

Introduction

MEMORY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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“Christianity is found in the Gospels
and in the lives of the saints.”¹

THESE WORDS, WRITTEN in Barcelona in 1417 by Violant de Bar, the queen dowager of John I of Aragon, defined Christianity as a compendium of historical events which form an exemplar for life: the narrative events in the Gospels and the lives of the saints. Throughout the Middle Ages, memory, a compendium of what was recalled from the past, became the essential basis for one’s own identity and for establishing strategies to consolidate the future.

Medieval, particularly Christian, society gave great importance to memory; this chapter features this importance. It shows how memory penetrated all aspects of human relations, to the point that we can say life *was* memory. This led people of the Middle Ages to question the nature of memory, and so, in the second section of this introduction, we will see how medieval science interrogated the qualities of memory. The combination of these two aspects—the importance of memory in the lives of medieval men and women and the efforts of medieval science to define and place the memory physiologically—leads to a third point: the need to maintain and cultivate memory, the reason we dedicate the third section to the contemporary methods for stimulating the capacity to recall. It becomes clear that memory in the Middle Ages had a significant social dimension, which forces us to analyze it as a conscious strategy in the fourth section of this introduction. These social strategies ultimately reflect the powers-that-be, reinforcing their interests and dominant ideology. The introduction concludes with a section illustrating what we could term a guided memory.

Life is Memory

Medieval confidence in the past was inherited from classical culture along with a mistrust of change, thought to be inferior to what went before: the ancient models should not be forgotten or altered. Tacitus, for instance, is very clear: “in all matters the arrangements of the past were better and fairer and that all changes were for the worse; everything

¹ “Christianisme per force se trobe en Evangelis ne Vida de Sants.” From Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, Reg. 2052, fol. 29v; edited in Jaume Riera, *Els poders públics i les sinagogues, segles XIII-XIV* (Girona, 2006), 545.

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that is transformed, changes for the worse.”² The so-called Fathers of the Church, writing in the two first centuries of Christianity, established the bases from which a line of continuity was drawn. In the second century CE, Irenaeus of Lyon restricted true knowledge as delimited by the teachings of the Apostles, the order established by the Church, and the apostolic succession. Origins and historical continuity were based on the Gospels, as guarded and interpreted by the Church, who could define the true, correct historical narrative, and the development of history was maintained on earth under the bishops.³ Fourth-century Christianity conquered history, as it were, establishing historical truth by moving beyond biblical history, which till then defined Jewish identity and operated within Roman history. From then on, the history of the world, the history of the Church, and the history of salvation became one and the same.⁴ The Church proclaimed a religious model for society that was justified in a story of continuity from the creation of the world until the *parousia*.⁵ Consequently, the story around which society was built required the remembrance of historical continuity. We can see this in the Romanesque cloister of Aix-en-Provence, its capitals sculpted in the twelfth century successively showing the three phases of humanity: the Old Testament, the life of Jesus Christ, and the triumph of the Church in the Roman Empire.⁶ Christian religion is a record of a path: “Christian teaching is memory, Christian worship is commemoration.”⁷

Life was a path towards salvation: “we are all of us pilgrims who pass along the way” as the Castilian Gonzalo de Berceo stated in the thirteenth century.⁸ It was the past that gave meaning, not novelty, as expressed by Paien de Maisières (late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries):

Today, the old paths are less appreciated than the new paths, because these are considered more beautiful, but they are only better in appearance; but it frequently occurs that the old ones are more appreciated.⁹

2 “Super omnibus negotiis melius atque rectius olim provisum et quae converterentur in deterius mutari.” Cited from Tacitus, *Annales*, 14.43, accessed April 22, 2013, <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/tacitus/tac.ann14.shtml>. Translation by Alfred J. Church and William J. Brodribb (London, 1882), available at <http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/annals.10.xiv.html>, accessed May 20, 2020.

3 José Vives, *Los padres de la Iglesia* (Barcelona, 1982), 184.

4 Raúl González Salinero, “La idea de *Romanitas* en el pensamiento histórico-político de Prudencio,” in *Toga y daga. Teoría de la praxis de la política en Roma*, ed. Gonzalo Bravo and Raúl Salinero (Madrid, 2009), 349–62 at 349–51.

5 Flocel Sabaté, “Els referents històrics de la societat: identitat i memòria,” in *L’Edat Mitjana. Món real i espai imaginat*, ed. Flocel Sabaté (Catarroja, 2012), 16–21.

6 <http://www.provence-hors-des-sentiers-battus.com/2010/10/27/cloitre-de-la-cathedrale-saint-saveur-aix-en-provence>, accessed April 22 2013.

7 “L’enseignement chrétien est mémoire, le culte chrétien est commémoration.” Cited from Jacques Le Goff, *Histoire et mémoire* (Paris, 1988), 133.

8 “Todos somos romeos que camino pasamos.” Cited from Gonzalo de Berceo, *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*, ed. Fernando Baños (Barcelona, 2002), 13.

9 “Ahora son menos apreciados los viejos caminos que los nuevos, porque éstos se consideran más bellos, y solo son mejores en apariencia; pero ocurre con frecuencia que los viejos son más

This does not prevent appreciating, with Anselm of Havelberg in the twelfth century, the benefits of *novitas* when it comes to improving the spirit and knowledge.¹⁰ Later, Bernat Metge comments, “people always enjoy new things.”¹¹ This view did not alter an intellectual preference for the past, as shown in another fourteenth-century Catalan text:

Maximus states that old men praise things from the past and complain about those of the present, because our lives continually worsen; our parents’ times were worse than those of our grandparents, and ours are worse than our parents, and those of our children will be even more full of vices.¹²

So, one only looked to the future rooted in a strong connection with the past, a well-defined past with which one was permanently linked through memory. Reference to memory was consistent across the Middle Ages. Religion relied on evocative images, which held a central position in popular worship,¹³ endowed them with particular symbology where, to a large extent, aesthetics, pedagogy, mimesis, and symbolism referred to events in the past.¹⁴ Constant recollection of biblical stories—particularly the martyrdoms or miracles of the saints—all of remembrance of which served to generate devotion. Most aptly, the medieval cathedral has been defined as “the theatre of the memory,” because the images are useful “against the ignorance of the simple people, against the inertia of the emotions, and against the weakness of the memory.”¹⁵

Similarly, when political power addressed its subjects, previous sovereigns had not faded into oblivion but were held in the memory. Like other characters worthy of remembrance, such as the members of the royal household, their mention was always accompanied by the invocation of their memory: “King James of good memory, lord King John of good memory, highest Lady Joan of good memory, the very noble King Henry of good memory.” The adjective “good” was occasionally varied; it could be “clear” memory, for example. Evidently, the monarchs spoke similarly about their ancestors; for example,

apreciados.” Cited from Paien de Maisières, “La doncella de la mula,” in *El caballero de la espada; la doncella la mula*, ed. Isabel de Riquer (Madrid, 1984), 31.

10 Walter Edyvean, *Anselm of Havelberg and the Theology of History* (Rome, 1972); Karl F. Morrison, “Anselm of Havelberg: Play and the Dilemma of Historical Progress,” in *Religion, Culture and Society in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and John J. Contreni (Kalamazoo, 1987), 219–56.

11 “La gent tot temps s’alegra de novetats.” Cited from Bernat Metge, *Lo somni*, ed. Josep M. de Casacuberta and Lluís Nicolau d’Olwer (Barcelona, 1980), 28.

12 “Diu Maximià que-l hom vell loa les coses passades e blasma les presents per ço com nostra vida pijora contínuament, que les edats dels pares són pijors que dels avis e nós som pijors que nostres pares e encare seran nostres fills pus plens de vitis.” Cited from *Documentos literarios en antigua lengua catalana (siglos XIV y XV)*, ed. Pròspero de Bofarull (Barcelona, 1857; 2nd ed. 1973), 186.

13 Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Le corps des images. Essais sur la culture visuelle au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2002), 97–133.

14 Jèssica Jaques Pi, *La estética del románico y el gótico* (Boadilla del Monte, 2003), 160–241.

15 “Le théâtre de la mémoire; agissent contre l’ignorance des simples, contre l’inertie des émotions et contre la faiblesse de la mémoire.” Cited from Roland Recht, *Le croire et le voir. L’art des cathédrales (XI^e-XV^e siècle)* (Paris, 1999), 290.

mentioning “lord King Peter of good memory our father” and referring, in general, to “our ancestors of laudable memory.”¹⁶

Meanwhile, daily life was based on the maintenance of agreements and undertakings from the past. Such documents recorded how affairs were organized and established at their outset.

However, complete memory was a characteristic of the divine. Christ knew everything, which meant he held it in his memory, according to Ramon Llull:

In the same way that the logical man has acquired the knowledge of logic through science, so our lord Jesus Christ in so far as he is man retains everything in the memory, and in so far as he is God has everything gathered under the habit created of the memory. Consequently, he remembers everything created, in so far as he is man and he is God; and so our lord Jesus Christ attends to and understands all the creatures, in so far as he is God and that he is a creature.¹⁷

So, although everybody has memory, only God has a memory of everything, which explains why he never errs: “clearly, to have a memory of everything but not to err in no way belongs rather to the divine than to the human.” Conversely, because they lack full and continuous memory, men, even kings, make mistakes, distracted by the numerous affairs of their reigns, as John I of Aragon explained in 1387.¹⁸ Consequently, good management of secular affairs depended on exercises to commit things to memory: reiterating statements, recalling topics related to current issues, and restating previous decisions.¹⁹

The same exercise in remembering was required in law courts: the witness’s memory was a vital element in trials.²⁰ Given that it was often necessary to clarify the situation in disputes about rights, incomes, and possessions, witnesses were often asked for their records, as far back as they could take them. That happened, for example, in a trial in Girona in 1338, where a witness explained, “from his memory until now, he has seen that the court of the king held jurisdiction in the said parishes, and that is twenty-eight

16 “Rei Jaume de bona memòria, lo senyor Rey en Johan de bona memòria, la molt alta senyora infanta dona Johana de bona memòria, el muy noble Rey don Enrique de buena memoria”; and “del senyor Rey en Pere de bona memòria pare nostre; als nostres antecessors de loable memoria.” From Tortosa, Arxiu Comarcal del Baix Ebre, Batllia II, 42, fol. 4r; Girona, Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Girona, XV.4, llibre 3, unnumbered; Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 2029, fol. 172v; Cancelleria, Papeles por incorporar, Cervera-2, fol. 1v; Cancelleria Varia, 28, fol. 33r; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, esp. 216, fol. 89r.

17 “Sicut logicus acquirit habitum logicae per scientiam, ita dominus Iesus Christus homo habet in memoria omnia in hoc, quod deitas, sub habitu memoriae creatae, recolere uult omnia, quae recolit, in quantum est homo et in quantum etiam est Deus; et sic attingit et comprehendit dominus Iesus Christus omnes creaturas, et quantum est Deus et in quantum est creatura.” Cited from Raimundus Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, ed. Pere Villalba, 3 vols. (Turnhout, 2000), 2:591.

18 “Omnium habere memoriam et in nullo penitus errare potius pertinent divinitatis quam humanitati nimirum est.” Cited from Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, 1913, fol. 184r.

19 Barcelona, Arxiu de la Ciutat de Barcelona, Consell de Cent, B-VI, llibre 2, fol. 3v.

20 Irene Bueno, “‘Dixit quod non recordatur’: Memory as Proof in Inquisitorial Trials (Early Fourteenth-Century France),” in *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lucie Doležalová (Leiden, 2010), 365–93.

years and more,” while another stated “from his memory until now, which is twenty years, he has seen the executors of Girona acting in the said parishes.”²¹ The record can go further back still if it concatenated the memory of various people. However, a reliable memory in these records went no further back than a hundred years. Reliance on the powers of human recall shows the disadvantages and limits in numerous legal disputes. Thus, in some jurisdictional disputes in the Pyrenees between the abbot of Sant Joan de les Abadesses and the king, the latter explained:

It is true that the vicars and other officers from La Ral, in reality without any right and contravening ancient privileges and uses, usurped and seized all the jurisdiction that the abbot and the monastery have over their men in the vicariate of La Ral, which they had possessed for ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, and seventy years and for so long in the past that there is no human memory to contradict it.²²

This is not much different from what was said in 1395, also in Catalonia, in a legal dispute between the monastery of Poblet and the town of Valls over dominion of a farm, thus showing that it was really a formula with which to express the sequence of years going back beyond the record:

The aforesaid abbot and monastery said that they had and possessed and have had and possessed said farm of Doldellops in full possession with all its lands and assets for ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years and so long that there is no human memory to contradict it.²³

In 1384, in Igualada, another Catalan town, the local rulers explained to the king that the clash between bands in the town was remembered to have lasted a hundred years:

In a humble explanation made to us an eminent citizen from the town of Igualada about the factions he said that for almost one hundred years and particularly for two and a half years between on one side the so-called Castellolins and, on the other side, the Ocellons had been fighting in this town and the surrounding area by instigation of the enemy of humanity.²⁴

21 “De sa memòria a ansà ha vist usar la Cort del Rey en les dites perròchies e ha XXVIII ayns e més”; and “de sa memòria a ansà qui es XX anys ha vists los saygs de Gerona usar axí matex en les dites perròchies.” From Girona, *Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Girona*, I.1.2.1, lligall 3, llibre 2, fols. 15v and 16r.

22 “És cert que los vaguers e altres oficials de Sarreyal da ffit sens tota conaxensa usurparan e levaran contra los dits privilegis e usos antichs tota la jurisdicció que lo abbat e lo manastir havian en llur homens dins la vagaria de Sarreyal constituïts la qual havia possaïda per x, xx, xxx, xxxx, L, LX e LXX. anys passats e per tant de temps més avant que no era memòria d.òmens en contrari.” From Sant Joan de les Abadesses, *Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Joan de les Abadesses*, Documents sobre la jurisdicció de l’abat e la veguería de la Ral, fol. 2r.

23 “Lo dit abbat e convent deyen que ells tenien e posseïen e an tenguda e posseyda la dita granya de Dol de Lops en x, xx, xxx, xl, L, LX anys, e de tant de temps ençà que memòria de homens no és en contrari, per fi e franch alou ab tot sos terme e pertinences.” Cited from Jordi Rius i Jové, “Transcripció i notes d’un plet pel domini de la Granja de Doldellops (1395),” *Quaderns de Vilani* 21 (1992): 29.

24 “[E]xposicione humili nobis facta pro parte proborum hominem ville Aqualate quod est super bandositatibus que quasi a centum annis et potissime a duobus annis et medio citer intra los Castells Aulins ex una parte e los Ocellons ex parte altera, in dicta villa et eius convicino instigate

One can also talk about social or collective memory, derived from interlinking these popular accounts, a memory that combines, completes, and eventually weaves a picture of everyday life beyond the individual experience.²⁵ But this level of antiquity already surpasses the human record. So, across a wide range of disputes, documentation shows that supposed rights of ownership or any other kind, are so deeply rooted that they extend beyond the memory of contemporaries; it is no longer memory:

Time that is no longer in the memory of men.
Across such a large space of time that human memory is against [it].
No human memory contradicts [it].²⁶

An ancient memory positively supports inherent rights. In 1425, King Alfonso the Magnanimous of Aragon backed a decision that was questioned because there could be no opposing precedents dating that far back: “it is so long ago that there is no contradictory memory.”²⁷ Of course, one of the strategies for increasing patrimony was to occupy unpopulated lands, farm them, and finally obtain a title deed from the sovereign based on the lack of memory about other landholders: “so long ago that human memory does not contradict it,” as practised successfully in Castile at the end of the Middle Ages.²⁸

However, with no other basis than memories fading over time, disputes would frequently arise; memory required documented reinforcement. Very often, orders and legislation were collected in documentary form as a way to combat memory’s weakness. In 1196, King Peter the Catholic of Aragon began his disposition indicating: “given that human memory is feeble, we all need to adopt the consensus of the testimony inherent in what is written.”²⁹ Numerous documentary collections aimed to become the memory on which to base appropriate cases. For example, Sant Joan de les Abadesses made this case in the fifteenth century in his dispute with the king for jurisdiction over La Ral:

inimico humani generis vigentur.” Cited from Joan Cruz, *Els Privilegis de la vila d’Igualada* (Barcelona, 1990), 308.

25 Isabel Alfonso, “Memoria e identidad en las pesquisas judiciales en el area castellano-leonesa medieval,” in *Construir la identidad en la Edad Media: poder y memoria en la Castilla de los siglos VII a XV*, ed. José Antonio Jara, Georges Martin and Isabel Alfonso (Cuenca, 2010), 270–72.

26 “Temps que no és memòria d’òmnes”; “usu antiquissimo etiam usitato in tantum quod memoria hominum in contrarium non extabat”; “tan gran espay de temps que memòria d’òmnes no n’és en contra”; “atento tempore citra quod hominum memoria in contrarium non existit”; “memòria d’homes non és contrari.” From Tortosa, Arxiu Comarcal del Baix Ebre, Paheria i Vegueria I, procés 8, unnumbered; procés 48, unnumbered; Comú IV, 113; Vic, Arxiu Històric Municipal, llibre III, 57; Girona, Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Girona, I.1.2.1, lligall 3, fol. 58r; Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, 2217, fol. 108v, among many others.

27 “A tanto tempore circa de cuius memoria in contrarium non existit.” From Tortosa, Arxiu Comarcal del Baix Ebre, Paheria e Vegueria I, 56, fol. 1r.

