HUMAN AFFAIRS 29, 224–234, 2019 DOI: 10.1515/humaff-2019-0018

MEDIATED MEMORY AND LIFE IN DIGNITY[1]

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Abstract: After the fall of an oppressive regime, public interpretation of the past provides the normative backbone for the new society's institutional framework. This narrative also molds temporality on a collective level, elevating some events and eras above the floating river of time, while omitting or suppressing others. In all societies, collective memory, and the temporality embedded within it, are mediated within the public domain. This paper argues that the hyper-accelerated time of transition leaves its mediating function vulnerable and prone to slip into manipulation. By monopolizing the public interpretation of the past and manipulating public temporality, political regimes undermine the processes of healing and reconciliation, which require us to recognize different voices and interpretations. A manipulated temporality, that clashes with the personal temporality of lived experience, may violate personal identity and dignity and impede the democratic project.

Key words: temporality; memory regime; personal identity; dignity; collective memory; hyper-accelerated time

Introduction

When an oppressive political regime ends, the new era is welcomed in with the hope and expectation that it will be more of a just society. This requires us to find a way to address the past, heal the injuries of the victims, punish the perpetrators, and restore relations in the society. The new regime sets up institutions to pursue these goals, passes legislation to enable court trials, reparations for damage and losses to property, and so on. For these tasks to be carried out, the past must be interpreted and assessed in an emerging public narrative negotiated by numerous actors. The narrative shapes new laws and institutions which come to represent memory—constituting an exo-skeleton within which the collective memory flows and operates. This mediation entails passing judgments on the past eras, determines when is the right time to prosecute, when to forgive, or move on. As these processes unfold, some find it difficult to follow the pace set in the institutional realm or feel unsettled, or even violated anew. Their interpretation of the past and their relationship to it, stemming from their lived experience, clashes with how the past is interpreted publicly.

[1] This work was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under contract No. APVV-15-0682.

This paper examines the way in which personal and public temporality interact during transition eras. It considers the central importance of narrative identity and intersubjectivity in relation to personal temporality. It argues that when authentic personal interpretations of the past are violated, living a fulfilled life in dignity becomes impossible. In the public domain, it explores the realm of public temporality through the concept of a regime of memory and world time. Temporality is studied in the context of the transition era, conceptualized as "hyper-accelerated" time. Acceleration relates to the way the future is made present, de-distanced in the dominant narrative, run through the bottleneck of a few strong expectations, indicating that other aims and needs are less urgent. The memory regime is easily monopolized in support of this agenda, captured by those in political power. Lastly, the paper returns to explore how the manipulation of public temporality affects personal identity and dignity needs. Violation of these may endanger the very tenets of democratic society. In this analysis, personal and public temporality are linked through the phenomenon of succession of generations, which also allows for epochal shifts in memory regimes.

Time and personal identity

Time is normally conceived of as moving linearly from a point in the past toward a point in the future. But that is not how the personal experience of time works, nor is it how it operates within social and political discourses. Some events are elevated from the grey mass of the past, de-distanced and made present, or projected into future expectations. Other events are suppressed or forgotten entirely. Chronological and lived time, as Koselleck points out, diverge (Koselleck, 2004).

Temporality is among the key defining features of personal identity. Temporality gives it a meaning, brings it into existence. In Heidegger's thought, aware Being (Da-sein[2]) is constituted by its past "as a property that is still objectively present and at times has an effect on it" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 17). Da-sein *is* the past also in the manner of its being, which occurs out of its future. Being requires constant interpretation of itself, it "grows up in that interpretation" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 17). The past does not follow from Da-sein, rather the interpreted past determines and shapes the Da-sein. The quest to understand being, the core of personal identity, takes places in a webbed world of relations. And thus is susceptible to interpretations around it. "Da-sein can discover, preserve, and explicitly pursue tradition" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 19). It may be warped by tradition, which may obfuscate understanding. The social nature of being-in-the-world brings with it a great deal of arbitrariness—social relations, habits, and obligations that we have little influence over but are subjected to on a daily basis, throwing us into a world of interdependence, constituting our *thrownness* (Heidegger, 1996). Temporality plays a crucial role in the way social life is organized. For Levinas the very sense of time is embedded in relations with the other. We anticipate the future relationally—"the very relationship with the other is the relationship with the future" (Levinas, 1999, p. 44). Personal temporality is an outcome of this intersubjectivity.

