6 Globalization, Universalization, and Forensic Turn: Postcatastrophic Memorial Museums[☆]

Ljiljana Radonić

Many recently inaugurated museums dealing with atrocities in the 20th century have a similar appearance. In the *Terror Háza* [*House of Terror*], a building in central Budapest where people were tortured, first by Hungarian Nazi collaborators and later by communist state police, the wall depicting victim portraits reaches from the ground to the top floor—a clear reference to the *Tower of Faces* at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Yet, in the Hungarian case, we do learn nothing about the individual victims, who are the focus of the private photographs collection in Washington; the whole House of Terror serves only one purpose: to stage Hungarian collective suffering, Hungary itself as the biggest victim of all. Ten years after the genocide in Rwanda, the Kigali Memorial Museum opened with a permanent exhibition in the capital approved by the president of Rwanda and curated by a UK-based NGO that specialized in Holocaust exhibitions (Brandstetter 2010). A black panel with private photographs of the victims highlights the individual victim, a focus that goes hand in hand with the "universalization of the Holocaust" (Eckel and Moisel 2008) as a "negative icon" (Diner 2007, 7) of our era. At first, following the big commemorative events in 2004, the atrocities were referred to as the "1994 Genocide" without naming the victim groups. Yet when the government of Rwanda took the decision to change all references to the 1994 Genocide to "Genocide against the Tutsis," the Kigali Memorial Center had to follow suit—although mentioning only the Tutsis as victims does not mention the fact that there were Hutu who protected Tutsi during the genocide and that revenge violence against Hutu occurred until the 2000s (Buckley-Zistel 2006, 141). There is, therefore, an obvious tension between "the global rush to commemorate atrocities" (Williams 2007) at postcatastrophic sites in a globalized way, and the challenge of self-critical "negative memory" (Koselleck 2002) that not only identifies with

[☆]This text is part of the "Globalized Memorial Museum" project and has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (GMM - grant agreement No 816784).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003050544-6

the victim but allows for delicate questions of guilt and responsibility, of perpetrators and collaborators.

Much has been written about transnational/cosmopolitan/universalized/globalized memory (Stone 2004; Levy and Sznaider 2005; Alexander 2009; Assmann and Conrad 2010; Leggewie and Lang 2011). This paper argues that what is called "globalization" compromises in fact three parallel, partially contrary trends: (1) The US Holocaust Memorial Museum and Yad Vashem are role models for one concept of universal moral orientation that uses victim narratives in order to build identity. This includes the focus on the individual victim (instead of photographs of anonymous corpses or heroic narratives) and aesthetical musealization "standards"—even for postcatastrophic in-situ memorial sites. (2) The German concept of "negative memory"—self-critically confronting the crimes committed by one's own community—has inspired museums to more or less successfully tackle the delicate question of collaboration in order to challenge collective self-victimization and externalization of responsibility. (3) The genocides of the 1990s have led to a globally unfolding "forensic turn:" bones, spaces, and material traces of atrocities, become subject to investigation, thus bringing about a profound change in the ways the memorial museums deal with material traces of the violence they come to commemorate. This shift has an impact on "old" memorial sites such as Sobibór and Treblinka, transforming them into sites of archaeological research after 70 years.

Do specific obligations arise in connection with postcatastrophic memorial museums in-situ? Can memorials at the sites of mass crimes do greater justice to complex historical events and victims than historical museums in capital cities—museums that are often criticized for embodying a political agenda? Are historical events, perpetrators, and victims presented differently at such sites? How are universalization and individualization, negative memory, and the forensic turn related to each other at the memorial museums? Can we say that the aesthetics and forms developed by Holocaust memorial museums "travel" (Erll 2011, 13) to museums in Rwanda and Srebrenica, while the forensic approach "travels" to Sobibór and Treblinka, influenced by the recent genocides? Connecting all three trends will show how the following categories are pertinent: flagship of national identity vs. motivation by external "standards;" focusing on the suffering of one's "own" collective vs. that of others; externalization of responsibility vs. negative memory; representing collective vs. individual victim stories.

Memorial museums not only display history but also commemorate crimes and genocides since they deal with traumatic events of the recent past. Yet, while concepts of post-trauma and postmemory tend to focus on the individual aspect, or respectively the individual transmission within the family, the concept of postcatastrophe also looks at collective constellations, objects, remains, and ruins and the specifics of in-situ postcatastrophic sites (Artwińska and Tippner 2017, 15–39). Memorial museums constitute an inherent contradiction. While a memorial is usually devoted to history

seemingly set in stone, a history museum is presumed to be concerned with interpretation, contextualization, and critique. "The coalescing of the two suggests that there is an increasing desire to add both a moral framework to the narration of terrible historical events and more in-depth contextual explanations to commemorative acts" (Williams 2007, 8). That many recent memorial museums find themselves instantly politicized itself reflects the uneasy conceptual coexistence of reverent remembrance and critical interpretation.

