

ANAS as a Historical Memory Space: Philosophical Approach

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Abstract. The article explores the philosophical implications of Pierre Nora's concept of "memory space" in the context of historical memory. Within this framework, a philosophical perspective is applied to the scientific and cultural memory space of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS). It is demonstrated that the memory space of ANAS can be examined in two aspects with distinct characteristics. One aspect is related to the historical-chronological context of the philosophical research of existing academies in Azerbaijan. The main factor here is the synthesis of Greek philosophical-scientific rationalism with the local scientific thinking style, which has been present in academies in Azerbaijan since ancient times. The second direction is linked to the establishment of ANAS in Azerbaijan in the mid-20th century and is associated with institutionalising scientific research under new conditions.

The synthesis of these two aspects is analysed in the context of the role of ANAS's historical memory space in ensuring the integrity of society in the modern stage (in the digital cultural environment) and is subjected to philosophical analysis. To achieve the scientific goal, interdisciplinary methodology is employed, emphasising dynamic integration, systematic analysis, and organisational prioritisation as methodological principles. Historical aspect-oriented systematic analysis is applied as a method.

The analysis of ANAS's historical memory space as a scientific-cultural historical memory space in the context of Azerbaijani philosophical thought is a novelty in scientific innovation.

Keywords: historical memory; memory space; digital culture; academies in Azerbaijan; organisation; dynamic integration; institutionalisation of scientific activity.

INTRODUCTION

The philosophical-scientific discourse on historical memory is highly relevant for every society, particularly as the digital culture increasingly becomes integral to the life of the community and the state. In this context, the issue gains strategic importance, leading to a rapid increase in philosophical research on the subject. The philosophical approach to the problem is usually implemented in terms of how historical memory ensures the integrity of society. Philosophers specifically explain how society's integrity can be maintained in the face of new realities introduced by digitisation – social, cultural, informational, and axiological. Despite various analyses, a common standpoint is that, in the modern stage, historical memory should preserve society's unity and in-

tegrity amid the diversity of historical changes. For example, O. Leontyeva contends that "the attitude towards the past in historical memory becomes especially relevant during periods of serious social and cultural changes", and this occurs in the context of challenging traditional standards, even giving rise to values with contrasting meanings [8, p. 6].

Author [7, p. 35] thoughts in the same context are also intriguing. He states that the relevance of historical memory in the "global digital world" can be perceived through two factors. One is the new situation created by historical memory that "fragmentises identity" and is "diachronic to statism." The other factor is related to the increasing uncertainty of the future, coupled with the intensification of manipulation through arguments.

Summing up these perspectives, the author [10] concludes that historical memory's meaning, preservation, functionalisation, and transmission mechanisms have become more pertinent.

While other philosophical inquiries can be referenced, it is sufficient to acknowledge that, at this stage, the arguments presented emphasise the increasing relevance of historical memory in ensuring the integrity of society. Simultaneously, to concretise the problem further, we focus on the philosophical significance of the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences' scientific and cultural memory space within the context of the "memory space" concept.

The scientific goal of the article demands an interdisciplinary approach, so we adopt a multidisciplinary methodology. The primary methodological principles are dynamic integration, systematic analysis, and prioritisation. Historical aspect-oriented systematic analysis is applied as a method.

METHODS

This research adopts an interdisciplinary approach to explore the philosophical implications of Pierre Nora's concept of "memory space" within the historical memory framework. The study focuses on the scientific and cultural memory space of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS). By analysing the historical-chronological context and the institutionalisation of ANAS, the research aims to uncover the synthesis of Greek philosophical-scientific rationalism with local scientific thinking and the role of ANAS's historical memory space in modern society.

Dynamic Integration, Systematic Analysis, and Organisational Prioritisation are this research's primary methodological principles. Dynamic integration involves integrating disciplines such as philosophy, history, cultural studies, and organisational theory to understand ANAS's memory space comprehensively. Systematic analysis employs a structured approach to examine historical data and philosophical concepts, including the chronological development of scientific academies in Azerbaijan and the institutionalisation of ANAS. Organisational prioritisation emphasises the organisational aspects of ANAS, focusing on its role and structure in the mid-20th century and its impact on Azerbaijan's scientific and cultural landscape.

The methods employed in this research include Historical Aspect-Oriented Systematic Analysis, which involves a detailed examination of historical documents, academic records, and other archival materials related to the development of scientific academies in Azerbaijan and the establishment of ANAS, focusing on the synthesis of Greek philosophical-scientific rationalism with local scientific thinking and its subsequent evolution in the context of ANAS. Philosophical analysis is also used, where philosophical texts and concepts, particularly those related to Pierre Nora's "memory space," are analysed to understand their application to ANAS's scientific and cultural memory, investigating how ANAS's memory space contributes to societal integrity in the modern digital cultural environment. Additionally, Interdisciplinary Synthesis is employed to integrate findings from various disciplines, constructing a comprehensive narrative about ANAS's role in preserving and promoting scientific and cultural memory in Azerbaijan, thereby bridging the gap between historical developments and contemporary philosophical discourse.

