

Politics, Media and Power: Relationships within the Frameworks of Political Memory

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Abstract: The main objective of this study is to scientifically prove the limits of the hypothesis that political memory is shaped by the media and press operations in Turkey under the influence of the political actors. The studies consist of using two different methods, media analysis and fieldwork. In this context, the media analysis involves newspaper articles about the political leaders from the 2014 Presidential elections. The newspapers were selected based on their political view and ratings. We collected and analysed 1067 articles from the most read five national newspapers which have different places on the political spectrum in Turkey, published between June 1 and August 10, 2014. The fieldwork chapter of the analysis consisted of a sealed envelope survey. The questionnaire forms were given to the 500 students from Pamukkale University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, 243 of them were valid; social media and media usage habits of the subjects were examined and evaluated with their replies to the memory-related questions. Lastly, the study concluded that the interactive-relationship between media and memory could be shaped by the political motivations of media and/or political actors, but the result can be eventually a false memory. That is, one's habitus has the determining priority regarding the scope and the content of the memory -or the false memory.

Keywords: political memory, politics, media, habitus.

1. Approach

Media and politics are in an interactive relationship in which frequently updated power balance. In this relation, the media can influence decision-making mechanisms and political elites by shaping the sphere of influence of political power. On the other hand, legislators and political powers have control of the legal grounds and operating conditions of the media. Thus, the interaction appears to be a very attractive opportunity for both sides, both politically and economically. The ubiquitous nature of the media provides itself with a strong position against political power via reaching out various social classes of the society at any time.

Media has an interactive relationship with society as well as politics. This relation contributes to both cultural and individual memory in society. The need for information of the individuals provides media with an opportunity to set a useful framework regarding

shaping memory. In the process of building this memory, it will not be appropriate to think that individuals are utterly surrendered by all submitted news which is shaped by the relationship between media and politics. A Bourdieuan concept, Habitus plays an important role in understanding how effective this news will be on individuals in the process of creating memories.

In this framework, the relationship between media and memory will first be examined. And then, media and political relations will be discussed, and the possible consequences of the mutual interest relation in the field of the media-politics-capital triangle will be evaluated. In the light of these results, the democratic nature of the media will be debated when considering the effect of the media on political memory. Finally, the data of the research are based on the field survey and media analysis before the 2014 presidential elections.

2. Political Memory

At first, we can say that political memory differs from the cultural memory of social/collective memory regarding the scope and paradigmatic view. (Akyıldız & Bora, 2013, pp. 213-214). The most important factor that distinguishes political memory from social memory is its usability as a weapon at the international level. Also, the collective (social) memory can be shaped by political memory.

Political memory is a concept associated with the way memories are remembered, recorded, or forgotten. Politics takes an active role in the process of differentiating memories from facts and plays an active role in differentiating memories from facts while providing a framework for shaping memory. According to Akyıldız and Bora (2013, p. 210), political memory studies is a field that explains which political events and facts are to be remembered, forgotten or are wanted to be forgotten. In other words, the difference between political memory and those above "objective facts" shows how events are perceived and remembered differently by individuals and society.

On the other hand, as with Foucault's conceptualisation of "technologies of the self", it can be argued that the construction of political memory is a political technology of the self (Akyıldız & Bora, 2013, p. 210). The main thesis of this approach is that the nation is a mnemonic¹ politics of a great extent and it builds identity through this politics. Thus, political memory is described as a transitional justice mechanism and is introduced to compensate for past losses, damages and grievances in times of catastrophe such as authoritarian/totalitarian rulings, massive and devastating wars, massacres,

¹ Mnemonic: 1) "Helper for memory", Regeneration with memorial things 2) Art of memory Enhancement (Online Etymology Dictionary)

genocide. (Akyıldız & Bora, 2013, p. 214). As the relationship with the past can be established through “remembering”, in the form of a “culture of remembrance” and as a “reckoning policy”. It can also be established as a “forgetting culture” and “suppression policy” through “forgetting” (Sancar, 2010, p. 35). It is possible to see some of these strategies in the political moves of political actors to “forget” and not to “recall” As a consequence, they can make a variety of “forgetting” or “do not remember” politics and construct an identity from scratch on a political, religious or ethnic level. Consequently, the question of how the political memories of the individuals will be shaped will also determine how social memory will be shaped in total. Thus, social and political memory becomes an interactive space between the media, politics and society, which is why those concepts are the key to this study.

