

The Role of Social Media in Preserving Collective Memory: A comparative Study of Post Conflict Societies in Rwanda and Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The 21st century is defined by the digital era. Global dynamics are taking on a new form, centered around digital technology. Digital tools serve as powerful repositories for preserving memories of the past for future generations. Furthermore, these digital technologies possess the power to connect individuals scattered across vast distances and diverse locations, bringing them together in large groups within seconds. It is due to these characteristics that communities that have lost their collective memory—a pillar of social harmony—are turning to digital technology, particularly mass-oriented social media, to preserve their shared history. Sri Lankan Tamils are a community that has faced ethnic conflict, civil war, and genocide over the past 70 years. Following the end of the civil war in 2009, reconciliation efforts have been undertaken with international intervention. However, the inability of Tamils to preserve their collective memory over the past 17 years remains a profound problem. Communities like the Hutu in Rwanda have achieved significant success in constructing their collective memory through digital technology and social media. Building upon the success of the Hutu, this study is designed to explore the importance of social media as a platform for Sri Lankan Tamils to protect their denied collective memory. This research is structured as an empirical and descriptive study within a qualitative research methodology, employing a comparative approach. Through this, the study identifies the lack of engagement of Sri Lankan Tamils with the rapid pace of the digital era. Furthermore, beyond merely criticizing social media platforms, the study recommends strategies to transform them into platforms that can be utilized by the Tamil community to preserve their collective memory and transmit their past to future generations.

Keywords: Digital Era, Genocide, Selective Amnesia, Reconciliation, commemorate

Introduction

Digital technology is becoming an indispensable force in shaping the world of this century. The emerging of Generation Z ('Gen-Z', those born between 1996 and 2010) revolutions and regime changes in the Global South have received widespread instigating in contemporary international politics. These movements, in particular, are seen as creating massive transformations through social movements built through online platforms. However, political changes throughout history have always been driven by young people. The changes brought about by today's Gen-Z are a continuation of this historical time-

line. The digital technological advancements of this century have made their online structures possible. Everything must be approached with this understanding of reality. Digital technology has established a significant influence on all aspects of contemporary global affairs. If the internet has shrunk the world, then social media, a digital technology and one of its tools, stands out as a primary force in simplifying it. Social media has influenced the success of heads of state in many countries. A study has confirmed that Modi has made history—and social media has undoubtedly played a vital role in ringing in the victory at the Elections 2014 (Abbas & Singh, 2014). When US President Donald Trump's so-



cial media accounts were suspended, he created his own new social media platform called 'Truth App'. In this context, social media has grown into an indispensable force in both creation and destruction. Social media refers to a communication method where people create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Through this, individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. This introduces significant and widespread changes in communication between organizations, communities, and individuals. Social media has had a significant impact on both the positive and negative transformations of social harmony. Sri Lanka's past experience shows a history of social media disrupting social harmony. In the Kandy riots that took place in Sri Lanka in March 2018, social media had a negative impact. Amanda Taub and Max Fisher, in an article titled 'Where Countries Are Tinderboxes and Facebook Is a Match' in *The New York Times*, state the following: "A reconstruction of Sri Lanka's descent into violence, based on interviews with officials, victims and ordinary users caught up in online anger, found that Facebook's newsfeed played a central role in nearly every step from rumor to killing." (Taub & Fisher, 2014) At that time, the government temporarily banned social media to control the ethnic riots. Such negative manifestations of social media are also widely observed internationally. Mass media have long been used to mobilize mass violence. By democratizing communication tools, Facebook gives anyone with a smartphone the ability to spread hatred. The nature of social media, which can create mass mobilization, and the democratization of communication tools have allowed social media to contribute to shaping social harmony in some contexts. Specifically, social media has contributed to social harmony as a tool for strengthening collective memory. A direct correlation exists between collective memory and social harmony. However, in some post-conflict countries, minority or defeated communities face difficulties in preserving their collective memory. Only the memories of the majority or victorious community are established, while the voices and memories of past suffering of the minority or defeated communities are disregarded. In Sri Lanka, the armed struggle was silenced in 2009, bringing an end to the country's civil war. The Tamil

