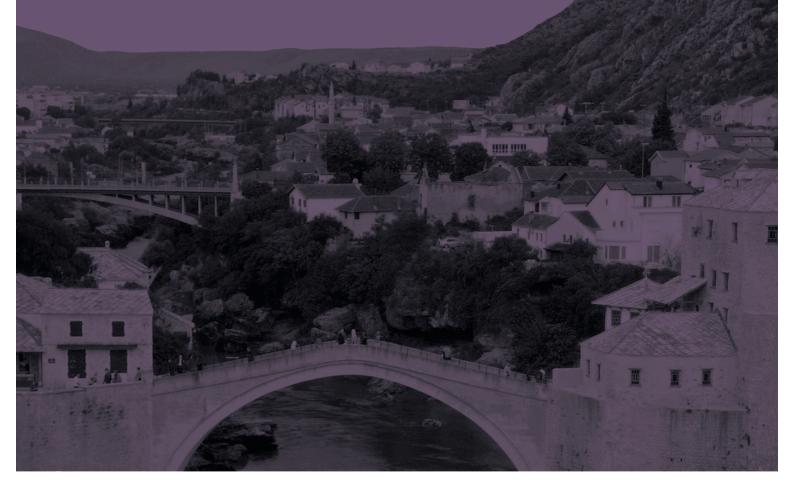# WORKING PAPER NO.1

Memory Politics, Cultural Heritage and Peace
Introducing an analytical framework to study mnemonic formations

Authors:

Annika Björkdahl
Susanne Buckley-Zistel
Stefanie Kappler
Johanna Mannergren Selimovic
and Timothy Williams

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Abstract

This working paper presents an analytical framework for assessing how memory politics impacts on the quality of peace in societies transitioning from conflict. The framework captures the inherent fluidity and friction of memory politics and can be used to develop a typology of memory regimes. The multidimensional framework is based on a constructivist epistemology that acknowledges the performative capacity of discourses, material manifestations, practices and agentive subjects. It is designed around four conceptual points of entry reflected in the acronym SANE: sites; agents narratives; and events. We study the interaction of sites, agents, narratives and events as 'mnemonic formations', i.e. a cluster that shapes the memory politics around a salient issue, phenomenon or event of the conflict. We illustrate this framework with references to mnemonic formations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cyprus, South Africa and Rwanda. The mnemonic formations referred to in this working paper are considered as diagnostic sites from which we can draw wider conclusions on how memory politics impacts on peacebuilding and transitional justice. Our ambition is to lay out a grid for a comparative analysis through which we can develop a typology of memory regimes and assess the impact of commemoration on the quality of peace, measured in terms of inclusivity, pluralism and human dignity.

Authors

Annika Björkdahl is Professor in Political Science at Lund University, Sweden. (annika.bjorkdahl@svet.lu.se)

Susanne Buckley-Zistel is Professor for Peace and Conflict Studies, at Philipps Universität Marburg, Germany. (s.buckley-zistel@staff.uni-marburg.de)

Stefanie Kappler is Associate Professor at Durham University, UK.
(stefanie.kappler@durham.ac.uk)

Johanna Mannergren Selimovic is Associate Professor and Senior Researcher at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. (johanna.mannergren@ui.se)

Timothy Williams is a researcher at Philipps Universität Marburg, Germany.
(timothy.williams@staff.uni-marburg.de)

Introduction

Memory work is intense in societies transitioning from conflict. Stories about the violent past are told in thunderous voices or in whispers. Rituals and practices build bridges or widen gaps. They take place in formal as well as informal spaces, involve top-down as well as grassroots rituals and commemorative events, and engage a plethora of agents. Heads of states apologise or uphold divisions, while hidden away from media floodlight, private commemoration as well as organised resistance take place on social media or in the streets. Various actors engage in this constitution of the memory of violent pasts, from artists making films and poetry, to politicians making speeches. These actors variously make the past complex or simplify it.

In a sense, memory politics is about both change and continuity; finding constructive ways of linking the past to the present and the future are central in transitions from conflict to peace. That is why transitional justice and peacebuilding research pay increasing attention to memory politics. But it is a difficult task to approach the fleeting and shifting terrain of memory politics and to trace its impact on the quality of peace. The so-called memory turn in social sciences has unfolded over the last couple of decades and a rich literature exists on individual case studies, but there is little work that attempts to draw out some generalizable observations across time and space concerning the relationship between memory politics and the formation of peace.