[2] Da-sein is understood to mean "beings... interrogated with regard to their being" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 5). But we have to be prepared for this interrogation, aware of the self, and of the context within which we exist.

Responsibility for the other, and for all, gives meaning to being. It is what constitutes "a supreme dignity of the unique" (Levinas, 1985, p. 101), an escape from "being" to "something".

Being and time are interpreted and understood through narratives. A narrative plot allows us to perceive time—past experiences, interpreted through perceptions of the current situation projected in expectations of the future. Emplotment makes sense of the otherwise discordant episodes, utilizing emotions (e.g. pity and fear) to produce a catharsis (Ricoeur, 1983, p. 50). This emplotment is different and unique for everyone. Diversity is an essential feature of the human condition (Arendt, 1998). For this reason, speech and action are needed to communicate meanings; for if the condition was sameness, they would not be needed (Arendt, 1998, p. 176). Distinctness, acted and spoken out, is what composes personal identity, and is constitutive of human dignity. Acting and speaking reveal *who* we are (*ipséité,* uniqueness) (rather than *what* we are and do (*mêmeté* or *idem,* sameness), based on appearance). Speech and action take place in a structured place, *polis*, which provides the boundaries to the otherwise boundless and unpredictable universe of actions. It is shaped by physical boundaries as well as laws, which mediate between these narratives. The second dimension of personal identity is an ethical notion of self-constancy, permanence in time achieved through "keeping one's word" or responsibility to the other (Ricoeur, 1992). The image of a being embedded in a robust web of relations, fostered by just institutions and norms, is a form of being in dignity (Bernstein. 2015; Hicks, 2013; Ricoeur, 1992). It is founded in an agent-centered ethic of social consequences. Dignity as the highest moral aim is achievable through laws, institutions, and the provision of protection required for the fulfilment of human capabilities and potential (Nussbaum, 2011). Dignity is the central criterion for evaluating the beneficiality of social action. If speech and action are the central tools for maintaining personal identity, and temporality a central component of that identity, then the forceful violation of personal temporality may also disrupt the person's sense of dignity. To understand the violation of dignity, it is useful to conceptualize it experientially—on the basis of an appropriate experience to be had in its presence (Kriegel, 2018). An appropriate experience involves respect based on recognizing the other as a human being, regardless of their merit (Kriegel, 2018, p. 127). Recognition requires us to *refrain* from actions that are morally wrong, in other words, treating a person as an end rather than a means. The opposite of a life in dignity is "what is called humiliation—a horrible caricature of humility—[which] is nothing else than the destruction of self-respect, beyond the destruction of the power-to-act, the capacity possessed by an agent to constitute himself or herself as the author of action…" (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 220).

Having authorship of our own consciousness generates *empirical inviolability*—related to the uniqueness of our experience, and *normative inviolability* as the claim to first-personal authority is extended to that over our mind (Kriegel, 2018, p. 134). In practice, even if factually incorrect, dismissing a person's narrative account of their experience leaves them *feeling violated*. It is a moral violation, a violation of what Kriegel refers to as a norm of *incorrigibility*—the fact that only the author may correct his or her narrative. Thus, violation amounts to disrespect and insensitivity.

All this is not to state that interpretations of the past should not be subject to any fact-checking whatsoever or that all memories should be placed on equal planes—victims of

atrocities alongside perpetrators. It is not about *what* is disputed in a person's account, or dismissed or omitted, but about *how* and to what end it is being disputed. Insofar as the memory regime is concerned, and managing the content and channels for negotiating past interpretations, the key distinction is between *mediating* and *manipulating* collective memory in the public realm.

Memory regime as mediation

The memory regime is the normative and institutional framework for society's interpretation of the past and for acting on consequences stemming from it in pursuit of a just society (Kusá, 2018). For Ricoeur, a just society provides the conditions in which personal identity can be fully formed. It is, in summary, "aiming at the 'good life', with and for others, in just institutions" (Ricoeur, 1992, p. 172), in other words, being—with others—in the world (Heidegger, 1996). Levinas underscores that it is essential for institutions to have a mediating function so personal autonomy and freedom can be maintained. "Freedom is engraved on the stone of the tables on which laws are inscribed—it exists by virtue of this incrustation of an institutional existence" (Levinas, 1969, p. 241). The memory regime resides primarily in the institutional realm. It creates the channels within which collective memory is shaped and thus controls the flow of personal narratives, celebrating some, suppressing others, and rendering yet others invisible or illegal. The memory regime molds public temporality, establishing a narrative that brings some events, eras and their heroes nearer, distancing others, and declaring some past periods to be criminal. The nature and the impact of the public temporality embedded in the regime of memory depends on the nature of political power. A dominating political power (as opposed to power-in-common; Ricoeur 1992, p. 220) may capture the memory regime.

