

Social Memory and Identity: Luke 19:12b–24 and 27

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Abstract

Based on a specific understanding of social memory, this article develops a social–scientific model of social memory. The model is then applied to three social memories of the events surrounding Archelaus’ journey to Rome to get his kingship over Judaea confirmed in 4 BCE: Josephus’ *WAR* (2.80–100), his *ANTIQUITIES* (17.208–323), and the social memory of the event in Luke 19:12, 14 and 27, as part of the parable of the minas (Lk 19:12b–24 and 27).

Social memory is simultaneously individual and social—it is in society that people recall their memories. The sociology of remembering also indicates that there is an interrelationship between *memory*, *identity* and *narrative*: identity (e.g. of a group) is constructed by the remembering (retelling) of narratives from the past, and the present is reframed (identity) by telling (narrative) through remembering (memory). With this understanding of social memory as a point of departure, a social–scientific model of social memory can be developed. As a test-case, the model is applied to three social memories of the same event (Archelaus’ journey to Rome to get his kingship over Judaea confirmed in 4 BCE). The analysis indicates that memory plays a crucial role in the cohesion and self–understanding of groups; especially to define boundaries and suggest particular behavior.

Collective Memory

Some sociologists and psychologists argue that memory is an individual exercise, “the property of individual minds” (Schudson, in Klein: 130), a psychic event associated with a specific person (Klein: 13). We remember, the argument goes, by ourselves certain childhood experiences or traumatic events that are part of our past—thus, individually. This kind of memory is called “collected memory,” memory that is based on individualistic principles (Olick 1999: 338).

In the early twentieth century, however, a social perspective on memory became prominent, a perspective that coined the term “collective memory” (Olick 1999, 2006, 2007; Olick & Robbins). This term was first used by Hugo von Hofmannsthal in 1920 (as a poetic allusion). Although also used by Warburg in 1923 (Assmann: 125, Confino: 1390–92), by Bloch in 1925 and Bartlett in 1932, the contemporary use of the term can be traced back to the father of collective memory, the French scholar Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945). Halbwachs’ understanding of collective memory combined the insights of the philosopher Henri Bergson and the psychologist Sigmund Freud, as well as work done by the sociologist Emile Durkheim. In the late nineteenth century—a time characterized by scientific advances, “increasingly complex and widespread commerce and political power” (Kern, in Olick 2006: 10), and a philosophical tendency to favour objectivity—Bergson rejected an “objectivist” understanding of time and space, arguing that subjectivity is the only source of knowledge. Memory, in particular, is not an objective reproduction of the past; memory, rather, is fluid and always

changing. Like Bergson, Durkheim also rejected an “objective” understanding of space and time, but differed from Bergson in locating the subjective understanding of time not in individual experience but in the way different societies produce different concepts of time —“to be human is to be social, and ... to be social is to be, after all, a member of a group, a member of society” (Durkheim, in Aguilar: 61).

Building on the work of Bergson and Durkheim, memory, for Halbwachs, first of all is framed in the past and in the present, and is thus more variable than constant. Memory, secondly, is a social enterprise; it is in society that people normally acquire, recall, recognize and localize their memories. For Halbwachs

memory was not a matter of reflecting philosophically on inherent properties of the subjective mind; memory is a matter of how minds work together in society, how their operations are not simply mediated but are structured by social arrangements [Olick & Robbins: 109].

As Halbwachs states:

The greatest number of memories come back to us when our parents, our friends or other persons recall them to us ... it is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories [38].

According to Halbwachs, therefore, it is impossible for individuals to remember coherently outside their group context (i.e., the social frameworks of memory), which mean that groups themselves share publicly articulated images of collective pasts. This Halbwachs calls “collective memory” (which he distinguishes from autobiographical memory, historical memory, and history). In the words of Olick (1999: 346): “There is no individual memory without social experience nor is there any collective memory without individuals participating in communal life.” Memory is thus a collective affair, and not individual in the first place (Olick 2006: 10–11). As a sociology of retrospection, collective memory is therefore concerned with “how what we say and do—as individuals and together—is shaped by a not often obvious ... combination of traditions, fantasies, interests, and opportunities” (Olick 2006: 9). As such, collective memory refers to a wide variety of mnemonic products (e.g. stories, rituals, statues, speeches, images) and practices (reminiscence, recall, representation commemoration), of which the latter is always “simultaneously individual and social” (Olick 2006: 12).

Recent studies under the topic “collective memory” are diverse, and as a result the term “collective memory” has become somewhat imprecise, being used as a label to describe almost all possible aspects of the sociology of remembering. This becomes apparent when one considers the different terms employed under the rubric of “collective memory,” of which the following are but a few examples: “history of mentalities,” “historical consciousness” (*Geschichtsbewusstsein*), “the politics of history” (*Geschichtspolitik*), “mnemohistory,” “political myth,” “tradition,” “oral history,” “heritage,” “collective remembrance,” “popular history making,” “national memory,” “public memory,” “vernacular memory,” “collective authority,” “counter memory,” “sites of memory,” “cultural memory,” “images of the past,” “political cultural profiles,” and the

“politics of memory” (Kansteiner: 181–82; Klein: 127; Knapp: 123; Olick 2006: 9; 2007: 8).