This working paper proposes an analytical framework that can move the research agenda on peace and the memory of politics forward by outlining the social contexts in which it takes place. It is designed to enable a systematic investigation into how commemoration impacts the quality of peace, and explain why commemoration may contribute to the making of a durable peace – or the perpetuation of conflict.

Based on a constructivist epistemology, the multidimensional framework acknowledges the performative capacity of discourses, material manifestations, practices and agentive subjects. Four conceptual points of entry guide the framework: sites, agents, narratives, and events – in short: SANE. As we will develop below, these concepts provide lenses through which we can study the inherent fluidity and friction in memory politics. We identify certain particularly salient issues or phenomena of the memory politics in a particular post-conflict society around which sites, agents, narratives and events cluster and interact. We call these clusters 'mnemonic formations'. Such mnemonic formations are considered as diagnostic sites from which we can draw wider conclusions on how memory politics impacts on peacebuilding and transitional justice. We tentatively lay out a grid for comparative analysis of mnemonic formations, with the aim to develop a typology of mnemonic formations and assess the impact of commemoration on the quality of peace, measured in terms of inclusivity, pluralism and human dignity. We illustrate our arguments with some briefly presented examples of mnemonic formations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus, Rwanda and South Africa.

The paper will proceed as follows. We first discuss some central observations about the links between memory politics and peace and how to study it, before introducing the SANE framework and presenting the theoretical purchase of the SANE components of sites, agents narratives and events. From there we move to a conceptualisation of what a mnemonic formation is and why it is a useful entrance point to make sense of transformations from conflict to peace, before presenting empirical illustrations of some mnemonic formations. We end with a discussion on how the SANE framework will aid us in conducting a systematic comparison and develop a social typology of mnemonic formations.

Why is politics of memory important to peace? Advancing the agenda

The so-called 'local turn' in critical peace research has over the last decade profoundly changed our understanding of what durable peace entails, raising questions such as peace for whom, by whom and peace where (e.g. Björkdahl and Kappler 2017; Mac Ginty 2010; Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013; Shinko 2008: 489, Mitchell & Richmond 2011; Pfaffenholz 2015). This body of work has criticized the tendency to conflate peace with the securing of states, institutions and rule of law, without really taking into account local and indigenous strategies for coping with violence and the making of peace. This has led to peace that is empty, shallow and inherently unstable. Critical peace research has called for more comprehensive and finely grained methods for understanding how and why transitions to peace develop into durable peace and at other times deteriorate into deeply divisive societies. Recent research has taken some new empirical and theoretical steps by analysing peacebuilding as a frictional and agonistic encounter, and making previously obscured agents and processes visible (Björkdahl & Höglund 2013; Björkdahl & Mannergren Selimovic 2015; Buckley-Zistel 2014; Kappler 2013, 2015).

Building on this research, we argue that a key realm for negotiations of the quality of the peace under formation is the politics of memory. Understanding remembrance practices as an integral part of the (re)constitution of society has been a key topic since the beginning of studies of collective and political memory (Halbwachs 1992 (1941): 47; Renan 2006 (1882)), allowing for insights on how peace is lived. It resonates with key claims in the transitional justice literature and field of practice, which assume a strong link between commemoration and nation-building. Memorials, monuments and various activities of remembrance are perceived as sites for the telling of a stabilizing, nation-building narrative for the fractured post-conflict state (Buckley-Zistel 2014, ICTJ 2015). Another prevalent argument in transitional justice studies is that citizens will be sensitized through memorials and museums and hence a repetition of the atrocities will be avoided (Bickford 2014: 394). Commemorative activities are understood to be central to the need for acknowledgement among survivors, and truth commissions usually recommend the development of memorials as part of reparation measures (Jelin 2007).