Museums are key producers of knowledge and history, of the dominant historical narrative that is always shaped by current identity-building purposes; they display how a society interprets its past, but they are definitely not neutral spaces of knowledge transfer showing how "it" was before. They are, rather, manifestations of cultural patterns, inclusion and exclusion mechanisms, as well as social, ethnic, and religious in- and outgroups—contested spaces (Sommer-Sieghart 2006, 159; Simon 2010). Memorial museums are sites where identity is represented, official memory is canonized, and the dominant historical narrative is made visible as the foundation of the present. On the other hand, museums can also challenge the hegemonic national narrative.

The discussion over the role of museums as propagators of national identity goes hand in hand with the diagnosis of a change in perspective. What was formulated as a desideratum 15 years ago (Crane 1997), is self-evident today: The focus on the victims' perspective has, for the most part, replaced hero, martyr, or resistance narratives (Rousso 2011, 32). Still, it is necessary to distinguish between the individual approach that aims at displaying "ordinary life before" (Köhr 2007) and empathy without identification on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the victim represented as part of a collective, as an emotionalizing symbol for national suffering. While the former does not need to conceal the perpetrator and the social context, since memory implies the question of quality and root causes of the atrocities, the latter goes hand in hand with the externalization of responsibility, leading to a "Europe of victims" (Hammerstein and Hofmann 2009, 203)—and beyond the European frame.

In both cases, decisions concerning which objects and images should be used, how to organize them, and how to choose a space to display them involve aesthetic, ethical, and political issues typically loaded with significance. Memorial museums stand for authenticity and evidence on the one hand, but also often desire to create an emotive, dramatic visitor experience, on the other.[1] Apor and Sarkisova argue that physical objects play a significant role in the relationship of the present to the recent past, which is why the

> "touch of the real" makes historical exhibitions so attractive for many variants of the politics of history and memory. … Many of the museums representing Communism are either the actual result of, or

> closely connected to, resolutely articulated politics of commemoration. (Apor and Sarkisova 2008, 5)

One would expect the "authentic" postcatastrophic sites of atrocities to differ from memorial museums in the US, Israel, or the capitals of European countries not located on such sites. While the latter can be viewed through the prism of their urban and architectural contexts, the political debates and decisions leading to their establishment in strategic or peripheral urban settings, the former are assessed principally as more or less creative (and historically accurate) responses to the actual spatialities and materialities of violence (Schindel and Colombo 2014). In Rwanda and Srebrenica, forensic investigations and archaeological research preceded the construction of memorial museums, which incorporate the findings both in their exhibitions and architectural arrangements. The Kigali Genocide Memorial and Sobibór are obvious cases in point. Elsewhere, not least in some former National Socialist concentration camps, the demand for "authenticity" (Assmann 2005, 325–338) has often gone hand in hand with very selective preservation policies, beginning in the early postwar years in the case of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek and the 1960s in Germany and Austria. To date, the mass graves in their immediate vicinity have not been taken into account at sites like Jasenovac. Why do the spatialities and materialities of atrocities serve as independent, impersonal agents (Latour 2005; Olsen 2010) in some memorials on postcatastrophic sites but not in others?

"Universalization" and "Globalization" of the Holocaust

The "memory-boom" in the West after the Cold War emphasized the Holocaust as the "negative icon" (Diner 2007, 7) of the 20th century. It has become a universal imperative for respect for human rights in general, and as a "container" for the memory of different victims and victim groups (Levy/Sznaider 2005). While Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider understood cosmopolitization of the Holocaust at first as a predominantly positive trend, in the preface to the second German edition of their renowned book they call it the "price" of this "de-contextualization" that "there are no Jews and no Germans allowed any more in this discourse. There are only humans and humanity, as follows from the term 'crimes against humanity' and the development of a moral and legal codex against 'genocide'" (Levy and Sznaider 2005, 12). In the global context, "universalization of the Holocaust" furthermore means that different victim groups' stress that they have suffered "just like the Jews" (Rothberg 2009, 239).

In Europe, this "universalization of the Holocaust" has another dimension: the memory of the Holocaust has become a negative European founding myth (Leggewie and Lang 2011, 15). Postwar Europe is understood as a collective with a common destiny that developed shared structures in order to

avoid a recurrence of the catastrophe of the Holocaust. In its search for an identity that goes beyond economic and monetary union, this founding myth provides a compelling common narrative that is otherwise lacking. This is one of the reasons why the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (today: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, IHRA)—founded in Sweden as a network of politicians and experts in 1998—aroused so much interest and today includes 31 countries, most of them European.

