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DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PASTS: MEMORY, HISTORY AND ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

ET APRÈS ? MÉMOIRE, HISTOIRE ET ÉTHIQUE POUR FAIRE FACE AU PASSÉ

INTRODUCTION

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DOSSIER

ET APRÈS ? MÉMOIRE, HISTOIRE ET ÉTHIQUE POUR FAIRE FACE AU PASSÉ / DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PASTS: MEMORY, HISTORY AND ETHICS

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ÉCOLE NATIONALE D'ADMINISTRATION PUBLIQUE

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CENTRE DE RECHERCHE EN ÉTHIQUE

INTRODUCTION

July 2018, Turtle Island (Canada). Robert Lepage's works *Slāv* and *Kanata*, based, respectively, on slave songs and on the relationship between First Nations and white settlers in Canada, make the headlines and spark debates on cultural appropriation. "We as Indigenous people have a voice, ...[one] that Lepage needs to learn from and never dismiss. You cannot, no matter how educated you think you are, tell our stories without us. That is just not possible. You need us to provide the context, the pain, the suffering, the texture. Without that you're left with a vapid production that continues to perpetuate stereotypes and ignores our very existence today," said Steve Bonspiel, editor and publisher of *The Eastern Door* in Kahnawake (Drimonis, 2018).

October 2019, Santiago de Chile. A popular uprising takes place in Chile. In response, President Piñera declares a state of emergency in the metropolitan region on October 19, then quickly extends it to other regions. The military takes over, dictates curfews, and makes hundreds of arrests in just the few first hours. *Cacerolazos* break the silence at night. The events recall Pinochet's dictatorship, and, on October 25, over two million people protest, claiming they are not at war and that Piñera is "a murderer just like Pinochet." The protests will unravel for months, in the midst of which a constitutional process will be launched to replace Pinochet's 1980 constitution. In parallel, vandalism against at least a dozen memorial sites and Human Rights Houses (established to remember human rights abuses during Pinochet's dictatorship) will be perpetrated, confirming how the contestation of memory was a central aspect of these events (Andrade Daigre, 2020).

These recent events in Canada and Chile highlight how debates and issues around collective memory are contemporary and can have vital consequences. Whether the desire for reconciliation is superficial or real, there have been multiple initiatives to shape and preserve the ways in which individuals and collectives remember episodes of oppression or authoritarianism. However, these

initiatives often raise debates and questions about the instrumentalization of memory for political or personal purposes. Sometimes the victims do not feel understood; at other times, the allies of the protagonists feel that they are wrongly judged. Recovering historical memory, especially in connection to episodes of oppression and violence, is a sensitive—and far from unanimous—process.

This special issue explores ethical issues around the inclusiveness, politicization, and instrumentalization of memory, particularly in relation to the remembering of episodes of oppression or violence. The articles address these issues from the perspectives of various disciplines (political science, art history, philosophy, sociology, law) and in light of case studies from Canada, Chile, Colombia, Rwanda, South Korea, and Spain.

We believe the main contribution of this special issue is twofold. First, the special issue exposes a great variety of memory-recall mechanisms (both official and unofficial) and sheds light on their respective specificities, limitations, and challenges. Second, it discusses and analyzes how sociopolitical variables interact with memory processes, as plural memories emerge, become hierarchized (and sometimes silenced), and play into politics. The next two sections will detail this double contribution and situate it in the existing literature. A third section will present the organization of this special issue and the individual contributions of each paper. (Some readers could be interested in reading this last section first.)

1. REMEMBERING THE PAST: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND BEYOND

In the struggle they face in shaping their narratives of the past, postconflict nations rely on mechanisms that help sort and cement what is remembered and forgotten. These mechanisms are a fundamental piece of dealing with the past, since “whether or not the past passes away depends not only on its meanings and its contexts but also on its forms and commemorative trajectory” (Olick, 1998, p.385). This special issue contributes to this understanding overall by describing and analyzing the specificities, limitations, and challenges of a great variety of these mechanisms.