28 “Tanto que memoria de omne non es en contrario.” Cited from José Antonio Jara Fuente, “‘Que memoria de onbre non es en contrario’. Usurpación de tierras y manipulación del pasado en la Castilla urbana del siglo xv,” *Studia historica. Historia Medieval* 20–21 (2002–2003): 73–104.

29 “Cum hominem memoria sit labilis, que inter aliquos geruntur fidei scripture comitti consentio.” Cited from Martin Alvira, *Pedro el Católico, Rey de Aragón y Conde de Barcelona (1196–1213). Documentos, Testimonios y Memoria Històrica*, 6 vols. (Zaragoza, 2010), 1:198.

Memory must be made in the way in which the agreements were made that established the jurisdictions of the town and the vicariate of La Ral between, on the one hand, the lord King James, of good memory, and the other kings who later succeed him and, on the other hand, the abbot of Sant Joan de les Abadesses.³⁰

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, collections of breaches and abuses by lords³¹ were kept as they accumulated. Frequently, a document heading read, “This is the memory.”³² The memory could be good or bad, because it might keep a record of the rights possessed or, conversely, the offences suffered. So, when an agreement was reached in 1203 between the bishop of Lleida and the countess of Urgell, it stated the importance of a solid memory: “Finally it shall still be possessed throughout life with good memory and in its full sense.”³³ Many legal judgements, especially those solving long conflicts, mention the desire to remain permanently in the memory: “in the memory of future [times]” in the words of the sentence of 1311 between the abbot of Ager and the bishop of Urgell.³⁴

Writing down agreements, orders, and dispositions became essential for sustaining memory. In 1244, King James I of Aragon ordered his vicar and eminent citizens (*prohoms*) of Barcelona to always keep in mind a constitutional law about the kidnapping of maidens and secret weddings and to note these “in the book of your customs or uses, for the perpetual memory of matters.”³⁵ With similar words, in 1297 the king’s grandson, James II, ordered his vicar in Manresa to record his orders, saying: “you must keep a copy of the present letter in the book of your court to have a perpetual memory of matters.” He once again invoked memory when ordering the same officer to count the assets to be registered, and thus retain the existing rights permanently in the memory.³⁶

All governments and administrations specified the things “that are kept in memory,” as a way to permanently record agreements and provisions and manage all kinds of topics and conflicts.³⁷ Municipal ordinances were put down in writing to invoke this neces-

30 “Memòria sia en qual manera los contractes qui foren fets entre lo senyor Rey en Jachme de bona memòria e los altres Reys qui après son stats de una part e l’onrat Abbat de Sent Johan Cesabadessas de l’altra part sobre les juradicions de la vila e vagaria de Sarrayal.” From Sant Joan de les Abadesses, Arxiu del Monestir de Sant Joan de les Abadesses, Documents sobrela jurisdicció de l’abat e la vegeria de la Ral, fol. 1r.

31 Flocel Sabaté, *La feudalización de la sociedad catalana* (Granada, 2007), 70–71.

32 “Hec est memoria.” From Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, Arxiu, fons de pergamins R1910, parchment 384; Luis Rubio, *Documentos lingüísticos catalanes de los siglos X–XII* (Murcia, 1979), 72; Philip D. Rasico, “El català preliterari en uns documents de l’antic bisbat d’Urgell (segles XI–XII),” *Urgellia* 7 (1984–85): 286.

33 “Finaliter possidere vivens ad huc in bona memoria et pleno sensu.” From Lleida, Arxiu Capítular de Lleida, drawer 119, packet 2, parchment 19.

34 “Ad memoria futurorum.” From Lleida, Arxiu Capítular de Lleida, fons Àger, packet 2, parchment 53.

35 “In libro vestrarum consuetudinum sive usaticorum ad perpetuam rei memoriam.” Cited from Joaquim Miret i Sans, *Itinerari de Jaume I “el conqueridor”* (Barcelona, 1918), 169.

36 “[F]acientes ad perpetua rei memoria presentem literam in libro vestre curie registrari.” From Manresa, Arxiu Comarcal del Bages, fons del veguer 4, unnumbered.

37 “Que haien mes a memòria.” From Barcelona, Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona C–XV, llibre 3, fol. 78r.

sity, while at the same time insisting on the equivalence between a written register and memory. This was stated in Valencia in 1310,

Recognizing the forgetfulness of men who, through levity and the weakness of nature, can err and not have a memory of things, so the juries and *prohom* councillors ordered that the aforesaid ordinations and chapters be put in written memory, to which anyone can easily resort.³⁸

Almost as many contemporary examples can be found as there were towns and cities. In the Catalan town of Balaguer, for instance, in 1354, the municipal authorities, “put it in writing so that from here onwards the aforesaid ordinances shall remain in the firm and lasting memory.”³⁹

As a result, expressions about *posar a la memòria* (“putting it into the memory”) entered into everyday political affairs. For example, before the representatives of the city of Lleida set out for a general *Cort* assembly in Perpignan, in 1351, the local government ordered “that all the concessions that can be good and profitable for the city be expressed in writing as a chapter and memory, so that the representatives who go to the Parliament gathering in Perpignan can obtain them for the city.”⁴⁰

The introduction of documentary records in both administrative and official practice and in business and economic agreements was linked to improved methods of registering and better management. It followed the introduction of notarial systems, the organization of public documentation on a Roman legal basis,⁴¹ and material improvements, like the spread of paper from the thirteenth century onwards.⁴² However, this was still always done under the invocation of memory, with the document meant to assist the memory. Notaries and scribes tended to organize their writings well and produce compilations and summaries explicitly known as memorials. As a notary from Lleida explained before the end of the thirteenth century: “written from memory in the memorial book of Domènec de Siscar, public notary of said city.”⁴³ Memory played a vital role even in a new scenario dominated by the spread of writing, based on a wide social con-

38 “Com per oblidança d’òmens, los quals leugerament segons frèvol natura pot hom errar e no aver memòria de les coses, per ço manaren los dits jurats e prohòmens consellers que-ls dits ordenaments e capítols sien meses en memòria de scriptura, a la qual cascú leugerament pot recórrer.” Cited from Antoni Furió and Ferran Garcia-Oliver, *Llibre d’establiments i ordenacions de la ciutat de València* (Valencia, 2007), 23.

39 “Feren transladar e escriure, per ço que d’aquí a avant estiguessin los dits bans e ordinacions en pus ferma duradora memòria.” Cited from Robert Cuellas, *El ‘Llibre de Costums, Privilegis i Ordinacions’ de la ciutat de Balaguer* (Lleida, 2012), 149.

40 “Pensen que de totes gràcies que sien bones e profitoses a la ciutat sie feyt capítol e memòria als missatgers que van a les Corts a Perpinyà, per tal que aquels recapten e puxen aver aquels gràcies a la ciutat.” From Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida, llibre d’actes 399, fol 65r.

41 Ignasi J. Baiges, “El notariat català: origen i evolució,” in *Actes del I Congrés d’història del notariat català* (Barcelona, 1994), 134–37.

42 Thomas F. Glick, *Tecnología, ciencia y cultura en la España medieval* (Madrid, 1992), 59–61.

43 “A memoria scripta in libri memoriali Dominici de Siscario, notarii publici eiusdem civitatis.” From Lleida. Arxiu Capitular de Lleida, pergamins calaix 6, L-438.

sensus of its continued importance; memory included representative testimonies and authorities involved with the events recorded in writing.⁴⁴

In fact, since the Central Middle Ages, lists of domains and assets were justified formally by the need to retain them in the memory. Very explicitly, for example, before the end of the twelfth century, the Catalan canonry of Sant Pere of Àger put in writing the “memory of the olive trees that Sant Pere has in Ager” or the “memory of the services in la Règula,” while declaring “that is the memory of the allodial lands of the monastery of Sant Llorenç.” Establishing the register of properties and rights was “to take into the memory,” to become “in accordance with the memory.”⁴⁵

In this way memory became essential for all aspects of life; at the same time, however, human memory was inadequate and partial, since it could betray and confuse events. So, efforts were required to maintain a record of the past that went beyond the human mind’s power of retention, making it necessary to resort to writing in all fields, whether public or private, formal or even playful. This is explained at the head of a cookbook written by master Chiquart in the court of the Count of Savoy in 1420:

Man’s unretentive memory often reduces clear things to doubt. The foresight of worthy ancients therefore determined that ephemeral things should be rendered immortal by being written down, so that whatever the feebleness of the human mind cannot retain might survive by means of immutable writings. In order, therefore, that people in the present as well as those of future generations may know with certainty, the following is written down.⁴⁶

Memory does not necessarily refer to written documents; what matters is combating oblivion, lack of knowledge, and ignorance. In Girona, in 1399, when an important agreement was reached about jurisdictional redemption, it was written down “so that all the things mentioned above be retained better in the memory and that nobody could allege or pretend to allege ignorance of this.”⁴⁷ The local authorities would make a public proclamation of the agreement every year on the day of the fair, when large numbers

44 Yves Grava, “La mémoire, une base de l’organisation politique des communautés provençales au xiv^e siècle,” in *Temps, mémoire, tradition au Moyen Âge. Actes du XIII^e Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur Public (Aix-en-Provence, 4–5 juin 1982)* (Aix-en-Provence, 1983), 70–83.

45 “Memoria de holiuariis quo sanctus Petrus habet in Ager”; “memoria de seruciis Regule”; “hec est memoria de suis alaudibus sancti Laurentii cenobi”; “deducere ad memoriam”; “ad memoriam.” Cited from Ramon Chesé, *Col·lecció diplomàtica de Sant Pere d’Àger fins 1198*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 2013), 2:952–53, 1027, 645, 689.

46 “Lubrica gencium memoria frequenter que clara sunt reducit dubia propter que fides veterum provida decrevit rerum seriem scripture testimonio perhempnari ut ea que mentis humane fragilitas non recolit scripturis appareant auctenticis stabilita noscant igitur tam modernorum presencia quam futurorum posteritas hec infrascripta.” Cited from Terence Scully, *Du fait de cuisine* / “On Cookery” of Master Chiquart (1420) (Tempe, 2010), 87.

47 “Per tal que totes les coses dessus dites mills sien en memòria retingudes e algun en açò no pusque ignorància pretendre o allegar.” From Girona, Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Girona XV. 4, llibre 1, fol. 8v.

of people were in the city. The struggle to retain memory, in this case, then, involved repeating once a year in public what they did not want to forget.

Elsewhere other techniques were used: stones used to mark out property boundaries,⁴⁸ especially when these were new lands,⁴⁹ intended as a permanent memory. Properties seized from Muslims in Valencia in the thirteenth century were defined “by placing milestones and markers for the eternal memory of these limits.”⁵⁰

However, the spread of literacy across different aspects of communication in the Late Middle Ages, especially where knowledge was concerned, focused memory on its written record, which was increasingly valued, while at the same time provoking distrust in orality or any pretension of memory not registered in writing.⁵¹ Nobody doubted that the mind’s fragility made the retention of knowledge vulnerable. In 1334, when Opicinus de Canistris fell ill and lost consciousness, as he himself explained afterwards, he could not talk and lost a large part of his “literal memory,” by which he meant the record of acquired knowledge.⁵² Although the path of life culminated in the afterlife, according to the prevailing religious paradigm, at the personal level, what remained after death of a human being was conserved in someone’s memory. This is how the Spanish poet Jorge Manrique expressed it on the death of his father:

He returned his soul to he whom he had given him it
(which heaven gave him
in its glory),
and still he lost his life
he left us a great comfort
his memory.⁵³

In general, the constant invocation of memory across different aspects of everyday life reflected not only a growing concern to support it by more written documents, but also an interest in better understanding such an important human function.

48 Angels Casanova, “La utilització de pedres i elements gravats com a fites i indicadors de límits territorials. Aportacions documentals,” *Gala. Revista d’Arqueologia i Antropologia* 1 (1992): 143–52.

49 Flocel Sabaté, “Occuper la frontière du nord-est péninsulaire (x^e–xii^e siècles),” in *Entre Islam et Chrétienté. La territorialisation des frontières xi^e–xvi^e siècle*, ed. Stéphane Boissellier and Isabel Cristina Ferreira Fernandes (Rennes, 2015), 83–113 at 89–91.

50 “Ponendo inibi, ad eternam rei memoriam, fitas seu mollones.” Cited from Manuel Pastor, “Les senyories valencianes dels comtes d’Urgell. Les baronies de Bunyol, Xiva i Xestalgar entre el 1238 i el 1327. Renda i jurisdicció,” 2 vols. (PhD diss., University of València, 2014), 1:737.

51 Camen Marimón, “La memoria de omne deleznadera es’: oralidad, textualidad y medios de transmisión la Edad Media,” in *Dicenda: Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica* 24 (2006): 139–57.

52 “Memoria litteralis.” Cited from André Vernet, “Les ‘visions’ cosmiques d’Opicinus de Canistris,” in *Fin du monde et signes des temps. Visionnaires et prophètes en France méridionale (fin xiii^e–début xv^e siècle)*, ed. André Vauchez (Toulouse, 1992), 295–307 at 299.

53 “Dio el alma a quien se la dio / (el cual la dio en el cielo / en su gloria), / que aunque la vida perdió / dejónos harto consuelo / su memoria.” Cited from Jorge Manrique, *Poesía* (Madrid, 1975), 148.

Memory Defined: What and Where It Is

"The predominant opinion in our youth, my brother Quintus, if you remember [...]"⁵⁴ So began Cicero in his second book of the *De oratore*, evoking his memory of infancy. Memory occupied a central place in Roman oratory, both in a civic and moral sense.⁵⁵ As a record of the past, it was joined with intelligence, attentive to the present, but with an eye on the future. Memory, intelligence and foresight are the elements that constitute prudence, which dictates to us what is good and what is bad, as Cicero himself defines:

Prudence is the knowledge of things which are good, or bad, or neither good nor bad. Its parts are memory, intelligence, and foresight. Memory is that faculty by which the mind recovers the knowledge of things which have been. Intelligence is that by which it perceives what exists at present. Foresight is that by which anything is seen to be about to happen, before it does happen.⁵⁶

This tripartite approach, linking memory, intelligence, and providence, was easily adaptable to a Christian outlook. Augustine of Hippo incorporated the reflection on memory in his thought. He presented a tri-functionality of memory, intelligence, and will, all complementing each other as a single mind, a single life, and a single substance:

Since, then, these three, memory, understanding, will, are not three lives, but one life; nor three minds, but one mind; it follows certainly that neither are they three substances, but one substance. Since memory, which is called life, and mind, and substance, is so called in respect to itself; but it is called memory, relatively to something.⁵⁷

St. Augustine places memory within the soul, although separated from the four perturbations of the soul ("desire, happiness, fear, and sadness").⁵⁸ He interprets it as having a vital connective function, storing images of everything we have known and sensed, excepting only what has been absorbed by its true enemy, oblivion:

54 "Magna nobis pueris, Quinte frater, si memoria tenes. opinio [...]." Cited from Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De oratore. Libro secondo* (Rome, 1985), 5.

55 Renato Barilli, *Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, 1983), 24–26.

56 "Prudentia est rerum bonarum et malarum neutrarumque scientia. Partes eius: memoria, intelligentia, providentia. Memoria est, per quam animus repetit illa, quae fuerunt; intelligentia, per quam ea perspicit, quae sunt; providentia, per quam futurum aliquid videtur ante quam factum est." Cited from Marcus Tullius Cicero, "De inventione. Liber secundus," in *The Latin Library*, accessed November 1, 2019, <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/inventione2.shtml>. Translation by C. D. Yonge at http://www.arts.uwaterloo.ca/~raha/793C_web/deInventione/Bk2.pdf.

57 "Haec igitur tria, memoria, intelligentia, voluntas, quoniam non sunt tres vitae, sed una vita; nec tres mentes, sed una mens, consequenter utique nec tres substantiae sunt, sed una substantia. Memoria quippe, quod vita et mens et substantia dicitur, ad se ipsam dicitur; quod vero memoria dicitur, ad aliquid relative dicitur." Cited from Aurelius Augustinus, "De trinitate," in *Opera omnia*, book 10, chap. 11.18, accessed November 1, 2019, <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/trinita/index2.htm>. Translation from <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/130110.htm>.

58 "Perturbationes animi: cupiditatem, laetitiam, metum, tristitiam." Cited from Aurelius Augustinus, "Confessionum libri," in *Opera omnia*, book 10, chap. 14.22, accessed November 1, 2019, <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/confessionum/index2.htm>.