The materials used in this research include historical documents such as archival materials from the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS), including founding documents, research publications, and historical records of scientific activities; academic records consisting of publications, reports, and other scholarly outputs from ANAS that reflect the academy's scientific and cultural contributions over time; and philosophical texts by Pierre Nora and other relevant philosophers that discuss the concept of "memory space" and its implications for historical memory and societal integrity.

The methods and materials outlined above provide a robust framework for exploring the philosophical implications of ANAS's memory space within the broader context of historical memory. By integrating historical analysis with philosophical inquiry, the research aims to uncover ANAS's unique contributions to Azerbaijani society and its role in maintaining the integrity of collective memory in the modern era.

Literature review

Exploring the philosophical and cultural significance of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS) and its memory space is grounded

in an extensive body of literature that spans historical, philosophical, and cultural studies.

The concept of "memory space," as introduced by Pierre Nora, forms a critical philosophical framework for this study. Nora's work and his collaborators explore the multifaceted nature of memory about historical and cultural identity. This concept is further examined by P.H. Hutton [5], who discusses history as an art of memory, providing insights into how historical memory shapes and is shaped by cultural narratives. Yeyts' seminal work on the art of memory also contributes to understanding memory techniques and their cultural implications [6].

The impact of digital culture on historical memory is a contemporary concern addressed by several scholars. Research [7] on historical memory in the global digital world highlights the semiotic and rhetorical aspects of how digital environments influence collective memory. Similarly, study [8] on historical memory and images of the past in Russian culture provides a nuanced view of how cultural and historical memory is preserved and transformed in modern contexts. The author [9] also offers a foundational perspective on the shift from print to digital cultures and its implications for human cognition and memory.

The author [10] exploration of memory in the digital environment underscores the cognitive aspects of historical research, emphasising the need for new methodologies to address the challenges posed by digitalisation. This work aligns with the interdisciplinary approach of the current study, which seeks to integrate historical, philosophical, and cultural analyses to provide a holistic understanding of ANAS's role in preserving and promoting scientific and cultural memory.

The literature reviewed provides a robust foundation for understanding the dual aspects of ANAS's memory space: the historical-chronological development of scientific academies in Azerbaijan and the institutionalisation of ANAS in the mid-20th century. By synthesising insights from historical documents, philosophical texts, and contemporary digital studies, this research aims to offer a comprehensive narrative on the significance of ANAS in the broader context of Azerbaijani scientific and cultural memory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"Memory Space" Concept: Content and Organisation. According to [4], the "memory space" is where memory crystallises and "takes refuge." Here, "space" is a metaphor representing any cultural monument, book, personality, religious artefact, or, in general, material, social, and spiritual-cultural values. In Nora's understanding, "memory space" primarily involves the collective memory occupying a place in consciousness. Thus, philosophically, the "memory space" becomes a significant aspect of both individual and societal consciousness in the sense of ensuring its integrity. In this context, the "memory space," as a "place," transcends its existence as a material and spiritual fact by transforming into an event of consciousness. However, the cognitive conditions of the existence of the "memory space" as an event of consciousness must be defined.

As Devid Chalmers states, "memory space" is a qualitative event, meaning it is an experiential element of consciousness. It is a conceptual image that materialises in the cognitive-social-cultural boundaries of the subject's cognitive activity and practical experience in the time and space continuum. Nora characterises it figuratively as "crystallisation" and "existing space" in the context of historicity.

It is crucial to note that Nora's use of "crystallisation" and "existing space" is a theoretical metaphor with philosophical implications. French historians relate it to the distinct structural-functional qualities European societies acquired in the New Era, particularly in contrast to previous stages. Nora extends this perspective to the concept of "memory," asserting that in the modern era, the formula "memory = society" present in oral culture disintegrates against the communicative characteristics of written civilisation. Nora vividly terms this as the "squeezing of memory" [4].

Here, a need arises for a philosophical explanation. "The squeezing of memory" is not merely a figurative expression; it introduces a new term with philosophical meaning and function. Nora briefly outlines its nature, stating that when the connection with the past is severed, a "turning point" occurs when the memory that has clothed itself with history faces a crisis [4]. This implies that the philosophical relevance of Nora's approach lies in the fact that the meaning of memory plays a pivotal role at the "turning point" in history. According to the French schol-

ar, "enough memory is preserved at this juncture for the problem of its (the problem of memory - Ed.) manifestation to be posed" [4].

Three essential philosophical conclusions can be drawn from this. First, "commitment (regarding the past in terms of thought or ideological connection) finds refuge in memory places." Secondly, "numerous memory places (lieux de mémoire) emerge." Second, as a result, "the memory of social groups no longer exists" [4].

