Samuel Byrskog / Raimo Hakola / Jutta Maria Jokiranta (eds.)

Social Memory and Social Identity in the Study of Early Judaism and Early Christianity

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Introduction

During recent years, social memory and social identity perspectives have been increasingly used in the study of ancient Jewish and Christian sources. The use of these concepts is a part of a larger trend that has resulted in the application of various interdisciplinary methodologies to explain those diverse and complex sociological, psychological or cognitive processes that might explain early Judaism or Christianity as historical phenomena or certain aspects of them in the surviving ancient literary material. As such, it is not surprising that scholars have found the concepts of social or collective memory and social identity attractive. These concepts recapitulate something that has been on the agenda of Biblical and cognate studies for a long time. Such late Second Temple sources as the Dead Sea Scrolls or early Christian writings present various illustrations of how past events became part of mnemonic processes and were reinterpreted for contemporary purposes. In a similar way, scholars have studied social ramifications of these sources that give voice to different groups by expressing their collective convictions and shared view of the world. While scholars have become more and more cautious in reading ancient sources as direct reflections of sociohistorical situations of specific communities, it is still a legitimate and meaningful objective to examine in what ways these sources participate in the processes of collective recollection and commemoration and in this way contribute to the construction and maintenance of distinctive social identities.

The recent interest in social memory and social identity thus continues the long tradition of historical-critical Biblical studies in that the same methods that are prominent in the study of other historical sources or corresponding social and cultural phenomena are applied to Biblical and related material. The articles in this collection demonstrate the benefits of these kinds of interdisciplinary experiments but they also discuss potential pitfalls and problems that have emerged when modern theories are applied to ancient material.

The interest in social memory and social identity represent social-scientific criticism that has received an established and recognised position in the field of Biblical studies from 1970's onwards.[1] Social-scientific criticism originally

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1 For example, see A.J. Blasi/J. Duhaime/P.-A. Turcotte (ed.), *Handbook of Early Christianity : Social Science Approaches* (Walnut Creek, California, AltaMira Press, 2002); W. Stegemann/R.E. De-

developed as a conscious reaction against mainstream Biblical scholarship that was seen to focus one-sidedly on theological beliefs and influential individual personalities. Roughly speaking, Biblical scholars interested in social topics have represented two types of methodological approaches: some scholars have focused on the description of ancient social history and social contexts of written source material, while others have applied more specific sociological and anthropological models and theories. An important discussion has emerged on the benefits of each of these approaches among scholars.[2] There can be no question that both approaches should be included in the study of social and collective memory and social identities in the ancient world. The ways in which various Jewish and Christian groups and individuals negotiated mnemonically and used collective memory to foster their social identities were always deeply bound on specific sociohistorical realities, which means that the study of memory and identity processes cannot succeed without accurate and comprehensive information of the surrounding social world. Then again, modern theories of corresponding social processes can clarify the study of ancient society and sources because these theories provide scholars analytical tools to understand and compare basic human processes reflected in their source material.[3] The application of theoretical concepts like social and collective memory or social identity does not mean that specific aspects of each particular culture and sociohistorical context are ignored, but these notions may help in recognising cross-cultural processes behind specific sociohistorical situations.[4]

Maris (ed.), *Alte Texte in neuen Kontexten: Wo Steht die sozialwissenschaftliche Bibelexegese?* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2015).

2 See P.F. Esler (ed.), *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* (London: Routledge, 1995); idem, "Models in New Testament Interpretation: A Reply to David Horrell", *JSNT* 78 (2000) 107–13; D.G. Horrell, "Models and Methods in Social-Scientific Interpretation: A Response to Philip Esler", *JSNT* 78 (2000) 83–105; P. Luomanen/I. Pyysiäinen/R. Uro, "Introduction: Social and Cognitive Perspectives in the Study of Christian Origins and Early Judaism", in P. Luomanen/I. Pyysiäinen/R. Uro (ed.), *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contributions from Cognitive and Social Science* (BibInt Series 89; Leiden: Brill, 2007) 1–33, on pp. 18–20; P. Luomanen, "Social-Scientific Modeling in Biblical and Related Studies", *Perspectives on Science* 21 (2013) 202–220.

3 Cf. Luomanen et al., "Introduction", 20: "In the case of social identity approach, it seems clear that its usability is at least partly based on the fact that modern observations about basic human processes of social categorization find responsive data in the text because the writers of the texts were subject to same constraints of perception as we are."

4 Cf. N. Hopkins/S. Reicher, "Identity, Culture and Contestation: Social Identity as Cross-Cultural Theory", *Psychological Studies* 56 (2011) 36–43.

