



Urban Terrorism in Contemporary Europe

Remembering, Imagining and
Anticipating Violence

Edited by Katharina Karcher
Yordanka Dimcheva · Mireya Toribio Medina
Mia Parkes



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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Remembering Urban Terror in Europe—Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Memorialisation, Narratives, and the Politics of Memory

*Katharina Karcher, Yordanka Dimcheva, Mia Parkes,
and Mireya Toribio Medina*

REMEMBERING URBAN TERROR IN EUROPE

The year 2024 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Madrid train bombings (11M). What has been described as the largest terrorist attack on European soil (Reinares, 2014) and as ‘Europe’s 9/11’ (Truc, 2018: 44) is widely seen as the beginning of a new era of political violence in Europe.

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Other major attacks in this era include the London 7/7 bombings in 2005, the 2011 Norway attacks, the Paris attacks in November 2015, the Nice and Berlin truck attacks in 2016, the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017, the 2017 Barcelona attacks, and three racist shootings in Germany in Munich (2016), Halle (2019), and Hanau (2020). While there are important ideological and political differences between these attacks, they have one important thing in common: the perpetrators sought to spread fear and terror by targeting social events and busy urban spaces.

The targets of the Madrid bombings were not government decision makers, members of the armed forces, police officers, or public figures. They were ordinary people using public transport. At 7:37 am on 11 March 2004, thousands of them were on their way to work or school when ten explosive devices detonated on four trains on the Madrid rail network. 191 people lost their lives at Atocha, El Pozo and Santa Eugenia stations as well as in Calle Téllez in Madrid. 1,841 people were injured (Audiencia Nacional, 2007: 174–175). On 3 April 2004, seven members of the group responsible for the attack, facing imminent arrest in Leganés (Madrid), committed suicide by detonating several charges of dynamite. The explosion also killed a policeman and injured another 34 people (Audiencia Nacional, 2007: 172 and 710–711).

The public nature of the Madrid bombings and other acts of terrorism in Europe since has profound implications on their memory. As this volume illustrates, the attack sites are shaped by both rituals of remembrance (e.g. makeshift memorials and commemorative events) and practices of forgetting (e.g. the quickest possible removal of physical traces of the attacks and the subsequent return to business as usual). Soon, it was possible to travel from and to Atocha station without being forced to think about the deadly attack in 2004. On the platforms, the only physical reminders of the attack are temporary: flower bouquets that visitors leave in honour of the victims (Image 1.1).

On the first anniversary of the attacks, a first memorial for the 193 victims in the form of a ‘Forest of Remembrance’ (Bosque del Recuerdo) located in a local park was inaugurated by King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia. On the third anniversary of the bombings, a second memorial followed. The memorial, which was accessible through an entrance at

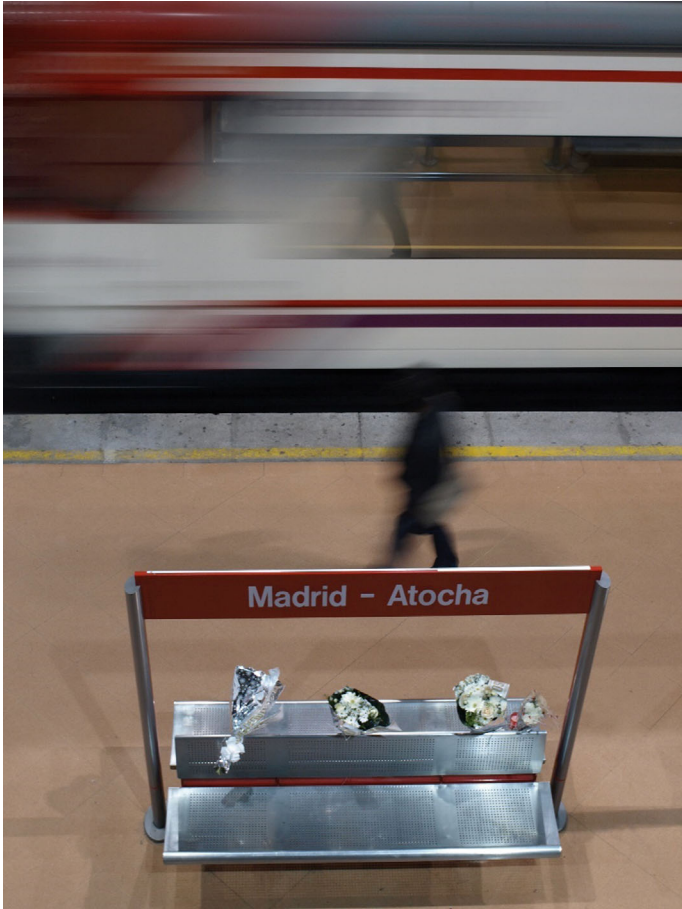


Image 1.1 Madrid, 11 March 2010: flowers laid on one of the platforms at Atocha train station, struck by terrorists on 11 March 2004 (Photograph by G r me Truc)

Atocha station, contained a large plastic bubble with messages of condolence in various languages left by anonymous visitors at the sites of

the attacks (Image 1.2).¹ Far from creating a sense of unity and solidarity, the Atocha memorial became a contested symbol of Spain's deeply polarised and fragmented memory landscape. Over the years, the delicate construction collapsed multiple times, prompting some to demand that it is removed altogether. In 2023, local officials decided to get rid of the memorial. They argued that the deconstruction was necessary to enable works on a new metro network. They promised to replace it with a new memorial.

The controversies surrounding the Madrid bombings did not begin with the disputes over the Atocha memorial. From the first moment on, the attacks were the subject of 'mnemonic battles' (DeGloma & Liebman Jacobs, 2023; Irwin-Zareka, 1994). They took place three days before

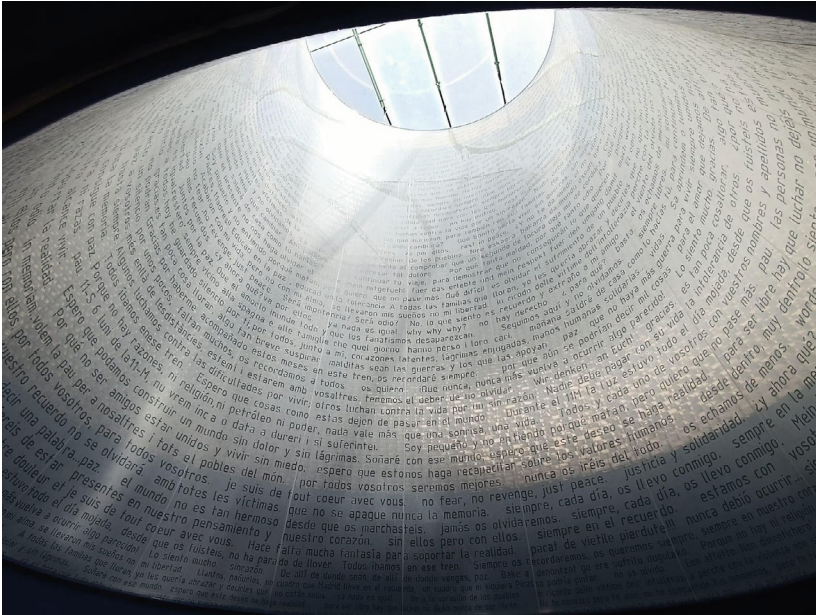


Image 1.2 Messages on the plastic bubble at the Atocha memorial (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

