Introduction

Maria Holmgren Troy and Elisabeth Wennö

*Memory, Haunting, Discourse* reflects the relevance of these terms to researchers in many fields all over the world. The volume brings together the work of scholars from ten countries: Austria, Canada, Germany, Malaysia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the U.S.A. In twenty articles, these scholars investigate various relationships between memory and haunting, memory and different discourses, and discourses and haunting, in most cases with a focus on particular artefacts, or particular means of expression: fiction, autobiography, poetry, experimental and popular film, videotaped interviews, and artworks, such as photography, paintings, and installations. The anthology is divided into three sections. The first section explores memory as a phenomenon in art and philosophy, the second how memory functions in particular cultural contexts, while the third section addresses specific issues, often involving memory and trauma, that concern gender, race, ethnicity, nationality and age in constructions of identity, and that are related to the impact of and resistance to dominant, oppressive discourses. Before summing up the articles in the different sections, however, we want to highlight a few central notions and cross-section connections in the anthology.

Many articles in *Memory, Haunting, Discourse* discuss some kind of collective or cultural memory. (Notable exceptions are Richard Kopley's,
Thomaz Mazur's and Piotr Szalek's contributions, which focus more narrowly on the individual.) The term collective memory is often attributed to the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who first used it in the 1920s, and it has been in wide circulation since his posthumously published *On Collective Memory* was translated into English in 1992. Halbwachs argues that memory is a social phenomenon that functions in different groups: the family, the clan, the social group, the religious community, the nation. In his view, the individual always remembers as a member of one group or another. In *Memory, Haunting, Discourse*, Uta Gosmann, Luiza Nader and Robert Finley examine collective memory in the creative works of a specific poet or artist. While Gosmann shows that what she terms literary memory, a kind of collective memory, is figured as a complicated and complicating factor in the construction of personal memory and subjectivity in Sylvia Plath’s poetry, Nader investigates how a sculptor and performance artist fuses autobiographical and collective memory into an artistic and ethical whole, and Finley discusses how a pictorial artist works with family and community memory in his art. In her analysis of gesture, Julia Creet focuses on the embodied and communicative aspects of a form of collective memory that Avashi Margalit calls shared memory.

The terms collective memory and cultural memory are often used interchangeably, and they overlap to some extent, but it is possible to make a distinction between the two notions, as the editors of *Memory Work* do in their introduction. Based on Jan Assmann’s employment of the term, they define cultural memory as “the manner in which a group or a society can guarantee the continuity of its culture and its identity over several generations.” Cultural memory is preserved in and transmitted by objects, “cultural formations and institutional patterns of communication” (Kitzmann, Mithander and Sundholm 17). David Lim’s article, in the present anthology, gives good examples of how Hindu-Indian cultural memory is transmitted in K. S. Maniam’s novel by means of the land and the *Ramayana*, and Isabel Gil traces interconnections between war and memory to the roots of Western cultural memory, which also serves as a support for one of the oppressive discourses discussed in this anthology: patriarchal discourse.

The relationship between memory and history also plays a prominent part in many articles in this anthology. Probably two of the most cited figures in contemporary memory studies, Halbwachs and Pierre Nora, configure this relationship as a dichotomy, but the values they assign to the two terms are
different. Halbwachs sees history and memory as “contradictory narratives about the past” and describes history as “a result of research, a reconstruction of the past from a critical distance, in principle uninfluenced by social and political circumstances. In contrast, collective memory is described as an organic part of social life, which changes constantly as a result of social (political and other) needs” (Kitzmann, Mithander and Sundholm 10). Compared to Halbwachs, Nora views history’s reconstruction of the past as much more problematic and laments what he sees as today’s loss of an authentic, organic form of collective (folk) memory (Nora 7-8). In Memory, Haunting, Discourse, John Sundholm, who does not regard memory and history in terms of a dichotomy, makes a thought-provoking analogy between film and memory and states that “memory is placed in a peculiar position between history (the factual, external, past) and subjectivity (the personal, internal, present) . . . Memory is history in the present . . . where both history and memory coexist.” In an article that explores the haunting effects of the tension between memory and history in a post-colonial context, Christina Kullberg exposes the limitations of Nora’s concept lieux de mémoire, sites of memory, in places where official, colonial history has avoided acknowledging the existence of any kind of collective memory. Susanne Pichler points out that “writers from the black and Asian diasporas in Britain or elsewhere dealing with the interrelated issues of history, memory, and the past constitute a new departure in (Western) literature.” In the final article of the anthology, Maurice Stevens suggests that, although or rather precisely because they are constructed as opposites, “memory and history contribute to a regime of remembrance” whose function is, among other things, “to reproduce the Same.”

