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Connected Memories: The International Politics of Partition, from Poland to India

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This article theorizes connected memory, or in other words how people remember each other's memories, through the connected histories of territorial partition in different contexts. It claims that social memories can travel beyond their original context, pushing beyond efforts to understand supranational "mnemonic communities," or to understand cosmopolitan memory as a thin memory community encompassing all humanity. It builds on the idea of "connected histories," arguing that existing approaches to social memory in world politics either neglect connections across national and regional boundaries or scale up the national model to the global level. The article uses the history of territorial partitions as an illustration of three types of connected memory: sympathetic, vicarious, and modular. Partition has often been studied in comparative or aggregative ways, ruling out the possibility that partitions affect each other. But from the partitions of Poland to the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, to Ireland, Palestine, and India, partitions have often been events remembered beyond the national context and in the plural. Such memories have, in turn, altered the imaginable possibilities of the future, for example, by providing precedents for or warnings about future partitions.

Cet article analyse la mémoire connectée ou, en d'autres termes, la manière dont les individus se remémorent les souvenirs des autres, dans le cadre d'histoires connectées de divisions territoriales, dans différents contextes. Il avance que les mémoires sociales peuvent voyager au-delà de leur contexte d'origine, multipliant les efforts pour comprendre les « communautés mnémoniques » supranationales ou la mémoire cosmopolite en tant que communauté mémorielle étroite, englobant l'humanité entière. Il part du concept d' « histoires connectées », expliquant que les approches existantes de la mémoire sociale en politique mondiale soit négligent les connexions entre les niveaux national et régional, soit dupliquent simplement le modèle national au niveau mondial. Cet article s'appuie sur l'histoire des divisions territoriales pour illustrer trois types de mémoire connectée : compatissante, indirecte et modulaire. Les divisions ont souvent été analysées de manière comparative ou agrégative, excluant la possibilité qu'elles puissent avoir un impact mutuel. Toutefois, du fractionnement de la Pologne à l'éclatement de l'Empire ottoman, en passant par l'Irlande, la Palestine et l'Inde, les divisions territoriales ont souvent constitué des événements marquant les mémoires au-delà de leurs contextes nationaux. Ces mémoires ont ensuite, à leur tour, modifié les possibles imaginables pour l'avenir, par exemple en créant des précédents ou en incarnant des avertissements quant à de futures divisions.

Este artículo teoriza sobre la memoria conectada, o, en otras palabras, sobre cómo las personas recuerdan las memorias de los demás, a través de las historias conectadas de la partición territorial en diferentes

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contextos. Sostiene que las memorias sociales pueden viajar más allá de su contexto original, yendo más allá de los esfuerzos para entender las «comunidades mnémicas» supranacionales, o para entender la memoria cosmopolita como una comunidad de memoria estrecha que abarca a toda la humanidad. Se basa en la idea de las «historias conectadas», argumentando que los enfoques existentes de la memoria social en la política mundial o bien descuidan las conexiones a través de las fronteras nacionales y regionales o bien amplían el modelo nacional al nivel global. El artículo utiliza la historia de las particiones territoriales como ilustración de tres tipos de memoria conectada: empática, vicaria y modular. La partición se ha estudiado a menudo de forma comparativa o agregada, descartando la posibilidad de que las particiones se afecten unas a otras. No obstante, desde las particiones de Polonia hasta el desmembramiento del Imperio Otomano, pasando por Irlanda, Palestina y la India, las particiones han sido a menudo acontecimientos recordados más allá del contexto nacional y en plural. A su vez, estas memorias han alterado las posibilidades imaginables del futuro, por ejemplo, proporcionando precedentes o advertencias sobre futuras particiones.

Introduction

In February 2021, in commemorating the centenary of the partition of Ireland, President Michael O'Higgins held a public seminar with leading historians, entitled "Empire: Instincts, Interests, Power and Resistance." Partition here appeared not simply as the beginning of a nation state but also as an experience linking Ireland with colonial struggles across the world. "Partition has been closely associated," Alvin Jackson (2021) argued, with "processes of decolonisation in Ireland, India and Palestine." John Horne (2021) noted, partition "had been tried before 1914 in India, with the failed attempt to partition Bengal, as it would be in the new colony in Palestine." The panel might have gone yet further, to point out that 2022 would see not only the 75th anniversary of both the partition of India and the UN's approval of the partition of Palestine, but also the 250th anniversary of the first partition of Poland.

Partition has not infrequently been remembered as an event taking place in the plural. In the 1940s, while partition was debated in India and Palestine, many remembered the partition of Ireland as a precedent or warning. Imperial federalists such as Leo Amery and Reginald Coupland, who were influential in the making of British policy, used historical memory of partition as an important resource. Opponents to partition in Ireland, in turn, had recalled the infamous partition of Poland between Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, all manner of "partitions" were likened or distanced from Poland, in contexts as disparate as British parliamentary debates and Chinese opera. This helped make the partition of the Ottoman Empire a taboo in British politics in much of the nineteenth century, while in late Qing China the memory of Poland was a catalyst for a burgeoning reform movement. There is even a tradition that while Poland was under foreign rule, Poland's partition was remembered in Ottoman diplomatic proceedings with the ritual pronouncement that the ambassador of Poland was "delayed on his journey and unable to attend" (Gamm 2014).

This connectedness of partition, however, fits uneasily within the literatures on the politics of memory in International Relations (IR) and International Political Sociology (IPS). In line with the "memory boom" of the 1990s, social memory has often been thought of as something that occurs within a national or state context. Various developments of that literature have pushed beyond it in order to theorize social memory in the context of the international (Levy and Sznaider 2002;

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Mälksoo 2009; Levy, Heinlein, and Breuer 2011; Olesen 2012; Mälksoo 2014; Subotić 2018; Subotić and Steele 2018). Yet, these developments have remained tied to the nation-state model in some ways. Social memory is often seen as a reinforcement—however contested—of a specific community, and those who own a memory of something are largely confined to members of the community that experienced it.

The central argument of the article is that what I call "connected memories" exist and are important for international political sociology. The idea of connected memories, building on notions of "connected histories" and the transcultural turn in memory studies, aims to characterize the ways in which social memory travels across contexts, and is appropriated and reappropriated, without being firmly tied either to a specific identity or to a universalizing global culture. Within this framework, I examine three modes of connected memory. First, there is sympathetic memory, which moralizes the experiences of an other, shaping the moral landscape of future possibilities. Second, vicarious memory performs the self's likeness to an other, while stopping short of actually *being* the other. Third, these and other kinds of mnemonic connections can combine to make memories "modular," in that mnemonic analogies are made frequently across a range of examples.

The article also contributes to the literature on territorial partition, which generally assumes, contrary to my argument, that partitions do not influence each other in important ways, either by focusing on one partition without reference to others (Galnoor 1995; Shlaim 1998; Lukowski 1999; Sen 2018; Raychaudhuri 2019) or by quantitatively aggregating them without regard to path dependence.[1]

The article proceeds first by demonstrating in more detail the ways in which traces of the national model remain in recent sophisticated work on social memory in an international context. In a second section, I elaborate on resources from global history and transcultural memory studies that can be of use in conceptualizing social memory differently. Then in the remainder of the article, I outline the concepts of sympathetic, vicarious, and modular memory by developing a connected history of partition and its memory from Poland to India.

