Constructing Memorials

Susana Torre

The international mobilization of shame over state violence has inspired the creation of numerous new artworks and monuments. These memorials are not merely reminders of pain and loss; they are also part of the worldwide opening of cultural memory to previously unacknowledged violations of human rights.[1] However, like monuments to conquest — whose aim is nearly the opposite[2] — they may be doomed eventually to fall into oblivion, their original purpose forgotten and their intended message ignored. Thus the challenge before their organizers, designers, and builders is to find ways to keep alive the memory of victims of crimes against humanity in the hope of preventing future generations from ever allowing such suffering again.[3] It is essential, then, to ask, What are the processes and circumstances that give memorials an enduring visibility? What are the factors that give a mute structure the power to construct or evoke a story about a past and to impart lessons for the future?

Ultimately, I believe, a building alone cannot summon the persistent reinscription of memories without commemorative ceremonies specifically connected to its program.[4] However, there are certain conditions that make a structure more or less effective at provoking or inviting such reinscription. Although one of these conditions may be more important than the others in any given memorial, they always achieve their effects in combination. To understand how they interact, we shall need to consider each separately. I call them *site*, *purpose*, and *representation*.

Site

On a night in 1996, Krakow's most shameful intimacies lit up its proudest public space, as artist Krzysztof Wodiczko projected images evoking domestic violence against women onto the fourteenth-century tower of the town hall. Only the women's hands were visible — one holding a candle, another peeling potatoes with the same knife that had threatened her life — as each woman's voice was heard telling her story. As in his many other public art projects, Wodiczko was projecting the testimony of victims and witnesses of violence onto a major public landmark.[5] The resulting overlapping of personal and collective memory was designed to enlarge the cultural meaning of a place through an event — itself memorable — that announced a discomfiting fact: the state's failure to protect women and children from violence, sometimes fatal, in contrast to its success in persecuting undesirables, often by violent means. Wodiczko's projects take monuments and other sites whose iconic meaning has been forgotten and appropriate them for the construction of a new memory. Against the passivity of stone, mortar, and metal, his projections stimulate active remembrance in the audience, witnesses who become responsible for the memory's preservation as the images fade from sight.

Wodiczko's installations allow him greater latitude of expression than would more permanent memorials to probe difficult truths. Public monuments, by contrast, are meant to embody official memory, which often involves a compromise between competing stories. Another difference is that after Wodiczko's projections the sites he has used revert to their customary invisibility, except as they may be charged with new meaning in the audience's personal memories.

As Wodiczko's work recognizes, site is critical in the construction of cultural memory. By *site* I don't mean only a specific plot of land, but its position in the palimpsest of cultural memory that is the city.

Whether ambitious structures or simple tablets with commemorative inscriptions, monuments reveal a hierarchy of memory in public space. When a memorial is placed at the actual location of the event it commemorates, the connection between site and meaning is direct, and the site itself is the real memorial. When a memorial is remote from the site of the event, it becomes more dependent on its relationship to the city's symbolic *lieux de mémoire*.[6] Brigadier General Wilma Vaught understood this when she chose a site hidden behind the existing ceremonial entry wall of Arlington National Cemetery for the Women in Military Service Memorial, in preference to more visible sites offered by the state.[7] She evidently thought that embedment in one of the most hallowed places of the U.S. military, no matter how tenuous, would enhance the memorial's power.

The Washington Mall is the United States's most sacred framework for memory. This is why the promoters of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial insisted on that setting, as due reparation for the years of national indifference and hostility to the soldiers of that war.[8] But the Mall also evokes memories of protests as well as mourning. Thus the display of the NAMES Quilt, whose every piece represents a person who has died of AIDS, elicited eerie associations as it covered the entire mall, much the way the living had in rallies demanding the government's attention to human rights. Recently, demands that cultural memory be made more inclusive have led to the construction, on the Mall's margins, of new memorials to Martin Luther King, Jr., and to black patriots who fought in the Revolutionary War. Similarly, it is the location of the planned World War II memorial on the Mall, rather than its contested neoclassical style, that gives the project its special significance. By its placement between the Washington Monument, a celebration of the nation's independence, and the Lincoln Memorial, commemorating the end of the Civil War, it seems to imply that the saga of national unity has been finally achieved through a "definitive" war, a war that signaled the beginning of the hegemonic presence of the United States as a world power. After the planned World War II memorial, however, a permanent moratorium on memorials on the Mall has been decreed, threatening to turn what was an open framework into a kind of straitjacket for memory.[9]