1.1. Shaping and Cementing National Narratives: (dis)entangling Memory and History

Mechanisms for recall can be categorized as official and unofficial, although these categories are not exclusive, and at times official and unofficial memory mechanisms can straddle both realms, as art and archives did in the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission process and its afterlife (Milton and Reynaud, 2019). Official processes include mechanisms frequently encountered in transitional-justice spaces: truth and reconciliation commissions, financial compensations, apologies, and official commemoration events and spaces.

Mechanisms that tend to fall outside official spaces are mostly artistic and include a variety of elements such as photography, film, installation art, paintings, theatre, dance, storytelling, and music.

The work of remembering is present in all these processes, even though official spaces might strive to uncover or present a historical narrative of events. Memories of individuals and collectives—for instance, survivors and intergenerational survivors—become entangled in the pursuit and articulation of historical memory. To explore memory in this light leads us to consider it to be an active process, best captured by the verb *to remember* and defined as a mediated reproduction of the past that implies selective re-creation within a sociocultural context (Huyssen, 1995; Antze and Lambek, 1996; Argenti and Schramm, 2010).

When people remember, they connect their personal memories to a broader narrative, just as that broader narrative feeds on personal memories. This “broader narrative” was first explored through the notion of collective memory (also called social or external memory) as theorized by Maurice Halbwachs in 1925 (*Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*). For Halbwachs, collective memory is the idea that memory depends on socialization and communication, and that it can be analyzed as a function of social life. He stipulated that individual memories are necessarily shared memories and that those can also be embodied within social practices and beliefs (1992, p. 53).

Halbwachs’s work led to what has been labelled a democratization of history and of memory, with the recognition of the validity of marginal and oppressed voices in the production of history (Samuel, 1994; Argenti and Schramm, 2010, p. 6). In Canada, for example, the recognition of Indigenous oral history as valid evidence emerged with the 1997 Supreme Court ruling in *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*. Yet, despite efforts like this one to consider history and memory together, a long-standing tension remains between the two. Memory is considered risky because it is subjective, vested with emotions, and questionable as to its reliability (Ricoeur, 2000; Hodgkin and Radstone, 2003). Memory therefore represents “the history that cannot be written” (Lambek, 2006, p. 211) and it is “because memory cannot be trusted as history that it needs to be explored, as a record not of the past, but of the present of those whose interests, views, experiences and life-worlds are somehow inimical to or have fallen outside of the historical project” (Argenti and Schramm, 2010, p. 3). In keeping with this line of thought, Trakas (this issue) characterizes historical memory as a type of large-scale collective memory that accomplishes directive, identity, and social functions (for the collective) that are not oriented towards the truth.

For the sake of conceptual clarity, we should stress that this does not mean considering memory and history to be opposed, but rather “entangled” or even mutually constitutive (Sturken, 1997; Cole, 2001). Still, the concepts remain distinct (for instance, in their methods and aims) while influencing each other: historical consciousness might influence memorial practice and vice versa (Cole, 2001). Trakas (this issue) underscores that the relationship between history and historical memory is both harmonious and conflictive.

1.2. Official Memory Processes and Transitional Justice

Truth and reconciliation commissions can play an important role in the establishment of national narratives. They open spaces for testimony and have been adopted as a way to deal with victims and perpetrators of collective atrocity in processes of national reconciliation (Brants and Kelp, 2013). They also play an important role in shaping an official version of what is remembered (and forgotten), while calling on nations to fulfil a moral imperative of seeking truth and reconciling.

Transitional justice got its name from a wave of political transitions from authoritarian regimes to liberal democracies that started with Argentina in 1983. Human-rights activists and others wanted to address systematic abuses by former regimes without endangering the political transformations that were underway (ICTJ, 2009, p. 1). Governments in Latin America and Eastern Europe therefore began adopting mechanisms such as truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) in 1974, and there have been over thirty commissions around the world since. Most TRCs have been put in place by governments, but some have also been prompted by the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations (Minow, 1998; Gibson, 2004). As Martin (this issue) shows in the case of Spain's future truth commission on crimes committed during the civil war and the Franco dictatorship, commissions reveal questions that matter in the present—even when they are set up years after the fact.

