Within and beyond South Africa's borders, memory is studied across a wide range of disciplines in what has been dubbed the "memory boom" (e.g. Blight 2009: 238; Simine 2013). Ethics, too, has spilled out from traditional theological and philosophical discourses. The "ethical turn" (Todd F Davis and Kenneth Womack 2001; Fassin 2014) is apparent in disciplines as diverse as literary studies and anthropology. Ethics, which is broadly defined as involving moral principles of right and wrong conduct; concepts of good, obligation, virtue, freedom, rationality, choice (Fieser n.d.; Blackburn 2016), may seem to have little to do with memory. So much of what we as individuals remember or forget is likely to be involuntary; how can principles of right and wrong, duty and choice, be relevant?

Remembering and forgetting are independent of ethics when they are beyond conscious control such as in individuals who have extraordinary recall (hyperthymesia) or those who cannot retain memories (due to dementia or amnesia or trauma); this is true, too, for those who, like most of us, fall between these two extremes and are, for much of the time, simply unable to retain or rid ourselves certain memories. Surely, absent-mindedness or forgetting cannot be held to be a moral failing? But remembering and forgetting are imbricated in ethics when we are conscious of an obligation to remember or to remember accurately or when we select, on the basis of ethical principles, particular items (events or people) which will be actively and intentionally prevented from slipping into oblivion. As individuals we celebrate anniversaries and the birthdays of people who matter to us; as communities, we adopt commemorative public holidays, we erect statues and fund museums, we promote versions of history to be passed on to youth.

What should we remember in the present and into the future? What are the ethical principles which shape such obligations? This special issue contributes to debates around memory and ethics, in particular as these inflect South African writing practices, in memoirs, fiction and memory work. In "Re-signing History and Opening up an Ethical Space of Disclosure: Yvette Christiansë's Wyschogrodian Ethics in *Unconfessed*", Alexandra Negri examines the ethical implications of Christaansë's ratification of Edith Wyschogrod's contention in *An Ethics of Remembering* that the "heterological historian" has a responsibility to give a voice to the dead. Negri appraises Christaansë's use of the archival records of the trial of the slave Sila van den Kaap to spur the crafting of "an elliptical, fragmented novel" which explores Sila's experiences and thoughts before and after she murdered her son. Negri shows how Christaansë

employs court records – by definition, the records of the dominant power – to attend to the story of one of history's most disempowered and also to shed light on the broader historical context and profoundly unethical practices of the Cape slave society.

The next essay, by Aghogho Akpome, focuses on two texts which critique hegemonic South African memory practices. The ruling party, the ANC, has actively supported efforts to record and remind South Africans of the apartheid past. In "Memory, Ethics and the Re-temporalisation of South African National History in the Works of Jacob Dlamini", Akpome draws on Chris Lorenz and Berber Bevernage's as well as Homi Bhabha's theories on the construction of national histories to assess Jacob Dlamini's two main historical works, *Askari* and *Native Nostalgia*. Akpome argues that these texts "complicate the relationship between the past, present and future" and fruitfully "deconstruct notions of a teleological national transition from an apartheid to a post-apartheid dispensation". He construes Dlamini's challenges to the dominant ANC party line as enabling a more ethical "form of memorialisation" because they uncover the messy ethical complexities of the liberation struggle and the complicated – and emotionally laden – ways in which individuals remember the apartheid past.

The landmark attempt to confront the apartheid past in ways that deployed memory ethically was, of course, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Michael Britt adds his voice to the many who have responded to Antjie Krog's "literary take" on the TRC, in "Struggles over Voice: Polyphony, Appropriation, and the Construction of Truth in *Country of My Skull*". In this essay he analyses Krog's engagement with the testimonies which she, in abridged forms, incorporates in her narrative. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of heteroglossia and polyphony and Michael Rothberg's concept of "multidirectional memory", Britt seeks to reconsider the ethics of memory which informs *Country of My Skull*. He argues that the book's fluid traversal of genres "is both a major aesthetic feat" and "an [ethical] act of democratisation".

In "The Oak Tree Was Huge: Reading *Koppie's Story* at the Hoek", Julia Martin weaves her own autobiographical account of her family's visit to the Hoek with her reading of Frances Cope's unpublished manuscript of a novel. Cope's narrative, which Martin refers to as *Koppie's Story*, begins in 1879, "a pivotal year in terms of the catastrophic socio-environmental impact of the colonial government's invasion of Zululand". Martin employs

current historical insights and ethical values in her reading of this colonial tale, thereby enacting the present's inexorable force on remembering the past.

J U Jacobs reflects on the ethical implications of intertextuality in "Performing in the Margins: Intertextual Memory in *Invisible Furies* by Michiel Heyns". Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, Genette's notion of hypertextuality, Riffaterre's obligatory intertextuality and Hutcheon's analysis of parody as "repetition with critical distance" inform Jacobs' assessment of Heyns' "blatant appropriation of a classic text", leading Jacobs to conclude that *Invisible Furies* performs an ironic interrogation of intertextuality.

In "Urban Space in Transformation: The Imagined City's Response to Change in Vladislavić's Johannesburg", Nandi Weder draws on, and extends, architectural theorist Fred Scott's three possible approaches to existing material and cultural infrastructure, namely demolition, preservation and re-appropriation. In her analysis of Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys: The City of Johannesburg Unlocked*, Weder examines the implications for an ethics of memory of the socio-cultural effects of material change in post-apartheid Johannesburg. A second essay on this same text is entitled "Illusions of Separation: The Walls in Ivan Vladislavić's *Portrait with Keys*". Here Rilette Swanepoel explores the significance of the work of scholars in the field of border poetics. Showing that boundaries both separate and provide contact zones, Swanepoel reads social interaction, identity formation, time and change through the walls and along the "Walls" and "Painted Walls" routes in *Portrait with Keys*.

A third essay on a personal evocation of Johannesburg in the apartheid past and post-apartheid present is that by Jennifer Upton. Mark Gevisser's memoir is the focus of Upton's "'Such is the ambiguity of coming home': Writing and Memory in *Lost and Found in Johannesburg*". Upton argues that *Lost and Found* "is about overlapping types of homecoming: the desire to feel at home in South Africa, the wish to find narrative forms that accommodate the telling of this desire, and the literary interpolation of selfhood that reflects these impulses". In her analysis, Upton explores Gevisser's questioning of memory and nostalgia, as well the boundaries of writing itself.

Memory can be deployed for unethical ends; it is this unethical use of memory that features in Dlamini's critique (considered by Akpome in this issue) of state-sponsored post-apartheid

narratives. Memory can, however, also be used to promote ethical values. In her essay in this issue, Negri quotes Pierre Nora: "To claim the right to memory is, at bottom, to call for justice". This speaks to the heart of the work done by the Sinomlando Centre for Oral History and Memory Work in Africa. Assisting orphaned and vulnerable children and their caregivers to build memory by recording the family's history, the "memory workers" aim to enhance resilience in the children. Judith Lütge Coullie explores the competing ethical demands of Sinomlando's memory work in the final essay entitled "The Memory Box Project: Ethical Considerations of Memory Work amongst AIDS Orphans in South Africa". Workers' respect for the child as individual competes with respect for cultural norms and values which assign subordinate roles to children; conformity to ontologies, epistemologies and ethical principles which arise from the Western research practices of oral history and psychology competes with the careful regard for indigenous African knowledge systems. This essay alerts us to the ways ethics as duty is inextricable from ethics as right: the duties of the Sinomlando workers to uphold goods such as autonomy, justice and beneficence are intended to provide practical means by which the rights to memory of vulnerable children are upheld.

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