¹ The two monuments are discussed in more detail in Mireya Toribio Medina's contribution in this volume (see Chapter 3).

the general elections were due to be held. Despite a lack of evidence, the conservative Popular Party (PP) blamed the Basque separatist group ‘Euskadi Ta Askatasuna’ (ETA) for the bombings. Meanwhile, part of society saw the attack as a direct consequence of conservative government’s decision to send Spanish troops to Iraq and thus join the US-led ‘war on terror’. This sparked protests in front of PP headquarters on the day before the elections. Despite conservatives being the favourite in the polls, the Socialist Party won the elections.

As the example of Madrid train bombings in 2004 illustrates, terrorist attacks in Europe in the twenty-first century are the subject of intense mnemonic conflicts (Saryusz-Wolska et al., 2022). The narratives surrounding these violent events are shaped by multiple coexisting and intersecting memories of political violence in the past and present. In the case of the Madrid train bombings, narratives were not only shaped by memories of ETA violence but also by repressed memories of colonial expansion and of the Francoist dictatorship as well as global discourses about the 9/11 attacks and the global ‘war’ on terror. Analysing the complex interplay between such memory narratives and conflicts requires a range of methods and explanatory strategies (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994: 72). The aim of this volume is to offer ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) of the material, cultural, and political impact of European terror attacks since 2004. It includes chapters by scholars from a range of disciplines and countries as well as critical insights from survivors of terrorist violence and artists. The book shows that the memory of the Madrid train bombings and other terrorist attacks in Europe in the twenty-first century is multi-directional (Rothberg, 2009), transcultural (Erll, 2011), and ‘entangled’ (Fareld, 2021) with the memory of other violent histories including acknowledged and unacknowledged forms of state violence.

TERRORISM AS A THREAT TO THE EUROPEAN PROJECT

While the Madrid train bombings and other attacks explored in this volume need to be situated in a particular cultural and political context, terrorism in twenty-first-century Europe is also a transnational phenomenon and must be analysed as such. A key part of the European project is the creation of a shared view of the past (Jones, 2017; Rigney, 2012) and a collective narrative of progress leading from a lawless and violent past towards a peaceful and democratic future. The end of the Second World War—in Germany sometimes referred to as *Stunde Null* or

Zero hour—marks the beginning of this process, and the ‘peaceful revolution’ of 1989 is widely regarded as an important milestone. On the 30th anniversary of the protests on 9 November 1989, EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker (2019) argued that the people who took to the streets in autumn 1989, ‘healed a European continent divided by war, and reconciled Europe’s history with its geography’.

In recent years, the narrative of a reconciled and peaceful Europe has become the subject of growing criticism. In a controversial speech in October 2022, the European Union’s foreign policy chief Josep Borrell compared Europe to a peaceful garden surrounded by a wild jungle. By portraying Europe as a beacon of ‘peaceful coexistence, cooperation, integration and development’ (Borrell, 2022a) in a world characterised by violence, disorder, and ‘the law of the jungle’ (Borrell, 2022b), Borrell reinforced a ‘sanitized version of European history that ignores both the experience of the East and the South of Europe, as well as the West’s colonial and imperial history’ (Boatcă, 2021: 390; see also Chakrabarty, 2000).

This sanitised version of European history is problematic because it fails to account for historical and ongoing patterns of violence, exclusion, and marginalisation. Indeed, even ‘as Europe progressed to its more internally peaceful later twentieth century, its war-making techniques in its colonies and outposts would have gained prosecutions for their implementers at the Nuremberg trials’ (Bloxham et al., 2011: 14). The ‘strategic cruelty’ at the European borders (Sajjad, 2022; see also Stierl, 2023) and the hidden and open forms of racism in Europe today are a direct result of these violent histories.

The history of racism in Europe is far from over, and there are plenty of examples illustrating this. While we were working on this introduction, thousands of people were protesting against police violence in France. The current protests were triggered by the brutal killing of a 17-year-old boy of Algerian and Moroccan origin during a police control. Like in many other European countries, racialised communities in France face a significantly higher risk of police violence. In a joint statement, France’s leading police unions declared that they are in a war against ‘savage hordes’ and ‘vermin’ (Henley & Chrisafis, 2023). After three nights of riots in cities across the country, the UN urged France to ‘seriously address the deep issues of racism and discrimination in law enforcement’ (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2023).

Europe is no idyllic garden. As this volume shows, violence is not just an important part of Europe's past but also of its present. Violence here is understood in the broadest sense ranging from genocides and mass atrocities to 'epistemic violence' (Brunner, 2021; Spivak, 1988) and 'imperialist amnesia' (Fletcher, 2012). The particular focus of this volume is on *urban* violence. As Andrea Pavoni and Simone Tulumello (2023) argue, urban violence is the subject of a quickly growing body research but remains under-theorised. According to them, urban violence is shaped by three interlocking trajectories: 'the *process* of (capitalist) urbanisation, which ontologically structures the realm in which urban violence emerges; the spatio-political *project* of the urban, which [...] constitutes the epistemological realm against which urban violence is made visible; and the concrete urban *atmospheres* in and through which the process and the project materialise, often violently so, in the urban' (Pavoni & Tulumello, 2023: 4). From this perspective, urban violence has material, political, affective, and imaginary dimensions that are deeply entangled. It follows that urban terrorism in contemporary Europe is a complex phenomenon that is about much more than spectacular attacks and official commemorations. A key aim of this book is to show that there are many other—and often less visible—forms of violence that contribute to the social, cultural, and political impact of terrorism in contemporary Europe.

The essays in this book, with a focus on memory discourses of and creative responses to terrorist violence in the twenty-first century, illustrate that violence in the past and in the present and within and outside Europe intersect in complex ways. The volume shows that the way in which we remember recent acts of political violence is not just a question of (re)interpreting Europe's past but also one of (re)imagining Europe's future. As Andreas Huyssen (2003: 6) notes, we 'need both past and future to articulate our political, social, and cultural dissatisfactions with the present state of the world'.

