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The Urge to Remember

The Role of Memorials in Social Reconstruction and Transitional Justice

About the Report

This report is based on the deliberations of a United States Institute of Peace Working Group that focused on the role of memorialization in promoting, jeopardizing, or impairing social reconstruction and reconciliation in societies emerging from violent conflict. The Memorialization Working Group was part of the Institute's Filling the Gaps series, which addresses reconstruction and stabilization challenges facing societies that have recently experienced violent conflict. Judy Barsalou (Institute vice president, Grant and Fellowship Program) and Victoria Baxter (director, The People Speak, United Nations Foundation) led the Memorialization Working Group, with assistance from Beth Cole (senior program officer in the Institute's Center for Post-Conflict Peace and Stability Operations). Judy Barsalou and Victoria Baxter prepared this report. Baxter was the senior program associate, American Association for the Advancement of Science, while writing this report.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Institute of Peace, which does not advocate specific policy positions.

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Contents

Summary and Recommendations 1
Introduction 3
Defining Memorialization 4
Defining Reconciliation and Social Reconstruction 5
Memorialization and Types of Conflict 6
Timing and Sequencing 8
Connecting Memorialization to Other Transitional Justice Initiatives 9
"Insiders" versus "Outsiders" 11
The Importance of Process 13
Measuring Impact 15
Difficulties of Determining Impact 16
Helping Outsiders Approach Memorialization 17

Summary and Recommendations

This report focuses on the often-ignored challenges faced by those seeking, through memorialization, to help repair societies that are emerging from violent conflict. The summary matrix at the end of this report provides recommendations to international actors interested in assisting in that process.

- Memorialization is a process that satisfies the desire to honor those who suffered or died during conflict and as a means to examine the past and address contemporary issues. It can either promote social recovery after violent conflict ends or crystallize a sense of victimization, injustice, discrimination, and the desire for revenge.
- Memorialization occurs throughout the conflict life cycle: before conflict begins, during conflict, and after conflict ends. Memorialization initiatives take different forms depending on who initiates them, the stage of the conflict at which they are initiated, and the kind of society that emerges after the violence ends. Thus, memorialization is a highly politicized process that reflects the will of those in power.
- Outside providers of assistance, such as international mission staff, peacekeepers, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and humanitarian organizations, often are inadvertently drawn into local disputes about the creation or maintenance of memorial and cultural sites. These outsiders may be expected to protect places (such as mass gravesites or important document collections) that form the basis for future memorials and museum sites or that may be valuable in legal trials.
- It is not easy for outsiders to determine their proper roles in such situations, especially when dealing with ad hoc, spontaneous efforts to build memorials that can fuel the desire for revenge and promote further violence. Adding to the complexity is the fact that the definition of "outsider" depends on context. Survivors in local communities may view fellow nationals from other communities or identity groups as outsiders.

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- Outsiders can play important roles in getting former enemies to work together on memorial initiatives that promote social reconstruction. Increasingly, outside experts on memorialization are called upon to consult on national memorial projects in societies emerging from conflict. But outsiders overstep their role if they seek to start or dominate memorial processes, for those processes must be initiated and controlled by local actors if they are to become truly meaningful to recovering societies.
- International actors, especially, need to be clear about the limits of their role. Memorialization is a process that locals must initiate, although outsiders may make important contributions through technical assistance, financial help, or facilitation in bringing contending parties together.
- Few international actors—international mission staff and peacekeepers, humanitarian aid workers, foreign NGOs, international organizations, and others—involved in postwar reconstruction are prepared to deal with memorialization. Their personnel need to learn about the importance of memorialization, for good or for ill, in societies emerging from conflict. International actors must recognize sites and other resources (such as document collections) of cultural, historical, or symbolic significance and clarify how they can protect these resources in an effort to promote social reconstruction. They also need to train their staff to be culturally aware of local practices and beliefs relating to conflict resolution, death, and burial.
- The *process* of determining what shape a memorial project should take and how memorial space should be used is essential—more important, ultimately, than the physical edifice itself. Moreover, the process remains essential even after a memorial is built. Memorial projects that encourage survivors to explore contested memories of the past, promote learning and critical thinking, and facilitate ongoing cultural exchange are more likely to advance social reconstruction. They are also more likely to retain meaning for rising generations than static memorials of long-past conflicts and heroes that fail to interpret their meaning in ways that have contemporary relevance.
- Memorialization is often not recognized as an important tool of transitional justice initiatives. National and international actors involved in transitional justice—especially in tribunals and truth commissions—have largely missed the opportunity to incorporate memorialization into their initiatives. The repeated failure to deal with memorials (whether ad hoc or sanctioned) and their potentially negative impact can imperil transitional justice efforts and peacebuilding.
- Successful memorialization draws upon specialists from many fields—transitional justice experts, historians, museum designers, public artists, trauma specialists, and human rights activists, among others—who traditionally have not worked together or are not viewed as having concerns in common.
- Tribunals and truth commissions share with memorial projects the fact that their work depends in part on collecting documents and other materials used to establish historical truths. Collecting, managing, and deriving value from these materials is especially challenging when the amount of documentary materials is overwhelming. Those involved in truth commissions and tribunals need to consider how their documentary collections can be made accessible to those involved in memorial projects. Truth commissions can make better use of their proceedings and final reports to prepare countries for tasks that logically follow—incorporating the truth commissions' findings into educational programs and memorial projects designed to prevent future generations from forgetting the past and repeating its mistakes.
- In planning and budgeting for tribunals and truth commissions, national and international authorities need to consciously lay the groundwork for national memorialization projects designed to advance the goals of earlier transitional justice initiatives.

- Determining what contributions memorial initiatives make toward reconciliation or social reconstruction is difficult in part because of the complexity and contested meanings of those terms. Memorial initiatives describe evolving, long-term social, economic, cultural, and political processes that are difficult to measure. Assessing the impact of memorials and museums is possible, but doing so requires careful planning, investment of resources, and willingness to track changes over time. Understanding what effect a memorial project has on promoting social reconstruction also requires being clear up front about the goals the project is trying to achieve.
- Effective evaluation also requires assessments before, during, and after project implementation, as well as the understanding that future generations may form entirely different, unanticipated opinions of a memorial. Researchers seeking to link changes in attitude and behavior to a specific initiative may find it difficult to do so in relation to broader social and political change, but consider it worth trying nonetheless. More broadly, the impact of *all* transitional justice processes—memorialization among them—remains under-research.

Introduction

The urge to honor the dead and remember violent struggles is as prevalent as the impulse to try to repress terrible memories and move on. Societies around the world undertake memorial activities to preserve historical memory relating to traumatic events. But what is the impact of such initiatives? Do they advance reconciliation and social reconstruction among former enemies, or do they have the opposite effect of preserving or even strengthening divisions that led to violent conflict?

In an effort to understand how to promote social reconstruction, reconciliation, and transitional justice in societies emerging from violent conflict, the Memorialization Working Group addressed five sets of questions:

- ***Memorialization:*** What is memorialization and why is it important? What forms do memorials take around the world, and what roles do timing and the nature of the conflict play in shaping the form and impact of memorial activities? Who initiates memorial projects, at what stages in the conflict, and why? What memories do they seek to preserve, and how? In whose name do they act? How much memory is useful, particularly in cases of mass murder and genocide? How can one limit the manipulation of public memory by political actors for their own narrow interests?
- ***Timing and Sequencing:*** What is the relationship between memorialization and other transitional justice interventions, such as legal tribunals and truth commissions? How can memorials best advance the goals of other transitional justice initiatives? What is the optimal timing and sequencing of memorials in relation to other transitional justice initiatives?
- ***Insiders versus Outsiders:*** What roles do "outsiders"—including UN-mandated missions, international organizations, foreign peacekeeping troops, and international NGOs—play in memorialization, and how do they become involved in memorial initiatives? What steps should outsiders take to ensure that their role is a positive one?
- ***Process:*** How can outsiders prompt communities of former antagonists to work together on memorial projects? Why is process so important?
- ***Impact of Memorials on Social Reconstruction:*** What contribution—positive or negative—does memorialization make to social reconstruction or reconciliation, and what is the meaning of these terms? How does the impact of memorials change over time, as subsequent generations are born and the events and people being memorialized recede from immediate memory? What means are available to assess the impact

The urge to honor the dead and remember violent struggles is as prevalent as the impulse to try to repress terrible memories and move on.

of memorials on people's understanding of a conflict and their inclination to live in peace or conflict?