Nevertheless, one must not assume that remembrance practices by default serve peace. What to remember and what to forget is at the centre of the constitution of political authority as

'[m]emory is a struggle over power and who gets to decide the future' (Barahona de Brito et al 1997: 38; for other key works on this topic, see Bell 2006; Edkins 2003; Williams 2007; Zehfuss 2006). In such struggles national governments and other political authorities often attempt to maintain power in the present by controlling the past (McDowell & Braniff 2014). Victimhood is a powerful platform from which to make political and moral claims and commemoration can be used as a means to uphold or construct a victim status (Winter 2006: 62). Importantly, commemoration can also be productive of power for marginal or informal actors. Advocacy groups such as victim associations may gain recognition and leverage through commemoration activities (Nettelfield 2010). Gendered subject positions are also driven by memory politics and commemoration is a productive site both for maintaining and challenging gendered narratives and practices (Brown 2014, Mannergren Selimovic fortcoming 2017). Thus memory politics drive both continuity and change.

Salient topics can transform, fade into the periphery or be abruptly re-interpreted through shock or rupture. For example, change can, but need not, occur through an official public apology by an agent at the state level, and narrative claims that challenge power relations can be made at e.g. an event such as a civil society peace march or an informal eruption of violent protest. Memory politics in itself fundamentally challenges the assumption of linearity, given that memory always connects the past and the present in circular, narrated and performed ways. Likewise, the sudden construction of monuments and counter-monuments make spatial/territorial claims that may cement or reinstate certain spatial everyday patterns of movement, affecting for example practices of co-existence.

A sustained analysis of memory politics is thus essential in order to shed light on its frictional nature and disclose its continuities and discontinuities, and a sharpened analysis of memory politics could generate indicators of peace sensitive to local and dynamic developments. The last is a point argued by Brown (2013) who suggests that political memory work can access more fine-grained and dynamic processes than what is normally the case with assessments of peace process that tend to rely on simple attitudinal indicators (2013: 505). Brown notes that by closely studying memory work it is possible to trace on-going tensions both between and within communities in relation to how the peace process is developing. Further, to study how protagonists engage with social and political memory in relation to internationally produced narratives around peace and reconciliation is also an indicator of how such interventions from outside are 'adapted, countered, or re-branded.' Studies of politics of memory are thus useful in order to 'uncover tensions, ambiguities, and sometimes the plainly counter-intuitive' (ibid: 503-505).

Brown does not offer a specific model of how to go about this analysis, prompting us to propose one here. In this we are driven by the same urge that underlies one of very few systematic comparisons of memory politics produced so far; Bernhard and Kubik's study of how the year of revolutions 1989 and 1991 were officially commemorated in 17 post-communist states at the 20th anniversary (Bernhard and Kubik 2015). From this comparison they draw out a typology of memory regimes and 'mnemonic actors', identify them as fractured, pillarised or unified, and make some preliminary observations on the impact of

these actors on democracy (Bernhard and Kubik 2015: 10-11). Their interest differs from ours as their investigation is focused on official actors and the area of interest is transition from communism to democratic states. In contrast, we are interested in the patterns of memory politics that cut across various post-conflict cases and which highlight the complex interactions between both formal and informal actors with the socio-political environment they are situated in, in material and narrative terms. On this basis, we investigate the ways in which the interaction between actors and their political environment experience temporal ruptures, often evoked by events and rituals of commemoration. Nonetheless our investigation into the politics of memory and its impact on the quality of peace is inspired by Bernhard and Kubik's theoretical thinking and systematic analysis.

A final but important point that we want to make before presenting our framework is to establish our definition of peace. We depart from an understanding of peace processes as dynamic and frictional (Shinko 2008) and identify the building of durable peace as a process that 'simultaneously addresses surface issues and changes underlying social structures and relationship patterns' (Lederach 2002: 16). It includes transformations of the mutual negative perception of the parties to the conflict, often enshrined in the composition of their collective identities (Galtung 2001; Lederach 2002). It is through such transformations that a society '…moves from a divided past to a shared future' (Bloomfield 2006: 12). There are some key characteristics that we posit are of particular importance in relation to memory politics: that peace is *inclusive* in terms of ethnicity, religion, age and gender, that peace is *pluralist* in terms of diverse societal discourses, and that peace *embraces human dignity* in terms of respect for human rights (Lederach 2002; Wallensteen 2015:5). This definition of durable peace will guide future empirical investigations into whether, how and why commemoration impacts on the quality of peace.