3. Mediated Memory

As Johnson and Raye (1981, p. 67) claim that “both perception of external stimuli and thought produce memories”. In this respect, mediated memory means (Dijck, 2007) that the memory is mostly directed and made by the media, and it “comes nearer to understanding the mechanisms by which personal, social, cultural and collective memories become mediated and thus transmitted in both placed and boundaryless ways” (Hansen-Garden, 2009, p. 46). Moreover, the ubiquitous nature of digital media is a fundamental change in personal and collective memory formation (Burns, 2013, p. 39) because “the likelihood of media influence increases with exposure. (Joslyn, 2003, p. 442) In short, distribution has increased with digital media which led to a drastic change in the memory of individuals and society.

According to Morris and Suzuki (2005, pp. 29-30), media shapes the memories and “gives us access to a diverse range of voices and imagines of past events”. Thus, memory and media are both a cause and a result of each other. These two emerged as units that allow the formation of social memory. Ideally, in the rapidly evolving and changing world of communication, “mediated memory” (Dijck, 2007) emerges as a viral spread of democratic memory. However, in practice, this may not always be the case. (We will return to this topic in the next subchapter in the context of depolitisation).

Bourdon’s (1992, p. 545) survey from 1992, indicates that “audiences do not accept everything offered to them by the media, even if it is offered repeatedly if it is perceived to be a contradiction with ‘what is learnt from other sources’.” Joslyn advocates similar views on this issue: “Political knowledge serves as a resistance causing agent, permitting recipients of media messages to counterargue new information and assimilate it to their existing cognitions” (Joslyn, 2003, p. 442). But today individuals have much more options for media and they usually follow one which fits their worldview. Thus the media plays a role in enhancing individuals’ established beliefs and thoughts and contributes to their memory as the way they would prefer.

4. Habitus and Memory

To understand the relation between politics-media-memory, the concept of habitus, which draws attention firstly in Aristotle's works, should be emphasised. Bourdieu used the concept of habitus, which he strongly emphasised in his terminology, to show social, political and economic relations. According to Bourdieu (2006), the habitus is a structure that internalises social practices and memories are closely related to the individuals' habitus. Also, individuals develop their media preferences due to their habitus. When the relationship between habitus and memory is examined in a Bourdieuan context, the concept of episodic and semantic memory emerges.

Actors are provided with episodic memory - that constitutes the memories of the individuals (Squire & Zola, 1996) - to be able to remember concrete and related events consciously. According to Matelski (2000, p. 75), the media offers supportive news for episodic memory formation. Although episodic memory is based on personal experiences, it becomes meaningful with semantic memory which is a long-term memory and makes the acquired information meaningful. Because episodic memory is related to the memories of individuals, it is also influential in the formation of long-term predispositions, that is, habitus. On the other hand, the interpretations of episodic and semantic memories related to a certain event will vary by the diversity of individuals' habitus and capitals.

5. False Memory

According to Lyle and Johnson (2006, p. 197), "false memories are memories for events that never occurred, or did not occur the way we remember them". Thus, false memory is different than misremembering. They can be developed due to different reasons (Johnson & Raye, 1981), but our focus here is on media. The media owners and editors who are very aware of their effects on individuals may play a role as shapers of the false memory regarding the perception and recollection of political events, and when they expect us to act a certain way they can frame the news or emphasize particular events, they can cause some effects on the memory by various techniques (e.g., *Agenda Setting*, *Spiral of Silence*; *Knowledge Gap*; *Media Dependency*; *Semantic saturation* i.e.). Thus, the media can distort reality by highlighting certain aspects of events and ignoring some others. This process ultimately contributes to the formation of false memory of individuals who may *remember* unrealised political events.

