12-2020

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Published in Cosmopolitanism in hard times (2020). Brill. pp. 221-232.
https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004438026_017

Unpacking Cosmopolitan Memory

Hiro Saito

Cosmopolitanism is here to stay despite rising nationalist sentiments and movements against the forces of globalization. To be sure, some groups are suspicious of, and even hostile to, the increasing numbers of foreigners and foreign products coming into their countries, but other groups accept and embrace more opportunities to interact with foreign others and cultures. Similarly, while policies and laws continue to take the nation- state as a primary frame of reference, they have also incorporated the idea of humanity to expand rights for both citizens and foreign residents. A globalizing world is full of these contradictory forces of cosmopolitanism and nationalism. In this sense, cosmopolitanism and nationalism form a central dialectic of globalization.

This dialectic also operates as a focal point for the construction of 'collective memory' today. Since the early 1800s, collective memory has been integral to the formation of national identity to the extent that Max Weber (1978: 903) defined the nation as a 'community of memories.' At the beginning of the 21st century, however, nationalism is no longer the only logic of collective memory. As Ulrich Beck, Daniel Levy, and Natan Sznaider (2009) argued, the logic of cosmopolitanism is now increasingly found in a variety of mnemonic practices, thanks to the globalization of human rights discourse and the growing sociocultural interactions across national borders.

But exactly what does 'cosmopolitan memory' (Levy and Sznaider, 2006) look like? Is it the same as 'transnational memory' (De Cesari and Rigney, 2014) or 'multidirectional memory' (Rothberg, 2009)? Does cosmopolitan memory facilitate the creation of 'global identity' (Smith, 1990) and 'global solidarity' (Misztal, 2010), and, if so, how? After all, how does emerging cosmopolitan memory interact with existing national memory (Saito and Wang, 2014), and how does this dialectic unfold in a globalizing world? These are important questions concerning the nature of cosmopolitan memory, but they have yet to be systematically answered, partly because there has been much confusion over the concept of collective memory itself (Bell, 2003) and partly because cosmopolitanism studies is still a relatively new field that needs further conceptual refinement and empirical research (Delanty, 2012).

In this brief chapter, then, I prepare the ground for answering the important questions about cosmopolitan memory in three steps. To begin with, I elaborate on the concept of collective memory in terms of how mnemonic practices, especially commemorations, articulate mnemonic schemas and objects as the basis of collective autobiography vis- à- vis group identity. Given this clearer conceptualization of collective memory, I proceed to unpack the working of cosmopolitan memory— how it comes about and how it differs from, as well as overlaps with, transnational and multidirectional memories. Finally, I illuminate the dialectic of cosmopolitanism and nationalism in terms of the concept of 'institutional contradiction' (Friedland and Alford, 1991) and illustrate how this dialectic shapes the dynamics of collective memory in a globalizing world.

1 What is 'Collective Memory'?

To have 'memory' of a past event, people have to experience it themselves. Learning of an event secondhand, individuals acquire knowledge, but not memory. Yet, when researchers speak of 'collective memory,' they routinely include as agents of memory those who do not have firsthand experience (Halbwachs, 1992; Assmann, 1995). But in what sense can these agents be said to have memory of a past event of which they lack firsthand experience? This conceptual clarification is worthwhile because more than a few researchers have used collective memory metaphorically as a category of analysis, obscuring its underlying causal mechanisms (Bell, 2003).

Simply put, collective memory emerges when those without firsthand experience of a past event identify with those who have such an experience, establishing both sets of actors as sharing membership in the same group.

The creation of this affect-l aden, first- person orientation to the past is at the crux of commemoration, one of the emotionally most powerful mnemonic practices available in society (Saito, 2018). Commemoration typically positions those who have firsthand experience center stage, whether in person or as images and symbols. This setup tends to lead those who lack firsthand experience to fix their attention on those with firsthand experience and induce the former to experience a past event vicariously from the imaginary first-person perspective of the latter. Commemoration also structures this vicarious experience in terms of mnemonic schemas—patterns of feeling and thinking about an event— to be shared by those without firsthand experience. In short, the concept of collective memory is meant to capture the misrecognition of secondhand knowledge as living memory by virtue of identifications on the part of those who lack firsthand experience.

Put another way, just as autobiographical memory is crucial to generating and maintaining personal identity, collective memory provides people with autobiographical narratives of their purportedly shared past as the basis of their group identity. People are then induced to accept such narratives as authentic through mnemonic practices like commemoration that mobilize strong emotion. This is why social life is marked by an array of commemorations organized around anniversaries— the existence of any social group, be it a family, a company, or a nation, depends on constant reaffirmation of its collective autobiography, homogenizing mnemonic schemes among group members.