In this article, the term “social memory” will be used, following the contributions made by Aguilar and Duling on “collective memory.” According to Aguilar, “collective memory” can be seen as “a single authoritative narrative, *consisting of social memories*, that is, all memories of a specific event or chain of events in the past, even when contradictory” (emphasis added). Josephus’ “historical” account of the Maccabean period, for example, cannot simply be dismissed because he was on the side of the colonial occupiers. His voice, with those who had to live within a colonial occupation, is but one among many social memories of this period. Another example is the *kerugma* about Jesus in the Gospels (i.e., collective memory), consisting of several social memories. As put by Aguilar:

[C]ollective memories contribute to the process of imagining a subject, thus creating myths of nationalism and belonging, while social memories use social discontinuities that in turn produce social cohesion through the acknowledgment of social diversity and social difference (alterity). Within such memories one can isolate elements, sometimes diverse and even contradictory, that create fragments of history to be discovered, compared, classified, analyzed, interpreted, and re-interpreted [60].

One should therefore speak of social memory in the plural, “as they are memories rather than a single unified narrative of identity and belonging” (Aguilar: 60). As such, social memories—as part of an archeology of (collective) memory—could be seen as the “production of history,” that is, a specific community’s perception of historical events. Social memory, therefore, can also be seen as the “collective memory” of smaller social units, while the “collective memory” of larger social units can be seen as cultural memory (Duling 2006: 2). Both social memory and cultural memory are memories that make up the “collective memory” of the same event in the past.

Social Memory and (social) Identity

The majority of scholars who study the sociology of remembering are of the opinion that there is an interrelationship between memory, identity and narrative: identity is constructed by the remembering (retelling) of narratives from the past. Put differently: the present is reframed (identity) by telling (narrative) through remembering (memory).

Memories have their own specific grammar, and can (must) be analysed as *narratives*; but they also have functions, and can (must) also be analysed in a functionalist manner, as guides, whether uniform or contradictory, to social *identity* [Fentress & Wickham: 88; emphasis added].

This is also the point of view of Olick (2006: 5): Historical narration is an important feature of collective life, and plays a crucial role in the cohesion and self-understanding of groups. The cohesion and identity of a group is a matter of collective imagining (social memory), and “made in large part by telling and retelling stories, which define boundaries and suggest moral purposes” (Olick 2006: 6). He continues:

Storytelling about the past is thus not merely something communities do; it is, in important ways, what they are. Rather than being a mechanism that underwrites cohesion, *storytelling about the past* “per-forms” the group by “re-member-ing” it ... Identity—self-sameness through time—is always a relation between past and present established through the media of memory [2006: 6, 8; emphasis in the original].

As a result, identity is not an already accomplished fact; it is a production that is never complete, always in process and always constituted within and through representation. It is also a matter of becoming and being constructed through memory (Hall: 222-26). Collective or cultural identity, therefore, can be termed as a shared (remembered) history (Olick 2006: 6), an identity created by memory: “Memory is a central, if not the central, medium through which identities are constituted” (Olick & Robbins: 133).

Social memory, as a result, is in a certain sense a “power play”, a mechanism to either criticize or legitimize the present, and, of course, an effort to control the future; to control the past is to control the present (and future). Which stories are remembered, and the way the selected narratives of the past are interpreted, is therefore important (Olick 2006: 7). This is also the point of view of Knapp, who argues both that “ethical and political values are essentially related to narratives,” and that “shared values are likely to be connected to the narratives preserved by collective memories” (141). Hall calls this aspect of social memory “the positions of *enunciation*”—the practices of representation (remembering) always implicate the positions from which we speak (Hall: 222). As a result, the one that remembers thus always speaks “from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always ‘in context’, *positioned*” (Hall: 222, emphasis original), and since we always simply are where we are, it is contemporary circumstances that provide the cues for the remembering of certain narratives from the past (Olick 1999: 341). Because of this “situatedness”—which Halbwachs call “space”—those with power will value certain narratives more than others, while those at the other end of the social ladder will have their preferred memories (Olick 1999: 342). When it comes to the same (grand) narrative, the interpretation and application thereof will consequently divert in different directions (e.g., the remembering of Apartheid in South Africa). Social memory, therefore, also has to do with “memory makers, memory users, and the ... objects and traditions of representations” (Kansteiner: 197).

Assmann (130–33) summarizes the above characteristics of social memory (which he calls cultural memory), as follows: Social memory is the concretion of identity, it is reconstructed in relation to a contemporary frame of reference, it leads to a culturally institutionalized heritage of a society, it is cultivated, always takes place within a set system of values, and it reinterprets, criticizes and censures common practice in the light of the self-image of the group in which it takes place.

A Social scientific Model of Social Memory

Social memory is a social phenomenon and therefore has significance for the social-scientific study of the New Testament (Duling: 3). Moreover, personality in the first-century Mediterranean world was dyadic or group oriented, which means that individuals tend to represent their group and the views of their group. “Individual” beliefs were usually—although not always—the beliefs of the group,

formed by its inherited traditions (social memory). Group-oriented persons are acutely sensitive to the family's or group's traditions. Education is basically the process of learning the proverbs and aphorisms that indicate social expectations and behavior. All are subject to this milieu of socialization, instigating an ongoing experience and continued relationship with others and their shared traditions (social memory). Taking into consideration that first-century Jewish (and Greek) culture was mainly oral in character, it is clear that social memory as a social phenomenon has significance for the social-scientific study of the New Testament.