Community continue to allege that genocide was committed against them and demand an international investigation. However, even after nearly 17 years since the end of the war, the Tamil People still lack full legal recognition and protection for commemorating their past memories. Yet, memories of the war victory permeate the North-East and the entirety of Sri Lanka. This, in a way, constitutes a 'selective amnesia'. A similar phenomenon can be observed in Rwanda. However, the genocide in Rwanda received international attention in 1994. It is primarily identified as a genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi people. However, the moderate Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups have also been partially affected. The memory of Hutus, Twa, or those of mixed Hutu and Tutsi background killed in the 1994 genocide, or in other civil wars of 1990s in Rwanda and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is not part of official history (Zistel, 2006). However, in Rwanda, people who were denied remembrance through 'selective amnesia' have constructed a collective memory through another means. In the digital era, social media has provided numerous examples of platforms that amplify the voices of marginalized communities on an international scale. The Black Lives Matter movement, a call for the rights of Black people, and the #MeToo movement against violence against women, are prime examples. The Hutu and Twa ethnic groups in Rwanda have utilized this model for the construction of their collective memory. Drawing in this experience as a model, the present study is designed with the objective of assessing the opportunities and challenges involved in the formation of collective memory among Tamils in Sri Lanka through social media – centered practices. The study seeks to identify the significance of collective memory, while, as a secondary objectives, it examines the role of Social media in the digital era in amplifying the voice of marginalized communities. This study is designed within an interpretivist qualitative approach to examine how social media contributes to the preservation of collective memory in post-conflict societies. The analysis is based primarily on secondary sources, along with the researcher's observations and experiences. In this context, it is structured as an empirical and descriptive study, utilize a comparative approach. In this regard, this research contributes to discussions on identi-

fyng a mechanism for collective memory among Tamils, relevant to the digital era. The constructive outcomes of this discussion will identify opportunities for the collective memory of Tamils and contribute to creating a conducive environment for reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

Research Design

This study is structured within a qualitative research framework. The data required for the study have been obtained primarily from secondary sources. In addition, the researcher's observation and lived experiences constitutes a principal source of data for the analysis. Data relating Rwanda's collective memory experiences have been collected from relevant academic journals and media publications. With regard to Sri Lanka, the primary source of data on collective memory documentation in the researcher's observations and experiential engagement, positioned as a scholarly representative of the affected community. Furthermore, several academic studies have been published examining the challenges faced by Tamil collective memory practices as they unfold in the contemporary context. In addition, issues concerning the rights of Tamils to express and preserve their collective memory have been highlighted in reports of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). These reports also serve as significant data on Tamil collective memory in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the study adopts an empirical and descriptive qualitative research design, utilizing a comparative analytical approach to identify patterns, divergences, and contextual specificities in collective memory practices across the Rwanda and Sri Lanka post conflict societies.

Results and Discussion

Selective Amnesia in Governmental Memory Practices

The manifestations of selective amnesia are common to both Rwanda and Sri Lanka. In both countries, the construction of post-war collective memory is based solely on incorporating the perspectives of the victorious community.

In Rwanda, collective memory is preserved for the atrocities committed by the Hutu military against the Tutsi ethnic group. However, opportunities for collective memory for the Hutu and Twa people who died during the war have not been guaranteed by the government. In Sri Lanka, the legal protection and state recognition afforded to war victory monuments and memorial days for military personnel have not been extended to the Tamils for commemorating their past over the last 17 years. The Rwanda genocide of 1994 reflects a history of the systematic extermination of primarily Tutsi people by Hutu military forces. According to UN data, it is estimated that more than one million people died. By 1994, Rwanda's population consisted of over 7 million people, comprising three ethnic groups: Hutu (85% "To remember is good, but it should be inclusive. For instance, my parents have been killed during the genocide. But when they [the public] remember they remember only Tutsi, so I am frustrated because they don't remember my family." (Zistel, 2006) In Rwanda, there are differing approaches among communities in commemorating the losses of the past. Some wish to remember only the Tutsi genocide, while others insist that all suffering requires recognition. However, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi-dominated party that assumed power following the war, has largely framed genocide commemorations within a victor-centered narrative. Instead, outside of the government's official Tutsi memorials, prayers are organized for those who died and disappeared in Rwanda. These gatherings are not branded as commemorations. The Rwanda government is campaigning that this is a strategy to deny the genocide and reduce the risk of being punished under the law. The official memorial considers such gatherings illegal, and the government fears that they might encourage public discussions about events that should be forgotten. This is because the killings and disappearances of Hutus and other ethnic groups, which occurred as a side effect of the Tutsi genocide, are also seen as acts of revenge by the RPF. Laurent Kabila, rebel groups of Congolese Tutsi, and former RPA soldiers who were part of the new Rwandan army were accused of carrying out violent attacks on people at Zaïre [today DRC] in 1994. It is against this backdrop that the Rwandan government treats the memorials for non-