The international Holocaust conference that took place in Stockholm on 27 January 2000, the 55th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, for the first time brought heads of state together with renowned experts and survivors from 46 states (Kroh 2008, 111). Among the resulting declarations was a recommendation that countries introduce a Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January, or another date connected to the murder of the Jews in their respective countries (Schmid 2008). By 2010, 34 of the 56 OSCE member states had followed the recommendation. The "suggestion" that countries join the Holocaust Task Force and implement a Holocaust Memorial Day was the first step toward some kind of "European standard." While not officially applied during the eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004, these standards were internalized by future member countries—as suggested by the fact that Hungary's Holocaust Memorial Centre in Budapest opened a few weeks before the country joined the EU—despite no permanent exhibition having been installed at that point (Fritz 2010, 173).

Acknowledging the Holocaust became an entry ticket to the EU, as Tony Judt (2005) has put it. Running parallel to the "Europeanization of the Holocaust" has been a re-narration of history in Eastern European countries from 1989 onwards, in particular the invention of a "golden era" before communist rule (Cornelißen 2006, 48; Troebst 2013 and 2006). The narrative of a heroic antifascist struggle has been delegitimized along with the communist regimes—if Soviet history was a myth, then the antifascist narrative which was at its core must have been part of this instrumentalization. The trauma of communist crimes, often evoked using symbols familiar from Holocaust memory (railway tracks, carriages), is now placed at the core of memory. A "divided memory" between "East" and "West" has prompted representatives of post-communist states to demand that communist crimes be condemned "to the same extent" as those of the Holocaust. In reaction to these conflicting memories, the European Parliament recommended in 2009 that another memorial day to be introduced on 23 August, the date of the Hitler-Stalin respectively Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1939, in which the victims of Nazism and Stalinism are commemorated together (the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism). While the memory of the victims of Stalinism is thereby finally added to the European canon, the explicit equation of victims of both regimes are raised new problems. The new memorial day is not, in fact, an addition

to 27 January, but its antithesis: while the Holocaust Memorial Day acknowledges the crimes of its own collective, the European Day of Remembrance externalizes responsibility for those crimes to the Nazis and the Soviets. One's "own people" are understood as innocent victims of oppression from outside, while participation in the communist regime is denied and externalized.

When Levy and Sznaider wrote about the "cosmopolitisation of the Holocaust," they concentrated on examples from the US, Israel, and Germany, three countries that have—each in its own way—a very specific relationship to the Shoah. They completely ignored the post-communist states, for example, which renders their claims about the "globalization," or "cosmopolitization" of the trends they describe rather questionable. I argue that what is called "globalization" are in fact three parallel, partially contrary trends.

Trend 1—Archetypical Holocaust Memorial Museums

The "universalization of the Holocaust" makes the approach of a "memorial museum" the dominant paradigm for institutions dealing with atrocities from the 20th century. Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, for which the term "memorial museum" was first developed, serve as role models. The first "globalized" trend thus combines: A universal moral orientation, learning from the Holocaust to respect human rights and prevent new atrocities and "human suffering;" individual victim stories: testimonies, photographs from their "lives before," and auratic objects; and aesthetic musealization "standards" from the US and Israel: dark rooms, victims' belongings, names of the victims written mostly in white letters on dark ground.

This holds true even of in-situ museums at the sites of the Second World War atrocities in Germany, Austria, and Poland, and memorials in Rwanda, etc. There is a tendency for in-situ museums to tap into this "global" language of forms without much regard to the actual presence or suitability of relevant material traces on the ground. At the Jasenovac Memorial Museum in Croatia, for example, the fact that the museum is located at the site of a concentration camp—there were still mass graves on the site—does not play much of a role at the exhibition. Thus, it could have been installed anywhere else in the country, since it hardly touches upon the material aspects of the site, the daily routine in the camp, or the camp commanders and overseers. The exhibition focuses on the individual victim stories while referring to the perpetrators merely in generalizing terms as the *Ustaša* as the Croat fascists called themselves. Thus, while one critic called the exhibition "post-modern rubbish," another one rumbled it as a "dray-horse towards Europe" while Croatian EU accession talks were stagnating (Radonić 2010).

I have shown elsewhere (Radonić 2017) that post-communist memorial museums tend to fall into two categories. The first category stresses the allegiance to Europe, refers to international standards of musealization, and claims to focus on the individual victim: The Jasenovac Memorial Museum and the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Budapest show stunning similarities when it comes to dark exhibition rooms, names of the victims written in white letters on a black backdrop, the focus on testimonies, and the personal belongings of individual victims exhibited in glass showcases. Both museums explicitly refer to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., as their role model. In order to determine whether this merely reflects an attempt to invoke Europe and pay lip service to "Western memory standards" or genuinely demonstrates the proliferation of new, transnational forms of "negative memory," we need to examine how the aesthetic form connects to the content of the exhibitions discussed in the next chapter.