Where should one start in proposing a social-scientific model of social memory? The following observation of Kansteiner can perhaps serve as a point of departure:

[W]e should conceptualize collective memory as the result of the interaction among three types of *historical factors*: the intellectual and cultural *traditions* that frame all our representations of the past, the *memory makers* who selectively adopt and manipulate these traditions, and the *memory consumers* who use, ignore, or transform such artifacts according to their *own interests* [180, emphasis added].

Kansteiner, in essence, argues that social memory is about *who* (memory makers) remembers *what* (cultural traditions) *when* (historical factors) for *whom* (memory consumers). To these four factors we can add the "why-question" (Confino: 1393). This question relates to what has been argued above: people remember because memory and identity go together (Kansteiner's "own interests"). A social-scientific model of social memory should therefore concentrate on "who wants whom to remember what when and why."

The *who*, *whom* and *when* in this maxim refer to the "situatedness" of the act of social remembering. This not only includes the "situatedness" of the one who remembers, but also the social-historical situation of those for whom the remembering takes place. Socially shared dispositions (e.g., economical, ethical or political), for example, are connected with narratives preserved by social memory (Knapp: 123). The model thus presupposes that social memory is, most often, rooted in the conflict and interplay among social, political and cultural interests (Thelen, in Olick & Robbins: 127). Therefore, to analyze (a specific) social memory, the social context (conditions) in which the remembering takes place has to be part of the interpretation thereof (Aguilar: 62). Of course, the model also assumes that the *whom* on whose behalf the remembering takes place (the hearers), has knowledge of what is being remembered.

The *why* in the maxim relates to the intended outcome of the act of remembering, namely the formation of identity: "Recollection of the past is an active, constructive process, not a simple matter of retrieving information. To remember is to place a part of the past *in the service of conceptions and needs of the present*" (Schwartz: 374; emphasis added). Put differently: social remembering takes place especially where there is a need to transform the structure of current society (Schwartz: 375). This is also the point of view of Aguilar: "Memory ... used by a particular individual ... can be understood as a social device that catalyzes emotions, senses, participation, pain, joy, togetherness, and ultimately community" (2005: 60). Social remembering thus relates to community or identity, with the aim of mimesis: determining the way it should be and how we (the *whom*) should act (Aguilar: 65).

Finally, the *what* in the maxim refers to what is remembered. This “what” not only relates to *what* is remembered (this memory and not that one), but also *how* the tradition or memory (that is remembered) is remembered. Social memory is often “selective, distorted and inaccurate” (Fentress & Wickham: xi). This does not mean that no analogy or continuity can be present in what is remembered and how it is re-remembered (Knapp: 130). Moreover, people do not remember actual events; rather, “each time “memory retrieval” takes place, what is retrieved is a previous memory. Memory is therefore construed and reconstructed in a cascading effect”. Memory retrieved is constructed memory: “The mind is not a simple recording device; it constantly reinterprets—and thus (re)constructs—the past for the present” (Duling 2006: 2). Social memory is also a “much more creative reconstruction as accurate recollection” (Crossan: 59). Apart from the fact that social memory is always constructed memory, social remembering also takes place in a specific socio-historical situation for a reason, that is, with an intended outcome. Consequently, a social-scientific model of social memory should take cognizance of the fact that almost all remembering is ideological in nature. In a colonial situation, for example, remembering that challenges the established order is ideological in its aim to legitimate, change, or to redefine the current order. A social-scientific approach to social memory should take into account the fact that social memory is not about “truth” or “the actual past” (Knapp: 124).

Applying the Model: Jesus, Josephus, and Social Memory

Jesus research and gospel studies “cry out for an integration of memory studies” (Kelber: 16). Jesus’ language, Kelber continues (in following the work of the French Jesuit Marcel Jousse), “operated in a conspicuously rhythmic, formulaic diction, couched in memorially usable patterns and formulated around structural cores”. Memory, therefore, was an imperative force in Christian origins. As such, the oral traditions regarding Jesus operated less as transmissions of traditions but more as a functioning social memory (Kelber: 15). Kelber, in his description of the language used by “Jesus,” seems to refer to the way in which the gospels writers “memorized” the traditions regarding the words of Jesus. His reference to “Jesus” language describes the diction, patterns and structures of “Jesus” speech.

Here the interest is not the memories *about* Jesus, but the memory *of* Jesus, focusing on the parables he told. This focus purports that it is possible to identify some or parts of some parables of Jesus in the gospels (and in the non-canonical gospels, e.g., Thomas) as authentic sayings of Jesus the Galilean vis-à-vis those created by the gospel writers. The second presupposition is that some of Jesus’ parables do contain memories of events that actually happened in the past. Here we voyage in stormy waters. Several parable scholars, with reference to the first presupposition above, argue that this distinction is either unnecessary or impossible—we have in the Synoptics the parables as Jesus told them (see, e.g., the discussions in Van Eck 2009a: 311–313; 2009b: 346–348; 2011a :214–216; 2011b: 3–4). Secondly, it is argued that the parables of Jesus most probably do not refer to actual historical events, but are paraenetic stories that are tropes of everyday events or the normalcies in first-century Palestine (e.g., Dodd).