Social and Collective Memory

The modern study of memory as a social construction goes back to the 1920s. With the publication of *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* in 1925,[5] the French sociologist and philosopher Maurice Halbwachs initiated a line of thought that stressed the collective memory of societies and groups, insisting that all memory depends upon the social frameworks within which it is situated. As a product of social change, memory is always in process and produces ever-changing representations of the past. Halbwachs died in Buchenwald in 1945. Five years later his sister Jeanne Alexandre published *La mémoire collective* on the basis of manuscripts found among his papers.[6] The two studies constitute the classics for the study of social and collective memory. Halbwachs clarified in his second study that he distinguished between autobiographical memory, historical memory (the past to which we have no "organic" relation), and collective memory (the past forming our realities), and pointed out that individuals always remember as members of groups, opening up a long scholarly discussion of what is sometimes labelled as social and sometimes as collective memory.

Various theoretical perspectives have modified Halbwachs' emphasis on the importance of the social framework. Barry Schwartz, who is a sociologist and leading specialist on social memory, is one of the most influential critics of Halbwachs and expresses criticism against his "pejorative conception of collective memory".[7] While important in the field of collectivistic notions of memory, Halbwachs tended, according to Schwartz, to simplify both the temporal notion of memory in favour of its orientation to the present as well as the interaction between individual and collective memories, to the extent that individual recollections almost always operated within the framework of collective memory. Several of the contributions of the present volume discuss the temporality of memory and the possibility of identifying specific cognitive aspects of memory.

Halbwachs was careful to keep his concept of collective memory apart from the realm of traditions and transmissions across generations. Memory was communication and social interaction. Another recent influential avenue which takes into account the temporal notion of memory focuses on its cultural dimension. Without replacing the concept of collective memory, Jan Assmann, a German Egyptologist, divides it into communicative memory and cultural memory and distinguishes between collective memory and cultural

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5 M. Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, new ed. 1952).

6 M. Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).

7 B. Schwartz, "Christian Origins: Historical Truth and Social Memory", in A. Kirk/T. Thatcher (ed.), *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity* (SBLSS 52; Atlanta: SBL, 2005) 43–56, on p. 49.

memory as two different *modi memorandi*.[8] The key difference between Halbwachs' and Assmann's theories lies in the function attributed to past events when no one is alive to tell the tale from her/his own experience. Assmann argues that when all eyewitnesses have vanished, the socially conditioned collective memory will change and the communicative memory transforms itself into cultural memory.

Today there is a bewildering array of different theories of social or collective memory. They represent, it has been said, a nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, and centreless enterprise.[9] There is no single theory, and handbooks present different avenues.[10] In her book *Theories of Social Remembering*, the sociologist Barbara Misztal includes a chapter entitled "The dynamics of memory approach: memory as a process of negotiation" and discusses the active mediation of temporal meanings of the past, locating memory in the space between an imposed ideology of the present and the possibility of an alternative way of understanding the past.[11] This approach, in short, "stresses the presence of the past in the present through psychological, social, linguistic and political processes".[12] This might be said to represent the central core features of today's discussion of social and collective memory.

The vital component in any such theory is the mnemonic community. Such a community maintains traditions and teaches new generations what to remember and forget through socialization, the monitoring of mnemonically important persons in a group, and through controlling what and how to remember. Language – oral and written – makes possible certain linguistic locations of memory and allows memory to pass from one person to another, providing a mnemonic transitivity in terms of transmitted traditions. In this way, the mnemonic community integrates different personal pasts into a single common past that all members eventually might come to remember collectively. Such mnemonic synchronization, to use an expression from the cognitive sociologist Eviathar Zerubavel,[13] takes place in joint acts of remembrance. Remembering is thus a kind of control system regulated by social rules of remembrance. Being socialized into a community means to be

8 J. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: C. H. Beck, 1992).

9 J.K. Olick/J. Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices", *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998) 105–40. For new avenues in Cognitive Science of Religion, see Petri Luomanen, "How Religions Remember: Memory Theories in Biblical Studies and in the Cognitive Study of Religion", in I. Czachesz/R. Uro (ed.), *Mind, Morality, and Magic: Cognitive Science Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Durham: Acumen, 2013) 24–42.

10 Cf. James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

11 B.A. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003) 67–74.

12 Misztal, *Theories*, 70.

13 E. Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003).

taught socially what to remember and what to forget and to be given the plot structures according to which the past is narrated.