The other mechanisms found in the transitional-justice toolbox, such as apologies and financial compensations, also come with their risks and benefits (Olsen, Payne, Reiter and Weibelhaus-Brahm, 2010). Financial compensations, for instance, can be seen as necessary yet never good enough, especially when their timing does not coincide with a symbolic and meaningful implementation measure (Reynaud, 2017). Public commemorations and museums have been recognized as mechanisms that are key for the construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of collective memories (Schwartz, 2012; Isurin, 2017). Yet, as Baldwin (for the Kwibuka commemoration period in postgenocide Rwanda), as well as Doran and Basaure (on the creation of museums in Colombia and Chile), discuss in this special issue, both of these mechanisms raise questions of inclusion and exclusion of memory, as well as reveal the tensions intertwined with calls to face the past in just and ethical ways.

1.3. Beyond the Realm of Transitional-Justice Spaces

There are many examples of creative expressions of truth telling that exist outside official processes and a few that have emanated from official processes, as in the case of Canada's TRC, which was set up as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement signed in 2007. Creative expressions can be performed, beaded, carved, recorded, filmed, photographed, painted, quilted, or written. At times carefully preserved in galleries or archives, sometimes also ephemeral or hidden, these works of art play an important role in memory

processes through their narrative power (Bilbija, Fair, Milton and Payne, 2005; Milton, 2007). Art can provoke ideological shifts and promote dialogue, especially through the creation of productive sites of disruption (Hill and McCall, 2015, p. 13).

Archives can also play a similar role through their stewardship and curation, though this often requires first a fundamental shift in power to decolonize or depoliticize the archives. This may not always be an available option, as the conservation and destruction of archival documents are often an issue of power in conflicts, and reversing the impacts from previous decisions is not necessarily possible (Lynch, 1999; Lemoine, 2015; McGrattan and Hopkins, 2017). Yet Thomson's article in this thematic issue offers an original perspective by showing that not only the content of archives but also their organization can erase Black experiences in Canada. She presents her study through a storytelling approach. Fluid forms of remembering such as storytelling intersect with other processes beyond memory and history making, and can support healing, as well as promote cultural identity and traditional knowledge (see Rousseau, this special issue).

Archives often play an important role in official memory mechanisms, as in Canada's TRC and its afterlife through the Indigenous-led National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). Ethical questions arise and entangle both the tangible and intangible realms of these official and unofficial spaces, just as much in the case of archives as in art. What do we remember about the past? Who decides that? How is this organized and stored or curated? What are the ethical roles and responsibilities of the stewards of these collected memories? In her exploration of colonial narrative through landscape paintings in Canadian museums, Robertson (this issue) reminds us that art must be approached with a critical mindset, as the way in which it is curated can fix narratives just as much as it can disrupt them.

Still, art can make it possible to move beyond our own memory and ethically recall the memory of others, as Guichard (this issue) shows through the example of the statue of the Vietnam Pieta. Guichard (referring to Nguyen, 2017) argues the Vietnam Pieta, through its ethical recall of a neglected facet of the conflict, makes way for a more "just memory," which is not to be conflated with inclusive memory, as total inclusion can never be reached. In making way for a more just memory, art provides options and spaces for carrying out an extremely fine balancing act between what is remembered and what is forgotten, especially in political situations that leave little space or options for ethical remembering.

2. SOCIOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS AND PLURAL MEMORIES

This special issue also contributes to the study of and the critical thinking on the generation, preservation, and role of plural memories, from a sociopolitical perspective. Sociopolitical variables interact with the ways in which the past is remembered at different stages in the process. This special issue adds to the

understanding of three dimensions of these interactions: (1) the sociopolitical sources of plural memories, (2) the sociopolitical dynamics through which these memories are hierarchized (including overrepresentation and suppression), and (3) the way in which collective-memory processes and representation may impact on national and international politics.