The long-hallowed memories attached to a particular site can also be used in more subversive ways, that is, to undermine the place's preexisting associations. Such is the effect of building a recent Holocaust memorial on Vienna's Judenplatz, a square where an old plaque celebrates the medieval burning of a synagogue as the praiseworthy punishment of "the terrible crimes of the Hebrew dogs."[10] The siting of Berlin's Holocaust memorial on the former site of the Berlin Wall, adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate, makes a less ironic but no less powerful statement: its location implies that the city's partition and the wall that reified it were somehow connected to the monstrous crime commemorated there. The implication is that recognition of that crime is necessary for the city's reunification.

Promoters of other memorials may have given too little attention to the importance of site. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, for example, human-rights groups mobilizing to build a "Monument to the Disappeared, Detained and Assassinated by State Terrorism" — a monument to be located in a newly designated "Parque de la Memoria" (Park of memory), far from the city center — seem to have been more concerned about the use of public funds than about fighting for a more compelling, accessible site in which to inscribe the memory of the military state's political intolerance.

Purpose

By purpose I denote the underlying agenda, usually manifested in the selection of the site, the type of its inscription (museum, archive, or memorial), and the formulation of the ideas and values to be represented, whether that formulation occurs with or without broad consultation. Memorials to the victims of atrocities cannot satisfy demands for truth and justice; these are issues better addressed by

truth commissions, courts, and human-rights groups. Memorials, rather, serve the aims of creating a place for grieving, publicly recognizing suffering, and acting as a permanent reminder of a crime so that it may not be repeated. In these ways they can help survivors transform their present trauma into a past — into memory.[11]

How such aims are to be achieved is articulated in the memorial's program. In their different ways, archives, museums, and memorials filter and frame how and for what purpose memory will be preserved. Archives and museums, in their retelling of a story, become sites of perpetual reinscription — unless the process of inscription has been so hindered by the politics of assigning blame that silence replaces narrative. This is the case, for example, with Tuol Sleng, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.[12] Some types have evolved to contain multiple forms of inscription, as in the National Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., which includes galleries for historical narration, extensive archives for scholars, and major symbolic spaces.

Memorials are usually built as sites for grieving, symbolic graves. This function is especially important when there is no actual known burial place, as in the case of people whom the authorities or terror forces have caused to "disappear."[13] Memorials then become surrogate sites for mourning, a ritualized performance that is necessary to continue reinscribing the memory. Without such rituals these sites tend to become "invisible," or at least unnoticed, unless they are attached to a larger site of memory.

Unlike an archive or museum that presents a multiplicity of viewpoints, including that of the victims, a memorial tells one story, which tends to become identified as official memory — at least when the memorial is built in a public space and with the resources or the implicit or explicit approval of the state. There are of course many unofficial memorials (New York City's ubiquitous murals depicting police brutality, for example, which may appear on public streets but occupy private walls, as posters do), and these neither demand nor imply official consensus; an artist with a contrary view may simply paint another mural on the same or an adjoining wall. But official memorialization, in officially controlled public space, does not easily tolerate dispute. When people want to challenge official memory, they almost always feel obliged to topple or remove the old monuments. This happened not long ago in Jedwabne, Poland, when it was revealed that a massacre of Jews attributed to the Nazis had in fact been carried out by the Jews' own Polish neighbors. Local officials were not content to try to "correct" the message of an existing memorial to the massacre, or to build a new one beside it — an approach that would have documented the memorial's own history, including the attempted shift of blame.[14] Instead, at least partly out of embarrassment, they felt it necessary to erase the previous official history and replace it with a new one.

The purpose of some memorials is to attempt a form of retribution, a symbolic settlement of accounts that facilitates reconciliation without forgiveness.[15] This is the underlying text of many prominent recent memorials, including Berlin's Holocaust memorial; as described above, the siting of this memorial on the former line of the Berlin Wall, adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate, is an appeal for acknowledgment of the connection between the state's complicity in crime and the subsequent partition of the city and indeed of the entire nation. This is a clear example of how *site* can be used to express a memorial's *purpose*.