During the last decade, the notion of social and collective memory has become a prominent conceptual framework for understanding the development of the Jesus tradition. The editors of the multi-authored volume *Memory, Tradition, and Text* from 2005 recognize that "social memory theory presents a number of far-reaching implications for the study of the Gospel traditions, the composition history of the Gospels, and the quest for the historical Jesus".[14] To this could be added the vast concept of how the early Christians thought of themselves, their social identity. From the perspective of social memory, it becomes essential to look closely into the dynamics involved as they struggled to find their identity in relation to the past history that they cherished and performed. Social memory is intrinsically linked to questions of identity and challenges scholars to seek for a clearer conception as to how each Gospel narrative reflects the interaction with the social construction of the past.

Social Identity Approach

The social identity theory was first developed by social psychologist Henri Tajfel and his colleagues in Great Britain in the late 1960s and early 1970s and it was later developed into a more general explanation of the processes connected to group formation in the so-called self-categorization theory. These two theories have become known as the social identity approach, which continues to be developed and applied to new phenomena in the field of social psychology.[15] The theory was originally developed to explain intergroup discrimination and it addressed such questions as "Why do people in groups discriminate against each other?" One of the key ideas behind the social identity theory was formulated by Tajfel as the "minimal group paradigm".[16] In a series of laboratory experiments Tajfel and his colleagues found out that, even in minimal groups whose members do not know each other, people tend to favor ingroup members over outgroup members. These findings challenged

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14 A. Kirk/T. Thatcher, "Jesus Tradition as Social Memory", in Kirk/Thatcher (ed.), *Memory, Tradition, and Text: Uses of the Past in Early Christianity* (SBLSS 52; Atlanta: SBL, 2005) 25–42, on p. 39.

15 For general introductions to social identity approach, see S. Reicher/R. Spears/ S.A. Haslam, "The Social Identity Approach in Social Psychology", in M. Wetherell/ C.T. Mohanty (ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Identities* (London: Sage Publications, 2010), 45–62; R. Jenkins, *Social Identity* (4th Edition; London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

16 For minimal groups, see H. Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 33–238 and 268–76; H. Tajfel/J.C. Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict", in W.G. Austin/S. Worchel (ed.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1979) 33–47, on pp. 38–40.

earlier social psychological theories that had claimed that ingroup favoritism and intergroup conflicts arise only if groups are in competition with each other for limited and desired resources.[17] Another basic observation of the social identity theory is that human social behavior varies along the "interpersonal and intergroup continuum".[18] At the interpersonal extreme, social encounters are determined by personal relationships between individuals while at the intergroup extreme, membership in different social groups determines human behavior. The point of this observation is that various cognitive, emotional and motivational processes connected to intergroup relations cannot be seen as an extension of interpersonal relations and cannot be explained simply in terms of personal psychology. Tajfel summarized his theoretical findings in the formulation of the concept of social identity. Social identity is understood as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [sic] knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership."[19]

The distinction between personal and social identity was further clarified by the self-categorization theory developed in particular by John Turner and his colleagues.[20] The self-categorization theory is based on the observation that social categorization is a fundamental aspect of group behavior. According to this theory, "the central hypothesis for group behavior is that, as shared social identity becomes salient, individual self-perception tends to become depersonalized."[21] As a result, people experience themselves and other members in the group not as differentiated individuals but as approximating common characteristics of their group. According to the social identity approach, the sense of sameness among fellow group members and social cohesion are not a precondition for a shared social identity but rather its outcome which enables a disparate collective of people to agree on their shared values and objectives and to function as a cohesive social force.

Many basic concepts in the social identity approach are based on various laboratory experiments which naturally raises the question whether and to what extent these concepts are applicable to different real-life groups in varying cultural, historical and social contexts. However, many social identity theorists have concluded that it is not enough to theorise about general social psychological processes in the abstract without examining how these

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17 This was the basic claim in the so-called realistic conflict theory, see M. Sherif, *Group Conflict and Cooperation: Their Social Psychology* (London: Routledge, 1966).

18 Cf. Tajfel, *Human Groups*, 228–53.

19 Tajfel, *Human Group*s, 255

20 J. Turner, *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987); idem, "Some Current Issues in Research on Social Identity and Self-Categorization Theories," in N. Ellemers/R. Spears/B. Doosje (ed.), *Social Identity: Context, Commitment, Content* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 6–34.

21 Turner, "Some Current Issues", 12.

processes manifest themselves within specific contexts. In recent years, the social identity approach has increasingly been applied to real historical and actual intergroup situations in the study of nationalism, leadership, or various ethnic conflicts.[22] The relevance of the social identity approach for explaining historical intergroup processes has also been demonstrated in various applications of this approach to early Jewish and Christian sources.[23] It is interesting for the study of Biblical and related literature that many social psychological studies have recently stressed the importance of history for actual social identities and seen how various claims for historical continuity are tightly connected to the construction of collective identities.[24] This suggests that the applications of social or collective memory and social identity to early Jewish and Christian sources have some shared interests as also the articles in this collection demonstrate.

