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Exhibiting Atrocity

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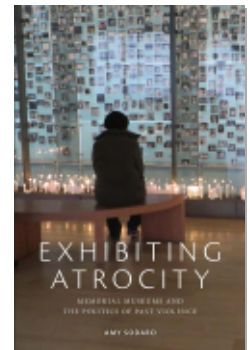
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NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Dark tourism, also referred to as thanatourism, refers to tourism at sites of grief, death, and suffering and has been receiving increased scholarly attention in recent years. The seminal book on the topic is *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* by J. John Lennon and Malcolm Foley (2000), but there is a growing body of scholarly works on the topic.
2. In this way, they might be considered what Elzbieta Matynia would call “spaces of appearance” for performative democratic practice (2009).

CHAPTER 1: THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW FORM

1. Anecdotally, a quick search on TripAdvisor shows that the museums in this book are all listed in the top ten things to do in their cities, with the exception of the House of Terror in Budapest, which is, however, in the top 10 percent of recommended things to do.
2. Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theories perhaps best represent this belief that the past is always present; as he writes, “In mental life nothing which has once been formed can perish” (1961, 16). The past for Freud is a reality that shapes the individual in the present, a notion that was dramatically challenged by Halbwachs’s theory of the social construction of memory.
3. Zygmunt Bauman stridently and compellingly makes this argument in *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989).
4. This is an argument excellently illustrated by Elazar Barkan and Belma Bećirbašić in their work on the former Yugoslavia (2015).
5. The International Center for Transitional Justice, the leading organization in the field and that has defined the field itself and its academic study, lists on its website the six pillars of transitional justice: criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs (both material and symbolic), gender justice, security system reform, and memorialization efforts. See <http://ictj.org/en/tj/#1> [Accessed February 4, 2011].
6. Several widely cited surveys of US museum visitors found that for the vast majority of those surveyed, museums were considered to be one of the most trustworthy sources of historical information, even more so than books or relatives (AMS 2001; Reach Advisors 2008). More recently, even as trust has diminished among the US public in many spheres of society like politics and media, another Reach Advisors poll of seven thousand participants found that museums ranked 6.4 on a scale of 1–10 for trustworthiness, above NPR and Wikipedia (Reach Advisors 2015).

7. Jeshajahu Weinberg, former director of the USHMM, has written about what differentiates it from other history museums; he highlights that its point of departure is not the collection but rather the story of the Holocaust. It is, according to him, “an attempt at visual historiography . . . a narrative museum” (1994). However, I prefer the term experiential, as it better captures the essence of memorial museums.

8. Parabolic speakers are speakers able to focus their sound very precisely, so a visitor can stand under or in front of one and essentially be the only person able to hear the speaker.

9. Thomas Cushman (2003) makes this excellent point about the emerging field of genocide studies and its basis in the belief that by studying genocide, we can find a way to prevent it, though genocide itself is often rooted in these modern ideas that society can be perfected. However, genocide itself increasingly relies on the tools of modernity for its perpetration, which complicates the idea that through education we can prevent it.

CHAPTER 2: US HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

1. The full report from the commission can be found at <https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum/presidents-commission> [Accessed February 13, 2017].

2. See, for example, Barbie Zelizer (2002b), “Photography, Journalism & Trauma,” in *Journalism after September 11*.

3. Most notably, in 2005, Yad Vashem reopened after a ten-year, \$100-million renovation, the centerpiece of which is the Holocaust History Museum, a forty-thousand-square-foot museum intended to bring “Holocaust remembrance well into the 21st century” (<http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/museum/overview.asp#!prettyPhoto> [Accessed July 7, 2015]).

4. For an excellent discussion of “the six million” as a Holocaust icon, see Stier 2015.

5. Wiesel’s writings on the Holocaust, especially his book *Night* (which is frequently read by high school students), have greatly influenced America’s reading of the Holocaust. He sees it as something that can never be understood but must be remembered for the sake of humanity. Almost incapable of being represented, the Holocaust to Wiesel is almost only comprehensible and approachable through survivor testimony and is totally unique in history (Linenthal 1995, 4).

