

A REVIEW ON THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONCEPT OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND ITS EVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT

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Abstract

If we begin with the history of the relevance and importance of working on memory, we will have to go back to antiquity. We can understand it from the statements of important figures of ancient philosophy such as Plato, who defines this interest and curiosity as "a midwife who gives birth to remembering", Aristotle, who expresses it as "recording every moment lived" and Cicero, who referred to the "instant reconstruction of remembered information" It is a fact that with the development of societies, new branches of science have emerged. In these developments, studies on memory, the branch of psychology that defines memory, the ability of an organism to store and then retrieve information and the branch of physiology, which defines it as a complex system in which we can associate, use and store information of different types, enters into the fields of interest of most researchers. The involvement of physiology and psychology has not prevented sociologists from thinking about memory. It has made them to additionally add innovations to concepts such as remembering and memory in social science. This study, in addition to addressing the history of memory, is examined by finding answers to the questions of how memory is examined socially, how the concept of social memory emerged, how this concept provided the basis for new thinkers, how it evolved and branched, how it evolved to the present day, how it resonates today, and how this concept is used and what is the value in individuals, institutions and states.

Keywords: Collective, memory, acceptance, evolution.

Introduction

Before addressing the evolution of the concept of collective memory to the present day, it is useful to dwell on the concepts of society and memory. When we look at the equivalent of the word society in the Cambridge dictionary, we see "a large group of people who live together in an organized way, making decisions about how to do things and sharing the work that needs to be done. All the people in a country, or in several similar countries, can be referred to as a society". In addition to these definitions, there are also definitions such as "the aggregate of people living together in a more or less ordered community" and "the community of people living in a particular country or region and having shared customs, laws, and organizations". (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022) In line with these definitions, we can say that sociation dates back to ancient times and that even primitive tribes formed a group and cooperated with the people around them in order to maintain their lives, create shelters or catch their prey. When we touch on the thoughts on society and sociation, we can see that this curiosity dates back to the ancient age. Aristotle's statement that man is a social being is an example of this curiosity. (Felsefelogos, 2017, p.5) It is the common thought of other philosophers of the same period that human beings have a social life as of their creation, but that they can reach the perfection they deserve through social life and meet their necessary needs only through social life. The interest in researching society has led to the transformation of this situation into science. The emergence of the discipline of sociology, which is most interested in society today, is the result of this curiosity. Despite being defined in many relatively many ways, society has two important meanings that have become apparent. Raymond Williams says, "The first is the most general meaning used in the set of

institutions and relationships in which a relatively large group of people live, and the other is the most abstract meaning used for the condition that it is formed in such institutions and relationships.” (Williams.R, 1958, p.54) Anthropologist Calvin Wells states that the concept of 'society' is used in two different senses. This concept is used to denote the largest social group in general in the sociological sense. Society, then, is the largest politically organized unity based on group members: village, tribe, nation. The second usage describes associations within the larger group, such as clubs, guilds, friendship and solidarity associations and foundations, whose membership is often optional. When modern sociologists speak of a society, they usually mean a group of people living on a defined territory, sharing common cultural characteristics such as language, values, and certain codes of conduct. Considered one of the founders of modern philosophy, Durkheim, while defining society, believed that the thing that holds society together is shared values and traditions; means. Weber, one of the founders of philosophy, who stated that the power of thoughts shapes societies, compared the traditional thoughts of simple societies with the rational thought that influences today's modern societies. In the past, tradition has brought society together, while modern societies have created a rational and large-scale organization that relates people's lives. (Durkheim.E, 1987, p.43) The branch of psychology that defines memory, the ability of an organism to store and then retrieve information and the branch of physiology, which defines it as a complex system in which we can associate, use and store information of different types, enters into the fields of interest of most researchers. In addition to the concept of society, which is a very wide research area, the concept of memory has aroused so much interest and curiosity. Again, if we look at the equivalent of this concept in the Cambridge dictionary, a simple definition such as “the ability to remember information, experiences, and people” will appear. Unlike social studies, memory studies are not only a concept adopted by sociology, but memory is in the fields of interest of both physiology and psychology. the branch of psychology that defines memory, the ability of an organism to store and then retrieve information and the branch of physiology, which defines it as a complex system in which we can associate, use and store information of different types, enters into the fields of interest of most researchers. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022) The importance of both concepts has gained a different dimension when the famous sociologist Maurice Halbwachs brought these two concepts together. This concept takes place in the literature as Collective Memory today.