In Lippmann's terminology (2009, p. 27), he uses "pseudo-environment" to explain individuals' "interior representations of the world". They are "a determining element in thought, feeling, and action." Considering "a behaviour is a response to that pseudo-environment", it will be understood that having false memory is a projection of individuals' false interpretations of the facts. Moreover, it has shown that individuals do not follow media and social media channels that are incompatible with their ideas, they

live in filter bubbles, as Praiser (2011, p. 17) claims, “we’re never bored. We’re never annoyed. Our media is a perfect reflection of our interests and desires.”

Frenda, Knowles, Saletan and Lotus² (2013) have reached various conclusions regarding the existence of false memory in their work which is the most comprehensive False Memory study ever done. In the survey, 5269 people participated, one in every five subjects claimed that they *remember* the (fabricated) political events. The half of the respondents misread these events, while 27% claimed that they *saw* these fabricated events in the news.

The events that have been settled in memory are partly related to the pre-existing attitudes and evaluations of the people. Attitude-congruent events are supported by familiarity and similarity. (Frenda, Knowles, Saletan, & Loftus, 2013, pp. 280-286) Actual events without attitude-congruent do not find the necessary framework in the person and lead the person to conflict. Ultimately, the individual has to choose between the “truth” which is compatible with the rooted habitus and the realities. At this point, individuals generally continue to choose the first one, that is their truth.

6. Memory Formation under the Influence of Media

6.1. Research Method

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relation between media, memory and politics in the framework individuals’ habitus. We claim that individuals with different habitus and capital have different political memories. SPSS2-v.21 program was used in evaluating the data obtained by the researcher's questionnaire and content analysis.

6.2. Media Analysis

In this section, it will be examined how many news reports about political actors (Far-right party MHP Leader Devlet Bahçeli, Kurdish Nationalists HDP leader Selahattin Demirtaş, AKP leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President Candidate for CHP and MHP Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu) are made in the five selected newspapers (Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet, Sözcü, Yeni Şafak and Zaman) and how the actors are evaluated in these news articles. Thus, it will be investigated which newspapers are more likely to criticise which political actors or which ones are closer to their thinking and political view. In this context, the media analysis involves newspaper articles about the political leaders from the 2014 Presidential elections. The newspapers selected based

² In the study, five unreal photographs were shown and the link between the political preferences of the individuals and the false memory was tried to be revealed. A photographic image has been added to all of these fabricated events. These images are about Lieberman, Cheney / Edwards, Bush, Clinton and Obama.

on their political view and ratings. We collected and analysed 1067 articles from the most read five national newspapers which have different places on the political spectrum in Turkey, published between June 1 and August 10, 2014. The following table presents the news counts for each leader. Most of the news was made about Erdoğan, especially by the main-stream *Hürriyet* newspaper. *Cumhuriyet* and *Sözcü* newspapers which both have an opposition angle, are the second and the third most frequently reporting newspaper on Erdoğan.

	D. Bahçeli	S. Demirtaş	R.T. Erdoğan	E. İhsanoğlu	K. Kılıçdaroğlu	
Cumhuriyet	25	54	82	29	58	
Hürriyet	23	35	129	23	47	
Sözcü	25	15	84	27	53	
Yeni Şafak	9	13	71	10	10	
Zaman	29	22	51	22	32	
Total	111	139	417	111	200	978

Table 1: The Number of News on Political Actors in Selected Newspapers

Therefore, the presentation of political actors in the news has been evaluated in the category of “positive”, “negative” and “neutral”.

Newspaper	D. Bahçeli	S.Demirtaş	R.T.Erdoğan	E. İhsanoğlu	K.Kılıçdaroğlu
Cumhuriyet					
Neutral	20	22	9	6	32
Positive	2	30	-	22	22
Negative	3	2	73	1	43
Hürriyet					
Neutral	21	26	68	3	32
Positive	2	9	57	20	14
Negative	-	-	4	-	1
Sözcü					
Neutral	18	7	10	3	13
Positive	5	4	-	23	39
Negative	2	4	74	1	1
Yeni Şafak					
Neutral	6	6	2	4	-
Positive	1	-	69	-	-
Negative	2	7	-	6	10

Zaman					
Neutral	24	17	5	1	15
Positive	5	4	-	21	16
Negative	-	1	46	-	1
Total	Neutral	Positive	Negative		
978	370	365	243		

Table 2: Present Status of Political Actors in Selected News

When the news about Bahçeli is examined, it can be said that the newspapers displayed a neutral attitude towards Bahçeli but he was left behind. The reason for this is that he would not be a candidate in the elections, but he and his party would support İhsanoğlu by jointly nominating with the CHP.