Introducing SANE: a conceptual framework to analyze politics of memory

We propose a theoretical approach to memory politics designed around four conceptual points of entry that all open up for engaging with time and space as central analytical components. The central, inter-actively constituted, concepts that we will here unpack are sites, agents, narratives and events. We acknowledge the central role that *narratives* play, and we understand memory narratives to always be emplaced – they are stories of what happened in certain places, and at these *sites* there is in the present often an abundance of material artefacts with affective consequences. At the same time we acknowledge the role of *agents* with various agendas in memory politics and see a need for a more nuanced understanding of agency, moving beyond the obvious political agents and their hegemonic narratives. We acknowledge that the past is not only narrated through stories and discourses, it is also performed through practices that agents engage in. Thus our fourth component concerns *events*, manifestations and practices of memory politics. It is the interaction of sites, agents, narratives and events – SANE – that constitutes memory politics in transitions from war and violence to peace. In what follows the four interrelated conceptual dimensions are unpacked to bring forth their relevance for a systematic analysis of mnemonic formations. For the sake

of clarity they are here analytically separated, but we understand them to be in constant productive interaction with each other.

Sites

In contested geographies of post-war societies, memories of the conflict are materially tangible. They may come in the form of physical scars on the landscape, mass graves, buildings or areas previously used for confinement, torture or execution, ruined religious buildings, the marks of grenades, remnants of divisive walls and crossings. Such difficult heritage of conflict bring forth central nodes around which memory politics revolves and in a way may be said to pin memory politics to place (cf. McDowell & Braniff 2014). Territorial claims of certain groups may be supported by the materiality of heritage sites that are anchored in contested geographies, but it can also play out in seemingly insignificant places such as run-down buildings or shopping malls, as Forde (2017) demonstrates in her analysis of social movement in Mostar, a divided city in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Our analytical approach acknowledges that memory politics always takes place in a physical locality and that place produces meaning. Where memory is narrated and performed therefore has a strong influence on the ways in which it is politicised, who can access it and how it is politically perceived. It is no coincidence that both apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa has maintained a political strategy of relocation as a way to disempower and marginalise poorer sections of the population (cf. Björkdahl and Kappler 2017). An understanding of memory politics must thus involve a spatial analysis foregrounding the importance of material representations (Björkdahl & Buckley-Zistel 2016; Kappler 2017). At the same time, it must pay heed to transnational forms of memory and commemoration (cf. De Cesari & Rigney 2014).

Often the sites of atrocities evolve into commemoration places. Museums and memorials are built, providing an important space for official narratives and the construction of collective memory (e.g. Barsalou and Baxter 2007; Hamber 2012). At the same time they may be used for personal, quiet mourning. This is of course not to distract from the potentially controversial role that memorial sites and museums can play, particularly in divided societies. The museums for National Struggle in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, are illustrative of this, in their ambition to reinforce one strong national narrative (cf. Papadakis 1994). In Rwanda's memorial museums, such as the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre, and others located at the sites of massacres around the country *inter alia* in Ntarama, Nyamata, Murambi, a hegemonic official narrative is constructed which structures how various actors can negotiate their own memories of the conflict in relation to these sites. In particular, these sites only allow commemoration of victims who fit the official narrative, for example excluding Hutu memories of loss, and rendering certain forms of memory and commemoration legitimate (Jessee 2017). Similarly, the memorial site in Potočari in Srebrenica is seen as a central place mainly for Bosniaks to mourn their victims, whilst many Bosnian Serbs from the surrounding areas tend to avoid the site as they feel accused of being perpetrators.

Other spaces are not formally marked but still form part of the cultural heritage of conflict. They may entail empty yet meaningful spaces, voids where once individuals, families, communities lived; 'places of pain' where terrible things happened but the crimes committed are collectively denied by new inhabitants. Rape camps may not display any acknowledgement of the past crimes, or only crimes against certain people will be acknowledged. There may be physical gaps remaining in the townscape after the erasure of religious buildings. These voids are not meaningless but may disrupt hegemonic remembering (and forgetting). One particularly interesting example are the so-called 'Sarajevo Roses', citizens' monuments in the shape of red markers on the city's pavements and streets where once mortar shells killed inhabitants during the siege (cf. Kappler 2017). People still remember what the roses stand for and often avoid walking over them for respect of the dead – yet without deliberately talking about it. In that sense, people's movement across sites of commemoration, their reluctance to cross bridges or their determination to cross into the areas of the 'other' can be important markers of how they engage with the landscape of memory. Such a landscape necessarily carries the past into the present, where it can be reengaged with in different ways. A similar example are '*Stolpersteine*' (Stumbling Stones, designed by the artist Gunter Demnig) which are small brass plaques placed in the pavement outside the former houses and businesses of victims of the Holocaust, primarily across Germany; these commemorative plaques are designed as a constant reminder of the past violence, as well as the passive reaction of wide parts of society, thus also drawing the processes of dealing with the past into contemporaneous social interactions (Krzyzanowska 2016).