Memory Communities: The Nation State, the Supranational, and the Global

Collective memory has not always been closely identified with memory communities on the national model. *La mémoire collective* was originally proposed by Maurice Halbwachs (1925, 1992) to understand memory as shaped through a context of social interactions. For Halbwachs, the memory of an individual is not an isolated phenomenon; instead memory is mediated by social vocabularies, images, and so forth, which help make sense of experience. Yet, neither is collective memory the reified memory of an organic national community. In fact, the words "*nation*," "*nationalité*," and "*France*" barely appear in the text of *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire*, with separate chapters being devoted instead to the memories of families, of religions, and of social classes.

Is a bounded community of any kind even necessary at all for social memory to exist? Halbwachs is inconsistent on this (Olick 1999, 334; Erll 2011, 10). Sometimes, he is concerned with group memories that define the group's boundaries (Halbwachs 1992, 54, 57). Yet elsewhere, he insists that memory is an activity only done by individuals socially interacting (Halbwachs 1992, 38). For example, he notices that we rely on other people in order to clarify our childhood memories, often family members. We could read this as a family collectively defining its own past. But surely if some of these people turned out not to be family members, it would still be a social process of remembering. Memories can still be social, even if they extend beyond any clearly recognizable, self-conscious group.

[1] For an analytical review of this literature, see Sambanis and Schulhofer-Wohl (2009).

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Yet in the 1980s and 1990s, cultural memory to a certain degree came to be seen as synonymous with national memory and group identity, in a shift often associated with Pierre Nora's work *Lieux de mémoire* (Erll 2011, 6; Conrad 2003, 86n4). To some extent it is still true, as Sebastian Conrad (2003) noted, that "Studies of memory. . .continue to cling to the nation with a peculiar stubbornness." A persistent theme, for example, has been the attempts by Germany and Japan to come to terms with their own wartime past and to find an identity as a member of an international community (Löwenheim 2009; Lawson and Tannaka 2011; Berger 2012). Claims about national identity are of course complex, and memories based on the same experiences can be used to justify opposite policies, as in Maja Zehfuss's (2007) study of German war memory debates, where the claim that Germans are biased against war, as a result of their war memories, can in fact justify war itself. Typically considered central to the politics of memory in world politics is the attempt by states and state officials to deliberately manipulate and reify national identities (Edkins 2003).

In response, memory scholars have put forth various ways in which memories transcend national or state communities. For Maria Mälksoo (2009, 654), "mnemonic communities" can exist beyond the state, for example, the distinctly "Atlantic-Western European, German, East-Central European and Russian" ways of remembering the Second World War, each focusing on a different aspect of it. By portraying Soviet crimes and Nazi crimes as within the same frame of reference, Poland and the Baltics asserted their true Europeanness, even as they reveal "fundamental insecurity about their immediate past's compatibility with the Western European states' own" (Mälksoo 2009, 655). Eastern European states decentered the monolithic European memory and identity imposed by the West, but in struggling over Europe's memory they reaffirmed the importance of Europe itself and its coherence, however tenuously. As Mälksoo puts it, their argument was that "While the experiences of East and West Europe in World War II were different, a common frame for their interpretation should not be an impossibility" (Mälksoo 2009, 660).

The recognition of such memory communities transcending individual nations is a very important corrective to the nation-state model of collective memory. At the same time, these memory communities still seem to be relatively well-bounded communities that are defined, in the first instance, by an aggregation of state boundaries, and the memories under discussion are experiences of those communities themselves. Moreover, what is ultimately at stake in this particular struggle, for Mälksoo, is what it means to be part of Europe, in the context of inclusion into formal supranational political institutions. Debate between transnational memory communities over their differing experiences of war and Europeanness, then, is not dissimilar to debate between groups within a nation over experiences of war and nationhood.

But what if something happens that is meaningful not only for the community that experienced it? One particularly influential answer to this question was the idea of a "cosmopolitan memory," set out by Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider (2002). Levy and Sznaider took on board many aspects of collective memory theory. In particular, they scaled up to the global level Benedict Anderson's (1991, 90) claim that national communities were "imagined" and a result of myth making. They argued, from an analogy with the creation of national identities and memories in the nineteenth century, that the creation of a cosmopolitan memory in the twenty-first century would be possible. "The nation *was* the global when compared with the local communities that preceded it. . .And there is nothing inconceivable, theoretically and empirically, about [cosmopolitan memory] providing such a basis [of authenticity] on a global level" (Levy and Sznaider 2002, 90–91). Where they disagreed with many scholars of collective memory was primarily the level at which collective memories could exist, rather than displacing the bounded community model of collective memory itself. Their argument at a theoretical level was not, like for example the nineteenth-century British memory of the partitions of Poland examined below,

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that outsiders sympathized with victims of certain crimes. Rather, they argued that "the abstract nature of 'good and evil' that symbolizes the Holocaust" (Levy and Sznaider 2002, 102) made it potentially anyone's memory, and that the Holocaust had "potential to become the cultural foundation for global human rights politics" (Levy and Sznaider 2002; see also Olesen 2012).

Many raised difficulties with this idea of cosmopolitan memory. Levy and Sznaider (2007) themselves recognized that cosmopolitan memory is at risk of reinforcing a utopian Eurocentrism, and particularly of ignoring actually existing Eastern European national memories. But while an actually existing global cosmopolitan memory appears distant, if not impossible, scholars have suggested various ways of qualifying cosmopolitan memory in more realistic, empirically driven ways (Levy, Heinlein, and Breuer 2011). Mälksoo (2014) engages critically with this framework of cosmopolitanization, emphasizing how European efforts to build a common future by engaging with the legacy of Soviet communism draw on key cosmopolitan themes of shared humanity and the inclusion of the "other."

This effort to inscribe a cosmopolitan memory of the Holocaust, Jelena Subotić (2019) argues, creates a situation of profound ontological insecurity in postcommunist Europe. Postcommunist states have attempted to resolve this insecurity by redirecting responsibility for the Holocaust toward communism. Cosmopolitan memory, then, is not an actually existing state of affairs but a narrative and an "institutional push" by West European states (Subotić 2019, 35). Much as the state-sponsored memory narratives explored by Zehfuss and Edkins cause anxiety for people who then resist the state, here Holocaust memory is resisted not only within the state but also at the level of European politics.

To sum up this selective overview of efforts to conceptualize social memory outside the nation state, there are two key themes that all these paradigms have tended to accept since the 1990s "memory boom," which the notion of connected memories will take us beyond. First is the basic idea that when memories transcend individuals, it is through reference to one or another kind of identity shared by those individuals. To the extent that a cosmopolitan memory is in the process of becoming actualized, either on a European or on a global scale, it is conceptualized in the way that a national memory is, writ large. The idea of "memory communities," likewise, does not break with the idea of a community of some kind. While Western and Eastern Europeans' memories of the Holocaust, the Second World War, and their outcomes may clash, they do so as a contest over the meaning of a series of tightly connected historical events, and ultimately as a struggle over what it means to belong to the collectivity called "Europe."