On the other hand, the newspaper which made positive news for Kurdish Nationalists' leader and presidential candidate Demirtaş is the Cumhuriyet newspaper. The newspaper with the most negative news about him is Yeni Şafak which supports Erdoğan in any circumstances. Cumhuriyet newspaper indirectly supported Demirtaş to redistribute Kurdish origin votes of Erdoğan.

Only 9 of the 82 news reports on Erdoğan in the Cumhuriyet newspaper were neutral, and the remaining 73 were negative. There was no positive news about Erdoğan in the Cumhuriyet newspaper in this period. Five of the 51 stories in the Zaman newspaper were neutral, and the remaining 46 were negative. The Yeni Şafak newspaper has made positive news only for Erdoğan and has not even made one negative news item for this leader.

The Cumhuriyet; the Hürriyet, the Zaman and the Sözcü made positive news about İhsanoğlu (MHP and CHP's joint nomination). There was not a negative discourse about İhsanoğlu in these newspapers. The Yeni Şafak newspaper, on the other hand, made the only negative news.

While all of the news about Kılıçdaroğlu in the Yeni Şafak was negative, the Zaman and the Sözcü newspapers made the positive news. Most of the news in the Hürriyet and the Cumhuriyet newspaper were neutral.

In short, the Yeni Şafak newspaper stood up for Erdoğan whilst the Cumhuriyet and the Sözcü stood up for İhsanoğlu. Main-stream media, Hurriyet, tried to keep a balance between the power and the opposition but apparently, they could not.

6.3. Field Study

The research was conducted between 28 July-4 August 2014 on the sample of the students of the Pamukkale University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. The 500 subjects were asked to fill in the questionnaires distributed in the

closed envelopes. Once the forms were filled in by the students, they were again collected in the sealed envelopes. Thus, it is guaranteed that the identities of the subjects or any personal information were not taken. At the same time, this was reinforced by the statement of the guarantee at the head of the questionnaire, but only 243 of the forms were filled and valid. Lastly, the data obtained were evaluated using SPSS and NVIVO programs.

According to the content analysis, we grouped the newspapers as dissentient (e.g. Sözcü, Cumhuriyet, Zaman), main-stream (e.g. Hurriyet) and Partisan media (e.g. Sabah). The following table shows a relationship between the votes cast in the presidential elections and the media preferences:

presidential vote	Media Position			Total
	Dissentient	Main-stream	Partisan	
Erdogan	2	3	12	17
Ihsanoglu	24	13	10	47
Demirtas	4	1	1	6
Did not vote for political reasons	10	5	2	17
Did not vote for non-political reasons	22	25	22	69
Total	62	47	47	156

Table 3.
Presidential Vote * Media Position Crosstabulation

As we can observe from the above table, dissentient media users tend to vote for Ihsanoglu or Demirtas. Meanwhile, the vast majority of Erdogan supporters read partisan media. The subjects who did not vote for political reasons (e.g. they did not find any worthy candidate) tend to read either dissent or mainstream media. Those indications are consistent with the media content analysis' outcomes.

6.4. Findings Related to False memory

Inspired by the work of Frenda et al. (2013), six correct and six false statements were given to the subjects to calculate their political memory scores. Each reply was scored as the following way:

	"I remember."	"I do not remember"	"I remember with pictures."
For False statements	-1	0	-2
For Correct statements	1	-1	2

Table 4.
Memory Scoring System

The false statements³ are intentionally unrealistic, the content was never in the news of the period between June 1, 2014, and August 10, 2014. Some of the statements were made up entirely of fiction, that is, those "events" have never happened. Other false expressions were partly real, that is the (undesirable) action was real, but the name of the leader was not correct.

