

How societies remember

In treating memory as a cultural rather than an individual faculty, this book provides an account of how practices of a non-inscribed kind are transmitted in, and as, traditions. Most studies of memory as a cultural faculty focus on inscribed transmissions of memories. Connerton, on the other hand, concentrates on incorporated practices, and so questions the currently dominant idea that literary texts may be taken as a metaphor for social practices generally. The author argues that images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained by ritual performances and that performative memory is bodily. Bodily social memory is an essential aspect of social memory, but it is an aspect which has up till now been badly neglected.

An innovative study, this work should be of interest to researchers into social, political and anthropological thought as well as to graduate and undergraduate students.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-27093-9 - How Societies Remember
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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 1989
 Tenth printing 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data
 Connerton, Paul
 How societies remember. – (Themes in the
 social sciences)
 1. Cultural processes
 I. Title II. Series
 306

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
 Connerton, Paul.
 How societies remember.
 (Themes in the social sciences)
 Bibliography.
 Includes index.
 1. Memory – Social aspects. 2. Rites and ceremonies –
 Psychological aspects. 3. Costume – Psychological aspects.
 4. Body, Human – Psychological aspects. 5. Psychohistory.
 I. Title. I. Series.
 BF378.S65C66 1990 302'.12 89-7070

ISBN 0 521 24948 1 hardback
 ISBN 0 521 27093 6 paperback

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the Director and Deputy Director of the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University for the invitation of a Visiting Fellowship and the provision of congenial conditions in which some of the work towards this book was done. I owe a special debt of thanks to Geoffrey Hawthorn, for his steadfast support for this project from its inception as a quite different idea to its eventual appearance as something else, and to Russell Keat, with whom I discussed the details of the work at most stages. The book has benefited from the critical comments on an earlier version of it made by them, and also by Gregory Blue, Nicholas Boyle, Peter Edwards, Ritchie Robertson and Elisabeth Stopp. I am deeply grateful to them all for helping me to say a little more clearly what I wanted to say. Finally, I wish to thank Bobbie Coe and Joyce Leverett who cheerfully and efficiently prepared this manuscript for publication.