In the United States, the organization promoting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial specifically stated its purpose as encouraging national reconciliation, which the memorial was to do by focusing on the names of dead and missing soldiers and on the grief shared by both those who had supported the war and those who had opposed it. Reconciliation was further aided by the participation of celebrities, intellectuals, and politicians on both the right and the left, who helped raise funds from a wide

spectrum of the U.S. population. The project of reconciliation within the United States, however, required an amnesia about the devastation of Vietnam, and the incomparably larger loss of life there. This has prompted other veterans to return to Vietnam to establish a very different type of memorial, explicitly directed more toward the future than the past: the founding and supporting of schools, as a gesture of goodwill initiated by individual Americans.

Some artists have attempted to counteract the traditional redemptive and consolatory purposes of the memorial. One such "countermonument" is the German artist Jochen Gerz's conceptual memorial *2146 Steine — Mahnmal gegen Rassismus* (2146 stones — monument against racism), in Saarbrücken, Germany (1993).[16] The work consisted of replacing seventy cobblestones in a major square in that town, in front of an old palace that had once served as a local headquarters of the Gestapo. The cobblestone replacements, identical with the originals, were inscribed with the names of obliterated Jewish cemeteries in Germany — of which there were over 2,000 — but then were placed with the carved side down and the unwritten-on face up, so that the information would be invisible. The square was officially renamed "Place of the invisible memorial." Gerz believes that visitors provoked by the name will want to "repair and fill in the now absent event with their knowledge of it,"[17] although the ability to remember over 2,000 cemeteries would be beyond most people's expectations.

Gerz's memorial returns us to the question of an artist's latitude of expression, for his work was created without the knowledge of the local inhabitants or authorities. Confronted with the memorial as a fait accompli, the Saarbrücken parliament's Christian Democratic Union contingent walked out on the vote to rename the square after a memorial whose existence could be doubted. The countermonument, originating in a "subversive" art practice, was in the end legitimized ex post facto as official memory through cultural, not political, discourse.

Gerz's work had the virtue of opening the discourse of memory construction to criticism from within, a much needed debate over half a century after the war, a period in which hundreds of Holocaust memorials had been built all over the world. But each tragedy is unique, and must unfold in its own time before it can reach the stage at which such a work is appropriate. Valuable as counter-- monuments are as cultural critique, we cannot expect them to replace redemptory memorials when the time is proper for grieving.

Political activists have also given us countermonuments in the form of ritualized ceremonies. The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo's iconic circular procession around the central monument in the Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires, Argentina's most important public space, still continues today, eighteen years after the reinstatement of democratic government ended the period of disappearances and assassinations under the military regime of 1976-83.[18] The purpose of these demonstrations is to prevent national closure on the episode; with this march, in which any woman wearing the emblematic white scarf can stand for a Mother, the activists continue to press for a revocation of the amnesty granted to the kidnappers and killers, and for the return of their spouses and children — "alive." Even in the face of evidence that bodies were dumped from military planes into the Rio de la Plata, making them irretrievable, the Mothers fear that accepting their relatives' death, and the compensation offered by the state, would preclude the punishment of the guilty. In their literal embodiment of lived memory, they continue to oppose, symbolically and politically, the very idea of memorialization.

Unlike Gerz's countermonument, constructed by the individual memory of historical events, the Mothers' presence on the square is a perpetual reminder of unfinished justice, challenging observers to join in the construction of a present-day collective memory. The Mothers' own memorial to their disappeared, a counterinstitution that expands the range and types of memory inscription, is a

nomadic popular university, whose courses — ranging from political analysis to street performance art — seek to keep alive the utopian political ideals now homogeneously attributed by the Mothers to all the victims of state repression.[19]

Representation

Representation refers to the designs and visual languages employed to communicate the ideas that are the main purpose of the memorial. What should memorials to victims of atrocities represent? Trauma? Loss? The brutality of the perpetrators? The grief of the survivors? The continuity of life? The suppressed ideals of the victims? The question of representation is bound in with the memorial's purpose and program; even if these have not been made explicit, representation must always presuppose them. And as we have seen in the discussion of the siting and purpose of the Holocaust memorial in Berlin, representation is also bound in with the site and the context, which will often inspire the design.

