



Memory and Identity: A Review of Music Studies from the Perspective of Cultural Memory *(Memori dan Identiti: Sorotan Kajian Muzik dari Perspektif Memori Budaya)*

Wu Haoran (*Corresponding Author) & Nur Atiqah Tang Binti Abdullah
Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), The National University of Malaysia (UKM)
P126267@siswa.ukm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Music evokes individual experiences and carries collective cultural memory. Based on a systematic literature review and rigorous selection, this paper reviews research on music as a medium for constructing memory and identity from the perspective of Jan Assmann's cultural memory theory. The article is divided into four sections: 1) Theoretical and empirical discussions on music and memory; 2) Memory mechanisms within and through music; 3) How cultural memory participates in the construction of collective identity; 4) Empirical research and case studies on music entering cultural memory and its social functions. Rather than merely 'passively reflecting' identity, music actively 'constructs' belonging and group boundaries through memory techniques, education, and performance practices. When works enter the discourse and communication system through canonization, education and interpretation, they become part of cultural memory. The article also identifies two major shortcomings in the existing research: a tendency to prioritise Western discourse and a lack of an operational, interdisciplinary and replicable research framework. To address these issues, the article proposes a research framework connecting the three dimensions of 'musical material–memory practices–identity politics' to promote cross-cultural comparison and methodological operationalization.

Keywords: Music, Memory, Identity, Culture, Cultural Memory Theory.

ABSTRAK

Muzik membangkitkan pengalaman individu dan membawa ingatan budaya kolektif. Berdasarkan tinjauan literatur yang sistematik dan pemilihan yang ketat, kertas kerja ini mengkaji penyelidikan tentang muzik sebagai medium untuk membina ingatan dan identiti dari perspektif teori ingatan budaya Jan Assmann. Artikel ini dibahagikan kepada empat bahagian: 1) Perbincangan teori dan empirikal mengenai muzik dan ingatan; 2) Mekanisme ingatan dalam dan melalui muzik; 3) Bagaimana ingatan budaya mengambil bahagian dalam pembinaan identiti kolektif; 4) Kajian empirikal dan kajian kes mengenai muzik yang memasuki ingatan budaya dan fungsi sosialnya. Daripada sekadar 'mencerminkan secara pasif' identiti, muzik secara aktif 'membina' sempadan kepunyaan dan kumpulan melalui teknik ingatan, pendidikan dan amalan persembahan. Apabila karya memasuki sistem wacana dan



komunikasi melalui kanonisasi, pendidikan dan tafsiran, ia menjadi sebahagian daripada ingatan budaya. Artikel itu juga mengenal pasti dua kelemahan utama dalam penyelidikan sedia ada: kecenderungan untuk mengutamakan wacana Barat dan kekurangan rangka kerja penyelidikan yang beroperasi, antara disiplin dan boleh ditiru. Untuk menangani isu ini, artikel itu mencadangkan rangka kerja penyelidikan yang menghubungkan tiga dimensi 'bahan muzik-amalan ingatan-politik identiti' untuk menggalakkan perbandingan silang budaya dan operasi metodologi.

Kata kunci: Muzik, Memori, Identiti, Budaya, Teori Ingatan Budaya.

INTRODUCTION

Past events often lead us to deep reflection. When we confront the past, we try to remember, but we cannot escape the reality of forgetting. When memory becomes plural and forms collective memory, it creates a space for remembrance, prompting us to keep recalling. Memory is central to identity recognition, and identity is formed and transformed within specific social or collective frameworks. While memory often enables us to recall many past events, the temporal scope of these memories is typically limited to the period from the age of conscious awareness onwards. Memory is not merely an individual psychological activity, but a socialised process. Through specific symbolic practices, social groups can collectively remember and pass on their history and culture (Connerton, 2002).