The cues taken here are that it is, firstly, possible to distinguish between the authentic and non-authentic parables of Jesus in the gospels by employing

inter alia the criteria of early, multiple and independent attestation and the criterion of coherence. Secondly, some of Jesus' parables may indeed refer to events that actually happened. The parables, for example, of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30–35), the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11b–32) and the Great Banquet (Matt 22:1–10/Lk 14:16–23) may be stories about everyday events—on the other hand, it is also possible that Jesus, in these parables, referred to events that actually happened. It is simply not possible to argue with certainty for one of these two possibilities.

There is, however, at least one parable of Jesus that most probably refers to actual events which happened in the past, namely the parable of the minas in Luke 19:12b–24 and 27. The parable of the minas includes the so-called “throne claimant parable” (Lk 19:12, 14 and 27), a description of a well-borne man who goes to receive a kingdom, has his leadership contested by his subjects, and proceeds to slaughter his opponents after being appointed. Several scholars (e.g. Jeremias: 59; Schottroff: 187; Van Eck 2011b) see this aspect of the parable reflecting the historical situation in 4 BCE when Archelaus journeyed to Rome to have his kingship over Judaea confirmed. At the same time a Jewish embassy of fifty persons went to Rome in order to resist Archelaus' appointment. None the less, Archelaus was appointed, and when he returned to Judaea he took revenge on those that had opposed him (Josephus, WAR 2.311).

Our primary sources of these events are Josephus' WAR 2.80–100 and ANTIQUITIES 17.208–323. Flavius Josephus (37– ca. 100 CE) was a commanding officer of the Galilean Jewish forces during the Jewish War (66–70 CE) and was captured by Vespasian in 68 CE. While Vespasian's prisoner, he predicted that Vespasian would become emperor. When Vespasian became emperor in 69 CE, Josephus accompanied Titus to Rome, was adopted into the Flavian family, and subsequently became a client of the emperor. Josephus' first work was his WAR, written somewhere between 75–78 CE. Written under the commission of Vespasian, WAR (and ANTIQUITIES) is a fine example of Hellenistic historical writing (including speeches displaying facility in Greek rhetoric), and could be seen as an apologia, sometimes on behalf of Rome, at times on behalf of the Jews and Judaism, but always on his own behalf. WAR has an evident pro-Roman tone, portraying to his fellow Jews Roman conduct against the Jewish people in the best light, at some times inflating the successes of the Romans. Written as a client of the emperor and the Flavian family, WAR's main tone is the exaltation of Rome and the futility of rising against the Roman Empire.

Josephus' second work, ANTIQUITIES—modeled after the Roman antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and dedicated to Epaphroditus—was written in 93–94 CE during the reign of Domitian. Not written by commission of the emperor—Vespasian's name only occur once in ANTIQUITIES—Josephus wrote this work “with the desire of giving the world a narrative which might remove the prejudices entertained against his nation” (Stebbing 1987:xiv). Aimed at Gentile readers, the main tone of ANTIQUITIES is to portray to the cultivated Graeco-Roman world the high antiquity and achievements of the Jews, inspiring them with respect for the Jewish faith (Goldin: 988). Where the subject matter overlaps in WAR and ANTIQUITIES, in the latter the account is often more ample, the tone less pro-Roman and less enthusiastic towards his earlier political attitude and appraisals of the Empire in WAR. Importantly, large parts of both writings are based on Josephus' memory (Goldin: 987–8).

If the so-called “throne claimant parable” (Lk 19:12, 14 and 27) in the parable of the minas (Lk 19:12b–24 and 27) does indeed refer to the events narrated by Josephus, we possess three social memories of the same event. What can we learn from these three social memories when we analyse them through the lens of the above suggested social–scientific model of social memory, namely “who wants whom to remember what when and why”?

WAR 2.80–100

The reason for Archelaus’ visit to Rome is because of yet another accusation from the Jews against him. This accusation was made by the ambassadors, who before the revolt, came with Varus’ permission to plead for the liberty of their country. They were fifty in number, with more than eight thousand Jews at Rome, who supported them. To hear the case of the embassy, Caesar assembled a council of the principal Romans in Apollo’s temple, which was in the palace, a temple Caesar himself built and adorned at considerable expense. During the hearing, the multitude of the Jews stood with the ambassadors, and on the other side stood Archelaus with his friends. The family of Archelaus stood on neither side, firstly because of their hatred and envy of him, and secondly, because they were afraid to be seen by Augustus as siding with Archelaus’ accusers. Also present is Phillip, Archelaus’ brother, sent by Varus out of kindness for two reasons: to assist Archelaus if needed and to be present if Augustus decided to distribute what belonged to Herod the Great. The focus in this scene is Augustus and Roman power (Archelaus and Phillip): the temple of Apollos built by Augustus is described in detail and Phillip is present merely to assist Archelaus “if necessary”. In a certain sense, the Jewish embassy is pushed to the background. It is a Roman story.