The Articles of the Book

Samuel Byrskog takes Paul Ricoeur's discussion of personal versus collective memory as a point of departure in his "Philosophical Aspects on Memory: Aristotle, Augustine and Bultmann". Byrskog uses the ancient philosophical reflections by Aristotle and Augustine as an avenue to bridge the gap between studies of cognitive memory and studies of social or collective memory and to ponder the hermeneutical dimension of history and time visible in Rudolf Bultmann's work. In order to grasp the hermeneutical dimensions of memory through ancient philosophy, Byrskog focuses on how Aristotle and Augustine,

22 Cf. S. Reicher/N. Hopkins, *Self and Nation: Categorization, Contestation and Moblization* (London: Sage Publications, 2001); B. Doosje/ N.R. Branscombe, N.R. Branscombe, "Attributions for the Negative Historical Actions of a Group", *European Journal of Social Psychology* 33 (2003) 235–48; M.J.A. Wohl/N.R. Branscombe, "Remembering Historical Victimization: Collective Guilt for Current Ingroup Transgressions", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94 (2008) 988–1006; S.A. Haslam/S.D. Reicher/M.J. Platlow, *The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power* (Hove and New York: Psychology Press, 2011).
23 P.F. Esler, *Galatians* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 40–57; idem, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 19–39; P. Luomanen, "The Sociology of Knowledge, the Social Identity Approach and the Cognitive Science of Religion", in P. Luomanen/I. Pyysiäinen/R. Uro (ed.), *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contributions from Cognitive and Social Science* (BibInt Series 89; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 199–229; J. Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran* Movement (STDJ 105; Leiden: Brill, 2013); J.B. Tucker/C.A. Baker (ed.), *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); R. Hakola, *Reconsidering Johannine Christianity: A Social Identity Approach* (New York and London: Routledge, 2015).
24 Cf. Cf. S. Reicher/N. Hopkins, *Self and Nation*, 131–51; S. Reicher, "Making a Past Fit for the Future: The Political Dimensions of Historical Continuity", in F. Sani (ed.), *Self Continuity: Individual and Collective Perspectives* (New York: Psychology Press, 2008) 145–58; Haslam/Reicher/Platlow, *The New Psychology*, 147–55.

each in their own specific way, comment on the individuality of memory, its relation to time and narrative, its place in the present and evasive "now", and on its dependence on mental images.

To the ancients, Byrskog argues, memory was philosophically part of the individual and her/his experiences and thoughts. Memory also implied an understanding of time and narrative. It was intrinsically temporal and as such linked to a structure of temporal existence that reached language in narrativity, be that by the linking of events (Aristotle) or by basing memory on autobiography (Augustine). Time and narrative are, furthermore, synchronized in the evasive "now", which is the essence of temporal existence and the crucial moment when the past can be narratively ordered or felt to be part of a narrative flow. This narrative configuration of the past in the present, finally, designs the past according to mnemonic pictures and images and thus reconfigures the past through cognitive processes that interact with the process of recall and the individual's capacity to capture the past in images. In all this, Byrskog detects significant hermeneutical implications similar to Bultmann's interest in history and time and his idea that the absent past becomes existentially present through the invention of historical myths, urging today's scholars of the historical Jesus to take seriously the existential notions that were intrinsic to memory and intruded into the transmission process.

In his "The Formation of the Synoptic Tradition: Cognitive and Cultural Memory Approaches to an Old Problem", Alan Kirk criticizes in a similar vein the form-critical way of separating the "individual" and the "psychological" from the "social" and "cultural" and the distinction between individual "reminiscences" and the sociological forces of the *Sitz im Leben.* Focusing on memory as a neurobiological phenomenon, Kirk seeks to find a link between cognitive and social sciences in the field of memory and to clarify theoretically how the synoptic tradition emerges at the interface of the two.

Culture penetrates, according to Kirk, to the neural encoding of memories. These memories are filtered through cognitive schemas that make them intelligible and, when similar to each other, form the generic memory. It is this cognitive and cultural interface of schematic encoding that is implicated in the formation of tradition and leads to the variability as well as the stability of memories. When communicated socially, such memories are conformed to formulaic and narrative patterns drawn from the genres of the ambient culture. Commemorative remembering relates to specific group strategies employed to subsume individual contributions of memory into shared representations interacting with wider cultural patterns. Tradition artifacts thus become functions of cultural symbols. Through cognitive-cultural coupling, tradition emerges as meaning-laden externalisation of cognitive memory processes and cycles back into cognition with the result of enduring modifications to one's cognitive apparatus, to the extent that tradition can be labelled cybernetic memory. The cognitive-cultural coupling gives an

explanation to the absence of individual eyewitness memories in the synoptic tradition while at the same time confirming that memory was a principal factor in the origin of tradition. As an autonomous cognitive system, loosened from originating historical contexts and extended by means of oral and written media and culturally relevant genres, the synoptic tradition cannot be reduced to homeostatic functions of sociological processes but is a paradigm of the cognitive-cultural interface.