In an increasingly transnational environment, we can observe the activation of memory sites across national contexts (Assmann 2014). The apartheid museum in Johannesburg, for instance, has become world famous and a key tourist attraction – as has Robben Island as an emblem of the restrictive and oppressive measures of the apartheid regime. In Cambodia, Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and Choeung Ek Killing Fields were constructed primarily in a bid for legitimacy as sites of evidence towards the international community, and today remain primarily tourist sites with only a secondary usage by Cambodians themselves. Nonetheless, the sites and their interpretations are laden with political meaning for the politics of memory in Cambodia. The same can be said about the many memorial sites in Rwanda, often at authentic places, which seem to be directed to an external audience rather than to Rwandans some of whom find their choice of exhibiting remains of genocide victims inappropriate. These transnational sites in themselves carry this meaning and represent the canvas on which memory politics play out; driven by powerful political actors as much as business entrepreneurs, artists, tourist guides and the transnational audience itself.

Agents

Memory politics after war and violence is driven by multiple agents. These agents may be formal or informal, elite or grassroots, individual or collective, local or global. They may have wildly diverging understandings of the past but share that they have a stake in how it is remembered. Politicians, victim associations, museum curators, external peacebuilders, media, tourist entrepreneurs are examples of agents that participate in memory politics. To

map and identify agents and understand the agential dynamics of memory politics and peace warrants a thinking-through of the concept of agency.

Agency has to do with the making of the world that we inhabit. It is always about power relations, to exercise agency is to bring about effect of some sort on the world. It is not exercised in a vacuum but in a social world that shapes the opportunities and resources available, in a constant interplay of practices and discourses (Giddens 1984; Ahearn 2001: 112). Agency is never completely autonomous but unfolds in the relation of the subject with the world. We thus locate agency in the inter-subjective relations between people rather than as a possession contained within individuals. To exercise agency is thus to engage in activities that form fields of relationality (Ahearn 2001: 130; cf Arendt 1958), involving varying degrees of friction.

A mapping of memory agents discloses their presence in scalar realms of politics stretching from the individual level, to local communities, national and transnational politics and global communities. In any given mnemonic formation, due to the increasingly global and transnational memory work, global agents – such as e.g. UNESCO and peacebuilding agencies – tend to be present. The presence of agents also stretches out horizontally in sometimes overlapping social and political communities, e.g. civil society, religious communities, political parties, media, and the arts. Agency can also be non-organised and exercised through fleeting action in hidden and obscure spaces by agents that struggle in the margins to change existing power relations. The digital age has brought new ways to act and partake in memory politics for both organised and non-organised agents. The past is 'narrated, performed, screened, broadcasted, Facebooked, tweeted and reflexively and spectacularly considered in new contexts' (Freeman et al 2014: 241). In the digital age, the modes for exercising agency have multiplied and expanded horizontally and vertically for formal as well as informal agents. Whilst this is not to say that the use of social media and other information technologies necessarily empowers a multiplicity of memory actors (Tellidis and Kappler 2016), it suggests that networks have the potential to become increasingly complex, so that mourning and grief, as much as celebrations and rituals, can be shared translocally and transnationally across memory sites.

Further, attention needs to be paid to 'ordinary agency' (Das 2007) that is exercised in the everyday, a mundane memory work that often is deeply meaningful for individuals coping with loss and grief such as caretakes at Rwandan memorial sites (Viebach 2014). The impact of ordinary agency on peace is seldom studied, and often ignored by external peacebuilders as well as domestic powerholders.