To understand the interaction between media consumption and false memory, we examined the subjects' media literacy group (Dissident, Main-stream, Partisan media) and their "remembering" those false statements in the following table.

		Media Position			
		Dissident	Main-stream	Partisan	Total
"Erdoğan has reached an economic trade agreement with North Korea."	I Remember with a photo	15(%24)	14 (29%)	9 (19%)	38
	I remember	30(%48)	19 (%40)	25 (53%)	74
	I do not remember	17(%27)	14 (29%)	13 (27%)	44
	Total	62	47	47	156
		Media Position			Total
		Dissident	Main-stream	Partisan	Total
"Ihsanoglu asked Gulen for his permission to be nominated."	I Remember with a photo	15(24%)	18(38%)	5(10%)	38
	I remember	34(54%)	16(34%)	29(61%)	79
	I do not remember	13(20%)	13 (27%)	13 (27%)	39
	Total	62	47	47	156
		Media Position			Total
		Dissident	Main-stream	Partisan	Total
"Demirtas has met with the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs."	I Remember with a photo	14(22%)	12(25%)	10(21%)	36
	I remember	33(53%)	17(36%)	24(51%)	74
	I do not remember	15(24%)	18(38%)	13 (27%)	46
	Total	62	47	47	156

³ The statements and their content are listed in the appendix.

		Media Position			Total
		Dissentient	Main-stream	Partisan	
"Demirtas congratulated TRT for its democratic publishing policy."	I Remember with a photo	16 (25%)	5(10%)	7(14%)	28
	I remember	33 (53%)	28(59%)	30(63%)	91
	I do not remember	13(%20)	14 (29%)	10 (21%)	37
Total		62	47	47	156
		MediaPosition			Total
		Dissentient	Main-stream	Partisan	
:"Bahceli told Demirtaş that his ethnic background is mixed."	I Remember with a photo	18(29%)	5 (10%)	6(12%)	29
	I remember	29(46%)	20(42%)	28(59%)	77
	I do not remember	15(%24)	22(46%)	13 (27%)	50
Total		62	47	47	156
		MediaPosition			Total
		Dissentient	Main-stream	Partisan	
"Gül did not visit Kılıçdaroğlu."	I Remember with a photo	21(33%)	15 (31%)	9 (19%)	45
	I remember	27(43%)	15 (31%)	24(51%)	66
	I do not remember	14(22%)	17(36%)	14 (29%)	45
Total		62	47	47	156

Table 5.
False Statements * Media Position Crosstabulation

In the above table, the relationship between the recall of the contents of each false statement and their media preferences is observed. One of the most striking points is that the dissentient or the partisan media readers are more inclined to claim that they remember the fabricated events. This "inclination" is developed with habitus and their preferable media discourses. Thus, it can be understood that media with more rigid and angular discourse tends to strengthen the habitus in individuals. And, whenever individuals *want* to remember a political event which is never happened, they develop a memory with the references from their habitus which is fed by the media they particularly follow. Main-stream media followers tend to have much less strong ideas (that's why they follow mainstream media), and this laxity relatively frees them from an obligation to remember an event. The subjects who are following the media opposed to the leader who is named in negative statements are more likely to claim that they remember the fabricated news.

6.5. Political Memory and Political Trust Relation

According to David Easton (1975, p. 447), “the presence of trust would mean that members would feel that their own interests would be attended”. This trust and satisfaction provide politicians with a useful environment to shape the political memory they prefer to be in individuals. On the other hand, political memory can alter trust in political institutions and incumbents.

In order to measure the political trust of the subjects, various political statements related to trust in political institutions took place in the questionnaire. We simplified items of the political trust scale borrowed from Craig and his colleagues’ (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990) research. After reading these items, subjects were asked to choose one of three options: "I agree", "I do not agree" or "No idea". These items are as follows.

