

THE HISTORICAL MEMORY AS WAY TO SAVE OUR IDENTITY

Maya Gvinjilia

Doctor of Management, Georgian National University -
SEU, Associate Professor
E-mail: m.gvinjilia@seu.edu.ge

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Abstract. “Historical memory” is the most important component of self-identification of a person, a social group and society as a whole.

Historical memory can help people affected by a terrible past feel that society is fully aware of their pain, condemns the actions that caused this pain, and gives some confidence that such actions will not be repeated in the future.

When the bearers of historical memory die, historical memory naturally changes, revisiting and rethinking the facts of the past. Some details disappear forever, while others, on the contrary, expand and are added under the influence of today's reality.

We remember Abkhazia and all the memories, and while I am there, my memory will exist, but when I and my generation are gone, the memory will also disappear. Although I tell my children a lot about Abkhazia, what I remember and experience is a completely different perception, and therefore I consider it necessary while I and the representatives of the previous generation are still alive and doing this. Historical memory, document as much as possible.

The initiative of certain groups of the population of Abkhazia was to create an interactive map on which one could mark their house and download information about the people living in this house, thereby giving an opportunity to generations not born and not raised in Abkhazia. To have an idea of where and how their ancestors lived. It will be especially good if the return to Abkhazia does not take place during our lifetime (I hope) and that future generations know about their heritage and history.

Keywords: *Historical memory, collective memory, Abkhazia, identity.*

Historical or collective memory is the way in which people construct specific narratives about historical periods. This means that people tell stories from the past, but they change as information is learned. That is why it is important to create an oral history archive, as well as a

folk virtual family museum, so that after we, the dead and displaced people of Abkhazia, and our previous generation, the historical memory does not completely disappear.

The concepts of “history” and “historical memory” are not synonymous, as it may seem at first glance. The study of history aims at the most accurate reflection of the past, the most objective description of events, presenting their causes and clarifying the patterns and results of the historical process. Historical memory is primarily related to the oral tradition of information transmission, it is always subjective, related to a specific individual or social group. The memory, which keeps the events of the past in its slot, reproduces this information with the help of imagination, awakened feelings, sensations, facts of the present. These processes are closely related.

In the 1920s, the French sociologist and philosopher Maurice Halbwachs was the first to talk about “collective memory”. His central thesis states - very emphatically - that every society creates the past it needs to imagine itself. The past is used as a reservoir of symbols, signs, “eternal” truths, from which collective memory selects reference points that create an identity to base society's current and future goals on. According to Jan Assmann, based on Halbwachs, collective identity emerges from this shared memory: “The sense of social belonging that we call 'collective identity' is based on the sharing of common knowledge and common memory”.

Collective memory is based on the continuous production of forms of representation. Certain narratives and icons are always subject to reproduction and formation.

This form of memory takes on a collective character in the process of oral exchange. The second form of collective memory that Assman identifies are concrete, materialized, and solid objects separate from everyday life, such as texts and monuments. Ian Assman also developed the concept of cultural memory [1].

According to the American sociologist Eviathar Zerubavel, collective memory is common to families, ethnic groups, nations, and other mnemonic entities. Collective memory is not a simple collection of personal reminiscences of members of a community. It includes memories common to all members of the community as a group.

J. According to Werch, collective memory is a memory that is conditioned by various stories, narratives, primarily of a historical nature. Relevant texts (annals, chronicles, school books, etc.) are considered tools of collective memory [2].

When the witnesses of historical events die, the historical memory naturally changes, the facts of the past are re-examined and interpreted. Some details disappear forever, while others, on the contrary, expand, adding shadows of present reality... Thus, unlike history as scientific knowledge of the past, historical memory is a resource that connects time. Historical memory is the most important component of the self-identification of an individual, a social group and

society as a whole, because the separation of animated images of the historical past is a type of memory that is of particular importance for the integration of social groups. The growth of interest in one's own past, which is observed in modern society, is explained precisely by the desire to “identify” historical memory.

It is very important to celebrate holidays and dates related to important historical events, because these events are given symbolic importance.

History usually begins at the moment when tradition ends, when social memory fades or collapses. As long as the memory continues to exist, there is no need to record it in writing or fix it in any way at all. Therefore, the need to write the history of a particular period, society, and even a person only arises when they have already gone so far into the past that we have little chance of finding many witnesses around us who retain any memory of them.

Unlike historical science, collective memory is not a detailed reconstruction of facts. Rather, “common memory” relies on central codes, places, archetypes, myths, festivals, and rituals that largely ignore historical differentiation. “It feeds on vague, mixed, global and inseparable memories, special or symbolic, which can transfer, disappear, cut and project in any way (...) and makes the memory sacred”, explains the French historian Pierre Nora [3].

It's very painful, emotionally charged, and exhausting, with accompanying shifts in collective memory that tend to reflect highly subjective memories and often distance themselves from the larger story. If individual experiences are not taken into account, or if they are too quickly transferred to more general experiences, then there is a risk that important opportunities for the process of social integration remain untapped.

The victims of gross violations of human rights, atrocities such as genocide, wars and ethnic cleansing are not easily forgotten or forgiven. However, historical memory is not just memory: when we preserve memory, it means that we remember well or do not allow ourselves to forget the horrors of the past.

When the preservation of historical memory is organized at the public and official level by state bodies, it often happens that people remember what they themselves have not experienced. Victims do not need such artificial reminders: they usually cannot forget the bitter experience. Official commemoration is usually organized so that other members of society and those not directly affected are informed about what happened and publicly acknowledge the suffering of the victims [4].

No human right is directly related to the preservation of historical memory, but the types of events that society deems necessary to remember are almost always associated with a fact that affects a certain group of people.