While the Madrid bombings in 2004 can be seen as the beginning of a wave of terrorist attacks targeting public events and spaces in Europe, it is important to stress that they were not the first attacks of this kind on European soil. The year 1980 alone saw two major bombings in Italy and Germany; one targeted a busy train station in Bologna and the other a popular folk festival in Munich, Germany. However, in the early twenty-first century, terrorism against 'soft targets' in European cities has undoubtedly reached a new intensity. And there is something else that is 'new' about this wave of terror attacks: unlike in the twentieth century,

political authorities in many European countries depict terrorism today as a threat to a ‘European’ way of life.

In his State of the Union Address 2016, the then President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker highlighted that terrorist attacks in the EU since 2004 had claimed more than 600 lives and promised further policy actions to protect ‘the European way of life’ in the face of heightened internal and external threats (Juncker, 2016). The EU has made the prevention of further acts of urban terrorism a key priority. Yet, less than three months after Juncker’s speech, Anis Amri deliberately drove a truck into a Christmas market in Berlin, killing 12 people and injuring dozens, and the following years saw several other attacks against soft targets in European cities. In 2017, EU officials openly admitted that despite all security measures ‘there can never be “zero risk”’, because an almost infinite number of public spaces could be targeted in a range of ways (European Commission, 2017). How does this constant threat of violence affect the memorialisation of such violent events?

The immediate aftermath of recent terror attacks in Europe has been characterised by public declarations of unity and collective gestures of solidarity with victims. A famous example for this is the use of the famous ‘je suis Charlie’ hashtag after the 2015 attacks on the editorial office of the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris. In the days after the 13 November Paris attacks, thousands of people left flowers and messages at the attack sites (Image 1.3). However, such public displays of solidarity and love should not obscure the fact that collective memories of urban terror in contemporary Europe are far from consensual (Faucher-King & Truc, 2022), and that different people and institutions are implicated in different ways in Europe’s violent histories. According to Michael Rothberg, implication ‘emerges from the ongoing, uneven, and destabilising intrusion of irrevocable pasts into an unredeemed present’ (2019: 9). Moving beyond the perpetrator/victim dichotomy, Rothberg’s implicated subject participates in injustice in ways that are not necessarily visible or obvious. He rightly insists that commemoration that fails to acknowledge positionality and implication ‘tends toward empty rhetoric and platitude’ (Rothberg, 2019: 20). While the chapters in this book focus on different countries and cultural contexts, they share an interest in questions of positionality and implication as well as in the ethics and politics of memory.



Image 1.3 Paris, 17 November 2015: an ephemeral memorial in front of the restaurant Le Petit Cambodge 4 days after the 13th November Paris attacks (Photograph by G r me Truc)

As Aleida Assmann and Linda Shortt (2012: 5) note, memory can be both a catalyst for and an impediment to social and political change. This is because memory narratives ‘commonly imply multiple collective references, nonlinearities, ambivalences, manipulations and blindspots’ (Capdepon & Dornhof, 2022: 6). Even if there are strong official narratives about terrorist attacks and about *who* and *what* should be seen as a terrorist threat to European citizens and their way(s) of life, such narratives rarely remain uncontested. The case studies explored in this book illustrate that power is relational, dynamic and ‘exercised from innumerable points’ (Foucault, 1990: 38). The book does not seek to offer an in-depth analysis of every terror attack on European soil in the twenty-first century (and could not possibly do so). Rather it offers empirical, theoretical, and creative perspectives on particular events that offer critical insights into local, national, and transnational memory discourses. The

contributions show that these discourses erupt and evolve in complex and often contradictory ways.

This volume focuses on attacks that are widely regarded as acts of terrorism. However, this should not obscure the politically charged and contested nature of this terminology. Multiple definitions on a national and supranational level shape how ‘terrorism’ is conceptualised in contemporary Europe. The prevailing definitions have several common features, but there are also some interesting differences. Most definitions emphasise the collective affective impact of terrorist violence. Namely, its capacity to create *terror* in a society or in part of it. This terror is created through an instrumentalization of violence for political ends. Terrorism is widely understood as a political form of violence—even if discussions abound on the question of what exactly should be seen as political in this context (e.g. in relation to religious motivations or perpetrators with unclear or mixed ideologies).

There are also some key assumptions surrounding the victims and perpetrators of terrorist violence—even if both issues are heavily disputed. Some definitions specify that perpetrators of terrorist violence must be sub-national groups and clandestine actors. Unlike the US, the EU has no official register of state sponsors of terrorism and has no legal tools to address state terrorism. As we have shown elsewhere (Geerts et al., 2023; Karcher & Geerts, 2024), the inclusion and exclusion of potential perpetrator groups is deeply political and has been the subject of important work in the field of Critical Terrorism Studies. While some definitions of terrorism specify that the victims must be civilians, others maintain that members of the armed forces can also be targets of terrorism. Overall, definitions tend to agree that a defining element is that victims are targeted randomly and not individually. This aspect is closely linked to the communicative function and affective power of terrorist violence. If a substantial part of the population identifies with the victims to the degree that they feel that they themselves could have been the target, this can create a general sense of terror.

Definitions of terrorism in Europe have evolved with and against the perceived threat of political violence. Since 2004, the EU has adopted a range of new measures to stop terrorism. They include new rules on the online dissemination of terrorist content, measures to improve information exchange between EU countries and with non-EU partners, anti-money laundering rules, measures to stop foreign terrorist fighters, stricter rules on the acquisition and possession of weapons and explosive

precursors, and measures to improve the safety of public spaces and infrastructures. Although it is still too early to assess the long-term effects of these counter-terrorism measures, it has become clear that they, too, can have harmful and divisive consequences. For that reason, it is vital that research on terrorism in contemporary Europe also critically examines counter-terrorism measures at a local, national, and supranational level.

An EU directive from 2017 lists a number of offences, including causing significant damage to transport and information systems, which can be classified as terrorist acts if they aim to seriously intimidate a population, to destabilise the fundamental structures of a country or international institution, or to manipulate decisions and actions on a national or supranational level. Human rights organisations have warned that the broad language adopted in this directive makes it possible for states to ‘criminalise, as terrorism, public protests or other peaceful acts’ that they see as destabilising for their social, political, or economic order (European Network Against Racism, 2016). This criticism is nothing new. Studies have repeatedly shown the politically charged nature of the term terrorism (see e.g. Cronin, 2006; Jackson et al., 2020; Tilly, 2003).