Sandra Huebenthal argues in her "Reading the Gospel of Mark as Collective Memory" that memory studies have sometimes been used in the study of the New Testament to support the historical reliability of the New Testament Gospels as eyewitness testimonies. However, these interpretations do not pay due attention to various studies that have emphasised the constructive nature of collective memory. Already according to Maurice Halbwachs, memory is not a storehouse that preserves the past as such because individuals locate their memories in a social framework that directs the interpretation and communication of their memories.

In addition to Halbwachs' pivotal insights, Huebenthal uses, for example, Jan and Aleida Assman's notion of cultural memory in order to investigate how various recollections of Jesus are incorporated into Mark's narrative that can be regarded as a textual externalisation of collective memory. Huebenthal demonstrates that while the Markan narrator uses direct narrative commentary quite sparingly, the way Mark's story is structured indicates how the reader is supposed to respond to the events and the characters. The Gospel of Mark not only records what happened in the past but also imbues past events with specific meanings and interpretations. In this way, the Gospel contributes to the construction of a common identity for those who are willing to accept its message. Huebenthal shows how collective memory is closely related to the construction of identity which suggests that there are promising points in common between approaches applying the concepts of social memory and social identity.

Kari Syreeni examines in "Eyewitness Testimony, First-Person Narration and Authorial Presence as Means of Legitimation in Early Gospel Literature" how covert hints of eyewitness testimonies or explicit references to eye-witnesses in early Christian sources should be assessed. Syreeni remarks that scholars who have maintained that the canonical Gospels are somehow based on eyewitness memories quite rarely discuss the evidence found in non-canonical sources. Syreeni argues that this evidence should not be overlooked because a broader look at the development of early Christian literature reveals tendencies that already begin with the canonical documents and become clearer in various second century or later sources.

Syreeni concludes that both Mark and Matthew – most likely the earliest of the canonical Gospels – show little interest in eyewitness testimony. Syreeni claims that the allusions to eyewitnesses in the Gospels of Luke (1:1–4) and John (21:24–25) should not be isolated from similar mentions appearing in

such sources as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Mary, the Jewish Christian Gospel fragments and the infancy Gospels. The study of this material shows that references to eyewitnesses, authorial fiction and first person narration become more and more common in various Christian sources. Syreeni suggests that the need to legitimate diverse understandings of Jesus traditions among distinct early Christian groups could explain this development.

Dan Nässelqvist examines in his "Dual Conventions: The Oral Delivery of New Testament Writings in Light of First-Century Delivery Practices" different models for understanding the oral delivery of New Testament writings. He finds evidence in favour of the existence in antiquity of both oral performance from memory and public reading directly from a manuscript. These types of oral delivery not only involved different delivery practices, but were also used in dissimilar settings for distinct text genres. Nässelqvist finds, for instance, that in antiquity oral performance was largely confined to the delivery of oratory and drama, whereas public reading was used for all literary genres, including oratory and drama.

As to the early Christian practice, Nässelqvist gives a corrective to the notion of oral performance and argues that the sources describe the oral delivery of New Testament writings in terms of public reading from a manuscript. He distinguishes this carefully from oral performance, which is a notion forwarded by scholars engaged in performance criticism. Nässelqvist finally points to the practical details of the two types of delivery and compares them in relation to the stance of the performer, the skills required, and the use of gestures, movement, facial expressions, vocal expression, manuscripts, and furniture.

The articles in the second part of the book make use of the social identity approach. Several articles study the Qumran movement or texts found among the Qumran texts from this perspective. Cecilia Wassén argues in her "The Importance of Marriage in the Construction of Sectarian Identity in the Dead Sea Scrolls" that marriage, not celibacy, was a prominent feature in the identity formation of the Qumran movement. Outsiders were criticized for their behaviour related to marital relations. Proper marital relations were necessary for keeping the holiness of the people. Wassén analyses the sectarian text, 4QMMT, for its views on illicit marriages; marriages with non-Jews were forbidden and seen as defiling the holy seed of Israel. In social identity terms, 4QMMT can be interpreted both as an attempt to appeal to the shared values between the implied author and the addressee and as an instruction to the ingroup members to distinguish themselves from close and similar priestly groups who refused to follow their path.

