

Cultural Studies in Europe: critical elements (III)

Research Methodologies in European Cultures and Society,
Session 14

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Course outline

- I. Approaches to culture. Limits and definitions
- II. “Self” and “Other”
- III. Culture and memory
- IV. Popular culture
- V. (...)

III. Cultural Memory.

- The history of memory sites (« lieux de mémoire ») in a European context
- Cultural memory and the history of art: Frances Yates
- Pierre Nora and the « new » use of the concept of memory sites
- Cultural memory: Aleida and Jan Assmann

Bibliographical elements

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DE CERTEAU, Michel, *L'invention du quotidien I. Arts de faire*, Paris, Gallimard, 1990.

HALBWACHS, Maurice, *La Mémoire collective*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1950.

NORA, Pierre et AGERON, Charles-Robert, *Les Lieux de mémoire*, tome 1, Paris, Gallimard, 1997.

NORA, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", *Representations*, special issue Memory and Counter-Memory no. 26, 1989, pp. 7-24. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928520>

YATES, Frances, *The Art of Memory*, London, Ark, 1984 (première édition 1966).

Contemporary illustration of the concept (*Science et vie*)



Simonides epitaph at Thermopylae:

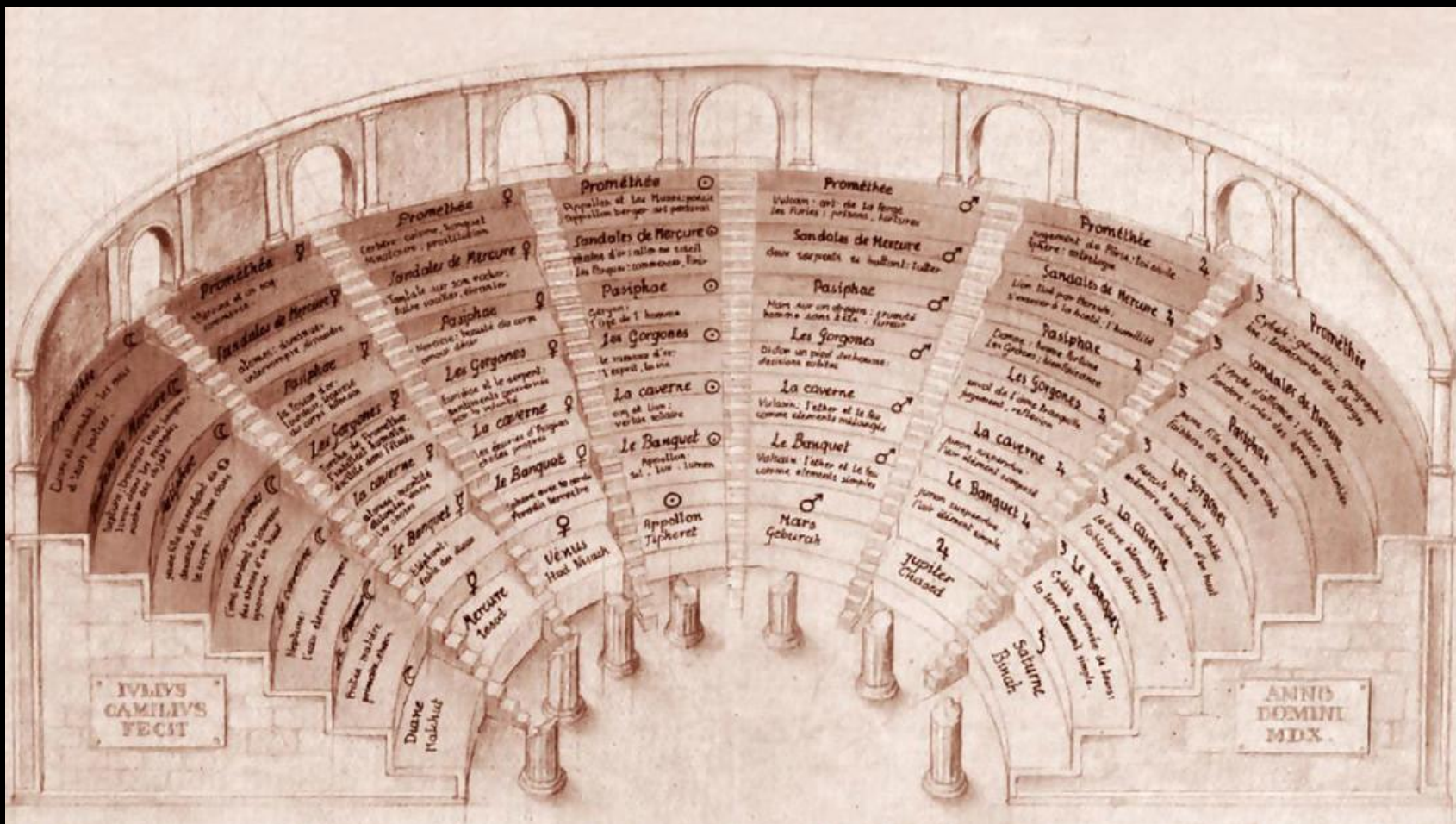
“O stranger, tell the Lacedaemonians that we lie here, obedient to their words.” (new stone on Spartan burial mound: 1955)