- * *I trust in government.*
- * *I trust in the opposition.*
- * *I trust in the elected president.*
- * *The politicians we chose to keep their promises.*
- * *I trust in our political system.*
- * *Politicians are unreliable.*

The political trust scores for each subject were established by evaluating their replies in the following way: “0” for “No idea”; “-2” for “I do not agree”; “2” for “I agree”. In the following table, we can observe the relation between the political trust scores and the political memory scores.

	Political Trust Score														Σ
	-2	-1,6	-1,3	-1	-0,6	-0,3	0	0,3	0,6	1	1,3	1,6	2		
Political Memory Score	-13			2											2
	-12				1										1
	-11	1	1	1			1								4
	-10		1						1						2
	-9	3		1			1								5
	-8	2		2	2	1				1					8
	-7			2		1		3							6
	-6	1	1	2	1			1							6
	-5	3	5	4			1	1			1				15
	-4	2	1	3		1	1				1				10
	-3	3	2	1	1		1		4						12
	-2	9		2	1	2	3	1	2		1				21
	-1	4		3		1		2		3		1			14
	0	4	3	6	2	3	1	3	2	2	2			1	29
1	15	6	17	2	4	4	6	4		1	1			60	
2	9	3	6	1	1		3	1		1	1	1		27	

3	3	1	1	1		1	1		1	2	1			12
4				1		1		1						3
5	1						1							2
6						1								1
9							1							1
10								1						1
13										1				1
Σ	60	24	53	13	14	16	23	15	8	10	5	1	1	243

Table 6.
Political Memory and Political Trust Relation

When the table above is examined, it will be observed that 28 of 60 subjects have the lowest political trust scores (-2) and the mean of the political memory scores of those individuals is -4,07. The 50 subjects’ political trust scores were sub-zero and their mean of the group score was 0.60 and the mean of the political memory scores of the same subjects was calculated as 0.16 which is much more higher than the earlier group’s one (-4,07). The majority of individuals with the highest political trust scores have an average or higher political memory scores. That is to say, as the political trust scores of these subjects decrease, the potential to remember political events also declines. According to Joslyn’s claim as (2003, p. 442) “the trust in government may be a likely contributor to inaccurate memories” and thus, political trust has the potential to create a false memory in individuals because, “citizens’ memories are a valuable resource for political elites, who use and mould them to advance their legislative and electoral goals”. (Joslyn, 2003, p. 440) However, as it can be seen from the table when the political memory weakens, the political elites may find themselves in an unreliable environment.

6.5. Political Memory and Social Media Usage

According to a report published by the Oxford University Institute in 2016, confidence in the news media has fallen from 45% to 40% over the last few years. (Newman, Fletcher, Levy, & Nielsen, 2016, p. 73). In the societies where the media is controlled by political power, political trust declines and social media becomes a *relatively* alternative source. Ince (2014, p. 25) claims that “usage of the new media technologies in the non-Western countries in the creation of counter-narratives against authoritarian discourses of the past” is a good example in this matter. This is also a good example of what Donk claims (2009, p. 14), “memory in the digital era seems to pluralize and elude from official monopolies of knowledge about the past.”

However, social media is a powerful force working as forgetting and reminder. Excessive sharing leads us to forget many things, while repetitive sharing leads to remembering. Besides, a recent study (I.Tamir, M.Templeton, F.Ward, & JamilZakid,

2018) indicated that “using media to preserve moments may prevent people from fully experiencing them” and limit “our ability to remember the moments”. In short, they claim that “media may impair memory” because “it externalizes an experience”. This claim may be valid for political events which individuals participated personally, but if they did not, then we have a different situation. At this time, the problem is called “digital amnesia” which means “the experience of forgetting information that you trust a digital device to store and remember for you”. This phenomenon is dangerous because “it prevents the build-up of long-term memories, and thus makes us process information merely on a shallow, moment-to-moment basis.” (Karpesky Lab, 2015).

