Franziska Metzger / Paul Oberholzer / Hans Zollner (eds.)

The Memory of Power and Abuse of Power

böhlau


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Table of Contents

3 Dealing with Abuse of Power in the Christian Churches

Hans Zollner

Memory – Power – Abuse

An Introduction

What originally prompted Franziska Metzger, Paul Oberholzer and myself to organise a conference on the topic of "Remembering power and the abuse of power" was the discovery that the Catholic Church obviously finds it difficult to remind itself and others of the abuse of power inflicted by clergy members on many victims of sexual and other types of violence. When planning the conference, we thus went beyond the church and incorporated other important topics playing a major role in the public debate on the culture of remembrance in various countries. By inviting colleagues from diverse academic disciplines, we also wanted to emphasise that power, abuse and memory are complex phenomena that must be examined from various perspectives. Failing to do this poses a great risk of remaining trapped in the ivory tower of one's own hermeneutic, linguistic and methodological limitations.

The Human Condition and Memory

Memory is a fundamental part of human existence. It shapes our identity, guides our behaviour and connects us to our past. The formation of memories is a complex neurobiological process occurring primarily in the brain. When we have an experience, sensory impressions are received through our senses and transmitted to the brain. These impressions are processed in the hippocampus, a central structure for memory. This is the area that decides whether the information is important enough to be stored for the long term.

Long-term memory is created through a process in which information that was first stored in the short-term memory is transferred to the long-term memory through repetition and emotional meaning. Events that have a strong emotional impact on us are therefore often remembered for a particularly long time. Memory is thus created by complex processes in the brain in which sensory impressions, emotions and existing knowledge play a decisive role. Intense traumatic experiences are 'stored' in the brain and body, and it often only takes the appropriate 'triggers' to immediately bring back the original intensity of what happened.

From an anthropological perspective, memory is of central importance for the individual, as well as for groups and societies. On an individual level, memory is closely linked to identity. Our personal memories largely define who we are and

help us make decisions based on past experiences. Without memory, we would not be able to learn from mistakes or pursue long-term goals. Memory is also key to social bonding. Shared memories strengthen relationships and create a sense of belonging. They are the basis for traditions and culture that enrich our lives and provide a sense of orientation. At its best, collective remembrance can enable a society to learn from its history and avoid past mistakes. Historical awareness – if not glossed over or exploited – can motivate people to take responsibility and create a better future. Memory helps shape moral values by providing examples of right or wrong behaviour. It plays a decisive role in the assumption of responsibility and in ethical reflection. Remembrance is therefore not just a look into the past, but a signpost for the present and future.

The Christian Faith and Remembrance

From a theological perspective, it should be noted that remembrance plays a central role in the Jewish-Christian tradition. It not only serves as a means of passing on the history and content of the faith, but is also a formative element of identity formation for individuals and the people of God as a whole. Memory is understood not only as passive retrospection, but as an active practice that influences the present and the future.

In Judaism, remembrance is a central component of the Torah. For example, in Exodus 12, the annual celebration of the Passover feast is arranged in order to commemorate the exodus from Egypt. The repeated commandment 'Remember' (e. g. Deuteronomy 5:15) emphasises the obligation not to forget the great deeds of God in the history of the people of Israel. Collective memory, especially of exile and persecution, plays a key role in understanding Jewish self-assurance. Last but not least, the Shoah has shaped the meaning of remembrance in and for the Jewish community in a unique way.

In the synoptic gospels, as well as in Paul's letters, remembrance is particularly associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19: "Do this in memory of me"). The sacraments and holidays such as Easter and Christmas serve to commemorate the central events of salvation history. Liturgical prayers and hymns in both traditions often contain retrospectives of God's saving work in the history, even when it does not seem immediately obvious or clear – such as in David's failure (2 Samuel 11–12) or in Christ's crucifixion. God's work, which sometimes seems hidden or incomprehensible, only gradually reveals itself in His intention through remembrance.

Power and Memory

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, remembrance is a central element and a powerful practice in which, among other things, the powerful are not only relativised, but literally disempowered. This is exemplified by Mary singing about it in the Magnificat: "He has brought down rulers from their thrones" (Luke 1:52).