And I enter the fields and roomy chambers of memory, where are the treasures of countless images, imported into it from all manner of things by the senses. There is treasured up whatsoever likewise we think, either by enlarging or diminishing, or by varying in any way whatever those things which the sense has arrived at; yea, and whatever else has been entrusted to it and stored up, which oblivion has not yet engulfed and buried.⁵⁹

The record of sensations, of the good and the bad, and, especially, the notion of what we know, what we are, and what we believe, as well as the remembrance that we have forgotten things, is all in the memory, although stored in an untidy way and under various and sometimes complex references. Thus, memory is the most important of all things, the keystone that supports all the references and the identity:

These things do I within, in that vast chamber of my memory. For there are near me heaven, earth, sea, and whatever I can think upon in them, besides those which I have forgotten. There also do I meet with myself, and recall myself—what, when, or where I did a thing, and how I was affected when I did it. There are all which I remember, either by personal experience or on the faith of others. Out of the same supply do I myself with the past construct now this, now that likeness of things, which either I have experienced, or, from having experienced, have believed; and thence again future actions, events, and hopes, and upon all these again do I meditate as if they were present.⁶⁰

Defining the memory as one of the parts of the mind implies that it must have a specific physical space. The location and working of this element of the human body was studied by Costa ben Luca (Constabulus), an author writing between the ninth and tenth centuries who was widely repeated in later centuries when his texts were confused with those by Aristotle. He imagined the memory as a corpuscle—“like a worm” (similis vermin)—deposited in a specific hole in the head, which had to be physically stimulated to find the memories through the movement of one’s head or eyes:

That happens to whoever wishes to recall something, that moving the head vigorously and inclining it, while keeping the eyes looking up, facilitates that, in this position or figure the corpuscule similar to a worm can come out through this mentioned type of hole in the head and go upwards.⁶¹

59 “Venio in campos et lata praetoria memoriae, ubi sunt thesauri innumerabilium imaginum de cuiuscemodi rebus sensis invecarum. Ibi reconditum est, quidquid etiam cogitamus, vel augendo vel minuendo vel utcumque variando ea quae sensus attigerit, et si quid aliud commendatum et repositum est, quod nondum absorbit et sepelivit oblivio.” Cited from Aurelius Augustinus, “Confessionum libri,” book 10, chap. 8.12, accessed November 1, 2019, <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/confessionum/index2.htm>. Translation from <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110110.htm>.

60 “Intus haec ago, in aula ingenti memoriae meae. Ibi enim mihi caelum et terra et mare praesto sunt cum omnibus, quae in eis sentire potui, praeter illa, quae oblitus sum. Ibi mihi et ipse occurro meque recolo, quid, quando et ubi egerim quoque modo, cum agerem, affectus fuerim. Ibi sunt omnia, quae sive experta a me sive credita memini. Ex eadem copia etiam similitudines rerum vel expertarum vel ex eis, quas expertus sum, creditarum alias atque alias et ipse contexo praeteritis atque ex his etiam futuras actiones et eventa et spes, et haec omnia rursus quasi praesentia meditor.” Cited from Aurelius Augustinus, “Confessionum libri,” book 10, chap. 8.12, accessed November 1, 2019, <http://www.augustinus.it/latino/confessionum/index2.htm>. Translation from <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110110.htm>.

61 “Ideo accidit, ei qui vult recordari alicuius rei, ut caput suum ualde mergat et inclinando eum retrouertat et immotis oculis sursum aspiciat, ut haec positio uel figura fiat ei auxiliatrix ad

Constabulus also mentions the *pithacium* as support for recall and memory.⁶² In a very generalized way, different authors situated the hole or space that the human body reserves for the memory in the occiput, or rear of the head, as Ramon Llull defined it in the thirteenth century: "It is in the back, in the occiput of men, because it is an instrument with which to remember."⁶³ At around the same time, Gilbert de Tournai followed his contemporaries but provided greater detail on this:

The sensitive memory is an energy situated in a cell behind the brain, established for the conservation of the impressions from the attention placed on the sensitive things, that the estimative faculty, that lacks organ and time, has perceived for each of the senses.⁶⁴

Indeed, memory was considered throughout the Middle Ages as one of the three powers of the human being, equivalent to the trinitary model for God: "In heaven God is three people: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and in the head are three powers: intelligence, reason, and memory."⁶⁵ This is the tri-functional hypothesis broadly understood and accepted. Ramon Llull explains the purpose of each: "Our Lady has memory, intelligence, and will; for the memory she has the custom of remembering, and for intelligence thinking, and for the will, loving."⁶⁶ The prominent position of the memory explains its vital function while also conditioning reason, because the latter cannot function separately from the memory, according to Gilbert de Tournai: "Certainly in ourselves, memory cannot recall without reason, nor can reason without memory, [though] we can to some extent discern or judge."⁶⁷

These functions survive death,⁶⁸ because when death arrives and separates the flesh from the soul, the three powers continue with renewed energy, as Dante explains:

aperiendum foramen predictum et ut ipsum corpus uermile sursum possit eleuari." *Excerpta e libro Alfredi Anglici de motu cordis item Costa-ben-Lucaae de differentia animae et spiritus. Liber translatus a Johanne Hispalensi*, ed. Carl Sigmund Barach (Innsbruck, 1878), 126.

62 José Martínez Gázquez, "El 'De differentia inter spiritum et animam' de Costa ben Luca en el ms. 80 del Archivo de la Catedral de Tortosa," in *Actas del IX Congreso Español de Estudios Clásicos*, 7 vols. (Madrid, 1999), 7:220–21.

63 "Est retro in occipite hominis, quia est instrumentum ad memorandum." Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:572.

64 "Memoria vero sensibilis est virtus sita in posteriori cellula cerebri, ordinata ad conservationem impressionum provenientium ex intentionibus in sensibilibus quas virtus aestimativa accepit ex singulis sensibus idigens organo et tempore." Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi (Sobre el modo de aprender)*, ed. Javier Vergara and Virgilio Rodríguez (Madrid, 2014), 314.

65 "In celo Deus sunt tres persone, pater, filius, Sancte Spiritus et in capite tres potentie, intellectus, ratio et memoria." From New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Library, MS 189, fol. 10v.

66 "Domina nostra habet memoriam, intellectum et uoluntatem; per memoriam habet in habitu recolere, et per intellectum intelligere, et per uoluntatem amare." Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 2: 572.

67 "Nec certe in nobis memoria recordari potest sine ratione nec ratio sine memoria potest aliquatenus discernere sive iudicare." Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 372.

68 Anna Cerbo, "Sull'arte: Ramón Llull e Dante," *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli. Sezione Romanza*, 41 (1999): 126.

Whenever Lachesis has no more thread,
It separates from the flesh, and virtually
Bears with itself the human and divine;

The other faculties are voiceless all;
The memory, the intelligence, and the will
In action far more vigorous than before.⁶⁹

It was a trilogy inherent in existence. Consequently, as Lull continues, in his duality as God and man, Jesus Christ can also be explained in the same way: “as the divine will and human will are reflected in love, and the divine and human intellect are reflected in thought, and the eternity of God and the memory of our lord Jesus Christ are reflected in remembering.”⁷⁰

In the fourteenth century, when Opicinus de Canistris depicted the human being within a comprehensive worldview, below divinity and above the world, he characterized humans with five concepts in descending order: “reason, memory, intelligence, will, sentiment.”⁷¹ Memory is indissolubly linked to the human body and participates in a cosmic order. The conquest of historical time by the Church provided a continuous narrative from Creation to the Second Coming of Christ (*parousia*) in which the human being was central. In the context of salvation, and the dogmas of faith required to achieve salvation, memory had a role in human fate; so as not to fall from the path of righteousness, one has to remember one’s Christian duties. Christian life was one of constant remembering. Many medieval authors pointed this out, including Henry Suso in the fourteenth century: “Jesus is mentioned and Mary is remembered.”⁷² Religious faith consists of recalling, not only for humans but, to enjoy the divine vision, it was also important for angels to ensure their memory was not affected by forgetfulness, as Gilbert de Tournai remarked in the thirteenth century:

The created memory, which is part of his image, is an intellectual power in the angels, not co-eternal with the eternal, but rather part of his eternity, mutable by nature but that exceeds by contemplation and beatitude all mutability of time and without any lapse since it was made; God being inherent to it, it overcomes all the variable changes of times.⁷³

69 “Quando Lachesis non ha piú del lino, / solvesi da la carne, e in virtute / ne porta seco e l’umano e’l divino: / l’altre potenze tutte quante mute; / memoria, intelligenza e volontade / in atto molto piú che prima agute.” Cited from Dante, “Divina Commedia,” in *Tutte le opere* (Rome, 2005), 382 (Purgatorio, XXV.79–84). Longfellow translation from <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/purgatorio/purgatorio-25/>, accessed November 1, 2019.

70 “Sicut voluntas diuina et uoluntas humana quae se respiciunt in amare et intellectus diuinus et humanus qui se respiciunt in intelligere et aeternitas Dei et memoria domini nostril Iesu Christi, quae se respiciunt in recolere.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientie*, 2: 586–87.

71 “Ratio, memoria, intellectus, voluntas, sensus.” From Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1993 (the image was included in the exhibition “Pen and Parchment. Drawing in the Middle Ages,” at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2009, but unfortunately was not included in the catalogue).

72 “Yhesu nominatur et Maria memoratur.” From New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Library, MS 130, fol. 3r.

73 “Memoria autem creata quae est pars imaginis est in angelis vis intellectualis non coaeterna

Boncompagno da Signa, very influential in the early thirteenth century, situated memory between heaven and hell while he reused the classical image linking the memory of the past with the demands of the present and the hopes of the future.⁷⁴ Memory was a glorious and wonderful gift of nature, by which we recall the past, comprehend the present, and contemplate the future through its similarities with the past.⁷⁵

Boncompagno also noted that memory was not only necessary for rhetoric but also in the arts and professions,⁷⁶ as he explained in his *Rethorica novissima*, a work with great impact in university circles in Bologna and other intellectual centres.⁷⁷ In fact, while early medieval authors like Alcuin continued dealing with memory within rhetoric, citing Cicero,⁷⁸ the thirteenth-century scholastics, like the emblematic Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, moved it towards ethics, granting it a much wider significance. Certainly, the introduction of Aristotelian thought facilitated the abandoning of Platonic memory as an instrument that facilitates knowledge through memory and, instead, developed a more empirical approach closely linked to the sensations. The reconstruction and re-elaboration of the past was thus interpreted as arising from the association of ideas supplied by sensory experience, which facilitated the perception of various types of memory: the sensory, which, in a general sense, can be perceived as common to humans and animals; the imaginative, which extracted the formal image from the sensations, and is also perceived in humans and animals; and the rational, that allowed forms and images disconnected from the sensations to be elaborated, which, thanks to the memory, provided the raw material for the understanding to generate ideas or universal concepts.⁷⁹ From a physiological point of view, these complex requirements occupy all the brain, according to Gilbert de Tournai: “It is necessary that the

aeterno sed aeternitatis particeps, natura mutabilis sed contemplatione et beatitudine omnem excedens mutabilitatem temporis et sine ullo lapsu ex quo fact est inhaerendo Deo excedit omnem volubilem vicissitudinem temporum.” Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 312–14.

74 Pietro De Leone, “Storia e memoria,” in *I saperi nella scuola del futuro*, ed. Armando Vitale (Soveria Mannelli, 2002), 147.

75 Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Philadelphia, 2002), 105.

76 Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London, 2007), 17–69.

77 Luca Marcozzi, “La ‘rhetorica novissima’ de Boncompagno da Signa e l’interpretazione di quattro passi della ‘Commedia,’” *Rivista di studi danteschi* 9 (2009): 370–75.

78 “CHARLES: What are you to say about memory, which I deem to be the noblest part of rhetoric? ALBINUS: What can I tell you except what Cicero has already said: Memory is a treasure trove of all things. If these are not used in all that we have thought or found, whether these are words or things, they have no use, and no matter how great they may be” (CAROLUS. Quod dicis de nobilissima, ut reor, rhetorica parte, memoria? ALBINUS. Quid aliud quam quod Marcus Tullius dicit, quod thesaurus est ómnium rerum memoria, quae nisi custos cogitatis inventisque rebus et verbis adhibeatur intelligimus omnia, etiamsi praeclara fuerint, in oratore peritura). Cited from Alcuin (*al. Flaccus Albinus*), *Dialogus de rhetorica et virtutibus*, Patrologiae cursus completus. Series latina, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1863), 101: col. 919.

79 Javier Vergara, “La memoria en las obras pedagógicas de la baja edad media,” *Bordón* 64, no. 4 (2012): 111–12.

imagination is in the frontal part of the brain, then the thinking part is in the middle, and then that of recording and conserving in the back.”⁸⁰ In any case, the process makes clear, as Gilbert emphasizes, that only through memory can one advance towards knowledge, and that is the radical difference between what is recalled by an irrational animal and what a human recalls:

Remembering refers to what one knew before in the past, and that is common to all animals that have imagination; but to investigate using the memory or recollection is only for humans, because this involves voluntary inquiry of such an idea and makes it present after its absence.⁸¹

Ramon Llull interpreted memory as necessary and essential for the human condition, functioning as a bridge between the body and soul, a kind of third position: “memory is situated in the third number, because man is made up of soul and body, and this third number is in transit between one and the other, because it is neither soul nor body.”⁸² Without memory there would be no science: “thanks to remembering man has the habit of science, which is good, and privation of it is bad.”⁸³ Moreover, “it is a matter of greatness to remember things of the past and the absent sensations.”⁸⁴ Memory serves knowledge and will: “the memory has, for wisdom, the natural instinct to remember and it has, for the will, the natural appetite to remember.”⁸⁵ Accordingly, memory can have positive or negative effects depending on the sensation derived from what is recalled: “if man recalls something disagreeable that another man has done to him, he will be filled with rage by natural instinct and by the appetite of the memory.”⁸⁶ Conversely, “memory is of glory, in other words, of pleasure, just as nature has on feeling delight and pleasure.”⁸⁷ Memory, either way, always has consequences: “quia memoria est de uirtute, facit opera uirtuosa.” Thus, it can be said that memory is the base for everything which is important; without it, nothing would be sustained, either in humans or animals:

80 “Necesse est ut imaginans sit in anteriori parte cerebri, deinde cogitans in medio, deinde memorans et conservans in posteriori.” Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 320.

81 “Unde memoria est eius quod prius sciebatur in praeterito, et hoc est commune omnibus animalibus habentibus imaginationem, sed investigare per memoriam aut rememorationem est in solis hominibus, quia hoc est voluntarie inquirere de huiusmodi intentione et facere eam praesentari post absentiam.” Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 316.

82 “Ipsa est posita in numero tertio, quoniam sicut homo est, ex anima et corpore, et in numerum tertium transit, in tantum quod non est anima neque corpus.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:201.

83 “Per quod recolere homo habet habitum scientiae, qui bonus est, et eius priuatio essent mala.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:201.

84 “Qui magnum quid est recolere res praeteritas et sensibus absentes.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:202.

85 “Habet per sapientiam instinctum naturalem ad recolendum, et habet per uoluntatem appetitum naturalem ad recolendum.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:202.

86 “Si homo recolat aliquot displicium quod aliquo homine recepit, quoniam tunc se mouet ad iram per instinctum naturalem et appetitum memoriae.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:202.

87 “Est de gloria, uidelicet de delectatione, idcirco naturam habet in habendo delectationem et placitum.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:203.

The memory is for great and important things, in being a substantial part of the soul. Certainly, if it is accidental, it is not disposed to recall much nor possess a great capacity for remembering, and in contrast it is so disposed when it has to recall things with greater substance than just simpler accidental things. The same happens with kindness, and also with the will, virtue, truth, glory, duration, power, difference, concordance, the principal, the means, and the aim.⁸⁸

Recollere (recall) is, in short, one of the three basic functions of human nature. Remembering who we are and where we are from is the only way to preserve identity (as shown by the oft-repeated example of the Knight of the Lion),⁸⁹ to maintain oneself in the social group, and even to maintain one's religious beliefs. Gilbert de Tournai clearly stated that life was not possible without memory, just as it wasn't without food.⁹⁰ In this sense, it can be said that the central position of memory does not lie so much in the capacity to store data as in the ability to recall it. Indeed, "the essential function of the memory is to remember or record."⁹¹ Consequently, it is worth preserving and encouraging the power of the memory. Care must be taken to increase its functions, a concern that grew stronger during this period.

Memory Maintained and Promoted

The *Retorica ad Herensium*, a classical text that was influential throughout the Middle Ages when it was believed to have been written by Cicero, defined two types of memory: the natural and the artificial. The former referred to past events, while the latter was stimulated precisely to avoid forgetting the former. It was a crucial distinction, because the so-called artificial memory opened the door to all kinds of mnemonic devices:

There are, then, two kinds of memory: one natural, and the other the product of art. The natural memory is that memory which is imbedded in our minds, born simultaneously with thought. The artificial memory is that memory which is strengthened by a kind of training and system of discipline. But just as in everything else the merit of natural excellence often rivals acquired learning, and art, in its turn, reinforces and develops the natural advantages, so does it happen in this instance.⁹²

88 "Memoria est de maioritate, ut sit pars substantialis animae, quia, si esset accidentalis, disposita non esset ad memorandum magna nec habere posset magnum recollere, cum ita sit, quod magnitudo maiorem habeat concordantiam cum substantia quam cum accidente; et bonitas similiter; et idem est de uoluntate, uirtute, gloria, duratione, potestate, differentia, concordantia, principio, medio et fine." Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:204–05.

89 Chrétien de Troyes, *Le chevalier au lion*, MS H, vv. 2822–34.

90 Javier Vergara, "El 'De modo addiscendi' (c. 1263) de Gilbert de Tournai O.F.M., un puente entre la tradición y el renacimiento," *Educación XXI* 16, no. 2 (2013): 63–82, <http://revistas.uned.es/index.php/educacionXX1/article/view/10332>.

91 "Essentialis autem operatiu memoriae memorari sive recordari." Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 316.