However, mnemonic schemas constitute only one dimension of collective memory. Mnemonic schemas can be stabilized and shared across time and space only when they are accompanied by mnemonic objects that include, but are not limited to, archives, memorials, museum exhibits, and history textbooks (Nora, 1989). In fact, the built environment as a whole can be seen as a gigantic set of multiple mnemonic objects enveloping people. Creatively rethinking the phrase ‘out of sight, out of mind’ as ‘out of site, out of mind’ nicely captures this constitutive role of mnemonic objects in the construction of collective memory. In this regard, collective memory is best understood as being ‘distributed’ partly in the internal world of mnemonic schemas and partly in the external world of mnemonic objects (Olick, 1999; Wertsch, 2002). Collective memory is then reproduced when mnemonic practices articulate the same sets of schemas and objects, whereas it is destabilized and even transformed when mnemonic practices rearticulate schemas and objects newly and differently.

Since the early 1800s, this process of production, reproduction, and transformation of collective memory has been dominated by the logic of nationalism to the extent that much of collective memory studies assumed the nation as a unit of analysis (Olick, 2003). By using the nationalist logic of collective memory, people focused on what happened to their conationals, whether heroes or victims, without sufficient regard for foreign others. This exclusive focus on conationals has manifested most clearly in the collective memory of an armed conflict, which often elevates fallen soldiers to immortal heroes of the nation while disregarding what these soldiers might have done to foreign others— the moment when one’s own nation becomes sacred above all else, as Benedict Anderson (1991) pointed out. Moreover, nationalism excludes foreign others from commemoration in another sense: the principle of national sovereignty prohibits foreign others from participating in the process of shaping the content of commemoration. When a government plans a memorial ceremony for war dead at a national cemetery, for example, it typically does not allow foreign governments to influence the content of the ceremony. Thus, given the dominance of nationalism in both societies and social sciences (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002), collective memory has been often equated with national memory.

2 Which Collective Memory is ‘Cosmopolitan’?

Nevertheless, nationalism is no longer the only logic of collective memory available today. As Ulrich Beck and his colleagues (Beck, Levy, and Sznaider, 2009; Levy and Sznaider, 2006, 2010) argued, cosmopolitanism, an orientation of openness to foreign others and cultures, is increasingly institutionalized in a variety of mnemonic practices in the contemporary world, thanks to the globalization of human rights discourse and the growing sociocultural interactions across national borders. Cosmopolitanism here presents an alternative logic of feeling and thinking that takes humanity, rather than nationality, as a primary frame of collective memory. Drawing on the logic of cosmopolitanism, people remember what happened to foreign others as members of humanity, but they also invite those others to contribute to shaping the content of collective memory. As Beck put it, cosmopolitan memory involves acknowledging the history (and the memories) of the ‘other’ and integrating them into one’s own history, … where the national monologues of victimization that are celebrated as national memory are systematically replaced by transnational forms and forums of memory and dialogue, which also enable the innermost aspects of the national realm—t he founding of myths— to be opened up to and for one another.

Cosmopolitanism thus allows people to extend identifications beyond national borders and engage in transformative dialogues with foreign others, steering their collective autobiographies away from the logic of nationalism.

To be sure, 'cosmopolitan memory' is an important conceptual innovation capable of sensitizing researchers to the changing nature of collective memory in a globalizing world; however, it has also created some conceptual confusion since researchers in collective memory studies began to use similar concepts (Assmann and Conrad, 2010). For example, some researchers introduced the concept of 'transnational memory' (Erll, 2010; De Cesari and Rigney, 2014) to understand how and why memories travel across countries and regions, whereas others developed the concept of 'multidirectional memory' (Rothberg, 2009) to illuminate how the globalization of human rights discourse allows people to connect memories of multiple events from different times and places. But how do transnational and multidirectional memories differ from, and overlap with, cosmopolitan memory?

I argue that this conceptual confusion is actually productive because it presents an opportunity to elaborate exactly what is distinct about cosmopolitan memory vis- à- vis similar concepts. Here, the case of Holocaust remembrance, often seen as a quintessential example of cosmopolitan memory (e.g., Levy and Sznaider, 2006, 2010), offers a useful point of departure. Suppose only people in Israel remember the Holocaust as an important event for the Jewish nation. This would be a case of national memory of the Holocaust. But, if people in other countries begin to remember the Holocaust as something relevant to them as members of humanity, collective memory of the Holocaust will become cosmopolitan. In other words, the degree of cosmopolitanness of collective memory can vary on the transnational dimension— the more nationalities remember the past event, the more cosmopolitan its memory becomes (see x- axis in Figure 15.1). Along this transnational dimension, memory of a single past event like the Holocaust can become 'singularly cosmopolitan.'