Tutsi people with selective amnesia. The contestation of which has been evident since the immediate post-conflict period. Despite these tensions, social coexistence has often been interpreted as a consequence of state coercion, mutual fear between groups, pragmatic accommodation, or a combination thereof. In 2009, the armed conflict in Sri Lanka was silenced. There are allegations of genocide against the Sri Lankan armed forces for committing atrocities against the Tamil people during the war, acts that were beyond the bounds of human civilization. The UN initially provided a death toll of 40,000 Tamil civilians, but now has found evidence that 70,000 were killed. Almost 147,000 are thought to be unaccounted for and presumed dead (Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace & Justice, 2024). Although the genocide has not received international recognition, retired leaders of countries and international organizations have acknowledged the genocide against the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Former US President Barack Obama, in his book "A Promised Land," noted in his reference to the UN that 'Its member states lacked either the means or the collective will to reconstruct failing states like Somalia, or prevent ethnic slaughter in places like Sri Lanka (Obama, 2024):' Beyond the genocide debates, in the post-war reconciliation process, the right to remember the past is being emphasized. However, in Sri Lanka, Tamils have been systematically denied the right to mourn and find solace in remembering their loved ones. Instead of acknowledging the immense suffering endured by the civilian population, the government suppresses remembrance and instead celebrates a national war heroes' day. This day is marked by grand military parades and monuments glorifying the security forces as heroes. At the same day, on May 18th, in the Tamil homeland of the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, those who died in the final war are commemorated at the Mullivaikkal sea site under the name of Tamil Genocide or Mullivaikkal Remembrance Day. However, no legal recognition has been granted so far. Tamils carry out this commemoration, accepting the pressures imposed by the state machinery whenever opportunities arise. In the initial post-war years, the Sri Lankan army and police imposed severe restrictions on holding May 18th Mullivaikkal commemorations. Since 2015, they have been continuously creating pressure and in-

timidation at the intelligence level against those organizing and participating in these commemorations. Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, who has condemned the denial of the Tamils' right to remembrance, "The Sri Lankan authorities' use of a counterterrorism law against Tamils commemorating those who died in the civil war is cruelly abusive and further marginalizes a community that already faces persistent government discrimination (Human Rights Watch, 2023)." The Sri Lankan government's selective amnesia of the Tamils' right to collective memory is an act of deliberate forgetting, aimed at protecting the state apparatus from accountability for past crimes against humanity. In post-conflict societies like Rwanda and Sri Lanka, the right to collective memory is commonly denied through selective amnesia. However, it is noticeable that the characteristics of the communities affected by this selective amnesia differ. In Rwanda, the Hutu and Tutsi people were affected by the side effect of the genocide. In contrast, in Sri Lanka, the Tamil people were the direct victims of genocide. The denial of the right to remembrance and the imposition of forgetting can lead to the suppression of the suffering within the affected communities, potentially creating a volatile situation that could erupt into renewed conflict.

Impact of Hutu Collective Memory on Social Media:

During the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the propaganda campaign was necessary to mobilize international support against the atrocities committed on a massive scale by Hutu forces, which were contrary to human civilization, and to gain international recognition for the Rwandan Patriotic Front party's claim to power. The past experiences and traditional understanding of genocide constitute an injustice against a national ethnic group. Lemkin, who first used the term genocide, coined the word in response to the Nazi policies that systematically murdered the Jewish people during the Holocaust, and also in response to previous instances in history of targeted actions aimed at destroying specific groups of people. The United Nations defined genocide in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of