6. Arguments about the uniqueness of the Holocaust are usually framed in terms of the six million (Jewish victims) versus the eleven million (six million plus five million other victims). This figure—eleven million—was the invention of Simon Wiesenthal, another prominent Holocaust survivor in the United States who is a proponent of the inclusion of other victims.

7. The Museum Council was expanded at this time, in late 1979, to include fifty-five presidential appointees, who are chosen by the president from a list of candidates compiled by the current council members. Five members each are selected from Congress and the Senate. The term for an appointee is five years, and they can be reappointed.

8. TripAdvisor recently listed it as the number-four attraction in Washington, DC (2016).

9. Subsequently a Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian was constructed, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture has just opened; both of these museums focus not primarily on genocide and slavery but on celebrating culture and heritage.

10. Tim Cole, for example, argues that Yad Vashem's recent renovation was a "response to the challenge to its monopoly over the 'Holocaust' coming from Washington, DC" (2000, 136).

11. For an excellent discussion of the United States' failure to respond to genocide again and again over the course of the twentieth century, see Samantha Power's *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide* (2002).

CHAPTER 3: HOUSE OF TERROR

An earlier version of this chapter appeared as "Haunted by the Spectre of Communism: Silence and Spectacle in Hungary's House of Terror," in *Silence, Screen, and Spectacle: Rethinking Social Memory in the Age of Information*, edited by Lindsey Freeman, Benjamin Nienass, and Rachel Daniell (Berghahn, 2014), and is being used with permission from Berghahn.

1. The Fidesz (Young Democrats) Party was formed in the 1980s and was one of the main opposition forces in the movement against communism. Throughout the years, it has had several ideological shifts but has remained right-wing or center-right and swept the 2010 election on a right-wing populist wave.

2. Throughout the region, a number of museums devoted to remembering fascism and communism embody a similar set of tensions in their remembrance of these two totalitarian regimes. Some examples include the Museum of Occupations in Tallinn, Estonia, and the Museum of Occupation in Riga, Latvia, which both tell the story of occupation first by the Soviets, then the Nazis, and again the Soviets; the Museum of Genocide Victims in Vilnius, Lithuania, which also tells the story of fascism and communism, with a focus on the communist genocide; and the Topography of Terror in Berlin, a museum and documentation center on the former SS and Gestapo headquarters in Berlin flanked by the Berlin Wall. A different tension is found in museums devoted solely to communism, such as the DDR Museum in Berlin and Prague's Museum of Communism, between depicting the terror of communist totalitarianism and producing a seeming nostalgia for everyday life under communism. As we shall see, this tension is also present in the House of Terror.

3. For example, until 1989, the exhibitions and displays at Auschwitz did not mention the specificity of the Jewish victims/victimization in the death camp and instead referred only to the Polish victims of fascism (Young 1993).

4. For example, just after the transition, the new democratic government tried to right the problem of inflation by allowing a dramatic rise in fuel prices, which resulted in a days-long blockade of the streets of Budapest in October 1990; fearing further unrest, the government capitulated and continued to subsidize fuel (Bohle and Greskovits 2009, 54).