92 "Sunt igitur duae memoriae: una naturalis, altera artificiosa. Naturalis est ea quae nostris animis insita est et simul cum cogitatione nata; artificiosa est ea quam confirmat inductio quaedam et ratio praeceptionis. Sed qua via in ceteris rebus ingenii bonitas imitatur saepe doctrinam, ars porro naturae comoda confirmat et auget, item fit in hac re ut nonnumquam naturalis memoria,

The natural memory depends on the capacity of each person, although it can always be reinforced by discipline and exercises:

The natural memory, if a person is endowed with an exceptional one, is often like this artificial memory, and this artificial memory, in its turn, retains and develops the natural advantages by a method of discipline. Thus the natural memory must be strengthened by discipline so as to become exceptional.⁹³

The artificial memory reproduces evocative places and images (“backgrounds and images”),⁹⁴ can be helped with writing and reading, and includes mnemonic exercises based on images and series of records. Equally, in the effort to increase rote retention, the setting and context must be taken into account to avoid distractions: “it will be more advantageous to obtain backgrounds in a deserted than in a populous region, because the crowding and passing to and fro of people confuse and weaken the impress of the images, while solitude keeps their outlines sharp.”⁹⁵

In the seventh century, while defining the seven liberal arts, Martianus Capella included a specific chapter, *De memoria*, on rhetoric in which he reproduced the explanation about the two memories, insisting on the importance of rote exercise, the use of letters and images, and adding practical advice like silence at the moment of memorizing or adequate lighting to retain good images.⁹⁶

Retaining and improving one’s memory became the main concern: in the *Dialogus de rhetorica et virtutibus* by Alcuin of York at the end of the eighth century, most of the short chapter dedicated to *De memoria* focused on how to increase one’s memory, based on a question asked supposedly by Charlemagne:

Charles: Is there any formula or recipe that is used to increase one’s memory?

Alcuin: There is no other than recommending the exercise of the memory, of using the writing and practising studying. Drunkenness should be avoided, as it greatly harms all good study, because not only does it damage one’s health but also spoils the integrity of the mind.⁹⁷

si cui data est egregia, similis sit huci artificiosae, porro haec artificiosa naturae commoda retineat et amplificat ratione doctrinae.” Cited from [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium. De ratione dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, ed. Harry Caplan (London, 1964), 207–8. Translation here and below by Caplan and available at https://www.laits.utexas.edu/memoria/Ad_Herennium_Passages.html.

93 “Naturalis memoria praeceptione confirmanda est ut sit egregia, et haec quae doctrina datur indiget ingenii. Nec hoc magis aut monus in hac re quam in ceteris artibus fit, ut ingenio doctrina, praeceptione natura nitescat. Quare et illis qui natura memores sunt utilis haec erit institutio.” From [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium*, 208.

94 “Constat igitur artificiosa memoria ex locis et imaginis.” From [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium*, 208.

95 “Commodius est in derelicta quam in celebri regione locos comparare, propterea quod frequentia et obambulatio hominum conturbat et infirmat imaginum notas, solitudo conservat integras simulacrorum figures.” From [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium*, 209–10.

96 Martiani Minei Felicis Capellae, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercuri et de septem Artibus liberalibus. Libre novem* (Frankfurt, 1836), 460–61.

97 “Car. Suntne alicue ejus praecepta, quomodo vel illa adhibenda vel augenda sit? – Alb. Non habemus ejus alia praecepta, nici dicendi exercitationem et scribendi usum, et cogitandi studium; et ebrietatem cavendam, quae omnibus bonis studiis nocet maxime; quae non solum corporis

Alcuin's response is based on the practice following the classical model of exercise, writing and study. The addition of drunkenness became one of the reiterated references throughout the Middle Ages. Given the importance of remembering, one of the main criticisms of drunkenness was usually that it erased the memory.⁹⁸ Elsewhere, drunkenness is condemned because it affects three areas of knowledge: "drunkenness erases memory, dissipates the senses, confuses the intellect."⁹⁹

Between the third and seventeenth centuries the Gallenic medical model gained widespread acceptance in the West, duly reinforced by Muslim thinkers like Avicenna and Averroes who adapted Aristotle's natural philosophy,¹⁰⁰ particularly the notion of the four humours and their associated qualities and temperaments, elements, and organs.¹⁰¹ This model saw memory as part of the body. One could deduce, as Albertus Magnus did, that those who have a better power to remember have a melancholic nature, because their dry and cold condition facilitates them retaining the impression of images more clearly. That would explain, for Gilbert de Tournai, why people with the worst memories are "small children, the elderly, and quick-witted adults" (*infantes et senes et nimis veloces ingenii*): in all of them, excessive humidity dominates. In any case, the humours and qualities must be kept in a necessary balance, because the other group of humans with poor memory are those who take a long time to understand things (*nimis tardi*); they are too dry, which is why images have difficulty remaining fixed with them.¹⁰²

Knowing that humidity and coldness harm memory, one can strengthen it by avoiding food and circumstances associated with cold and wet. By the thirteenth century advice and explicit aphorisms—*Amphorismi* (or *Canones*) *memoria* (or for the *conservatione memoria*)—taken from Arabized Gallenism now spread into Latin, through authors like Arnau de Vilanova, to maintain or improve the memory, even to strengthen and restore memory (*confortant memoriam et restaurant*). Such guidance began with a set of general advice: always try to avoid excessive cold and strong heat; do moderate exercise before every meal and remain standing or stroll gently after having eaten; moderate the consumption of food and drinks of a cold or humid complexion, like raw fruit and vegetables, avoid strong meats and opt for tender ones, especially chicken or partridge and, even more, the brains of these fowl; balance waking and sleeping, without excess in either, and avoid siestas; evacuate all the superfluities adequately from all the conduits ("through the intestines, through the urine, through the holes in the nose, through the palate, through the mouth, through the ears, through friction of the head

aufert sanitatem, sed etiam mentis adimigt integritatem." Cited from Alcuin (*al. Flaccus Albinus*), *Dialogus de rhetorica et virtutibus*, 101: col. 919

98 New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Library, Marston MS 140, fol. 268v–69r.

99 "Ebrietas aufert memoriam, dissipat sensum, confundit intellectum." From New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Library, S 482.113, fol. 1r.

100 Luis García Ballester, *La búsqueda de la salud. Sanadores y enfermos en la España medieval* (Barcelona, 2001), 129–32.

101 Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset, *Sexualidad y saber médico en la edad media* (Barcelona, 1989), 45–47.

102 Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 324–26.

with a comb” [per intestina, per urinam, per nares, per palatum, per os, per aures et per fricationem capitis cum pectine]], especially after sleep or exercise; maintain a good mood, with soft joy and honest delight. Other specific items similar to common advice for all health systems were added aimed especially at counteracting the *fumositats*; in other words, avoiding the damage from the rising of fumes produced during gastric digestion, according to how people then understood the digestive process. That implied avoiding food that generated gases, like pulses, cheeses, garlic, leeks or onions; not drinking cold water or wine while digesting; not going to sleep before digestion was complete; and helping close the mouth of the stomach to avoid fumes escaping with preparations of coriander or fruit with astringents. It was also worth avoiding fumes that rose from one’s feet, so they should be washed frequently with infusions of aromatic herbs and by sleeping barefoot or, at least, without shoes. Using the same logic, other measures were proposed that helped the memory: washing one’s hair every ten days (every four in other recipes) with a bleach in which medicinal plants had been macerated, or chewing mastic with ginger and other chewing gums prepared from musk, cashew, or coriander. Finally, memory was also increased by recalling everything one had seen and heard that one wanted to record: “taking care for what has been seen and heard by means of frequent recording corroborates and confirms the memory.”¹⁰³

The fact that memory occupied the occipital part of the skull inspired efforts to improve the memory by stimulating this specific area. An adaptation of the above-mentioned aphorisms by Arnau de Vilanova written in Catalan in the fifteenth century details this practice:

Should you wish to do something to improve the memory, use a lotion that is called “pliris cum musto,” and another lotion called “from cashew,” and confections of cherry plum. With these products rub the memory, which is at the back of the head, with moonshine: they much improve the memory and restore it. The moonshine must be made from red wine, in which some sprigs of lemon balm, sage, and rosemary must have been placed. That must be put with a bandage made from linen cloth over the memory and it is a great secret.¹⁰⁴

Other recipes seek the same objective: the *De bonitate memorie*, a late re-elaboration from the text by Arnau de Vilanova, added a confection of animal fat and honey, administered with an infusion of various plants.¹⁰⁵ Beyond these formulae, during the thir-

103 “Sollicitudo visorum et auditorum frequens recordatio memoriam corroborat et confirmat.” Cited from Arnau de Vilanova, *Commentum in quasdam parabolas et alias aphorismorum series: Aphorismi particulares, aphorismi de memoria, aphorismi extravagantes*, ed. Juan A. Paniagua and Pedro Gil-Sotres, *Opera medica omnia Arnaldi de Villanova* 6.2 (Barcelona, 1993), 205–20.

104 “En lo cas que vullau fer algun acte memoratíu, usau de una confecció qui-s apella ‘pliris cum musto,’ e altre confecció apellada anacardina, e mirabolans confits, e fregau la memòria derrera del cap ab ayguardent: conforten molt la memòria e la restauren. L’aygua ardent sia feta de vi vermell, en lo qual sia mès una manada de tarongina e de sàlvia e de romaní, e puys sia posada ab una bena de drap de lli a la memòria, e és gran secret.” Cited from Arnau de Vilanova, *Obres catalanes. II. Escrits mèdics*, ed. Miquel Batllori (Barcelona, 1947), 255.

105 Juan Antonio Paniagua and Pedro Gil-Sotres, “Introducció,” in Vilanova, *Commentum in quasdam parabolas et alias aphorismorum*, ed. Paniagua and Gil-Sotres, 214–15.

teenth and fourteenth centuries, various authors repeated ancient advice regarding trying to find surroundings without distractions from too many people or too much light and notably, encouraging mnemonic techniques, as the Franciscan Gilbert de Tournai does extensively when he explains that “if one’s memory is bad it can be helped by technique and training it with the practice of rules. Four factors are necessary: time, activity, place, and method.”¹⁰⁶ From here, he stresses that the right place for memorising must be found (better at night with silence) and, beginning with the invocation of classical authors, he discusses writing moderately, reading and meditating and, notably, linking the images one wished to remember to places and objects, as well as mentally fragmenting and distributing what one wishes to retain.¹⁰⁷

Gilbert de Tournai’s recommendations on memory are framed by a concern to teach and retain knowledge, and this is why the work is entitled *On Ways of Learning (De modo addiscendi)*. The link between memory and teaching was deeply rooted. Monastic teaching already influenced memorization: “they had to learn immediately by heart the 150 psalms of the psalter, an anthology from the Old and New Testaments, notably the life of Jesus.”¹⁰⁸ Late-medieval grammar schools catering for burghers who wanted their sons to read and write also resorted to rote learning.¹⁰⁹ Memorization, as an individual exercise by the student, was also indispensable in university teaching, especially if we consider the practical difficulties of accessing the texts and textbooks.¹¹⁰

It was expected that the holders of certain offices, such as jurists and lawyers, should retain concepts and key definitions in their memory. For some officials this was even an obligation: in 1330, the chapters of the Catalan maritime consulate in Bruges ordered:

The consols need to remember the chapters so that they have a better memory and cannot claim ignorance, and they also promised to pay the stipulated fines for this in case they did it badly, in line with the oath taken.¹¹¹

In a more generalized way, clergy were expected to retain a wide set of concepts and prayers. In fact, the concern with memorizing particularly applied to late-medieval

106 “Per artem nihilominus adiuvari et praeceptorum exercitatione formari; sunt ego quatuor necessaria: tempus, actus, locus, modus.” Cited from Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 352.

107 Gilbert de Tournai, *De modo addiscendi*, 352–70.

108 “Ils doivent ensuite apprendre par coeur les 150 psaumes du psautier, un florilège de textes de l’Ancien et du Nouveau Testament, notamment la vie de Jésus.” Cited from Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, *L’école au moyen âge* (Paris, 2007), 9.

109 Flocel Sabaté, “La formació de la personalitat a l’edat mitjana,” in *La formació de la personalitat a l’edat mitjana*, ed. Flocel Sabaté (Lleida, 2016), 14–15.

110 Jacques Verger, “The Contribution of Medieval Universities to the Birth of Individualism and Individual Thought,” in *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice*, ed. Janet Coleman (Oxford, 1996), 59–77 at 65.

111 “Los consols los sien tenguts de recordar los capítols per tall que n’agen mills memòria e que no y puxen alleguar ignorància, e més prometen de pagar les penes qui posades hi són en cas que fallissien, sots virtut del sagrament.” Cited from Antonio Paz y Meliá, *Series de los más importantes documentos del Archivo y Biblioteca del Exmo. Señor Duque de Medinaceli*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1915–22), 2:457.

urban preachers. Contemporary conceptual,¹¹² civic,¹¹³ and formal¹¹⁴ tendencies led at that period to the Church and the people finding a notable confluence in preaching, such that Francis Rapp proclaimed: “Perhaps never did so many men link their prestige to the seduction of the verb!”¹¹⁵ The preachers became true professionals of the word, which is why they took such great care of their discourses and the forms they used to present them.¹¹⁶ The search for efficacy justified theatricality, affecting urban location¹¹⁷ and all aspects of their delivery, given that the preacher had to master both gestures and diction, as well as having the speech well-prepared.

In this context, in the fourteenth century, Francesc Eiximenis wrote a manual aimed at preachers with the explicit title of *The Art of Preaching to the People* (*Art de predicació al poble*) organized into three chapters: “the ultimate aim of preaching” (la causa final de la predicació), which was to instruct the people in the faith; “the efficient cause of preaching” (la causa eficient de la predicació), about the moral qualities of the preacher; and the form of preaching. The latter is the longest, structured into seven subchapters: “brevity of the sermon” (la brevetat del sermó), “speaking with fervour” (parlar amb fervor), “speaking slowly” (parlar pausadament), “preaching with devotion” (predicar amb devoció), “speaking morally” (parlar moralment), “preaching with prudence” (predicar amb prudència) and, finally, “orderly preaching” (predicar ordenadament). This orderliness occupied almost half the book, thus showing that to preach well, it was crucial to structure the sermon well. In this section, Eiximenis first recommends carefully choosing the theme and its elements and, then, focusing on an order that helps the memory, clearly understanding that one cannot be a good preacher without counting on mnemonic strategies. He recommended the use of analogies rather than just words:

If what you want is to remember words, the memory has no easy task, because it has to create a similitude or a figure to remember a single word. In contrast, when we have to recall events, then a single similitude or figure can serve to remember a long story.¹¹⁸

112 Giacomo Todeschini, *Richesse franciscaine. De la pauvreté volontaire à la société de marché* (Lagrasse, 2008).

113 Daniela Romagnoli, “La courtoisie dans la ville: un modèle complexe,” in *La ville et la cour. Des bonnes et des mauvaises manières*, ed. Daniela Romagnoli (Paris, 1991), 25–87.

114 Antony Black, *Political Thought in Europe, 1250–1450* (Cambridge, 1996), 117–35.

115 “Jamais peut-être autant d’hommes ne durent leur prestige à la séduction du verbe!” In Francis Rapp, *L’Église et la vie religieuse en Occident à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1971), 130–36.

116 Jean-Arnault Dérens, “La prédication et la ville: pratiques de la parole et ‘religion civique’ à Montpellier aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles,” in *La prédication en Pays d’Oc (XII^e–début XV^e siècle)* (Toulouse, 1997), 47–352.

117 Prim Bertran, “El espacio religiosos en la ciudad catalana bajomedieval,” in *Morphologie et identité sociale dans la ville medieval hispanique*, ed. Flocel Sabaté and Christian Guilleré (Chambéry, 2012), 332–33.

118 “Si el que es pretén de recordar paraules la memòria no ho té gens fàcil, ja que ha de crear una similitud o una figura per recordar una sola paraula. En canvi, quan hem de recordar fets, aleshores una única similitud o figura ens pot servir per recordar una llarga història.” Cited from Francesc Eiximenis, *Art de predicació al poble*, ed. Xavier Renedo (Vic, 2009), 41.

However, Eiximenis continued, “the memory suffers from real difficulty when it has to retain a large multitude of things” (la memòria ho té realment difícil quan ha de retenir una gran multitud de coses). That is why this teacher of preachers resorted to tricks from (pseudo)-Cicero—in the *Retorica ad Herennium*—and justified their contemporary use by making clear that other preachers were using it. The strategy is based on listing references: “Nowadays, this rule is used to remember names: if you have to remember a long list of words, arrange them placing the words along a long path with the help of an appropriate similitude.”¹¹⁹ This enables you to retain a list of the apostles in order by linking in the memory images that evoked each one. Similarly, places and numbers can be used, so that “if you are asked where such and such a name is placed, by remembering the place you put it, the number assigned to that place will come to mind,” which “eventually gives excellent results as, without a big effort, it is possible to retain many names and the numbers associated with them in the memory.”¹²⁰ Eiximenis gave more examples of *línies rectes* (“straight lines”) where he added evocative references, like imagining a straight line between the firmament and earth, which places the stars, the sun, the moon, and the parts of the earth: “From the furthest heavens and descending in an orderly way for the intermediate spheres until the centre of the earth is reached”; a line between “cities, houses, and land”; and then one within “the human body beginning from the feet to the head and in reverse.”¹²¹ He then explains how you can do the same using a route, so you could imagine going from Rome to Santiago de Compostela all the while imagining putting references in each city according to its characteristics. Then he gives an example where you should imagine a great church:

First, the most notable places and the chapels following their location; their headstones; their paintings; and the distance that separates each place from the others; and then with the support of similitudes and images, fit all you have into memorizing it.¹²²

He summarizes various options, recommending you follow the easiest thread for retaining the information:

Everyone can easily remember evocative events through words if one always keeps in mind that the things you wish to recall must be arranged in an order that expresses well the relation that there is between the images and the things that have to be memorized.