2.1. Sources of Plural Memories

The pluralistic form of collective memory—or multiplicity of memory—has largely been acknowledged in memory studies as coexisting and often conflicting with its centralized (often official) form (Confino, 1997; Jelin, 2003; Schwartz, 2012; Kienzler and Sula-Raxhimi, 2019; see also Trakas, this issue). There are multiple sources of this pluralism. One source is sociodemographic factors, like age, gender, class, and ethnicity. Given that events that take place in adolescence and young adulthood tend to make the greatest impact for a group's collective memory, cohort is an important determining factor. Gender, class, and ethnicity are related to the social proximity of a group or a person to a past event (Schuman and Scott, 1989; Griffin, 2004; Larson and Lizardo, 2007; Mälksoo, 2009; Langenbacher, 2010; Isurin, 2017). Along this line of thought, Thompson (this issue) shows how the perspective of the upper echelon of European white settlers leads to a Canadian archival collection excluding Black communities' past. The contrasting visions of land that these settlers and Indigenous Peoples had is also put forward by Robertson (this issue).

Multiple memories also emerge from different personal values and political identities (ideology, affiliation with an organization). The left-right divide, especially, but also values that are (more or less) posttraditional or postmaterialist influence what individuals and groups remember (Larson and Lizardo, 2007). As Bratton (2011, p. 354) specifies, in postconflict settings “where citizens are deeply divided into polarised camps, and where one set of partisans associated with state power is responsible for most abuses, mass preferences are profoundly shaped by party political allegiances.” Basaure and Martin (both in this issue) describe how the left and the right (associated with dictatorial governments) have contrasting views on the memory of Pinochet's and Franco's regimes. Basaure also argues for the importance of distinguishing between the perspectives of the “hard right” and those of the “soft right.”

Collective memories are also plural, of course, because they may be influenced by the roles that groups or individuals play in past events and/or their experience of these. As Isurin (2017, p. 13) summarizes, “every collective memory is going to be remembered and recalled differently by individuals who might have a different personal experience of relating to such memories, whether those memories were part of their lived past or not.” Bratton (2011) and Milton (2015), as well as Doran, Guichard, Rousseau, and Trakas (all four in this issue) present examples of collective memories shaped by experiences such as being exposed to acts or threats of violence, being members of victims' families, and being veterans or members of armed forces (that have perpetrated human-rights violations).

2.2. Hierarchization of Collective Memories

The hierarchization of collective memories, in the process of which some of these may be overrepresented and others suppressed, can take the form of an open struggle or take place inadvertently, under the radar. In both cases, power relations and social conditions (together with cultural and psychological factors) play a key role (Langenbacher, 2010; Isurin, 2017). Many articles of this special issue contribute to our understanding of the sociopolitical dynamics at play.

The struggles over collective memory, especially in postoppression settings, recurrently consist in victims or the people contesting from below the view of the dominant group, the elites (which is often the official or well-established narrative) (Mälksoo, 2009; Nascimento Araújo and Sepúlveda dos Santos, 2009; Viggiani, 2014; Kienzler and Sula-Raxhimi, 2019). This special issue includes studies on the way in which initiatives from civil society have emerged to revive the past, in Chile and Colombia (Doran, this issue) and in South Korea (Guichard, this issue). It also sheds light on struggles between elites over memory—for instance, the debates over the Chilean Museum of Memory and Human Rights (Basaure, this issue) and over the Spanish *Valle de los caídos* (Martin, this issue).

But power relations and social conditions do express themselves not only through struggle, but also through silence (Rousso, 1987; Pollak, 1989; Nascimento Araújo and Sepúlveda dos Santos, 2009). This silence, on one hand, can be conceived as resulting from the two types of “subjected knowledges” suggested by Foucault: (1) confrontational content “that has been buried or disguised” and (2) “knowledge that has been disqualified” (Kienzler and Sula-Raxhimi, 2019, p. 177–178, referring to Foucault, 2001, 2003). In relation to the first type, Trakas (this issue, p. 255) states that a memory may “[silence] other possible collective representations of the past and [fix] a unique meaning to the event remembered.” She then explains how the genocide of Indigenous Peoples was first labelled “Conquest of the Desert” in Argentinean classical historiography and school manuals, as if no one lived in these territories. Similarly, the representation of empty landscapes in Canadian museums is the point of departure of Robertson’s article (this issue), as they represent a “vision of settler colonialism” that is opposed to the Indigenous vision of “land as a living relation.” The second type of subjected knowledge relates to disqualification. Women, especially Indigenous and Black women, have often not been considered “important enough” to be remembered, as Rousseau’s and Thompson’s articles in this issue highlight.