Functions of Memorialization

- Truth-telling or documenting specific human rights violations
- Creating a specific place for the immediate family and/or the larger society to mourn victims
- Offering symbolic reparations to honor the victims of violence and reinstate their reputations
- Symbolizing a community's or nation's commitment to values such as democracy and human rights
- Promoting reconciliation by recasting the national identity or repairing damaged relations among groups
- Encouraging civic engagement and education programs to engage the wider community in a dialogue about the past and promote discussions of a peaceful future based on coexistence
- Advancing educational purposes, including the retelling of history for future generations
- Facilitating historic preservation of a specific era in a country's or community's history

Defining Memorialization

Memorialization initiatives take a wide variety of forms—from formal museums and monuments that evolve over years and cost millions of dollars to ephemeral collections of condolence notes, flowers, and pictures of victims at sites where they died or vanished. In Kosovo, for example, Albanian students on annual school-led tours of Kosovo honor a famous Albanian nationalist by visiting his destroyed house, where he and fifty-seven others died in a fight with Serbian police in January 1998. Initiators of memorials range from individual survivors and the communities in which they live to civil society organizations, national governments, and even private sector enterprises.

At the same time, in every society emerging from a traumatic past there are efforts to suppress memory in an effort to "move on" or "put the past behind us." According to Liz Sevcenko, director of the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience, remembering is a basic human instinct, and memory cannot be imprisoned—it will usually come out in one form or another. The challenge is to find ways to harness memory to learn lessons from the past in an effort to avoid repeating it.

According to Ereshnee Naidu of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in Braamfontein, South Africa, memorialization takes a variety of forms, serving as an umbrella concept encompassing a range of processes to remember and commemorate. Memorialization as a process satisfies the desire to honor those who suffered or died during conflict and becomes a means of examining the past. In this process, the past can be reinterpreted to address a wide range of political or social needs—recasting "subversives" as martyrs or innocent victims, for instance, or consolidating a new national identity, such as the transformation of South Africa from apartheid state to "Rainbow Nation." Memorialization thus represents a powerful arena of contested memory and offers the possibility of aiding the formation of new national, community, and ethnic identities.

Hassan Mneimneh of the Iraq Memory Foundation notes that memorialization often results in a blurred line between reflecting and remembering, on the one hand, and deliberately promoting a political position, on the other. This blurring occurs particularly in ongoing conflicts. In south Lebanon, for example, the Khiyam prison (opened in the Israeli-occupied zone in 1985) has been converted into a site of remembrance to honor victims but also to denounce the enemy. Even more starkly, the hastily built Elian Gonzalez monument in Havana was erected as a sort of rallying call to political action, reinforcing Cuban demands for the United States to return Gonzalez. Regardless of the intention of memorials, Mneimneh argues that "remembering is by necessity refashioning the past, through the selective highlight of elements of subjective relevance" and that it can "even be perceived as being a confiscation of history."

Vamik Volkan, professor emeritus of the University of Virginia, points out that many memorials honor ruling parties or victors in a conflict at the expense of "losers" or marginalized communities. The dark side of memorialization, he notes, involves efforts to use memories of the past to fan the flames of ethnic hatred, consolidate a group's identity as victims, demarcate the differences among identity groups, and reify grievances. Wittingly or unwittingly, interested parties around the world use memorial sites to seek absolution, lodge accusations against their enemies, establish competing claims of victimhood, or promote ideological agendas. In short, regardless of what form it takes, memorialization is a highly political process that is shaped by those in power. In the words of Harvey Weinstein at the University of California, Berkeley, memorials represent a complex nexus between politics, trauma, collective memory, and public art.

Defining Reconciliation and Social Reconstruction

Any examination of memorialization requires clarification of the meaning of two terms—"reconciliation" and "social reconstruction." Dictionary definitions of the former emphasize a persuasive element, requiring a party to "win over" another with whom there has been a conflict. But a simple definition does little to convey the complexity of the term. For some, reconciliation carries a specific meaning based on religious injunctions to forgive and forget, while others define it in terms of changes in attitudes, beliefs, and identities, or in changed relationships. Those who think they understand what reconciliation looks like on the personal level may have trouble defining it on the societal level.

A related question is whether reconciliation is a state of being that can be observed and measured at various points, or whether it is a longer term goal that can be used to organize individuals and societies. Researchers often note that reconciliation is both a goal and a process. Does one directly promote a "reconciliation agenda" aimed at changing attitudes of former enemies, or are there subcomponents (effective legal systems, reconstructed school systems, etc.) that should be put in place first in order to promote reconciliation as a goal? What comes first—the institutions or the attitudes? Where should policymakers and others begin?

Despite ongoing debate about the meaning of reconciliation, it has become one of the key components of transitional justice, which assumes that (1) truth-telling (a full accounting of the past) is necessary for reconciliation; and (2) justice (holding perpetrators accountable through legal processes or restorative measures, such as compensation) promotes reconciliation. These assumptions are just beginning to be empirically tested, and the findings are mixed. Eric Stover and Harvey Weinstein in their edited volume *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) challenge the causal relationship between criminal trials and reconciliation. They state that justice is often more broadly defined by those immediately affected by atrocities and civil violence, and argue that criminal trials do not always have a therapeutic value for survivors of violence. By contrast, in his book *Overcoming Apartheid: Can Truth Reconcile a Divided Nation?* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004), James L. Gibson concluded that South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission did help promote reconciliation. More research drawing from a broad range of disciplines and social theories is needed to explain more fully the relationships among truth, justice, and reconciliation in a variety of contexts.

Some who are uncomfortable with the term "reconciliation" prefer the terms "social reconstruction" and "reclamation," which are usually associated with an array of interventions to promote economic, political, and social progress, as well as identity transformation, with less emphasis on legal accountability and truth-telling.

Without trying to contend with all the conflicting definitions of reconciliation, the Working Group's definition included the following assumptions about the meaning of the term and what must be done to achieve it:

- Reconciliation is a multilevel process that involves national-level responsibility but also requires coordination and holistic approaches to promote social reconstruction at many levels of society. Various processes—legal, social, political, and economic—need to be at work if reconciliation is to be achieved.
- Reconciliation should be aimed conservatively, with the goal of finding ways to peacefully manage rather than to eliminate conflict.
- Reconciliation is a long-term process that requires the management of expectations. There is a limit to what any one policy or intervention can achieve.
- Reconciliation has pragmatic dimensions and must be considered alongside programs to promote democracy, rule of law, and justice. Failure to pay attention to reconciliation can undermine interventions designed to achieve other goals.

Major Forms of Memorial Initiatives

Constructed sites:

- Museums and commemorative libraries
- Monuments
- Walls of names of victims
- Virtual memorials on the World Wide Web

Found sites:

- Graves
- Locations of mass killings or genocide
- Former torture centers/concentration camps

Activities:

- Anniversaries of coups, battles, or other actions related to the conflict
- Temporary exhibits
- Renaming or rededicating streets, buildings, or infrastructure
- Walking tours or parades
- Demonstrations and vigils
- Public apologies

Source: Louis Bickford, International Center for Transitional Justice

- Key to reconciliation is the creation of new national identities and, in some cases, new myths guiding the nation. Memorialization is a pivotal component of reconciliation because of its power to shape identities, myths, and memories.

Memorialization and Types of Conflict

Most research on memorialization is limited to descriptions of different types of memorial efforts, revealing little about their impact on society or their contributions to transitional justice. One question is whether there is a correlation between types of conflict (or types of conflict resolution policies and programs) and forms or functions of memorials.

Memorials to Genocide and Mass Killings

In cases of mass killings and genocide, memorialization often revolves around human remains. Displaying or preserving human remains becomes a central way to educate people about the sheer scope of death that occurred in a country. In Rwanda, for example, some victims' bodies from the 1994 genocide have been preserved in the schools and churches where they were found. These sites are open to visitors and seek to convey the scale of the genocide through the presentation of an almost overwhelming number of bodies. In some of the "killing fields" memorials in Cambodia, tour guides will assist visitors in digging up remains, such as bone fragments and teeth.