Second, the experiences referred to in these memories are typically claimed to have belonged to the community that is being referenced. For individual Eastern European states, for example, or for the Eastern European memory community as a whole, it is largely by virtue of Eastern Europe having had a different experience of the Second World War that it resists the Western narrative, at the same time as it is by virtue of having experienced the same Second World War that Europeanness is asserted. Even if states or supranational entities impose a memory forcibly and meet fierce resistance, rather than enjoying a harmonious organic collective memory, memories are still internal to their own communities.

Similarly, the idea of a cosmopolitan memory carries over the same model to the global scale. Although scholars of cosmopolitan memory have acknowledged that an actually existing cosmopolitan Holocaust memory is far from a reality, for it to exist would mean that people all over the world treat the Holocaust as part of their own legacy that they have inherited. There would need to be a "general sense that humanity had to be juxtaposed to the crimes of German chauvinism and Nazism," and that the Holocaust had created new forms of "humanist and universalist identifications" (Levy and Sznaider 2002, 88).

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The framing of social memory within and around bounded identity communities, then, in one way or another, remains common within scholarship on social memory and the international. In the next section, I examine scholarly resources that I argue could enrich understanding of social memory.

Connected Histories and Social Memory

The idea of "connected histories," adapted from history into cognate disciplines, has taken a somewhat different approach from those examined above to resisting both national introspection and homogenizing universalisms. The basic insight of connected histories is that the major events and processes that international historians are mainly concerned with rarely occur autonomously, outside the context of relations with other parts of the world. Going beyond area studies, and against methodological nationalism, macro terms such as "modernity" are properly understood by putting the local in the context of the regional and sometimes the global, and vice versa.

In originally formulating the term, Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1997, 747) examined a "millenarian conjuncture," which "operated over a good part of the Old World in the sixteenth century," from lower Burma to the Mughal emperor Akbar, all the way through to the Iberian explorers of the Americas. Investigating how ideas, things, and practices such as these were connected, for Subrahmanyam, indicated a way toward an understanding of large-scale phenomena, which avoided either defining them in terms of comparison with Europe or falling into a postmodern particularism. Gurminder Bhambra (2007, 77), then, systematically applies this as a method of reconstructing a sociological approach to modernity in general. Critiquing established myths around the Renaissance, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution, she argues that all these in one way or another were produced "in and through the colonial relationship."

Connected history, however, has generally been kept separate from scholarship on memory. Implicitly this signals an assumption that the analytical tools needed to analyze history, on one hand, and memory, on the other, are distinct and separate. In practice, it reinforces a sharp distinction between critical history on the one hand, which is attuned to the international as a thick space of interaction and travel of ideas, people, and practices, and on the other hand, collective myths, the objects of which tend to be politically contested, but ultimately bounded, identity communities. The memory–history distinction is, of course, important, but this distinction should not be taken as a strict opposition, as if history could be contrasted with memory as reason is sometimes thought to be sharply distinct from myth or belief (Bell 2008, 153).

Like the idea of connected histories, there is also a growing movement toward more self-consciously moving memory studies outside of methodological nationalism, sometimes referred to as the "transcultural turn" (Bond and Rapson 2014; see also De Cesari and Rigney 2014). Astrid Erll (2011) insists that traveling is a fundamental aspect of cultural memory, that cultural memory must travel in some sense if it is to have an effect on people. As a result, her critique is not reserved only for scholars mainly interested in national memories. "Even sophisticated approaches, which allow for difference and exchange between mnemonic communities, therefore, tend to operate with distinct 'containers'" (Erll 2011, 7). Whether at the level of the nation or a supranational community, the assumption of an isomorphy between territory, society, and memory remains limited by the "container culture" model.

Erll draws attention to carriers, media, contents, practices, and forms as central concepts for examining how cultural memories travel. For example, she traces the "iconization" and narrativization of District Six, a multiethnic neighborhood of Cape Town that was cleared of many of its residents by the South African

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government starting in 1968 (Erll 2014). The way in which art and literature mediated District Six in memorable ways made possible the Hollywood film *District 9*, albeit not without transforming the story in important ways. She argues that it is the "vital fluidity" of this "successful travelling schema" that makes it "a tool to tell stories of multiculturalism and racism, of victims and perpetrators. . .of futures past and present" (Erll 2014, 48). Another reference point is Michael Rothberg's "multidirectional memory." Starting from the premise that different memories are not necessarily destined to compete with one another but can also build on each other in productive ways, Rothberg (2009, 7) argues that "early Holocaust memory emerged in dialogue with the dynamic transformations and multifaceted struggles that define the era of decolonization."

The key differences between the transcultural turn in memory studies and the earlier work it builds on relate to the two themes of existing work on memory in IR and IPS pointed out above. First, there is no claim that any particular kind of community is being constructed. Memories travel between different contexts, even when they do not participate in constructing a "container culture." Second, there is no assumption that someone must claim to have been part of an experience in some way in order to have a memory of it.

Some scholars of social memory might consider this type of social memory to be more about the strategic use of historical analogies than memory itself. To use Erll's example, perhaps Hollywood filmmakers were not concerned to memorialize the troubled story of Cape Town's District Six, but were instead simply out to make an enormous profit by adding in some aliens to a winning storyline. But such a strict binary would be blurred by most studies of social memory in IPS, IR, and related disciplines, which have often acknowledged that instrumental use by politicians is a major part of what drives practice of social memory (Zehfuss 2007, 9, 89, 235). Historical analogy, just like other types of social memory, is a social practice of forming and reproducing memories, and of simplifying complex events into actionable forms.[2]

At the same time, a certain distance remains between these recent advances in memory studies and the idea of connected histories. Connected histories is juxtaposed alongside general abstractions such as "early modernity" or the "industrial revolution." Social memory studies scholars, however, have approached generality in a different way. Rather than problematizing general concepts, social memory scholars have been more likely to start from particular memories and ask how they might become general. However, as Zeynep Gülşah Çapan (2020, 292) notes, the intention of "connected histories" is not simply to promote more accurate historical narratives of particular events or periods by revealing connections. Rather, it is to "re-think those categories and methods that have limited our studies." While memory studies' scholars are interested first and foremost in, as Erll puts it, "cultural practices grounded in cultural memory," connected histories is concerned with "unifying features," even if these are more centered on connections than on structures.

Can a combination of these two sets of insights result in anything more than the sum of its parts? The transcultural turn in memory studies has raised important questions that were previously less visible. However, to follow up on these questions from an IPS perspective, an encounter with connected histories can push them further. How do transcultural or transboundary memories not only emerge and manifest themselves but also impact on politics at the level of the international? Or, more fundamentally, how do they participate in historically producing and constituting the international itself? Can various cases of transcultural memory build on each other to form a larger, if only loosely connected, whole?