119 “Modernament es dóna aquesta regla per recordar noms; si has de recordar una llarga llista de paraules, ordena-la col·locant les paraules al llarg d’una extensa via amb l’ajuda d’una similitud escaient.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 42.

120 “Si se’t demana en quin lloc està posat tal nom, tot recordant el lloc on el vas col·locar, et vindrà a la memòria el número assignat a aquell lloc”; “a la llarga dóna uns resultats excel·lents, ja que sense gens d’esforç, és possible de retenir a la memòria molt de noms i els numeros que hi estan associats.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 43.

121 “Del cel empiri i es pot anar baixant ordenament per les esferes intermèdies fins arribar al centre de la terra”; “ciutats, cases i finques”; “cos humà, començant pels peus fins al cap i a l’interès.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 44–47.

122 “Una gran església imaginant-te tot primer els llocs i les capelles més notables d’acord amb la seva situació, les seves làpides, les seves pintures i la distància que separa cada lloc dels altres, i després amb el suport de similituds i imatges, encabeix-hi tot el que hagas de memoritzar.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 46.

You must know that we can find orders of this type in many things. Firstly, long and famous routes; secondly, a series of things arranged clearly and adequately; thirdly, enormous, luxurious, large houses; fourthly, through the disposition of parts of the human body; fifthly, taking one of your books where you had to study various subjects; sixthly, through a careful, well adjusted mix of the previous points; seventhly, through the conjunction of the syllables of certain words and terms; and, finally, when the end of one section of the discourse links with the start of the next and so on successively.¹²³

Eiximenis also showed that books were used for reference and consulted repeatedly. He referred to the practice of his own predecessors and contemporaries who wrote on and marked up reference works:

Memory can be strengthened by recording the order of subjects on which one had to preach in the book where the discourse has been prepared. The ancients used this method a lot, and nowadays there are also many people who use it, because in the books where they studied their sermons, or the subject they had to remember, they always put a straight line where the important sentence or passage that had to be recalled ended; and later they made another clearly visible mark in purple ink beside other important passages, so that these signs and these passages became firmly recorded in their memory and, thus, when they referred to them during the sermon, they talked as if they were reading from the book where they had put the signs that enabled them to recall it so clearly.¹²⁴

The concern with mnemonics, in a context so marked by the need for teachers and especially preachers to remember specific things, soon culminated in a fifteenth-century genre called the *Ars memorativa*; in other words, works directly aimed at finding the best way to memorize and retain knowledge.¹²⁵ Some scholars have seen this as a forerunner of the humanistic revival of the Renaissance.¹²⁶ However, as Kim Rivers has pointed out,

123 “Tothom pot recordar fàcilment fets evocats a través de paraules si sempre té present que ha de saber ordenar les coses que vol recordar en un ordre que expressi bé la relació que hi ha d’haver entre les imatges i les coses que s’han de memoritzar. Cal saber que podem trobar fàcilment ordres d’aquesta mena en moltes coses. En primer lloc, en camins llargs i famosos; en segon lloc, en sèries de coses ordenades d’una manera clara i adequada; en tercer lloc, en cases enormes, luxoses i amples; en quart lloc, a través de la disposició dels membres del cos humà; en cinquè lloc, en un llibre teu on hakis d’estudiar diverses matèries; en sisè lloc, mitjançant una correcta i ben travada barreja dels punts anteriors; en setè lloc, a través de la conjunció de les síl·labes d’unes paraules i d’uns termes determinats; i, en últim lloc, quan el final d’una branca del discurs enllaça amb el principi de la següent i així successivament.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 44.

124 “La memòria es pot potenciar tot recordant l’ordre de les matèries sobre les quals s’havia de predicar en el llibre on s’ha preparat el discurs. Els antics van fer servir molt aquest mètode, i avui també hi ha molta gent que l’usa, perquè en els llibres on estudiaven els seus sermons, o la matèria que haguessin de recordar, sempre posaven una línia recta on s’acabava la sentència o el passatge important que calia recordar; i després feien una altra marca clarament visible de tinta de color porpra al marge d’altres passatges importants, de manera que aquells signes i aquells passatges quedaven fermament gravats e la seva memòria i, per tant, quan hi feien referència durant el sermó, en parlaven com si estiguessin llegint el llibre on havien posat els signes que els permetien de recordar amb tanta nitidesa.” Cited from Eiximenis, *Art de predicació*, 50.

125 Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 114–34.

126 Sabine Heimann-Seebach, *Ars und scientia: Genese, Überlieferung und Funktionen der mnemo-*

this was no novelty, but rather a culmination of a practice developed by the mendicant friars, both Dominicans and Franciscans, since the thirteenth century.¹²⁷

At the same time, this late medieval practice required the concepts and dogmas of the faith in the memory to be retained not only by the preachers but also those hearing the sermon. In truth, the recipients of sermons also needed a careful memory, in order for it to properly guide their understanding and experience of faith. Memory became a useful strategy for the mendicants whose mission was to take religion to lay people. First of all, given that the dogmas of the faith are intangible, images were needed for the memory to retain, fix, and translate these images. This process of recording appears in works of devotion like the vernacular writings of Bartolomeo de San Concordio and Matteo de Corsini in the fourteenth century. Corsini appealed to the *mortis memoria*, because to live an adequately Christian life “we must always think about death” (*dobiamo sempre pensare della morte*), referring back to Seneca to invoke the permanent record of the past that influenced the present and the future: “if your soul is prudent, it should be organized in three periods: [...] organize the present, foresee the future, and remember the past.”¹²⁸ Christian symbology was widely expanded, not only concerning saints, but also the virtues and vices, and adapted (often from classical images) into new forms and memorable drawings from this same mendicant milieu.¹²⁹ Popular mnemonics linked to the symbology used in art, generating coherent and repeated images to fill the memory and retain the very dogmas of the faith being preached by the clergy.¹³⁰

Memory was not just about a capacity to retain past events or hold the path of righteousness. Habits of behaviour were reinforced by the memory. There was only one thing that had to be erased from the memory: the record of sin (“the memory of sinners in darkness”).¹³¹ Ramon Llull talked about two possible habits: “those who have or will have the holiness of glory and those others who have and will have the condemnation of sadness.”¹³² Memory sets the respective behaviours. Thus, holiness is recognized under the habit of kindness, glory, and charity (*intelligit sub habitu bonitatis, gloriae et caritatis*); the second, which featured the sinners, repeated negative characteristics, including the corresponding record:

technischen Traktatliteratur im 15. Jahrhundert; mit Edition und Untersuchung dreier deutscher Traktate und ihrer lateinischen Vorlagen (Tübingen, 2000).

127 Kimberly A. Rivers, *Preaching the Memory of Virtue and Vice: Memory, Images, and Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2010), 4.

128 “Si prudens est animus tuus, tribus dispensetur temporibus”; “praesentia ordinata, futura provide et praeterita recordare.” Cited from Matteo de’ Corsini, *Rosario della vita* (Florence, 1845), 37–39.

129 Rivers, *Preaching the Memory of Virtue and Vice*, 149–333.

130 Miguel Larrañaga, *Palabra, Imagen, Poder: Enseñar el Orden en la Edad Media* (Segovia, 2015), 410–11.

131 “Tenebre peccatorum memoria eorum.” From New Haven, Yale University Beinecke Library, Marston MS 140, fol. 52v.

132 “Quos habent et habebunt sancti de gloria, et alii sunt, quos habent et habebunt damnati de tristitia.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 2:549.

First one needs to understand why Judas, who has a contrary habit for all his eternity, understanding intellectually the intelligible eternity in terms of punishment for evil and hate. Then comes the cloak of remembering. And these cloaks are the instruments with which the saints have eternal glory, while the damned have suffering. Judas has a cloak of conscience and despair with the cloak of sadness and the cloak of eternal intelligence, like a memory, because all these cloaks are those for eternity.¹³³

In this sense, memory could be a memory of evil. In the eighth century, when John of Damascus talked of cholera, he saw three types: bile, rage, and mania. The latter became the permanent memory of evil: “The mania is the permanent bile, in other words, the memory of evil, and it is called mania because it persists and remains recorded in the memory.”¹³⁴ Memory is the link with the entire vital journey of the human being, constantly loading the memory with everything good and everything bad. If you were to start again, you would need to lose your memory, as Dante explains when to drink from the river of forgetfulness:

What are you thinking?
Answer me; that the water [from the river of forgetfulness]
has yet to erase your sad memory.¹³⁵

Memory is a life force. Everything is memory: the words and texts that surround us, and the images. All the power of depiction that religion can master, filling cloisters and churches with reliefs and sculptures, is nothing other than the expression of a particular memory, showing why monastic buildings can be described as an “architectural mnemonic in monastic rhetoric.”¹³⁶

Let us return to Frances Yates when she discusses “memory as the converting power, the bridge between the abstraction and the image.”¹³⁷ Memory is an action activated by agents who wish to transmit a certain social behaviour. It has a versatile capacity, used not only by the Church, but also holders of power when they wished to influence society. We can now see how memory served at the mercy of power; and proponents of the powerful attempted to manipulate the past through its memory.

133 “Et idem est de intelligere Iudae, quod in contrarium habitatum est in aeuernitate sua, intellectuitate intelligente intelligibilitatem aeuernitatem sub ratione malitiae poenae et odibilitatis. Et idem sequitur de habitu memoriae. Et isti habitus sunt instrumenta per quae sancti havent gloriam aeuernaliter et damnati poenam. Iudas habet habitum conscientiae et desperantiae cum habitu tristitiae et cum habitu intelligentiae aeuernitatis et memoriae similiter in tantum quod omnes habitus erunt ita appropriati aeuernitati.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 2:549–50.

134 “La manie est la bile permanente, c’est-à-dire la mémoire du mal, et s’appelle manie parce qu’elle demeure et reste consignée dans la mémoire.” Cited from Carla Casagrande and Silvana Vecchio, *Histoire des péchés capitaux au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 2003), 125.

135 “Che pense? / Rispondi a me: ché le memorie triste / in te non sono ancor da l’acqua offense.” Cited from Dante, *Divina Commedia*, 10–12, Purgatorio, XXXI.

136 Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge, 1998).

137 Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 104.

Memory as a Strategy

The medieval conception of the world as a continuous path from Creation to the Second Coming, in which the history of the world and the history of salvation were entwined, encompasses the meaning of being human and the impact of one's actions. The present was justified both by the inescapable destiny of one's path forward whilst being deeply rooted on the path from whence we came. Power in the present thus required a justification in the past, and that link was the memory.

This is underlined by the two terms used in Mary Carruthers' magisterial work, *Memory and Authority*.¹³⁸ The basis for authority was rooted in memory. For instance, Eginhard supported Charlemagne, primarily due to his lineage, since all his predecessors had shown their worth before Pepin was anointed king, by continuously occupying the position of Mayor of the Palace:

Pepin the Short, father of King Charles, exercised this post as if it were already hereditary. In fact, Pepin's father, Charles Martel, worthily occupied the same position, having, in turn, received it from his father, Pepin of Herstal.¹³⁹

After recalling the success of Charles Martel in battle against the Muslims,¹⁴⁰ the same chronicler adds: "The people did not tend to grant such an honourable post to anyone except those who stood out for their enlightened lineage and abundant riches."¹⁴¹ Eginhard thus links wealth, continuity in the retention of power, and recognition of the lineage to popular acceptance.

In reality, in early medieval dynastic affairs, a historical justificatory narrative contributed powerfully to popular cohesion around sovereigns, as Rosamond McKitterick concluded for the Carolingians: "A sense of the past was deeply integrated into the sense of identity possessed by the audiences for history in the Carolingian world. The Franks defined themselves in terms of their history."¹⁴² Great churchmen in the ninth century defined, managed, and consolidated power through accurate control of the past, particularly the *gesta*, as Constance Bouchard writes: "The creation of this genre grew from a need to make a strange and distant past more comprehensible and to prepare a hortatory 'mirror' for the authors' contemporaries; it thus demonstrates vividly the historical process of remembering and forgetting."¹⁴³

138 Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge, 1990), 234–73.

139 "Este cargo lo ejercía, como si ya fuera hereditario, Pipino (el Breve), el padre del rey Carlos. De hecho el padre de Pipino, Carlos (Martel), ocupó dignamente este mismo puesto que, a su vez, le había sido legado por su propio padre Pipino (de Heristal)." Cited from Eginhard, *Vida de Carlomagno*, ed. Alejandra de Riquer (Madrid, 1999), 59.

140 Flocel Sabaté, "La victoire de Charles Martel à Poitiers," in *L'histoire de France vu d'ailleurs*, ed. Jean-Noël Jeanneney and Jeanne Guérout (Paris, 2016), 45–54.

141 "El pueblo no solía conceder este cargo tan honorable más que a aquellos que sobresalían por su esclarecido linaje y sus copiosas riquezas." Cited from Eginhard, *Vida de Carlomagno*, 60.

142 Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2004), 282–323.

143 Constance B. Bouchard, "Episcopal 'Gesta' and the Creation of a Useful Past in Ninth-Century Auxerre," *Speculum* 84, no. 1 (2009): 1–35 at 1.

Charlemagne consolidated his power in agreement with aristocratic kinship groups, who wove a memory to reinforce the respective aristocratic groups, their monastic links, and their connection to imperial power, as summarized by Régine Le Jan :

The reciprocal system of the 'memoria' contributed the integration of aristocratic group into the overall monastic structures of the Frankish Empire. Even if the Carolingian aristocracy still founded its legitimacy in itself, it was integrated into the structures of the Frankish and Christian 'imperium'.¹⁴⁴

In reality, the aristocratic system operating between the seventh and tenth centuries, based on cousinage,¹⁴⁵ wove mutual, horizontal relations that helped to link dispersed kinships closely related to royalty under the invocation of common mythical ancestors, like Priam, king of Troy, to sustain the Merovingian dynasty.¹⁴⁶ The consolidation of each aristocratic lineage meant consolidating a specific memory visualized in locations of family memory. These were rooted in ceremonies and places of burial, which were often within private churches founded on their own domains and, especially in the Merovingian era, in particular monasteries. This maintained the link between the living and the dead, with the former adapting the record of the lineage in accordance with the political context in a new Carolingian environment.¹⁴⁷

Once the power of Charlemagne had become entrenched, supposed kinship links to the emperor and his descendents justified many lineages. In the early generations, Charlemagne's time became a place of idealized memory, as Matthew Gabriele has written: "In the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, telling stories about Charlemagne meant telling stories about a (lost) Golden Age whose contours shifted across time and space." It was still, in reality, a way to create (literally invent) a new evocative memory; again, Gabriele says: "Each scribe who recorded the great one's deeds or narrated the events of that Golden Age added a layer, pressing his particular memories and preoccupations into the fabric of the Charlemagne legend."¹⁴⁸ The biographical construction of the Carolingian sovereign created a model image,¹⁴⁹ both of its time and one projected towards posterity in idealized form. Rulers over almost all of Western Europe invoked supposed links to the Carolingian environment; in some cases this continued even into the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁰

144 Cited from Régine Le Jan, *Femmes, Pouvoir et société dans le haut Moyen Age* (Paris, 2001), 108–18.

145 "Le système réciproque de la 'memoria' contribuait à intégrer les groupement aristocratiques dans les structures monastiques globales de l'empire franc. Même si l'aristocratie carolingienne fondait toujours sa légitimité en elle-même, elle se trouvait intégrée dans les structures de l' 'imperium' franc et chrétien." Régine Le Jan, *Famille et pouvoir dans le monde franc, VII^e–X^e siècle: Essai d'anthropologie sociale* (Paris, 1995), 159–428.

146 Martin Aurell, *La noblesse en Occident (V^e–XV^e siècle)* (Paris, 1996), 45–47.

147 Le Jan, *Famille et pouvoir dans le monde franc*, 45–57.

148 Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011), 1.

149 Dominique Iogna-Prat, "La construction biographique du souverain carolingien," in *À la recherche de légitimités chrétiennes. Représentations de l'espace et du temps dans l'Espagne médiévale (IX^e–XII^e siècle)*, ed. Patrick Henriot (Lyon, 2003), 197–224.

150 Flocel Sabaté, *Expansió territorial de Catalunya (segles IX–XII): Conquesta o repoblació?* (Lleida, 1996), 53–54.

Elsewhere we see similar behaviour: King St. Stephen was held up as the source of rights and freedoms in medieval Hungary, a tradition that has continued almost to the present day.¹⁵¹

Feudalism imposed a new family structure,¹⁵² duly sanctioned by the Church, based on monogamous, indissoluble, and exogamic marriage.¹⁵³ This created lineages that were maintained with the support of what Ruiz Domenec called the “memory of the feudal lords” (*memoria de los feudales*). This would typically include the justification of a specific genealogical path, attesting kinship ties, and providing eulogistic references. Later on, the genealogical narratives further stabilized written records and established commemorative actions.¹⁵⁴

Such written records required management and this was commonly performed by a monastic community that was closely linked with the lineage. In the Ribagorça, a former Carolingian county south of the Pyrenees, between the eleventh and twelfth centuries up to three versions of the history of the county’s lineage were written, the last explicitly known as the *Memoria renovata*. These Ribagorçan chronicles contain clear historical errors, even in the identification of the Frankish kings, as historians have noted.¹⁵⁵ It is almost commonplace to excuse errors in such primitive historical works. But research by Gener Gonzalvo shows that the errors were not down to ignorance by the monks who wrote them but rather were intentional, aimed at manipulating dates and genealogies, as the purpose of their work was to glorify the county’s lineage for purposes of legitimation and ostentation, whilst splicing together the imperial lineage of Charlemagne, the heroic deeds of the counts, and their relation to the French royal house. More specifically, the narrative aimed at consolidating specific issues, such as the patrimony, possessions, and jurisdictions, which were then in dispute, and to reinforce the patrilineal family model.¹⁵⁶ This one example illustrates the function of the written memory, not to transmit historical narratives, but to generate them at the service of strategies of power. Even the liveliness of the story was adapted to the aims of the memory. For example, in thirteenth-century Castile, Countess Urraca, wife of Count Álvaro Núñez de Lara, drew on the monastery of Cañas, where she took vows after being widowed and became abbess: the story of her memory, in both written and monumental forms, was enriched in life and after her death, as circumstances required.¹⁵⁷

151 Nora Berend “Construcciones divergentes de la memoria real en el reino de Hungría: Esteban I (997–1038) en las leyes, las crónicas y la hagiografía,” in *La construcción medieval de la memoria regia*, ed. Pascual Martínez Sopena and Ana Rodríguez (Valencia, 2011), 54–57.