In the Bible, as in other religions, there is an ambivalent understanding of power: on the one hand, people – especially prophets or priests – are attributed a special power. This power is ultimately intended to serve the salvation of the people, even if this is hidden in bitter messages such as the announcement of exile or the call to repentance. On the other hand, all human power – even that of great prophets such as Elijah or Jonah, or of kings and scribes – becomes very small in the face of divine power. The irreconcilable paradox of an almighty God whose Son, however, did not "consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage" (Philippians 2:6), but rather "humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8), is sung in one of the oldest hymns in the New Testament. There is something that doesn't sit quite right in the human sentiment that God "chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things" (1 Corinthians 1:28); then as now, it is a "stumbling block" and "foolishness" for many (1 Corinthians 1:23). From a human point of view, it is therefore quite understandable if the memory of God's way of salvation remains difficult to understand and even more difficult to put into practice.

The Church and Memory

With regard to the handling of power in and by the church, the past decades have shown that the temptation to put oneself in God's place is all too enticing, and that any reminder of this failure should be rejected or suppressed. After all, that would involve recognising the fact that one has not only not applied one's own standards and laws to oneself, but also that the most important messages of Jesus have not been put into practice: Jesus, who identifies with those in need ("Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me." Matthew 25:45); Jesus, who is concerned with genuine neighbourly love and not a façade or reputation ("Everything they do is done for people to see." Matthew 23:5); Jesus, who promises true life to those who are not interested in themselves ("For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for my sake will find." Matthew 16:25).

Traditionally, the church is a master of the culture of remembrance, shaping collective memory through rituals, art and architecture. However, in light of the

sexual abuse scandals, this ability to remember has been put to the test. Instead of creating spaces for public mourning and repentance, the church has often refused to recognise the extent of the abuse, leading to a culture of denial and cover-up. The Catholic Church, an institution historically endowed with immense moral, social and effective authority and power in many parts of the world for hundreds of years, has been profoundly challenged by revelations of widespread sexual abuse by its clergy and the cover-up of these crimes by church authorities.

Change Processes

The power dynamics existing up to that point had created an environment in which victims of abuse often felt silenced, their experiences dismissed or actively suppressed. The institutional power of the church was used to shape the narrative about abuse ("back then, people didn't know how serious something like this was", "back then, it was the same in society" etc.), whereby the preservation of the institution was far too often prioritised over care for the victims. The church's resistance to comprehensive accountability has hindered any real memorialisation. While some dioceses have taken steps to acknowledge the abuse and apologise to survivors, many have resisted calls for transparency and reparation. This unwillingness to face up to the past perpetuates the culture of putting one's head in the sand, and ensures the power imbalance between the institution and its victims continues.

In an increasing number of countries, however, victims are now speaking out and questioning the church's carefully constructed narrative by telling of horrific abuse and appalling cover-ups. The emergence of survivors' stories has forced a reckoning with the past and revealed the extent of the abuse and the Church's complicity. This shift in the balance of power between the church and those affected has led to a growing demand for appropriately commemorating the suffering. More and more of those affected have begun to create their own spaces of remembrance, to tell their stories in books, interviews or through pictures, poems or paintings and to demand justice. This process is important for healing and to ensure that the past is not repeated.

Criteria for an Appropriate Culture of Remembrance

Due to the special responsibility and moral standards of the Catholic Church, it is in its own interest to develop a culture of remembrance worthy of the name in relation to the abuse committed by church members. The church could indeed demonstrate ways of doing this, which other institutions could then follow.

The criteria for this genuine, honest culture of remembrance are as follows:

1. First and foremost, the suffering of those affected is remembered, which is why they themselves must be protagonists in any process of remembrance culture. The form of memory representation deemed most appropriate by those affected, and where and how this should be executed, is the starting point for every joint decision and implementation. All experience has shown that this will be a demanding process, sometimes fraught with tension, between those affected and those not affected, but also among those affected themselves, who sometimes have opposing ideas. Care must therefore be taken from the outset to ensure that appropriate support measures, such as supervision or mediation, are available.

2. Remembrance must take place in a culturally appropriate and well-considered manner, in terms of form and content, as well as frequency or visibility. Neither pushing away and concealing nor hyperactivist celebrations will suffice to fulfil the requirements of a sustainable and effective culture of remembrance.

3. Remembrance must occur in a way that also involves those unfamiliar with the topic – partly because they no longer know the exact circumstances of the abuse or cover-up or the people involved –, addresses them personally and motivates them to act responsibly for a better present and future.