In general, memorials created by architects gravitate toward the tropes of official memory, whereas those created by artists have sometimes successfully undermined those tropes. But representation is in either case bound in with the history and structure of the preexisting practices and discourses of architecture and art. In earlier times, the continuity provided by architectural styles contributed to the intelligibility of all civic buildings, including memorials, even when they bore the burden of representing historical trauma, such as the extraordinary loss of life in World War I. Some scholars have interpreted Sir Edwin Lutyens's Memorial to the Missing of the Somme at Thiepval, France, as an "antimonument," because he challenged the traditional monumentality of the arch by inscribing its otherwise unornamented surfaces with the names of the 73,357 dead and missing soldiers, and by multiplying or inverting some architectural features.[20] Nonetheless, its intelligibility as a monument relies upon the conventions of the trope, as does Lutyens's other war memorial in New Delhi. India Gate is similarly inscribed with the names of colonial soldiers— though in this case the structure is more conventionally used as a monumental entrance to a precinct of colonial government buildings and open spaces. In any case, the time for such gestures is past. The old unified language of memorials has been shattered; when the subject is rupture, absence, and loss, classical arches and columns — the enduring tropes of victorious monuments — have become unbearable.

In the search for a new language of memorials, the two paradigmatic projects of recent years are Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, D.C., and Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum, in Berlin (not to be confused with the Berlin Holocaust memorial discussed elsewhere in this essay). These works share a language of abstract minimalist forms that stand in opposition to their immediate contexts — the neoclassical structures in the Washington Mall, and the baroque building housing the neighboring Berlin Museum. Both achieve their exemplary quality through powerful convergences of the narratives of site, purpose, and representation. The ways in which they represent loss, however, are very different, each work being anchored in the specific history of that which is mourned.

As discussed above, the choice of a site in the Washington Mall for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was understood as a kind of compensation for past public indifference to the veterans' losses, and the memorial's stated purpose was to provide a place for national reconciliation. The representation of loss is most obvious in the names of the dead soldiers carved into the monument's stone, and the design itself is a symbolic grave, cut into the earth and barely defined by the stone's polished black surface, in which visitors see their own faces. The inescapable association of oneself with the collective loss is deeply emotional, giving the memorial an enormous power of catharsis. Lin's minimalist forms, eloquent as they were, did not represent the heroism of the soldiers in a way recognizable to

many veterans, who passionately demanded to have it publicly acknowledged. Thus a conventionally figurative statue of soldiers was added nearby to record the contested official narrative of the memorial.

In the case of the "extension of the Berlin Museum with the Jewish Museum department," as Libeskind's building is officially called, the design was chosen through an architectural competition in which the representation of loss was a requirement. In that the brief challenged the designers "to acknowledge the terrible void [in the city's history and culture] that made this museum necessary," it specifically prevented the form from suggesting "reconciliation and continuity" — quite the opposite of what was required for the Vietnam Memorial.[21] The structure, which is physically separate from the Berlin Museum but connected to it by an underground corridor, derives its lightning-bolt-like plan from the designer's distortion and fragmentation of the Star of David, as he sought to create a "metaphysical map" of the city by joining the addresses of Berlin's cultural figures with that shape. But the spatial continuity of the structure, instead of allowing an uninterrupted display of historical exhibits, is purposely broken up by several multistoried voids, marking the loss of narrative stability. The voids intersect the plan along a line conceived as the structure's conceptual backbone, the opposite of a conventional axis with spaces to either side, leading and building up to a major ceremonial space. The function of Libeskind's axis, however, is to void space, to make it inaccessible, and to enforce spatial fragmentation. Permanent loss, like that caused by the Holocaust, involves that which can never be attained or recovered.[22]

Both memorials are conceived within the possibilities of an expanded architectural discourse, and both are immediately intelligible. For this reason they have influenced the designs of scores of other memorials. Unfortunately, what many subsequent designers have emulated is not Lin's and Libeskind's method of finding the form in the specific historical facts in each case, but rather the memorials' surface characteristics. Thus countless state and municipal Vietnam memorials merely reproduce a version of a V-shaped black shiny wall inscribed with names.[23] There is even a traveling version, a folding "wall" half the size of the original, which can be displayed in places where there is no permanent memorial as a backdrop for local commemorative ceremonies. What these popular memorials represent is no longer the loss. Rather, they are representations of a representation, rooted in neither context, site, nor purpose but deriving all their authority and civic intelligibility from their model. Through postmodern artistic and design practices such as reproduction and collage, elements of such paradigmatic memorials have reappeared in such dissimilar places as Argentina, Rwanda, Bosnia, and South Africa, regardless of the particular nature of the human-rights violations committed in each place. They have become inscribed in what Andreas Huyssen has called the "transnational discourse of memory,"[24] referring to all suffering in general and no suffering in particular.

The Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado (Monument to the victims of state terrorism) being built in Buenos Aires is an example of the representational possibilities and limitations of these transnational art practices. The memorial consists of three parts: a large mound cut through by a passage lined with stone panels, on which, on alternating sides, are inscribed the names of the victims of state violence; a space inside the mound, to be used for exhibitions and lectures on issues related to the losses memorialized here; and a grouping of eighteen sculptures, twelve of which were selected through an international competition.[25] The site is a stretch of newly planned waterfront parkland that will also hold a number of other memorials. It is far from the city center and from the Plaza de Mayo. It is close to military institutions, however — including the infamous Escuela Superior Militar Argentin (ESMA)[26] — and to the incomplete Ciudad Universitaria, created by the military government in the early 1970s to enclose and control faculties with a history of political activism.

What is being represented here? At first glance the design is a hybrid of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, including the ancillary sculptures, and the Jewish Museum in Berlin. But despite the names inscribed in it, the uninterrupted jagged gash is not a symbolic grave. Rather, it is a passageway to a real grave, the river in which many of the victims were dumped while still alive. The memorial has been described as a "deep wound" in a "breast" (the mound), in whose depth private grieving is to be hidden.

An alternative proposal by the architect Clorindo Testa would have extended the memorial's meanings to include specific historical context and references to the class origin of most of the victims.[27] In his proposal, a similar passage inscribed with names would have been covered with a metal trellis and a Santa Rita (bougainvillea) vine, evoking at once the residential patios in working-class neighborhoods — where many of the victims lived — and a blooming suture over the "wound." The carving of the names on the panels would have been supplemented with engravings of contemporary newspaper pages, instructing visitors about the victims. In the context of the official story of the repression, these men and women were homogenized in death; with the information Testa proposed supplying, it would have been clear that they were a diverse group, with a range of political beliefs, including proponents of armed struggle, people accused of no more than owning subversive literature, and innocent friends and relatives who may not have been politically active at all. This would have made the modus operandi of the state terrorists, and the arbitrariness of the terror, more apparent.

Whereas in the case of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial the statue of soldiers was added in response to political demands, the sculptures in Buenos Aires represent the artists' personal responses, for which no agreed-upon set of issues was collectively developed. Their primary form of inscription will be as artworks in a sculpture garden, a framework that will reinforce their self-referential condition and the ahistorical abstraction of the ideas they represent: utopia, absence, convulsion, silence.

Constructing Memory: Themed Enclosures and Transnational Discourses

The sites of memorials may have many-layered meanings, a collective struggle may take place to clarify their purposes, values, ideas, and emotions, and the clarity of their representations may be compelling, yet none of this is necessarily enough to make specific memories endure. Unless reinscribed generation after generation, cultural memory fades, and its markers may be assigned new and contradictory meanings. We therefore need to understand how the reinscription of memory may be affected by two recent trends: the defining of enclosures of memory in the city, and the emergence of a "transnational discourse of memory."

In response to a worldwide demand for memorials to victims of atrocities or to a suppressed historical past, planners have moved to restrict building in sites deemed overcrowded by monuments, or have proposed extending existing sites. In Washington, D.C., for example, land behind the U.S. Capitol building, which closes one end of the now protected Mall, has been made available for recent and future memorials, including the National Memorial to Japanese-- Americans, which commemorates them both as World War II heroes and as victims of internment.

Urban planners have also seen new memorials as elements of urban development, creating spaces specifically for that purpose. The south end of New York's Battery Park City, where a new memorial to the great famines in nineteenthcentury Ireland is to be located,[28] is one example (although all plans for that area must be in abeyance after the attacks of September 11, 2001); Buenos Aires's new

Parque de la Memoria is another. Both show the influence of postmodern urbanism and one of its favored devices, the theme park. Will themed precincts like these develop their own framework for the inscription of memory? Or will they be marginalized repositories from their inception? To claim attention in these new memory parks, will each memorial have to be made spectacular, and will this quality work against their meditative and reflective functions?