Collective memory is the fundamental source of ethnic identity for group members who have not experienced the 'past' first-hand. Memory relies on social frameworks, including family, religion and occupational groups. These frameworks provide members of different social groups with specific memory patterns and content, assisting individuals in locating and recalling past experiences (Halbwachs, 2002). Jan Assmann (2011: 36-37) built upon the framework of collective memory to introduce the concept of cultural memory. Cultural memory differs from communicative memory. While communicative memory is preserved through oral communication and social forms, cultural memory transcends personal experience and is transmitted through media such as language, text, art and rituals. This makes it more enduring and stable, and gives it a stronger influence on collective identity and memory. Cultural memory is an active construction process whereby memories are selected to become shared collective memories.

As a form of cultural expression, music often serves as a medium for conveying collective memories. As a cultural research paradigm in musicology, cultural memory emphasises the social construction of memory and analyzes its social mechanisms (Nieper & Schmitz, 2016).



As a unique symbolic system, music requires the support of musicological knowledge to analyse these memories. For music to be permanently remembered, it must be transformed into a coding system. Music that is retained in memory must be conceptualised as memorable at an early stage. However, in addition to musical symbols, this memorable image also takes the form of concerts and recordings within the musical performance system (Unsel, 2016).

Music and memory are closely connected; the spaces created and reflected by music are also spaces of collective memory. Music helps to create memory images, and is also an important medium for emotional expression and memory stimulation (Wietschorke, 2020). As an important medium of collective memory, music reinforces cultural identity and group belonging through expression in social interaction and historical context. This paper conducts a literature review and summary of music-related memory and identity formation under Assmann's cultural memory theory framework, with the aim of summarising past scholars' explorations in music studies under memory theory.

METHODOLOGY

This study's methodology is based on a systematic review of the literature, supplemented by additional literature searches and a strict screening process to establish the final evidence base for the review. The specific steps are as follows: First, keyword searches were conducted in international and regional academic databases (Scopus, Web of Science, RILM, JSTOR, ProQuest and Google Scholar), as well as Chinese databases (CNKI), with the search timeframe primarily covering the period from 1989 to 2024, as this field has produced a significant number of theoretical and empirical findings over the past three decades. Additionally, several foundational works (such as those by Halbwachs and Assmann) were included without time restrictions to ensure theoretical tracing was comprehensive. Search keywords included (but were not limited to): 'music and memory / musical memory / cultural memory', 'music and identity/ music and identity', 'sites of memory', 'music notation and memory', and 'music and collective memory'.

The literature screening process consists of two stages. The first stage involves an initial screening of titles and abstracts to exclude literature that is clearly irrelevant or repetitive. The second stage involves a full-text assessment of the literature selected in the first stage, and a final decision is made based on pre-established inclusion or exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include peer-reviewed journal articles, academic monographs or edited volumes and chapters of an authoritative nature; direct relevance to music-memory-identity or cultural memory theory; availability of the full text with accessible methods or theoretical arguments; and texts



written in English or Chinese (with translations into other high-impact languages included when necessary). Exclusion criteria include non-academic media (e.g., blogs and non-peer-reviewed articles), single cases unrelated to the theme (unless they directly discuss memory and cultural dimensions), and duplicate publications. Archival materials (e.g., government commemorative project descriptions or significant archival catalogues) are included under a supplementary inclusion strategy only if they provide unique historical or contextual evidence.

Data extraction is carried out according to pre-designed criteria, including author, year, research objectives, theoretical perspective, research methods, research subjects and regions, key findings and connections to the cultural memory framework. Selected studies undergo quality assessment, with the theoretical literature being evaluated for conceptual clarity, argument coherence and supporting evidence. This comprehensive approach primarily employs a thematic review, focusing on core topics such as 'the mechanisms of music as a medium of memory', 'memory-identity construction pathways', and 'the role of musical memory in identity construction', to facilitate interdisciplinary integration.

MUSIC AND MEMORY

Music is not just a form of artistic expression; it is also a social and cultural phenomenon with multiple semantic layers of meaning. Its existence often depends on social, historical and cultural contexts (Jost & Sebald, 2020). At the same time, the process of musical memory plays a central role. Since integrating sound events into musical forms is a necessary part of experiencing music, memory functions are essential for this process. When listening to music, if stored information in memory shares similarities or semantic connections with the music being heard, it is activated (Halbwachs, 2020). Music has always been closely linked to human memory. It consistently serves as a form of social culture with collective content, where each sound narrates the stories of individuals within the collective.