We remember wars mostly where civilians and combatants die. We remember the cases of ethnic cleansing not only because it was a systematic violation of human rights, but because these violations were directed against certain groups and without any justification, these groups were treated inhumanely [5].

After the war, the country's infrastructure is damaged, the provision of refugees fleeing ethnic cleansing exceeds the country's existing capacity, and the number of victims of the original tragedy is increasing.

When horrific events are given official status that society must never forget, then the survivors or victims of those events may experience some satisfaction in the public acknowledgment that what happened was wrong. They may also have some hope that they will no longer be seen as groups of individuals whose rights may again be violated. Unfortunately, many people in the world have not received even this small satisfaction: the number of terrible events that society does not remember far exceeds the number that we acknowledge and celebrate.

I remember Abkhazia, my home and the places where I grew up, and as long as I am there, my memory will exist, but when my generation and I are gone, our memory will disappear. Although I talk to my children a lot about Abkhazia, but I hear and what I experience are completely different perceptions, and that's why I think that it is necessary, as long as I and the representatives of the previous generation are still alive and carry this historical memory, to document it as much as possible.

The connection between historical memory and human rights is essential both for assessing the past and for the future. Tragic events caused by both human action and inaction deserve our remembrance and respect for past victims who died or were injured. But just as important is the forward-looking aspect of memory, which is too often pushed into the background when it comes to the need to acknowledge one's own role in the causes of these terrible events.

I think it is important to have a meeting place where displaced people can come at any time and share their pain and experiences with each other. Unfortunately, the topic of Abkhazia is slowly being forgotten, it is not often discussed in political circles, and if we, the representatives of this area, do not try to voice this topic and do nothing so that this topic is not forgotten, maybe we will share the same fate as the residents of other territories in the recent past.

The inclusion of the historical memory resource in the socio-cultural circulation is an important task. The leading role is assigned to cultural management bodies to perform the coordination function.

It is interesting to create an archive of oral history (records of memories of city and village residents, oral information); as well as a folk virtual family museum (an interactive resource that will make it possible to present materials on the history of families on the site; any family (with the help of specialists) will be able to create their own virtual exposition on this resource).

There was an initiative by individual groups of the Abkhazian population to create an interactive map where it would be possible to mark one's house and upload information about the people living in that house, which would enable virtually generations who were not born and raised in Abkhazia to have an idea of where and how they lived. their ancestors. This will be good especially if our return to Abkhazia does not happen in our lifetime and future generations will know about their property. But this activity needs some financing.

I hope that we will be able to return to Abkhazia and share our historical memory with future generations.

Conclusion. Historical memory is “the most important component of the self-identification of an individual, a social group and society as a whole, because the separation of animated images of the historical past is a type of memory that is of particular importance for the integration of social groups...”.

When the bearers of historical memory die, historical memory naturally changes, the facts of the past are re-examined and interpreted. Some details disappear forever, while others, on the contrary, expand, adding the influence of today's reality.

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ისტორიული მემსიერება, როგორც გზა ჩვენი იდენტობის
გადასარჩენად

მაია ღვინჯილია

მენეჯმენტის დოქტორი, საქართველოს ეროვნული
უნივერსიტეტი - სეუ, ასოცირებული პროფესორი
E-mail: m.gvinjilia@seu.edu.ge

*წარდგენილია ცხუმ-აფხაზეთის მეცნიერებათა აკადემიის I საერთაშორისო
კონფერენციის სამეცნიერო კომიტეტისა და გეოგრაფიისა და ტურიზმის
ინსტიტუტის მიერ*

აბსტრაქტი. “ისტორიული მემსიერება” არის პიროვნების, სოციალური
ჯგუფის და მთლიანად საზოგადოების თვითიდენტიფიკაციის ყველაზე
მნიშვნელოვანი კომპონენტი.

ისტორიულ მემსიერებას შეუძლია დაეხმაროს მათ, ვინც დაზარალდა
საშინელი წარსულით, იგრძნონ, რომ საზოგადოება მთლიანად აღიარებს მათ
ტკივილს, გმობს ქმედებებს, რამაც გამოიწვია ეს ტკივილი და უზრუნველყოს
გარკვეული გარანტია, რომ ასეთი ქმედებები არ განმეორდება მომავალში.

როდესაც ისტორიული მემსიერების მატარებლები გარდაიცვლებიან,
ისტორიული მემსიერება ბუნებრივად იცვლება, წარსულის ფაქტების ხელახლა
განხილვა და ინტერპრეტაცია ხდება. ზოგიერთი დეტალი სამუდამოდ ქრება, ზოგი
კი პირიქით, ფართოვდება და ემატება დღევანდელი რეალობის გავლენით.

ჩვენ გვახსოვს აფხაზეთი და ყველა მოგონება და სანამ მე ვიქნები, ჩემი
მემსიერება იარსებებს, მაგრამ როცა მე და ჩემი თაობა წავალთ, მემსიერებაც
გაქრება. მიუხედავად იმისა, რომ ჩემს შვილებს ბევრს ველაპარაკები აფხაზეთზე,
მაგრამ რაც მახსოვს და განვიცდი, სრულიად განსხვავებული აღქმას და ამიტომ
მიმაჩნია, რომ აუცილებელია, სანამ მე და წინა თაობის წარმომადგენლები ჯერ
კიდევ ცოცხლები ვართ და ამას ვატარებთ. ისტორიული მემსიერება, რაც შეიძლება
მეტი დოკუმენტირება.

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საკვანძო სიტყვები: ისტორიული მემსიერება, კოლექტიური მემსიერება, აფხაზეთი, იდენტობა.