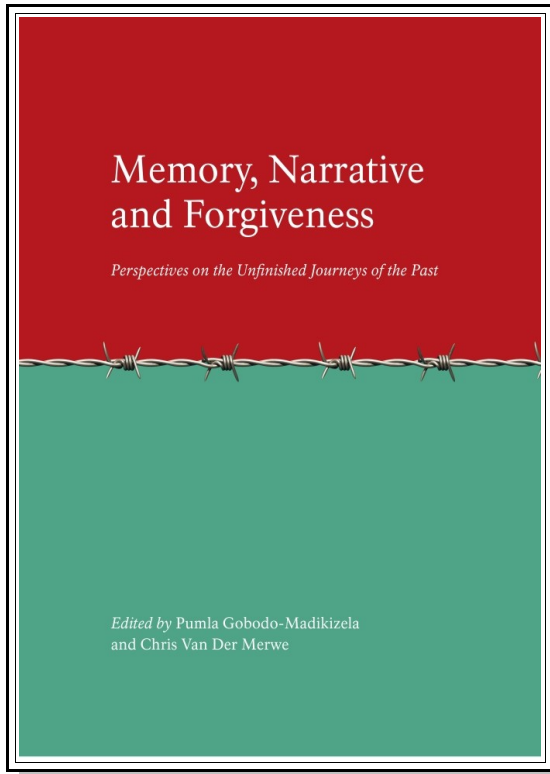


# MEMORY, NARRATIVE AND FORGIVENESS

## Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past



EDITED BY  
**Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela  
and Chris Van Der Merwe**

ISBN 9781443801584. 420pp. Hardback. £49.99/USD74.99

The United Nations' declaration of 2009 as the International Year of Reconciliation is testimony to the growing use of historical commissions as instruments of reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Since the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has had a profound impact on international efforts to deal with the aftermath of mass violence and societal conflict, this is an appropriate time for scholars to debate and reflect on the work of the TRC and the wide-ranging scholarship it has inspired across disciplines. With a foreword by Harvard Law Professor Martha Minow, *Memory, Narrative, and Forgiveness: Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past* offers readers a front-row seat where a team of scholars draw on both theoretical analysis and case studies from around the world to explore the themes of memory, narrative, forgiveness and apology, and how these themes often interact in either mutually supportive or unsettling ways. The book is a vibrant discussion by scholars in philosophy, psychology, psychoanalytic theory, history, literary theory, and Holocaust studies.

“This is a very important and timely book for everyone concerned with a holistic approach to justice and peace. The significance of memory, truth recovery, and forgiveness cannot be underestimated. This book of essays promises to stimulate a very necessary interdisciplinary debate concerning trauma, apologies and healing.”

**Alex Boraine**, Chairperson and founder of the International Centre for Transitional Justice, author of *A Country Unmasked: Inside South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Oxford, 2001).

“Although volumes have been written about South Africa's truth and reconciliation process, high-quality, analytical work has been relatively sparse. *Until now!* In breadth, depth, and generality, *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness* is an unparalleled collection of research papers. This is not a book about South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission; nor even about South Africa itself. Rather, the various chapters explore and analyze fundamental processes of memory, healing, forgiveness, and memorialization of the past. This volume is an extraordinarily useful contribution to our understanding of truth and reconciliation throughout the world.”

**James Gibson**, is the Sidney W. Souers Professor of Government in the Department of Political Science at Washington University. He is the author of *Overcoming Apartheid: Can Truth Reconcile A Divided Nation?* (Russell Sage, 2004).

“This excellent collection of essays provides us with thoughtful distinctions between forgiveness and apology, atonement and moral repair, and reconciliation and social reconstruction. These distinctions themselves add nuance to what has become a growing and essential debate about how societies that have been torn apart by horrendous, violent conflict, can collectively engage in the process of healing and reconstruction. The essays engage the growing terrain of trauma theory ... The authors, however, not only look at social institutions but also at representations in art and literature, which enhances the rich quality of the text. Moreover, several of the authors, writing about reconciliation in post colonies, particularly in Africa, address the need to develop African ethical ideals, such as *Ubuntu*, as crucially important in the growing literature on transitional justice. This book will be a much-welcomed text in departments ranging from sociology, anthropology, law and comparative literature.”

**Drucilla Cornell** is the Chair of Customary Law, Indigenous Values and Dignity Jurisprudence and co-director of the uBuntu Project at the University of Cape Town's Law Faculty.

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**Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela** is the author of the critically acclaimed book, *A Human Being Died that Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness* and co-author of *Narrating our Healing: Perspectives on Healing Trauma*.

**Chris van der Merwe** is the author of *Barriers, Stereotypes and the Changing Values of Afrikaans Literature*, and *Strangely Familiar: South African Narratives on Town and Countryside*, which he edited.

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