In another group of memorial museums, narratives of Nazi occupation are predominantly used to frame an anti-communist interpretation of history. "Threatening" aspects of the memory of Nazism are contained so that it cannot compete with stories of Soviet crimes. Thus, the Shoah here only serves in order to demonstrate that communist crimes were worse, not even to claim that Nazi and communist crimes were equal. Yet both kinds of museums refer to the archetypical aesthetics of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. The House of Terror adopted the principle of the *Tower of Faces* in Washington by exhibiting portraits of the victims on a wall that ranges from the ground floor up to the roof. Yet, these aesthetics originating from the turn toward the individual victim in "western" museology are placed here in a narrative of collective (Hungarian) suffering from Hungarian Nazis and communists. Also, the *Könnyek Terme* (Hall of Tears)" in the basement reminds one strongly of the Children's Memorial at Yad Vashem. Yet its director, Mária Schmidt, had a clear position regarding the Holocaust: the Second World War was not about Jews or genocide. "We are sorry, but the Holocaust, the extermination or salvation of the Jews was a side, so to say, a marginal aspect, which was not the war objective of any of the opponents" (Schmidt 1999). The ostensible equation of Nazi and communist crimes turns into the struggle to contain Holocaust memory while at the same time demonstrating its predominance as the European negative founding myth, by adopting its symbolism and aesthetics.

Post-communist museums take the Holocaust as a reference point when musealization strategies coming from Holocaust museums are implemented: the memory of the Nazi crimes and its victims is contained and marginalized, while at the same time the individualization of the victim narrative is applied only to "our" victims, those who suffered from Communism. Even if the museums decide against trends stemming from international Holocaust museums, they still confirm them as a standard by taking a stand. According

to the director of the *Okupatsioonide muuseu* (Museum of Occupation) in Tallinn, inaugurated in 2003, the building was inspired by the Museum of Danish Resistance in Copenhagen (Ahonen 2008, 233). Its directors see it in clear opposition to Holocaust museums, which he describes as dark, plangent, and creating uneasiness (Ahonen 2005, 108). As per Heiki Ahonen, Western Holocaust museums limited the museum experience through the use of dark and oppressive spaces combined with a hushed reverent tone that was

> [a]lmost church-like. In Holocaust-museums, you are told not to speak loudly, have to behave, but the church atmosphere does not support learning. You are just made to act in a certain way. You are dragged into some kind of environment where there should be no doubts. It's all set. (Ahonen quoted in Mark 2008, 351)

Ahonen sees an impropriety in importing a "Western" style of history that was of much less significance to Estonia than it was to other parts of Europe. He addresses the need to show an international audience the validity of the specific and different nature of an Estonian story that did not need to foreground the Holocaust. When asked by the director of the USHMM what was exhibited at the museum regarding the Holocaust, he answered:

> [E]stonia never had a Jewish question and we just simply don't have any physical items from these people who were killed. […] We are never going to do what's done in some concentration camps, let's say they built the new crematorium and said that this is original. (Ahonen quoted in Mark 2008, 367)

There are meaningful exceptions from this rule grounded in the specific history of each country: Former Nazi satellites and recent deficient democracies in the 1990s, Slovakia and Croatia, are the most prominent examples of the "invocation of Europe," while the *Terezín* memorial in the Czech Republic stands out completely. It prefers a bright aesthetic, including a shiny blue sky outside the symbolic ghetto windows, and does not refer to any kind of European standards. There are also voids in musealization, like in Bulgaria and Rumania, where dozens of memorial museums from the communist era were closed during the half-hearted transformation process in order to be redone, but never reopened.

No matter if post-communist museums import the aesthetics stemming from Holocaust memorial museums or they explicitly refuse their church-like atmosphere that makes you behave in a certain way as Ahonen put it in the quote above: they prove how universalized Holocaust memory is as the universal moral imperative one has to refer to in some way. Thus, even if the museums decide against trends stemming from international

Holocaust museums, they still confirm them as a standard. Yet, to what extent are aesthetics and content contradictory here?

Trend 2—"Negative Memory" and the German Norm of Confronting the Past

Theodor W. Adorno formulated a "new categorical imperative," to arrange our "thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself," (Adorno 1966, 358) and Dan Diner (1988) has called the Shoah a "rupture in civilization." German scholars developed the concept of "negative memory" (Koselleck 2002), something that takes the historically precisely contextualized guilt and responsibility of a "perpetrator country" as an opportunity for critical self-reflection and self-assurance, as the director of the Buchenwald Memorial at the site of the former concentration camp put it (Knigge 2008, 157).

References to this negative past are conceived to be comprehensive and concrete. It has to include victims, perpetrators, and social as well as individual preconditions for deeds, without blending out ambivalences and grey areas that contradict simple schemata of victims and perpetrators. "Negative memory" takes reverence toward victims seriously without pitting it against historical knowledge, striving to understand and reflect. According to Knigge self-critical historical memory is by no means the same as superficial moral rejection (Knigge 2005, 24 and 2008, 159).