5. Schmidt (personal communication) anecdotally tells the story of the opening of the museum when a group of survivors of communism visited with a group of youth, aged six to sixteen. The survivors were quite unhappy with the museum, instead expecting something more traditional; however, after visiting the exhibit with the youth, their minds were completely changed and they loved the museum.
6. Altering a World Heritage site building like this was a point of huge contention and controversy, though Schmidt happily asserts that the controversy over the facade gave the museum more publicity than it could have hoped for and ultimately backfired for the museum's detractors.
7. The museum's soundtrack was composed by Ákos Kovács.
8. The phones throughout the museum also play testimony, political speeches, and so on, none of which is translated.
9. The House of Terror website does tell you that no executions were carried out at 60 Andrássy, though it's never explicitly said in the exhibition: http://www.terrorhaza.hu/en/exhibition/basement/reconstructed_prison_cell.html [Accessed April 2, 2011].
10. In an interview, Aron Mathe explained that the concept of the memorial comes from a story told to Kovacs, the exhibition designer, by his grandfather, who fled Hungary under communism by affixing torches to bamboo poles that waved in the wind and distracted the border guards, allowing him to cross the border undetected.
11. The perpetrators are defined as those "who took an active part in establishing and maintaining the two Hungarian totalitarian terror regimes . . . as well as those who held responsible positions in the executive orders of these two regimes" (Exhibition guide).
12. This wall of perpetrators is highly controversial, especially as many are still alive and have indeed gone free. Maria Schmidt told me the story of a man who came to her and begged her to take down his photo because his second wife, whom he had recently married, did not know that he had been a member of the political police and would divorce him if she found out; his children had already found his photo in the museum and were not speaking to him.
13. The journalist and author Anne Applebaum, for example, is listed as an associate on the museum's website; when asked about her relationship to the museum, she said that she doesn't really have one but stayed in an apartment maintained by the XXI Century Institute once while doing research in Budapest.
14. Anecdotally, most Hungarian intellectuals I have met refuse as a matter of principle to visit the museum.
15. Unfortunately I do not have the space or time here to devote to a discussion of the Uprising Museum, which deserves its own chapter or book.
16. This museum, called Emlékpont, which translates to "point of remembrance in time," is intended to encapsulate the memories of the town of Hódmezővásárhely from 1945 to 1990. See <http://www.emlekpont.hu/eng/index.html> [Accessed April 2, 2011].
17. Aron Mathe showed me the artifact storage room, which was hardly larger than a closet with only a few dusty volumes and several midcentury artifacts on its shelves.
18. The planned memorial depicts an eagle, representing Germany, descending on the angel Gabriel, a symbol of Hungary, with a plaque stating that it remembers all of

the victims of the German occupation. Critics rightly argue that this not only fails to recognize Jews as the primary victims of the Holocaust but, worse, depicts Hungary as an innocent victim, when in fact the Hungarian government and portions of the population were highly complicit.

CHAPTER 4: KIGALI GENOCIDE MEMORIAL CENTRE

An earlier version of this chapter appeared as “Politics of the Past: Remembering the Rwandan Genocide at the Kigali Memorial Centre,” in *Curating Difficult Knowledge: Violent Pasts in Public Places*, edited by Erica Lehrer, Cynthia E. Milton, and Monica Eileen Patterson (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and is being used with permission from Palgrave Macmillan.

1. Much of the ethnic distinction is based on appearance and greatly exaggerated. Tutsi are supposedly taller, lankier, with a thinner nose, lighter skin, oval face, and straighter hair—in other words, they look more like Europeans; Hutu are supposed to be shorter and stockier with a wider nose, darker skin, and curlier hair. All of this is rooted in European “race science” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and Jonathan Hanning Speke’s “Hamitic hypothesis” of a “superior race of negroes” (Des Forges 1999).
2. To this day, it is still unknown who shot down President Habyarimana’s plane. At the time, Hutu leaders claimed it was the RPF and used this as an excuse to start killing Tutsis, though today it is more widely believed that it was Hutu extremists dismayed at the moderation of Habyarimana, who had recently signed a cease-fire agreement with the RPF, toward the Tutsi population. Today there are others who believe that Kagame gave the orders to shoot down the plane in order to sabotage the cease-fire and ensure full military victory of the RPF over the Hutu leaders; clearly this is a highly controversial claim in Rwanda today.
3. In 1999, the government created the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) as a semi-autonomous body intended to educate about and promote unity and reconciliation. See <http://www.nurc.gov.rw/index.php?id=83> [Accessed November 2, 2015].
4. In Kinyarwanda, *interahamwe* means “those who stand together” and refers to the armed Hutu militias that were largely responsible for perpetrating the genocide.
5. Most recently, Patrick Karegeya, Rwanda’s former external intelligence chief, was found murdered in a hotel in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2014; many believe Kagame ordered the killing.
6. In October 2010, the UN released a report, “DRC: Mapping Human Rights Violations 1993–2003,” that implicates the RAF and Rwandan government in genocide in the DRC. The release of the report was a serious international test of the Kagame regime, which has enjoyed impunity for crimes committed in postgenocide Rwanda and Congo. However, Kagame has powerful friends, and the UN accusations fell on largely deaf ears in the international community.