All these above-mentioned evaluations point to the need to examine the relationship between social media and political memory. In this research, a couple of questions were set to examine the relationship. The following questions were asked to the participants:

* *Do you read the political news first when you visit social media?*

* *Do you visit political sites such as political parties, political forums, debates on the internet?*

* *Do you read and share any political content?*

To measure the usage of social media scores of the subjects, we evaluated their responses in the following way: "0" for "Never", "1" for "Very rare", "2" for "Always". In the following table, we can observe the relationship between social media usage frequency and political memory scores of the subjects:

		Social Media Usage Score						Σ
		0	0,3	0,6	1	1,3	1,6	
Political Memory Score	-13,0			1		1		2
	-12,0			1				1
	-11,0				1	3		4
	-10,0				2			2
	-9,0			1	2	1	1	5
	-8,0			1	4	2	1	8
	-7,0		1	1		1	3	6
	-6,0			2	1	2	1	6
	-5,0				3	4	8	15
	-4,0		1	1	1	4	3	10
	-3,0			3	3	4	2	12
-2,0			5	7	7	2	21	
-1,0			3	3	2	6	14	

,0		2	5	5	8	9	29
1,0		2	7	10	16	25	60
2,0		1	5	6	7	8	27
3,0	1		1	2	4	4	12
4,0			1		2	0	3
5,0	1					1	2
6,0						1	1
9,0					1		1
10,0					1		1
13,0						1	1
Σ	2	7	38	50	70	76	243

Table 7.

Political Memory and Social Media Usage

The table above indicates that individuals with the highest political memory scores (above 6) are the most engaged in social media. But they are only a few subjects. More importantly, the least engaged users' (7 subjects with 0,3 score and 38 subjects with 0,6 score) mean of their political memory score is -1, meanwhile the vast majority of the users are highly engaged users (70 subjects with 1,3 score and 76 subjects with 1,6 score) and their mean of the political memory scores is -0,5. Although this result indicates a slight increase, the mean still remains below zero. This result supports the claim of that social media impair memory yet, it is seen that those with an average level (between 0 and 2) of political memory are active in social media.

6.6. Political Memory and Media and Social Media Belief Relations

In the case of conflicts between the “individual oriented social media” and the “institutional media” discourse, considering the effect of these two on memory formation, it is important what they choose to believe. Thus, the question, “If you see conflicting news between media and social media, which one do you believe?” was asked. The obtained data were compared with the political memory scores of the subjects at the following table.

		Media and Social Media Belief Relations			Σ
		None	Media	S.Media	
Political Memory Score	-13,00	1		1	2
	-12,00	1			1
	-11,00	2		2	4
	-10,00	2			2

-9,00	5			5
-8,00	8			8
-7,00	4	1	1	6
-6,00	4	1	1	6
-5,00	13		2	15
-4,00	5	2	3	10
-3,00	8	2	2	12
-2,00	12	4	5	21
-1,00	9	1	4	14
,00	14	7	8	29
1,00	40	6	14	60
2,00	21		6	27
3,00	11	1		12
4,00	2	1		3
5,00			2	2
6,00		1		1
9,00	1			1
10,00	1			1
13,00	1			1
Mean scores	-1,30	-0.62	-1,14	243

Table 8.

Political Memory and Media and Social Media Belief Relations

The table above shows that in response to the question, “If you see conflicting news in the media and social media, which ones do you believe”, the vast majority of the subjects (n=165) answered "none" and the average memory score of those is -1.30. It implies that the subjects deem neither the social media nor the media reliable enough they are less likely to remember political events correctly. In this case, they may use other – probably internal- sources to check reality.

Meanwhile, the mean of the political memory scores of the subjects (n=47) who prefer to believe in social media rather than the media, is -1.14 which is very close to the first group’s mean. This is probably because they prefer to keep their information sources limited in the filter bubble and save themselves from confronting ideas and memories. For example, 174 of the respondents stated that they did not use media channels that were incompatible with their ideas. Likewise, 206 of the respondents said they did not follow social media accounts that did not match their ideas. However, this isolation prevents individuals from having the chance to check reality and increases the likelihood of false memory formation.

The mean of the memory scores of the “media believers” (n=27) is -0.62. From the table, one can observe that those subjects mostly have low political memory scores. Only three of them have a positive score and yet, the average is not as bad as the rest’s political memory scores averages.