Transformation and agency are conceptually close as we understand change to be conditioned by the 'ability to act in an unexpected fashion or to institute new and unanticipated modes of behavior' (McNay, 2000: 22). While agents are to a lesser or greater degree embedded in relations of power and interdependence (MacLeod 1992: 533–534), we find that it is important to recognize not only reactive but also proactive agency, with power of initiative.
A search for agency and agents in unexpected, ignored or hidden spaces discloses that transformation can take place beyond overt and organised forms. The creative dimension of

agency hints at the shortcomings of the rationalist and determinist notions of agency. We do however acknowledge that agents may exercise their agency not only in order to bring about change but also to uphold and reinforce prevailing practices and systems of meaning (McNay 2000: 5). In the post-conflict space there are high stakes in maintaining sociocultural and political hierarchies.

Narratives

Narrative analysis takes an interest in how narratives create meaning through a particular rendering of events and experiences which organizes a morally coherent relationship between the past, present and the future (Bruner 1986; White 1996). Narrative is what links individuals to political and cultural context, and thus story-telling is central to the way politics operate (Andrews 2014: 355). As people go about their everyday lives they construct meaning and identity through narrative work. In order to construct coherent meaning it is crucial to make time intelligible and so narrative is always about temporality. Peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives are based on a particular ordering of the past, present and future in which interventions draw a sharp line between the violent past and the present, which brings hopes of a peaceful and better future (e.g. Moon 2008) or memorials seek to portray one story about past events to the exclusion of alternative accounts (Buckley-Zistel 2014). Such narratives are often confronted with counter-narratives with a very different understanding of how to make the past, present and future morally coherent. The multitude of agents with stakes in memory politics produces a polyphony of stories at any given moment that circulate and are used in support of various claims. They are produced in political discourses, in media, in classrooms and in conversations over dinner.

Narratives can tell the story of particular segments of the population. Of particular interest for memory politics in relation to peace is the way that stories produce narrative identity through transmitting collective memory (cf Hammack and Pileski 2011:76; Wertsch and Billingsley 2011). Of particular interest here is the emergence of globalized templates for remembering that scripts local processes of remembrance as the narratives of Srebrenica- Memorial in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre in Rwanda point to (Mannergren Selimovic, 2013).

Further, narratives of memory tend to be emplaced. Reading the narratives in conjunction with the sites they concern opens up new insights into the potency of territorial claims in relation to remembering. The stories are generated from the events and experiences in the present, which are given multilayered meanings as they are tied to earlier experiences and historical events. Thus, '[s]tories about place produce a second, metaphorical geography' (Collie 2013) so that the physical, material site becomes 'meaningful and habitable through the legends, memories, and dreams that accumulate in and haunt places' (ibid).

In the struggle over hegemonic story-telling there are usually some very loud voices, that is, voices that enjoy public attention and carry across localized contexts. Yet there are those that choose to be silent or are muted. By tracing narrative silences in memory work we can map

what is not told publically, what remains private memories, and we can investigate the meaning and potential power of these silences (Eastmond and Mannergren Selimovic 2012; Björkdahl and Mannergren Selimovic 2017; Motsemme 2004; Porter 2016). Indeed, sometimes silences can tell us at least as much as the public vocalization of grievances and success stories. Linked to the topic of silence is whether a collective narrative of the difficult past can contain multiple and plural experiences. A central question for inclusive peace is the possibility to tell plural subjective stories that reflect the experiences of various individuals and collectives, yet at the same time maintain a factual truth of what happened. The challenge to excluding hegemonic collective memories may come unexpectedly. Zembylas and Bekerman call such challenges 'dangerous memories' that 'are disruptive to the status quo' of entrenched hierarchies and closely guarded group identities (Zembylas and Bekerman 2008: 125, cited in Hammack and Pileski). The emergence of 'dangerous' memories in public may provide opportunities to reconfigure essentialised identities and be a vehicle for the type of transformative agency discussed above.