According to Wassén, the claim that wrongful marriage and sexual practices had led the people astray is even stronger in the *Damascus Document.* Furthermore, polygyny, uncle-niece marriages, and sexual intercourse during menstruation were seen as traps by Belial, and outsiders

were thus demonized for following these practices, which would have discouraged interaction with them. Such marital laws could have been a new way of creating positive distinctiveness in a situation where some other comparative features were no longer favourable for the ingroup.

Jutta Jokiranta studies other social identity phenomena within the Qumran movement in "Black Sheep, Outsiders, and the Qumran Movement: Social-Psychological Perspectives on Norm-Deviant Behaviour". Typically, the outgroup is viewed as being more homogeneous than the ingroup. Whereas the social identity approach generally predicts that ingroup members are viewed more positively than the corresponding outgroup members, the ingroup deviants present a challenge to this tendency. Research on the so-called "black sheep effect" has grown during recent years to explain when the ingroup deviants are excused and when they are punished. Jokiranta studies the evidence in the Qumran *Community Rule* as efforts to manage reactions to ingroup deviants as well as accentuating the outgroup homogeneity in situations where ambiguity may have prevailed.

Jokiranta first explores clear rules of when the deviant member can and cannot be excused in line with the social psychological predictions. The more difficult cases are the passages on the "people of injustice". These people are similar to novices in that they should not be in direct contact with the full members in matters of purity, knowledge, and possessions. On the other hand, they are like deviant members, who also had to keep a distance to the full members. Lastly, in 1QS, the people of injustice clearly represent the outgroup with whom the insiders should not mix. Separation from the outgroup or threatening ingroup members always concerned practical everyday issues, but grew also to include ideological distinctions and essentialisation of the outgroup.

Elisa Uusimäki studies a wisdom text from Qumran, *4QBeatitudes* (4Q525) in "Wisdom, Scripture and Identity Formation in 4QBeatitudes". Uusimäki argues that macarisms and the cursing account in 4Q5252 are not descriptions of the present reality, but they create the future social reality; they do more than describe. Uttering and performing such divisions of the world have social and spiritual aims. They invite the recipients to see the world in a particular way and to enhance the coherence of the ingroup's internal worldview by polarization. The distinction between two groups of people – the wise and the foolish – was probably based on having (or not having) Torah piety. Uusimäki further draws implications on understanding such teaching in the setting of the Qumran movement. Group leaders typically employed shared cultural knowledge and "received wisdom" as resources in their attempts to efficiently construct new group identities.

Rikard Roitto explores in his "Forgiveness, Rituals, and Social Identity in Matthew: Obliging Forgiveness" the role of the divine and the interpersonal forgiveness in the formation of the Matthean social identity and gives special attention to rituals related to forgiveness. Roitto maintains that forgiveness is

an ongoing process in Matthew's covenantal and salvific identity narrative and explores the conceptualizations of sin in the Gospel of Matthew with the aid of insights from cognitive linguistics.

Of particular importance is the role of forgiveness in ritual activities – the Lord's Prayer, intercessory prayers for sinners, and the Eucharist. Roitto uses ritual theory to explore how these rituals contributed to identity formation in the Matthean community and points to the contribution of the ethics of forgiveness – non-retaliation and love of enemies, forgiveness of brothers – to inter- and intragroup dynamics.

In his "The Johannine Community as a Constructed, Imagined Community", Raimo Hakola takes issue with recent attempts to deny that the New Testament Gospels were addressed to distinct early Christian communities and argues that it is still meaningful to trace how these writings construct distinct early Christian identities. Hakola applies the social identity approach and concepts related to the symbolic construction of communities and imagined communities to explain how an ideal portrait of the community of Jesus' followers is created in the Gospel of John. Hakola contends that this portrait constructs social reality rather than reflects it in any transparent way.

Hakola demonstrates how John anchors his story of Jesus to mythical beginnings and uses various dualistic polarities to express a clear demarcation between Jesus' followers and the rest of world. In the Gospel, the knowledge of God communicated only by Jesus and the mutual love between Jesus' disciples function as strong symbols of belonging for Jesus' followers but also create an imagined boundary between them and those who have not received Jesus' revelation. Hakola argues that the Gospel writer has embedded his story of Jesus in a mythical framework in order to naturalise and essentialise a distinct early Christian social identity that was actually blurred and in the making.