[2] I thank the editors for suggesting this formulation.

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In the following, then, I build on these scholars of memory studies, but toward aims that do not ultimately rest with the characterization and understanding of mnemonic processes. Instead, following a "connected histories" approach, I show how a major category that tends to be studied using a comparative approach, under the assumption that each instance is separate from the others—in this case, territorial partition and its memory—in fact turns out to be an interconnected phenomenon across time and space.

Connected Memories of Partition

One major historical phenomenon in which connected memories have played a strong, rarely acknowledged role is that of territorial partition. The politics of partition are generally explained and understood through either a comparative historical approach or a quantitative hypothesis-testing approach. In quantitative hypothesis-testing literature, each partition is taken for granted as a separate event, with no possibility for one of them to affect another, no change in the meaning of partition over time, and no path-dependencies emerging (Sambanis and Schulhofer-Wohl 2009). Two comparative historical studies of partition, by T.G. Fraser (1984) and Radha Kumar (1997), in contrast, reveal many connections between partitions, particularly through common origins within the British Empire. However, these connections are not central to their overall comparative analysis.

The concept of connected memories is of course not limited to partition, and could in principle be extended to secessions, protest movements, and other political phenomena. Moreover, recent IPS scholarship on a number of different topics shows potential for an appreciation of connected memory, although it has not yet been theorized as such. For example, Yoav Galai (2017) examines the intersections of various narratives of redemption—a concept that must presuppose a certain memory of the past—Israeli, German, and Chinese, through afforestation in the Negev region. Or in Michal Givoni's (2020) study of Palestinian volunteers assisting refugees in Greece, it is through a certain commensurability of traumatic past experiences that motivates "an exception to the rules of humanitarian action" typically thought of as universalist and impartial (see also Zambernardi 2017; Callahan 2020, chapter 10).

The value of focusing on partition here is two-fold: first, focusing on one phenomenon makes it possible to demonstrate a wide range and variety of types of connected memory while limiting the amount of historical background information that must be provided. Second, it is particularly with partition that it is possible to demonstrate connections over much more time and space than has been shown in the past (e.g., Chester 2019; Sinanoglu 2019). Thus, the focus here makes it possible to use the study of memory to advance discussions of a substantive political phenomenon more effectively.

In the following sections, I show how the idea of connected memories can provide a different understanding of how partition has unfolded historically over a range of contexts. Rather than approaching partitions with the methodological assumption that they are separate events to be compared or aggregated, connected memories of partition circulate widely and have important implications for other partitions. I focus here on three ways of conceptualizing the international political implications of connected memory, which I call sympathetic, vicarious, and modular.

The memory of partition is of course highly context-dependent, and partition has meant many different things in different times and places. In some cases, partition was seen as a crime or disaster to be avoided, in other cases as a necessary evil, and occasionally as a positive good. The picture of partition that emerges from Poland to India here, however, is not one in which partitions are discrete, disconnected events, as assumed by much literature on partition, nor are memories of partition only relevant to those who experienced them. Instead, the argument here is that

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social memories of partition traveled, and shaped how partition was seen, one way or another, beyond their original context. Because of this capacity for traveling, the international political effects of any particular partition memory are complex and cannot be reliably predicted. Because the concept of partition is so easily applied to different contexts, partition memories often had effects that were quite other than the intentions of those who promoted them. However, the important point is that whether we are looking at the potential partitions of the Ottoman Empire or China in the nineteenth century, or the actual partitions of Palestine or India in the twentieth, no account of what "partition" meant, or how it was understood, could avoid reference to certain connected memories of past partitions in other contexts, and these connected memories in turn do not easily fit within the categories of existing social memory studies.

Sympathetic Memory: The Partition of Poland in Britain

One type of connected memory is based around the modern concept of sympathy, which first requires some explanation. This concept of sympathy is largely a product of Enlightenment attempts to justify morality (MacIntyre 1981, 49). David Hume gave it its radical form as one of the passions, in principle unjustifiable by reason, which motivate human action. Threatened by the Calvinist view of humans as irredeemably depraved egotists, he argued that we can be motivated to assent to universal moral principles, but only by feeling the sufferings of others, not by reasoning. Hume, Adam Smith, and many others thought that without sympathy, society would disintegrate (Sayre-McCord 2015). While we cannot thoroughly evaluate this concept here, we can examine sympathy as a historically existing disposition toward feeling for others because of the large impact that this understanding of sympathy as fundamentally affective, and not rational, had and continues to have in many modern societies.

In particular, the Anglo-American humanitarian reformers of the eighteenth century exemplify this disposition (Halttunen 1995). These promoters of sympathy necessarily invoked memory because they targeted affective and sensible aspects of human experience. They aimed to avoid societal disintegration by bringing suffering to the attention of the public, trying to move people to feel others' suffering. However, the problem with Enlightenment sympathy was that in reality, simply seeing nearby suffering often did not actually move people to sympathy. In practice, then, it was often not really suffering itself that moved people to action but the affective performances of the reformers, whose agendas could be different from those of the suffering.

Much of this suffering was ongoing, such as on slave plantations or in the military. However, to arouse public emotion, the reformers had to refer to exemplary moments and events of this suffering that took place in the past. For example, as peace reformer William Ladd asked, "What pencil can paint, what language can describe, the horrors of Borodino, Moscow, Berezina and Waterloo?" (Halttunen 1995, 328). Sympathetic memory, then, is a kind of social memory influenced by this modern disposition toward cultivating feelings for another's suffering. Sympathetic memories commemorate someone's suffering and seek to bring awareness of it into the present.

While vicarious memory, examined in the next section, may often reinforce one's own collective group, as in, "it could have happened to us" (Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele 2021, 53), sympathetic memory does not rest on such a close identification between the self and the other. This means that it is not logically necessary for it to hinge on any particular, well-defined sense of self. Memories of atrocities commonly cited as motivation for humanitarian activity, for example, could potentially be instrumentalized as nation-state rhetoric. Yet at the same time, it may also be made by individuals or institutions on behalf of more nebulous

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positionalities or entities such as "humanity," where it is not always clear who "we" are (see Olesen 2012).

Of the Enlightenment philosophers of sympathy, it was Edmund Burke who was most focused on its international dimensions, and particularly its relation to the partition of Poland (Pitts 2005, chapter 3). Like the humanitarian reformers, Burke tried to reinvigorate public morality by theatrically stirring up sympathy for status-quo causes abroad, for example, Indian rulers deposed by the East India Company, or those who stood in the way of the French Revolution. Burke was keenly aware of the problem that cultural and geographical distance posed for this project of manufacturing sympathy. However, these only exacerbated difficulties that the humanitarian reformers had already discovered in moving people to sympathize even with local suffering, and Burke's solution was not fundamentally different from theirs. He focused on the "vicinity" of France and the "Commonwealth of Europe" in order to make the plight of the aristocracy there and the balance of power seem tangible, and likened the Nawab of Oudh to the King of Prussia. Whether explicitly in an international mode or not, then, promoters of sympathy developed emotive and potentially sentimental rhetorical vocabularies to reinforce what they saw as morality.