the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention). Article II defines it as follows: 'In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.' Both practice and theory identify genocide with a national ethnic group. It is against this backdrop that the RPF conducted a campaign focused solely on the Tutsi ethnic group during the Rwandan genocide. Collective memories were also constructed subsequently. This is also one of the reasons for obscuring the facts surrounding the mass extermination of the Hutu and Twa people. Later, the RPF concealed its crimes and denied the memory rights of ethnic groups other than the Tutsi. Furthermore, the Rwandan government recognizes only the official memorial commemorating the past of the Tutsis, and considers other forms of remembrance as acts of denying the Rwandan genocide, enforcing strict legal measures against them. The Rwandan Patriotic Front's portrayal of the Hutu and Twa ethnic groups' commemorations of the past as acts of genocide denial and as a strategy to protect themselves from legal proceedings, amounts to accusing the victims of the Rwandan genocide's side effect of being genocide perpetrators. This not only rejects the people's remembrance of their past suffering but also completely denies their past, presenting a new, fabricated narrative. The right to commemorate the Hutu victims is fraught with difficulties not only in Rwanda but also in diaspora communities. In an effort to protect intergovernmental diplomatic relations and interests, other governments tend to ban what the Rwandan government portrays as terrorism. In Belgium, Rwanda's former colonial power and a major destination for Rwandan refugees, annual commemorations of the Rwandan genocide are held, with survivors sharing their testimonies. While a torchlight procession is held in Brussels on April 7th, the day the Rwandan genocide began, events commemorating Hutu and Twa victims were organized on April 6th, the day before, since 2005. However, in 2007, the mayor of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre, the Brussels municipality where the Rwandan memorial is located, banned the April 6th commemoration events. This led to various forms of police intervention, and for several years, organizers and participants were arrested. In 2022, a lone activist brought a bou-

quet of flowers and delivered a speech near the memorial, later posting a video of it on social media. To commemorate the past, they use unofficial means to remember their loved ones who disappeared during the genocide. Among the alternative methods, some pray at the local Catholic church and spend time on volunteer work. Despite the fear of public commemoration of the disappeared in Zaire, the 'digitally native' generation is using online methods to remember Hutu refugees and other victims who died in the civil wars of the 1990s. Through these online channels, their stories have gained traction in Rwanda and beyond in ways that were previously impossible. The digital memory of the Hutus, particularly in the diaspora, has established a strong foundation. The internet is one of the key arenas for the activism of Rwandan diaspora youth, a space where competing narratives about the past can emerge. This allows for the dissemination of diverse interpretations of the genocide and challenges the dominant narratives promoted during official commemoration events. As Eric, a young Rwandan in the diaspora living in Belgium, explains: 'We have restricted discussion groups on Facebook and on WhatsApp, where we can discuss more openly, and be more critical of all these official events and discourses (Féron, 2024).' The Rwandan government's official memory is facing a stark challenge from alternative digital memory initiatives. Their recent proliferation has become a genuine threat to the official narrative of the genocide. The interactions between official and unofficial accounts have recently escalated into tensions regarding claims about Rwanda's past, present, and future. It is against this backdrop that the Rwandan government is also accelerating its official memory efforts through digital means. The Minister of National Unity and Civic Engagement, Dr. Jean-Damascène Bizimana, has encouraged young people to utilize their platforms. Rwandan media outlets are also advocating for the official memory. Young activist Winny Baho Ntaganira, who uses social media to challenge genocide ideology and misinformation, laments that 'adds that gaps remain, particularly as denialist narratives multiply daily (Kagire, 2025).' The views and actions of supporters of the official genocide memory are, in turn, a reaction to the rise of digital memory among Hutus who feel their right to remembrance has been de-

nied. The digital turn and the increasing presence of social media in our daily lives and politics have altered the parameters for expressing and constructing collective memories. Today, institutionally sanctioned memory practices that guided public acts of remembrance no longer exist. Despite the Rwandan government denying the memory rights of the Hutu through stringent laws and state diplomatic actions, the Hutu digital memory, operating outside the state apparatus, has created an impactful politics of remembering the past. The fact that the Rwandan government is also attempting to respond through the Hutu digital sphere demonstrates the powerful impact of Hutu digital memory.