As we hope to show in this volume, terrorism is not only a political but also a cultural phenomenon and needs to be analysed as such. In a special issue of the journal *Memory Studies* focusing on the 2005 London bombings, Matthew Allen and Annie Bryan (2011) highlight the mediated nature of commemorations of terrorist violence in the twenty-first century. Indeed, to analyse the memories of terrorism in Europe today, researchers must explore ‘a complex memoryscape that encompasses multiple media, modalities and temporalities’ (Allen & Bryan, 2011: 264). It is important to note that this memoryscape is shaped by a broad range of plurivocal meaning-making practices. As research in memory studies has shown, a range of memory actors including state authorities, victims, local residents, journalists, and transnational communities engage in a variety of practices and rituals to build, maintain, and transmit specific memories (Hirsch, 2015). It is through their power and their limitations that commemorative practices are shaped and reshaped (Vinitzky-Seroussi, 2002: 33).

While the Spanish police made the controversial decision to release graphic video footage of the Madrid bombings and a video of three men claiming responsibility for the attacks, police authorities in other countries tried to share as little evidence as possible with the public. For example, after a racist terror attack in Hanau, Germany, in February 2020, police

refused to discuss critical details of the incident—as the chapter by Karin Yesilada in this volume illustrates. The families of the nine victims of the racist shooting commissioned the research agencies Forensic Architecture and Forensis to investigate the attack. The findings of the investigation were presented as part of the exhibition ‘Three Doors’ at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, a public space for contemporary art and culture in Frankfurt am Main (see Image 1.4). As the contributions to this volume illustrate, art has been used by victims and survivors to process their traumatic experiences and to reclaim their lives. The book shows that art is used to offer critical perspectives on collective practices or remembering and forgetting in relation to violence in the past and the complex effects of counter-terrorism measures in the present.



Image 1.4 “Forensic Architecture/Forensis, Installation view Frankfurter Kunstverein 2022 with the investigation “Racist Terror Attack in Hanau: The Arena Bar” and the timeline “Incidents and Unknown” (Photograph by Norbert Miguletz, ©Frankfurter Kunstverein)

MEMORY, ART, AESTHETICS: REPRESENTATIONS OF AND RESPONSES TO TERROR

The work of art, writes John Dewey, serves to ‘concentrate and enlarge an immediate experience’, directly expressing ‘meanings imaginatively summoned, assembled, and integrated’ (2009: 273). It is vital that we acknowledge and explore the multiple, multi-directional, transcultural, and entangled nature of memories of twenty-first century terror in Europe. Such an exploration, we believe, would be incomplete without a consideration of the role of art, as the representation of these immediate experiences, in the creation and proliferation of memory. Indeed, art has played a crucial role in our research, offering new and transformative perspectives in our understanding of terror, memory, and the memory of terror. As Marsha Meskimmon writes, art functions as ‘an active constituent element’ within the conditions of the world and of memory, allowing us to ‘encounter difference, imagine change that has yet to come, and make possible the new’ (2010: 8). The various artworks that make up this volume, as well as the contributing chapters that discuss the art and literature of memory, thus enable us as researchers to expand the field of imagination in ways that go beyond the forms of narrating, planning, and playing that characterise catastrophe scenarios, exercises, and the academic literature on this subject.

Our understanding of art in this volume, then, is as a form of testimony. Generally difficult to define in absolute terms, we use the term ‘testimony’ here to refer to memory narratives of past traumatic events, or what Verónica Tozzi refers to as ‘limit events’, which she defines as ‘events of victimisation on a massive scale and intensity’ (2012: 3). For Tozzi, whose work builds on Hayden White’s studies of ‘witness literature’ (2024: 114), testimony is a vital means of interpreting history, as it not only recounts this limit event in the past but effectively re-constitutes it in the present (2012: 4). Andreas Huyssen, too, writes that artists have ‘used these confusions of temporality to create [...] aesthetic work, weaving a web of memories in the present with an opening to alternative futures’ (2022: 11). The notions of temporality and linear memorialisation are again disrupted here, as memory is ‘actively constructed and re-constructed over time’ and memory and imagination come together to create ‘various lines of synthesis between past, present, and future’ (Keightley & Pickering, 2017: 167). In such an approach to testimony, then, memory narratives of these ‘limit events’ (Tozzi, 2012: 3) stand

not only as an affirmation that these events took place, or a recounting of the facts of the event, but also as a reconstitution or ‘enactment [...] of *what it felt like* to have had to endure such “facts” (White, 2004: 123, emphasis in original). Aleida Assmann similarly proposes that the purpose of testimonial narratives ‘is less to tell us what happened than what it felt like to be in the centre of those events; [to] provide very personal views from within’ (2006: 263).

A majority of the work on testimony refers generally to written narratives, to ‘art’ in the form of literature—such as, for example, in the poems that appear in Folkvord and Lassègue’s chapter, or the reflective writing contributed by Harry Man and David Fritz Goepfinger. Sara Jones, for example, defines testimony as ‘a form of knowledge’ existing within culture, where culture includes ‘the creation of artefacts such as books, film, and the theatre’ (2019: 259). To these, we would add visual arts: indeed, there are a number of studies considering the role of visual arts in the creation of testimonial knowledge. For example, Jill Bennet proposes that art offers ‘unique capacities to contribute actively’ to what she refers to as ‘the politics of testimony’ (2005: 3). The work of Halilovich and Fejzić asserts that history and testimony have long been “‘preserved” in collective memory’ through ‘creative “inscribing” through different media such as paintings, drawings, sculptures, photographs, and films’ (2018: 91). Similarly, Andreas Huyssen theorises the work of art as one that ‘embodies memory in its media and materiality’ and ‘produces memory in the social present’ (2022: 18). Understood as a form of testimony, artworks thus allow for the ‘deepening of knowledge and a better understanding of the facts that we might already know’, offering us these so-called inside views as a ‘distinctive way of offering us facts that is more vivid and involving than the usual mere providing of facts, or by expression of attitudes of the artist which can challenge or enlighten our own worldview’ (Vidmar & Baccarini, 2010: 334).

In their work on Bosnian memory, Halilovich and Fejzić also examine how art might become implicated in the creation, preservation, and proliferation of memory narratives, as well as how it might stand as a form of counter-memory in the face of sanitised historical discourses, such as those versions of European history mentioned above. The example they give is that of Picasso’s painting *Guernica*: despite the Franco regime’s multiple attempts ‘to create and impose an alternative memory of what “really” happened in Guernica on that fatal April 26, 1937’, they write, Picasso’s famous painting stands as a counter-narrative to this denial of atrocity,

and one that has now ‘become the shared memory of millions of people across the globe’ (2018: 21). Today, the painting is seen as an enduring symbol of Francoist repression in Spain, and it has been re-interpreted, re-contextualised, and re-purposed by groups across the political spectrum. Now installed in the Reina Sofia Museum in democratic Spain, *Guernica* is thus implicated in the practice of memory-making, standing as an artistic record of the experience of state terror. Mihaela Mihai, in her recent work on political memory, defines the creation of such art as ‘mnemonic care’, or memory care work. For Mihai, art may be defined as an act of memory care when it ‘chips at dominant mystifications by uncovering their blind spots’ (2022: 47), making visible collective and alternative narratives of history and memory. As in the case of Picasso’s famous painting, this art challenges dominant or hegemonic memory narratives, allowing artists to refuse and counter ‘the erasure of certain inconvenient, shameful, or not-so-glorious episodes from political memory’ (Mihai, 2022: 61).