On the other hand, we argue that the silence can also be the result of what we label “withheld knowledge.” This withholding can take place when peoples or communities do not express and share their knowledge because they believe it would be useless, counterproductive, or even dangerous. Conscious withholding may happen when their knowledge is expected to be buried, disguised, or

disqualified, but also if it is expected to generate risks, danger, or conflict that they may want to avoid. Rousseau (this issue) indeed mentions that voices may have been silenced from the report of the *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* because of feelings of distrust that emerge and because of a lack of communication and support for victims' families. Besides, Martin (this issue) notes that historically the left refrained from recovering the memory of Franco's dictatorship in Spain out of fear. This fear, or the dilemma between peace (or democracy) and justice (often associated with memory), is central in the transitional-justice literature (Bratton, 2011). The withholding of knowledge can also be unconscious, as is raised by Trakas (this issue), who refers to such withholding as "hermeneutical marginalization." Hermeneutical marginalization is largely grounded in socioeconomic inequality.

If power relations and social conditions are important for memory processes, it is also important to note that they are not fixed, as memory is never definitive (Schwartz, 1982; Olick, 1998). Trakas (this issue, p. 252-253) notes that "members of the collective occupy different positions in the social reality at the moment of experiencing the event and at the moment of reconstructing it." These changes can vary with the political context—for example, they can change if the population become more sensitive to (or demanding around) certain issues (Jelin, 2003; Brunyeel, 2014; Viggiani, 2014; Martin, this issue) or if the state develops a national-identity narrative that excludes ethnicity (Baldwin, this issue). Yet they can also be the result of the original conflict itself, as Guichard (this issue, p. 29) points out: the role of South Korea in the Vietnam War, indeed, has contributed to its economic status, which in turn has given South Koreans "the capacity to project their presence, influence, and remembrance in Vietnam."

2.3. Memories in National and International Politics

Memory processes of painful and violent pasts certainly have the potential to generate or reactivate conflicts, but also to lead to social transformation, to overcome division (McGrattan and Hopkins, 2017; Verovšek, 2020). The temporality can impact on the likelihood of one or the other, but this impact is not unidirectional (Bratton, 2011). Martin (this issue) sees this dual potential in the creation of the Truth Commission in Spain, forty-four years after Franco's death: on one hand, it could reinstate internal divisions on the basis of the civil war and Franco's dictatorship; on the other, it could consolidate democracy.

Various articles in this issue shed light on the potentially conflicting dimension of memory initiatives. Baldwin describes how individual experiences of the Kwibuka commemoration period in Rwanda is associated with increased violence according to "survivors" (who then feel more vulnerable). Guichard shows that South Korean veterans' organizations have responded to the memory processes around the participation of South Korea in the Vietnam War by a remilitarization of their discourse. Basaure notes how the creation of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Chile has created new controversies more than it has strengthened reconciliation.

The dual potential of memory is not limited to postauthoritarian and postconflict settings, and memory processes can certainly impact not only national politics, but also bilateral and multinational politics (Onken, 2007; Mälksoo, 2009). Guichard (this issue, p. 33) indeed explains that, in part to prevent the emergence of bilateral tensions, the memory of the role of South Korea in the Vietnam War has been mostly silenced in Vietnam: “To date, civilian killings and other wrongdoings do not constitute the subject of a bilateral conversation between the Republic of Korea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, let alone of a dispute that remains unwanted by both states’ political authorities in light of the mutual economic interests on which their unequal relationship is premised.”

Overall, memory processes can certainly not be dissociated from the processes through which voices are forgotten and silenced. While there is a multiplicity of memories, some are often left aside. As power relations, social conditions, and politics come into play, shaping a just or epistemically responsible memory may not be easy or may even seem impossible to reach. Yet, this special issue suggests that promising possibilities exist, as Guichard (this issue) argues the Vietnam Pieta can be considered a “just memory” (referring to Nguyen, 2017) and Trakas (this issue) presents how a collective rememberer could be epistemically responsible.