See <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AfricaRegion/Pages/RDCProjetMapping.aspx> [Accessed November 2, 2015].

7. These ambitious plans include Rwanda's Vision 2020 (<http://edprs.rw/content/vision-2020> [Accessed November 2, 2015]), which was implemented in 2000 and seeks to develop Rwanda from an agricultural to a knowledge-based, middle-income economy by 2020.

8. The term *gacaca* comes from "lawn," referring to how members of the *gacaca* sit on the lawn to listen to cases and consider appropriate punishments (Rettig 2008).

9. The image of piles of bones stacked in churches is one that often comes to mind when thinking about genocide commemoration in Rwanda; and the most prominent genocide memorials outside of the Kigali Centre, such as the churches in Nyamata and Ntarama and the technical school in Murambi, still display the bones, bodies, and clothing of the thousands of people killed on the sites.

10. There are now also Holocaust Museums in Durban and Johannesburg.

11. In addition to funding from the Clinton Global Initiative, funding was secured from the Waterman foundation in the United Kingdom, the Swedish and Belgian governments, the British department of education, among others.

12. Aegis created a documentary, *Our Memory, Our Future*, that describes the creation of the center: Aegis Trust. (n.d.). *Our Memory, Our Future: Creating the Kigali Memorial Centre* [DVD]: Aegis Trust.

13. For example, the USHMM and other Holocaust and memorial museums have had small exhibits on other genocides or comparing genocide, though these kinds of exhibits have generally been supplementary to the permanent exhibit, not an integral part of it.

14. All of these senior leaders of the genocide have been indicted, tried, and convicted by the ICTR: <http://www.unictr.org/Cases/tabid/204/Default.aspx> [Accessed February 16, 2017].

15. Each grave is four meters wide by eight meters deep; the coffins in each grave are all different sizes and can hold the remains of many individuals, as it is primarily bones that have been recovered; often it is difficult or impossible to identify the remains or find complete remains.

16. The growing archive has evolved out of the many materials collected to create the museum exhibition that did not end up on display. In 2010, the Aegis Trust, in partnership with CNLG and with support from University of Southern California Shoah Foundation, University of Texas Libraries, Austin, and the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies in the Netherlands, officially launched the archive, which continues to collect survivor testimony, perpetrator confessions, film footage, artifacts, photographs, documents, and scholarly work related to the genocide. All of this will be available online through the archive's digital database: http://genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw/index.php/Welcome_to_Genocide_Archive_Rwanda. The archive is intended to be the largest repository of information about the 1994 genocide in the world and is expanding rapidly, with a number of specialized programs in addition to collecting, preserving, and digitizing its collection. For example, in collaboration with IBUKA, the central Rwandan survivors' organization, the archive manages a victim's database that

compiles biographical information on victims; not unlike the databases at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago and the 9/11 Museum, the purpose is to restore the humanity and memory of those killed. The archive is also engaged in mapping sites of genocide and reconstruction. Interactive maps with virtual tours of genocide memorials and key sites connected to the genocide are available on the website.

17. Though it could (cynically, but perhaps correctly) be argued that in the House of Terror, prevention means preventing the Socialists from gaining political power, as they are the successor party to the communists.

18. The changes to the constitution allowing him to run for a third seven-year term also allow for him to run for two additional five-year terms, meaning that he could be in office until 2034.

CHAPTER 5: MUSEUM OF MEMORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. The term comes from the title of a 2006 book by Naomi Roht-Arriaza, *The Pinochet Effect: Transnational Justice in the Age of Human Rights* (University of Pennsylvania Press), and reflects the global implications of Pinochet's arrest on international transitional justice and human rights.