Of course, the successor state of the Third Reich had no other choice in developing a new positive national identity other than to claim that it had worked through the Nazi crimes in an exemplary way—while Austria on the other side staged itself as the "first victim" of National Socialism. Yet what Timothy Garton Ash (2011) has called the "DIN [German industrial norm] standards for past-beating"—material on this German notion of memory fills a library by now—was exported to many European countries in the course of the "Europeanization of the Holocaust," and led to self-critically dealing with questions of complicity and collaboration. Only during such a phase was it possible for example for Jan Tomasz Gross' Jedwabne book to have such a heavy impact on the Polish debate. This development is part of the explanation why today the crimes of the Vichy regime, the Swiss "Nazi gold controversy," or Lithuanian execution missions are confronted critically.

Of course, it makes a difference where a museum is situated, for example in Germany, Austria or Japan, as the main perpetrator countries, or in Hungary or Lithuania, the US or Israel. Yet, in the course of the transformation processes in Eastern Europe, liberals from the post-communist countries considered Germany the role model for critically confronting the past. On the level of memorial museums, this trend can be observed at the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest, in which

Hungarian pre-Second World War antisemitism and Hungarian responsibility for the deportation of Jews in 1944 are pinpointed—even including three pictures showing members of the Hungarian population looting a ghetto, which is a very rare visual representation of collaboration and even shows female perpetrators.

At other post-communist museums, new exhibitions opened in the course of the EU accession process have the word Europe written all over them. Take the Múzeum Slovenského národného povstania (Museum of the Slovak National Uprising) in Banská Bystrica. An exhibition was created there in 2004 (in Slovak and English) that is called "Slovak National Uprising 1944—A part of the antifascist resistance in Europe." Prominently featured panels are titled "Europe after 1918," "Europe after 1938," "Resistance movement in Europe," and "International participation in the Slovak National Uprising," the latter stressing that people from 32 nations took part. Up to a point, this Europeanization does indeed reflect an incorporation of the concept of negative memory. In the section on "The Tragedy of Slovak Jews," it is made clear that "from March 25 till October 20, 1942 Slovak Government deported by its own legal-administrative means almost 58,000 Jews from Slovakia to Nazi extermination camps"[2] and that "Slovakia paid 500 Reich Marks to the Third Reich for each deported Jew as evacuation fee. The deportations were brutally organized particularly by the members of Hlinka's Guard and the FS," the Slovak collaborationist forces. Yet the section on the so-called "Slovak Republic" is called "Political life in Slovakia in 1938–1944," rather than, say, "The authoritarian system of the Nazi satellite state." The term "Slovak Republic" is used without adding "so-called" or putting it in inverted commas indicating that the Nazi client state had really been a Republic in the beginning and arguing that the Parliament's powers were abolished only "gradually." Repression is mentioned only once. The panel ends with the following sentence: "In spite of the authoritarian regime the Slovak Republic achieved many positive results in the areas of economy, science, schools and culture, owing to the war boom." Negative memory only goes so far when it comes to depicting the state during the Second World War as a milestone on the way to Slovak independence.

Trend 3—The Forensic Turn

After 1989, the word genocide was primarily associated with Rwanda and Srebrenica. So to what extent, do those two events also have a universalizing effect? Both in Rwanda and in Srebrenica, human remains are the focus of the memorialization processes. The bones and skulls are the centerpiece of most Rwandan exhibitions and the Potočari graves and periodical burying ceremonies play a significant role in the struggle around the number of victims of Srebrenica. Obtained as evidence within

the framework of mass graves, exhumations, and forensic investigations conducted for the International Criminal Tribunals that aimed at prosecuting human rights violations in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia (Stover and Peress 1998), the bodily remains of their victims became essential to the spatial arrangement and the exhibitions of the in-situ memorials. This cannot but have an effect on the cultural and political functions of those institutions, which, additionally to their commemorative and educational purposes, came to serve as collections of evidence, cemeteries, and/or spaces of reconciliation through religious and political reburials (Dziuban 2017, 27). Importantly, the focus on material traces of atrocities, especially the search for, exhumation and identification of bodies, has become a standard approach to the human remains resulting from mass violence around the globe (Anstett and Dreyfus 2015; Weizman 2014, 22). This development, described by Anstett and Dreyfus in terms of *forensic turn*, was initiated by the research conducted in the 1980s by human rights forensic teams in Argentina in the aftermath of the junta regime and, later on, in other Latin American countries (Doretti and Fondebrider 2001). Today, forensic archaeology is mobilized not only by human rights organizations or civil society initiatives but also by state agencies and transnational political bodies (Ferrándiz and Robben 2015; Lawrynowicz and Zelazko 2015), establishing a global platform for exchange of study results, practices, and ideas, and building new links between memorial museums.

