration with the creative tension that makes it such a fascinating subject of study (Zerubavel 1995, 5).

Summary

The literature on social memory consists of different conceptualizations, schools and approaches. Some of the differences are relatively minor ones as the offshoots of differences in focus or interpretation of specific scholars. However, there are also major discrepancies originating from underlying philosophical differences. The antagonism between humanist and anti-humanist philosophical schools find their reflection in the dispute between the individualist and collectivist social memory studies grow out of the ontological and epistemological status granted or denied to individual. Whereas the most ideal typical examples of the humanist approach reveals itself in social memory studies that regard the phenomenon as simply an aggregate of the individuals' remembering, at the opposite end there are studies almost equating social memory to a Jungian collective unconscious. Durkhemian influences are an apparent

component of the 'collectivist' social memory studies, some of which lean towards metaphysical arguments. Foucauldian inspirations, while informing the 'new structural memory' studies, they also inform the rather individualist studies that point out multiple and conflicting memories in a given society.

Besides these, the main disputes in the literature can be summarized as follows. First, the phenomenon of social memory is a disputed subject. Whereas some scholars regard social memory as a rather static, long lasting canon of the society, others approach it as a timely, dynamic, empirical phenomenon. The media of social memory is another subject that generates different views. Some scholars point out the mnemonic technologies (extra-individual recording and storage spaces) as the media, i.e., vessels and technologies of memory. On the other hand, others focus on individuals and the everyday communicative actions among them. A large portion of the literature is on the volitional deeds of the memory agents that seek to construct 'usable memories'. Yet, although smaller in number, there are also studies that stress the limits of construction and the resistance of the past to manipulation. In the subset of the literature that focuses on the memory agents, there are those studies that focus on different memory agents such as the states, elites and non-elites. The question of the boundaries between history as a science and social memory is a subject of heated debates in the literature.

On the other hand, there are points on which there is a general consensus, as well. Almost all the social memory studies overtly or implicitly admit the socio-political functions of the social memory. As such, functionalism is an underlying sociological basis of the literature. Another consensus in the literature is the refusal of the naïveté of regarding social memory as an unmediated facsimile one-to-one record of the past representation of the past. On the contrary, literature sustains that social memory is selective and embodies only the 'useful past' and socially acceptable meanings. As such, organic relation between social memory and society is duly acknowledged. Another thing that receives acknowledgement is that social memory is a 'binding force' in a society transmitting knowledge in time and space.

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