Nina Nikki argues in her "Contesting the Past, Competing over the Future: Why is Paul Past-Oriented in Galatians and Romans, but Future-Oriented in Philippians?" that in the letters to the Galatians and the Romans Paul is more interested in the past than in his letter to the Philippians. Nikki suggests that the distinct temporal orientations are due to the different historical situations behind the texts: In both Galatians and Romans Paul is faced with Jewish Christ-believers, who subscribe to a particular view of the Jewish past, whereas in Philippians a Gentile audience is in view, with no previous Jewish historical narrative to be contested. With the use of the social identity approach, and the concepts of *possible future and past social identities*, Nikki clarifies the way Paul constructs identity on a temporal level and demonstrates how Paul's references to the past and the future exemplify the role of history as a domain of social contest in various intergroup conflicts.

According to Nikki, Paul contests his opponents' view of scriptural history in Galatians by claiming that Gentile believers are the legitimate heirs of this history without the demand of circumcision and the observance of the Law. In Romans, Paul tries to incorporate Jewish and non-Jewish addressees of the

letter into one group by reminding them that they have a shared past but can also anticipate jointly the transformation of the whole creation (Rom 8:19–39). In Philippians 3, on the other hand, Paul does not really reinterpret a common understanding of the Jewish past but simply negates it by presenting himself as having renounced his earlier Jewish life. In this way Paul identifies with Philippian believers who have rejected their Gentile past just like Paul has done away with his Jewish past.

In his "Covenant, Conflict and Collective Identity: The Relationship between Hebrews and 1 Clement", Martin Wessbrandt investigates the construction of collective identity in the letter to the Hebrews and *1 Clement* and argues against the consensus opinion which maintains that the two writings originated in a similar social context in Rome around the turn of the 1st century. Using Richard Jenkins' theories concerning collective identification, especially issues concerning boundary-making, Wessbrandt points to the problems arising with the consensus view once we realize how different these letters are in matters concerning collective identity construction, specifically in their relationship to Judaism.

According to Wessbrandt, the author of Hebrews is involved in an intra-Jewish conflict, seeking to establish that his Christ-believing community represents something so radically different from other Jewish communities that one cannot participate in it and at the same time be a part of others. The author distances his group from Jewish institutions related to Jerusalem and creates a new collective identity for his group around the concept of a new covenant. The author of *1 Clement* was familiar enough with the letter to the Hebrews to quote from it and allude to it in dozens of places throughout his own letter but seems unaffected by the way Hebrews presents the notion of a new covenant, its rejection of the Levitical cult and the special role it gives to Jerusalem. The things that were central to the collective identity in Hebrews are ignored in *1 Clement*.

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I Social Memory

Samuel Byrskog

Philosophical Aspects on Memory: Aristotle, Augustine and Bultmann

Memory in Perspective

During the last decades NT scholarship has seen a significant shift in the way it discusses the notion of memory and recollection in Greek, Roman and Jewish antiquity and in early Christianity.[1] While previous scholarship reacted to old form criticism and focused on the capacity of each person's memory to learn by heart and on the oral forms of conveying stored information almost unaltered in disciplined processes of transmission,[2] more recent scholarship, with some notable exceptions,[3] rarely discusses the memory and memorization of individuals but elaborates theoretical agendas for mnemonic activities in social contexts. The discussion ensuing from Maurice Halbwachs' (1877–1945) groundbreaking studies of the social ramification of collective memory and Jan Assmann's culturally imbedded investigation of communicative memory,[4] and from many other theoretical reflections,[5] has received increasingly more attention and resulted in several attempts to clarify the mnemonic negotiations and commemorations of the early Christians.

The previous investigations of memory were under-theorized but grounded in ancient discussions; more recent scholarship is theoretically more sophisticated but not always sufficiently based on what the ancient sources actually say about memory. There is an unfortunate gap between the theorized

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1 In what follows I will use the term "memory" in a comprehensive way including both the faculty and content of memory as well as the processes of recollection. The two often overlap, despite Aristotle's attempt to make a distinction, and I will separate them only when necessary.

2 The groundbreaking reaction to form criticism from the perspective of memory is B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity* (ASNU 22; Lund: Gleerup, 1964).

3 E. g. R.K. McIver, *Memory, Jesus, and the Synoptic Gospels* (SBLRBS 59; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011).

4 M. Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, new ed. 1952); idem, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950); J. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: C.H. Beck, 1992).

5 For introduction and overview of the theoretical issues of social and collective memory, see B.A. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003); A. Kirk, "Memory", in W.H. Kelber/S. Byrskog (ed.), *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009) 155–72.

approaches to memory of present day scholarship and earlier less theoretical but more source-oriented investigations. The two approaches are not incompatible, because the ancient sources can be analyzed from the perspective of modern theoretical agendas, but the powerful influence of scholarly traditions has resulted in a somewhat polarized situation concerning the way we approach the mnemonic processes of early Christianity.