These problems of sympathy became particularly acute when it came to the partition of Poland, and it is precisely because of this that public displays of sympathy for the fate of Poland are good illustrations of this disposition. The dismembering of Poland among Prussia, Austria, and Russia, begun in 1772 and completed in 1795, was rooted in a long process of weakening relative to its neighbors for at least a century (Lukowski 1999). The partitions of Poland were a key step in the emergence of the concept of partition into the realm of international politics, and evoked responses that locked Poland into the memory of politicians and diplomats.

For Burke, Poland's existence was necessary for the balance of power, which was in turn necessary for protecting the customs and morality of England, but Burke recognized it was extremely unlikely that public opinion could sympathize with Poland enough to support an action to prevent partition, even if such an action were materially possible (Plassart 2020). "Poland might be," he lamented, "considered as a country in the moon" (Plassart 2020, 907). It was thus not a failure to rationally recognize England's national interest in the preservation of Poland, but a failure of "moral imagination." What came as a result showed the contrast between the Enlightenment concept of sympathy, by its very definition, and rational self-interest. On the one hand, "No Cause in the world can, as a Cause, be more clear in my Eye, or can have more of my warm wishes than that of the Poles." However, on the other hand, Britain was not in a position to "afford Poland any assistance whatsoever" (Plassart 2020, 907). While Poland itself was a lost cause, the consequences of this interpretation of the partition of Poland were far-reaching, for example, influencing the emergent idea of the Concert of Europe (Plassart 2020, 910).

Burke himself was not successful in creating sympathy for Poland, but those who followed later, in creating a public memory of the partition, were. The way in which the partition cut through Poland was memorialized in striking illustrations that became widespread. In a particularly influential allegory drawn by Nicolas Noël le Mire and Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune (figure 1), the monarchs of Europe tore up pieces of a map of Poland, while looking away in shame (Dawson 2002, 74).

Historian John Kutolowski (2004) has documented the varied but widespread and overall sympathetic attitudes toward Poland among the literate British public, peaking in the mid-nineteenth century. Jane Porter's *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803), which some consider the first historical novel in English, was set within the context of the partitions of Poland, and was wildly successful, remaining in print throughout the nineteenth century (McLean 2007).

Britain never acted seriously to undo the partitions of Poland. However, this sympathetic memory of them had unintended effects on the political landscape

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Figure 1. Untitled copy of an original engraving likely entitled "The Twelfth Cake, Le gâteau des rois" by Noël Le Mire, 1773.
Source: Dawson (2002, 75).

of British foreign policy toward countries other than Poland. Even hardened realists took careful account of what they thought public opinion would support. In the British parliament, debates over whether to consider contemporary events analogous to the partition of Poland extended to the 1815 transfer of Genoa to Sardinia,[3] the partition of Belgium considered in the Flahaut plan of 1830,[4] the 1864 Prussian–Austrian invasion of Denmark,[5] and even England, on the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy there.[6] Others pointed out the potential dangers of another partition of Poland in Greece,[7] Hungary,[8] or Egypt,[9] or the "partition of three new Polands" simultaneously in Egypt, Siam, and Morocco.[10] This is only to mention some of the examples where a comparison with Poland was explicitly made.

The Poland partition discourse played an important role in the way Britain approached the Eastern Question, or the question of the future of the Ottoman Empire, which many throughout the nineteenth century thought to be on the verge of collapse. There are at least two key moments where this mattered. First, in the lead-up to the Crimean War (1853–1856), Russia's historical treatment of Poland, seen to prefigure its aggressive stance toward the Ottoman Empire, fueled public

[3] HC Deb, April 27, 1815: 900
[4] HC Deb, August 18, 1831: 256; HC Deb, March 26, 1832: 912.
[5] HL Deb, March 8, 1864: 1630.
[6] HL Deb, February 11, 1851: 366.
[7] HL Deb, May 24, 1830: 995.
[8] HC Deb, July 21, 1849: 795, 815.
[9] HC Deb, March 27, 1885: 886.
[10] HC Deb, June 1, 1904: 534.

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anti-Russian sentiment. Accounts of the onset of the Crimean War are complex and diverse, but British pro-war public opinion was at least a crucial background factor, which provided a fallback position for a divided and chaotic coalition government (Gooch 1956). Anti-Russian political opinion in Britain had for decades been stirred up, and Russia's treatment of Poland was a consistent part of the picture being painted, going back to the partitions (Gleason 1950). British public opinion preceding the war had been provoked especially by an 1853 series of meetings between a British ambassador and Tsar Nicholas I (Palmer 1992, 118). The Tsar claimed that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire—he infamously originated the label "sick man" of Europe at these meetings—was imminent and sketched out plans to divide up its territory. In the parliamentary debate on the declaration of war against Russia, Britain's first declaration of war in over fifty years, comparisons with the partition of Poland were raised against the government by three different MPs concerned that the government was not taking a tough enough stance against Russia.[11]

Second, in the circumstances surrounding the Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878), the assumption remained that to publicly discuss the partition of the Ottoman Empire was immoral and dangerous. Despite growing public antipathy toward the Ottoman Empire, this played a role in Britain's hesitation to pursue a comprehensive partition of it. Lord Salisbury, who hoped that an Ottoman partition could be undertaken, found public moralism to be an obstacle. In 1876, he wrote that dividing up a collapsed Ottoman Empire would be dangerous because "If the Powers quarrel over it, the calamities of a gigantic war must be undergone. If they agree, people call it a partition and denounce it as immoral" (Cecil 1921, 80). Benjamin Disraeli, as Prime Minister, was less consistent but in 1877 wrote to his ambassador in Constantinople that his intention was to veto "the dark designs of a secret partition, from wh[ich] the spirit of the 19th Century recoils" (Temperley and Penson 1938, 360). And, as before with the Crimean War, parliament debated whether or not the government was guilty of working with Russia toward a partition. For example, a Liberal MP reminded the government that Lord Palmerston—a towering figure in British foreign policy—had declared "he could be no party to repeating in Turkey the partition of Poland. . .he believed such a step would shock the moral sense of Europe, and be fatal to any Government who should propose it."[12] While the memory of Poland was not the only reason Britain still did not pursue a complete partition of the Ottoman Empire, public disapproval of "partition" in general was a relevant factor.

Actual expressions of moral outrage around partition were, of course, largely selective, and generally tended to ignore British imperialism. Exposing precisely this double standard was part of Salisbury's argument against the kind of foreign policy characterized by repeated condemnation of the partition of Poland. During the Crimean War he had argued, against those calling for Britain to undo the partition of Poland, that it would be "a very gross piece of hypocrisy to say that England upon all occasions was to come forward in defence of oppressed nationalities when a great portion of her empire was constituted of them."[13]

Sympathetic memory, then, is an ambiguous type of memory, which not only draws deeply on human emotions but also risks sentimentalism and unintended consequences. British sympathy toward partitioned Poland in the nineteenth century never materialized into any meaningful intervention on its behalf. Memory of the partition of Poland did, however, alter how other events could be viewed. In particular, for much of the British public, it gave the Eastern Question certain moral undertones, contributing to the Russophobia that led to participation in the

[11] HC Deb, March 31, 1854: 198–308.
[12] HC Deb, July 30, 1878: 732.
[13] HC Deb, March 27, 1855: 1186.