3. ORGANIZATION OF THE SPECIAL ISSUE

The articles in this special issue cover a great range of geographical areas, remembrance temporalities, modes of memory recall, and disciplinary perspectives.¹ We divided the special issue into three sections, which we believe highlight and generate connections between articles, as we detail in the presentation of each section below. However, in this introduction, we have also outlined other connections between the articles and we encourage the readers to not limit themselves to the connections we suggest, as the articles speak to each other in various and extended ways. The special issue concludes with an afterword by Cynthia Milton.

1. Shaping Memory Processes: Views on Politics, Representation, and Archives (*Façonner la mémoire : Regards sur la représentation, la politique et les archives*)

The articles of the first section analyze how memory has been shaped throughout three major sociopolitical phenomena of world history in the twentieth century: Cold War conflicts, democratic transitions in Latin America, and post-colonialism. They show that memory-shaping processes can be contentious, that conflicts may be more or less apparent, and that some memories may be silenced.

In the first article, Justine Guichard takes the statue of the Vietnam Pieta as a starting point to question who shapes the memory of South Korea’s participation in the Vietnam War. Based on an analysis of the advocacy work of South Korean activists who have originally mobilized for the statue making, she argues that

they are simultaneously privileged compared to Vietnamese victims of the war and marginal in the face of South Korean and Vietnamese governments, while struggling with South Korean veterans' organizations. She sheds light on material and political asymmetries that come into play in the construction of memory. She concludes that the statue can be considered "just memory," as conceptualized by Nguyen (2017)—that is, it is a memorial that is not totally inclusive (which is an unreachable goal), but which recalls both one's own and others' memories.

In the second article, Marie-Christine Doran analyzes similar "memory from below" social movements that have emerged in two starkly different institutional settings: an elite-based negotiated transition in Chile and a gradual exit from an armed conflict in Colombia. In light of interviews conducted with people participating in these movements, she argues that the commonalities of these movements resulted from a common understanding of the political role of memory, as well as from a common social imaginary of "shared suffering" (in which state violence is central). She concludes that institutional support for memory is not a determining factor in the emergence of memory from below, and that the fight against impunity cannot be dissociated from the claim for memory.

In the third article, Cheryl Thompson's point of departure is to consider archives as a subject rather than as a source. She argues that Black women have been erased in Canadian visual archives, though the mislabelling or misinterpretation of metadata. From a first-person narrative and in light of the nineteenth-century photographic portraits of Black women available in the McCord Museum's online collection, she extracts clues of how these women in colonial Canada scripted their own identities in these visual representations. Her approach sheds light on the limited identification data available. She suggests that "naming projects," in which the community would be asked to identify nameless people they might have known, could be a practical alternative to consider in a timely manner.

2. Memory in-the-Making: Critical Outlooks on Contemporary Initiatives (*Analyses critiques d'initiatives contemporaines de récupération de la mémoire*)

The second section stresses that remembering the past is a dynamic and evolving process, which is continuously questioned, contested, reconstructed, or maintained. The fourth, fifth, and sixth articles provide critical analyses of contemporary memory developments that have taken place on three continents: North America, Europe, and Africa.

In the fourth article, Carmen Robertson studies how three projects on and around Canada's 150th anniversary have differently positioned themselves in relation to the naturalization of the settler narrative (and to the way of seeing land) in art museums. She explains how Monkman's exhibition has served an educational purpose with its inclusion of "thoughtful provocations" (as images of colonial

violence), how the rehang of Morrisseau's painting *Artist and Shaman between Two Worlds* (1980) in an exhibition (far from landscapes paintings) suggests that his vision of land has been misinterpreted, and how the Belmore and Casson exhibition has introduced different visions of land in a way accessible for non-Indigenous people. Robertson concludes that art institutions have different options when it comes to the decolonization of their gallery spaces, but also that an additive process is insufficient: acquisitions, curatorial commitment, and educational programming are needed for systemic change to take place.

