

**Individual Memory on the Verge of 1990s, Based on Kote Jandieri's Short Story
*Globalization***

Abstract: Memory is the ability, by means of which we perceive our own identity, both at individual and collective levels. Individuality, on its behalf, is connected with time and is not isolated from memories of other individuals. We discuss formation of identity connected with memory based on Kote Jandieri's short story *Globalization*. The text reflects memories from 1920s to 1990s, on survival and dramatic life of people against the background of political transformations. Our research is based on Stanley B. Klein's model - Standard model of long-term memory systems that implicate self representations and attempt to show if the main character of the short story has managed to overcome the constructed identity.

Key words: Collective memory; individual memory identity

Discussions about memory started back in Antique Epoch and can be seen even in Plato's and Aristotle's works. Memory is related to knowledge, accumulation/transmission of knowledge and is based on one's practical and theoretical modelling, the carrier of which is a thoughtful and wise individual. In one of his small works Aristotle (*De memoria et reminiscencia*) discusses memory function in connection with thinking and consciousness (*wahrnehmung*) and offers essential notions for research of memory, which later created bases and gave an impulse to conduction of theoretical research of memory (Aristotle 1987:449).

Since the Antique Epoch, perception of memory significantly extended and memory, as understanding of information kept in memory, inversion of access to essence and recreation/transmission was defined in connection with identity. Memory was named as basis for human identity by John Locke in his work - *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke, 1689/1997) (Harth Dietrich, *Gedaechtnis und Erinerng*, 750). Although later John Locke was criticized¹ for basing identity on memory and not on human soul and body substance, however, based on the aforementioned researches, memory was focused on continuous connection with the present and became a determinant of human identity (Nimbalkar 2011: 268)

Hegel went even further and shared the neuropsychological approach during memory research, as long as according to empiric psychology, memory is believed to be the information retention and reproduction model of brain (Baddeley 1986). Considering the aforementioned, Hegel offers three forms of memory: 1) Names retention memory form; 2) Reproductive memory form; and 3) Mechanical memory form. Such forms point to the function of memory as of information retention archive (repository), in which past images and symbols, episodes, stories are preserved and come back to life by imagining the past and by consideration of social context of the present, as it is unacceptable for memory to be separated from the social space, formed by the society. What we call “memory” cannot be separated from the physical space, or perception of time at lingual level. Just as “Me/I” forms and develops identity with permanent interactive and communicational experience in the present (Erikson, Mead), the same way changes memory’s “dynamic structure” by permanent stimulation of perceptions and understanding (Rosenfield 1992, 14).

Researches of memory especially activated from the second half of the XX century and comply of mixture of spheres of culturology, social psychology, media archaeology, political philosophy and comparative literary studies. Based on and considering the previous experience in memory research significant theoretical works has been offered by Maurice Halbwachs, Jan and Aleida Assmann, Pierre Nora. They have offered notions and extended the area of memory studies. They have developed the following terms: individual/collective memories, communicative memory, cultural memory, historic memory, translational/transcultural memories and so etc.

In framework of the research we will study individual memory of an individual of the transitional epoch of 1990s, connection of memory with identity and its forms; would memory be able to influence identity? As long as one of the essential concepts of transitional character of an epoch is destruction of identity constructed by memory, in a specific historic time, against the background of physical environment and transformations of interactive space.

Memory is an ability, by means of which we perceive our own identity, both as individual and collective levels. Individuality, in return is in connection with time. Human “I” is a “diachronic identity, which is constructed from time material (Luckmann). This synthesis of time and identity is realized through memory. When we talk about time, identity and memory, we must differ three levels: inner (neuro-mental); social; and cultural. Related with inner neuro-mental level is the individual memory, which is the determinant of human identity and reveals their “inner I”.

KoteJandieri’s story character opens the memory repository, or archive at the neuro-mental level and from biographical perspectives tells us about the past, which is

connected with the present and destructs its identity – the concept called *“Inner I”*. Individual memory: It is immovable, non-transferable, fragmentary, fleeting and unstable but not isolated from the memory of other individuals (Aleida Assmann 1947), therefore, the narration by the protagonist is fragmental, is not consistent and coherent, is related to generative memory defines its identity.

Recalling of stories told by the protagonist start from childhood, when he and his sister Anichka were being raised by grandparents and is related to the process of his formation as a person and ends with the decease of his sister, with whom the main character of the short story is chained at emotional level and orientates by her. The long-term memory includes both his biographical and self-perception processes, when understanding of pain caused by his sister’s death, puts him in between the harsh and blind perception/feeling of own identity and being/not being of his sister.