We suggest that the artistic contributions included in this volume, as well as a range of other art works, engage in such refusal, providing valuable forms of artistic testimony and memory. Art, then, is a fundamental part of our project and our methodology. We believe that art can provide new ways of looking at terror, and at how terror is remembered in the twenty-first century. Our volume points towards new ways of understanding memory-making, with its particular focus on art as a means of ‘materialising concepts and meanings beyond the limits of a narrow individualism’ (Meskimmon, 2010: 8), allowing us to emphasise the plurivocality and multidirectionality of memory and of memories of violence. We hope that this volume, and the multiple artworks included within as well as the scholarly considerations of art and its contributions to memory, will point to new ways in which to understand the role of art in the memorialisation and commemoration of terror in Europe.

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book does not follow a linear structure. Each contribution offers a unique perspective on the memory of terrorist violence in Europe in the twenty-first century and can be read as a stand-alone piece. But there are also important synergies and connections. The volume is structured around five common themes, and there are shared cultural contexts and methodological approaches connecting chapters in different parts. Some

authors have contributed personal reflections in the form of photographs, paintings, and autobiographical accounts. Others offer comparative analyses of individual and collective memorialisation processes in different countries and contexts. As survivors, local residents, critical observers, artists, and academics, the contributors are implicated differently in Europe's violent histories. The 'view from within' that distinguishes many of the volume's contributions from existing scholarly writings on terrorism eloquently demonstrates how political violence touches us, shapes how we perceive events, and how they fold into our personal stories throughout time and then suddenly re-emerge as a violent rupture when a terrorist attack occurs close to us. The volume offers perspectives on the transformative potential of accounting for the researcher's positionality in relation to the object of study, the spatial context, and affective layers which have rarely been brought to the surface in the field of political violence research.

If terrorist attacks are studied as isolated incidents, it is possible to create a linear memorialisation timeline. Each time a terrorist attack strikes across an emblematic urban location in Europe, citizens would gather in solidarity with the victims and create grassroots memorials as tokens of remembrance of the victims. The memorialisation process is thus often perceived as originating in the immediate aftermath of an attack with spontaneous expressions of grief and solidarity materialising in improvised memorial assemblages, and it reaches a 'mature' stage when attacks become part of official memory discourse on a national and/or transnational level. However, in line with other recent work in the field of memory studies, the contributions in this book complicate and challenge the linear model of conceptualising both memorialisation and coming to terms with trauma.²

Gérôme Truc's opening chapter in the section on time and temporality draws on extensive ethnographic and archival fieldwork to analyse social responses to terror attacks in Europe in the post-9/11 era. The chapter challenges the dominant view that it is possible to distinguish clearly between a short-term period of 'social responses' to the attacks and the memorialisation of these attacks. Instead, it argues that the phenomenon of memorialisation begins from the very first moments after a terrorist attack as evidenced by the posting of messages on social

² Hristova et al. (2020) give an excellent overview of alternative approaches to time and their growing importance to the field of memory studies.

networks, taking to the streets, and placing objects and messages in tribute to the victims at the sites of the attacks, and that those responses eventually form a continuum with other memorial practices. By proposing three different levels of memorialisation—official public memory, group memories, and individual memories—not as distinct entities, but ones that constantly influence each other over time, the chapter demonstrates the need to reconsider the usual distinction between ‘individual’ and ‘collective’ memory when we think of the social responses to terrorism.

Through a walk along the main memorials of the 11M attacks in the Spanish capital, **Mireya Toribio Medina** explores the dynamic interplay of remembering and forgetting in Madrid. She provides a visual overview of commemorative sites for the 11M victims, exploring their most significant features. This contribution addresses the complexities related to individual and group responses to terrorist attacks, private and collective commemoration as well as their evolution across time.

The chapter by **Charlotte Heath-Kelly and Tom Pettinger** shows how commemoration and ‘the past’ have become implicated within national security practices in the United Kingdom which anticipate and act upon future insecurity. The authors demonstrate how the imagination of ‘the next’ attack is reliant upon knowledge of previous cases of terrorist violence and how governmental bodies purposefully attempt to anticipate and curate ‘spontaneous’ expressions of grief after terrorist attacks. As a result, counter-terrorism measures that try to prevent future attacks are often based on historical attacks and can act as deliberate or inadvertent reminders of past attacks.

Faisal Hussain’s contribution to the volume offers a powerful response to recent counter-terrorism and extremism measures in the UK through an artistic lens. Illuminated anti-vehicle bollards emblazoned with the words ‘insecurity proves itself’ and ‘it might be nothing, but it could be something’ represent the reordering of cities as counter-terrorism response, a process that re-positions and re-conceptualises the purpose and the function of urban space. The chosen text—which is taken from academic articles that analyse the PREVENT strategy—and font allow Hussain to ‘question the terminology and often racialized nature of the legislation’ (EP, 2021: 3). Similarly, the image of the PREVENT cupcakes playfully calls into question the legitimacy and efficacy of the UK’s PREVENT legislation: as Hussain writes, the cakes are symbolic of the strategy’s ‘positive façade but harmful core [...] a seemingly generous offer as luring promotional materials often are, but whose presentation

disguises an inedible acrid taste' (Suspect Objects, 2017). These works then constitute a rejection of official state discourses surrounding both terror and counter-terrorism legislation, providing a counter-narrative to strategies such as PREVENT, which is still in effect today, despite 'racialized understandings of radicalization and extremism' (Ali, 2020: 579).

The second part of the edited volume shows how individual memories and the embodied engagement of the researcher with sites of memories and commemoration can play an important role in addressing and contesting silences and purposefully obscured memories in terrorism discourses. Drawing on her multisensorial experience of the Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain, which opened to the public in 2021, **Itoiz Rodrigo-Jusué** analyses the exhibition panels of the museum in the goal of examining the role of public institutions in processes of memorialisation. By acknowledging her own experiences with regard to the past in the Basque Country, this chapter highlights the potential of embodied writing and autoethnography to 'hear' some of the silences and detect some of the absences in relation to public truths and collective memories enacted through the commemorative space.