When the violence occurred fairly recently, these memorials often do not offer visitors an analysis of the conflict or any sort of educational background. In places where more time has elapsed, memorials are more likely to provide explanations of the roots of the violence and present larger lessons. For example, many of the Holocaust museums or exhibits centered primarily on the loss of Jewish lives during the World War II period draw upon a larger historical context and offer a coherent "story" for visitors. According to Edward T. Linenthal of the University of Indiana, the designers of the exhibits at the U.S. Holocaust Museum and Memorial made a point of choosing a relatively narrow, coherent story that visitors could easily follow and understand, rather than attempting to include all aspects of the Holocaust.

While many such memorials are reminders of a violent past, some honor positive actions. In Sarajevo, Tito's granddaughter Svetlana Broz created the Garden of the Righteous memorial to commemorate those who helped victims across ethnic lines during the Bosnia war—stories that were documented in her book, *Good People in Times of Evil*. The Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem honors those who protected victims of the Holocaust. In Yerevan, the Garden of the Righteous remembers non-Armenians who helped Armenians before, during, and after the 1915 genocide. Such memorials help postwar societies celebrate courageous people and positive values that existed even during the worst times.

Memorials to Disappearances

Unlike genocide sites that display human remains, sites commemorating disappearances generally reflect the absence of bodies.

Memorials in countries in which many people have been "disappeared" often take a different form. Unlike genocide sites that display human remains, sites commemorating disappearances generally reflect the absence of bodies. Repressive regimes and other perpetrators use disappearances precisely for the deniability of the act. The immediate result is that surviving family members are left without physical locations to mourn their dead.

Accordingly, memorials to the disappeared often include walls of names of the victims and sometimes other information focused on recasting their identities—from "subversives" to victims of the state. Such sites also provide a physical space where family members can mourn their losses. Survivors have created a number of Internet-based "virtual" memorials to the disappeared in Latin America in which pictures are displayed, along with biographical information and places for family members to record their emotions. Two

examples are *Sin Olvido* (Without Forgetting) at www.sinolvido.org and *Proyecto Desaparacido* (Project Disappeared) at www.desaparecidos.org/main.html.

Societies recovering from large-scale disappearances also tend to create memorials at clandestine torture centers, where visitors are encouraged to explore the history of state-sponsored torture and extrajudicial killings. Depending on the level of legitimacy the former regime still enjoys and public attitudes about the subsequent political transition, there can be an uneasy relationship between the state and these former torture centers. In 2001, a coalition of survivors and NGOs attempted to create a monument to the disappeared in Kashmir. A day after the group laid the foundation stone for the monument, the Indian government razed the site. In Chile, a similar coalition took the initiative to convert the former torture site of Villa Grimaldi into a memorial. After the demise of the military dictatorship led by General Augusto Pinochet, the first few democratic governments did little to promote Villa Grimaldi officially or incorporate the site into national education initiatives. This situation might have to do with the fact that for many years after the transition, Pinochet continued to enjoy substantial support throughout Chile. By contrast, the Argentine government has been very involved in the formation of a human rights-themed museum at a former torture center in the Naval Mechanics School. A coalition of human rights and survivor organizations called *Memoria Abierta* (Open Memory) has been closely involved with the government and a number of other groups in designing this site to make it accessible to the public, and the government has been relatively open to their participation. The process of creating the museum has been a widely debated issue in Argentina.

Memorials to Ethnic Conflict

Ethnically divided societies usually produce memorials that honor a narrowly defined ethnic group and its "martyrs." Sometimes, however, memorials are used to promote a new, multicultural national identity after the conflict has ended and a democratic transition is under way. Examples of the former include a memorial in Kigali, Rwanda, to the Tutsi victims of the 1994 genocide, which fails to mention some 200,000 Hutu victims of subsequent Tutsi repression, and wall murals in Northern Ireland commemorating "martyrs." By contrast, Robben Island Museum in South Africa tells the story of the "Rainbow Nation" through the collective struggle of anti-apartheid prisoners on the island, yet the dominant narrative is that of the party that came to power through the struggle: the African National Congress. The difference between the two approaches often has to do with how the conflict ended (whether or not an inclusive democratic transition is under way, replacing an authoritarian political order that privileged one ethnic group over another); how much time has elapsed since the violence ended; and whether the memorial was initiated at the local or national level.

Ethnically divided societies usually produce memorials that honor a narrowly defined ethnic group and its "martyrs."

In newly democratic societies, national memorials often honor the "great men" who prevailed during the conflict at the expense of marginalized groups, such as women and ordinary citizens also involved in the struggle. For example, in Zimbabwe Hero's Acre, a monument was built to honor the people who fought for independence. The monument features statues of men in combat fatigues. The women depicted in the statues, however, are wearing dresses rather than the combat fatigues they actually wore, thereby downplaying their important role. The focus on "great men" sometimes creates anomalous juxtapositions. In Moscow, the Park of (Totalitarian) Arts features an uneasy coexistence between statues of former Soviet leaders, sculptures celebrating Russian artists and writers, and a monument commemorating victims of the Gulag. South Africa continues to struggle to integrate memorials honoring Afrikaner culture and history with the "Rainbow Nation" themed memorials that celebrate black African culture, democracy, and racial tolerance.

Naidu points out that national memorial projects in democratizing societies often reflect the aspirations rather than the reality of transforming countries. These memorials

may not address the immediate needs of victims/survivors and their families but work instead to consolidate new notions of nationhood. For example, South Africa's Freedom Park project is being built directly opposite the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. Freedom Park seeks to negotiate the triumphant nature of the Voortrekker Monument by depicting a variety of stories, ranging from the Anglo-Boer War to the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. In doing so, Freedom Park acknowledges the survivors, broadly defined, of the conflict but focuses mainly on drawing together the different racial, ethnic, and cultural narratives of a richly diverse country in an attempt to portray a nation moving forward into a transformed future. Survivors may have negative opinions about a nationally and future-focused memorial because it does not relate directly to their particular needs—honoring those killed in conflict, restoring the good names of those involved in struggles against oppression, or commemorating particular types of violence. However, memorials representing aspirations of a transforming society often appeal to the broader community, particularly bystanders and/or perpetrators of the conflict, by allowing them to "participate" in the meaning of the memorial.

Regardless of what type of conflict a society experiences—a civil war, a war between states, genocide, or other conflict—the urge to publicly document who died, by what means, and why appears to be nearly universal. Societies want to be able to say definitely how many died and under what circumstances. For example, this impulse is behind a new initiative in Kosovo to create a comprehensive database with details about individual Albanians and Serbs who died or disappeared between February 1998 and December 2000 during the war and immediately thereafter. This so-called "Kosovo Book of the Victims" is being created by the Humanitarian Law Center. The fact that the book will include information about victims on *both* sides of the conflict means this documentation effort will help lay the groundwork for a more complete historical narrative of the war. Even in countries like Lebanon, where no national memorials or museums to the fifteen-year civil war have been built and where former warlords from the conflict occupy the highest positions in government, civil society efforts to document the war are increasingly evident in photo exhibits, films, and other cultural media.

Timing and Sequencing

The forms that memorials take reflect the time when they were initiated and the people who built them.

The forms that memorials take reflect the time when they were initiated and the people who built them. Grieving relatives sometimes create impromptu memorials where their loved ones died. In Kosovo, for example, hundreds of memorials were erected by families of victims. Survivors often build memorials when new mass gravesites are discovered or human remains are removed for reburial elsewhere. Larger, formal memorials undertaken by states generally do not appear until at least five to ten years have passed. Liz Sevcenko argues that memorialization takes place, and should be supported, throughout the different stages of the conflict—from the time when trauma first occurs as a result of violence and as it reverberates throughout subsequent generations. Each stage or type of memorialization addresses different but powerful needs. Clearly, however, events or people who seem heroic or noble and worth memorializing during or immediately after conflict often appear differently with time and hindsight.