The memory regime constantly evolves over time, in relation to historical context, the key actors, the bearers of the main narrative, the audience, and their changing relations over time. However, it is subject to significant epochal changes, whether as a result of a generational change or the breakdown of the regime. Ricoeur's narrative arc, composed of a three-staged *mimesis* (prefiguration–configuration–refiguration), constitutes a simple model for imagining such shifts in epochal time. Prefiguration takes place within the historical context in which the narrative bearing the memory regime emerged—its cultural context with the prevalent norms and ideals that shape the public interpretation of the past, its social context, and who the crafters of the memory regime are in relation to the past. Configuration refers to the content of the memory regime—the dominant narrative, the structures it produces, and the ways in which it is reproduced in public discourse. Refiguration takes place when the constellation of speakers and audience changes significantly, whether abruptly after another significant political regime change, or gradually. During epochal transformations, people are more perceptive and critically reflective of the world. Being, in the Da-sein sense, is grounded primarily in the future (anticipation or awaiting), stirred up by such changes. Once the dust settles, Da-sein slips into oblivion again (Heidegger, 1972, p. 52), receding into everydayness. The act of falling prey, or succumbing, to the influence of the world, is temporally firmly rooted in the present, where awareness fades and entities and things come to the fore. Attunement (mood, state of mind) temporalizes itself primarily in having-

been (retrieve or forgottenness). The personal and world temporality intertwine with one another—one cannot be understood without the other. Personal temporality is also vulnerable to public/world temporality and may be shaped or obscured, but also perceived as having been violated through manipulation.

Mediation of temporality: the meso-level of social groups and generations

Public temporality seldom has a direct impact on the personal. Instead it is mediated through the "world" we are thrown into—the communities of kind we belong to (family, ethnic group, profession, generation etc.). They mediate interpretations across the boundaries of world-time and ordinary now-time (Heidegger, 1996, par. 422). Mediation can take place through the intergenerational transmission of interpretations, symbols, models, and traditions. If this transmission fails, it may result in a sense of uprootedness and feelings of angst and fear among members of the young generation.

Heidegger approaches generations through two types of historicities—that of the Da-sein, and that of "world history" into which the generation is thrown and whose fate it is intertwined with—a generation as a community of shared destiny. Heidegger did not pay particular attention to the mediating level, sociality, or being-in-the-world, and so it is lacking in in his thinking on the complexity of human society (see a study by Thonhauser, 2016). Ricoeur, finding this linkage insufficient, added the concept of a *succession of generations*, a process of communicating the experiences of the older generation and the gradual replacement of one generation by another (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 394). The communication and transmission of meta-memories, and the perception of history through its physical remnants (monuments, archives, public spaces) enables history to be integrated into the living memory (Ricoeur, 2004, pp. 395-396). The concept of repetition, borrowed from Kierkegaard and Heidegger, refers to the "repetition of a possibility of existence that has been" (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 379), that is, the ability to learn from the past, recalling or revoking heritage, loyalty to what can be repeated—opening up the past again to the future (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 380). A generational consciousness—the sense of a shared destiny—forms around a significant event or issues dominating that generation's world, particularly around the time of adolescence, and this also shapes the personal temporality of its members. A succession of generations exerts pressure and brings about changes in the dominant public temporality. Generations mediate temporality both towards their own personal temporalities and towards the public temporality embedded in the political structure of society.