Karin Yeşilada's chapter demonstrates how childhood memories of racism and historical taboos can become violently intertwined with far-right extremism. Zooming in on the 19th February 2020 right-wing terrorist attack that has put in her hometown Hanau on the map of a series of racially motivated attacks in Germany, Karin Yeşilada makes a compelling argument why we should think of Hanau as a '*lieu de mémoire*'. Her essayist recollections and scholarly reflections on the role of literary works and activism in disturbing dominant political discourses exemplify the notion of the researcher as an archivist.

The third part of the edited volume shows that absence and presence are not mutually exclusive categories. Rather, they co-exist and intersect in individual and collective memory practices, as **Katharina Karcher's** contribution shows. She reflects on a field trip to Berlin, a city 'scarred by the twentieth century' (Ward, 2016: 11). While the Breitscheidplatz square in central Berlin still bears some of the traces of aerial raids during the Second World War, almost all physical traces of the 2016 terror attack at the same location have disappeared.

Kostas Arvanitis and Robert Simpson's chapter views spontaneous memorials as places of communion with the bereaved in the goal of

demonstrating how spontaneous memorials construct and communicate presences by and for the living too. By viewing them as an expression of the individual's and community's need to create, participate in, share, and experience presence through their own bodies and actions, they argue that these memorials are sites where different forms of presence co-exist and interact with one another. Furthermore, they claim that the presences of the individuals involved in the making of the spontaneous memorials and their participation in the sociality of those memorials shape the rationale, value, and use of those memorials when collected by museums and related cultural organisations. They show that curational and preservatory practices in the museum space have extended the embodied presences created by the grassroots memorial(s) that have emerged in the city of Manchester in the aftermath of the Arena bombing in 2017.

Based on observations from a multidisciplinary research program on the spatial effects of the attack on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice on France's National Day in 2016, **Frédéric Vinot's** chapter explores the intricate ways in which traumatic grief can become a catalysator for the transformation of the urban space that has sustained an attack and conversely, how those spatial renovation works eventually turn into markers and resources for the work of mourning. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory as well as interviews with bereaved parents and staff involved in reconstruction works, the chapter demonstrates how the post-attack life confronts the bereaved with two types of loss: firstly, a traumatic loss of a loved one and secondly, a symbologenic loss following urban renovation and security work. This psychoanalytical approach to the post-attack transformation of the urban space and the redoubling of the loss it triggers proposes an alternative to the thought of resilience by bringing forward the creative effects of construction upon dealing with violent loss and mourning.

The fourth section demonstrates how the temporality of memory and memorialisation is further challenged when we attend to the difference between victims' needs and political and cultural expectations of closure. The three chapters in this part draw on distinct experiences of victimhood and trauma with the goal of demonstrating how incorporating victims' experiences are key sources to learn from when thinking about temporality, memory, and remembrance. **Alejandro Acín's** photographs address individual memories of terror and grief, working with **Darryn Frost**, a survivor of the attack at Fishmongers' Hall on London Bridge in 2019: as in the previous discussion of testimony as a 'view from within' (Assmann,

2006: 236), these photos constitute an intimate form of memorialisation, produced through collaboration between artist and survivor.

Drawing on interviews with victims and prolonged involvement with victim communities that have emerged following different terrorist attacks in Europe's recent past, **Ana Milošević's** chapter highlights the temporal dimensions of victimhood and the ways victims' needs and demands across time might clash with those of society as a whole. The chapter advocates for a shift away from the linear conceptualisation of victimhood and post-attack recovery and instead demonstrates eloquently through victims' testimonies that the passing of time and the experience of victimhood interact in a spiral way—at times they overlap, or alternatively collide. By drawing our attention to how temporal conflicts are multiple—between victims and society, within victim associations themselves, and in the distinct way each victim comes to terms with the trauma of their experience, Milosevic's study challenges the assumption that time alone can eventually resolve trauma, heal and lead to closure.

The temporal misalignment between the political and societal wish to 'wrap up' trauma through the inauguration of permanent memorials, on one hand, and the victims, especially those who have lost loved ones in the attacks, is also explored in **Yordanka Dimcheva's** chapter on the phenomenology of grief in the aftermath of terrorist violence in France. Based on in-depth phenomenological interviews with two bereaved parents, the chapter explores the role of memory-making activities and sustained acts of care for the deceased in defying societal forgetting and resisting closure. The qualitative study of affect-laden practices of remembrance the bereaved parents have committed themselves to in the aftermath of violent loss thus aims at expanding upon the lived experience of grieving and explore how 'living' forms of memorialisation in the goal of challenging what is commonly understood as commemoration.

The transformative role of artistic expression in coming to terms with experiences of victimhood and trauma is reflected upon in **David Fritz Goepfinger's** essayist writing and photographic capture of the historical trial against the perpetrators of the deadliest terrorist attacks in 21st century France. Survivor of the Paris attacks on 13th November 2015, David's photography and writing traces the psychic transition he underwent over the eight months of judicial hearings in the Court of Justice in Paris. The habits and routines he established through sharing in writing his reflections of each day in Court and photographing victims from

the intimate proximity of a shared experience gave back meaning and substance to his post-attack life. In addition, the trial did not only push the creative limits of his writing and photography, but also allowed him to grasp the contours of his traumatic experience and the enigma of his survival. David's painful transition occurred both ways—through the restorative potential of judicial justice and the disruptive power of writing and photography in rethinking his perception of the terrorist event. The act of capturing the unfolding of the trial allowed him to claim ownership of his experience, rewrite the narrative of what he has been through, and eventually take a leave from victimhood.

The final section of this volume focusses on literature, creative responses to terror, and the anticipation of justice. The contributions, both academic and artistic, explore the role of art, and narration in the creation of memory after traumatic experiences. **Harry Man's** piece reflects on the process of writing about tragic events of enormous significance for society and the responsibility towards victims and survivors. The terrorist attacks on 22nd July 2011 have been deeply felt in communities across Norway and their impact continues to reverberate in every corner of Norwegian society even 12 years later. Both authors of the series of elegies in Deretter ('Thereafter')—**Harry Man and Endre Ruset** found themselves compelled to address what has happened through literature. They have created a collage of lived experiences in a collection of poems, several of which appear throughout this volume. The literary reflection traces the struggle of writing about others' loss and pain when one is an outsider to their experience, the risks of secondary trauma for the writer, the ethics of representation and the need to reach out to others and offer consolation to those who need it and privacy to those who continue living with the embodied knowledge of the events. It also evokes the ultimate wish to recentre the lives of the victims in a way which will engage the imagination and spark a contemplation and maybe even an inspiration for change. The poetic collages also become a tool to honour those whose lives have been lost by connecting their life to our memory and thus offering them a symbolic afterlife.