In the third scene of Josephus’ account in WAR, the embassy—described as accusers—is given permission to speak. Their speech has two foci, Herod the Great and Archelaus, and ends with a request. Herod is described as not being a king, but the most barbarous of all tyrants under whom they suffered immensely: he breached their laws, impoverished the nation, enslaved them, massacred a vast number of them, and tortured not only the bodies of his subjects, but entire cities. He did much harm to the cities of his own country while adorning those of foreigners, shedding the blood of Jews in order to show kindnesses to these foreigners. In the few years of his rule they suffered more than their forefathers had suffered in the period after the exile up to the beginning of Herod’s reign. When Archelaus took over, they called him king and joined in the mourning of Herod, hoping that things would change for the better. But to no avail. He began his reign with the murder of three thousand citizens, defiled their temple with dead bodies, and brought upon the people great calamities. Because of this, they requested Augustus to have compassion upon the remains of Judaea by joining their country as a province to Syria ruled by their own people.

In the next scene Nicolaus is given the opportunity to speak on behalf of Herod and Archelaus. His short speech is pro–Roman: the two kings are exempted and the burden of guilt is placed squarely onto the Jews. The problem, presumably, is not the conduct of Herod and Archelaus, but rather the behavior of the obstinate Jews who are hard to be ruled over and naturally disobedient to kings.

The last part of Josephus' narrative, the appearance of Archelaus before Augustus, is dedicated to Augustus' decision. After a few days of deliberating, Archelaus was appointed as ethnarch and received one half of Herod's kingdom (Idumea, Judea, and Samaria). The cities Stratos Tower, Sebaste, Joppa, and Jerusalem were subjected to him, but the Grecian cities (Gaza, Gadara, and Hippos) were cut from his kingdom, and added to Syria. The revenue of the country that was given to Archelaus was four hundred talents. The other half of Herod's kingdom was divided between Phillip and Herod Antipas, who were both appointed as tetrarchs.

ANTIQUITIES 17.208–323

In ANTIQUITIES the reason for Archelaus' visit to Rome is not due to an accusation from the Jews, but rather that he had trouble in Rome. An embassy of the Jews was on their way to Rome, with Varus' permission. The embassy is described as representing the nation and sent by their authority, which we do not have in WAR. Their mandate was not to petition for the liberty of their country, as in WAR, but for the liberty of living by their own laws. The description of the embassy is the same as in WAR, except for the fact that the embassy took action by assigning more than eight thousand Jews to them who were already in Rome. Also, nothing is mentioned about the revolt in Judaea. Already in this introduction of the events to follow, Josephus' different slant is noticeable. Archelaus is summoned by Rome; the embassy is described as official delegates of the whole nation (not only a few separatists); they petition not for liberty from Rome, but only to have the right to live by their own laws. Thus, what is at stake is not political liberty as in WAR. The embassy has Varus's permission, and their request was nothing extraordinary. Rome's policy of "indirect rule" made provision for their request (Horsley: 9).

In ANTIQUITIES the beginning of Archelaus' hearing before Augustus is described in the same manner as in WAR, except for one difference: no reference is made that the temple of Apollo was in Augustus' palace or to the adornings in the temple. Josephus is clearly sensitive to the Jewish religion and their point of view on images. With regards to the reason for Phillip's presence, ANTIQUITIES differs quite substantially from WAR: Phillip is present to assist Archelaus (not only if necessary). Also, he was sent by Varus, not out of kindness, but on Varus' persuasion: Varus suspected that, after the hearing, there would be a change in government. His action in persuading Phillip to be present, in terms of general reciprocity, meant that Phillip would have to reciprocate in kind if he was to receive some share of what belonged to Herod the Great. This can also be said of the account in WAR, but here Varus is called a great friend of Archelaus.

ANTIQUITIES differs on yet another point when compared with WAR: Josephus suggests that it was possible that Augustus could make a decision regarding to what belonged to Herod the Great in favour of the nation represented by the embassy—for a second time stating the reason why the embassy came, that is, the desire to have the liberty of living by their own laws. ANTIQUITIES thus again has a different emphasis when compared to WAR: the scene is not solely about Roman interests. Jewish interests (stated twice) are also part of the narrative, even making provision for the possibility that the embassy could be successful in their request.

In ANTIQUITIES the scene in which the embassy states their case before Augustus also differs from its description in WAR. The embassy is not described as accusers, but as they who hoped to obtain dissolution of kingly government, and is given liberty to speak. Their speech has the same foci as in WAR; Herod, Archelaus, and a request. The content of the speech, however, differs extensively from WAR. In WAR, Herod is described as a tyrant and only in name a king. The number of his vices, however, is increased and described in more detail. He destroyed the Jews, made many innovations to his own benefit, and took their estates away from them. He adorned the cities built by him and filled them with foreigners, while the other cities that flourished before his reign, were ruined and utterly destroyed. He caused the nation to decay to complete poverty, slain many of the nobility, and deprived them of their estates. Besides their annual taxes, they also had to bestow him with lavish gifts. This arrangement also benefitted his domestics and friends, and even his slaves who were appointed as his tax-gatherers—freedom from unjust violence could only be obtained through gifts of gold and silver. Furthermore, he inhumanly corrupted the chastity of their virgins, and expected those who were in his debt to prostitute their wives. Herod was like a wild beast because of the power given to him; a ruler under whom they have suffered the most.