The concept of collective memory and its development until today

Even if philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Confucius are considered to be the oldest thinkers interested in sociology, representatives and sociologists of the new era presented their ideas in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially in the Age of Enlightenment, and they began to be counted as the founders of sociology. It is seen that memory studies are given a wide place in these ideas, which form the basis of today's academy. Bergson and Durkheim have stated in their work that memory is very important for society. Maurice Halbwachs, on the other hand, was influenced by these two teachers and brought the two concepts together. The French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who was born in 1877 and died in 1945, put forward the idea that memory does not belong to the individual, but that it emerges by being influenced by the society, in other words, it cannot be considered independently of the society. Halbwachs's thoughts, who have made many researches, have reached our day with 3 works. When all these works are examined and a general evaluation is made, it is revealed that memory depends on social conditions. Halbwachs states that the memory of people who grow up in solitude cannot be formed, and that their memories are formed as people become social. (Halbwachs. M, 1925, p 28) The researcher, who accepts the idea that every memory and memory belongs to individuals, emphasizes the part that memories and memories are determined socially, and it is understood from the statements that "there is no memory belonging to societies, but societies determine the memories of their members". Touching on the point that personal memories are realized through social environment communication, the researcher states that even our individual memories leave a

place in our memory in the way that others tell us as important and reflect them to us, with the example of our childhood memories. (Halbwachs. M, 1950, p 74) Jean Assmann was the first to participate in Halbwachs, which offered a new opportunity to accept and criticize sociologists of the same period and who would later start their research.

German sociologist Jean Assmann defines various ceremonies, tales that have been passed down from generation to generation, important memories that have influenced societies and their transfer to the present, while communicative memory is the sharing of events that lived in the same period and that took place in the same period as memories. It occurs when the society lives in the same period and has been defined as a type of memory that disappears with the death of those individuals. Cultural memory, on the other hand, is defined as the transfer and transfer of intergenerational experiences through various rituals. This remembrance can also be considered to be related to religion and rituals, and it can also be expressed as history that remembers. The fact that Assmann never mentioned politics or community management in these two types of memory caused him to be criticized in a way, which led to the emergence of new types of memory. It is obvious that a political power directs societies in every period (Assmann J, 2011, p.35). This orientation naturally left traces in the memories of societies. Social memory studies, which started with Maurice Halbwachs, have led to new branches by taking into account the political administrations.

Another concept that can be used as a substitute for social memory is the concept of social memory. Social memory, which we can understand in contrast to the concept of institutional memory, refers to the form of memory inherited from the shared past due to social relations. On the other hand, school, court, museum etc. The form of memory that is shaped in institutions and constantly reproduced in these institutions is called institutional memory (Misztal, 2003, p. 20). Another concept that can be considered as an alternative to these two concepts is the concept of public memory. In particular, the concept of public memory, formulated by Kendall Phillips in her work *Framing Public Memory*, characterizes the form of memory that emerges in areas where the civil and the official intersect. In this respect, it has been formulated as a concept that does not ignore both the dynamics of the culture itself and the effectiveness of the political field. Because it defines a memory based on what people share in public spaces. (Phillips, 2003, p.11)