Ingvild Folkvord and Jean Lassègue's chapter draws our attention to the inexhaustible potential of literature to 're-work' judicial material and deepen the concepts of justice and injustice in the goal of broadening the borders of how we think about and imagine life after experiences of crisis and rupture. By stressing the role of literature as an integral part of the communal process of coming to terms with extreme experiences,

the authors reject the conventional perception of art and literature as ‘supplements to the soul’ and instead argue that they have a key role in restoring the relationality, a sense of community and the ability to envision anew living together. The chapter’s exploration of three literary texts focusing on three different national contexts—Norway, France, and Germany, shows how judicial trials are not always a sufficient condition for justice and thus encourages us to broaden our understanding of the notion of justice—not as a mere judicial fact, but an experience where multiple voices can be heard.

The book concludes with **Jose Ibarrola’s** umbrella paintings, which offer an intimate memory of terror. As part of the series *Memory and Umbrellas*, these paintings allow Ibarrola to address his own memories of ETA terrorism. In Jose Ibarrola’s work, the umbrella functions as a metaphor through which he is able to speak about objects, images, remembrance, absence, emotions, metaphors, and tribute.

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PART I

Time



CHAPTER 2

European Cities Facing Terrorism: From Social Responses to Memory, and Vice Versa

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The fact that it has been possible to organise an international conference on ‘Remembering/ Imagining Terror in Europe’¹ bears witness to the extraordinary development of the field of ‘terrorism studies’, understood in a broad sense, over the last 20 years. When I started working on the

¹ This paper is based on a keynote delivered at the international conference ‘Remembering/Imagining Terror in Europe’ at the University of Birmingham in September 2022. The conference was hosted by the University of Birmingham project ‘Urban Terrorism in Europe: (2004–19): Remembering, Imagining, and Anticipating Violence’, whose key team is formed by the editors of this volume. Like this volume, the conference received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No. 851329—UrbTerr).

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social responses to terrorist attacks and their memorialisation in the mid-2000s, a relevant bibliography would not even fill a page²... That such a scientific event has now taken place is therefore the result of the convergence of a wide variety of research projects, both collective and individual, launched in the aftermath of deadly attacks that have struck European cities since 9/11 such as Madrid and London, first, in 2004 and 2005, then, more recently, Oslo and the island of Utøya, Paris, Brussels, Nice, Berlin, Manchester, or Barcelona, among others.³

My book *Shell Shocked: the Social Response to Terrorist Attacks* (Truc, 2017) was part of this overall movement. It was an attempt to answer a question that can be stated as follows: why do people who are not direct victims or witnesses of an attack feel concerned by it, to the point of reacting publicly to it, especially when this attack takes place in a foreign country? Why are they not simply indifferent, as they are to so many other events occurring every day—in their country or in the world—and sometimes just as tragic and deadly? My inquiry led me to emphasise three key factors in this book. First, *the importance of media coverage*: our reaction to an attack is heavily dependent on our perception of it through the media lens. It will vary according to the images we have been shown—or not—and the words journalists use—or not—to describe and qualify what happened. Second, the role of *a sense of common belonging*—a sense of ‘us’—which links us to the victims and makes the concern obvious to some. But such feelings are not limited solely to the feeling of national belonging: they also arise on many other scales, such as that of the cities hit, or of what I call a ‘community of conditions’, such as users of public transport in big cities, when terrorists hit trains, metros or buses, like in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005. Third and lastly, the influence of *a singularisation process*, which leads us to experience our relations to an attack and its victims on the ‘I’ mode rather than ‘we’ mode—something the slogan ‘*Je suis Charlie*’ (I am Charlie) after the Charlie Hebdo attack in January 2015 has exemplified on a global scale. The idea behind this

² The precursors in this field can be considered to have been the sociologist Randall Collins, with his article on the response of American society to the September 11, 2001 attacks, published in 2004 (‘Rituals of solidarity and security in the wake of terrorist attack’), and the historian Edward Linenthal, with his book on the memorialisation of the 1995 Oklahoma City attack, published the year just before: *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory*.

³ For an overview of these various works, see: Spilerman and Stecklov (2009); Truc (2019); and Faucher and Truc (2022).

is that there would be links that belong only to me which tie me to the victims, inscribed in my socio-biographical trajectory, from what I have lived through, the experiences I have had, to the trips I have made, etc., that lead me to feel a little more intensely concerned by a given attack than my neighbour, and perhaps also more by this attack than by another.

This work corresponds to the first two parts of my PhD thesis. The third and last part of it was dedicated to the question of the memorialisation of terror attacks, to which I intend to devote another book. This second monograph, that the present chapter prefigures, will also be based on the results of other research launched after the 2015 Paris attacks and reflections based on my role today as a member of the team in charge of conceiving the French national museum and memorial of terrorism which is due to open in Suresnes, near Paris, by 2027. While I was working on my thesis, a decade ago, it seemed obvious to me that the immediate social responses to a terrorist attack and the memorialisation of that same attack—whether or not it is remembered, commemorated, etc.—were two different processes. My initial assumption was that social responses belong to the immediate aftermath, the hours, days or maybe weeks that follow; while memory, on the contrary, is what comes afterwards, in the following months and years. But, little by little, I began to question this assumption. I began to ask myself: when do social reactions end and memory begin? After a year, six months, or six weeks? Maybe even just six days? Is it possible, after all, to draw a clear line between the two?

Thus, I have come to realise in recent years that the reactions to a terrorist attack and its memorialisation are actually part of a single social process, that they form a *continuum*. From the very first moments after an attack, the very fact that we post messages on social networks, that we take to the streets, that we begin to gather and place objects and messages in tribute to the victims at the sites of the attack, are all already part of a phenomenon of memorialisation—what we might call *immediate memorialisation*. This immediate memorialisation is a way of expressing that this event, which has already passed, still recent indeed, but past nonetheless, does not pass for us in the phenomenological sense of the term. We dwell on it instead. We are not indifferent, and this implies that we begin to commemorate, to recall memory, as soon as it occurs, on that very evening and in the days that follow. In the streets of New York, in the days following the 9/11 attacks, a slogan came up again and again that clearly express this concern: ‘*Never forget*’ (Fraenkel, 2002, 2011). What I’m talking about in *Shell Shocked*, in fact, is then already

memory. Besides, one might notice that heaps of messages and objects in tribute to the victims on the sites of the attacks, from which I drew most of my empirical material, are labelled as street, grassroots or ephemeral *memorials*⁴...