The transnational dimension alone, however, cannot capture all variants of cosmopolitan memory because transnational and cosmopolitan memories are not identical. Suppose, this time, only people in Israel remember the Holocaust, but they remember it in conjunction with slavery, genocides, and other episodes of large- scale violence that happened around the world. Their collective memory exists within national borders, but it encompasses victims of multiple past events irrespective of their nationalities. I propose to call such collective memory 'cosmopolitanized national memory': even though this memory is still centered on conationals, it is also extended with openness to and inclusion of foreign others. In this regard, the degree of cosmopolitanness of collective memory varies on the multidirectional dimension—t he more nationalities are remembered, the more cosmopolitan this act of remembering becomes (see y- axis in Figure 15.1).

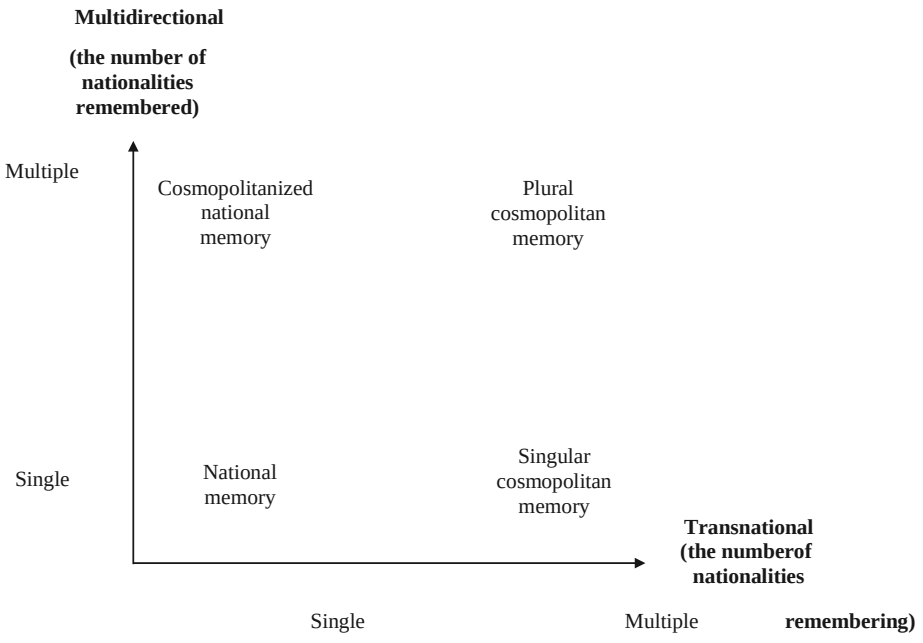

Figure 15.1 The variants of cosmopolitan memory

Such conceptual formalization of 'cosmopolitan memory' is anything but a mere intellectual exercise, for it effectively facilitates empirical investigation. Take, for example, collective memory of the atomic bombing of

Hiroshima (Saito, 2015). On the one hand, as more and more people outside Japan came to learn the damages of the atomic bombing against the backdrop of the worldwide antinuclear movement in the 1950s, collective memory of the event became more cosmopolitan on the transnational dimension, similar to the aforementioned 'singular cosmopolitan memory' of the Holocaust. On the other hand, as more and more people in Japan began to remember victims of the atomic bombing in conjunction with victims of other armed conflicts— eventually including Asian victims of Japan's own past aggression—t he Japanese memory of the event became more cosmopolitan on the multidirectional dimension in the sense of 'cosmopolitanized national memory.'

Moreover, this conceptual formalization helps identify empirical cases where maximal transnationality combines with maximal multidirectionality to produce the highest degree of cosmopolitanness in collective memory, that is, 'plural cosmopolitan memory,' wherein people around the world remember multiple past events as relevant to their common humanity. Construction of such 'truly' cosmopolitan memory has been promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Currently, UNESCO runs the World Heritage site program. Launched in 1972, the program aims to preserve natural and cultural sites around the world as shared heritage for humanity as a whole. While cultural sites consist mostly of ancient castles, temples, and monuments, they also include sites related to slavery, the Holocaust, the atomic bombing, and other forms of extreme human suffering. UNESCO also established the Memory of the World Programme in 1992 to protect historic documents, relics, and works of art as focal points for remembering world history. This program also includes projects to preserve historical documents related to negative aspects of world history, such as the Holocaust. These two UNESCO programs encourage people around the world to remember various events that happened to foreign others as fellow human beings—hence their potential to produce plural cosmopolitan memory as the basis of 'global solidarity' and 'global identity' (Misztal, 2010).