4. Remembrance must occur with courage, clarity and prudence by those who, as representatives of the institution in which the abuse took place, want to or must assume institutional responsibility, especially when those actually responsible are no longer alive or are no longer in a position to take appropriate action themselves.

5. The institutions in which abuse and cover-ups occurred – dioceses, religious communities, schools, boarding schools, children's homes, etc. – must perform their remembrance through special acts (which can admittedly only be isolated moments within a long-term commitment) aimed at not only preserving the memory of suffering and failure, but also at seeking to understand it better and better, so as to ensure more effective safeguarding in the broadest sense of the word.

Outcome

Said culture of remembrance results in a credible commitment to transparency, accountability and restorative justice. This includes creating safe spaces for survivors to tell their stories without fear of re-traumatisation, shaming or even retribution, in a way that suits them. It also requires a willingness to address the systemic factors that have contributed to abuse, such as clericalism and the prioritisation of institutional prestige over the welfare of children, young people and other vulnerable people. By honestly acknowledging the past and taking concrete steps to prevent future abuse, the church can begin to rebuild trust and create a culture of healing.

Such acts of remembrance play an important role in fundamentally shifting attitudes and mentalities, which are changed by more than just cognitive appeals

or authoritarian orders. This would also make it easier to recognise the challenges faced by those affected, and paint a clearer picture of what ongoing efforts need to look like in order to achieve greater justice and deeper healing.

Trans-Disciplinary Perspectives on the Memory of Power and Abuse of Power

Power and abuse of power on the one hand and dealing with power and abuse of power on the other hand are intricately intertwined. This entanglement anchors the topic of power and abuse of power immediately and prominently in the field of Memory Studies focusing on the construction of narratives of memory, on politics of history, on the relation between historiography, public memory, restitution and reparation, but also on empowerment and participation by minorities and victims of violence, and on the creation of public spaces for commemoration and memorials regarding instances of abuse of power.

Power does not necessarily lead to abuse of power, whereas abuse of power is not conceivable without power. The concentration of power, its control and 'normalisation', that is its essentialization as pertaining to a certain system of rule and dominion, its stabilization through the convergence of internal and external perceptions, and the superposition of power in different fields of society increases the enabling and the probability of abuse of power. The social, structural, and systemic dimensions of power, the functioning of relations of power in different societies, political systems, and communities are crucial to approaches to power in the social and cultural sciences. If looking at abuses of power, at violence, mass destruction, genocide and the violation of personal integrity from a perspective on the dimension of memory, individual stories, individual narrations must be made visible as much as ways of narrating, modes and spaces of remembering in a society, in parts of a society and communities as well as by different agents.

In this volume, we address such questions with a comprehensive transdisciplinary perspective on power and the memory of abuses of power in past and present societies, with the aim of developing fruitful methodological approaches and schemes of analysis. Concepts and lines of thought from the fields of philosophy and theory of history, history didactics, religious history, theology and anthropology will be related to perspectives and methodological approaches from the field of Memory Studies. These conceptual reflections will be related to specific expertise and research in Holocaust and post-colonial studies, the history of slavery, missionary history, mass violence, war, and sexual abuse.

In the last two to three decades, Memory Studies have conceptually been significantly influenced by approaches of philosophy of language, semiotics and literary studies and – somewhat later – by such of sociology and social psychology. In historiography based on constructivist positions, since the late 1990s the creation and

usage of memory has been studied first of all with regard to ancient cultures, nationalism, Holocaust studies, and the history of historiography, more recently also with regard to political myths and politics of memory (regarding debates in the public sphere for instance), and even more recently with a focus on post-colonial memory and migration.[1] In the last few years, intersections with history didactics and public history have provided fruitful perspectives and conceptual reflections.[2] In the last decade too homogeneous, essentialising and static perceptions of collective memory excluding not least long silenced minorities that largely remain invisible, have been contested. This led to more dynamic approaches to memory focusing on transformations, remodelling and deconstruction of (dominant) narratives, on interaction, mediation and remediation.[3] It also led to a more reflected approach on communities and agency as well as on spatial dynamics, not least through the concept of 'transcultural memory'.[4]

Approaches of Philosophy of History and Memory Studies

In the first part of this volume, conceptual and methodological reflections on memory and power, on historiography and other modes of memory construction and on mechanisms of violence and victimization are discussed, drawing especially on (post-)structuralist (French) philosophical, anthropological and linguistic approaches.