The general philosophical significance of these three propositions is intriguing: in a particular stage of societal development, the cultural, social, scientific, and historical energy of the society accumulates in various "local spiritual and material structures"! The memory issue, in turn, exists in the mutual relations of individual and collective scales about these "local energy structures." In any case, these accumulated structural-functional units function as cultural factors. Even modern historians conceptualise history as the "intersection area of memories." In this context, the philosophical content is that history is the space of the consolidation of the "key intersections of memories" (main intersection places) [5].

In this light, researchers associate historical memory directly with cultural types. Specifically, they propose that memory, shaped according to the communicative characteristics of oral, written, and contemporary electronic cultures, can be classified into cultural, political, ethical, spiritual, economic, scientific, etc., types. In this qualitative sense, it is possible to differentiate the "memory places of scientific memory" and assert that they serve a specific function.

Naturally, we envision historical memory (cultural, collective, social-cultural memory) in the sense of society's historical evolution. In that case, we must acknowledge that each example of historical memory fulfils its function at specific stages. From this perspective, the analysis of academies as scientific-cultural memory places playing a unique role in the socio-cultural environment of Azerbaijan is exciting and relevant.

ANAS: A Unique Example of Azerbaijan's Scientific and Cultural Memory. In the article, the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS) is examined as a specimen of scientific and cultural memory in two aspects: firstly, the historical-chronological aspect of scientific academies in Azerbaijan from ancient times, closely related to the decline of Byzantine Greek academies, and

secondly, the organisational aspect of ANAS as a social institution since the mid-20th century.

The first aspect is intricately linked to the decline of Byzantine Greek academies. Scholars from these closed academies flocked to regions within Azerbaijan's political-geographical and cultural-scientific sphere. As a result, numerous academies emerged in present-day Northern and Southern Azerbaijan territories. These academies conducted research by synthesising Greek philosophical-scientific rationalism with local thinking styles. With the spread of Islam to Azerbaijan, these academies conducted significant research at the intersection of Greek rational logic and religious concepts. European travellers visiting Azerbaijan during this period documented these developments in their works [2].

Historical facts indicate that Azerbaijan's academy experience as a scientific-cultural phenomenon has been shaped over the centuries. The primary focus of this experience was on exploring religious and secular sciences. Naturally, this characteristic has transformed academic research in Azerbaijan into a tradition. It has historicised the academy as an inseparable fragment of historical memory embedded in consciousness. However, its institutionalisation as a social entity began to take a modern form in the mid-20th century. The main difference of the new stage lies in conducting scientific research exclusively in a secular context. This doesn't imply the cessation of religious studies; the central thesis is that academic research in Azerbaijan, under the status of ANAS, was conducted based on rationality and practical application methods formulated within secular sciences. This feature represents the primary position of ANAS in the modern scientific-cultural memory.

Another characteristic of ANAS as a memory place is its organisation of scientific activity solely within the framework of rationality and research methods. This aspect has allowed ANAS's research to remain relevant globally and to be open to leading scientific directions. Thus, as a symbol, ANAS has opened Azerbaijan's scientific world to the developed segment and integrated itself into the advanced part of the world [3].

The two aspects emphasised reflect the dynamism of content and organisation in the scientific-cultural memory of Azerbaijan after gaining independence. President, I gave the full expression of this innovation. Aliyev during the event dedicated to the 70th anniversary of ANAS. The

head of state stated: "Scientists have many responsibilities. The main desire is for Azerbaijan to develop scientifically and contribute to our general development as a gift," including "...multiculturalism, preservation of the purity of the Azerbaijani language, our rich history. Our scientists should actively deliver more comprehensive information to the world" [1]. Undoubtedly, the points emphasised by the President are crucial in the modern era, in the digital environment, for Azerbaijan's historical memory to play an integral role in uniting society!

CONCLUSIONS

The philosophical exploration of historical memory sites in Azerbaijan is highly relevant. Additionally, the research on scientific memory sites holds particular significance. Two essential directions become evident in light of the ideas expressed in the article.

The first direction involves recognising the philosophical aspects of the historical role played by the places where scientific research is conducted for society and the state. This process is highly relevant for understanding the position scientific research has historically held in the country and the specificities of its impact on consciousness.

The second direction emphasises the institutionalisation of scientific activity in Azerbaijan since the mid-20th century. As a result of the specific structural and functional form that scientific research has taken, the process of institutionalising scientific activity has started to acquire concrete content. Exploring this change in the philosophical context of scientific memory sites would be beneficial in the historical context.

One side of the issue concerns determining the role of scientific research in society's collective consciousness. The other side concerns strategic positions in establishing a solid culture, particularly in the context of the formation of an independent state.

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