Personal temporality is also configured through the social role the person had in the previous regime (or which he or she "inherits", identifies with). Raoul Hilberg, after the Second World War, described these roles as forming a triangle of perpetrator, victim, and bystander. Finding them insufficient to capture the scope of experiences, South African sociologist Sharlene Swartz expanded the triangle into a pentangle, adding the roles of resister and beneficiary (Swartz, 2016). Which of these roles we identify with affects the way we interpret the past, and how temporality is configured—lending some events a sense of urgency, suppressing others. These interpretations can be further supported or denied by the memory regime emerging after the fall of an oppressive regime. If the previous political regime inflicted open violence upon its own population, impacting many, including whole

communities, the new memory regime will likely focus primarily on the victims of the past atrocities as the main bearers of cultural trauma, as, for example, in post-apartheid South Africa. If the previous regime was a totalitarian system of "dull" coercion, requiring the vast majority of people to conform as was the case in Central Europe, it is more difficult to draw a clear line between victims and perpetrators, and beneficiaries and bystanders, and the dominant narrative of the memory regime places the blame on the political regime itself, its structure and consequences. This affects the way in which the various communities of people in the present relate to the past.

The constellation of narrators and bearers of the narrative determines the main message and the institutional and legislative choices of the memory regime. And the memory regime, in turn, serves to legitimate the new political regime and its representatives, and justify its policies and actions.

Transition as hyper-accelerated time

Accelerated time, a concept introduced by Reinhart Koselleck, refers to a qualitatively new era of modernity—the era of progress, revolutions, and expectations (Koselleck, 2004). Secularization has changed the way history is seen from something that is a given to something that is to be made. Modernity, Koselleck argued, brought a different way of relating the past and the future. It extended the future and brought it much closer to the present, defined increasingly by expectations and plans (Koselleck, 2004). History came to be perceived as series of exemplary events to learn from, but which are open to manipulation. "Since then historical instruction enters political life... According to party or position, the categories of acceleration and retardation (evident since the French Revolution) alter the relations of past and future in varying rhythm" (Koselleck, 2004, p. 41).

The transition following the fall of an oppressive regime takes place in hyper-accelerated time. It is accelerated anyway, within the context of the historical epoch of modernity, but also becomes politically accelerated within the political context of the political, economic, and social transformation, fed through the funnel of urgent expectations triggered by the abrupt change. Everything is subordinated to the proclaimed ends of the transition process (economic growth often being among the priorities of transition regimes), and the past is interpreted with a stretched forward-looking gaze, molding public temporality accordingly. Leaders ask the citizens for patience while goals are fulfilled, and the space within which an open, diversified, accountable addressing of the past can take place is limited. For many, personal expectations are also exalted in a hyper-accelerated time, in sync with the public temporality with its extended future, making the situation unripe for the in-depth and systematic scrutiny of the past trespasses against justice (more on ripeness below).

The danger of a single story: mediated and manipulated memory

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, an award-winning Nigerian novelist, warns against the "danger of a single story", against compacting complex human experiences into a single narrative, whether out of cultural ignorance or manipulation. "The consequence of the single story is this: it robs people of dignity. It makes recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It

emphasizes how we are different, rather than how we are similar. Stories matter. Many stories matter" (Adichie, 2009). The memory regimes of open, plural societies are maintained only partially through the ruling echelons of power. Mediation occurs through the channels designed through the legislation and institutions established to maintain the cultural memory, but the past can be interpreted by multiple actors from civil society, the cultural sphere, and academia. When a memory regime is captured by political power, plurality vanishes. A single story narrative is prescribed.

A captured memory regime repressively erases specific narratives of the past (for example the Polish law passed in 2018 forbidding the accusation that the Polish nation, or the Polish state, were complicit in the Nazi crimes committed in Poland by the Third German Reich during the Second World War); it prescribes forgetting and silences past narratives, in a kind of humiliated silence, (for example the expulsion of ethnic Germans and Hungarians after the Second World War from Czechoslovakia). It imposes its version in history education or commemorative rituals—training collective memory in selective remembrance (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 85). This manipulation of memory and the temporality embedded within it—the distancing and bringing closer of past events via selection, omission, and the passing of judgment—may clash with the personal temporalities of those who feel violated by such prescriptions, leading to a sense of being wronged, discriminated, or humiliated. It may also elicit a cultural trauma narrative when extended to a community bound by a shared interpretation that is at odds with the single public story or purged from public interpretation. Such clashes are perceived as fresh injuries, linked to an acute sense that fairness has been violated. Thus, dignity suffers a moral violation—in the sense of a person's responsibility to respect the first-personal authority of the other. Even if such mistreatment breaks no legal code, it breaks the more fundamental moral code (Gluchman, 2004, p. 505). The past that is unaddressed within captured narratives is ever present and frustration can turn into action, the search for redress. The target of the frustration resides in the here and now; the perceived wrong is extended from the past into the present.