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Crimean War, and creating a formidable obstacle for politicians favoring a wholesale partition of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century.

Vicarious Memory: The Polandization of China

A second type of connected memory can emerge through vicariousness. The notion of vicarious memory overlaps with that of vicarious identity, which has been explored by Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele (2021). As they point out, vicarious experiences are common to everyday life, for example, when people tell stories about events they did not experience, in such a way as to provoke feelings as if they had experienced them directly. So far this resembles sympathy. However, this becomes vicarious identity, a substantially different phenomenon, when people live more generally as if these experiences really were theirs, "*integrating them as part of their own biography*" (Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele 2021, 12). They explain this using a Lacanian-inspired framework in which a person's identity is always inherently unstable and suffers from "lack." Living vicariously allows the person to live out a fantasy in which the satisfaction of this "lack" seems within reach.

Vicariousness lacks the particular moral undertones of sympathy, and is distinct from humanitarian regard for an other insofar as it is neither sharply distinguished from rational self-interest, nor is it invoked as a precondition of civilized society. The key to the sense of a vicarious experience, instead, is the sense that "it *could have* been me" (Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele 2021, 53).

Browning, Joenniemi, and Steele note that people sometimes identify vicariously with victims, such as in the Western response to the 2015 Paris attacks. In this case, the memorialization of the attacks reinforced a Western civilizational identity that obscured similar attacks that were occurring outside Western societies. However, this does not have to be the case, as vicarious experiences are, in an important way, not our own. Vicarious experience is not necessarily exhausted by the notion of identity. "It *could have* been me" is not the same as "it *was* me." The reason why it could have been me might be a result of my shared identity with the victim, or it could be that I share something else with the victim, for example, that I was in the same place at the same time, or that I almost suffered a similar fate once. Vicarious memory, then, may exist with or without vicarious identity.

One way vicarious memory can work in an international context, and without involving a larger claim of membership in an identity community, is when different societies are victim to, or threatened by similar political forces. Robbie Shilliam's (2015) *Black Pacific* reveals a multitude of forms of solidarity between Māori and other colonized people, sometimes without specifically involving forms of collective identification. For example, the nineteenth-century gospel written by Te Ua Haumēne memorializes a history in which "Africans and Māori, enslavement and dispossession, all bind together as elements in the same global colonial injustice" (Shilliam 2015, 145). Often, these connections surface "despite very tenuous material linkages" (Shilliam 2015, 54). Similarity in situation can provoke vicariousness even when distance makes claims of identity too tenuous.

As "partitions" proliferated after Poland, observers in various places vicariously anticipated a Polish partition in their own country. Sympathetic memory became vicarious memory when James Connolly, the founder of the Irish Socialist Republican Party, responded in 1914 to the first major proposals for the partition of Ireland. He recalled that "for generations the conscience of the civilised world has been shocked by the historical record of the partition of Poland. . . But Ireland, what of Ireland?" (Connolly 1914).

But perhaps the most unexpected context in which this occurred was in China, beginning especially in the late nineteenth century, where in response to histories of the Polish partitions, the term *guafen*, or "cutting up like a melon," came to be the common translation of "partition" (Wagner 2017, 11–24). Traveling via

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missionaries, the story of Poland's demise became a cautionary tale of what might happen in China. As a result there is a considerable literature in Chinese on the late Qing historiography of Poland's partition and subsequent rule by Russia (see Zou 2020).

Foremost among the promoters of the lessons of Poland were the reformers Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei, and Tang Caichang. These reformers played a crucial role in convincing the Guangxu Emperor to enact the sweeping changes called the Hundred Days Reform in 1898, which the Empress Dowager ended with a palace coup. Histories of Poland became very popular, with Japanese author Shibue Tamotsu's *Pōrando suibō senshi* (A History of the Wars of the Decline and Demise of Poland) being translated into Chinese, with different modifications, by three different translators in the early 1900s (Zou 2020, 392). Exam questions appeared at universities such as: "Poland. . .was partitioned while Turkey maintained its integrity. What are the reasons for this?" and "Russia, when it wanted to partition Poland, took a war of revenge against Turkey as their excuse. . .Please try to discuss this with a calm heart!" (Zou 2020, 405).

Kang Youwei periodically sent letters directly to the Emperor, and submitted his seven-volume book *Bolan fenmie ji* (Record of Poland's Partition and Demise) to the Emperor in July 1898 (Karl 2002, 34). According to Kang, the Emperor "read it and was so moved that he sobbed" (Zou 2020, 392). Moreover, using the example of the conservative officials blamed for Poland's demise, Kang convinced the Emperor to decree that anyone should be able to send letters to the throne (Wong 1992, 532). When this decree was disobeyed by the Board of Rites, the Emperor dismissed all its top-ranking officials and replaced them with reformers.

The example of Poland appealed to the masses as well as the gentry in Shanghai, where in 1904 a play by opera reformer Wang Xiaonong was written and performed as Russia's and Japan's armies clashed in Korea, involving a war between Poland and Turkey, and ending in Poland's defeat and partition (Karl 2002). The allegory of *guafen* also appeared frequently in burgeoning new forms of Chinese visual media in the early 1900s, particularly political cartoons (figures 2 and 3).

That the memory of Poland was being performed vicariously by these Chinese writers is made painstakingly clear. As Kang put it, "We ourselves truly are Poland!" (Wagner 2017, 66). By drawing on parallels of experience and position with others in world politics, vicarious memory of Poland in China was an important resource for reformers, both during the Hundred Days Reform and afterward.

Modular Memory: Connected Partitions of the Retrenching British Empire

A third type of connected memories can be called modular. "Modular" here is a term as used by Benedict Anderson (1991, 4) in referring to modern nationalism as "capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations." Beginning with the anti-colonial movements of the Americas, in Anderson's account, nationalisms in certain places had international significance because the content of those movements found resonances and were politically useful elsewhere. As a framework for imagining and analyzing events that can appear natural, perennial, or inevitable, "partition" can serve to limit the range of actions and outcomes that seem possible or plausible.

This does not mean that partition does not change. Partha Chatterjee (1991) has argued that Anderson's modular nationalisms write a script that leaves nothing left for the rest of the world to imagine, consigning those in the postcolonial world to be perpetual consumers, and not producers, of modernity. Indeed, many possible connections between partitions were not actually made, and the meaning of partition has evolved considerably over the centuries, particularly in terms of its connotations and associations. Only through the partition of Ireland, for example,

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Figure 2. "Anfeng luxian zhi weixiang" 安丰路綫之危象 [Image of the danger of the An Feng line], (by Ma Xingchi 馬星馳). [Japanese speaking:] "I want to get my own hands moving." Shenzhou huabao 神州畫報, 1907.
Source: Wagner (2017, 106)

particularly through the work of the imperial federalists, which I explore below, did it become possible for some to articulate "partition" as a solution to intercommunal conflict, and to forget its negative associations with Poland.