152 José Enrique Ruiz Domenec, “Système de parenté et théorie de l’alliance dans la société catalane (env. 1000–env. 1240),” *Revue historique* 532 (1979): 305–26.

153 Flocel Sabaté, *La feudalización de la sociedad catalana* (Granada, 2007), 171–91.

154 José Enrique Ruiz Domenec, *La memoria de los feudales* (Barcelona, 1994).

155 Ramon d’Abadal, *Dels visigots als catalans*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1970), 2:323–24.

156 Gener Gonzalvo, “La memoria dels comtes de Ribagorça,” in *Miscel·lània Homenatge a Josep Lladonosa*, ed. Jesús Alturo i Perucho (Lleida, 1992), 79–87.

157 Ghislain Baury, “Sainteté, mémoire et lignage des abbesses cisterciennes de Castille au XIII^e s. La comtesse Urraca de Cañas (av. 1207–1262),” *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 41, no. 1 (2011): 151–82.

Monasteries in their turn concerned themselves particularly with ingraining the memory of certain saints associated with them, reinforcing those stories that supported devotional imagery. The aim was to attract the faithful. Significantly, attempts to increase the memory of certain saints tended to coincide with problems and tensions within the monastery about its incomes or jurisdictions.¹⁵⁸ The same monastic scriptoria that catered for the memory of the religious house, and especially its donors, also manipulated, sometimes inextricably, the monastery's heritage.¹⁵⁹ Monasteries paid strong attention to these writings, if need be by resorting to forgeries,¹⁶⁰ in order to maintain their sources of revenue or to triumph in lawsuits in which they were involved.¹⁶¹

At the same time, reinforcing the lineage meant not only emphasizing a certain historically- based story but also visualizing and displaying it. Memory took advantage of the corresponding *signum* or *figura* to remain indelible in the shared knowledge of a society so familiar with symbolism.¹⁶² For instance, heraldry on military equipment from the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries offered a memorable emblem for each lineage.¹⁶³ Locations or buildings associated with lineages offered other locales for the memory, and heraldry often took on these references. Heraldry, lineage, and memory became interweaved within strategies of family consolidation. All levels of the nobility participated in this game and adapted their arms. In many cases, as in Castile, these were enriched with references to the origins and success of the family. By the fourteenth century, in the words of Faustino Menéndez Pidal, it reached "The definitive fixing and codifying of the coats of arms gave them a marked character of remembrance of the ancestors and their deeds, constituting the spiritual heritage of the lineage."¹⁶⁴

158 Javier Pérez-Embid, *Hagiología y sociedad en la España medieval. Castilla y León (siglos XI–XIII)* (Huelva, 2002), 92–95.

159 Leticia Agúndez San Miguel, "Memoria y cultura en la documentación del monasterio de Sahagún: la respuesta de la fórmulas 'inútiles' (904–1230)," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 40, no. 2 (2010): 847–88.

160 Leticia Agúndez, "Escritura, memoria y conflicto entre el monasterio e Sahagún y la catedral de León: nuevas perspectivas para el aprovechamiento de los falsos documentales (siglos X a XII)," *Medievalismo* 19 (2009): 261–85.

161 Flocel Sabaté, *La feudalización de la sociedad catalana* (Granada, 2007), 195–200.

162 "When, in the same text, Latin in turn uses words like 'signum', 'figura', 'exemplum', 'memoria', 'similitudo'—all terms which can be translated in modern French as 'symbol'—it does not do so indifferently but instead chooses each of these words carefully because each one carries an essential nuance." (Quand, dans un même texte, le latin utilise tour à tour des mots comme "signum," "figura," "exemplum," "memoria," "similitudo"—tous termes qui en français moderne peuvent se traduire par "symbole"—il ne le fait pas indifféremment mais au contraire choisit chacun de ces mots avec soin parce que chacun est porteur d'une nuance essentielle.) Cited from Michel Pastoureau, *Une histoire symbolique du Moyen Âge occidental* (Paris, 2004), 11.

163 Michel Pastoureau, *Traité d'heraldique* (Paris, 2003), 24–36.

164 "La definitiva fijación y codificación de los escudos de armas les daba un marcado carácter de recuerdo de los ascendientes y de sus hechos, constitutivos del patrimonio espiritual del linaje." Faustino Menéndez Pidal de Navascués, "El linaje y sus signos de identidad," in *Estudios de Genealogía, Heráldica y Nobiliaria*, ed. Miguel Ángel Ladero (Madrid, 2006), 12–28 at 23.

All noble lineages told a tale of a long, unbroken, vigorous history, “the importance of being ancient (la importancia de ser antiguo),” showing a real “hunger of lineage (hambre de linaje).”¹⁶⁵ The wealth and distinction of the lineage justified its identity, legitimated in the various conflicts it was involved in,¹⁶⁶ reflected by the social relations of each noble, and the focus for continuing economic and social ascent.¹⁶⁷ Accordingly, many lineages link to mythological, biblical, or classical origins. There was no lack of fantastic origins: the Anjou, Berry, and Lusignac families claimed descent from the fairy Melusina, as Jean d’Arras wrote in the fourteenth century, following a request from the Duke of Berry.¹⁶⁸ Likewise, the Haros, in the Iberian Peninsula, drew on fantastic origins around the Goat-footed Lady (“Dama del Pie de Cabra”).¹⁶⁹ Alternatively, a memorial story could be based on a dark past, justified simply because “there was no argument against it from human memory (Que memoria de omnes no es en contrario),” as stated by the Basque nobility, showing how memory could be manipulated by those of pre-eminent status.¹⁷⁰ The strengthening of the agnatic lineages in the late Middle Ages, with the preoccupation both to conserve and extend the family heritage and play the game of matrimonial strategies, always tended to be accompanied by the search for, and invocation of, genealogical stories;¹⁷¹ more than a few times a single family could find itself with various origins, thus reinforcing its antiquity and contacts.¹⁷² The view was to the past and the future, which is why the stories were duly continued, as with the Castilian *Libro del linaje de los señores de Ayala*.¹⁷³

These memorial stories were also used for lesser lineages when they could not produce an ancient chronology. Whether middling or lower nobles, they all resorted to such origins. A Castilian knight, Sancho de Paredes, who had been chamberlain to Queen Isabella the Catholic, flaunted his position by erecting a palace in his home city of Cáceres, including a specific Arms or Lineage Room. The decoration of the room was finished

165 Cristina Jular, “La importancia de ser antiguo. Los Velasco y su construcción genealógica,” in *La conciencia de los antepasados. La construcción de la memoria de la nobleza en la Baja Edad Media*, ed. Arsenio Dacosta, José Ramon Prieto, and José Ramón Díaz de Durana (Madrid, 2014), 201–36.

166 Maria Consuelo Villacorta, “Creando memoria: Pedro López de Ayala y Lope García de Salazar,” in *Memoria e historia. Utilización política en la Corona de Castilla al final de la Edad Media*, ed. Jon Andoni Fernández de Larrea and José Ramón Díaz de Durana (Madrid 2010), 74–75.

167 Miquel Àngel Ladero, *Poder político y sociedad en Castilla. Siglos XIII al XV* (Madrid, 2013), 393.

168 Jean d’Arras, *Melusina o la noble historia de Lusignan*, ed. and trans. Carlos Alvar (Madrid, 1982).

169 Luis Krus, “Una variante peninsular del mito de Melusina: el origen de los Hara en el ‘Livro de Linhagens’ del Conde de Barcelos” and Krus “La muerte de las hadas: la leyenda genealógica de la Dama del Pie de Cabra,” in *La conciencia de los antepasados*, 17–42 and 43–86 respectively. However, see the work of Isabel Beceiro, “La legitimación del linaje a través de los ancestros,” in *Memoria e historia*, 91–93.

170 Cited from Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Clio’s Laws on History and Language* (Austin, 2019), 47.

171 Isabel Beceiro, “La memoria y el discurso de la nobleza en los relatos genealógicos castellanos (1370–1540),” in *La conciencia de los antepasados*, 122–43.

172 Beceiro, “La legitimación del linaje,” 85–87.

173 Arsenio Dacosta, *El ‘Libro del linaje de los señores de Ayala’ y otros textos genealógicos. Materiales para el estudio de la conciencia del linaje en al Baja Edad Media* (Bilbao, 2007).

during the sixteenth century, but, at the building's conception, at the start of the century, elements proclaiming his lineage were introduced. We see his family arms accompanied by portraits of his ancestors, although there are only eight of them and they only date back to the fourteenth century. They are accompanied by the heraldic shields of the respective spouses' families, showing the role of matrimonial links not only financially but in glorifying the lineage. A text in Castilian crowns the room:

This work was commissioned by the honourable knight Sancho de Paredes, son of the most honourable knight Alonso Holguín and chamberlain to the most powerful and most Catholic Queen Isabel, our lady. Beginning with Pero Domingo Golfín, over two hundred years ago, who was a neighbour of this town and whose wife is not remembered and others whose wives' arms are presented. The said Pero Domingo had a son Alonso Pérez Golfín whose son was Pero Alonso and whose son was Alonso Golfín, and of Alonso Golfín, Alonso Holguín and whose son was Sancho de Paredes and whose son was Ferna Pérez Golfín. Finished in the year 1508.¹⁷⁴

We can see here a portrait of an heir looking assuredly to the future while the ostentatious decoration displays his present wealth, but all rooted in the memory of the lineage, displayed with pride, though he is simply a rich knight keen to show off his prestige and the power he gained through service to the crown.

At the time, medical understanding of procreation argued that bodily fluids transmitted not only physiological traits but also moral virtues or defects.¹⁷⁵ The son of a king might inherit his authoritarian traits,¹⁷⁶ or the son of a Jew might have a characteristic such as fearfulness.¹⁷⁷ That is why St. Bernard received virtues through his mother's milk,¹⁷⁸ just as the Castilian writer, don Juan Manuel, traced bad character traits to the milk of a bad wet-nurse.¹⁷⁹ Such views reinforced the importance of lineage. It was common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in discourses praising barons and nobles, which is why texts had to adopt "the theme of unknown youth prepared to make his name as a knight and to establish a position in society on the basis of his own exploits, without the help

174 "Esta ovra mandó facer el onrado cavallero Sancho de Paredes, hijo del mui onrado cavallero Alonso Holguín i camarero de la mui poderosa e mui católica reina dona Isabel nuestra señora. Comiença de Pero Domingo Golfín, que puede aver docientos años, que fue vecino d-esta villa i d-él no ai memoria quien fue su muger y de los otros se ponen las armas que tovieron sus mujeres. Del dicho Pero Domingo fue hijo Alonso Pérez Golfín i d-él fue hijo Pero Alonso i d-él fue hijo Alonso Golfín, i de Alonso Golfín, Alonso Holguín i d-él fue hijo Sancho de Paredes i d-él fue hijo Ferna Pérez Golfín. Acabose año de mdviii." Cited from "Sala de Armas o de linajes" in Pilar Mogollón, *Guía del Palacio de los Golfines de Abajo* (Cáceres, 2015), 50–51.

175 Danielle Jacquart and Claude Thomasset, *Sexualidad y saber médico en la Edad Media* (Barcelona, 1989), 55–57.

176 Stefano Maria Cingolani, "El 'Llibre de l'infant en Pere'. De la sutil frontera entre realidad y ficción en la historiografía," *Talia dixit* 7 (2012): 79–80.

177 Teresa Alsina, "La imatge visual i la concepció dels jueus a la Catalunya medieval," *L'Avenç* 81 (1985): 54–56 at 54.

178 Jacques de la Voragine, *La Légende dorée*, trans. Teodor de Wyzewa, facs. repr. (1911; Paris, 1998), 440.

179 Cruz Montero Garrido, *La historia, creación literaria. El ejemplo del Cuatrocientos* (Madrid, 1994), 206.

of a known and well-established family reputation,” whilst keeping “a strong emphasis on heredity.”¹⁸⁰ Three things were necessary to judge a knight, the prime one being lineage, as stated in the mid-fourteenth century at the Aragonese court: “This knowledge is obtained in three ways. The first, which lineage they are descended from; the second, what manners and customs they have; the third what exploits they have achieved.”¹⁸¹

So, dynastic continuity, displaying one’s roots, and continuing success, became central to the claims to power by lords, and especially sovereigns. What was important was the dynasty, more so even than any individual monarch. By the fourteenth century, this meant hiding the monarch and focusing on the royal lineage: “the invisibility of the king and the visibility of the dynasty (*L’invisibilit  del re e la visibilit  della dinastia*).”¹⁸²

Portraying continuity of succession from the beginning was crucial, whilst enumerating all the members of the dynasty from its origins, observed in the royal palaces of Castile, France, and Aragon between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁸³ Royal speeches, chancery documents, chronicles, the overall care of archives and libraries, all show this same memorial policy. Memory was deeply embedded in strategies for promoting late-medieval monarchies. Assuming one could present longevity in the transmission of values and successes, genealogical and dynastic memory became essential for the legitimacy of power.¹⁸⁴ This was explicit in the kingdom of Leon, where “the memory of the ancestors acquires a fundamental role in the process of creating the image of the king and his power.”¹⁸⁵ It could sometimes be difficult to integrate a positive narrative of one’s ancestors, such as trying to eulogize a dynastic memory involved in the murder of Thomas Becket, who was immediately accepted by the Church as a martyr.¹⁸⁶ Sometimes

180 Elspeth Kennedy, “The Quest for Identity and the Importance of Lineage in Thirteenth-Century French Prose Romance,” in *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood, 2: Papers from the Third Strawberry Hill Conference, 1986*, ed. Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge, 1988), 70–86 at 75.

181 “Aquesta conexen a ha a esser en tres maneres. La primera de quiny linyatge venen; la segona de quinyes maneres et costumes son: la ter era quinyes fets han fets.” Cited from Pr spero de Bofarull, *Procesos de las antiguas cortes y parlamentos de Catalu a, Arag n y Valencia*, 8 vols. (Barcelona, 1847–51), 6:23.

182 Flocel Sabat , “L’invisibilit  del re e la visibilit  della dinastia nella Corona d’Aragona,” in *Il principe invisibile*, ed. Lucia Bertolini, Arturo Calzona, Glauco Maria Cantarella, and Stefano Caroti (Turnhout, 2015), 27–63.

183 El as Tormo, *Las Viejas series ic nicas de los reyes de Espa a* (Madrid, 1917); Roland Reicht, “Le portrait et le principe e r alit  dans la sculpture: Philippe le Bel et l’image royale,” in *Europ ische Kunst um 1300. Akten des xxv International Kongresses f r Kunstgeschichte (Vienna 4th–10th September 1983)*, ed. Hermann Fillitz and Martina Pippal, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1986), 4:189–201.

184 Ana Rodr guez, “La preciosa transmisi n. Memoria y curia regia en Castilla en la primera mitad del siglo XIII,” in *La construcci n medieval de la memoria regia*, ed. Pascual Mart nez Sopena and Ana Rodr guez (Valencia, 2011), 295–324 at 295–96.

185 “El recuerdo de los antepasados adquiere un papel fundamental en el proceso de creaci n de la imagen del rey y su poder.” Cited from In s Calder n, “La memoria de los reyes de Le n (1157–1230),” in *La construcci n medieval de la memoria regia*, 169–89 at 175.

186 John Hudson, “Derecho, escritura y memoria real en Inglaterra, ca. 870–1215,” in *La construcci n medieval de la memoria regia*, 209–20 at 219–20.

there was legitimate doubt, allowing room for ambiguity, such as with Crown of Aragon and Peter the Great, who died in 1285 in dispute with the Holy See and excommunicated.¹⁸⁷ We have seen how memorialistic narratives could link to powerful or mythical origins¹⁸⁸ but were adapted to each case.¹⁸⁹ By the Late Middle Ages chronicles subsumed these dynastic narratives into what has accurately become known as the “memory of the kings (memòria dels reis).”¹⁹⁰ It was no accident that this all took shape with the ongoing development of centralized administrations¹⁹¹ that generated and looked after corresponding royal or governmental archives.¹⁹² The memory of the dynasty consolidated sovereign power.