A just society, as defined above, as the fulfilment of human capabilities to pursue a life in dignity, should respond to the call of the "duty of memory", to preserve and present the narratives on behalf of those who were wronged or killed, the victims, who have moral priority. This is the mediating function that governments hold in relation to cultural memory. Ricoeur (2004, p. 88) sees it as an imperative of justice, and this aim focuses the gaze on the *future*. Manipulated memory, as an inauthentic past narrative, is firmly planted in the *present* (Heidegger, 1996). Arendt reminds us that we need institutions to mediate because the world of human plurality is too vulnerable. Human action is irreversible and unpredictable—without the mediating force of institutions it is unlikely we would have the will and courage to engage (Arendt, 1998). However, the line between mediation and manipulation is one that should not be crossed.

Manipulated temporality

Public interpretations of the past necessarily omit, suppress, or render invisible a whole range of narratives. This occurs naturally as part of negotiating meanings in the public arena. A captured memory regime, though, commits these acts on purpose. The memory regime is

at times preoccupied with directly configuring public temporality. Legislation defines past eras as criminal for the purposes of truth commissions, trials, or reparations for previously seized property. It also molds temporality symbolically—particularly at state-formational moments—through constitutions (harkening back to the "golden age", lamenting injustices inflicted upon the nation during certain eras, etc.). In Central Europe, their preambles claim historical continuity of more than a thousand years. This imagination projects the presence and longevity of historical nations and creates the foundations for a narrative which exports the guilt for the twentieth-century totalitarianisms to the West (Nazi Germany) and the East (Soviet Union), skirting over them as mere glitches in the past of a longue-durée. The turn to the ancient past and the avoidance of accountability for the more recent past is reproduced in political discourse and institutional practice.

Another way in which temporality is manipulated is in the criminalization of the past. Laws on the criminality of the communist regime, for example, remove the statute of limitation on political crimes committed during that era and enable the institutions vested with such powers to conduct criminal investigations and bring cases before the courts. While such measures are taken with the victims in mind, they also have consequences. As Jacques Rupnik points out, "it introduces the idea that the political representation has as part of its mission to legislate on history" (Rupnik, 2002). He asks whether history can be revised by law. Responsibility for the crimes of the communist regime is attributed to the leaders and members of the Communist party alike—of whom there were millions—and so to nobody in particular. Laws also define the period within which the previous regime was criminal. This leaves out those whose grievances fall outside this period. In lumping the different eras and events together in that period, they place them on equal footing despite them being very different in terms of oppression and violence, while personal responsibility dissipates in an amorphous pot of vastness.

Stuck in the past: waiting and ripeness

For many, personal temporality during the time of transition is also affected by the pace of transitional justice. The shared personal side effect is the waiting. Waiting for a court trial or ruling, waiting for reparative measures, or waiting for recognition or an apology. The victims perceive the failure to deliver justice as the second injustice. It is the sense of being let-down, the unfulfilled expectation, and the impossibility of closure.

The hyper-acceleration of time requires people to wait patiently. People are asked to put their personal needs on hold while the burning priorities set by the new regime are pursued. Generations for whom the advent of a new regime represented an important life-changing event may exhibit patience, fueled by the hopes and expectations attached to that change. However, generations that grew up after the change in regime, in a vastly different environment, have no reason to offer patience. Their sense of urgency is shaped by a different lived experience and hence by a different temporality molded by this experience.

The hyper-acceleration of time has a marked effect on the timing and emphasis of the legislative and institutional processes of the memory regime. The new memory regime is scrutinized from abroad, with pressure being put on the processes of transitional justice, while individuals and communities may have different needs and priorities. The victims of

the previous era in particular need ample time to heal and work through the trauma before they are ready to address the past in a public forum. “Memory does not only bear on time: it also requires time—a time of mourning” (Ricoeur, 2004, p. 74), particularly for the victims, who are often least ready to take part in the mechanisms of transitional justice, which often start immediately or shortly after the change in regime (Braithwaite & Nickson, 2012). As the government regulates the stages in which the past is addressed and the period of public mourning, of venting and moving on, many struggle to do the same in their private lives.