Social Media in the Collective Memory of Tamils in Sri Lanka

Tamil speakers are engaging in dominant conversations on social media platforms. However, there are strong doubts as to whether social media can effectively fill the void in the collective memory of Sri Lankan Tamils, which is being denied in the real world. The Tamil people are scattered, living in their homeland, in the regional country of India, and as refugees in various international countries. Meanwhile, beyond Sri Lanka's two million Tamil population, eight crore Tamils in Tamil Nadu share the same language and culture, connected by a common heritage. This is a strength for Sri Lankan Tamils. Tamil Nadu has strongly utilized social media in politics and entertainment. In particular, the youth protest in 2017, which championed Tamil pride and culture by protecting Jallikattu, became a massive movement due to the use of social media, enabling the mobilization of young people. Tamils demonstrated a pre-emptive experience of the online impact of Gen-Z protests, which are being discussed in 2024-2025, during the Jallikattu protest. Furthermore, hashtag dominance for political protests and celebrating film stars is popular in Tamil Nadu. A hashtag and memes centered around a Tamil film character (Nesamani) released in 2001 became globally popular in 2019, trending in many languages beyond Tamil. Despite having the support of such a powerful digital community, Sri Lankan Tamils have not demonstrated significant effectiveness in preserving their

collective memory on social media or in disseminating their struggle for justice through social media platforms. One exemplary benefit brought about by social media is evident in the collective memory politics of the Tamils. In 2021, a genocide memorial erected on the Jaffna University campus was demolished by the university administration due to military pressure. The protest against this act gained widespread attention in a short period through Facebook posts. Following this, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and political representatives from international countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom expressed their condemnation on social media. Subsequently, the university administration, with the permission of the University Grants Commission and the Ministry of Higher Education, rebuilt the demolished memorial within the university campus. However, the Tamils have failed to properly internalize this example and implement a mechanism through social media to protect their collective memory rights. Meanwhile, there is a growing trend of the Sri Lankan government suppressing the activities of Tamils on social media, particularly their efforts to transmit past memories to future generations, by labeling them as acts of terrorism. The Tamil people observe May 18th as a day to commemorate the destruction of the final war and November 27th as a day to remember the fighters who sacrificed their lives for the Tamil people. The Tamil people's struggle for rights was entirely structured around armed struggle from the 1980s to 2009. In this context, commemorating the past memories of the Tamil people is inseparable from the armed struggle and the fighters. However, the Sri Lankan government has declared the Tamil militant group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), as a terrorist organization. Even after the armed struggle was silenced in 2009 and the LTTE was declared to have been completely destroyed, they have maintained this terrorist designation. Through this, the government is able to prevent and punish the Tamil people for commemorating or transmitting their past, whether in virtual or online, by labeling it as an act of terrorism. Furthermore, this problem worsened when the Sri Lankan Parliament passed the Online Safety Act (OSA) in January 2024, a major law aimed at regulating online content and social media platforms in Sri Lanka. This law grants broad powers to an unelected

government commission to monitor, remove, and prosecute online content deemed 'false,' 'harmful,' or 'offensive.' This surveillance creates an atmosphere of fear, pushing many Tamil users towards self-censorship. Social media platforms are also caught in a political trap, leading to situations where the narratives of national ethnic groups are being controlled. Such pressure is also faced when Tamils record their collective memory on social media. Not only images but also certain names, when posted, lead to the deletion of the social media post and the disabling of some user accounts. There are many instances where social media posts highlighting injustices, commemorating the dead, and even basic news about the plight of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka have been removed by social media companies. Social platforms are censoring Tamil activists, argue Thusiyan Nandakumar, an editor at the Tamil Guardian and Amarnath Amarasingam, a professor and extremism researcher at Queen's University. This poses a challenge for the Tamil people in transmitting their past memories to future generations. In February 2021, as part of a social media campaign by diaspora Tamil activists to draw attention to the plight of Tamils, the hashtag #GenocideSriLanka trended on Twitter in Toronto, London, and Paris. This campaign, which saw millions of tweets, succeeded in attracting attention in mainstream media and highlighting human rights violations in Sri Lanka. However, despite the ability to mobilize on a large scale on Twitter, Tamil activists face obstacles on other social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, which they use more frequently. Content discussing the history of Tamil militancy and human rights on the island is being removed by Facebook, which claims that the posts violate their community standards regarding 'dangerous and violent organizations'. The digital influences of Tamil Nadu, with its umbilical cord connection to the Tamil people, and the strength of the Tamil diaspora, provide an opportunity for Tamils to construct their collective memory through social media and transmit their past history to the future. However, the terrorist label placed on the Tamils' past struggle faces challenges due to government actions and restrictions on social media platforms.