Events

Events are socially and morally meaning-making performative practices (Ashplant et al. 2004) such as parades, ceremonies, public protests, and burials, special media broadcasts of a public ceremony, tourist tours, peace marches, national days of commemoration. They may be highly ritualistic, or organic and fleeting as people come together for political action (Arendt 1958; Butler 2011). Events offer the opportunity for participation, for mass enrollment, for emotional purchase and they can be transmitted through television, the radio and social media. They are visual and may involve the display of flags, coffins and other material objects. Recurring events become rituals, anniversaries for example, that help to maintain continuity. They are often organized by elite memory entrepreneurs and as such central moments for the production of hegemonic collective memory. Since events take place somewhere they become a moment in the narration of collective identities, they are thus spatial and temporal markers that perform a crucial function in memory politics and can, as such, be deeply contested. Further, narratives evolve over time, the form of recurring events will be adapted by the relevant memory actors.

Event often have the character of a ritual, they are activities with a symbolic character and follow certain rules, and they circulate around objects of thought and feeling which are of great value to the participants (Lukes 1975: 291). These kind of rituals are a crucial mechanism for the recreation of a community. Drawing on shared objects or performances in which they share experiences helps to form and sustain deep emotional bonds among its members (Etzioni 2000: 45). Importantly, events may serve to maintain the existing memory structure they both reflect and for which they provide meaning, but they may also be transformative for they can potentially change prevailing structures. While memorial events may serve to (re)create a community they might also be used for the opposite purpose: to be divisive and to disrupt community fabric, to question remembrance in and of itself, or to provide a counter narrative. Similar to memorials, they are open to (conflicting) interpretations and subject of contestations.

Events can take on different forms, they can be ritualized such as annual commemoration events, lighting candles or laying wreaths and be embedded in or borrow from a long symbolic tradition, which often has its origin in religion. Yet they can also be spontaneous such as creating a piece of art like a dance performance, a light spectacle, or a graffiti. They can be rooted in one place – often in relation to a memorial – or lay claim to wider spaces, such as peace walks or parades. They can be solemn and quiet like the re-burial of excavated bones, or violent and loud like a riot.

What becomes clear is that events have a high potential of mobilizing large numbers of people and can therefore become highly political. Conflict can be triggered at such events as much as they can foster expressions of solidarity and belonging. They are often what holds a memory landscape together in terms of serving as a constant reminder of the importance of honouring the dead, keeping memory alive and establishing a sense of unity. At the same time, they can also hinder transformation as they keep reinforcing the past and its significance for the present.

Identifying mnemonic formations

After having laid out the SANE framework as a lens to analyze the multifaceted memory politics, the question emerges of how to identify the SANE components and how to study their interaction in time and space. How do we draw any conclusions concerning how commemoration impacts on durable peace? Differently put, how can we operationalize the conceptual framework to understand the interplay between peace and memory politics?

Memory politics is often studied through pre-defined units of analysis, for example localities (e.g. countries), objects (e.g. heritage museums) or agents (e.g. political leaders). Our approach is more organic. We start by identifying salient topics in the societies we study. What is a key issue about the past? It may be a specific event e.g. mass killings, a particular phenomenon such as disappearing people in South Africa, or phenomena that are in fact not publicly remembered such as sexual violence against men, but that may have a continuous, deep effect on families and communities. As will be discussed below, salient topics are seldom without overt or covert contention. The latter plays out in multifaceted and multi-layered processes that may impede or support the building of inclusive, durable peace. Around each such significant event or issue, politics of memory can be studied, involving sites, agents, narratives and events coming together in so called 'mnemonic formations'. By this term we mean a cluster of sites, agents, narratives and events that shape the memory politics around an issue, phenomenon or event of the conflict that is particularly salient. The mnemonic formations are considered as diagnostic sites where commemorative narratives enable 'discursive events' to take place, from which wider conclusions can be drawn on how memory politics plays out. Forgetting, silences and voids are also key to memory politics and we therefore attend to memory voids, i.e. what is *not* commemorated, not memorialized, and not narrated. The work of erasing topics from collective memory, to unsee, and unhear, as

well as the labour of bringing the forgotten into public attention, are important processes of relevance for peace.