In a post-structuralist perspective on memory, *Franziska Metzger* (Lucerne) attempts to systematise the relation between memory and societal discourses and the role of memory in establishing, fostering, extending power and legitimizing,

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1 See Huyssen, "Diaspora and nation: Migration into other pasts"; Boesen and Lentz (eds.), *Migration und Erinnerung*; Glynn and Kleist (eds), *History, Memory and Migration;* Lacroix and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Refugee and Diaspora Memory"; Dellios, "Personal, Public Pasts".

2 See Cauvin, *Public History*; Hinz and Körber (eds.), *Geschichtskultur*; Wojdon and Wiśniewska (eds.), *Public in Public History*.

3 See Olick, "From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products"; Erll and Nünning (eds.), *Cultural Memory Studies*; Erll and Rigney (eds.), *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*; Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*; Ebbrecht, *Geschichtsbilder im medialen Gedächtnis*; Langenbacher et al. (eds.), *Dynamics of Memory and Identity in Contemporary Europe*; Bond and Rapson (eds.), *The Transcultural Turn*; Feindt et al., "Entangled Memory"; De Cesari and Rigney (eds.), *Transnational Memory*; Landsberg, *Prostetic Memory*; García-Gavilanes et al., "The memory remains"; Erll, "Media and the Dynamics of Memory"; Daphinoff and Metzger, "Zur Einführung".

4 Bond and Rapson (eds.), *The Transcultural Turn*; Brunow, "Remediation and Reworking the Archive"; id., *Remediating Transcultural Memory*; Carrier and Kabalek, "Cultural Memory and Transcultural Memory"; Crownshaw, *Transcultural Memory*.

perpetuating but also disguising abuses of power, and how societal discourses create and perpetuate frames for practices of memory, that is for what is remembered and how and for what is not remembered and therefore remains invisible. She demonstrates these mechanisms, the dynamics of these entanglements, and how discursive frames and narratives of memory are transformed regarding religion and memory and with a special focus on the memory of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

Based on Paul Ricoeur's epistemological reflections on history and memory, on their complex relation not only regarding time and agency, but also to imagination and emotion, *Paul Schroffner* (Frankfurt/Paris) also focuses on different modes of use and abuse of memory – and of forgetting: from justifications of power to more radical modes of abuse of memory such as manipulation and instrumentalization often related to identity politics. He links these reflections to such on an ethics of memory, that is on a duty to remember and a duty towards victims (other than oneself) to do them justice by remembering. Based on this he raises the question of forgiveness as "common horizon" of history, memory and forgetting.

Nikolaus Wandinger (Innsbruck) approaches uses and abuses of the concern for victims through a perspective of René Girard's mimetic theory and its theological adaptation in Raymund Schwager's dramatic theology. Building on Girard's distinction between the perspective of ancient myths on the one hand and of the Bible on the other hand as regards the memory of victims and victimizers, perpetrator- and victim-centred perspectives in their various forms – including victim-centred perspectives that can be problematic as in a scapegoating of the past –, he reflects on the complex and relational dimension of forgiveness and on the possibilities and forms of a memory culture based on forgiveness.

Remembering Violence and Trauma

The second part ties in on the systematisations by the philosophical, theological and cultural historical approaches and concepts developed in the first part. The contributions of this part relate these interpretations to reflections on history education and approaches of memory studies with a focus on the analysis of public memory and its uses in cases of dealing with violent, traumatic pasts (and presents), suppressed and silenced people. Special attention is paid to how the complex relation between different abuses of power is dealt with in a non-dichotomising way, how hidden memory is made public and shapes communities – for instance in the case of indigenous peoples – and how hidden memory is reflected and mediated in society and can engender more inclusive, participatory approaches.

Susanne Popp (Augsburg) proposes a significant extension of the programmes of Holocaust education through a systematic integration of a meta-dimension

generated from the field of memory studies. A focus on the history of Holocaust memory and on – changing – modes of remembering shall create a (self)-reflexive in-depth perspective in the class room that enables students especially of upper secondary school level to critically approach contestations to both particularist and universalist discourses on the Holocaust often linked to emotionally charged debates especially in a post-colonial and present-time context of extreme cases of abuse of power in systemic violence and mass murder. She demonstrates how through a systematic analysis of the memory of the Holocaust a multidirectional (Michael Rothberg) approach promoting peace and mutual recognition can be realised.