Fragments floating up in and kept in the Globalization protagonist’s memory are connected with the present and his past experience attempts to find its way to the future. First episode is about his father, who was arrested by the Bolshevik authorities, was later sent to the war and he was killed there: “Ohooo! We can surprise whole Europe with your product. The Swiss, French and Dutch will know the price of this cheese”(Jandieri 1999:25). Even back in 1930s people hoped for exporting their products to Europe until they finally fell under fear and silence. Life has its requirements and naturally, the perspective of the narration of the narrator I, reproduction of the past kept in the memory, has its origins in the present and is related to those images, which, during political formations (from Sovietization to Globalization) were repressed and replaced by other, new images/symbols. Opposition models of thinking, ambivalent images appeared: loyalty to the idea/betrayal of the idea by the motive of self-saving; education/arrogance by the motive of self-saving; belief/atheism by the motive of self-saving; Orthodox/other religions by the motive of self-saving; accordingly, identity constructed by memory, became doubted during appearance of opposition images which are primarily related to his sister Anichka’s character, who, after becoming Jehovah’s Witness, is rejected by everyone and commits a suicide.

His sister Anichka, who was very hardworking and talented, was sent to study in Telavi and during the war to the frontline; after which, she returned to homeland and got married; this is when sister and brother separated from each other. The sister moved to live from Kakheti to Samegrelo in her husband’s family. The sister, who has never betrayed her family and relatives; always fully followed the order formed by the community. She was since childhood distinguished by loyalty and bravery. When she was just a little child, when she secretly brought food to Kakutsa Cholokashvili’s soldiers and when she was caught by a Bolshevik militiaman, she concealed the truth and despite fear,

did not reveal the task her grandfather gave her – she was the person who became the target to strictest sentence by the society/community.

The life of the brother and sister, full of hardships, was destructed when after Abkhazian war, at Anichka's place, who was living alone, settled her relatives, refugees from Sokhumi and became Jehovah's Witnesses. People left without income and living means, received food in exchange for the chosen belief, thanks to which they managed to save and feed themselves. During one of their gatherings they hardly managed to save themselves from attacking residents of the village, who were severely beating them, ruined and destroyed everything they had, in the name of the Lord and Christianity.

Militia hardly managed to save them. One of her daughters took her away from there, but the mark of being Jehovah's Witness followed her everywhere and after being insulted by her son-in-law, she found shelter with her second daughter, Marina, who was married in her home village. And this is where it happened, event that covers only one episode from the main character's memory but is the most painful fragment and returns him to the fear felt after losing her. Anichka, who went to the church to light candle for her father, was condemned by the priest, by people and was thrown out of the church.

Right there, in the struggle between the love of the sister and her behavior, appears the self-trait memory, when the whole family, the community which was never distinguished by great belief and warship, tried to clean and save Anichka, person who embarrassed them, by praying down on their knees.

The turning point "returned" people to the Church, while before they remembered God and Church only on Easter, seeing colored eggs, although, they severely punished in the name of God those, who found other ways of saving themselves. This is where the protagonist's, contentless religious identity appeared. Becoming part of biographical memory, he blindly followed "Father Zaza's" advises just for saving his sister physically, however, when he was told about her suicide, he instantly froze and ended struggle, life and existence.

Fragments, or episodes appearing in the memory of the main character create one whole narrative, which is used for overcoming own destructed identity. After the death of this sister, by reproducing the story archived in the memory of factually deceased and accidentally survived individual, the protagonist attempts to overcome the trauma caused by his sister's suicide, by which he is unable to give up the firmly constructed barrier of collective identity and gives up to the idea that if it was not for his sister's stubbornness, she would have been buried at the Orthodox cemetery and not separately from everyone as a stray "dog"; although, the place is beautiful, but still completely alone. His memory's

semantic space is so much strengthened by signs of collective identity constructed during long period of time that even his own sister's humiliation, suffering and decease could not make him to give up and separate from the pressure of collective identity.

References:

Aristoteles, Kleine naturwissenschaftliche Schriften (Parvanaturalia), übers. v. E. Rolfes, Leipzig, 1926

Erikson ,Erik H., *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York: International Universities Press, 1959.

Mead, George Herbert, *Geist, Identität und Gesellschaft*, Suhrkamp, 1998, 177

Namita Nimbalkar, Namita, John Locke on Personal Identity Mens Sana Monogr. 2011 Jan-Dec, 268–275. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3115296/>

Assmann, A., Harth,D.:Mnemosyne. Formen und Funktionen der kulturellen Erinnerung, Frankfurt/M, 1991

Baddeley, Alan, Working memory. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986

Rosenfield, P.L., The potential of transdisciplinary research for sustaining and extending linkages between the health and social sciences. Social Science & Medicine, 1992, 35

Jandieri, Kote, *Globalization*, Tbilisi, 1999