The forensic approach to memorial sites developed after the recent atrocities has also impacted the "old" memorial sites at the former National Socialist concentration and extermination camps. In Germany, Austria, Poland, and other Central Eastern European countries, those sites have become objects of extensive archaeological research, which focuses on finding and marking mass graves, as well as the analysis of material and spatial structures of the camps (Sturdy Colls 2015). While it could be argued that, in the field of Holocaust research, this new development is, first and foremost, a response to the gradual passing away of the survivors of the Holocaust (IHRA 2015, 13), bringing "the era of the witness" to an end (Wieviorka 2006), this paper locates it rather within a horizon of a broader and globally unfolding *forensic turn*, which radically transforms both practical approaches towards sites of atrocities and cultural sensitivities toward human remains and material traces of violence (Dziuban 2017, 33; Keenan and Weizman 2012).

Both Universalization and the *Forensic Turn* "Travel"

The "universalization of the Holocaust" plays a decisive role in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia. Before 2004, the Kigali Memorial Centre in the capital of Rwanda was a burial ground, with an empty building and a tentative plan for development. The mayor of Kigali organized the

construction of a building there in 2000 and which was used to display victims' remains, with the intention to expand the use of the site as a charnel house by creating "three big bays filled with shelves of skulls and bones […] they wanted to run sounds of babies screaming and the killings going on" (Ibreck 2013, 157). After a visit to the *Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre* in Nottingham, the mayor met and formed a partnership with its directors, the founders of Aegis Trust. A group of political and civil society leaders in Rwanda had formed a committee to organize a new memorial in Kigali for the 2004 anniversary. They wanted a memorial "comparable to Holocaust memorials in Europe and the US" (Ibreck 2013, 157) so they entrusted the British NGO with the exhibition.

At the Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide, a new memorial center opened across the road from the cemetery at the former Dutch UN peacekeeping mission to which the Bosnian Muslims had fled in 1995. Again, it was a team experienced in postcatastrophic memorialization from Westerbork, the Dutch memorial museum at the site of the former Nazi transit camp for Jews and Roma, which was in charge of the exhibition.

The memory of the Holocaust is also universalized in another way: victims of recent conflicts feel the need to obtain greater legitimacy for their victim status by referring to a new Holocaust. In the post-Yugoslav space, Bosnian Muslims, Croats, and Serbs, when referring to the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, often present themselves as the "new Jews" and their adversaries as the "new Fascists" or "new Nazis." In Sarajevo, for example, the memory of the annihilation of the huge Jewish community has been completely superseded by that of the "recent Holocaust" perpetrated against the Bosniaks (Miller 2010; MacDonald 2002). Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader argued during a visit to the Israeli Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem in 2005 that, during the war of the 1990s, the Croats were victims of the "same kind of evil as Nazism and Fascism," and that no one knew better than the Croats what it meant to be a victim of aggression and crime (Radonić 2010, 335).

We can conclude that Rwanda and Srebrenica precipitated a new focus on materialities and forensics that has since also been applied to several "old" postcatastrophic sites, especially Treblinka and Sobibór. Over 6,500 victims have been buried at the Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial and Cemetery since the memorial site was inaugurated by Bill Clinton in 2003. The huge effort to identify the human remains that had been reinterred in secondary or even tertiary mass graves in order to conceal the crime was undertaken, not for the International Crime Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, but out of respect for the wishes of the families. It also reflects the trend to individualize the victims.

So far, the memorial in Jasenovac has been exempt from this trend. Here, the desire to look Western and prove the qualifications for EU

membership apparently weighed rather more heavily than the determination to preserve or even mark those sites of the former Jasenovac camp complex that are not already part of the memorial. The Kula [Tower], the camp for women and children at Stara Gradiška, often referred to as Jasenovac V, has been an unmarked ruin since the war of the 1990s. And no one has ever bothered to examine the mass grave at the former Roma camp Uštica—close to the main Jasenovac III site where the museum has been since the 1960s—forensically.

We can draw three main conclusions. Firstly, the fact that a recently opened museum draws on the established Holocaust memorial museums as its role models does not mean that the concept of negative memory is applied in the permanent exhibition. On the contrary, archetypical aesthetics can quite easily go hand in hand with a narrative of collective victimhood. Secondly, the forensic turn has not impacted those postcatastrophic sites (yet) where the emulation of Holocaust memorial museum model primarily reflects the desire to appear European. Finally, as a result of the universalization of the Holocaust, every recent victim group now seeks to present itself as "the new Jews" and their adversaries as "the new Nazis." This obscures the historic specificity of each of the crimes and clearly obstructs the quest for pragmatic models for peaceful coexistence.

Notes

1 This US trend is also dominant in post-communist museums—in contrast to the German musealization tradition which avoids the dramatic, emotional approach.
2 When there is no source given, it means I am quoting from the English exhibition text itself respectively from the photographs I took of all the exhibitions I am analyzing here.