Turning to Archelaus, there are also notable differences between ANTIQUITIES and WAR. The reason for accepting Archelaus as new king is the same as in WAR, as well as them partaking in the mourning of his father. They gladly salute him as king, hoping that he would be milder in his approach than Herod. Archelaus, however, was afraid of being deposed by Augustus, and therefore, even before he was installed by Augustus, showed that there was no difference between him and his father: he slaughtered three thousand of his “own countrymen” at the temple. Note here again Josephus’ different slant in ANTIQUITIES: the Jews saluted Archelaus as their new king, considering themselves as his countrymen. It was, however, because of Augustus’ power to install or dispose that Archelaus turned to barbarity. Thus, their problems were not really the result of Archelaus’ actions, but the pressure he felt to satisfy Augustus. Their actual problem, therefore, was Rome. As a result, they desired to be delivered from kingly, and the like, forms of government, added to Syria, and ruled by their own. Through this state of affairs they will make it evident that they are not a seditious people; on the contrary, they are generally fond of innovations, and able to live in an orderly manner.

Nicolaus’ speech in ANTIQUITIES also differs from that in WAR. Although here the two kings are also vindicated, Josephus’ approach is gentler. The embassy should have complained about Herod when he was still alive, because then he could have been punished. In other words, they may be right in their estimation of Herod’s rule, but now it is too late. Although Archelaus governed contrary to the laws, as they argued, the Jews were also in the wrong: they rebelled, were un-submissive to justice and to the laws, and were manipulative. In both the cases of Herod and Archelaus, Nicolaus, in ANTIQUITIES, therefore, admits that the two kings may very well have been in the wrong.

Augustus’ decision after the hearing of Archelaus’ case is narrated in ANTIQUITIES in the same way as in WAR, except for one difference. Whereas in WAR the revenue of the country that was given to Archelaus is indicated as four hundred talents, in ANTIQUITIES it is enlarged to six hundred talents. Again here

one can pick up Josephus' different slant: the Jews living in the territories given to Archelaus will have to pay more taxes, thus being exploited more severely.

The differences between WAR 2.80–100 and ANTIQUITIES 17.208–323 can be summarized as follows:

WAR 2.80–100	ANTIQUITIES 17.208–323
The reason for Archelaus' visit to Rome is because of an accusation from the Jews	The reason for Archelaus' visit to Rome is because he had trouble in Rome
The embassy of the Jews is depicted as (false) accusers, pleading for the (political) liberty of their country (power)	The embassy is depicted as representing the nation and sent by their authority with a mandate to petition for the liberty of living by their own laws and not for political liberty
The revolt in Judaea is referred to	The revolt in Judaea is not referred to
The hearing of the case takes place in Apollo's temple in the palace, a temple Caesar himself built and adorned at considerable expense	No reference to the temple of Apollo as being in Augustus' palace or to the adornings in the temple is made
Phillip, Archelaus' brother, is present because he was sent by Varus out of kindness to assist Archelaus if needed and to be present if Augustus decided to distribute what belonged to Herod the Great. Phillip is present to protect his interests.	Phillip, Archelaus' brother, is present because he was sent by Varus (here called a great friend of Archelaus) by persuasion to assist Archelaus (not only if needed) because there most probably would be a distribution of what belonged to Herod the Great. Phillip is present to protect Varus' interest
The focus in the hearing is Augustus and Roman power (Archelaus and Phillip). It is a Roman story	The focus of the hearing is not solely about Roman interests. Jewish interests (stated twice) are also in play. The narrative makes provision for the possibility that the embassy could be successful in their request
Herod is described as a tyrant and only in name a king	Herod is also described as a tyrant and only in name a king, but the number of his vices is increased and described in more detail
When Archelaus took over, the Jews called him king and joined in the mourning of Herod, hoping that things would change for the better	The Jews saluted Archelaus as their new king even before he was installed by Augustus, considering themselves as his countrymen and hoped that he would be milder in his approach than Herod
Archelaus began his reign with the murder of three thousand citizens	Archelaus slaughtered three thousand of his own countrymen even before he was installed
In Nicolaus' speech the two kings are exempted and the burden of guilt is placed squarely onto the Jews	In Nicolaus' speech it is admitted that the two kings may very well have been in the wrong
In Nicolaus' speech the Jews is described as obstinate, hard to be ruled over and naturally disobedient to kings.	In Nicolaus' speech the Jews is described as not seditious, generally fond of innovations and able to live in an orderly manner
The revenue of the territory given to Archelaus is four hundred talents	The revenue of the territory given to Archelaus is six hundred talents. The Jews will have to pay more taxes and be exploited more severely

Josephus and Social Memory

When the suggested social–scientific model is applied to Josephus' two versions of the same event, the reasons for the differences between the two versions become clear. In WAR Josephus writes (remembers) as the client of Vespasian (*who* and *when*). The *whom* he is remembering for is most probably Vespasian, the Roman emperors, and those that support the Roman Empire. The narrative (*what*) has a clear pro–Roman tone: emphasis is placed on one of Augustus'

many successful building projects (he has a temple in his palace); the embassy of the Jews is depicted as (false) accusers, pleading for the liberty of their country (power); they show no change in their effort to stop Archelaus from being appointed over them; only a short speech of Nicolaus is needed to convince Augustus of Archelaus' innocence; Roman conduct involving the Jewish people is pictured in the best light possible; and Augustus is depicted as being fair and wise. The main tone of WAR is the exaltation of Rome and the futility of rising against the Roman Empire (*why*). The version of this event in WAR is a Roman story.