These three concepts, which are directly related to each other, focus on the organizational forms of people in social life and point to the area where memory is produced in their own contexts. While social memory refers to the social area in which people interact with all kinds of communication, institutional memory focuses on the memory production function of institutions - especially museums. Public memory, on the other hand, refers to the organizations where politics is institutionalized. But even if we think that these concepts keep the balance between the social and the political, it is possible to say that they neglect the cultural and historical dimension. In order to fill this gap, it is seen that the concept of historical memory is frequently used to characterize the memory of associations. (Karaarslan F. 2019, p.42) Recording the events of the past with different techniques and conveying them to the next generations, even at the level of knowledge, creates a memory for people who have not experienced the event themselves. In other words, the presentation of past events to the mediation of people with some tools and equipment constitutes the knowledge of historical memory. Just as the concept of historical memory mostly evokes the past, the concept of political memory also refers to the political field that has its eyes on the present and the future. The concept of political memory is widely used to express the memory of associations after political decisions and often wars due to political decisions. Attaching a sociological meaning to the concept of memory, Foucault tries to understand memory on the axis of the concepts of counter/oppositional and unofficial memory, which we can translate into Turkish as popular memory and counter memory. (Foucault. M, 1977, p.39) Foucault refers to Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony to explain these concepts. According to him, power imposes its own understanding of culture on the society by obtaining the consent of the people through hegemony and thus causes the shaping of popular culture. Popular memory emerges with the sharing of this popular culture. That is, Foucault sees memory as a widely manipulated field. This manipulation takes place through hegemony.

But after a while, a type of memory emerges that we can describe as the opposite by those who are uncomfortable with popular memory. This counter memory, which is diversified as counter, oppositional or unofficial memory, expresses the shares of people who prefer to stay out of the common and popular. In this type of memory, there is a state of being uncomfortable with what is popular and performing a kind of socialization and memory production over this disorder.

The importance of memory, social memory issues, remembering social events and traumas, forgetting to remember or overcoming them is increasing day by day, especially for societies that have experienced 2 world wars, have been affected by migration and various crises, and have turned to a different dimension with globalization. As a result of globalization, it has become easier for societies to mix with each other, to shop, to cross borders, and this has led to the mixing of memory and culture. This has led to the emergence of a new memory size. This type of memory also overlaps with the name of transnational memory. (Gruyter.D,2014) This type of memory, which can be summarized with the expressions of transferring their own memories to different societies, is generally better understood with the example of migrations and crossing the borders of the region where the movies were shot and broadcast. A movie made in India can easily be watched in Macedonia today, while enabling us to meet the memory of that region, it can also cause us to destroy our existing prejudices or gain new ideas. Digital memory, as a new form of memory, has been added to memory studies, especially in the last 30 years, which we can describe as the technology era. The protection of information in the digital environment and bringing it to light whenever desired has been brought to the literature as the most up-to-date memory type.

Conclusion

The importance of both society and memory studies for today is seen in the interests and studies of important researchers and scientists. This curiosity, which started from the ancient age, has developed itself in every period and has produced more productive results. The attempt to unite memory and society, which started with Maurice Halbwachs, also drew a new path and made various researchers, especially sociologists, think about it. Every event that has been experienced since the creation of the world has been provided to share and transfer memories that have been transferred from one generation to another through societies. Focusing on the memory of societies, which are of great importance in knowing the past and taking forward steps, especially as a result of the events experienced in the last century, its value has been understood more today and studies have continued on it. The events that took place in the first and especially the second world war, the genocides, reforms, changes and destructions had great effects on the societies living in that period. While these effects are taking place in the memories, it has been tried to be transferred to new generations through memory in a written, oral or cultural way. Like Macedonia, it has been under the rule of various powers from the past to the present, and even today, as a country that hosts different nations, cultures, customs and religions, the formation and transmission of memories has attached importance for the present and the future. Finally, the importance of the development of social memory studies is better understood today. The reason why it is more popular today when it first came out is that there have been social events that have been experienced especially in the last 50 years and that have affected the whole world and the process, the number of witnesses who experienced these events has gradually decreased, and the importance of transferring the future to the present, where it is shaped, is understood. The societies by knowing the past, can live the present better and shape the future more solidly.

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