Why does it take so long for national memorials to be built? Survivors often feel that other needs should take priority—caring for victims; rebuilding political, judicial, and economic institutions; reestablishing the rule of law; and engaging in truth-telling and legal accountability processes. Moreover, decisions about what should be depicted, where and how, and how much the memorial should cost usually are marked by lengthy, contentious, and exhausting debates—witness ongoing controversies over the World Trade Center memorial in New York City. In settings such as Bosnia, where international forces intervened, the parties to conflict may feel that little has been resolved and balanced

depictions of the country's suffering through memorials are difficult to conceive and negotiate. Perhaps this explains why a Bosnian NGO recently unveiled a statue of Bruce Lee in the city of Mostar, the site of fierce fighting during the war. According to Veselin Garalo of the group Urban Movement, which promoted the creation of the statue, "This does not mean that Bruce Lee will unite us, because people are different and cannot be united and we will always be Muslims, Serbs and Croats. But one thing we all have in common is Bruce Lee" (*Pravda*, November 27, 2005).

Even where contending parties are able to work with each other, it may take many years to raise sufficient funds for a memorial or museum. Doing so any earlier, in competition with other pressing reconstruction needs, is likely to be viewed as inappropriate by the poorest survivors, even though memorials generally cost much less than investments in infrastructure and other reconstruction projects. Sometimes, however, survivors or local entrepreneurs initiate memorials as a means of generating revenue. The Krasnoyarsk region in south Siberia, for example, recently advertised a newly restored memorial to Josef Stalin in an effort to promote tourism. According to Yevgeny Pashenko, the deputy governor of the region, "the idea was launched by travel agents" (*Times of Oman*, April 19, 2006). Robben Island prison, where Nelson Mandela spent many of his twenty-six years in prison, has become a major tourist destination in South Africa. Survivors sometimes welcome this kind of memorialization, but generally only if they derive personal benefit from the revenue generated. Especially when lavish monuments—such as the Kliptown memorial in South Africa—are built in very poor areas where victims of the conflict still struggle to survive, memorial revenue generation from tourism that does not benefit the local community becomes a source of resentment. In some communities, the memorial itself becomes the focal point of frustration. Furious Kurds in northern Iraq recently destroyed the Halabja Monument, which memorialized some 5,000 Kurds killed in a chemical warfare attack, because they felt that the Patriotic Union, which governs the eastern section of Iraq's Kurdish region, had "transformed the monument into an emblem of its own tyranny and greed." One resident said, "Kurdish officials used Halabja to gather money. Millions of dollars [have] been spent, but nothing has reached us" (*The New York Times*, March 17, 2006).

Connecting Memorialization to Other Transitional Justice Initiatives

The passage of time enables survivors to achieve perspective on a conflict and what they want to remember about it. If other transitional justice processes—especially tribunals and truth commissions—have finished their work, the public is likely to better understand aspects of the conflict that were previously hidden or repressed. For these reasons, memorialization at the national level ideally follows truth-telling and legal accountability processes and is intimately linked to educational efforts to engage the public and schoolchildren in a dialogue about the past. These education initiatives—ranging from efforts to change how the history of the conflict is taught in schools to public education programs based at memorials and museums—are essential to extending the impact of truth commissions and tribunals. For example, the education programs at the District Six Museum in South Africa help younger generations understand what their parents and grandparents lived through and have enabled that museum to retain meaning for new generations.

So what is the record on truth commissions with respect to memorialization? A number have included recommendations for memorialization—among them the truth commissions in Chile, Guatemala, South Africa, Ghana, and Sierra Leone—by specifically endorsing the use of symbolic reparations to promote reconciliation and, in the words of the South African commission, "restore human and civil dignity." But even in these cases, memorialization was largely an afterthought. Louis Bickford of the International Center for Transitional Justice described the expression of this need in the Chilean commission

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report as a "throwaway line." To date, truth commissions have not articulated in much detail what memorialization means, how it should be connected to other transitional justice processes, who should take charge, and other specific points of consideration. By not taking into greater account the role of memorialization and the educational processes that should accompany it, truth commissions are losing an important opportunity to extend their impact.

Countries are also missing opportunities when they do not use peace agreements to address the need for symbolic reparation. Generally, peace agreements include procedural components that outline processes to stabilize the country as well as structural components describing the new political order. While faced with the urgent need to end violence and establish stable peace in the short term, drafters of peace agreements could still include clauses designed to encourage memorialization and symbolic reparations at the national level years down the road.

Even when memorialization is not a conscious outgrowth of other transitional justice processes, all transitional justice interventions share a dependence on documentation. According to Louis Bickford, there are two overlapping paradigms for confronting the past—the "transitional justice paradigm" and the "memory paradigm." Both require the collection and preservation of a range of materials and resources—forensic evidence, files, photos, oral histories, posters, and other ephemeral materials.

- The transitional justice paradigm relates to the legal responsibilities of the state and the international community to promote the rule of law. It requires that postwar states meet four responsibilities: truth-telling about what happened in the past, prosecutions of perpetrators, reparations for victims, and guarantees of non-repetition through institutional reform. Documentation is essential for each of these postwar processes. Successful truth-telling requires collecting the stories of victims and perpetrators; prosecutions need documentary evidence of crimes; reparations need correct identification of the recipient class; and institutional reforms include vetting and other processes that rely on administrative files from the police, military forces, and other government bureaucracies.
- The memory paradigm seeks to promote a culture of democratization in part by creating a "never again" mentality. Depending heavily on cultural and other methods of educating and reminding people about the past, this paradigm also relies substantially on documentary evidence. Oral histories and other evidence used in trials and tribunals may be put to different but equally important use in museums and memorials.

Given the dependence of transitional justice interventions on documentation, it is essential to develop better policies for collecting, storing, and sharing documents that can be used for more than one purpose. Unfortunately, either because of limited resources or limited vision, many organizations collecting documentary evidence provide access to it on a limited basis at best. Concerns about victims' privacy may be one reason. The International Tracing Service, which was established in London in 1943 and moved to Germany in 1945 to help relatives of Nazi victims determine what had happened to them, has only now agreed to make its 30 million documents available to the public, citing privacy as the reason for keeping its archives closed for sixty-one years.

Trudy Huskamp Peterson, who recently surveyed the six existing international criminal tribunals as to their plans for the retention or disposal of their records, argues that they need to be more proactive in thinking about the disposition of their files. The Artemis Project at Yale University is conducting a feasibility study of creating a centralized facility to store truth commission archives. Because NGOs increasingly are involved in collecting valuable documentation, they also need to be drawn into collective decision making about how to make their resources accessible and useful to survivors, perpetrators, and various transitional justice initiatives. The Documentation Affinity Group, an unofficial group-

ing of documentation centers in Serbia, Burma, Cambodia, Guatemala, and Iraq, meets regularly to explore and share best practices in promoting documentation for a variety of transitional justice purposes.

A major problem facing those who collect documents is getting full value from them. According to Hassan Mneimneh of the Iraq Memory Foundation, the value of materials can be dissipated when the amount of documentation is overwhelming, and collectors find it difficult to establish a balance between too much and too little. In Iraq, the sheer amount of materials—estimated by Mneimneh at 400 million pages—gathered by various local and international actors with varying levels of financial resources and technical expertise has created a substantial burden to sort, preserve, and analyze. What may be essential to one transitional process—for example, establishing where a document was found and what else was found with it for a legal tribunal—may be of less interest to another process. Documents needed for legal prosecutions must meet very high evidentiary standards, while the requirements of memorials and museums may be less stringent. Despite these differences, the materials collected, analyzed, and stored by truth commissions and tribunals provide essential evidence upon which memorialization depends.

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"Insiders" versus "Outsiders"

It is essential that survivors of conflict, rather than the outsiders who come to help them, initiate memorial projects. Outsiders, especially international actors, may feel that they are more objective or balanced in their understanding of the conflict, particularly in its immediate aftermath, but their efforts to create memorials are likely to be greeted by either indifference or hostility. If memorials are to help reunite a society, they must be the outgrowth of a consultative process dominated by survivors.