Haunting, often in the form of trauma or as an effect of trauma, is shown in many articles in this anthology to originate in problematic relationships between memory and history or to be generated by oppressive imperialist, colonial, racist, homophobic, and patriarchal discourses, which are often interrelated or overlapping. Adelina Sánchez Espinosa’s article deals with Oscar Wilde’s response to homophobic Victorian discourses, while Johan Höglund examines Victorian imperialist discourses in light of the Gothic genre and compares them to discursive formations in the U.S. today. He observes that the discourses of imperialism and (neo)colonialism are intimately related to patriarchal discourse. Adriana Martins makes similar observations about different colonial and post-colonial contexts, and Rose Bloem shows examples of patriarchal discourse at work on different
levels: socio-political, familial, and individual. Both Zofia Kolbuszewska and Stevens address racist or racialized discourses in relation to subjectivity and identity formation. Moreover, Stevens traces the history of trauma as discursive formation or “cultural object.”

Several of the articles discuss examples of cultural trauma, which Ron Eyerman, in Cultural Trauma, defines as follows: “As opposed to psychological or physical trauma, which involves a wound and the experience of great emotional anguish by an individual, cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of social cohesion” (2). Eyerman also points out that “[a]s cultural process, trauma is mediated through various forms of representations and linked to the reformation of collective identity and the reworking of collective memory” (1). As the articles in the present anthology illustrate, this “tear in the social fabric” can be occasioned by diaspora (Finley and Pichler), the Holocaust (Creet), the Middle Passage (Kullberg), terrorist attacks (Höglund and Véronique Simon), and war. In the context of war, Karen Knutsen draws on Dominick LaCapra’s theoretical framework and explores a cultural trauma that has become a founding trauma, that is, a basis of national identity.

The Art and Philosophy of Memory
The anthology opens with an exposition of an artistic project that not only embodies the essence of Pierre Nora’s concept of lieu de mémoire through visual images, but also introduces many other aspects of memory work further dealt with by other contributors, such as cultural identity, cultural and individual memory, diaspora and resistance to colonization, and the relation between past and present. In “François Gaudet’s Art of Memory: A Ten Year Retrospective,” Robert Finley draws attention to the way the photographer and painter François Gaudet’s palimpsest-like layered artwork on the archives of negatives left to him by his father revives and challenges the paradigms of the past, thus contributing to the exploration of cultural and individual memory as an attempt to reclaim a place for the exiled and returned Acadian community in Nova Scotia, Canada (the cover illustration of this anthology is one of Gaudet’s images). Finley’s article can, in fact, be read as an illustration of the workings of Nora’s three aspects of modern memory: archive, duty, and distance (Nora 16).
If Finley examines the effect of memory work in visual art, Uta Gosmann tackles the complex intervention of memory in the poetic process in "Sylvia Plath’s Poetics of Memory." By focusing on three poems by Sylvia Plath, traditionally read as biographical and defined as "confessional," she challenges the validity of this classification and effectively demonstrates how Plath’s poetics of memory enacts a gradual defeat of individual memory before modes of collective memory, notably literary memory. Poetic discourse hinders rather than helps in the process of asserting individual memory, and subjectivity is revealed as a mnemonic fusion of personal and collective, a confrontation with otherness, rather than grounded in subjective memory.

The relationship between memory, biography, and poetics is also central in Richard Kopley’s article on "Poe and Memory," but with a difference since memory and subjectivity are not an issue but rather Poe’s preoccupation with the nature and functions of memory throughout his oeuvre. The loss implied in the emblematic "Nevermore" haunts Poe’s writings, as shown in Kopley’s examination of his treatment of memory. Poe’s interest in the power of memory, an issue which he also addressed in reviews and notices, does not only center on the effects of remembering in terms of pleasure and pain, but extends to a celebration of the potentials of mnemonics to enhance the faculty of memory. Finally, this faculty attains a spiritual dimension of cosmological interrelatedness in Poe’s understanding of the intuitions of memory.

Without denying the power of memory, Tomasz Mazur suggests, however, in “Methodical Forgetting as the Way to the Truth in Stoic Teaching and Proust’s Writings,” that remembering might be overrated in relation to the importance of forgetting. His analysis of the Stoic method of forgetting and Proust’s approach to remembering In Search of Lost Time leads to the conclusion that philosophical wondrousment and artistic inspiration alike involve and demand a “resistance to remember” and a “readiness to forget.” In contrast to Poe’s responsiveness to ideas that promised control of the power of memory, as Kopley shows, Mazur argues that disactivating memory or mnemonic reduction, that is, giving up control, is a more promising way to regain that which was lost.