Older memorials invoked painful social conflicts through the semblance of people identified with them, such as Martin Luther King, for civil rights, or Abraham Lincoln, for the abolition of slavery. The new memorials instead attempt to represent the issues themselves, and the concepts and emotions associated with them. We need to be alert to the danger that the transnational discourse of memory that inscribes and is inscribed by these memorials may become so general, so generic, that the memory of each specific violation is severed from the historical conditions that produced it.

September 23, 2001. Postscript

As I was readying this essay for its editors, I watched from my rooftop as the towers of the World Trade Center were destroyed in less than an hour and a half by a suicidal terrorist attack. At this writing, it is thought that the toll of the missing and presumed dead could exceed 6,000 — people of all economic classes, ethnic groups, and nationalities. Since September 11, 2001, the people of New York have been congregating in public squares in spontaneous memorials and vigils, to mourn and to reassure ourselves of our solidarity with other living people. To most cosmopolitan New Yorkers, the towers were not symbols of the United States's financial power, as they were intended to be a quarter of a century ago; that power is by now physically dispersed, and better symbolized by the flickering of stock indexes on computer screens. In the premodern frame of reference of the attackers, however, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon must have been sexually charged symbols of their enemy's financial and military might, and the destruction of the towers the emasculation of the enemy. Did they expect Westerners to look at this destruction as a kind of countermonument, a vengeful memorial to the Iraqi or Palestinian victims of American bombs? And how are the victims of the attack on the World Trade Center to be memorialized themselves? Does one memorial deny the other?

The rubble is not yet cleared, and there have already been calls to rebuild the towers in the manner of the Soviet reconstruction of buildings and entire urban districts razed in World War II, trying to replicate what was there before. Others want the site to remain open, a space of silence and commemoration, in the manner of the memorial to the victims of Timothy McVeigh's attack on the federal office building in Oklahoma City. Two artists whose workspace was on the 91st floor of the north tower have already proposed an ephemeral memorial in the form of powerful beams of light rising from a reflecting pool, reflecting a view of the towers as "ghost limbs we can feel even though they are not there anymore."[29]

But capitalist logic will demand the rebuilding of a valuable Manhattan property, and nationalist sentiment will likely demand the restoration of the skyline as the most visible sign of the country's unbreakable strength, even if large financial-service companies may never return to occupy the site of their catastrophic loss. To build a new World Trade Center on the ruins of the old would be to pretend that what happened never did; to focus the discussion on how the site should be rebuilt — instead of on what should be built, and why — would be to confuse purpose with appearance. A rebuilding of the site capable of matching the imagination of those who plotted its demise will require an understanding of the extent to which New York is a "world center" for so many different communities, cultural and scientific as well as financial. New York is a cultural artifact that now belongs to

the world because it embodies the potentialities of the urban global community. That is the reason it should be made whole again. And any rebuilding of the site will be entwined with the issue of what is to be memorialized and how it is to be represented.

Susana Torre. Constructing Memorials. In: Okwui Enwezor, Carlos Basualdo, Ute Meta Bauer, Susanne Ghez, Sarat Maharaj, Mark Nash, Octavio Zaya (ed.): Experiments with the Truth. Documenta11_Platform2. Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit. 2002, pp. 343-360.

References

1 I am using the concept of "cultural memory“ as it is developed by Jan Assman in "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,“ New German Critique 65 (1995), to signify collective memory inscribed in rituals, texts, images, and monuments recalling momentous historical events. See also the pioneering work of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, La Mémoire collective (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).

2 Current literature makes a distinction between "monuments,“ built to commemorate victories, and "memorials,“ dedicated to grief and loss. See Marita Sturken, "The Wall, the Screen and the Image: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial,“ Representations, no. 35 (Summer 1991): 118-42.

3 Throughout this essay I use terms such as "victim,“ "atrocity,“ and "crime against humanity“ in their legal sense, as it has evolved since the Nuremberg trials after World War II.

4 On the concept of memory as it is embodied in rituals, see Paul Connerton, "Commemorative Ceremonies,“ How Societies Remember (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 41-71.

5 See Ken Shulman, "A Monument to Mothers and Lost Children,“ New York Times, September 20, 1998, Arts and Leisure Section, pp. 40-41.

6 The term is Pierre Nora's. See his essay "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de mémoire,“ Representations, no. 26 (Spring 1989), for a discussion of this concept.