2. A summary of the Valech Report is available on the website of the US Institute for Peace: <http://www.usip.org/publications/commission-of-inquiry-chile-03> [Accessed February 12, 2017].

3. Most of the documentation comes from the collections of these human rights organizations: Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas (FASIC), Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo (CODEPU), Fundación de Protección a la Infancia Dañada por los Estados de Emergencia (PIDEE), and TeleAnálisis (Sepulveda 2011, 19).

4. This is dramatically different from a tour that I took of the former detention and torture center in Buenos Aires, ESMA (Escuela Superior de Mecánica de la Armada/Navy Mechanical School), which emphasized at every possible turn the role of the United States in installing and supporting Argentina's military junta.

5. There was a huge uproar over the 9/11 Museum's gift shop and café when the museum opened. Families were outraged at the "crass commercialism" of a gift shop on a site deemed sacred by many (Phillip 2014; also see Sturken 2015). The symbol of such crass kitsch became a cheese plate, in the shape of the United States with hearts marking the three sites of the planes crashing (Chung 2014). The museum was also forced to scale back plans for a café serving comfort food and artisanal booze by celebrity chef Danny Meyers. While the outrage over the 9/11 Museum café and gift shop was particularly visible, most memorial museums have to negotiate this tension and ultimately seem to decide to include shops and cafés.

CHAPTER 6: NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL MUSEUM

1. By some estimates, a third of the population watched the events unfold live and another third knew about the events within twenty-four hours, making it truly a twenty-first-century “media event” (Dayan and Katz 1994).
2. The full list of jurors is available here: <http://www.911memorial.org/design-competition> [Accessed July 13, 2016].
3. The layout that was agreed upon is one described by principle designer Jake Barton of Local Projects as “meaningful adjacency.” His firm designed an algorithm that determined what he refers to as the “geography of event,” arranging the names of individuals according to where they were (Barton 2013).
4. The composite is a controversial chunk of material that experts estimate is approximately five floors of one of the towers melded together by the heat; the controversy lies in the belief by many that it contains human remains, though experts have concluded that it does not because of the high heat that created it. Discussions on the composite and other controversial artifacts and concepts can be found here: <http://www.911memorial.org/museum-planning-conversation-series>.
5. Edward Linenthal is a well-known American historian who wrote books on the USHMM and the Oklahoma City Memorial. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is a professor of Performance Studies at New York University and is the project director of the new POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw.
6. This is a take on the title of Erika Doss’s book *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (2010).
7. This is a distinction made by Jeffrey Olick (1999) between collected memory—the collected memories of individuals (a concept also used by James Young [1993])—and collective memory that occurs *sui generis* within a group.
8. The Last Column is the final steel beam that was removed from the site. Rescue workers covered the column with messages and tributes, and it has taken on a heavy symbolic meaning as a sign of resilience and heroism.
9. These were the last words famously spoken by Todd Beamer, a passenger on Flight 93, who made a call to an airphone supervisor, Lisa Jefferson, when it became clear that the flight had been hijacked and described to her the passenger’s plan to attempt to thwart the hijackers by flying the plane into the ground.
10. I visited the museum with a group of students who were very young when 9/11 occurred, and this was an anecdotal response of a student when asked what she thought about the museum.

CHAPTER 7: PROMISES AND LIMITS

1. This reflects Walter Benjamin’s concept of the aura of an object, described in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (1936).
2. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia was established in 2006 as a national Cambodian tribunal with assistance from the United Nations in order to bring to trial the most senior leaders of the Khmer regime. Five individuals have been

brought before the court, two of whom died before their trials were completed and three of whom are serving life sentences for their crimes.

3. District Six was a neighborhood in downtown Cape Town that was cleared of its black and colored population to become white only. The occupants were sent to live in desolate townships outside of Cape Town, and the District Six neighborhood was left an empty plot of land and largely remains so today.

4. The ID cards were originally age- and gender-specific to encourage even greater identification, and the story of the individual's fate was meant to unfold with each stage of the exhibition. Though the concept has been simplified, clearly the effort to make individuals identify with the victims remains strong.