The prospect of bridging this gap might not yet be sufficiently recognized and revolves around the polarization between the individual or cognitive aspects of memory studied in earlier scholarship and the social and collective memory studied broadly today.[6] When in the late 1990s I worked on some theories of social and collective memory within the general framework of oral history, I was impressed by their potential to enhance our understanding of tradition and transmission as social constructions, but I could not escape the idea that individual consciousness matters also in collectively conditioned contexts and that strictly speaking only individuals remember.[7] I developed these insights in later publications and tried with the help of cognitive sociology to link the cognitive aspects of memory evident in personal recollection to theories of social and collective memory.[8] I affirmed indeed the idea that memory is social, I also affirmed the idea that memory is individual, and I argued that social memory is closely related to the cognitive aspects of each person's memory. Biblical scholars, in reviewing the book where I first indicated my view, often missed the point of trying to combine both perspectives and, with some exceptions, thought that oral history is an agenda for reconstructing the past from the retentive memory of passively observing eyewitnesses, neglecting to realize that it highlights history as a social construction embodied in the stories of eyewitnesses and that is to it is deeply interlocked with memory as both retentive and individualistic as well as social and collective.[9]

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6 The expression "cognitive aspects of memory" is perhaps better than "individual memory", granted it describes aspects that are broader than the mere intellectual activity of remembering. See Alan Kirk's discussion in the present volume and part one in I. Czachesz/R. Uro (ed.), *Mind, Morality and Magic: Cognitive Science Approaches in Biblical Studies* (London: Routledge, 2014), with references to further literature. In previous publications I have used the theoretical framework of "sociomental typography" presented by the cognitive sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel, at first in his article "Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the Past", *QS* 19 (1996) 283–99; and more fully in his book *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003). I used this terminology for the first time in "A New Quest for the *Sitz im Leben:* Social Memory, the Jesus Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew", *NTS* 52 (2006) 319–36.

7 S. Byrskog, *Story as History – History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (WUNT 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 255.

8 I did not include theories taken from psychology, mainly because I did not see a feasible link to theories concerning the social construction of memory.

9 E. Eve, *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition* (London: SPCK, 2013), 135–43, is unfortunately unfamiliar with my more recent attempts to link "the eyewitness model" to theories of social and collective memory.

Today's scholarship is intensely occupied with the social ramifications of memory, to the extent that the individual specificity of memory fades into the background. In his last major study, published in 2000, Paul Ricoeur (1913–2005) addressed this problem and discussed a host of issues relating to personal memory versus collective memory, including a critical section on Halbwachs' contribution.[10] Ricoeur is unsatisfied with the intrusion of sociology and the appearance of the concept of collective consciousness as this has resulted in a polemical situation where a younger notion of objectivity opposes the ancient ideas of reflexivity, so that individual memory and collective memory are placed in a position of rivalry creating separate universes of discourse estranged from each other. Neither Plato nor Aristotle nor any other ancient author, according to Ricoeur, held the concept of collective consciousness to be prior to knowing who remembered. Ricoeur's own attempt to find the region where the two discourses intersect focuses on the linguistic subjects of the ascription of memories: the ascription to oneself, to others and to our closest relations.

Ricoeur pointed to an impasse that is prevalent also in NT scholarship. Here the crucial questions have to do with the hermeneutical challenges emerging from our attention to social and collective memory and their intrinsic implications for notions of history and time. One way of beginning to move beyond the present scholarly situation is to analyze the theoretical discussions concerning the cognitive aspects of each person's memory in the ancient sources and relate them to modern hermeneutical reflections on how individuals and groups negotiate with the past in the present. This is what I intend to do here, indicating also the consequences of this for understanding the early Christians' mnemonic processing of the Jesus tradition. As I hope to show, the cognitive aspects of memory disclosed in each person's process of recollection are deeply social in that they profoundly relate to human existence in history and time.

As for the ancient sources, I am not thinking of the well-known advices for how to memorize. These techniques, whether we think of the mnemonic *loci* mentioned by Greek and Roman authors and traced back to Simonides of Ceos of the sixth century BCE (Cicero, *De Orat.* 2.86.352–53) or the rabbinic ideals of written and oral transmission emerging during the tannaitic period of the late first and second century CE or the preliminary exercises of Theon of Alexandria and others that include recommendations for how to remember and recite the *chreia* with clarity, have received considerable attention in the discussion of the historical reliability of the gospel tradition but contain almost no theory of memory and relate only vaguely to today's interest in theories of social and collective memory. Of more significance are those texts

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10 P. Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (L'ordre philosophique; Paris: Seuil, 2000). For an English translation, see P. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (transl. K. Blamey/D. Pellauer; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), here pp. 93–132.