In ANTIQUITIES Josephus remembers on behalf of Epaphroditus, no longer being a client of Vespasian (*who, when* and for *whom*). When one compares ANTIQUITIES with WAR the "*what*" Josephus is remembering becomes clear. The reason for Archelaus' visit to Rome is because he had trouble in Rome, not because of an accusation from the Jews. The embassy that goes to Rome is described as representing the nation and sent by their authority (and Varus'), with the mandate for the liberty of living by their own laws. No reference is made that the temple of Apollo was in Augustus' palace or to the adornings in the temple. The Roman kings are not depicted as a solid front as in WAR and Josephus suggests that it was possible that Augustus could take a decision in favour of the nation represented by the embassy. When given the liberty to speak, the number of Herod's vices is increased and described in more detail, and Archelaus' barbarity is seen as the result of Augustus' power to install or depose. In Nicolaus' speech the two kings are vindicated, but it is also stated that they may have been in the wrong. Finally, the revenue Archelaus will receive is enlarged, giving the impression that the Jewish people will be exploited more severely.

From these differences between WAR and ANTIQUITIES, the *why* of Josephus' remembering is clear: the remembering is less pro-Roman, and the Jewish people are more central in the act of remembering. Aimed at Gentile readers, the main tone is to portray to the cultivated Graeco-Roman world the Jewish people in a positive light, inspiring them to show respect for the Jewish faith.

Jesus—Luke 19:12b–24 and 27

As a point of departure, the parable of the minas in Luke is considered an authentic parable of the historical Jesus, and delimited to Luke 19:12b–24, 27 (see Van Eck 2011b for arguments that support these two point of departures). The *who* that is remembering in the parable is Jesus the social prophet (Van Eck 2010). The remembering takes place in the third decade of the first-century in Palestine (*when*). The peasantry is the audience of the remembering (*whom*). The "situatedness" of both the *who* and *whom* are thus Roman Palestine (circa 27–30 CE) in which the elite (Roman and Jewish) shaped the social experience of the peasantry. Social control was built on fear and the relationship between the ruling elite and the ruled non-elite was one of power and exploitation (e.g., taxes). Because of this, the peasantry lived on the edge of destitution. In this exploitative situation, Jesus spoke in his parables of a new and different world, the (ethical-eschatological) kingdom of God. His parables were "political" stories about God's kingdom, "not earthly stories with heavenly meanings, but earthly stories with heavy meanings" (Herzog: 3), exploring how human beings could

respond to an exploitative and oppressive society created by the power and privilege of the elite.

Part of the parable of the minas is Luke 19:12, 14 and 27, a description of a well-borne man who goes to receive a kingdom, has his leadership contested by his subjects, and proceeds to slaughter his opponents (the so-called throne claimant parable) after he is appointed as king. This so-called throne claimant parable is the *what* of Jesus' remembering in the parable. As with Josephus in WAR and ANTIQUITIES, Jesus is remembering the event in 4 BCE when Archelaus journeyed to Rome to get his kingship over Judaea confirmed. Jesus' social memory of this event, however, is much shorter than that of Josephus. This relates to the "why-question" of social memory.

In the parable of the minas Jesus is addressing two topics via the social memory of Archelaus' appointment in 4 BCE. By employing this social memory, Jesus is telling a parable not about two good slaves and one bad slave, but a parable about the exploitative normalcies that were part and parcel of first-century Palestine—elite who on a constant basis were looking for more honor, power and privilege and elite using their power to exploit. In the words of Schottroff: "The narrative is absolutely clear. It describes the economic and political structure of an exploitative kingship" (185).

The parallels between the two stories are obvious. In the parable, as in the Archelaus story, a nobleman (Archelaus) travels to a far country (Rome) to receive a kingdom (to be installed by Augustus as a vassal king). An embassy of citizens (fifty) went to Rome to ask that the nobleman should not reign over them (the plead of the Jewish embassy before Augustus), the nobleman receives the kingdom (Archelaus is installed as *etnarch*), returns and appoints two of his slaves over some of the cities placed under his governance (e.g., Stratos Tower, Sebaste, Joppe and Jerusalem; Josephus, ANTIQUITIES 17.315–323), and ultimately killed those who did not respect his authority.

Why is Jesus falling back on this specific social memory? Because the iniquities of which the embassy accused Herod and Archelaus before Augustus are the same as those the non-elite (peasantry) were now experiencing: exploitative and excessive taxation and tributes (including the taking of the so-called surplus of the harvest) to fund *inter alia* the lavish and consumptionist lifestyles of the elite as well as providing loans with exuberant rates with the aim of acquiring land when repayment of debts failed, thus creating large estates which in turn lead to a commercialized economy. This situation of the peasantry in first-century Palestine is described by Herzog as follows:

The peasant village in Palestine during the early decades of the first century was under increasing stress. The cumulative effects of Herodian rule combined with the rigors of Roman colonialism and the demands of the Temple hierarchy had taken their toll. The monetization and commercialization of the local economy had led to increasingly predatory relationships between elites and peasants ... there is evidence for rising debt and defaults on loans, accompanied by the hostile takeover of peasant small-holdings and the reduction of peasants to more dependent economic statuses. These practices can be traced back to the fact that elites made loans to peasants and held their land as collateral [206–7].