3 What is the Relationship between Cosmopolitan and National Memories?

As Anthony Smith (1990: 180) recognized, however, 'The central difficulty in any project to construct a global identity and hence a global culture, is that collective identity, like imagery and culture, is always historically specific because it is based on shared memories and a sense of continuity between generations.' Even if people around the world begin to remember the same set of past events as relevant to their common humanity according to the UNESCO programs, they will also continue to have memories of other past events that are relevant to their national identities. This is why the most common form of cosmopolitan memory today is likely to be 'cosmopolitanized national memory,' wherein people remember past events constitutive of their national identity together with similar events that happened to foreign others— in the sense that Holocaust memory 'does not replace national collective memories but exist as their horizon' (Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 13). By the same token, 'singular cosmopolitan memory' is likely to have significant regional variations: European countries are more likely to remember the Holocaust than countries in other regions, and even those European countries remember the Holocaust very differently given their diverse national histories (Chirot, Shin, and Sneider, 2014).

Thus, the relationship between cosmopolitan and national memories is not zero- sum but symbiotic, as Ulrich Beck and Natan Sznaider (2006: 20) observed '[c] osmopolitanism does not only negate nationalism but also presupposes it.' While United Nations (UN) organizations promote human rights, national governments are still responsible for implementing them in education systems and other societal institutions (Meyer, 2000). Similarly, even though membership in humanity is emphasized, national citizenship continues to structure access to socioeconomic resources and political rights (Soysal, 1994). This is why researchers need to keep in mind that 'even in a so- called post- national age, the "national" as a framework for identity and memory-making is still a powerful one' (De Cesari and Rigney, 2014: 19).

Since both cosmopolitanism and nationalism are legitimated as logics of collective memory, this creates an 'institutional contradiction,' wherein contradictory but equally legitimate logics clash with each other (Friedland and Alford, 1991). This institutional contradiction serves as a focal point of political struggles for the legitimate memory, and these struggles are likely to be in tense and protracted because all sides, subscribing to cosmopolitanism and nationalism differently, have reasonable claims to legitimacy (Saito and Wang, 2014). Take, for example, the so- called history problem in East Asia, where Japan is embroiled in intense controversies with South Korea and China over how to commemorate the Asia-P acific War that ended in 1945 (Saito, 2016). To name but a few, points of contention include interpretations of the Tokyo War Crimes Trial, apologies and compensation for foreign victims of Japan's past aggression, prime ministers' visits to the

Yasukuni Shrine, and history textbooks.[1] In essence, the history problem in East Asia is a clash of incompatible national memories in Japan, South Korea, and China— and even the United States— that developed transnational feedback loops reinforcing nationalism in each country involved (Yoneyama, 2016), precisely when the human rights discourse, associated with cosmopolitanism, came to be increasingly institutionalized around the world. The East Asian case thus demonstrates the open- ended interplay between cosmopolitan and national memories in a globalizing world.

Put another way, how collective memory of a past event maps onto the transnational and multidirectional dimensions (Figure 15.1) depends fundamentally on political struggles among relevant actors. Collective memory of the atomic bombing, for example, did not become as cosmopolitan as that of the Holocaust despite the worldwide antinuclear movement in the 1950s, partly because the United States, one of the superpowers during the Cold War, suppressed it (Levy and Sznaider, 2006: 40). In turn, Japanese memory of the atomic bombing came to be considerably cosmopolitanized in the early 1990s because the transnational network of non- governmental organizations (NGOs) inside and outside Japan advocated for former 'comfort women' and other victims of Japan's past aggression (Saito, 2015).[2] The politics of collective memory thus simultaneously divides and unites relevant actors: although po litical struggles may lead one group of actors to dominate others to prevent the emergence of cosmopolitan memory, it may also lead previously disparate groups to form a coalition that will expand the scope of collective memory and identity in a cosmopolitan direction.