The definition of an outsider depends on the context. For example, members of the community in Kliptown, just outside the Soweto township in which a memorial was being built, considered a South African NGO based in Bramfontein (about 40 kilometers away) that was consulting on the project to be an outsider. Ultimately, the question comes down to who makes the important decisions. When the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, located in a former prison and torture center in Cambodia, decided to turn its yard into an ornamental garden with walkways and flowers, local residents were upset. One of them said, "My opinion is we should leave the old things the same. It's our heritage." Chuch Phoeurn, secretary of state of the Cambodian Ministry of Culture in Phnom Penh, disagreed and said that the new garden should be permitted as long as it did not disturb prison buildings that formed the museum site or adjacent gravesites (*The Cambodia Daily*, September 27, 2005).

However they are defined, outsiders must work to win the respect and trust of locals in order to play an effective role in memorialization. In Kosovo, the head of the UN mission, Sorren Jessen Petersen, deepened his relationships with local residents by attending funerals, reburials, and remembrance festivals, among other important events. Insider reactions to outsiders vary from one setting to another. In some societies, receptivity to foreign NGOs may be greater than to foreign governments. But even outsiders who do their best to be "objective" and "neutral" are likely to be considered anything but by insiders. While outsiders both from abroad and from outside the immediate community often have much to offer in terms of human and financial resources, they must be prepared to engage in empathetic listening, be careful about imposing their own values, and be ready to deal with moral complexities.

International actors involved in memorialization also need to acquire cultural knowledge about local belief systems and practices related to death, burial, and memorialization. This means setting aside time and funding to train their staff members, to become familiar with the key stakeholders in any struggle over memorialization, and to understand

International actors involved in memorialization need to acquire cultural knowledge about local belief systems and practices related to death, burial, and memorialization.

the historical context of which the memorial effort is a part. Identifying, mapping, and protecting important sites, document collections, and other materials essential to memorialization are very useful functions that can be played by outside actors who are intent, at a minimum, on doing no harm or on promoting social reconstruction. International actors can also help bring together the disparate local and international professionals whose combined work helps create successful memorials. Transitional justice experts, historians, museum designers, public artists, trauma specialists, and human rights activists, among others, traditionally do not work together and/or view themselves as having significantly overlapping professional concerns, but their interests and skills intersect in key ways in memorial projects.

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How do outsiders get drawn into memorialization processes? For one thing, outside military forces involved in the conflict are expected to protect important sites, including mass gravesites. In Germany, Allied troops intervened to preserve the Nazi death camps—sites that many Germans were eager to destroy and forget. Peacekeeping troops in Kosovo stand guard over an uncompleted Orthodox cathedral in downtown Prishtina—a highly unpopular symbol of former Serbian domination. These sites are crucial to a country's historical memory and often become the basis for historical site museums and monuments. Yet because the "losers" in a conflict want to hide evidence of their crimes or the "winners" want to remove the reminders of a hated past, temporary foreign control of such sites is sometimes essential to their short-term survival.

Outsiders also play a crucial role in collecting and preserving documents and other artifacts—materials vital to memorial efforts. For example, eleven countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the United States) managed the aforementioned International Tracing Service. The U.S. government possesses the largest collection of documents and other artifacts that reveal the workings of the Saddam Hussein regime, although dozens of Iraqi groups also possess considerable collections. Preservation of such holdings is crucial to memorialization efforts and their educational programs. Foreign control can be useful for preserving and analyzing the documents in the short run, but usually eventually leads to struggles over their ownership.

Outsiders are also often involved in legal accountability and truth-telling processes that are part of transitional justice and essential to memorialization. International organizations, such as the United Nations, may run tribunals—as the United Nations currently is doing in Tanzania and The Hague following conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. They may also advise on the establishment and operation of truth commissions. As the field of memorialization has become professionalized, local authorities sometimes ask experienced outsiders to advise on memorial projects. Experts from Latin America have consulted with counterparts in Spain and India about how to memorialize their conflicts, and South African experts have advised Americans seeking to commemorate the September 11 terrorist attacks. Affinity groups, such as the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience, which has thirteen member institutions in eight countries, have organized to share knowledge and best practices internationally.

Outsiders sometimes get drawn into memorialization inadvertently or indirectly.

Outsiders sometimes get drawn into memorialization inadvertently or indirectly. Determining their proper role in such situations is not always easy. For example, Barry Hart, an expert on trauma alleviation training from Eastern Mennonite University, spent four months interacting with family members of missing persons in a small city near Sarajevo. This group decided that one way they wanted to address some of their issues and "move on" was by building a memorial not only to their missing loved ones but to all victims of the war in Bosnia. Although this plan was not the focus of Hart's original work, he became involved in discussions about what shape this memorial might take.

Outside military forces sometimes find themselves in the middle of confrontations when locals try to erect one-sided or partisan memorials and peacekeepers are expected to intervene. A politically divisive memorial in Prizren, Kosovo, is a case in point: UN

authorities insisted that elected city officials make the final decision, which they did—to prevent the memorial from being built. International authorities also may be caught up in battles over cultural icons. Kosovar Albanians successfully sought the assistance of Michael Steiner, head of the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo for eighteen months starting in December 2001, to facilitate the return of a 6,000-year-old figurine known as the "Goddess on the Throne" to the Museum of Kosovo after it was removed by the Serbs and placed in the Belgrade Museum when war broke out in Kosovo.

Outsiders—both fellow nationals from outside the immediate survivor community and international actors—can help plan and implement memorial projects. By insisting on the importance of widespread consultation during the planning process, and by helping local actors plan and fund assessment and evaluations, outsiders can bring skills and perspectives that may not be available in the survivor community. They may also have access to essential funding sources. Given their cultural and linguistic advantages, outsiders who are fellow nationals may take on some tasks that are daunting to international outsiders. Survivor communities, however, may view some outsiders from abroad as more objective.

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One of the difficulties facing outsiders is that it is not always obvious which sites have deep meaning for local residents, especially when the sites have not been formally developed as memorials. In India, for example, in the wake of attacks against Sikhs, Sikh temples took on added meaning as places of refugee and memorials to victims. Their architecture also evolved to make them less physically accessible to non-Sikhs. Thus, in one sense, Sikh temple architecture has become a memorial to the persecution of the Sikhs—something not obvious to outsiders. Outsiders not attuned to a society's past also may not notice the *absence* of memorials to significant events. In India, for example, it is meaningful that there is no memorial to the approximately 600,000 victims of the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan.

The Importance of Process

According to Eric Stover (University of California, Berkeley), Hanny Megally (International Center for Transitional Justice), and Hania Mufti (Human Rights Watch), effective transitional justice interventions must pass three tests. First, the wider population must see the intervention as legitimate and impartial. For public memory processes, this means that the process of remembering and honoring is not just victors' justice, but a thoughtful process of reflecting on the past. Second, any policy decisions or outcomes must be subject to a genuine consultation with those most affected by violence. For memory projects, this means that survivors must be directly involved in the discussion of what should be remembered and how. Third, effective transitional justice interventions have to be accompanied by a range of other initiatives aimed at promoting the rule of law, respect for human rights, economic and political reconstruction, and other aspects of civil society advancement. In short, memorialization is one aspect of the long-term policies and processes used in and by countries emerging from violent conflict.

The merit of a process based on broad community consultation was highlighted in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, which states, "symbolic reparations such as monuments and museums are important but should ideally be linked with endeavors that improve the everyday lives of victims and their communities. One way of combining the two aims is to involve victims prominently in the design and/or manufacture of monuments. . ." (Vol. 6, section 2, chapter 6, para. 4). Memorialization projects that follow this advice are more likely to contribute to the economic rehabilitation of the disadvantaged communities in which they are located and to create a greater sense of local ownership over them.

According to Sevcenko, process is paramount. In her view, the memorials that have the most positive effect are those that promote "dynamic performances of civic engage-

Elements of Feasibility Studies and Needs Assessments

- Define the objectives: Understand the needs of the community and share information.
- Define the community: Who are the different stakeholders and how do their views differ?
- Promote transparency: Create a process that makes information about the memorial project available through public meetings and other means.
- Research the options: Conduct focus groups and interviews with experts, local politicians, and other key stakeholders; conduct tours of the prospective site to stimulate debate about community needs and desires in relation to the site; collect stories and memories associated with the site.
- Present findings to the community.
- Conduct ongoing publicity campaigns. The feasibility study is an initial phase from which the project needs to build further momentum.