According to Josephus (ANTIQUITIES 17.299–314), this is exactly what Archelaus did after the death of Herod the Great: he destroyed the Jews, many of them perishing because of his adorning of certain cities. He forced the nation into a

paralyzing degree of poverty, confiscated estates and besides the annual impositions which he laid on everyone, he demanded liberal presents to himself, his domestics and friends, and treated many inhumanly. This then, is the first reason why Jesus is recalling this specific social memory—the elite exploit the non–elite, as can be seen in what happened in 4 BCE. The elite are like the nobleman and his two slaves (Rohrbaugh: 32–39). This is what the kingdom of Caesar looked like.

How does one resist such a kingdom? This is the second reason why Jesus recalls this specific social memory. There is, according to Jesus, a wrong and a more appropriate way to resist the kingdom of Caesar. In a situation (like first–century Palestine) where the relation between empire and subjected people is one of power and all matters of importance are in the hands of the elite, with the peasantry having no legitimate channel for political participation (Horsley: 5, 11; Fiensy: 34), it is easy to protest in a wrong way. As a matter of fact, even the slightest protest would have been experienced by the elite as rebellious. According to Jesus, however, there is a “correct” way to protest; a way spelled out in the parable.

In Luke 19:12b the man who journeys to a far country is described as well–borne or noble from birth. He is, as a result, a person with ascribed honor. In the first–century Mediterranean world, ascribed honor happened passively through birth (e.g. Archelaus was the son of Herod the Great and thus had ascribed honor). When honor is ascribed, “it is bestowed on someone by a notable person of power, such as a king or governor” (Malina: 82). More importantly, “the powerful one ascribing the honor has the sanction of power to make the grant of honor stick” (Malina: 83), and, of course, the power to annul a status of honor. If one sees the nobleman in the parable as Archelaus, this means that Archelaus went to Rome to have his ascribed honor sanctioned by Augustus. He also, however, sought acquired honor in his bid to receive the kingship over the territories that belonged to his father Herod the Great, and not his brothers Antipas or Philip. When the embassy contested Archelaus’ appointment as king, they in fact contested his honor, the most pivotal value in the first–century eastern Mediterranean world. In essence, they played a political game in a world in which they had no legitimate channel for political participation, ultimately receiving the customary penalty delivered by the elite in cases like this (e.g., the messianic movements of Judas son of Hezekiah [4 BCE], Simon [4 BCE] and Athronges [4–2 BCE]; Josephus, WAR 2.55–65). This clearly, according to the parable, was evidently not the way to protest. And to make this point, Jesus used the Archelaus episode in 4 BCE as social memory.

Jesus, however, also used the Archelaus episode to indicate what the appropriate way would be to protest. How can non–elites negotiate in a world of material domination that appropriates their agricultural production and labor by excessive taxation? One approach is to proceed like the first two slaves, legitimating the domination of the elite. Alternatively, as we have seen, one can, like the embassy, play the political game without any legitimation and subsequently carry the consequences. Or one can act like the third slave.

As correctly interpreted by Rohrbaugh (1993), the nobleman is a thief in the eyes of the third slave. He does not want any part in the exploitation of the peasantry. So what does he do? First, he ties the mina in a cloth to protect the existing share of the owner, “exactly what in the peasant view an honorable person should do” (Rohrbaugh: 36). Secondly, when confronted by his master,

he does not characterize him as a callous person in order to justify his fear and consequential inactivity with the mina. He rather employs an excuse: "I knew I had to be careful, and I have been" (Rohrbaugh: 37). How would the nobleman have heard this? Most probably in the sense of "Master, I have so much respect for you (I am honoring you), that I did not want to take a chance with your money. I did what I thought was the honorable thing to do, that is, to protect what belongs to you." But what did the peasants, who most probably were part of the audience when Jesus told the parable, hear? Most probably: "You are a thief, and I am not willing to be part of what you are doing!" And what did the nobleman do? Since he knew that the social control and power he enjoyed was built on fear, and that this led to the action of the third slave, the slave's action in a sense was the master's own doing. Nonetheless the slave acted responsibly. He was a "bad slave," compared to the other two. But he respected (honored) his master, although he made no profit. Consequently, the master let him go with only a label around his neck. This then, is the successful way to protest if you are part of the kingdom of God, and not that of Caesar.

Conclusion

Memory, identity and narrative are interrelated. Identity is constructed by the remembering (retelling) of narratives from the past; the present is reframed (identity) by telling (narrative) through remembering (memory). Memory thus plays a crucial role in the cohesion and self-understanding of groups, it is used to define boundaries and suggest moral purposes (Olick 2006: 5–6). Put differently: people (*who*) together with other people (*whom*) remember at times (*when*) certain events (*what*) for specific reasons (*why*).

A study of the three social memories that we have of the events surrounding Archelaus in 4 BCE indicates that the suggested social-scientific model of social memory can be used as a useful heuristic tool to analyze the social facets of memory. In *WAR*, Josephus remembers this event in a pro-Roman way to exalt Rome (their identity). In *ANTIQUITIES* the same historical event is remembered to portray to the cultivated Graeco-Roman world the high antiquity and achievements of the Jews (their identity). And in Luke 19:12a–24 and 27, Jesus uses the event to show what the kingdom of Caesar is like, and how one that is part of the kingdom of God, should protest (their identity).

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