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor W., *Negative Dialektik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1966).
Ahonen, Heiki, "Wie gründet man ein Museum? Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Museums der Okkupationen in Tallinn," in *Der Kommunismus im Museum. Formen der Auseinandersetzung in Deutschland und Ostmitteleuropa*, Knigge, Volkhard, and Ulrich Mählert (eds.) (Cologne: Böhlau, 2005), 107–116.
Ahonen, Heiki, "Das estnische Museum der Okkupationen: Ein Überblick über seine Arbeit," in *Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte*, 3 (2008), 233–238.
Anstett, Élisabeth, and Jean-Marc Dreyfus (eds.), *Human Remains and Identification: Mass Violence, Genocide, and the "Forensic Turn"* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2015).
Apor, Péter, and Oksana Sarkisova (eds.), *Past for the Eyes: East European Representations of Communism in Cinema and Museums after 1989* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2008).
Artwińska, Anna, and Anja Tippner, "Postkatastrophische Vergegenwärtigung – eine Positionsbestimmung," in *Nach dem Holocaust. Medien postkatastrophischer*

Vergegenwärtigung in Polen und Deutschland, Artwińska, Anna, and Anja Tippner (eds.) (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017), 15–39.

Assmann, Aleida, *Erinnerungsräume. Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2005).

Assmann, Aleida, and Sebastian Conrad (eds.), *Memory in a Global Age. Discourses, Practices and Trajectories* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).

Brandstetter, Anna-Maria, *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Remembrance in Post-Genocide Rwanda* (Wassenaar: Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, 2010).

Buckley-Zistel, Susanne, "Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post-Genocide Rwanda," in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 2 (2006), 131–150.

Cornelißen, Christoph, "Europas Gedächtnislandkarte. Gibt es eine Universalisierung des Erinnerns?" in *Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts?* Frei, Norbert (ed.) (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 159–175.

Crane, Susan A. "Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum," in *History and Theory* 4 (1997), 44–63.

Diner, Dan, *Zivilisationsbruch. Denken nach Auschwitz* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1988).

Diner, Dan, *Gegenläufige Gedächtnisse. Über Geltung und Wirkung des Holocaust* (Göttingen: V&R, 2007).

Doretti, Mercedes, and Luis Fondebrider, "Science and Human Rights, a Long Way in Third World Countries," in *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past*, Buchli, Victor, and Galvin Lucas (eds.) (London: Routledge, 2001), 138–144.

Dziuban, Zuzanna, *Mapping the "Forensic Turn": The Engagements with Materialities of Mass Death in Holocaust Studies and Beyond* (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2017).

Eckel, Jan, and Claudia Moisel, *Universalisierung des Holocaust? Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik in internationaler Perspektive* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008).

Erll, Astrid, "Travelling Memory," in *Parallax*, 4 (2011), 4–18.

Ferrándiz, Francisco, and Antonius C.G.M. Robben (eds.), *Necropolitics: Mass Graves and Exhumations in the Age of Human Rights* (Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania UP, 2015).

Fritz, Regina, "Der Umgang mit dem Holocaust in Ungarn zwischen internationalen Erwartungen und nationalen Diskursen. Das Holocaust Gedenkzentrum in Budapest," in *Diktaturüberwindung in Europa: Neue nationale und transnationale Perspektiven*, Hofmann, Birgit, Katja Wetzel, Katrin Hammerstein, Regina Fritz, and Julie Trappe (eds.) (Heidelberg: Winter, 2010), 167–179.

Garton Ash, Timothy, "Germany can show reborn Arab nations the art of overcoming a difficult past," in *The Guardian*, 16 March 2011.

Hammerstein, Katrin, and Birgit Hofmann, "Europäische 'Interventionen'. Resolutionen und Initiativen zum Umgang mit diktatorischer Vergangenheit," in *Aufarbeitung der Diktatur—Diktat der Aufarbeitung?* Hammerstein, Katrin, Ulrich Mählert, Julie Trappe, and Edgar Wolfrum (eds.) (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009), 189–203.

Ibreck, Rachel, "International Constructions of National Memories: The Aims and Effects of Foreign Donors' Support for Genocide Remembrance in Rwanda," in *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 2 (2013), 149–169.

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (ed.), *Killing Sites—Research and Remembrance* (Berlin: Metropol, 2015).

Judt, Tony, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Penguin Press, 2005).

Keenan, Thomas, and Eyal Weizman, *Mengele's Skull: The Advent of Forensic Aesthetic* (Frankfurt am Main: Portikus, 2012).

Knigge, Volkhard, "Gesellschaftsverbrechen erinnern. Zur Entstehung und Entwicklung des Konzepts seit 1945," in *Der Kommunismus im Museum. Formen der Auseinandersetzung in Deutschland und Ostmitteleuropa*, Knigge, Volkhard, and Ulrich Mählert (eds.) (Köln: Böhlau, 2005), 19–30.

Knigge, Volkhard, "Europäische Erinnerungskultur. Identitätspolitik oder kritisch-kommunikative historische Selbstvergewisserung," in *kultur.macht.europa – europa.macht.kultur*, Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft E.V. (ed.) (Bonn: Klartext, 2008), 69–82.