In the examples of sympathetic and vicarious memories given above, it was always more or less clear which previous partition served as a potential reference point. In becoming modular, however, tropes become at least relatively untethered from context and are taken from place to place. This can be seen visually in the way Western political cartoons, since the Partition of Poland, used the metaphor of cutting up either a map (figure 1) or a pudding (figures 5 and 6), or both (figure 4). Partition is no longer even predominantly in the past, but exists simultaneously in the present and future, and is not contained by any one context.

One way this can happen is through certain symbols or terms, such as the word "partition," or the image of a cake being cut, which lose the sense that there is an original experience that it ultimately refers to. Earlier, in the case of Britain's sympathetic memory of the Polish partitions, it seemed that just to say the word "partition"

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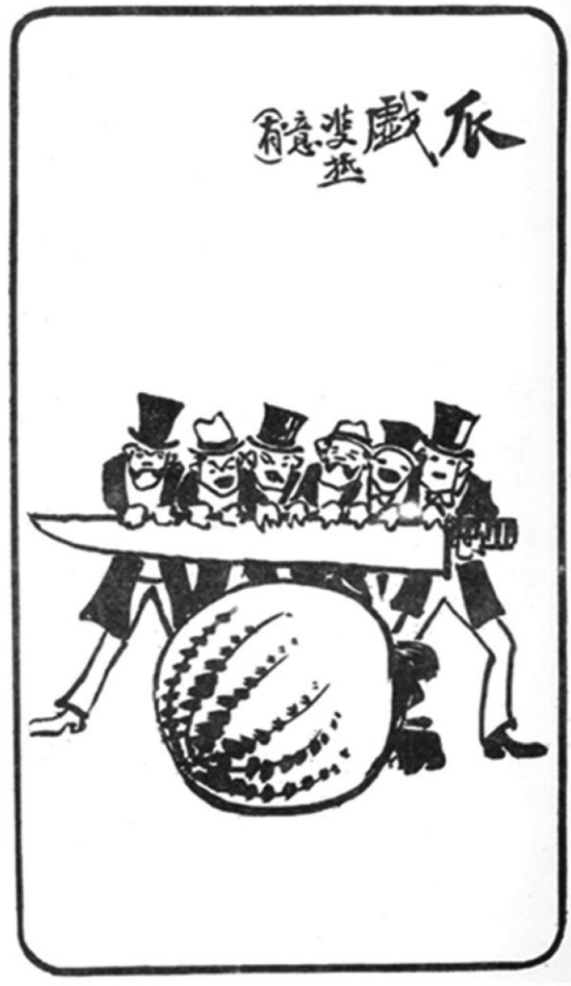

Figure 3. Minquan huabao 民權畫報 [Popular Rights Illustrated] "Guaxi" 瓜戲 [Melon Theater], 1912.
Source: Wagner (2017, 107).

in Parliament almost necessarily triggered associations with Poland itself for some, and even occasionally to drawn-out arguments over whether or not Poland was relevant. Yet in these partition cartoons, no reference is made to anything specifically Polish. Nor is there an appeal to some global human community, as scholars of cosmopolitan memory might look for. What ties these contexts together, in the imaginations of the cartoonists, is the ability of the symbol of cake-cutting to express what is important about them. In the case of territorial partition, the homogeneity and isomorphism of modern territorial units serves as a geographical parallel to these visual examples. Because in modern international politics, territory is thought to be in principle the same everywhere, if partition is possible in one place, it can seem possible everywhere (Goettlich 2019, 220).

A similar way that modular memory can emerge is through the interchangeability of proper names. In 1940s British parliamentary debates, with the Republic of Ireland still protesting partition, and India and Palestine contemplating a prospect of partition, not to mention the aftermath of the 1939 Nazi–Soviet "fourth" partition

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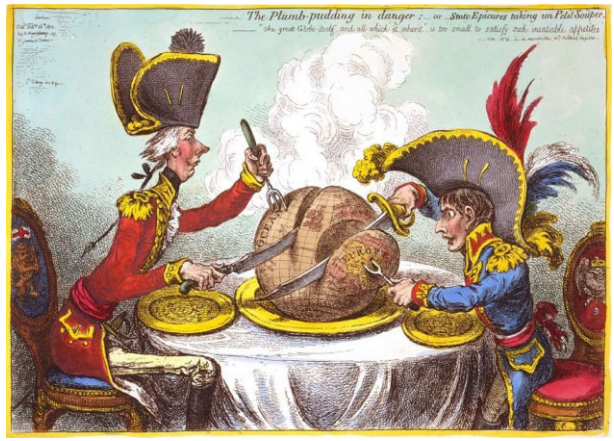

Figure 4. James Gillray, "The Plumb-pudding in danger: -or- state epicures taking un petit souper," 1805. British Prime Minister William Pitt and Napoleon divide up the world.
Source: National Portrait Gallery.

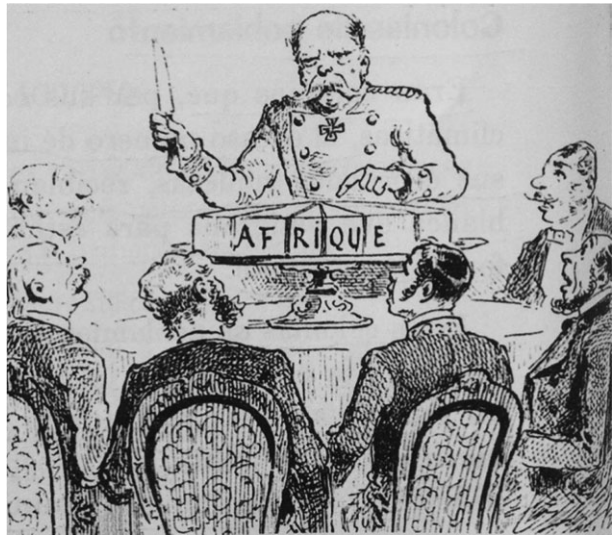

Figure 5. La Conférence de Berlin, Caption: "A chacun sa part, si l'on est bien sage." *L'Illustration*, 1885.
Source: Image in Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:IMGCDB82_-_Caricatura_sobre_conferencia_de_Berl%C3%ADn,_1885.jpg.

of Poland and countless other potential and actual partitions, each began to blend easily into the other in parliamentary discourse, as in the following examples:

> We certainly in this House have no excuse whatsoever for ignoring the dangers of the evil of partition—we who have on our own doorstep and under our very eyes the sad and sorry result of the bitter experiment of partition in Ireland. No man in his sane senses would like to see a Stormont erected on the hills outside Jerusalem.[14]

[14] HC Deb, July 31, 1946: 989.

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Figure 6. Louis Dalrymple, "No chance to criticize," Puck, vol. 43 no. 1107, 1898. *Source*: Image in Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:No_chance_to_criticize_-_Dalrymple._LCCN2012647567.jpg.