Against the background of post-colonial perspectives that enable to make invisible traumatic pasts visible, *Manuel Menrath* (Lucerne) demonstrates how the 'memory of power', narrated as a success story of the settler community in Canada, still shapes the central discourses on and modes of narrating Canada's national past. This is expression of the 'power of memory' fostered over many decades, marking national identity politics to the present. In a participatory approach of oral history, the author shows at the same time how indigenous voices, narratives and practices of memory against the still-dominant narratives, as the 150s anniversary celebrations of the Confederation in 2017 have shown, become more visible in the public sphere enabling a gradual transformation towards a more inclusive cultural memory in Canada.

Complex colonial and post-colonial structures and memory politics also build the focus of *Paul Oberholzer's* (Rome) contribution on pluri-ethno-linguistic East Timor, a Portuguese Colony from the 16th century until 1975 and under Indonesian occupation until 1999. Rregarding the latter he speaks of a 'colonised coloniser' with resulting long-term, pluri-fold abuses of power and memories of victimhood. In his analysis of the television work of Rudolf Hofmann, a Swiss Jesuit, in the early nation building period of East Timor the author demonstrates how Hofmann used popular narratives of legends and transformed them into mythic narratives of memory in graphic films in the context of present-time society and against the background of a traumatic past. He shows how these narratives had an empowering function and aim to overcome trauma and a self-image of victimhood.

Dealing with Abuse of Power in the Christian Churches

Empowerment through agency in the creation, fostering and public presence of memories in the complex and burdening contexts of suppression, war and mass murder, slavery and sexual abuse, is also a central dimension of the contributions in the third part of the volume. All four papers deal with the catholic or protestant Churches in the past and present. Narratives of historiography and historical

debates, memory politics and diverging practices of memory by different agents – perpetrators, victims and complex entanglements especially in the colonial and post-colonial context –, their strategies and modes of narrating are focused.

David Collins (Washington) deals with the Jesuits', and particularly the Jesuit University of Georgetown's involvement in slavery in the US context analysing Georgetown University's strategies in dealing with their slavery past. The case of Georgetown University is paradigmatic, in as much as historical research, enabling the access to archives and establishing archives as 'memory work' are related to a participatory dimension of this memory. Descendants of slaves are included in the process of forming and publicly making visible narratives of this difficult past of perpetuated abuse of power and victimhood. He demonstrates, how different agents take part in a process which is still ongoing and publicly staged from the official dimension of renaming a university building to the apology for slaveholding by the US Jesuits and an increased visibility and self-reflexive dimension of those sharing this difficult past.

Hidden missionary histories and the multilayered dynamics of power and abuse of power not only in the religious realm, but also in the broader imperial activities by states, as well as in economic and scientific projects – pertaining to the discipline of geography for instance – are the focal point of *Fabio Rossinelli's* (Lausanne) and *Filiberto Ciaglia's* (Rome) contribution. In a micro-history they analyse the structures and discourses of religious and 'civilising' mission, scientific and economic activities – which most often remained untold in the religious' own narratives on their activities – of Swiss protestant missionaries in Africa in the last decades of the 19th and early 20th centuries. They thus contribute to a new post-colonial narrative regarding the diverse, entangled strata of power relations.

Mick Feyaerts, Simon Nsielanga and Idesbald Goddeeris (Leuven) analyse the complex ways of dealing with the colonial past in an entangled history of the memories of Congolese Jesuits and Annonciades in the Democratic Republic of Congo and of African priests in Belgium focusing especially on the silences regarding the colonial past. They interpret these silences against the background of power structures in the past and present – colonial, post-colonial and within the Catholic Church – that perpetuate and transform abuses of power, discursive frames related to these structures and narratives of memory. The complex internal differences within the Catholic Church and Belgian society are brought to the surface in this in-depth analysis.

Kathleen Sprows Cummings (Notre Dame) analyses how sexual abuse in the Catholic Church has started to be commemorated in the public sphere in America. Looking at ongoing attempts of commemoration and of debates of memory in the public sphere, she evokes the contestedness of the usage of saints: saints as essential mechanisms of embedding sexual abuse in catholic memory on the one hand and critique of this practice and the power dimension related to it on the other hand.