Source: Ereshnee Naidu, Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation

ment or democracy." Memorials that merely list the names of victims without providing education about the past or a place for interaction run the risk of being either ignored or amended by others who perceive the memorials as frozen in the past. Examples of memorial sites and initiatives that have taken on a dynamic character include the following:

Memoria Abierta in Argentina: Created by a coalition of eight human rights organizations that use a variety of approaches in their work, this initiative has mapped hundreds of detention and torture sites, organized the collection of oral histories, built and made accessible archives documenting the past, organized training and workshop programs, and organized public events in Buenos Aires aimed at educating the public about the human rights abuses of past authoritarian regimes. All these activities operate on the assumption that memorialization is a long-term process.

District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa: Created by local residents to commemorate a flourishing mixed community that authorities declared in 1966 was a "whites only" area, this initiative focused on the suffering of some 60,000 nonwhite residents who were displaced and whose homes, businesses, and public institutions were bulldozed. The museum was created in one of the few buildings that remained—the Central Methodist Church—where previous residents now display secretly saved signs from streets that no longer exist and on whose floor they created a map of the original community. By inviting former residents to write their memories of places and events on this map, the museum made the map a place for encounter and dialogue among displaced communities about what they lost and where they are today. These encounters contributed to the building of a land reparations movement that resulted in one land court held at the museum through which former residents sought restitution. The museum has also become a forum for public discussions; a performance space for poetry, music, and other forms of remembrance and expression; an historical archive that includes oral histories; a sponsor of educational programs about the history of the area; and a space where social services for poor residents of the neighborhood are provided.

The Gulag Museum at Perm-36 in Russia: Created by the Memorial Society (an organization founded by Andrei Sakharov) and the Perm regional administration, this museum is at the site of the last remaining Soviet-era labor camp. When it first opened, the museum invited former prisoners and guards to give each other tours of the camp from their own perspectives. Current programs include traveling exhibits about the camp and what occurred there, as well as on-site educational and dialogue programs for students and others on the meaning of democracy and their role in shaping it. The museum has also developed a school curriculum on the history of Soviet repression and its implications for young people today, and has organized archives with documentary evidence (including videos and oral histories) about the camp and its role in the Soviet system.

Liberation War Museum in Bangladesh: Created by the Muktijuddha Smriti Trust, this museum memorializes the conflict in which three million Bengalees were killed and ten million were displaced in the civil war that led to the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971. The museum's activities include outreach programs for schoolchildren through its "mobile museum" and an annual Freedom Festival.

In her emphasis on process, Sevcenko argues that old memorial and museum traditions of creating static spaces need to be set aside. The goal is to make or preserve places for "performances of democracy, not static representation of national identity." In this vision, museum and memorial sites use the "power of place" to become the locations of popular, peaceful forms of interaction that encourage dialogue, focus on individual human experiences, and promote civic engagement. The process of creating these interactions becomes an end in itself. While the space may be designed to promote remembrance of the past, conflict prevention is an explicit goal.

Cases from South Africa and Sri Lanka

How does a community determine what memorial project will serve it best? Consultation among a variety of stakeholders—who may hold widely differing views of what happened

during the conflict—is essential. Such consultations may take the form of feasibility studies or needs assessments, ideally conducted before a memorial project is built. They can also provide useful input even while a memorial or museum is being developed or once it is in place to determine whether it is addressing the needs of the communities it is meant to serve.

The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation conducted a needs assessment for a memorial in Sharpeville. That memorial commemorates the 1969 massacre by South African police of sixty-nine peaceful protesters demonstrating against the pass laws designed to restrict the movement of black South Africans and others of mixed descent. In this case, the memorial had already been built, and the objective of the study was to understand survivors' needs and identify how to assist them in developing a memory project that could be integrated within the site.

The study found that the consultation process surrounding the monument's development had become politicized: The community as a whole felt no ownership of the project, and local victims of apartheid felt that their suffering had received no recognition through the memorial. Moreover, through the study it became evident that survivor groups, represented by different political forces, continued to disagree about what had happened at Sharpeville, and that survivors had little or no access to the finished site.

Memorials planned and built through a top-down process without significant participation from key stakeholders run the risk of becoming irrelevant. A beautiful and moving memorial to victims on both sides of the civil war in Sri Lanka, which was created by artists and human rights activists in the 1990s near the Sri Lankan Parliament in Colombo, now lies abandoned and in shambles, according to Itty Abraham of the East-West Center. The reason, says Abraham, is that "It was a top-down effort with no broad base of support; once completed it was quickly forgotten, even by those who put it up."

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The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation conducted a study concurrent with the development of a memorial site in Kliptown, South Africa. Kliptown is a sprawling collection of largely informal settlements where, in 1955, black opposition movements adopted the Freedom Charter, promoting equality, peace, and equal opportunity for all South Africans. The purpose of the study was to identify the community's needs and interests regarding the site, assess the impact of its development on the surrounding community, and create a vision of the community's future role in the development of the site. The study found unmet development needs among a very poor population suffering from a lack of basic infrastructure and services; continued racial and class divisions that belied the myth of "unity in diversity"; significantly different memories about the site among old and new residents; and controversy over what should take priority—developing the local community or building a memorial site that would earn tourism revenue.

These examples underscore the fact that memorialization is a highly political process in which complex dynamics are at work. Proceeding without adequate study of local needs, priorities, and interests can lead to the development of a site that carries little meaning for the local survivors of the conflict, breeds hostility toward it, or raises unrealistic expectations about it.

Memorialization is a highly political process in which complex dynamics are at work.

Measuring Impact

As difficult as it is to assess the impact of memorialization initiatives, evaluation is essential to understanding whether they contribute to social reconstruction or to further conflict. Evaluation is also an essential tool in designing and implementing memorial projects—by facilitating input from local stakeholders on project design, helping identify ways to fund projects, and the like. Conducting effective evaluations is time-consuming, technically difficult, and expensive. It is difficult to isolate the impact of a specific memorial from that of other cultural, social, economic, and political influences at work in a society. In designing evaluation plans for memorial activities, researchers face a number

of challenges, including political sensitivity; methodological problems (such as achieving random samples in unstable environments, applying standardized scales developed elsewhere, and maintaining the confidentiality of respondents); and linguistic and cultural barriers. There is also the problem of securing funding for evaluations that are best implemented periodically over extended time frames—ideally many years—to measure attitudinal and behavioral differences.

According to Randi Korn, an expert in the field of museum visitor studies, project managers should conduct or arrange for evaluations during each phase of the project—before the project begins to determine needs and interests; during project development to refine approaches; and after project completion to evaluate impact. The most effective memorial projects are those that are developed with the public through ongoing consultations. Korn contends that the following questions need to be asked before, during, and after project implementation:

Planning the project: What cultural, political, and gender differences divide the community? How do these differences affect people's social interaction, learning, and emotional responses, and their views about what should be memorialized and how? How much do people know about the subject or event addressed by the site, and what are their preconceptions or misconceptions about it? What are the project's goals and objectives, and who are the target audiences for the site and the groups least inclined to visit it? How does the community feel about the site and their access to it? How do people react when confronted with specific ideas to be presented at the site, and what ideas catch their attention?

Evaluating the implemented project: What have visitors experienced or learned? What parts of the visit were confusing, understandable, upsetting, or most compelling? How do people "use" the memorial and its educational materials? What do people do when they visit the site, and how much time do they spend there? Who does and does not visit, and why? Has the project achieved its goals and objectives?

Evaluations rely on a variety of methods, including standardized questionnaires, interviews, observations of visitors, and focus groups. Each method represents advantages and disadvantages in terms of cost and information yielded. Qualitative assessments through interviews and focus groups provide rich insights into visitors' attitudes, motivations, and experiences but generally produce inconclusive findings because they are based on small, nonrepresentative samples. Researchers relying on quantitative survey methods will lose rich personal details but may be able to produce more broadly representative and "generalizable" findings.