Thermopylae ancient coastline



Memory theatre 1510



Memory seals Giordano Bruno



The historian's appropriation: Pierre Nora's approach. Sites of memory (lieux de mémoire)

The study of “sites of memory” began with Pierre Nora. In an article entitled *Mémoire collective* published in the early 1970s, he postulates the need for research into “sites of memory.” Nora never defines the term, but it seems that he used it primarily to refer to institutionalized forms of collective memories of the past. Consequently, for Nora, a “site of memory” refers both to a historical archive and a monument, as well as to a private apartment where combatants would gather to celebrate some anniversary of importance to them. Nora speaks of the “site” in its literal meaning, one where a community such as a nation, an ethnic group or a party deposits its memories or considers the site to be an integral part of its identity.³

As I have already mentioned, Nora never defined precisely the notion of *lieux de mémoire*, nor was it his primary goal. He rather wanted to raise the awareness of the wealth of research strategies which can be used to investigate the diverse forms of the past's continued existence in the present.

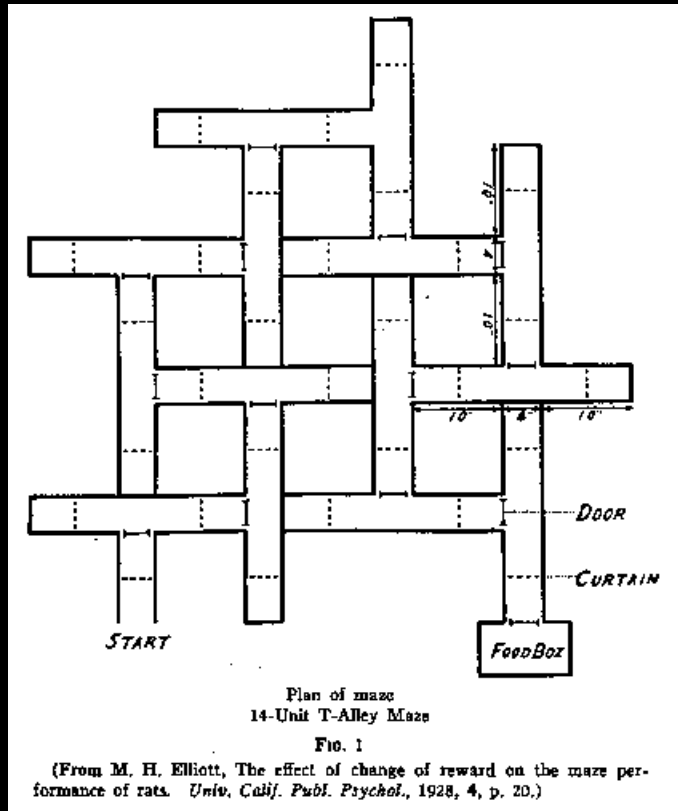
McCray, 1915: „Poppy Day“

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Tolman 1948 Cognitive Maps in Rats and Men



Web exhibition on the cultural « use » of walls in Europe

[https://atelierlimo.pageflow.io/by-my-
side#312781](https://atelierlimo.pageflow.io/by-my-side#312781)

Selma Weber

« The Dining Room »