Music is not only an art form, but also a storehouse of memory and history (Adorno, 2018). In the context of globalization and immigration, music plays a particularly important role in cultural preservation by enabling diaspora communities to maintain connections with their ancestral lands and traditions (Shelemay, 2006). The communication of music involves processes such as composition, performance and reception. As cultural memory, music is constantly reshaped and given new meaning. Pfleiderer (2011) notes that music originally belonged to the category of 'communicative memory', but gradually entered the domain of 'cultural memory' through archives, commemorative events, and documentary research. The melodies, lyrics and rhythms of music can evoke personal and collective memories, making music an integral part of cultural memory.



Unlike visual memory, sound cannot be directly 'frozen' on a physical medium, but must be preserved through storage and transmission technologies (Dreckmann, 2020). As a form of cultural memory, music is closely linked to the issues of recording and storing memory. The most common technology used to record music is a symbolic system that uses musical notation as its recording medium. Music notation is considered a type of writing, similar to written language. It transforms intangible things into tangible ones, temporary things into permanent ones, and gives local things the ability to spread widely (Assmann, 2019). Halbwachs (2020) emphasises the connection between sheet music and musical memory. Not only is sheet music a tool for recording musical works, it is also an 'external memory' shared by the musical community. This highlights the crucial supportive role of notation as a medium for musical memory.

Musicians focus on sound because it is the most effective way to convey musical cultural memory. As this medium constructs the most authentic sound events in people's memories over time, it completes the auditory perception from the past to the present. From the phonograph and radio to film and the widespread adoption of digital media, methods of communicating music have undergone significant transformation. While music has long been regarded as 'intangible cultural heritage', through written sheet music and recordings, it has partially transformed into 'tangible cultural heritage' (Buzarovski, 2024). Mediation increases the accessibility of music and influences its social memory, enabling specific musical works to transcend temporal constraints and become part of the collective memory (Jost & Sebald, 2020).

MUSIC AS A MEDIUM FOR MEMORY

With their unique symbolic systems and structural characteristics, musical works have developed memory mechanisms that are distinct from those of traditional literary works. Firstly, musical works refer to their past. This process can be interpreted as a metaphor for memory, as it creates possibilities for meaning through references and internal quotation, as well as the potential to form memories of the past (Assmann, 2020a). The structure of music reveals the repetition of the exposition in the recapitulation, as well as the repetition of motifs and phrases within movements.

FIGURE 1 uses Haydn's *keyboard sonata (Hob. XVI)* to illustrate thematic repetition between the exposition and recapitulation.