7. Results

This research has investigated the relationship between politics, media and memory. For this purpose, the period between 1 June 2014 and 10 August 2014 was examined before the 2014 presidential elections in Turkey. We collected and analysed 1067 articles from the most read five national newspapers which have different places on the political spectrum in Turkey. In the fieldwork, questionnaire forms were given to the 500 students from Pamukkale University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. After the students answered the questionnaires, the forms were collected in closed envelopes because of the political content of the questions, and 243 forms were valid.

In the study, some compatibility between the results of the media content analysis and the field research was observed. First of all, a compatibility was noticed between the preference of the subjects for the leader and the media literacy that made positive news about this leader. The subjects *remembered* or did not remember the fabricated events in accordance with the dissenting or partisan media they followed. (Main-stream media followers are more consistent with the reality than the other two followers). Recall of fabricated events is due to the fact that these fabricated events actually coincide with the established judgments and expectations of individuals. And those political judgements and expectations are constructed by their various capitals, fed by the favourite media channels. Thus, individuals who follow the media opposed to the leader in the statements, are more prone to false memory, especially when the content is negative.

The media can influence society and individuals also by speaking on behalf of the public, especially the majority. When the claim of the media being the voice of the majority is overly exaggerated, those who think that they are not in the majority fall into a kind of silence vortex. This phenomenon is what Noelle-Neumann calls as "Spiral of Silence" (Noelle-Neumann, 1984). Meanwhile, if a newspaper is ideologically close to a certain political actor, then it reports in favour of this specific political actor. The main purpose of political power to control the mainstream media is here: to reach out to the individuals who do not follow the media that openly support political power, and then, make them feel that nobody thinks like them. However as the findings of our study on the relationship between political trust and political memory coincide with Joslyn,'s (2003, p. 444) claim which is "distrust may serve as a resistance-causing agent, making it less likely that respondents' memories will be modified in a way that brings their preferences closer to those of government." Politicians, who plan to be persuasive via political memories of the individuals, have to earn to be trustworthy because controlling main-stream media alone would not help. On the contrary, this situation leads to individuals getting away from the media and providing information flow in social media according to their preferences. On the other hand, while social media offers opportunities for democratization as an alternative media, it also provides a natural environment for false memory with counter-memories within it.

Consequently, the research has shown that the power of the media is limited by the capitals and habitus of individuals because they don't want incompatibility between their thoughts, beliefs and what they learn from the news, and when it happens either they have to accept the new reality or they will escape to false memory. Usually, the latter one is easier.

Appendix

The following table shows the content of the false statements that we used for measuring and evaluating false memory.

False	<i>"Erdoğan has reached an economic trade agreement with North Korea."</i>
False	<i>"Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu asked for permission for the nomination from Gulen."</i>
False	<i>"Demirtas has met with the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs."</i>
False	<i>"Demirtas congratulated TRT for its democratic publishing policy."</i>
False	<i>"Bahçeli told Demirtaş that his ethnic background is mixed".</i>
False	<i>"Gül has not visited Kılıçdaroğlu."</i>

"Erdoğan has reached an economic trade agreement with North Korea."

This statement was made up entirely of fiction.

"Ihsanoglu asked Gulen for his permission to be nominated" This expression is also composed of fiction as in the first statement. There is no information on the occurrence of such an event in any media source.

"Demirtas has met with the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs." This statement is not valid for Selahattin Demirtas. The meeting took place between Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Barzani, the President of the Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government.

"Demirtas congratulated TRT for its democratic publishing policy." The statement was, in fact, the opposite. Before the presidential elections, Demirtas criticised TRT in various ways, saying that TRT (the state's tv and radio channels) was biased and not objective.

"Bahçeli told Demirtaş that his ethnic background is mixed". In his sentence, Bahçeli used those words for Erdoğan, not Demirtaş.

"Gül has not visited Kılıçdaroğlu." Abdullah Gül, the former President of the Republic, was actually on his farewell visit to Kılıçdaroğlu. (CHP's leader).

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