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978-0-521-75892-5 - Memory in Mind and Culture
Edited by Pascal Boyer and James V. Wertsch
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MEMORY IN MIND AND CULTURE

This text introduces students, scholars, and interested educated readers to the issues of human memory broadly considered, encompassing individual memory, collective remembering by societies, and the construction of history. The book is organized around several major questions: How do memories construct our past? How do we build shared collective memories? How does memory shape history? This volume presents a special perspective, emphasizing the role of memory processes in the construction of self-identity, of shared cultural norms and concepts, and of historical awareness. Although the results are fairly new and the techniques suitably modern, the vision itself is of course related to the work of such precursors as Frederic Bartlett and Aleksandr Luria, who in very different ways represent the starting point of a serious psychology of human culture.

Pascal Boyer is Henry Luce Professor of Individual and Collective Memory, departments of psychology and anthropology, at Washington University in St. Louis. He studied philosophy and anthropology at the universities of Paris and Cambridge, where he did his graduate work with Professor Jack Goody, on memory constraints on the transmission of oral literature. He has done anthropological fieldwork in Cameroon on the transmission of the Fang oral epics and on Fang traditional religion. Since then, he has worked mostly on the experimental study of cognitive capacities underlying cultural transmission. After teaching in Cambridge, San Diego, Lyon, and Santa Barbara, Boyer moved to his present position at the departments of anthropology and psychology at Washington University, St. Louis.

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CONTENTS

List of Contributors *page vii*

PART I: IN MIND, CULTURE, AND HISTORY:
 A SPECIAL PERSPECTIVE

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | What Are Memories For? Functions of Recall
in Cognition and Culture
<i>Pascal Boyer</i> | 3 |
|---|---|---|

PART II: HOW DO MEMORIES CONSTRUCT
 OUR PAST?

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 2 | Networks of Autobiographical Memories
<i>Helen L. Williams & Martin A. Conway</i> | 33 |
| 3 | Cultural Life Scripts and Individual Life Stories
<i>Dorthe Berntsen & Annette Bohn</i> | 62 |
| 4 | Specificity of Memory: Implications for Individual
and Collective Remembering
<i>Daniel L. Schacter, Angela H. Gutchess,
& Elizabeth A. Kensinger</i> | 83 |

PART III: HOW DO WE BUILD SHARED
 COLLECTIVE MEMORIES?

- | | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 5 | Collective Memory
<i>James V. Wertsch</i> | 117 |
|---|--|-----|

6	The Role of Repeated Retrieval in Shaping Collective Memory <i>Henry L. Roediger III, Franklin M. Zaromb, & Andrew C. Butler</i>	138
7	Making History: Social and Psychological Processes Underlying Collective Memory <i>James W. Pennebaker & Amy L. Gonzales</i>	171
8	How Does Collective Memory Create a Sense of the Collective? <i>Alan J. Lambert, Laura Nesse Scherer, Chad Rogers, & Larry Jacoby</i>	194
PART IV: HOW DOES MEMORY SHAPE HISTORY?		
9	Historical Memories <i>Craig W. Blatz & Michael Ross</i>	223
10	The Memory Boom: Why and Why Now? <i>David W. Blight</i>	238
11	Historians and Sites of Memory <i>Jay Winter</i>	252
PART V: HOW DOES MEMORY SHAPE CULTURE?		
12	Oral Traditions as Collective Memories: Implications for a General Theory of Individual and Collective Memory <i>David C. Rubin</i>	273
13	Cognitive Predispositions and Cultural Transmission <i>Pascal Boyer</i>	288
	<i>Index</i>	321

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viii

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