The commemoration of saints and the usage of saints still play a significant role in the present, enabling to link individual and communitarian memory, inner-worldly experience and suffering specifically with the transcendent sphere. This classical mode of commemoration has been appropriated in the establishment of a number of monuments commemorating sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. Specifically, Maria Goretti was turned into an icon of sexual abuse – and particularly of overcoming and surviving sexual abuse – that has been used in the last few years in memorials erected in the US.

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1 Approaches of Philosophy of History and Memory Studies

Franziska Metzger

The Power of Memory and the Memory of Power

Based on the perception that abuse of power and dealing with abuses of power – in past and present societies – are closely linked, and that a focus on memory is not only important, but also both methodologically and topically innovative, especially if marked by a transdisciplinary dialogue, I will focus in my essay on the complex relation between power/abuse of power and memory. This relation can be conceived as twofold: on the one hand as the power of memory, on the other hand as the memory of power. The power of memory refers to two interrelated dimensions: a) to the role of memory in establishing, stabilising and extending power, and its role in various modes of legitimising, perpetuating, but also disguising or at least downplaying abuses of power, and b) to power relations within the field of memory construction and usage of instances of memory, which set the frame for what is remembered and how, becoming not least part of mechanisms of abuse of power, as for example in the exclusion of the memory of minorities and victims, but also of transgression within a community, and of violence. The memory of power refers to how past and present memory construction is dealt with by different agents – in different fields of agency –, while it also refers to the limits set for the memory of certain agents leading to invisibility, silence, and perpetuation of trauma. This dimension includes meta-theoretical and methodological reflections on memory – in different disciplines – as well as the deconstruction of discourses of legitimisation of power and abuse of power, that is of what I described as the first field of the interrelation of power and memory, not only in the social and cultural sciences, but also in the public sphere.

In the systematisations in which I will present and discuss conceptual and methodological reflections towards a scheme of analysis of the above mentioned types of relation between memory and power, I will repeatedly make reference to religious history, building on the thesis that the complex relation of religion and memory is an essential mechanism of religious communication[1] and therefore crucial in an analytical, multidimensional approach to power and abuse of power in religious communities, not least to sexual abuse in the Church. I conceptualise religion as a system of meaning production, that is of discourses – semantics, images, and narratives – and ritual practices which can be conceived as religious

1 See Metzger, "Religion and Memory – Discourses and Practices"; id., "Memory of the Sacred Heart. Linguistic, Iconographic and Ritual Dimensions".

communication.[2] Mechanisms of memory are central for the modelling and stabilisation of religious language, of ritual practices and of the formation and fostering of religious communities, of control within a community and its positioning within and construction of difference in broader society.

Entangled Modes of Memory

The dynamics and complexity of the relationship of power and memory can best be approached based on a constructivist, post-structuralist perspective focusing on communication, close to Niklas Luhmann's approach, and discourse, in the line of Michel Foucault, regarding the analysis of both power and memory. Similar to Jacques Derrida's or Michel Foucault's notion of 'archive' and approaches by representatives of systems theory such as Niklas Luhmann or Elena Esposito[3], I conceptualise memory as space of selection, as fundamentally the result of processes of construction and not as something 'neutral' and 'given', a conception that differs from a more dichotomous notion of memory as storage on the one (*Speichergedächtnis*) and functional memory (*Funktionsgedächtnis*) on the other hand.[4] Selected particles of memory are used and modelled by different agents of memory construction and mediation, including historiography and history education, museums, archives, monuments, architecture, art, and symbolic and ritual practices. The focus of this approach lies on the dynamics, on the complex textures of entangled inventories of memory – codes and modes of interpretation, ritual and narrative use – and their polyvalence in and through transmission, reiteration, adoption, and more or less fundamental and radical transformation.[5] Centring on communication, memory is perceived as practice, as synchronous plurality of conflictive and competing, converging and shifting relations between different communities of memory, including different experiences of exclusion, violence, mass destruction, of 'multidirectionality' (Michael Rothberg) and intersections of memories of different

2 See for a comparable approach among others: Graf, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter*; id. and Große Kracht (eds.), *Religion und Gesellschaft*; Hölscher (ed.), *Baupläne der sichtbaren Kirche*; Altermatt, *Konfession, Nation, Rom*; Damberg (ed.), *Soziale Strukturen und Semantiken des Religiösen im Wandel*.