First Movement: Exposition

Allegro

Fourth Movement: Recapitulation

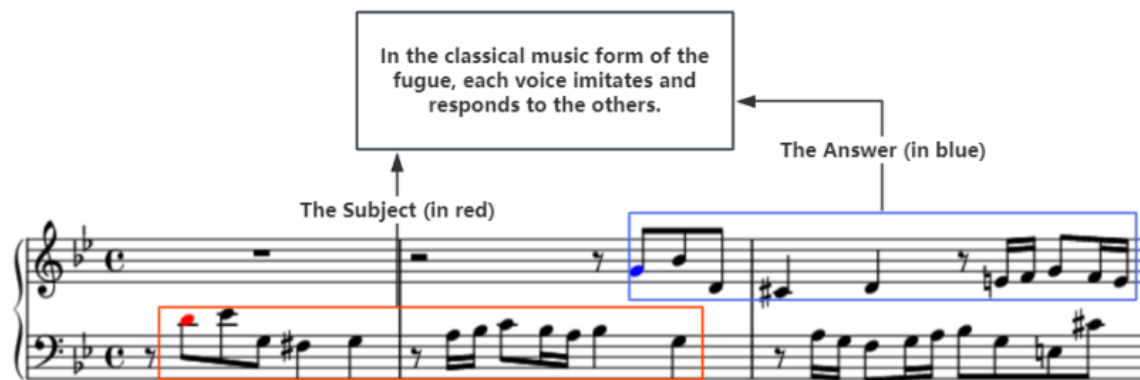
Haydn's Keyboard Sonata, Hob. XVI

**Melodic theme
repetition: a
memory
mechanism within
sonata-form
works**

FIGURE 1. The exposition and recapitulation of Haydn's sonata

A polyphonic structure involves repeatedly exposing the melodic theme from beginning to end, with the voices imitating and responding to one another. Each answer serves as a reminder of the main musical idea from the beginning of the piece, but how this is done is not limited to responses alone; there are also countersubjects and inversions. It is not difficult to see how wonderfully unique this metaphor of recollection is in music, and how it can be used to great effect.

FIGURE 2 shows the interplay between the theme and answer in a polyphonic piece, using the fugue from Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1, No. 16 (BWV 861)*.



*J.S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1-
Fugue No. 16 in G minor, BWV 861*

FIGURE 2. The theme and answer of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*

Similarly, Preuß (2016) argues that music can represent the 'past' through recollective themes and serve as a symbol of the passage of time through progressively developing melodies. Music's structure often relies on memory for interpretation, and polyphonic music requires listeners to remember the interplay of multiple melodic lines. Classical sonata form requires listeners to remember the theme and recognize when it returns in the recapitulation. Musical works often quote or adapt past music, thereby establishing connections with it and demonstrating clear intertextuality (Wappler, 2016). For instance, composers such as Chopin and Debussy have quoted Bach or Mozart in their compositions, thereby creating 'musical memories'. Liszt preferred to create musical memories by adapting pieces for the piano, which was a direct way of evoking memories in listeners. He often adapted vocal pieces by other composers for the piano. One example is his piano piece "*Rigoletto Paraphrase de Concert*", which is a transcription of the opera "*Rigoletto*" by the Italian composer Verdi. This piece transforms piano music into vivid drama, turning the opera's visual narrative of exposing corruption into pure auditory momentum that activates the audience's memories.

FIGURE 3 shows the references to opera music from the past in Liszt's *Rigoletto Paraphrase de Concert*.



The melody of Duca's singing part

The main melody in the 'Rigoletto Paraphrase de Concert' is adapted from the 'Beautiful Daughter of Love' aria, which the Duca sings in the quartet during Act III of the opera 'Rigoletto'

Piano melody motif

Giuseppe Verdi: Opera "Rigoletto"

Franz Liszt: Piano Solo "Rigoletto Paraphrase de concert"

FIGURE 3: Liszt's "Rigoletto Paraphrase de Concert" refers to the past opera

A musical work only truly enters collective cultural memory when listeners hear it and form their memories of it. For a musical work to become part of the cultural memory of the past, it must become a 'classicized' work. Assmann (2020b) identifies four functions that musical works typically fulfill in order to become 'classics' in society: an educational function (serving as models for 'classical masters' and forming the basis of music education); an aesthetic function (establishing a tradition of music criticism through analysis and commentary); a historical function (influencing musical historiography and defining composers' historical status); and intertextuality (classical music influencing subsequent works and forming musical traditions). Classic musical works are destined to be frequently performed. Even when set down in sheet music or recordings, they continue to evolve across cultures and through different performers. Different generations of audiences interpret and receive the same work in distinct ways, continually evolving the music within collective cultural memory (Buzarovski, 2024).



CULTURAL MEMORY AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

Identity is shaped through collective memory. The social framework of memory determines how a group understands itself and constructs its identity. When individual or group memory is challenged, this can result in identity confusion or shifts in identity (Halbwachs, 2002). Winter (2010) argues that memory is not static, but rather maintained through 'performance' and altered each time it is recalled. Therefore, memory is not merely a reflection of the past, but a dynamic social practice that has a significant influence on group identity.