> If we were to accept partition for Palestine it would be difficult, from a logical, fair, and just point of view, to refuse Pakistan to India.[15]

> Having created [India], we must see that nothing is done which alters the process of history by supporting any line which would lead to the partitioning of the country…that would be regarded as an attempt to pepper India with about 300 Ulsters.[16]

In these examples, unlike the partition cartoons, there is still a degree of specificity in comparing two situations. Yet in this Parliamentary context, there was no particular direction or singular linearity of comparison. The broader discursive picture that emerges is one in which Ulster Unionists, Zionists, and Indian Muslims become almost interchangeable.

These parallels were not simply rhetorical, however, but had an influence on how both anti-colonial activists and colonial officials were able to imagine the course of future events and how they were able to justify claims (for anti-colonial activists, see Devji 2013; Chester 2019). As for colonial officials, this type of memory is most clearly apparent within a particular style of historical reasoning adopted by a close-knit group of officials who were proponents of imperial federalism. Federalism was not a well-defined theory, but federalists were essentially united by the idea that in order to save the increasingly unwieldy British empire, it should to some extent recognize its constituent nations as such, in some cases necessitating partition.

The federalists were not public officials trying to use history simply instrumentally to convince public audiences (Lavin 1995). They convinced few people publicly but exerted influence through connections and official roles, and they genuinely believed that they had unlocked secrets of history. Part of this was through historical research, but part of it was also through their own group experience, which began in the white settler colonies and then worked through Ireland and Palestine to India. Nurtured in the avidly historically conscious environment of late imperial Britain, the group's ties to academic history-writing were integral to what, in their view, made them the vanguard of history itself. As movers of history, the movements of history *were* their memories.

The emergence of social memory among this group of imperial federalists was facilitated by the relative coherence and shared dispositions of colonial officials cir-

[15] HC Deb, February 25, 1947: 1988.
[16] HC Deb, March 5, 1947: 539.

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culating among the British colonies in the early twentieth century (Sinanoglu 2019, 160). Recruits for the Colonial Office were not only taken from certain families and educated at public schools and at Oxford and Cambridge, but was also done largely by one man between 1931 and 1948, who tended to look for a quality handshake in making staffing decisions. The Colonial Office routinely seconded officials to different parts of the empire and increasingly sought to achieve a coherent approach to governance. It should come as no surprise that shared memories circulated in this environment, where ideas and techniques of government were spread intentionally through both formal and informal channels.

Federalists intervened consequentially in the partition process of Palestine and India at several key moments. The first of these was the Peel Commission of 1937 in Palestine, which brought partition into the mainstream of public debate. Many scholars believe that Reginald Coupland, who thought that "the partition of Ireland was a good thing under the circumstances and for all time," mostly wrote the commission's report (Sinanoglu 2019, 171). Numerous scholars have argued that Ireland formed an important precedent for the report, which posited "the impossibility of uniting all Ireland under a single parliament" and that "the gulf between Arabs and Jews in Palestine is wider than that which separates Northern Ireland from the Irish Free State" (Palestine Royal Commission 1937, 361).

Another important intervention was in 1942 when Leo Amery, Secretary of State for India, began to argue, along with Coupland, to the Viceroy and Prime Minister for a federal plan for India, to which provinces would opt in (Fraser 1984, 85–87). This was a key moment in the transition of British policy toward partition. Amery was a keen follower of events in Ireland and Palestine. As historian William Roger Louis (2002, 83) put it, "When Amery pondered the problem of Palestine, he was haunted by the memory of Ireland, where terrorism and civil war had led to partition." Yet after the partition of India, this confirmed his belief that partition was right for Palestine; in 1947, he wrote that he had "ever since 1937 been a convinced believer in partition, and the Indian outcome, added to the Irish, has only strengthened the case" (Chester 2019, 149).

Moreover, the issue of population transfer was another dimension along which partitions could be compared with other historical memories. John Hope Simpson, an Indian Civil Servant, was tasked with dealing with Greek refugees from Turkey within the League of Nations in the 1920s, and then drafting a land resettlement plan for Palestine in the 1930s (Raghavan 2020). This, as well as the resettlement of Germans after the Second World War, set precedents for emulation in India (Raghavan 2020, 15).

All of this should not be taken to obscure the large importance that memories of partition have for many of the colonized peoples subject to partition, and their descendants. Today, for many, the memory of partition is very much a live political issue, and recalls a catastrophe of communal violence and migration, and the beginning of a new life in new surroundings (Kaur 2007; Talbot and Singh 2009). It is remembered in very different ways by different people. Partition typically involves the reopening and contestation of notions of nationality and citizenship (Sen 2018). Yet, many of the anti-colonial activists among them also thought of partition in the plural and made frequent use of comparisons, similarly to the imperial federalists. However, to do justice to the complexities of their various different positions would require far greater space than available here (see Devji 2013; Chester 2019).

Partition, of course, never became completely detached from context, as in the idea of a cosmopolitan memory shared by humanity as a whole. Yet, the connections between memories of partition in Ireland, Palestine, and India show that partition could not be reduced to the construction or division of any one national or supranational identity. Particularly among the imperial federalists, memories of partition constituted a thick field of examples that were commonly known and frequently drawn on. The apparent success of Irish partition made a significant impact through Coupland's recommendation of partition in the Peel Commission on Palestine, and

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both Ireland and Palestine made possible Amery's promotion of federalism for India. These memories largely defined what imperial officials thought to be possible as they continued on in their administration of the decaying empire.

Conclusion

The history of partition reveals messiness and contradictions in many different ways. Partition, as something that has manifested in concrete experience very differently for different people, is itself a traveling concept that can be put to work in various ways. While partitioned Poland was once a tragic but sometimes hopeful case for British liberals, it continued well into the late nineteenth century to put limits on what British foreign policy could be perceived to aim at or to participate in, particularly in terms of a partition of the Ottoman Empire. It later became a cautionary tale inspiring reformers in China and beyond attempting to avoid colonization. Finally, reformulated by federalists as a policy to maintain the British Empire that could be refined through learning from the experience of many historical examples, it ironically became a particularly violent pattern for the empire's dissolution.

This article has argued, then, that the memory of partition cannot be easily reduced to the sum of individual partitions, nor does "partition" necessarily refer to any particular national or supranational identity. It has shown that the history of partition, as a loosely connected phenomenon from Poland, through the Eastern Question to the federalist imagination of an empire remaining united through its divisions in Ireland, Palestine, and India, changes our understanding of social memory. Collective memory studies in IR and IPS could fruitfully learn from the connected histories approach as well as the transcultural turn in memory studies.

It is important, of course, not to exaggerate the extent to which any one partition conjures up certain other historical memories for all people in all places. Unlike the notion of cosmopolitan memory, connected memories are uneven and discontinuous, and build on historically contextualized, concrete linkages. Yet connected memories that do exist, with important consequences, have not properly been understood. The idea of "connected histories" thus provides a promising avenue to a greater understanding of the international dimensions of social memory.

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