Knigge, Volkhard, and Norbert Frei (eds.), *Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002).

Köhr, Katja, "Flucht in die Moral?—Museale Darstellungen des Holocaust zwischen nationalen Fragen und universellen Zugängen," in *Medaon* 1 (2007), http://medaon.de/pdf/A-Koehr-1-2007.pdf [last accessed 1, March 2020].

Koselleck, Reinhart, "Formen und Traditionen des negativen Gedächtnisses," in *Die Auseinandersetzung mit Holocaust und Völkermord*, Knigge, Volkhard, and Norbert Frei (eds.) (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002), 21–32.

Kroh, Jens, "Erinnerungskultureller Akteur und geschichtspolitisches Netzwerk. Die Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research," in *Universalisierung des Holocaust? Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik in internationaler Perspektive*, Eckel, Jan, and Claudia Moisel (eds.) (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008), 156–173.

Latour, Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

Lawrynowicz, Olgierd, and Joanna Zelazko (eds.), *Archeologia totalitaryzmu. Ślady represji 1939–1956* (Lodz: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2015).

Leggewie, Claus, and Anne Lang (eds.), *Der Kampf um die europäische Erinnerung. Ein Schlachtfeld wird besichtigt* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2011).

Levy, Daniel, and Natan Sznaider, *Memory and the Holocaust in the Global Age* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2005).

MacDonald, David Bruce, *Balkan Holocausts? Serbian and Croatian victim-centred Propaganda and the War in Yugoslavia* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002).

Mark, James, "Containing Fascism. History in Post-Communist Baltic Occupation and Genocide Museums," in *Politics of Collective Memory. Commemorative Practices in Post-War Europe*, Wahnich, Sophie, Barbara Lášticová, and Andrej Findor (eds.) (Vienna: LIT, 2008), 335–369.

Miller, Paul B. "Just Like the Jews: Contending Victimization in the Former Yugoslavia," in *Lessons & Legacies, vol. IX: Memory, History, Responsibility. Reassessments of the Holocaust*, Roth, John, and Jonathan Petropoulos (eds.) (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2010), 251–267.

Olsen, Bjornar, *In Defense of Things: Archeology and the Ontology of Objects* (Lanham and New York, NY: Altamira, 2010).

Radonić, Ljiljana, *Krieg um die Erinnerung. Kroatische Vergangenheitspolitik zwischen Revisionismus und europäischen Standards* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2010).

Radonić, Ljiljana, "Post-communist Invocation of Europe: Memorial Museums' Narratives and the Europeanization of Memory," in *National Identities*, 2 (2017), 269–288.

Rothberg, Michael, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009).

Rousso, Henry, "History of Memory, Policies of the Past: What For?" in *Conflicted Memories. Europeanizing Contemporary Histories*, Jarausch, Konrad H., and Thomas Lindenberger (eds.) (New York, NY: Berghahn, 2011), 23–38.

Schindel, Esther, and Pamela Colombo (eds.), *Space and the Memories of Violence. Landscapes of Erasure, Disappearance, and Exception* (London: Palgrave, 2014).

Schmid, Harald, "Europäisierung des Auschwitzgedenkens? Zum Aufstieg des 27. Januar 1945 als 'Holocaustgedenktag' in Europa," in *Universalisierung des Holocaust? Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik in internationaler Perspektive*, Eckel, Jan, and Claudia Moisel (eds.) (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008), 174–202.

Schmidt, Mária, "Holokausztok a huszadik században," in *Magyar Hírlap*, 13 November 1999.

Simon, Nina, *The Participatory Museum* (Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0., 2010).

Sommer-Sieghart, Monika, "Historische Ausstellungen als 'contested space'," in *Schauplatz Kultur—Zentraleuropa. Transdisziplinäre Annäherungen*, Feichtinger, Johannes, Elisabeth Großegger, Gertraud Marinelli-König, Peter Stachel, and Heidemarie Uhl (eds.) (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2006), 159–166.

Stone, Dan, *The Historiography of the Holocaust* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004).

Stover, Eric, and Gilles Peress, *The Grave. Srebrenica and Vukovar* (Zürich: Scalo, 1998).

Sturdy Colls, Caroline, *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions* (New York, NY: Springer, 2015).

Troebst, Stefan, "Konfligierende Erinnerungskulturen im größeren Europa," in *Transformationen der Erinnerungskulturen in Europa nach* 1989, Faulenbach, Bernd, and Franz-Josef Jelich (eds.) (Essen: Klartext, 2006), 156–173.

Troebst, Stefan, *Erinnerungskultur—Kulturgeschichte—Geschichtsregion. Ostmitteleuropa in Europa* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2013).

Weizman, Eyal (ed.), *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014).

Wieviorka, Annette, *The Era of the Witness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2006).

Williams, Paul, *Memorial Museums. The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (Oxford: Berg, 2007).