Collective identity is constructed through shared memory: each time society chooses to recall certain memories, the sense of collective identity is deepened. However, memory is not an objective historical record, but rather a process shaped by social selection and construction. Groups often emphasize certain memories while intentionally or unintentionally forgetting others in order to maintain their identity (Connerton, 2002). National memory, as a form of collective memory, has been the subject of extensive discussion. Anderson (2006) analysed how nations shape national identity through memory and history. Nationalism requires the forgetting of certain historical events to maintain national unity, and nations establish a unified national identity through education, commemorative days, monuments and language. National memory is often dominated by 'master narratives' (e.g., heroic, victim, and civilizational progress narratives) and is transmitted through historical education and public rituals. Understanding these mechanisms helps to reveal how different nations shape public perceptions of history and influence the formation of national identity (Carretero & van Alphen, 2018).

A collective identity is always associated with an image constructed by society. Members of a collective identify with this image. Based on his research into cultural memory, Assmann (2015) argues that collective identity is an awareness of social belonging. This is formed through a shared knowledge system, shared memory and a shared symbolic system among members. This symbolic system can be transformed into symbols that convey a sense of commonality, forming a cultural identity. Cultural memory possesses normativity and fixity. Through the process of canonization, cultural memory often establishes legitimate memory, enabling collective members to establish their identity (Assmann, 2011). These discussions mean that cultural identity is not naturally formed, but shaped by the selection of memory, political imagination and social construction.

The creation of memorial sites is closely linked to identity, particularly after the French Revolution, when the state used commemorative symbols to preserve collective memory (Boer, 2008). In the United States, landmarks such as the Washington Monument and the Declaration of Independence reinforce the nation's founding narrative and national identity (Hebel, 2008).



In the era of globalization and digitalization, the concept of memory sites is evolving to include new media and virtual commemorative methods. States shape collective memory and national identity by creating, maintaining and updating these sites. Harth (2008) explored how cultural memory can become central to national identity through the 'sanctification' of historical events (e.g., the French Revolution), which can be used to unify national identity.

Studies on cultural memory in the media also include case studies focused on identity. For example, Thomas (2021) analyzes a scene from the 1965 classic film *The Sound of Music*, in which Maria forgets the steps to the Ländler dance. Through this analysis, Thomas explores how dance, as a form of cultural memory, becomes part of national identity. Through film, music and dance, Austria constructed a national identity to distance itself from its historical responsibility for Nazism after the war. Similarly, Patrick (2021) analyzed how the Philippine national dance was officially defined at different historical stages and used to shape national identity. In summary, cultural memory is the result of continuous construction by the media. It originates from collectively shared symbolic systems and influences members' identities through the repeated activation of memory.

MUSIC AS CULTURAL MEMORY CONSTRUCTS CULTURAL MEMORY

Music is a social behaviour and music culture is closely related to the social context. Not only does music occur within society, but society can also be viewed as occurring within music (Turino, 1989). Stoke (2020) argues that music plays a central role in shaping a sense of place. It is not only part of social life, but also an important tool for social interaction, identity formation and the construction of cultural boundaries. It is not merely a reflection of society, but a mechanism for producing identity. It serves as a medium for cultural exchange and identity formation, fostering connections between different social groups. For instance, popular music can define subcultural groups, while ethnic music can preserve cultural identity at a national or ethnic level (Jost & Sebald, 2020). Music is a means of both expressing and experiencing identity. Frith (1996) argues that music provides an experience of both 'self-identity' and 'other-identity'. Music is a medium for expressing emotions and also defines identity through performance and participation. Rice (2017) highlights three roles that music plays in identity construction: identity symbolism (where music symbolizes a particular ethnic group or community); identity practice (where people express their identity through music, such as through ethnic dance or playing styles); and identity politics (where nations, governments or social organizations use music to shape identity).



Local music plays a vital role in shaping urban and community identity. Through the interaction of memory, emotion and space, it transcends its role as mere entertainment to become a part of social and cultural structures (Bennett & Rogers, 2016). Local music shapes cultural identity continuously through social interactions such as composing and listening. Various case studies have examined how local music shapes cultural identity.