In short, the dialectic of cosmopolitanism and nationalism reinforces the dual nature of collective memory as a focal point of both group solidarity and intergroup conflict on an increasingly global scale. On the one hand, the growing transnational circulation of collective memories vis- à- vis the globalization of human rights discourse allows people to remember all kinds of victims equally within the horizon of common humanity to express global solidarity and forge global identity. On the other hand, such transnational collaboration of collective memories, according to the cosmopolitan logic, will not eliminate competition between national memories. In fact, the cosmopolitan logic itself can reinforce international competition of memories when it is appropriated by nationalists demanding their national tragedies be remembered by people of other nationalities (Nakano, 2018). And yet such competition can also facilitate the growth of cosmopolitan memory because it publicizes previously little-k nown past events to global audiences and hence expands the coverage of nationalities to be remembered worldwide. Thus, collective memories in a globalizing world will continue to evolve in a complex manner, revolving around the institutional contradiction between cosmopolitanism and nationalism.

4 Conclusion

In this brief chapter, I have unpacked the concept of cosmopolitan memory to lay the groundwork for fully understanding the changing nature of collective memory in the contemporary world. First, I have cleared up some confusion over the concept of collective memory— this conceptual clarification is a necessary first step for identifying which collective memory is cosmopolitan. Specifically, I have proposed conceptualizing collective memory as a set of mnemonic schemas and objects that articulates a collective autobiography, which in turn serves as the basis of group identity among people with and without firsthand experience of past events. Then, I have proceeded to theorize how and why some collective memories become cosmopolitan in three different ways— singular cosmopolitan memory, cosmopolitanized cosmopolitan memory, and plural cosmopolitan memory— depending on where these memories map onto the dimensions of transnationality and multidirectionality. Such theorization of cosmopolitan memory is important because it helps empirically identify variants of cosmopolitan memory in the world. Finally, I have illustrated how cosmopolitan and national memories interact with each other, given that both cosmopolitanism and nationalism are legitimated to constitute an institutional contradiction as a focal point for both collaboration and competition of collective

[1] Prior to the end of the Asia- Pacific War, the Yasukuni Shrine had been managed by the government to enshrine war dead. Although it lost government sponsorship after the war, it has remained the most important site of Japan's nationalist commemoration. Especially because Yasukuni enshrines fourteen wartime leaders who had been prosecuted as Class A war criminals at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, the governments and people in South Korea and China regard Japanese prime ministers' visits to the shrine as an unrepentant justification of Japan's past aggression.

[2] 'Comfort women' were those who had provided 'sexual services' to the Japanese military during the Asia- Pacific War. Comfort women had been recruited from both Japan and its colonies, such as Korea and Taiwan. Some women had agreed to work at 'comfort stations,' whereas others had been forced by deception or coercion. After Japan had started war with the Allied powers in December 1941 and occupied Southeast Asia, the military had increased its involvement in recruitment, with methods that became increasingly coercive.

memories across national borders. In this sense, cosmopolitanism and nationalism form an untrancendable dialectic of collective memory in a globalizing world.

In conclusion, I suggest two lines of further research for fully understanding the working of cosmopolitan memory. The first pertains to cross-n ational and cross- regional comparisons, because cosmopolitan memory is fundamentally perspectival, as indicated by the pioneering case studies of the cosmopolitanization of Holocaust memory (Levy and Sznaider, 2006, 2010; Beck, Levy, and Sznaider, 2009). In effect, this research has focused on North American and Western European perspectives on the Holocaust—a nd more generally, the field of collective memory studies itself is 'West- centric' (Olick, Sierp, and Wüstenberg, 2017). The Holocaust, however, looks very different from African, Latin American, and Asian perspectives (Rothberg, 2009). Similarly, past events that drive the cosmopolitanization of national memories differ across countries—the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the case of Japan, the tragedy of 'comfort women' in the case of South Korea, and so on (Saito, 2016). Given the conceptual unpacking of cosmopolitan memory in this chapter, cross- national and cross-r egional comparisons will shed light on a wide variety of cosmopolitan memories that are emerging around the world today.

In addition, the second line of further research can critically probe into the relationship between cosmopolitan memory and historical justice. This is not only because justice by definition presupposes memory as well as other documentations of past wrongs, but also because the globalization of human rights discourse has prompted more and more people around the world to confront historical injustices of slavery, colonialism, and other legacies of violence that happened on a transnational scale (Neumann and Thompson, 2015), including the tragedy of 'comfort women.' Transnational dialogues on these historical injustices, however, are often obstructed by nationalist memories that discount the suffering of foreign others. In this regard, the pursuit of historical justice on a transnational scale is coterminous with the problem of cosmopolitan memory: how to remember what happened to foreign others. Thus, further research on cosmopolitan memory has the potential to generate important implications for the larger debate on how to obtain historical justice in a globalizing world.

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