Like Poe, Joseph Beuys, the German sculptor and performance artist, conflates the distinction between the theory and practice of art to present an artistic paradigm in which art (creation) equals existence. In the case of Beuys, as Luiza Nader argues in "Re-Collection of Wounds: Spaces of Memory in
the Art of Joseph Beuys," individual and collective memory combine to constitute a coherent aesthetic and ethical vision. This vision emphasizes the therapeutic power of memory as artistic material to rework individual and collective wartime trauma, insisting on the need to reclaim and rework memory through *regressus ad uterum* by returning to the origins of collective memory in symbol and myth and by creating biographical memory through narration.

Individual trauma and biographical re-creation of self are focused in Adelina Sánchez Espinosa's article "Empowering the Trauma of Homophobia: Oscar Wilde's Subversive Self in *De Profundis*." Although it has been argued that "The goal of recounting the trauma story is integration, not exorcism..." (Herman 181), Sánchez sets out to show that Wilde's biomythography is indeed an exorcism of trauma. Her definition of the extended letter as "creative life-telling" is an interesting parallel to Beuys' view that creation is identical to existence, and Wilde has expressed similar views on the relation between biography and literature in his essays. By artfully playing with fact and fiction, projecting himself as Christ-like, sacrificed and suffering, but intellectually and spiritually superior to philistine society, Wilde, Sánchez concludes, exorcizes the trauma of homophobia while striking back at his victimizers by appropriating their foundational cultural myth.

In "From *Cythera* to *Snow White,*" Véronique Simon examines memory in two artworks and two texts which share the frequent mythological motif of illustrating the relation between past/present and life/death as a journey. Her argument is that memory is paradoxical and essentially subversive as it distorts time, upsetting the linear path towards death, and is often tinged with nostalgia and possible political and social implications. The latter claim is particularly evidenced by the effects of the controversial installation *Snow White and the Madness of Truth* by Gunilla and Dror Feiler (in the context of the 2004 international anti-genocide conference in Stockholm) which challenged established contemporary notions of terrorism through a multi-media collage of polyphonic fragments of past discourses.

Based in the theoretical framework of deixis as a designating act, John Sundholm's application of the concept to photography and film in "I am a Rhinoceros": Memory and the Ethics and Aesthetics of Materiality in Experimental Film," serves not only as a possible companion to Finley's article, but also develops the argument that film and memory share consti-
tent features. Like visual images, Sundholm argues and demonstrates, memory is located in-between history and subjectivity, producing a presence in which memory and history co-exist. Experimental films, which openly display an awareness of the materiality of their mediating gestures, provide particularly illustrative examples of this process and emphasize the similarly-constructed character of memory. The deictic function in film and memory indicates a poetics and a politics, an "aesthetics of materiality," evoking critical reflection while paying respect to the mediated object, a stance that has its parallel in Nader's reading of Beuys.

Finally in this section, Piotr Szalek bridges the gap between psychology and philosophy in "Hic et Nunc: Memory in Binswanger's Dasein-analysis." Taking his starting-point in a number of axiomatic views of memory in psychology, he examines their validity in the context of Binswanger's psycho-philosophy of being-in-the-world, thus adding a further perspective on the relationship between the individual, existence, and operations of memory presented in this section. Having drawn attention to Binswanger's implicit aspects of memory as functional, structural and ontological, and of individuals as both transsituational and situational, cognitive and emotional, he concludes that psychotherapy, in particular, could benefit from an influx of a humanist philosophy which does not reject the achievements of experimental psychology.

Haunted and Haunting Memories in Cultural Discourses
Based on her videotaped interviews with witnesses and survivors of the 1944 deportations from a Hungarian town, Julia Creet's "On the Sidewalk: Testimony and the Gesture" examines the function and ethics of gesture in the context of shared memory and trauma. She sees gesture as an embodiment of memory, and she suggests that it might profitably be considered in trauma theory. Defined in this article as both "an individual movement expressive of thought or feeling and that of a small act of the body politic," gesture is a "deixical form of address" characterized by its mobility in the act of communication. Thus, sharing Sundholm's interest in the designating act, deixis, and its ethical implications, she shows that gesture can bridge past and present in its capacity as "both a historical act and a re-enactment in the present" and assign different roles, or positions, to speaker and listener.