In the fifth article, Arnaud Martin analyzes the creation of the Truth Commission in Spain, announced in 2018, from a legal perspective. Considering that this commission is intended to unveil the crimes committed during the civil war and Franco's dictatorship, Martin argues that it is embedded in a transitional-justice approach, with promises and pitfalls. He highlights, first, that its creation could have positive effects on Spanish democracy, either by helping victims' families to document their history to consolidate the democratic transition, or by building an inclusive historical narrative to strengthen Spain's democracy. He notes, however, that practical considerations (such as its composition, its two-year duration, and its late start), as well as, more importantly, the political and partisan motivations behind it, may limit its reach and significance.

In the sixth article, Gretchen Baldwin focuses on recent memory processes in postgenocide Rwanda and suggests that a (surprising) prison-state relationship may be developing. During the annual one-hundred-day commemoration period called *Kwibuka* ("to remember") imprisoned *génocidaires*' confessions apparently increase and lead to the exhumation of until-then undiscovered graves. These confessions are, to a certain extent, not expected, as there are no (publicly known) incentives for prisoners to confess (since the closing of the gacaca process in 2004). At the same time, the exhumations during *Kwibuka* (which likely occur as a result of these confessions) may contribute to the making and remaking of the national narrative of the genocide memory. Based on discourse analysis and field interviews, Baldwin's study questions how these confessions are obtained and how they may factor into commemoration practices.

3. Exploring Paths for Building Plural Historical Memories (*Pistes pour construire des mémoires historiques plurielles*)

The third section brings together three articles that underline the challenges and possibilities for building bridges between different historical memories. These articles opt for a proactive approach, with practical, exploratory, and conceptual proposals.

In the seventh article, Mauro Basaure suggests a way to address the controversies generated by the Museum of Memory and Human Rights' permanent exhibition on the human rights' violations perpetrated during Pinochet's dictatorship, in Chile. Created in 2010 under the Bachelet government, this museum was

rapidly contested by the “hard right,” which denies that human rights’ violations took place during the dictatorship, and by the “soft right,” which argued that human rights violations needed to be contextualized (i.e., that a presentation of the pre-coup period should be included). Basaure argues that the integration of a noncausal contextualization could be a noncontradictory addition to the museum that could even strengthen it, by showing that the coup and the ensuing human rights violations had neither causes nor antecedents.

In the eighth article, Audrey Rousseau presents the foundations of an exploratory collaborative research project addressing the disappearances and murders of Indigenous women and girls in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region (in Québec, Canada). The project consists in mapping *Anicinabekwek* (Algonquin women’s) memories, and aims to document, honour, and educate in light of these difficult memories in a manner that is culturally sensitive and relevant. Its methodological approach is based on storytelling and the coproduction of stories that take into account intergenerational experiences of women. It conceives memory as resting on interrelation and dialogue, often including a healing dimension, especially when memories are associated with suffering. Mapping memories intends to offer an avenue to the wellness and empowerment of individuals and communities.

In the ninth article, Marina Trakas explores the idea of taking responsibility for the past, by suggesting that an epistemically responsible collective rememberer should be open and responsive to divergent voices emerging outside or on the margins of the collective. She first discusses the notion of epistemic responsibility applied to individual memories and distinguishes among three versions: minimal (making a cognitive effort to retain information), basic (executing actions at the encoding and recollection stages), and strong (adopting an epistemically vigilant stance not only towards oneself but also towards others). She then argues that, for the collective epistemic responsibility that applies to historical memories, the strong version appears the most appropriate, and that this epistemic responsibility is based on grounds similar to the ones applied to individual memories: pragmatic considerations about the negative consequences of misremembering or forgetting and a feeling of care.

Finally, drawing on these articles and the discussions they open, Cynthia Milton provides some concluding thoughts on how this special issue situates itself in the interdisciplinary fields of memory studies, human rights and transitional justice, while underlining the importance of ethical recall in the aftermath of difficult pasts.

Last but not least, all our thanks go out to the authors who contributed to this special issue, as well as to Jean-Philippe Royer, the talented and dedicated administrative editor of *Les ateliers de l'éthique/The Ethics Forum*, and to all the diligent reviewers and the outstanding linguistic editors who worked with us. We especially want to stress that the team working in the shadows has been essential for putting forward the diversity of voices of this special issue. *Merçi!*

NOTES

¹ Note that authors were invited to submit their articles in either French or English. As the majority chose to write in English, we followed suit in the introduction.

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