Audrey Chapman of the University of Connecticut argues for the use of multiple methods to develop a comprehensive assessment of the impact of memorialization projects, and for repeated evaluations over many years to see if attitudes, knowledge, or behavior have changed. She also stresses the importance of defining clear goals and objectives against which to assess projects. Even limited evaluations can be expensive—generally 10 percent of the overall project budget. While it may amount to a sizable sum of money, this investment may prevent higher costs later on to fix ill-conceived projects that have not achieved their goals.

Some projects, such as museum exhibits, lend themselves more easily to evaluation than others. How can one evaluate an informal, unplanned memorial? Korn cited the case of a study that assessed the items left behind by visitors to the Vietnam War memorial in Washington, D.C. Some of the items later ended up in a museum commemorating the event.

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Difficulties of Determining Impact

Because memory is not static and "received" memory is reinterpreted from one generation to another, getting a fix on the impact of memorials as time passes is complicated and difficult. Memorials at Gettysburg, the site of an American Civil War battle in 1863 that

resulted in 51,000 casualties, illustrate how the impact of memorials can shift over time. Initially, many of the regiments that fought in the battle erected their own memorials, around which they organized separate reunions. Eventually, however, these sites became the basis for joint reunions among relatives of Union and Confederate soldiers.

In short, the meaning of memorials often shifts over time and depends on the life experiences of the viewer. A memorial that helps one victim regain his or her psychological balance may be viewed by someone from the other side of the conflict as a provocation. Young children will respond differently to memorials than adults. Outsiders to the conflict and direct participants may also interpret the same memorial in diverse ways. Rising generations may have different reactions to a memorial site than their grandparents who lived through the conflict. In the latter case, it may be necessary for memorial sites to evolve to accommodate social transformations. The Hector Pieter Museum in Soweto, South Africa, for example, commemorates the 1976 Soweto Uprising in which police killed young students who protested against the use of Afrikaans in the schools. Today, to address the political apathy of South African young people, the museum has begun to focus on social issues of direct interest to today's youth.

How do states deal with the problem of "negative" memorials that appear to be more divisive than healing? Some—especially those still in transition from authoritarianism to democracy—may remove memorials that contradict current government policies. While doing so may yield short-term benefits, an opposing view is that the destruction of these memorials represents a lost opportunity to continue dialogue about a past that the society would do well not to repeat. Interestingly, public perspectives about the value of such memorials may vary according the age of the respondent. Naidu reported that survey research in Sharpeville, South Africa, revealed that the older generation (aged 45–80) believed that monuments representing apartheid should be preserved as a reminder of the awful past, while the younger generation (aged 18–30) felt that such monuments were meaningless and should be removed.

"Reprogramming" the meaning of a monument glorifying an oppressive political order takes conscious effort. Two years after the fall of apartheid, the premier of Gauteng (a provincial area of which Pretoria is a part) visited the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria, which honors the courage and determination of the Afrikaners. In a very public media exercise, the premier (a prominent member of the African National Congress) reinterpreted the meaning of the site by stating that the original fence built around the monument, which was made of spears symbolic of the spear of a powerful Zulu leader, represented the power of the Zulu people in protecting the site rather than the victory of the Afrikaner people over the Zulus (which was the site's original meaning). Moreover, almost a decade after the transition to democracy, the aforementioned Freedom Park, designed to celebrate the country's multicultural heritage, is being developed directly across from the Voortrekker Monument.

Efforts to rebuild sites destroyed during violent conflict sometimes take on unintended meaning. The historic Krue Se mosque in southern Thailand was largely destroyed by the Thai army in a battle in April 2004 in which thirty-two Muslim militants were killed. The Thai government rebuilt the mosque in an attempt to reach out to the Muslim community in a gesture of reconciliation. The Thai Muslim community, on the other hand, perceived the rebuilding as the creation of a memorial to the fallen militants.

Helping Outsiders Approach Memorialization

International missions and peacekeepers, humanitarian organizations, foreign NGOS, and international organizations involved in helping societies emerging from violent conflict face a number of challenges related to the urge to remember and honor victims of conflict. The following matrix outlines some key assumptions and practical recommendations to guide their involvement in memorialization. It is followed by a chart that outlines the life cycle of conflict and memorialization.

Cautions

- Memorialization is a politically charged process that can stir up the worst in a community.
- Memorials initiated, controlled, or dominated by outsiders are doomed to failure.
- Memorial sites highly meaningful to a community may be largely invisible to outsiders.
- A memorial that helps individual survivors feel more at peace may promote future conflict.
- "Static" memorials that do not promote active learning or interaction among survivors lose their meaning for future generations.
- Impact assessment is time-consuming and expensive, and it needs to be repeated to capture changes in attitude over time.

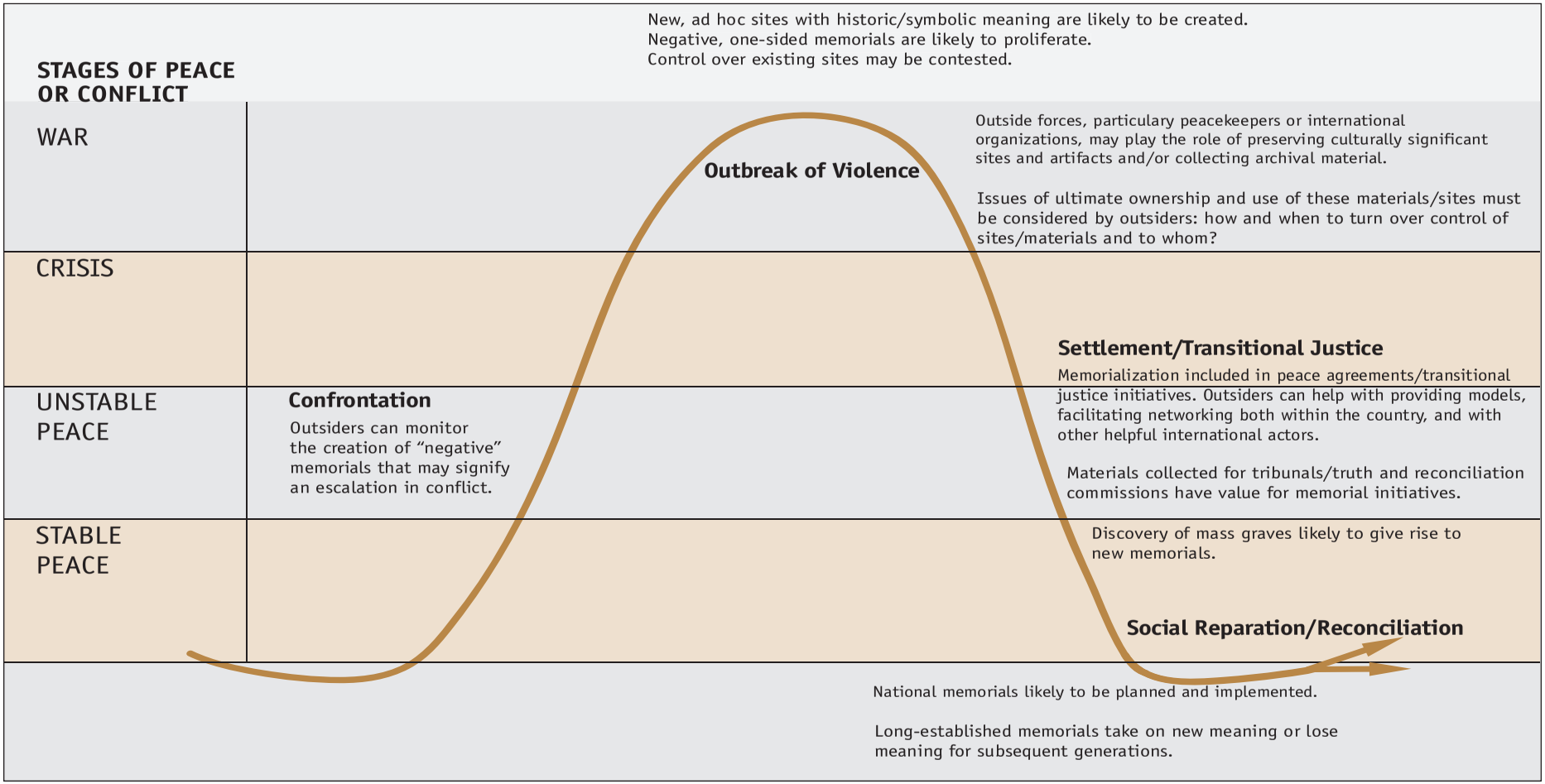
MEMORIALIZATION AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION MATRIX	
Starting Assumptions	
a. Memorialization occurs throughout the conflict life cycle: before conflict begins, during conflict, and after conflict ends. Memorialization takes different forms depending on the nature, duration, and stage of the conflict. At certain stages of the conflict, memorialization initiatives may be ill-advised, such as when violence continues, highly contested versions of the past exist, or intergroup tensions are extremely high.	
b. Outsider actors entering the country to do apparently unrelated tasks will be confronted with challenges relating to memorialization: • Peacekeepers will be asked to protect historic sites and documents. • International organizations (such as UNESCO) will be expected to help with cultural preservation tasks. • NGOs working on humanitarian aid and psychosocial development (including trauma relief) may be confronted with local needs or demands for memorials.	
c. Regardless of their roles, outsiders cannot and should not control or direct memorialization initiatives. Instead of initiating projects, outsiders should work either to (1) prevent harmful memorialization developments likely to retard social reconstruction or (2) assist memorialization initiatives by local actors designed to aid social reconstruction.	
d. Priorities for outsiders include (1) building or supporting indigenous expertise/capacity; (2) promoting participation by local actors from all sides of social/political/ethnic divides; (3) encouraging transparency and accountability; (4) promoting widespread consultation and assessment of options before taking action, with the understanding that process may be as important as outcomes.	
e. Conflicting impulses are likely to exist within the society (even within what might be conceived as unified groups, such as survivor groups) about what and how to commemorate. There may be a strong desire to forget or move on versus an impulse to remember and document. Should the former be true, it is important for outsiders to honor that sentiment and not push memorialization on a community.	
f. There is no such thing as complete objectivity. Local actors generally perceive outsiders as being on one side of the conflict or the other, which affects the roles they play in memorialization/social reconstruction.	
Planning for Outsiders	
1. DESIGNATION AND TRAINING OF STAFF	a. Before entering the country, recognize that staff will encounter "negative" and "positive" memorialization sites/initiatives designed by locals, and that such interventions may affect their other work. Designate staff with responsibility for addressing ad hoc and formal memorialization processes.
	b. Provide training to designated staff regarding (1) local and national political dynamics driving memorialization processes; (2) the nature of memorialization initiatives; (3) their potential either to support or undermine efforts to promote social reconstruction/reconciliation; (4) appropriate responses to local memorialization efforts.
	c. Designate funds for training in-country staff/local institutions about memorialization, archiving, and handling documents and artifacts. Budget for initiatives to help international staff and local groups to learn about initiatives undertaken in other contexts and to coordinate activity within the country.