In "Memory, War, and Trauma: Acting Out and Working Through in Pat Barker's Regeneration Trilogy," Karen Knutsen adopts the perspective
of contemporary British readers. Using Dominick LaCapra’s terminology, she discusses Barker’s literary depiction of the First World War—a war which is often seen as a founding trauma in the British context, a foundation for national identity—in terms of acting out and working through. Knutsen argues that Barker’s ways of embodying these processes in the trilogy create empathic unsettlement in the readers as they become implicated witnesses to what happens to the characters. However, since a founding trauma is important to a sense of collective identity and is therefore seldom allowed to heal or to be exorcised once and for all, Knutsen concludes that the ghosts of this war “will return to haunt future generations” in spite of readers’ and some of the characters’ attempts to work it through in Barker’s trilogy.

The troubled relationship between memory and history in a specific part of the world is also addressed in Christina Kullberg’s “A memory to be avoided...”: Haunted Filiations in Jean Rhys’ Wide Sargasso Sea and Édouard Glissant’s La Case du commandeur.” In this article, Kullberg shows how two literary depictions set in the Caribbean challenge the universal applicability of Nora’s lieux de mémoire. The cultures in the Caribbean are often regarded as “immanently colonial” without a past in which history and memory existed together in harmony. However, Kullberg asserts that Caribbean memory is not lacking or absent; it has been repressed and denied by colonial history and, therefore, takes other forms than sites of memory. In the two novels non-articulated, non-readable memory erupts in the form of the female main characters’ madness, which Kullberg sees as a sign of opacity and resistance; and, like other opaque traces of traumatic memory in the novels, this madness cannot be controlled by colonial power.

Whereas Kullberg’s article explores the repression of collective memory, in “Your memories are our memories”: Remembering Culture as Race in Malaysia and in K. S. Maniam’s Between Lives” David Lim focuses on the state of affairs in Malaysia, a country with over sixty ethnic groups, where an individual’s identity tends to be over-determined by assumptions about the connections between memory, culture and ethnicity/race. The injunction to remember one’s own culture in order not to betray assumed cultural roots has political and ethical implications both in terms of knowledge and actions, as Lim points out. In order to investigate how “our memory of the past comes to be ours in the first place” and to what extent the individual controls or is controlled by cultural memory beyond a personal past, he turns to K. S. Maniam’s novel Between Lives and its depiction of the transmission
of Hindu-Indian cultural memory. Lim concludes that “our identity is not so much found as it is ultimately determined by ourselves in a free act of decision which retroactively produces the grounds, roots and memories that justify its necessity,” and if people based their ethics on an awareness of the possibility or potential that this freedom provides, they would be able to transcend racial and cultural barriers and gain richer lives.

Like the other articles in this section, Susanne Pichler’s “The hunger for history. The resilience of a story. Even one of disappearance’: Memory in Romesh Gunesekera’s The Sandglass” is concerned with the relationship between individual and collective or cultural memory, and between memory and history. After having placed post-colonial and diasporic writers’ impact on issues of memory and history in a historical context, Pichler examines one work by a diasporic Sri Lankan writer. She traces the “ruptures” and “rememoration” (a form of narrative restoration or rebuilding) in Gunesekera’s novel and investigates the role that memory plays in the narrative. The novel is characterized by a “web of interconnected stories,” personal and historical, a fragmented form and a polyphony of voices, and its characters finally gain insight into collective and cultural memory as “an assemblage of diverse stories and experiences, interacting with each other” with the potential to create a fluid kind of home.

Race, Gender, Empire: Haunted and Haunting Discourses
Home, or perhaps rather the family who inhabits it, also plays a large part in Rose Bloem’s article “Haunting Depictions of Dominance and Oppression: Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things and Mark Behr’s The Smell of Apples.” However, in these two novels, Roy’s set in India during the late 1960s and Behr’s in South Africa during the 1970s at the height of Apartheid, family is shown to be a dystopic reflection of the larger community’s social ills, which Bloem identifies as patriarchal, authoritarian pathologies. Both novels present “painful reconstructions of past traumas” and address issues of race, gender, and social taboo from the perspective of a child in a particular family. Bloem argues that the mothers’ roles in the novels are complex as they attempt personal rebellion against the confines of family and society. These revolts are shown to be ineffectual and, like their children, the mothers are victimized by the authoritarian patriarchal systems at work in the family and society. Moreover, having internalized their societies’ norms, the mothers sometimes exacerbate the suffering and anxiety of their own children.
The women Isabel Gil discusses in "Arms and the woman I sing...": The Woman Warrior, Reinforcing the Can(n)on? are hardly helpless victims, although they are indeed affected by patriarchal discourses. Gil starts her article by pointing out that cultural memory can trace some of its roots to the interconnections between war and memory. She then examines the gender structure of remembrance and its relationship to normative discourses, and traces "the representation of the woman warrior and the possibilities of female agency it supports or denies by cross-mapping canonical narratives of warring femininity with case studies of popular action movies": the Charlie’s Angels sequel Full Throttle (2003) and Kill Bill Vol. 1 (2003). Her conclusion is that today’s woman warrior, in spite of the havoc she wreaks, is still appropriated by institutional discourses.