3 See Derrida, *Mal d'Archive*; Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir*. See also: Luhmann, *Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*; Esposito, *Soziales Vergessen*; Csáky, "Die Mehrdeutigkeit von Gedächtnis und Erinnerung".

4 See Assmann, "Funktionsgedächtnis und Speichergedächtnis". My approach is more constructivist than conceptions which differentiate between memory as storage and functional memory.

5 For the concept of textures of memory see: Metzger, "Textures of Memory in Apocalyptic Narratives and Iconography"; id. "Erinnerungsnarrative des Abendlandes".

communities, not least in a long-term perspective.[6] This approach counteracts more static, potentially essentialising conceptions and dichotomising perspectives on historiography on the one hand and other modes of memory construction on the other, as well as of notions of discourse vs. practice, language vs. image, language vs. emotion, to mention just a few of the most significant.[7]

I distinguish between three entangled modes that shape and texture memory. Linguistic and iconographic/visual codes, including forms of interpreting and of seeing, constitute the fundamental framework – a space of memory – for the two other modes: symbolic and ritual practices and narrative memory.[8] This conceptualisation is based on the poststructuralist premise – influenced by philosophy of language and semiotics – that emphasises on the one hand the dimension of memory in language, while it presumes on the other hand that memory is eminently created by linguistic and visual codes as polyvalently deployable and combinable inventories – as a web of possibilities of symbolisation[9] – stabilised by communities of communication and likewise forming such communities. Thus, for instance, the codification of semantics and images in religious communities can be interpreted as linguistic transposition of sacrality, of the code 'transcendent/immanent'.

Symbolic ritual and ritualized practices of memory emerging from linguistic and iconographic memory include the creation of sacralised places and spaces (1) as in the religious sphere pilgrimages and processions –, practices of veneration and commemoration (2), ritual objects (religious or not) (3) and (in the religious sphere spiritual and pastoral) texts (4).[10] The materiality of (religious) rites, which in memory studies has only been conceptualized in recent years, including sacred/sacralised objects, monuments, buildings, as well as bodies or parts of bodies and the interplay of bodies in a community – of devotees for example, where we

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6 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.

7 See for this perspective focusing on dynamics of memory: Daphinoff and Metzger, "Einleitung". See for similar postulates in recent transdisciplinary memory research: Olick, "From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products"; Carrier and Kabalek, "Cultural Memory and Transcultural Memory – a Conceptual Analysis"; Feindt et al., "Entangled Memory"; Langenbacher, Niven and Wittlinger (eds.), *Dynamics of Memory and Identity*; Erll, "Media and the Dynamics of Memory"; id., "Travelling Memory".

8 Regarding the poststructuralist positions this conception is based on: White, *Metahistory*; id., *Tropics of discourse*; de Certeau, *L'écriture de l'histoire*; Megill, "Recounting the Past". See on this approach: Metzger, "Erinnerungsräume", pp. 20–21.

9 See Zolles, "Die symbolische Macht der Apokalypse".

10 See in more detail: Metzger, "Memory of the Sacred Heart". Conceptually interestging: Macho, *Das zeremonielle Tier*; Morgan, *Images at Work*; Laube, *Von der Reliquie zum Ding*; Olick, "From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products"; Popp et al. (Hg.), *The EU Project "Museums Exhibiting Europe" (EMEE)*. This year's thematic focus of the *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte* will lie on material religious culture.

could speak of embodiment/enactment of devotional memory – creates spaces of memory.[11] Their creation and ceremonial usage generate sensuous and material routines as memory – including sounds and smells – enabling and enacting religious or ideological belief.

The third mode, which also emerges from the first and overlaps with the symbolic-ritual mode, is the narrativity of memory, which encompasses narrative memory in the broader sense and narratives of memory in the narrower sense, in so far as in a narrativist position fundamentally influenced by Hayden White and later on by representatives of literary and cultural studies, narrating can be described as an act of memory – also when it is not an intentional act of commemoration – through which past, present and future are connected.[12]

All three modes of memory create spaces of memory understood – similarly to Michel de Certeau's 'lieu pratique' – as textures of interpretations and imaginations that are produced and used, appropriated, reproduced and transformed.[13]

The Effects of Memory on Societal Discourse

My thesis is that the entwining of linguistic/iconographic, ritual and material as well as narrative memory is a factor that contributes to a stabilization and potentially to an increase of power, in as much as the superposition of the three modes of memory leads to the fostering and longue durée of instances of memory – internal entanglement – and of their effects on societal discourses – external entanglement – alike. This is the case not least because the three moes of memory set the limits of (a) what and how something is commemorated, of (b) how rituals that are moulded in a certain way contribute to the perpetuation of practices of memory, and (c) which narratives and modes of narration are mediated and medialized in a society or specific community.