MEMORIALIZATION AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION MATRIX	
2. PLANNING AND MAPPING	a. Map the main local players relevant to memorialization (e.g., government officials/ministries, security authorities, victim/survivor groups, local NGOs, educators, mental health professionals, historians) and the main international players/interveners (e.g., peacekeeping troops, humanitarian aid workers, other foreign NGOs, international organizations such as UNESCO heritage staff, historians, academics). Identify local "spoilers" determined to undermine positive memorialization initiatives or attack important cultural sites to destabilize or undermine peacebuilding.
	b. To the extent possible before entering the country, map existing cultural/historic/heritage/symbolic sites and document collections. Investigate who "owns" and controls them. Understand conflicts over "stolen" artifacts.
	c. Conduct a cultural assessment about local practices, beliefs, and rituals related to conflict resolution, death and dying, burial, and similar matters to understand the underlying social and psychological dynamics of grieving and commemoration.
	d. Identify actual or pending transitional justice processes in the country to promote truth-telling, legal accountability, documentation of war crimes, and preservation of historical sites/memory, and the key players involved in them.
	e. Strategize about how to integrate memorialization into other peacebuilding and transitional justice initiatives. For example, explore options for including memorialization plans in peace agreements and in truth commission recommendations.
	f. Plan how to best coordinate all the players in the field relevant to memorialization through the creation of joint working groups or task forces.
On-the-Ground Implementation for Outsiders	
1. PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION	a. Complete mapping of (1) existing cultural/historic/heritage/symbolic sites and (2) extent and location of collected and "uncollected" documents and artifacts. Determine who "owns" and controls them.
	b. Work with local and international authorities to (1) ensure the physical security of existing cultural/historic/heritage/symbolic sites and document collections; (2) guarantee a "chain of evidence" documenting the relationship of materials to the sites where they were found so that they can be used in legal proceedings; (3) determine appropriate policies regarding public access.

MEMORIALIZATION AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION MATRIX	
1. PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION	c. Promote collection and protection of additional, important "uncollected" documents/artifacts with an understanding that they may support many functions, including legal prosecutions, forensic investigations, memorialization, and historic site preservation.
	d. Consult with local actors to create a priority list of needs for protection of sites, including the provision of key resources (e.g., airtight plastic storage bins, dehumidifiers) for collection and storage of documents and artifacts. Work with donors and others to provide necessary resources.
	e. Monitor potential "flash points" in memorialization initiatives that could trigger renewed hostilities, and work with key players to manage conflict when it arises.
2. BUILD LOCAL CAPACITY	a. Provide training to improve local capacity in collection and preservation of documents, artifacts, and sites.
	b. Set up regular meetings between memorialization actors and transitional justice actors (e.g., tribunals, truth commissions, justice officials) to connect the dots between rule-of-law programs, transitional justice initiatives, and memorialization/social reconstruction initiatives. Consult with stakeholders involved with education and education reform initiatives.
	c. Establish relationships between local documentation/memorialization actors with experienced counterparts in other countries who have addressed similar issues. Establish affinity groups to share technical information, best practices, challenges and strategies to overcome them and to provide support.
3. CONSULTATION AND EVALUATION	a. Conduct feasibility studies to determine the interests, needs, and desires of local communities vis-à-vis memorialization. Identify the major stakeholders.
	b. Consider needs of diverse audiences (e.g., schoolchildren, victims' families, foreign visitors).
	c. Make results of feasibility studies widely available to government officials, community stakeholders, local and international NGOs.
	d. Use feasibility study findings to set major goals and desired outcomes. They will help form the basis of later evaluation.
	e. Help local actors design strategies to evaluate the impact of their memorialization initiatives.

MEMORIALIZATION AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION MATRIX	
Leaving the Country	
1. COORDINATION	a. Establish funding mechanisms to ensure continued funding for local initiatives to cover operating costs, training, and other costs. Work with created sites to develop revenue streams (through tourism, endowment campaigns, etc.).
	b. Continue to support affinity groups that combine inside and outside expertise on memorialization challenges.
2. EVALUATION	a. Evaluate your impact as an outsider actor.
	b. Share findings with local actors and other interested parties.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF CONFLICT AND MEMORIALIZATION



An online edition of this report can be found at our website (www.usip.org), together with additional information on the subject.

Of Related Interest

This report is part of a series of special reports that have been issued by the United States Institute of Peace's Filling the Gaps series of working groups. The special reports will address the causes of failure in specific areas in reconstruction and stabilization as well as generate policy options. The other reports in the series (all published in 2006) are:

- *Measuring Progress in Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Craig Cohen
- *Transitional Governance: From Bullets to Ballots*, Beth Cole and Christina Caan
- *Filling the Gaps: Managing Natural Resource Wealth*, Jill Shankleman
- *The Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Camille Pampell Conaway

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Related Resources

- Biggar, N. *Burying the Past: Making Peace and Doing Justice after Civil Conflict*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003.
- Bloomfield, D., T. Barnes, and L. Huyse. *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict: A Handbook*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2003.
- Cairns, E. and M.D. Roe. *The Role of Memory in Ethnic Conflict*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
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- Jelin, E. *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
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- Winter, J. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*. Cambridge: Canto, 1998.

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