An analysis of Afghan folk music reveals that, during a period of cultural fragmentation in Afghanistan, musicians used the radio to spread folk music in an attempt to establish a multi-ethnic political community (Baily, 2022). Collecting and creating folk music fosters a shared collective memory and cultural identity. Similarly, Polish composer Frédéric Chopin played a significant role in shaping Polish identity. His universal values and patriotic sentiments, especially his folk-inspired creativity, were well-suited to constructing Polish identity (Mach, 2022: 62). His works are based on the cognitive experiences of the people of Warsaw and adapt Polish dance music, folk songs and other musical materials into piano pieces. In doing so, he also conveyed the essence of Polish culture. The Polish government also regarded Chopin as a national prophet, and he played a significant role in the construction of Polish national identity. In Brazil, the poet Olavo de Andrade encouraged Brazilian composers to contribute to the development of a serious national musical tradition. He incorporated the three main ethnic groups in Brazil's "nation-state"—the Portuguese, African-Brazilians, and indigenous peoples of the Americas—into original Brazilian musical works. Brazilian folk music was transformed into a unifying force, promoting national cohesion (Reily, 2022). Magowan (2022) discusses how the Australian pop music industry has redefined the notion of regional indigenous identity. By transforming traditional music into modern pop, Australian Indigenous peoples have expressed their territorial claims and conveyed their identity. In these countries and regions, indigenous peoples have internalized the individuality of ethnic music and personal musical experiences, expressing them through new music genres that combine social functions while constructing an objective identity.

Much like possessing real culture and history, possessing music is a true collective symbol. Stokes (2022) argues that music has great social significance. While not exclusively, music largely enables people to identify with different regions and boundaries, and to explore various aspects of their identity. It can represent various aspects of identity, such as nationality, location, race, class, religion and gender. The text, melody, vocal style, instruments used and bodily movements all contribute to this expression (Shelemay, 2006). Musical activities are usually collective. This ensures the presence of individuals in the processes of musical composing, performing, and listening. Through this cultural exchange, a wonderful response emerges as music integrates individual differences into a unified identity.



Musical communication also has an important ritualistic dimension. Ritual experiences connect us, build relationships and create common ground. When we follow the rhythm of music, we align with one another, creating resonance (Harwood, 2017). In any country, the most revered music is undoubtedly the national anthem. Through the most direct auditory experience, the national anthem evokes our national pride, and even if we do not remember the lyrics, the melody reminds us of our shared values and sense of identity. They represent our current identity, but also remind us of our shared history and perhaps our expectations for the nation (Gilboa & Bodner, 2009). People within a group also tend to believe that others in the group share their musical tastes, and they are more likely to choose musical styles that represent the group as a whole (Tarrant et al., 2001). Thus, music can evoke emotions and coordinated behaviour within a group, thereby shaping and defining cultural identity. At the same time, music can also add emotional value to identity.

DISCUSSION

Previous studies have shown that the existing literature exhibits two distinct characteristics in terms of its theoretical construction and case interpretation. On the one hand, memory theory (as represented by Assmann and Halbwachs) and musicological concepts and tools have been systematically introduced in order to explain how music functions as a 'memory technique' and 'memory space' in the construction of collective identity. Music enters the field of cultural memory through memory-oriented structures, such as repetition, intertextuality and the canonization of music pieces. Through educational, performative and communicative processes, music embeds individual memories in a context that can be passed on culturally, thereby facilitating the transformation from 'personal memory' to 'collective memory'. This argument is frequently made in discussions of form, intertextuality, and the 'canonization' function.

RESEARCH GAP

However, a close reading of the literature reveals two types of structural deficiency in the review. The first is a clear deficiency in the de-Westernization of the context. Although theoretical discourse still centres on European and American traditions, such as those of Halbwachs, Assmann, Adorno and Stokes, existing non-Western examples, such as Afghan folk songs, Filipino dance music, Brazilian nationalist narratives and the popularization of Australian Indigenous music, are mostly isolated case studies lacking systematic comparison



or regional theoretical reconstruction. This hinders the achievement of comparability and explanatory power for 'memory mechanisms in cross-cultural contexts'.