The fostering of instances of memory (internal entanglement) and therefore the stabilization of dominant expressions and meanings in the three modes of memory is essentially marked by a number of mechanisms shaping the deep-structures of memory: the fusion of times and the creation of continuity and teleological perspectives on history (1), detemporalisation (2) through retro-projection and

11 See Laube, *Von der Reliquie zum Ding*; Morgan, "Rhetoric of the Heart".

12 On narrativist positions in memory studies see apart from White and Megill also: Erll, "Narratology and Cultural Memory Studies"; Nünning, "Selektion, Konfiguration, Perspektivierung und Poiesis"; Neumann, "The Literary Representation of Memory"; Buschmann, "Geschichte im Raum"; Daphinoff and Metzger, "Zur Einführung"; Metzger, "Erinnerungsräume".

13 de Certeau, *L'invention du quotidien*, p. 173. For a more detailed conceptualization of spaces of memory see: Metzger, "Erinnerungsräume".

repetition (in narrative as in ritual practices), the creation of presence (3) – both temporally and spatially (or in Hans-Georg Soeffner's words 'appresentation')[14] – narratively, visually and transposed through ritual practices, that is the mise en scène of the transcendent with material means, and – closely linked – the visualization of the invisible (4)[15], in the religious field as the (often imagined) visualization of the radically different 'other'. Detemporalisation and the creation of presence becomes particularly evident in the mythicisation (5) of spaces, figures and events conceived as the creation of easily connectable, often polyvalent symbolic particles that frequently have a high degree of stability, as they can be integrated into different narratives of memory and thus also rewritten at the same time.[16]

The perspective on mechanisms internal to the functioning of memory has to be immediately linked to that on the relation between memory and societal discourse with a focus on the ways in which memory contributes (with its deep-structural mechanisms) to discursive schemes, to perceptions of society, the legitimization of norms and the justification of certain actions, that create, foster, but also potentially question and destabilize structures of power, especially such leading to homogenization and difference, to inequality, exclusion, violence and destruction at the same time. The essentialising (or 'naturalising' in Roland Barthes terminology[17]), homogenising and sacralising effects of instances of memory for a certain community, combined with the respective effects of exclusion play an important role in the fostering and perpetuation of discourses. The usage of these functions of memory by different agents, that is their functionalisation, is an important factor in the stabilisation of power.[18] In the line of Foucault: control of discourse through control of memory.[19] In cases of functionalisation in concrete political contexts as expression of politics of history in the narrower sense of the term (as I conceive it), respective mechanisms are used specifically and in a targeted way. Extreme

14 Soeffner, "Protosoziologische Überlegungen zur Soziologie des Symbols und des Rituals"; id., *Zur Soziologie des Symbols und des Rituals.*

15 See Metzger, "Memory of the Sacred Heart".

16 For a dynamic, constructivist conception of myth see especially semiotic theories of myth such as: Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth"; id., *Myth and Meaning*; Barthes, *Mythologies*; White, *Tropics of Discourse*; id., "Catastrophe, Communal Memory and Mythic Discourse". Narrativist approaches to myth have increasingly been pursued in the cultural sciences in the last few years. See among others: Vietta and Uerlings (eds.), *Moderne und Mythos*; Ghervas and Rosset (eds.), *Lieux d'Europe*; Wintle, "Visualizing Europe"; Den Boer et al. (eds.), *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*.

17 Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 202.

18 Interesting regarding the focus on politics of history: Troebst, "Geschichtspolitik. Politikfeld, Analyserahmen, Streitobjekt"; Wolfrum, "Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik als Forschungsfelder"; Schmid, Vom publizistischen Kampfbegriff zum Forschungskonzept"; Conter, "Der Mythos als Instrument der Politikvermittlung".

19 Foucault, *Archéologie du savoir* ; id. *L'Ordre du discours.*