Our research will bring to the fore mnemonic formations around some salient topics in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cyprus, Rwanda and South Africa. The contexts in which these mnemonic formations are emerging share that the violent past is a divisive issue, and commemoration has emerged as a potential tool for peacebuilding and/or perpetuation of conflict. Although Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Cyprus, Rwanda and South Africa have undergone different types of conflict, they share a strong feature, namely the translation of past conflict into present conflict through contestations around the ways in which the past could and should be commemorated. The competing narratives of the past are projected onto contemporary social life, and are the source of the formation of imaginaries for the future. At the same time, these contexts display their own unique historical trajectories and conflict dynamics. The table below gives examples of mnemonic formations that we intend to study. The charting of mnemonic formations has only just begun and therefore the table is highly preliminary and at this stage mainly serves to illustrate how we will put the SANE framework 'to work'.

Cases	Examples of Sites	Agents	Narratives	Events	
Bosnia & Herzego-wina	Srebrenica Memorial, Sarajevo Roses	Widows organizations, OHR, Entity government, local politicians International dignitaries	Competing claims of victimhood, genocide cosmopolitanism, gendered patriotism	Commemoration of genocide at Potočari, incl. Peace March, procession with remnants Counter-event in Kravica	*Within-case analysis*
Cyprus	Buffer Zone, Check-points, National museums	Bi-communal movement, museum curators, UN peacekeepers	Independence heroism, anti-war narratives, victimhood	UN Day, opening of the check-points	*Within-case analysis*
Rwanda	Genocide Memorial Centre, Village graves	National reconciliation commission, 'Reconciliation village' (perpetrators/victims), survivor organisations	Reconciliation discourse 'Womenasvictims' Silence of Hutu loss	Period of Mourning, 'Dark' tourism events	*Within-case analysis*
South Africa	Freedom Park, Robben island, District Six Museum	Former prisoners, political parties, tourist industry	Boer nationalism, 'Rainbow nation', Forgiveness discourse	Reconciliation Day	*Within-case analysis*
Cambodia	Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Choeung Ek Killing Fields	Civil parties, victims associations, international donors and NGOs, Khmer Rouge Tribunal staff	Broadly inclusive victimhood, government and Vietnam as liberators and guarantors of peace	Day of Anger, rituals at memorials during *Phchum Ben* festival	*Within-case analysis*
	Cross-case analysis of sites	*Cross-case analysis of events*	*Cross-case analysis of agents*	*Cross-case analysis of narratives*	***Cross-case analysis***

Comparison within-case and cross-case: Towards a typology of mnemonic formations

A systematic analysis of the impact of commemoration on the quality of peace calls for a comparative analysis. As demonstrated by the table above, our analytical framework allows

us to compare across cases, look for patterns, similarities and differences, and systematize emerging knowledge. Thus we combine within-case analysis with cross-case comparison and we let the cases 'speak to each other' (George & Bennett 2005). This means that the depth of single cases are captured, at the same time as it is possible to find common factors and generate theory from qualitative research (Gingrich & Fox 2002). Our understanding of the politics of memory thus moves beyond the particularities of each case and demonstrates that investigations of the particular are able to reveal the general and speak to concepts and theories.

The analytic units of sites, agency, narratives and events that we study in each mnemonic formation enhance the coherences between the 'thick descriptions' in each case study (Geertz 1973), enabling a structured comparison across cases of these elements. We also compare the units of mnemonic formations and are thus able to develop a typology. We posit that the different types hold different ramifications for the peace that is consolidated and thus for the quality of that peace. In line with qualitative methodologists who emphasize that typologies may go beyond descriptive categorization (Elman 2005), the typology guides the research process and is theory-generating, through a reflective and hermeneutic process following our general constructivist approach.

Conclusions

This working paper has proposed a new framework for researching how memory politics impacts on peace. By grounding our analysis in evolving mnemonic formations through the SANE framework, we escape simplified readings of commemoration. The SANE framework gives us access to the shifting and organic form of mnemonic formation and can make visible the interconnections and frictional encounters between e.g. global, national, and informal mnemonic agents.

We posit that research needs to take on the challenge of analysing how these intricate processes interact and unfold over time and in space in order to understand how and why commemoration impacts on the quality of peace. Our study therefore provides a micro-level analysis to shed light on macro-level processes of memory politics and thus illustrates complex ways in which the past shapes both the present and the future in post-conflict societies. We suggest that we cannot understand memory through an analysis of either sites, agents, narratives or events, but only in the complex interplay between those. In addition, we claim that there is added value to studying memory politics in a cross-case manner in terms of identifying spatial and temporal patterns of governing after violence.

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