Although scholars have repeatedly called for interdisciplinary dialogue in their research, actual studies have mostly been limited to the application of theories within a single tradition or case-by-case interpretations. These studies have lacked operational theoretical frameworks that can be reproduced by others or subjected to quantitative testing. Therefore, the current literature requires a de-centring of Western paradigms to expand comparative studies across multiple regions and contexts. It also requires the development of interdisciplinary, operational research designs that connect the three levels of 'musical materials—memory practices—identity politics'. This approach aims to achieve theoretical refinement and methodological validation, thereby raising the profile of Western experiences as an analytical paradigm on a level with mainstream theories.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

In response to gaps in the current research on these two areas and based on memory theories by Halbwachs and Assmann, we propose the following theoretical framework. This framework can be used to study the mechanisms of cultural memory construction and the negotiation of cultural identity in cross-cultural, ethnic social contexts, with a focus on music as a medium of memory. The framework comprises three core dimensions. Firstly, it considers the memory mechanisms of music as a memory medium. Specialized music analysis will be employed to explore the internal memory forms within musical works and their references to the past beyond the works themselves. Extracting musical elements such as form, melody and rhythm is essential throughout the analysis process as it enables the specific content carried by music to be analyzed.

Secondly, consider how music contributes to the construction of cultural memory. Studying how musical works enter cultural memory is equivalent to studying their canonization and classicization. This involves exploring how musical works enter social memory, such as being held up as models for music education, being widely criticised or interpreted, and being cited in an intertextual manner. Each of these aspects deserves evaluation within its unique cultural context. Effective analytical evaluation reveals how musical memory remains continuous from the past to the present.

Thirdly, how does musical memory help to reconstruct collective identity? In cross-cultural communities and multicultural societies, music plays a key role in the reconstruction of collective identity. Identity is defined as both the perception of commonality and continuity and the perception of difference and discontinuity (Hall, 2021). In what ways does music



represent meaning in collective cultural memory, and how does it reconstruct collective cultural identity through both commonality and difference? Investigating the meaning of music itself and how audiences perceive it is key to analyzing the dynamic process of cultural identity construction. This process highlights the negotiation between integration and separation of identity in a cross-cultural context.

CONCLUSION

As a cultural practice, music can construct a society's cultural memory and (re)construct its collective identity within a specific social framework. In contemporary academic discourse, it is evident that music has evolved from a purely auditory performing art into a cultural symbol that embodies multiple social functions. From a cultural memory theory perspective, music serves as a medium for memory culture, embodying a unique 'memory technique'. Through its inherent structural elements, music can refer to its past to inscribe its memory; it can also construct a musical memory space by referencing past music or culture. Once a musical work is revered as part of a cultural canon, it enters the field of cultural memory. Music transforms memories into shared symbols that represent cultural meaning within the social symbolic system. By integrating and differentiating itself from others to define the boundaries of shared identity, music constructs a sense of belonging and solidarity towards that cultural identity.

While existing literature has established the theoretical connection between music, memory and identity, as well as revealing the social effects caused by several mechanisms, in order to achieve breakthroughs in theory and methodology in this field of research, it is necessary to incorporate more systematic and comparative studies from non-Western contexts into the mainstream discourse. This will avoid the use of Western experience as a model. Promoting the 'operationalization' of interdisciplinary methods — such as combining music analysis, archival research and audience surveys to construct a repeatable, testable, practical framework — responds to the main text's discussion of memory techniques and identity construction, and provides a clear theoretical framework for filling the gaps above in research.

As a methodological perspective, cultural memory theory places the data of musicology research within the context of cultural dynamics, thereby becoming a focal point of research (Nieper & Schmitz, 2016: 12). The core of interdisciplinary musicological research is the reconstruction of past phenomena. Traditions become objects of memory within musical culture and are continuously transmitted through contemporary interpretations.



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Wu Haoran (Corresponding author)
Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA)
National University of Malaysia (UKM)
43600 Bangi, Selangor, MALAYSIA
P126267@siswa.ukm.edu.my

Nur Atiqah Tang Binti Abdullah
Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA)
National University of Malaysia (UKM)
43600 Bangi, Selangor, MALAYSIA
atiqah@ukm.edu.my