Not only do people have to be prepared for appeased memory, but there is also a need for “epochal ripeness”, *kairos* on the societal level. There is a sense that a sequence is required. As emotions tend to run high immediately after the old regime ends, it is difficult at times to immediately and systematically address the past. This is especially true in societies where the bystanders or beneficiaries of the regime had the most extensive social role in the past, where attention will be directed towards the future rather than the past, which many wish to be forgotten, closed, left behind, especially if the former victims are not visibly represented among the new political elite. It may take a generation or two of distancing to allow a space for the past to be brought back into the present, and require the opening of narratives, the seeking of interpretations, and a move away from a mode of public forgetting toward one of remembering and dialogue (see Assmann, 2009, for a discussion of the modes of remembering). Changes in the mood and attunement toward the past are shaped by current needs and public interpretations. Due to intergenerational transmission, these may be gradual and barely noticeable. But if the transmission falters and a sense of continuity is absent in public interpretations, this may have significant consequences for the up and coming generation, which seeks to understand its situation, and so turns to other sources for interpretation.

(Not) falling prey

As explored above, authentic being is obscured by public interpretations. Da-sein falls prey to these, away from its authentic self. What keeps us from falling prey is angst—feeling anxious at being-in-the-world itself (Heidegger, 1996, p. 175). It individualizes, disturbs, gives us a sense of “not-being-at-home” (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177). When intergenerational transmission of the past falters, a sense of uprootedness may become widespread, resulting in a perceived identity crisis. It may lead to the formation of new epochal definition(s) of the situation. But when angst seeks answers in easy, inauthentic interpretations of the past, it becomes fear (Heidegger, 1996, p. 177).

A captured memory regime strives on such emotions, aided by a politics of fear and populism. Handing down the past, seeking meaning in it, and interpreting it are part of the mediating function of a society in relation to memory. Heidegger speaks of choosing a “hero,” (Heidegger, 1996, par. 371, p. 386) which helps us to facilitate the selection and interpretation of the past either as the possibility of repetition and learning from it, or in terms of stripping it of its past-ness and depth of meaning. In inauthentic historicity, public interpretations are unsteady. Thus the Da-sein focuses on the present.

Blind toward possibilities, it is incapable of retrieving what has been, but only retains what is and receives ‘real’, what has been left over, of the world-historical that has been... In contrast, the temporality of authentic historicity, as the Moment that anticipates and retrieves,

undoes the making present of the today and the habituation to the conventionalities of the they… Authentic historicity understands history as the 'recurrence' of what is possible and knows that a possibility recurs only when existence is open for it fatefully, in the Moment, in absolute retrieve (Heidegger, 1996, pp. 357-358).

The inward-looking, authentic being finds a hero in a life worth repeating (e.g. Jesus, for believers).

Interestingly, Heidegger (1996) speaks of heroes in a positive sense only. But in inauthentic public interpretations we can also find heroes in less worthy people, frequently a political leader promising answers to fear and anxiety. Such heroes often incite fear by manipulating temporality—by selectively fixating on an era and its manipulated interpretation.

Hannah Arendt is not inclined to embrace such heroes. Society's main end is to provide everlasting organized remembrance, where each member's life story can be witnessed and remembered without the assistance of one eloquent storyteller (Arendt, 1998).

It is the space of appearance in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things but make their appearance explicitly (Arendt, 1998, pp. 198-199).

Hers is a vision that seems to be closer to the just society described above.

Conclusion

To live life in dignity requires, among other things, being listened to and acknowledged, and having the opportunity to communicate in a public setting. It also means fair treatment, which a justice system based on a single story cannot provide for all in equal measure. Temporality is an element of personal identity, and its violation by manipulated memory impacts the person's perception of their dignity. A just society mediates the processes of addressing the past through laws and institutions. This mediation is forward-looking, aimed at justice. In contrast, a memory regime that is manipulated looks to the present—and is driven by a lust for power and justification of the status quo. A captured memory regime manipulates cultural memory, resulting in the failure to transmit memory from one generation to another. This has significant consequences for society. Angst and fear, stemming from the uprootedness of the up and coming generation, lead to a quest for the meaning of the past, and its interpretation in the present. A captured memory regime provides a breeding ground for a politics of fear and inauthentic interpretations driven by the political aims of the day. This impacts on the way in which the narrative frames of the political identity for the future are shaped. The norms, values, and attitudes derived from these frames in turn impact on political decisions and structures and may impede the democratic project for decades to come.

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