Conclusion

Social media are lauded as vehicles that give a voice to the voiceless. Movements such as Black Lives Matter and Me Too are particularly seen as examples of this. They are also viewed as a way to circumvent state-controlled media and content. However, within the political conflict, the commendable actions of social media are, in some instances, subjected to criticism. Some rights groups and activists complain that social media platforms are removing content integral to human rights activism around the world. This includes everything from removing evidence of chemical weapons attacks in Syria to suspending certain accounts related to the farmers' protests in India. Some of these removals appear to be accidental, with the content being restored shortly afterward. Other accounts are taken down due to being mass-reported by digital activists working for various authoritarian governments. Digital platforms have become crucial spaces for preserving memory and identity by fostering solidarity worldwide. The digital sphere has had an undeniable impact in bringing the memory of the Hutu people, which is denied by the Rwandan government, to international attention. The Hutu people, as a stateless ethnic group, face challenges in confronting the state and its superior power. However, despite these obstacles, the rise of Hutu memory sharing on social media has become a challenge for the Rwandan government. The emergence of this digital memory of the Hutu people has been made possible by the Hutu diaspora, who prioritize and actively engage in the transmission of memory through social media. As a result, the Hutu memory struggle has gained significant international support. A UN report documents the retaliatory attacks carried out against the Hutu people by the Rwandan Patriotic Front forces in the 1990s in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). Sri Lankan Tamils, even amidst constraints, are partially using social media as a medium for sharing memories, and diaspora Tamils are undertaking initiatives for digital archiving. A study conducted by Dr. Viveka Thambinathan, a Tamil scholar at the University of Michigan, shows how second-generation Tamil diaspora youth are using social media and digital 'memory-box' projects to archive family stories and photographs from wartime Jaffna. These

projects serve not only as personal memorials but also as a silent form of resistance against erasure. However, the drawback is that they do not constitute a vigorous form of activism. They are attempting to dismiss the ban on social media by wrongly criticizing the company. Instead, they are failing to utilize it as a medium to their advantage. This study also presents some recommendations for Tamils to leverage the impact that social media has in the world as a voice for the voiceless. Firstly, the Tamils living in the Northern and Eastern regions of Sri Lanka are not largely keeping pace with the speed of global trends. Today, social media platforms have proliferated. However, Tamils are predominantly found to be users of Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Twitter dominates at the political level. Tamil youth should engage in politics that transmits history within these widely used social media platforms. Secondly, the blocking of posts on social media platforms largely occurs due to reporting by others. By responding appropriately to such reporting and strengthening opinions regarding Tamil memorials, social media post blocks can be avoided. In the researcher's experience, most of the followers of the Jaffna University Student Union's Facebook page are Tamil-speaking people. However, on commemoration days, many contradictory comments on the Student Union's Facebook posts come from Sinhala extremist Facebook users. Yet, the Tamil social media users who follow the Facebook page do not post their legitimate opinions. This situation needs to change. Thirdly, since the diaspora communities live in many countries, they can utilize the differences in legal and regulatory environments. In the case of Tamils, the right to remembrance is legally protected within the Canadian government, and some symbols of the Tamil struggle (flag) have been recognized. Leveraging this legal recognition, social media accounts managed in countries like Canada can appropriately serve as centers for the dissemination of memorial information. Fourthly, the political and economic strength of the Tamil diaspora community is a significant force in their respective countries. Tamils also represent a considerable market that can exert influence on social media platform owners. Using this power, diaspora community organizations should negotiate with social media platform owners regarding the

legitimacy of Tamils' right to remembrance and the importance of transmitting history. Fifth, digital archives must be strengthened. Some efforts and activities are already underway. In particular, the 'Noolaham Foundation' (Noolaham.org) is undertaking a very robust digital archiving effort. They also maintain their data with stringent security. However, there are conflicting answers as to whether Tamils are fully utilizing or strengthening the work of the Noolaham Foundation. Such digital archives will serve as an excellent medium for preserving the past history of the Tamil people and passing it on to the next generation. As Michel Foucault noted, 'The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein (Hansen, 2009).' This is becoming a reality. This can extend even further. The existence of human civilization is preserved as memories are transmitted along with it. Human civilization is a collection of many individuals. The Tamil society is one such individual entity.

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