Royal pantheons were also part of this strategy. In the mid-fourteenth century in the Crown of Aragon, King Peter the Ceremonious began a policy of locating and dignifying the tombs of all his predecessors. He respected the place chosen for burial by each of his predecessors but wanted those around him and successors to share one royal pantheon in the Cistercian monastery of Poblet. This reflected a belief that they would resurrect together on the day of judgement: “we and our sons, who in a similar way have chosen our tombs, so that, on judgement day, we will be resurrected together with the said kings, our predecessors.”¹⁹³ The choice of monasteries called on to host royal pantheons had to demonstrate they were capable of developing adequate liturgical ceremonies for eternal salvation and, at the same time, serve as a bridge between legitimizing the past, presenting current glories, and projecting the future. We see just this at the start of the twelfth century when Alfonso VI of Leon and Castile adopted the Cluniac monastery of Sahagun as a royal pantheon.¹⁹⁴

Noble families showed the same concerns as royal lineages; first, the concern to depict a complete course from the family’s origins through to eternal salvation. Resurrection held a central position in late-medieval religion,¹⁹⁵ and was well represented in

187 Carlos López, “Conservar y construir la memoria regia en tiempos de Jaime I: los archivos reales,” in *La construcción medieval de la memoria regia*, 387–414 at 412.

188 Luís Krus, *A construção do passado medieval* (Lisbon, 2011), 182–83.

189 Gaetano Lalomia, “Per un’etica della ‘memoria’ e letteratura sapienziale castigliana del XIII secolo,” in *Memoria: Poetica, retorica e filologia della memoria. Atti del xxx Convegno Inter-universitario di Bressanone (18–21 luglio 2002)*, ed. Gianfelice Peron, Zeno Verlato, and Francesco Zambon (Trento, 2004), 49–74.

190 Stefano Maria Cingolani, *La memòria dels reis. Les quatre grans Cròniques* (Barcelona, 2007).

191 Bernard Guenée, *Occidente durante los siglos XIV y XV. Los Estados* (Barcelona, 1973), 103–217.

192 Andrea Calzolari, Rosanna Cosentino, “La memoria dell’amministrazione: l’archivio camerale sabudo a partir dal XIV secolo,” *Études Savoyennes. Revue d’histoire et d’Archéologie* 3 (1994): 47–51.

193 “Nos e nostres fills qui semblantment hi havem elegides nostres sepultures, per ço que ensemps resucitem ab los dits reys nostres predecessors al dia del juhi.” Cited from Antoni Rubió y Lluch, *Documents per l’historia de la cultura catalana mig-aval*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1908), 1:300.

194 José Luis Senra, “En torno a un espacio de evocación: las ‘Res gesta domini Adefonsi’ y la iglesia monástica de Sahagún,” in *La construcción medieval de la memoria regia*, 243–92 at 287–89.

195 Shirin Fozi, “‘Reinhildis Has Died’: Ascension and Enlivenment on a Twelfth-Century Tomb,” *Speculum* 90, no. 1 (2015): 158–94.

churches,¹⁹⁶ in particular with the image of the tomb-covers opening following the call of the Lord (such as at the expressive west front of Saint-Seurin's monastery in Bordeaux). In the Catalan parish church of Sant Salvador de Vilanova de Meià, the Gothic relief reproduces this very image, explicitly, with the heraldic signs of the resurrected showing they were the members of the local seignorial family.

The connections between noble lineages and religious centres became fixed by the late Middle Ages, reinforced by the prevailing feudal structure. A religious centre would provide the scriptorium where the story of the memory of the lineage could be assembled, the monks would guarantee the fate of the deceased from the lineage for all time, and display, as the deceased awaited resurrection, how the family's wealth grew through the increasing wealth of the tombs. Indeed, the term memory acquired a specific meaning in monasteries in the central part of the Middle Ages, when the Gregorian Reform from the 1080s required a different relationship with patrons. Memory was dedicated to recording prayers, masses, and various forms of commemoration of the donors.¹⁹⁷

In 1382, the aforementioned King Peter the Ceremonious of Aragon commented that the same monastery where he expected all the deceased of the royal family to be gathered was wanted for the same purpose by lineages elsewhere: "there are also queens and the dukes, our daughter in law and sons, our grandsons, counts and barons, knights, citizens, and townspeople who have chosen their burial place here."¹⁹⁸ In fact, the families establishing themselves as an urban oligarchy intertwined their own interests with those of the towns and cities where they had taken root since the twelfth century and we can observe similar strategies of consolidation. These families developed a comprehensive policy to gain representative functions and hold local political power, while strengthening their positions through marriage alliances.¹⁹⁹

Bourgeois families also appealed to their origins, but often through the invention of a family past.²⁰⁰ They invoked ancient origins but foregrounded their successes, both professional and familial. From the fifteenth century, they often put this in writing, generating a specific family memory²⁰¹ in which they intentionally mixed economic affairs

196 Matilde Azcárate, "Iconografía de la Resurrección en la escultura gótica española," *En la España Medieval* 5 (1986): 169–93.

197 Arnoud-Jan A. Bijsterveld, "Do ut des:" Gift Giving, 'Memoria' and Conflict Management in the Medieval Low Countries (Hilversum, 2007), 158–87.

198 "Aytambé de reynes e de la duquessa nostra nora e fills, néts nostres, comtes e barons, cavallers, ciutadans e homens de viles qui han aquí eletes lurs sepultures." Cited from Rubió i Lluch, *Documents per l'història de la cultura catalana*, 1:300.

199 Catalonia serves as an example: Flocel Sabaté, "Ejes vertebradores de la oligarquía urbana en Cataluña," *Revista d'Història Medieval* 9 (1998): 127–40.

200 Christiane Klapish-Zuber, "L'invention du passé familial a Florence (xivè–xvè s.). Temps, mémoire, tradition au Moyen Âge," in *Actes du XIII^e Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Public (Aix-en-Provence, 4–5 juin 1982)* (Aix-en-Provence, 1983), 97–118.

201 María Luz Mandingorra, "La configuración de la identidad privada: diarios y libros de memorias en la baja edad media," *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 29 (2002): 217–35 at 218.

with more emotive family traits,²⁰² often beginning narratives that were then continued by later members of the same family.²⁰³ The writings show an interest in preserving surprising facts or those considered curious or transcendental,²⁰⁴ mixed with the desire to provide solid, deep roots showing the sustained ascent of the family. This often required manipulation of documents and historical re-creation. It is worth mentioning the case of the late-medieval Bell-lloc bourgeois family in Girona. They had no qualms about hiding their humble origins as furriers by manipulating parchments that referred to this and starting a narrative linking the origins of the family with the founders of the country, thus moving it closer to alleged Carolingian origins.²⁰⁵

Taking due care of the memory also applied to the institutions the bourgeois families promoted. As municipal governments grew in statute they would create their own archives where they stored the memory of the rights they had acquired²⁰⁶ and so build their own identities.²⁰⁷ All municipal officers were involved in these games of power and took care to create and preserve their archives.²⁰⁸ How did they justify their status? In many cases, by invoking founding laws or charters, and using their own civic legal system to generate a communal memory.²⁰⁹ This created social cohesion and a sense of collective solidarity shared by the members of one entity, visible in shared activities and actions.²¹⁰

Collective acts made visible the shared urban identity. We see display of heraldic symbology, which, in many cases, included references to historic origins.²¹¹ Towns and cities adopted narratives that involved a memory of an identity born in characters from classical and biblical mythology. Noah appears frequently, and even more so Troy, which provided a wished-for continuity back to Greece and Rome.²¹² The historical discourse

202 *El llibre de la Baronia d'Eramprunyà*, ed. Elena Cantarell, Mireia Comas, and Carme Muntaner (Lleida, 2011).

203 Duccio Balestracci, *La zappa e la retorica. Memorie familiari di un contadino toscano del Quattrocento* (Florence, 1984), 155–79.

204 Reyes Rojas, "La memoria de lo privado por lo public. Los escribanos públicos sevillanos," *Historia. Instituciones Documentos* 31 (2004): 577–81.

205 Josep Fernández i Trabal, *Una família catalana medieval. Els Bell-lloc de Girona 1267–1533* (Barcelona, 1995), 32–33.

206 Pascual Martínez Sopena, "Los concejos, la tradición foral y la memoria regia en Castilla y León," in *La construcción medieval de la memoria regia*, 135–68 at 158–65.

207 Thérèse de Hemptinne, "Des sources pour une histoire des villes compare? Essai de typologie thématique," in *La ville médiévale en débat*, ed. Amélia Aguiar Andrade and Adelaide Millán da Costa (Lisbon, 2013), 27.

208 Maria Teresa Iranzo, "Memoria cívica: el archivo medieval del concejo de Huesca," *Aragón en la Edad Media* 19 (2006): 259–72.

209 Paolo Miceli, *Derecho consuetudinario y memoria. Práctica jurídica y costumbre en Castilla y León (siglos XI–XIV)* (Madrid, 2012), 178–80.

210 Flocel Sabaté, *El sometent a la Catalunya medieval* (Barcelona, 2007), 9–25.

211 Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Rezak, "Du modèle à l'image: les signes de l'identité urbaine au Moyen Âge," in *Le verbe, l'image et les représentations de la société urbaine au Moyen Âge*, ed. Marc Boone, Elodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, and Jean-Pierre Sosson (Antwerp, 2002), 189–205.

212 Colette Beaune, "L'utilisation politique du mythe des origines troyennes en France à la fin du

of each city, incorporating its list of successes, was fundamental in creating and maintaining an awareness of identity among rising communal powers like the Italians²¹³ or the Flemish.²¹⁴ The case of the *Annales ianuenses* is well known and illustrative. They were first written by Caffarus in the mid-twelfth century to provide an official memory for Genoa as it grew into an international power.²¹⁵

Collective municipal self-expression used the same philosophical and theological approaches that justified the recognition and participation of the *populus* as a legitimate power at the end of the twelfth century.²¹⁶ A sense of nation could be built around collective identities and specific cultural traits, traced from the classical epoch into the Early and Late Middle Ages.²¹⁷ From the thirteenth century on, legal, philosophical, and theological support grew across Europe for the concept of nations of people, identified as units with common cultural traits, especially a shared language. Naturally, there was no shortage of elites who wanted to claim to be its embodiment or representative, and sovereigns who wanted to subsume this entity.²¹⁸ In all cases, a popular sense of a nation and its political embodiment meant establishing a specific memory also linked to founding myths.²¹⁹

It was not only a question of generating a self-supporting memory of one's own origins or a memory storehouse with various elements well organized in order to be able to defend rights and incomes when and where needed. Supposedly representative entities, like municipalities or even permanent parliamentary delegations like the General Deputation of Catalonia, conspicuously fed a public memory through narratives and diaries often backed by a notary who certified the news as "kept by the witness of the present for future memory (Per memòria en esdevenidor presents per testimoni)."²²⁰ In Lleida, the book was headed with a classical reference to justify the need to collect the events for the common memory of the city:

Moyen Âge," in *Lectures médiévales de Virgile. Actes du Colloque organisé par l'École Française de Rome (Rome, 25-28 octobre 1982)* (Rome, 1985), 331-55.

213 Chris Wickham, "The Sense of the Past in Italian Communal Narratives," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino (London, 1992), 173-89.

214 Anne-Laure Bruaene, "S'imaginer le passé et le présent: conscience historique et identité urbaine en Frandre," in *Memoria, comunitas, civitas. Mémoire et conscience urbaines en occident à la fin du Moyen Âge*, ed. Hanno Brand, Pierre Monnet, and Martial Staub (Ostfildern, 2003), 167-80.

215 Gabriella Airaldi and Alex Mallett, "Annales Ianuenses, MXCIX-MCLXIII," in *Christian-Muslim Relations 600-1500*, ed. David Thomas and Barbara Roggema (Leiden, 2009), accessed November 9, 2019 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1877-8054_cmri_COM_25003>.

216 Philippe Buc, "'Principes gentium dominantur eorum': Princely Power between Legitimacy and Illegitimacy in Twelfth-Century Exegesis," in *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Thomas N. Bisson (Philadelphia, 1995), 310-28 at 324-26.

217 Georges Tugene, *L'idée de nation chez Bède le Vénérable* (Paris, 2001), 80-81.

218 Flocel Sabaté, "Amar la nostra nació," in *Sardegna e Catalogna, 'officinae' di identità. Riflessioni storiografiche e prospettive di ricerca*, ed. Alessandra Cioppi (Cagliari, 2013), 15-62.

219 Flocel Sabaté, "Els referents històrics de la societat: identitat i memòria," in *L'Edat Mitjana. Món real i espai imaginat*, ed. Flocel Sabaté (Catarroja and Barcelona, 2012), 22-23.

220 Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida A-700, fol. 1v.

In line with the sentence by Seneca and all the other moralists, all wise and prudent people should not only organize and run current affairs and provide for the future ones, but also memorize and record those of the past. Mainly those that for their rarity or singularity are worthy of record. That is why the same Seneca says that he who does not recall things from the past loses his life. And so doctors and other men of science in whose faculties knowing that the memory of mortals is fragile and expires, have wished, through important study, to arrange the knowledge of the past and put it into writing so that the things of the past do not fall into oblivion but instead, in contrast, their successors should have an assiduous record and memory.²²¹

The record of events worthy of remembrance and lessons for current behaviour have to be extracted from the past. The municipal authorities in Lleida echoed these arguments, while noting the lack of written registers (“it would not have been possible to find in the said books or registers records of behaviour in severe cases”) and the lack of recall among younger legislators: “the said honourable councillors, who are in the prime of youth, have no memory of such deeds because they have never seen them.”²²² Memory had to be living, constantly fed and fattened. So, the same people who took the decision to create a specific memorial book for the city of Lleida also demanded that their future successors continue this work for ever:

We earnestly pray and exhort all the successors in this office, when new cases happen, which are unique and worthy of memory, to include them in this book started and devoted to such things. It must be written by whoever is then secretary, because those who will succeed in government can better and more quickly manage and react to events.²²³

Other municipal governments, such as Barcelona, wanted the collection of the civic memory to be constantly maintained by an external body.²²⁴ In general, much of what is

221 “De les persones sàvies e prudents se pertany segons sentència de Sèneca e de tots los altres morals no solament ordenar e dispondre les coses presents e provehir a les esdevenidores, mas encara memorar e recordar-se de les passades. Maiorment d’aquelles que per llur raritat o singularitat són dignes de recordació. E per ço diu el mateix Sèneca que aquell qui no cogite res del passat pert la vida. E axí los doctors e altres homens de ciencia en quiscunes facultats sabents la memòria dels mortals esser fràgil e caduca, han volgut ab sobiran estudi ordonar moltes coses ja passades e aquelles posar e redigir en scrits per ço que no fossen en oblició posades mas los llurs successors haguessin aquelles en assídua recordació e memòria.” From Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida, A-700, fol. 37r.

222 “No és estat cercat que en los dits llibres o registres no s’ès trobat que per al cas urgent exemplar pogués ésser tret”; “los dits honorables pahers qui són en la flor de llur joventut constituïts no havien memòria de semblants actes com non haguessin may vists.” From Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida A-700, fol. 37r.

223 “Pregants encara e exortants afectuosament tots los qui succehiran a ells en lo dit ofici que si s’esdevindran algunes coses noves, singulars e dignes de memòria vullen aquelles fer continuar en lo present llibre principiat e dedicat per a tales coses per lo qui lladonchs serà scriva per forma e manera que los qui succehiran en lo regiment mills e pus promptament puxen ordenar e expedir les ocorrents e procegir en aquelles.” From Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida A-700, fol. 37v.

224 Besides the “Crònica del racional de la ciutat de Barcelona (1334–1417)” (*Recull de Documents i Estudis*, 1 no. 2 (1921): 113–92), in Barcelona the *Manual de Novells Ardits*, a diary of the municipal council, has been published in 28 vols: *Manual de Novells Ardits, vulgarment apellat Dietari Antich Consell barceloní* (Barcelona, 1892–1975).

gathered in this type of book has been neglected by historians and taken as merely anecdotal. On the contrary, they reflect what really mattered for groups, like municipalities, and what was considered worthy of entering into memory. They tend to reflect jurisdictional tensions with other powers and neighbours, thus showing the relative power of towns and cities in their regional context; ordinations and internal agreements, showing the importance of aligning the interests of the different communities and cultural minorities like the Jews; and, notably, celebrations involving the sovereign ruler usually always appear in great detail. This was done with the intention of appearing to show a confluence of interests when negotiating, at the appropriate time: “the city and our will which will always be joined to everything that will be of service to your Excellence.”²²⁵ There was no shortage of comments on surprising phenomena linked to nature, particularly when they affected harvests, or showed the vulnerability of the natural landscape, allied to the fact that all such phenomena were still viewed as messages to be interpreted.²²⁶ Thus, capturing what they considered surprising is significant. Conflating these aspects, they tried to configure a civic memory, with the purpose of generating internal cohesion in political management; we observe this in many large municipalities at the end of the Middle Ages.

We have seen in all these examples, at all levels of society, the importance of invoking an origin consistent with one’s present interests. Rather than some ongoing narrative, memory serves to supply origins that serve as a basis from which to confront struggles for power in the present. Consequently, conflicting memories can exist in the same place and at the same time. That is why there has been talk of “memories of the classes.”²²⁷ Fifteenth-century Catalonia furnishes a good example, because the king and the baronial and municipal estates were each seeking preeminence, each invoking a different story about the origins of the country: the former mentions an initial concession by the Carolingian sovereign to the Count of Barcelona; the barons extolled the knights of yore, whilst linking them to the leading lineages of the day, which founded the country, expelled the Muslim invader, and prepared the way for Charlemagne; and people invoked an alleged initial pact between these knights and the native population,

225 “La ciutat y nostra voluntat la qual estarà sempre aparellada a tot lo queu serà del servey de vostra Excellència.” From Lleida, Arxiu Municipal de Lleida, A-700. fol. 153r.