Violence and patriarchal discourses in literature and popular movies are also explored by Johan Höglund in "Gothic Haunting Empire," but here in their imperialist and Gothic manifestations. Höglund sees a reciprocal, symbiotic, vampire-like relationship between Empire and the Gothic, and he traces the parallels between, on the one hand, the British Empire and the renaissance for the Gothic novel at the turn of the nineteenth century and, on the other, the U.S. and American Gothic films (for example Van Helsing [2004]) today. Höglund proposes that Gothic narratives suit imperialist discourse particularly well because they describe reality reductively: "[The Gothic] is a genre seemingly designed to skirt economic and historical issues, a genre perfect for acting out imagined battles between good and evil."

However, the Gothic mode, if not the Gothic genre as such, may have subversive potential as Zofia Kolbuszewska shows in "What’s Really Haunting King Yrjö’s Estate?: The Uncanny and the Discourse of Waste in Thomas Pynchon’s The Secret Integration." Like Gil and Höglund, she brings up a discussion of the other. In her analysis of Pynchon’s short story, Kolbuszewska relates the racial and ethnic other’s place in the formation of white American identity to American Gothic—which is haunted by historical traumas such as slavery and racism, and in turn haunts and disrupts other American genres and narratives of national innocence, purity and equality that try to subsume and disarm it—and to Michael Thompson’s dynamic rubbish theory. Like the two novels Bloem discusses, "The Secret Integration" (1964) depicts an oppressive adult world from children’s points of view, in this case an American suburb in which white parents harass a black couple who has recently moved into the neighborhood. The three white boys
discovery of the uncanny secret of racism “is mediated by the figure of Carl, the boys’ black [imaginary] friend with whom they socialize and ‘integrate’” in a Gothic space slightly outside their everyday suburban white reality. Even though their increased historical awareness does not lead to political action, Kolbuszewskas suggests that the white boys’ “encounter with the other brings about a revitalizing sphere of potentiality for possible future action,” which emphasizes the subversive potential of the American Gothic.

Like Höglund, Adriana Martins, in “Imperial Scars: Colonialism and Trauma in Lídia Jorge’s The Murmuring Coast and J. M. Coetzee’s Waiting for the Barbarians,” focuses on imperialist discourse. The Portuguese and the South-African novel discussed in this article “question the representation of empire and of the civilizing mission that justifies it from the perspective of officers working for the colonial enterprise and their families.” Martins examines the importance of scars as a type of language and, also, of Nora’s lieux de mémoire and addresses the “emancipating impact” of the choice of a female or a male perspective in the two novels. She argues that the scars are powerful signs of colonial activity since they cannot be erased and that reading them leads “to a process of revision, criticism and transformation of the novels’ imperialist rhetoric.” Moreover, Jorge’s novel does more than criticize and revise Portuguese colonial war history; because of its female perspective it is a feminist intervention in more recent Portuguese history, “an assertion of female sexuality and identity.”

In the final article, “Ephemeral Traces: Enigmatic Signification, Race and the Sciences of Memory,” Maurice Stevens takes a closer look at one of the central concepts of this anthology and of contemporary research on memory: trauma. His approach is relevant to most of the articles in the anthology, insisting as it does on the inevitably “racialized, sexualized, gendered and classed” construction of trauma and its origin in institutionalized discourses ranging from railway accident litigation to the treatment of war casualties. In the process, he also provides an historical overview of trauma and memory. Arguing that trauma can be more rewardingly approached as a “cultural object,” the meaning of which transcends the particular situation, he extends the importance of the concept and shows how it produces various meanings and effects in different contexts, but always in the service of defining the center (white, heteronormative), while obscuring the racialized biases of subjectivity formation. In the same way, he argues, memory per se as well as the study of it are contextually
situated and shaped, subtly privileging the production of history as events of the past, while viewing memory as continuous production, thus failing to recognize violence endured by racialized communities as trauma: subjectivity on a national level relies on forgetting rather than remembering. If, as he suggests, “memory is itself racialized,” we must acknowledge that not only does memory, the object of study, complicate and obscure examination, but so do “the lenses with which we might investigate it. . . .”

Works Cited