7 Marion Weiss, codesigner of the memorial, discussed this decision in her presentation at the conference "Inherited Ideologies,“ at the University of Pennsylvania in March 1995. See also Weiss, "The Politics of Underestimation,“ in Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Weisman, eds., The Sex of Architecture (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), pp. 251-62.

8 Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., an early supporter of the memorial organizers, identified the site. Because the selection did not follow established procedure, it required the approval of Congress. The story of how this was obtained is well described in Joel L. Swerdow, "To Heal a Nation,“ National Geographic, May 1985, pp. 555-73.

9 See Elaine Sciolino, "Fighting for Space in Memorial Heaven,“ New York Times, June 26, 2001, p. A24, and "Agencies Limit New Memorials on Coveted Washington Mall,“ New York Times, September 7, 2001, p. A14.

10 See James E. Young, At Memory's Edge (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 109.

11 I am grateful to Dr. Marta Aizenman for her insight on this matter, and for her recommendation of Judith Herman's Trauma and Recovery (New York: Basic Books, 1992), especially chapter 9, "Remembrance and Mourning," pp. 175-95.

12 Unlike didactic exhibits at some of the former concentration camps in Germany, which feature exhaustive research aimed at creating an understanding of the historical framework, those at Tuol Sleng consist of photographs and documents presented as bare evidence of atrocities, but without a narrative structure.

13 A moving testimony on this situation can be found in Gustavo Bruzzone's interview with Tati Almeyda of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires, "Quiero tocar el nombre de mi hijo (I want to touch my son's name ...), in Ramona (Buenos Aires) 9-10 (2000): 10-12.

14 See Adam Michnik, "Poles and Jews: How Deep the Guilt," New York Times, March 17, 2001, p. B7.

15 Avishai Margalit, a professor of philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, states that "reconciliation, unlike repentance, is a symmetrical relation." See the report of the working conference "Truth and Reconciliation," organized by the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development and Documenta11 at The Hague, July 6, 2000 [see p. 63 in this volume]. In my disagreement with his assertion I draw from Jacques Derrida's speculative argument in "On Forgiveness," On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

16 See Young, At Memory's Edge, pp. 140-44.

17 Jochen Gerz, quoted in ibid., p. 144.

18 I discuss the formal structure of the Mothers' ritualized march in my essay "Claiming the Public Space: The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo," in Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Weisman, eds., The Sex of Architecture (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), pp. 241-50.

19 The curriculum of the Universidad Popular Madres de Plaza de Mayo can be found at vvww.madres.org/universidad/escuelas/arte/programa.htm.

20 See Hélène Lipstadt, "Thiepval in the Age of the Anti-Monument," Harvard Design Magazine, Fall 1999, pp. 65-70. In her thoughtful and detailed analysis of Sir Edwin Lutyens's monument, Lipstadt also discusses the views of other scholars and designers, including Vincent Scully and Maya Lin.

21 See Young, At Memory's Edge, p. 159.

22 This fragmented space has proven an intractable challenge for curators, as the space frustrates the succesful display of objects. Daniel Libeskind may have intended this space more as a symbolic memorial to loss and absence than as a place to recover the loss through the presence of cultural artifacts.

23 Web links to the sites of most U.S. Vietnam veterans' memorials can be accessed through http://grunt.space.swri.edu.

24 See Andreas Huyssen's essays "El Parque de la Memoria. Una glosa desde lejos," Punto de Vista (Buenos Aires), December 2000, pp. 25-28, and "El Parque de la Memoria: The Art and Politics of Memory," Harvard University DRCLAS Winter 2001 Newsletter, available at www.harvard.edu followed by a search for "Huyssen."

25 For the names and works of the artists participating in the competition, see www.parquedelamemoria.org.ar. The designers of the monument are Baudizzone, Lestard, Varas, and Becker & Ferrari.

26 Torture chambers were maintained at the Escuela Superior Militar Argentina under the military government of 1976-83.

27 Clorindo Testa's proposal received a Fourth Mention in the international competition, which received 665 submissions, but it will not be executed.

28 See David W. Dunlap, "Memorial to the Hunger, Complete with Old Sod," New York Times, March 15, 2001, p. E1.

29 See "Filling the Void: A Memorial by Paul Myoda and Julian LaVerdiere," The New York Times Magazine, September 23, 2001, p. 80.