226 On June 1, 1458, the diary of the General Deputation of Catalonia noted: “Thursday, first day of June, Corpus Christi day. Whale. This day, stranded on the sea-shore beyond the mouth of the Llobregat, a whale as long as a 22-oar galley. Many people thought that a great prince would soon die and, in fact, at the end of the same month, the king Alfonso of Aragon died” (Dijous, primer dies de juny. Corpus Christi. Balena. Aquest die donà a través en lo ribatge de la mar d’allà lo cap de Llobregat una balena del llarch de una galiota de xxii banchs. Molts presumiren que no-s trigaria a gayre que morria algún gran príncep e, de fet, a la fi d’aquest mes, morí lo rey Alfonso d’Aragó). Cited from *Dietari de la Generalitat de Catalunya*, ed. Josep Maria Sans Travé, 5 vols. (Barcelona, 1994), 1:142.

227 Carlos Laliena, “La apropiación mítica del pasado: poder real, legitimación y memorias de clase en Navarra y Aragón en el siglo XIII,” in *Memoria, mito y realidad en la historia medieval. XIII Semana de Estudios Medievales (Nájera, del 29 de Julio al 2 de Agosto de 2002)*, ed. José Ignacio de la Iglesia (Logroño, 2003), 61–84.

prefiguring the agreement between barons and burghers.²²⁸ All the participants in the struggle for late-medieval power were backed by their own memory.

At Sardinia, during a period of calm in the second half of the fifteenth century, each political level wrote its own historical narrative, generating contemporary histories of the island from different standpoints, royal, baronial, and municipal.²²⁹ So, we can talk about a clash of memories. When Patrizia Sardina analyzed power conflicts in the Sicilian city of Agrigento between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, she asserted that it was a “maze of memory” (*labirinto della memoria*).²³⁰ A confrontation can try to eliminate the opponent’s memory directly: the Castilian royal chronicler Diego Enríquez del Castillo explained that the rebels not only imprisoned him, but also seized his writings, with the clear intention of damaging the royal memory:

Despite guarantees, I was imprisoned in the city of Segovia when it fell, through treason, in the hands of disloyal knights. They stole my things and the registers, with everything I had written in them, given that memory, due to human weakness, tends to forgetfulness than recollection.²³¹

On other occasions, when a struggle for power sought agreement rather than confrontation, the memories also came into play, combining the different historical tales and memory. As David Nogales has pointed out, iconographic series of the late-medieval Castilian–Leonese monarchy did not always arise from a simple wish to exalt the royal dynasty: the royal series in cathedrals arose from an ecclesiastical desire to curry royal favour for religious interests, sometimes to generate finances needed to build a cathedral.²³² In another case, that of late-medieval Portugal, legitimation articulated around the memory of the noble lineages generated an “Old Book of Lineages” (*Livro Velho de Linhagens*) for the leading families before the end of the thirteenth century. At that moment, the monarchy was incapable of constructing a memory of the kingdom around itself for at least another century.²³³ When the Portuguese monarchy did achieve this, it was not at the expense of the old narrative of the nobles, but was adapted “in the image

228 Flocel Sabaté, “États et alliances dans la Catalogne du bas Moyen-Âge,” in *Du contrat d’alliance au contrat politique. Cultures et sociétés politiques dans la péninsule Ibérique à la fin du Moyen Âge*, ed. François Foronda and Ana Isabel Carrasco (Toulouse, 2007), 297–360 at 344.

229 Anna Maria Oliva, “‘Rahó es que la Magestat nostra sapia’. La Memoria del sindaco de Cagliari Andrea Suner al sovrano,” *Bullettino dell’Istituto Italiano per il Medio Evo* 105 (2003): 297–300.

230 Patrizia Sardina, *Il labirinto della memoria. Clan familiari, potere regio e amministrazione cittadina ad Agrigento tra Duecento e Quattrocento* (Caltanissetta, 2011).

231 “Fui preso sobre seguro en la cibdad de Segovia quando fue dada por trayción a los caballeros desleales; donde me robaron no solamente lo mío, mas los Registros con lo procesado que tenia scripto de ella, visto que la memoria, según la flaqueza humana, tiene mayor parte de la olvidanza, que sobra de la recordación.” Cited from Diego Enríquez del Castillo, “Crónica del Rey Don Enrique el Cuarto,” in *Crónicas de los Reyes de Castilla*, ed. Cayetano Rosell, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1953), 3:100.

232 David Nogales, “Las series iconográficas de la realeza castellano-leonesa (siglos XII–XV),” in *Estudio de Genealogía, Heráldica y Nobiliaria*, ed. Miguel Ángel Ladero, En La España Medieval supplement (Madrid, 2006), 81–111 at 91.

233 Luís Krus, *A construção do passado medieval* (Lisbon, 2011), 172–79.

and the model of noble heroes and their respective linguistic references,"²³⁴ as a way of adapting the historical events to the memorial necessity of each individual and group.²³⁵

Thus, memory is not some superficial dressing but is deeply embedded in tensions generated as various groups assert their hold on or claim to power. Indeed, events converted into memory largely reflect present conflicts.²³⁶ Moreover, the memories of one's lineage guide decision-making, so they serve as worthy, successful precedents to sustain the dynasty or lineage going forward, in a clear adaptation of the classical "imitation of the customs of the ancestors" (*imitatio morum parentum*).²³⁷ In 1357, King Peter the Ceremonious explained to his uncle, Prince Peter, how, facing the Castilian invasion, he brought to mind numerous actions by his predecessors, remarking that in the present, decisions should be based on lessons from the past:

Firstly, starting with King Peter, you know he often placed himself in danger, and that is why he was feared and defended himself from his enemies. Then, you know about King Alfonso, who with few armed companies prepared to fight the king of Castile, who had invaded his kingdom, and then the king of Mallorca, who with three others had invaded his kingdom. Then King James, your father, you know that when he was in Murcia, which had been seized from the king of Castile, and he went there and he had to organize in all his kingdom so that everyone went, at the same time as he communicated to the Castilian king that he had surprised him and that he did not count on his people, but that if he waited for him, he would take up the fight. Also you should know that the king our father, when the Moors went to Guardamar, and another time went to Elche, he did not wait at all and went to fight them. You know also the advice you gave us when James of Mallorca came to Conflent: that we did not allow any king to oppress our land because we could properly prevent it.²³⁸

234 "A imagem e o modelo dos heróis nobiliárquicos e seus respectivos referenciais linhagísticos." Cited from Fátima Regina Fernandes, "Estratégias de legitimação linhagística em Portugal nos séculos XIV e XV," *Revista da Faculdade de Letras: História* ser. 3, 7 (2006): 263–84 at 283.

235 Fátima Regina Fernandes, "O poder do relato na Idade Média portuguesa: a batalha do Salado de 1340," *Revista Mosaico* 4, no. 1 (2011): 75–86.

236 William J. Purkis, "The Past as a Precedent: Crusade, Reconquest and Twelfth-century Memories of a Christian Iberia," in *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages*, ed. Lucie Doležalová (Leiden, 2010), 444–61.

237 Stefano Maria Cingolani, "Memòria, llinatge i poder: Jaume I i la consciència històrica," *Butlletí de la Societat Catalana d'Estudis Històrics* 19 (2008): 101–27 at 107.

238 "Primerament, començant al rey En Pere, sabets que per aventurament de sa persona con fon temut e duptat e com se defès de sos enamichs. Après, sabets lo rey N'Anfós com ab poques companyes parà batalla a rey de Castella, qui li era entrat en son regne, e puys a rey de Mallorches, qui era ab tres tants e li era entrat en son regne. Après, lo rey En Jacme, vostre pare, sabets que com era a Múrcia, que havia tolta al rey de Castella, e el rey de Castella hi vench, que tramès per tot son regne que tot hom hi anàs, e féu saber al dit rey de Castella que ell era stat soptat e que no havia ses gents, mas que si l'esperava, que ell se combatria ab ell. Après, sabets que'l rey nostre pare, con los moros vengueren a Guardamar, e altra vegada con vengren a Elx, no sperà res, sinó que se'n anà devers ells per combatre's ab ells. Après, sabets vós quin consell nos dets con En Jacme de Mallorches vench en Conflent: que no soferissem que rey nos calcigàs nostra terra, pus vedar ho poguíssem covinentment." Cited from Romà Gubern, *Epistolari de Pere III* (Barcelona, 1955), 142–43.

The sovereign knew the history of his own dynasty, and took decisions influenced by his recollection of the dynastic past. You could say that history was master, with royal libraries taking care to stock history books, and sovereigns like that of the Aragonese flaunting their reading and knowledge.²³⁹ It was a question of remembering past events to act correctly in the present and not repeat errors. It had been precisely Cicero's intention when he addressed the Roman citizens, reminding them of the evils of past history, while appealing for these to be retained in the memory: "surely you have them in the memory (nam profecto memoria tenetis)."²⁴⁰

The Guided Memory

Recording was accepted by everyone as a necessary means of formulating lessons from the past to guide the future. Anyone in power in medieval society had reasons to retain and invoke the memory, either to brandish it in specific disputes or to display a glory that should help in future struggles. It forms a written tradition on which to base both the invocation of a past with which one is supposedly linked and convert successes in the present into guidelines for the future. A duty not to forget was in fact a stipulation for the future. The Benedictine Pierre Boutier, accompanying the Frenchmen Jean de Béthencourt and Gadifer de La Salle on their expedition to the Canary Islands in 1402–1404, experienced this intensely. While accepting the duty to memorize, he wrote it all down, as in this explanation for why he wrote *Le Canarien*:

Because in the past it was customary to write down the military exploits that princes and conquerors used to perform, as found in old tales, we want to mention here the deeds undertaken by Gadifer de La Salle and Bethencourt, knights who are native of the kingdom and France.²⁴¹

The memory of ancestors never has a simple anecdotal function; it always serves a purpose for the present and has a desired effect for future generations. The Florentine ambassador, Francesco Guicciardini, indicated this in the words with which he began his *Memorie di famiglia*:

Having news of one's elders, especially if they have been brave, good, and honourable citizens, is not only useful for descendants but also a continuous stimulus to behave in a way that these praises are not a reproach. For this reason I prepared to write a memory about the qualities of our progenitors, not only for my own records but also for these who have yet to come, and, doing so not for pomp but its utility, telling the truth of what we are coming to know, including failures and errors, so that he who reads it is encouraged not only to imitate the virtue, which do exist, but also to know to shun the vices.²⁴²

239 Sabaté, "L'invisibilità del re e la visibilità della dinastia," 44–50.

240 Cited from Cic. *Catil.* 3.19 (Cicero, *Cataline Orations 3 / Oratio in Catilinam Tertia ad Populum*, 19).

241 "Porque antaño se acostumbraba poner por escrito las hazañas militares que los príncipes y los conquistadores solían realizar, tal como se encuentra en las antiguas historias, nosotros queremos referir aquí la empresa que han acometido Gadifer de La Salle y Bethencourt, caballeros naturales del reino e Francia." Cited from Eduardo Aznar, Dolores Corbella, Berta Pico and Antonio Tejera, *Le Canarien. Retratos de dos mundos*, 2 vols. (La Laguna, 2007), 1:79.

242 "L'avere notizia de' maggiori suoi e massime quando e' sono stati valenti, buoni ed onorati

We see a society surrounded by historical references that appealed to different memories, but all part of a common social destiny. It was not very different from what occurred in the Roman era, as we can see from Cicero's testimony. He shows Roman citizens surrounded by a portrayal of both divine references—"simulation of the gods" (*simulacra deorum*)—and earlier civic models—"statues of ancient people" (*statuae veterum hominum*)—without forgetting their origins: "he who founded this city, Romulus, who we can contemplate in the Capitol when he was a boy and suckling from teats of the nature of the wolf."²⁴³

The permanent presence of the memory means sharing not only remembered facts but also their interpretation: in other words, a shared political and cultural community. References to deceased members of the royal family always include their *clare memoriae* or *eximie memorie*.²⁴⁴ This is not mere protocol: if the sovereign fell into disgrace after death, his memory would no longer be invoked in the most respectful and highest tones. For example, we find this in Aragon in royal documentation referring to James III after he ceased to be king of Mallorca or, in the fifteenth century, about Peter "IV" when he failed in his attempt at the throne during the Catalan Civil War. The record that would remain became negative, as Peter the Ceremonious wrote about his son-in-law and opponent on Mallorca: "James of Mallorca did many evil and treacherous things against us, so many that I cannot mention them all."²⁴⁵ The memory, always alive, adapted to changing political circumstance. The same happened in Portugal with the narrative around King Sancho II, finally removed from power as a "rex inutilis."²⁴⁶

In short, memory is guided. It can be directed and, so, manipulated, even created. Ramon Llull recognized this: the memory is composed of what is gathered from the surroundings and, so, can accept as truth ideas that have not been duly checked or confirmed:

Memory is truth, in other words, it records real events, and when it cannot recall events of truth it enters into a contrariety, one that affects the three basic branches: the vegeta-

cittadini, non può essere se non utile a' discendenti, perché è uno stimulo continuo di portarsi in modo che le laude loro non abbino a essere suo vituperio; e per questo rispetto io ho disposto fare qualche memoria delle qualità de' progenitori nostri, non tanto per ricordo mio, quanto etiam per coloro che hanno a venire; e faccendolo non per pompa ma per utilità, dirò la verità delle cose che mi sono venute a notizia, etiam de' difetti ed errori loro, acciò che chi leggerà s'accenda non solo a imitare le virtù che hanno avute, ma etiam a sapere fuggire e' vizi." Cited from Francesco Guicciardini, *Diario del viaggio in Spagna. Memorie di famiglia* (Pordenone, 1993), 39.

243 "Ille qui hanc urbem condidit, Romulus, quem inauratum in Capitolio parvum atque lactentem uberibus lupinus inhiantem fuisse." Cited from Cic. *Catil.* 3.19.

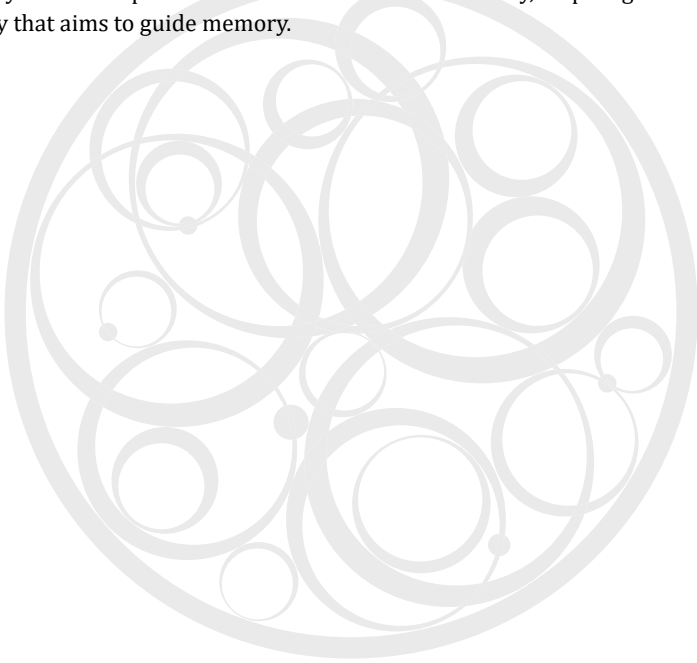
244 Gerard Marí, "La memòria de Blanca d'Anjou i Jaume II en la lluita pel control de l'hospital de la Font del Perelló (1308–1443)," *Acta historica et archaeologica Mediaevalia* 29 (2008): 350–68.

245 "Molts d'altres tractaments malvats e traïdors féu depuis e tractà lo dit En Jacme de Mallorques contra nós, los quals no puc adur a acabament." Cited from Pere el Ceremoniós, "Crònica," 3.207, in *Les quatre grans Cròniques*, ed. Ferran Soldevila (Barcelona, 1983), 1090.

246 Jose Varandas, "Um papa. Um rei. Uma sombre. A deposição de D. Sancho II: a imagem régia entre fragmentos de memória," *Clio. Revista do Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa* 16–17 (2007): 155–80.

tive, the sensitive and the imaginative, all of which affect the memory, and so sometimes it believes it recalls the truth and in reality it is the contrary.²⁴⁷

We have seen in this introduction how memory is essential to humanity and provides the necessary building blocks for both individual and collective identity. A close link also exists between memory and power in various aspects. Memory, the root of discourses of personal affirmation, social cohesion, and political reference, can be exposed to the weaknesses of the physical memory, political interests, and the wider environment. But memory can easily obfuscate and bear greater or lesser self-awareness, through fiction²⁴⁸ or, at least, carry a bias, given that memory, in contrast with history, is not based so much on knowledge of the past as a specific selection or even reworking of this past.²⁴⁹ Memory plays a central position in the construction of identity, inspiring us to explore the ideology that aims to guide memory.



247 “Memoria est de ueritate, idcirco recolit uera, et cum uera recolere non potest, contrariatur et contrarietas, quae est inter brancas elementatiuae, uegetatiuae, sensitiuae et imaginatiuae, cum quibus ipsa memoria participat; eti ideo saepius credit uera recolere, et recolit in contrarium.” Cited from Lullus, *Arbor Scientiae*, 1:203.

248 Néstor A. Braunstein, *La memoria, la inventora* (Mexico City, 2008), 208–09; Peter A. Levine, *Trauma and Memory. Brain and Body in a Search for the Living Past* (Berkeley, 2015), 15–50.

249 Jaume Aurell, “Memoria, historia i identitat: el debat teòric,” *Idees* 28–29 (2006): 65–79 at 77–78.