The question I would like to explore here is therefore the following: what is this process of memorialisation that begins as soon as the attack occurs? How does it work exactly? How can we grasp it sociologically? I will begin by specifying what I understand by ‘immediate memorialisation’ and distinguish the different forms it takes. I will then trace how we move from an immediate memorialisation to a longer-term memorialisation, and in what way the usual distinction between ‘individual’ and ‘collective’ memory does not seem relevant to grasp it. Indeed, this process actually articulates not two, but three levels, which I will illustrate with examples from my research on the various attacks that have struck major European cities since 2001. Finally, I will conclude by showing how this way of conceiving the memorialisation of past attacks helps to better understand the way we react to new attacks. To give just one example: there is no doubt that the French would not have experienced the 2015 Paris attacks as they did if they had not had the memory of 9/11 in their minds.

SOCIAL RESPONSES TO TERRORIST ATTACKS IN EUROPEAN CITIES: AN EMBLEMATIC CASE OF ‘IMMEDIATE MEMORIALISATION’

The street memorials that spontaneously formed, in Paris as elsewhere, in reaction to the attacks of January and then November 13, 2015, were much discussed, in academic and social contexts alike. Never before had the Place de la République seen such an aggregation of messages, flowers and various objects around its central statue in memory of the victims of a terrorist act (Gensburger & Truc, 2020). However, these were far from the first attacks suffered by France and its capital, and there is evidence that those perpetrated by anarchists in the nineteenth century had previously aroused waves of emotion and gatherings among the Parisian population comparable to those seen in the aftermath of the

⁴ For further discussion of grassroots and spontaneous memorials, see Chapter 9 in this volume, written by Kostas Arvanitis and Robert Simpson.

2015 attacks (Merriman, 2009; Salomé, 2010). Perhaps memorials of this kind had already appeared around the sites of the attacks on the occasion of these gatherings (after all, funerary uses of public writing have been attested to since Antiquity). But here the archives are lacking to affirm this with certainty. Future historians will not have this problem for the events that have plunged France and Europe into mourning since 2015, because many archive services have undertaken the task of collecting the contents of these street memorials, as had already been done after the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the Madrid and London bombings in 2004 and 2005, respectively (see, for example, Sánchez Carretero et al., 2011; Bazin & Van Eeckenrode, 2018; Arvanitis, 2019).

This is undoubtedly the main difference in comparison to the nineteenth century: not so much in the nature of the reactions that terrorist acts produce in Western societies today as in the value that we attribute to them. The terrorist ordeal is experienced directly, in the present, as a historical event, which must be documented by the archive as much as possible—which also requires, for example, the rapid collection of oral testimonies. This is clearly a manifestation of the ‘presentism’ of our time. According to François Hartog (2016), the two characteristic dimensions of this presentism—memory and heritage—, are to be found here. The terrorist attack and its victims are immediately the object of commemorations, but even more so, these commemorations themselves are now constituted as historical heritage, whose material traces must be preserved. This phenomenon, which is attracting increasing attention, can of course be observed for other types of events, such as air crashes, natural disasters, or the deaths of famous people. However, it is terrorist attacks that have given rise to the most obvious and massive manifestations in France and Europe in recent years.

As the field of memory studies develops, more and more research is now exploring the various forms taken by the memorialisation of events that have just passed, or even not yet completely passed, in the sense that their effects are still felt at the moment they are commemorated. At the same time, this research sheds light on the articulation of memorialisation with forms of patrimonialisation that constitute the memorialised event as a historical event, where it becomes important not only to commemorate the victims, but also to preserve the traces of the event itself. In this sense, we can distinguish at least four domains in the immediate memorialisation of an event such as a terrorist attack: (a) *popular memorialisation*, which manifests itself from the very first hours through these street memorials

generally perceived as ‘spontaneous’ and ‘ephemeral’—two qualifiers that have long been discussed (Margry & Sánchez-Carretero, 2011; Bazin, 2022); (b) *institutional memorialisation*, made up of ceremonies, as well as monuments or commemorative plaques that can appear sometimes very quickly after the event; and (c) *cultural memorialisation*, through books, films, songs, television broadcasts, etc., in which the memorialised event becomes an object of public interest. Finally, there is also (d) *heritage memorialisation*, through the creation of archives, exhibitions and even museums dedicated to the event, which are part of the process while enabling us to take account of the other three dimensions.

Rather than four distinct phases that follow one another in time, these are four dimensions of the same process that unfold synchronously and constantly interact with one another. Institutional commemoration ceremonies are organised while popular memorials still occupy the streets and archive services undertake to collect their contents. The ways in which the attack is memorialised through these ceremonies may be openly contested or criticised within these memorials, while survivors’ accounts or portraits of victims are published in the press or in books that can be found in street memorials as well as in institutional ceremonies, and have a wider influence, along with the political and media narratives of the event, on the memory that each of us, including survivors and victims, retain of the event over time. And when the time comes to think about the design of a permanent memorial to the victims, with which public authorities intend to replace the street memorials, it is not uncommon to draw inspiration from the elements of the street memorials that have been collected and preserved by archivists, museum curators or researchers (this was done, for example, at Atocha station in Madrid after the 11th March 2004 attacks). All these interactions between the different dimensions of immediate memorialisation are what makes the phenomenon so complex and invite us to look at it more closely than we usually do.

At least three questions can be raised about this phenomenon. The first relates to the nature of the events that are the subject of such immediate memorialisation. It has already been said that these are ‘historical’ events, but we also often hear and read about ‘traumatic’ events. It is generally as if the fact that an attack is subject to immediate memorialisation (even though this is not the case for all attacks) is in itself proof of its traumatic character on a collective level. In fact, trauma is commonly defined in psychology as a dysfunction of the individual memory: the memory of an event experienced in the past constantly returns to our mind, in an

uncontrolled way, until it invades the present. Does this therefore mean that there is a ‘collective trauma’ wherever there is an immediate memorialisation? And how does the awareness of experiencing a ‘historical’ event as it unfolds, characteristic of presentism⁵, and this traumatic dimension articulate? Does the phenomenon of immediate memorialisation that can be observed in our contemporary societies after certain events reflect a tendency to confuse what is historical with what is traumatic?

This first question leads to a second, concerning the relationship of researchers to events that are the subject of immediate memorialisation. Historians know how important the question of their emotions can become as the temporal distance between them and their objects of study shrinks. This is the difficulty of contemporary history. Researchers are human beings like any others who can be flabbergasted, horrified, or upset—even traumatised, in the clinical sense of the term—by a terrorist attack. It is therefore important to ask what leads them to take it on as an object of study. This is all the more important, as researchers in the humanities and social sciences are generally themselves central actors in the immediate memorialisation of an attack, whether they are involved in the front line of efforts to collect the testimonies of survivors or the archiving of street memorials, or whether they are asked to comment on the event in the media. More than ever, the need is felt here to question the researchers’ preconceptions about the event they are dealing with (concerning its ‘traumatic’ or ‘historical’ character, for example) and to go through empirical investigation, without which they run the risk of giving in to a self-centred analysis. The danger for academics in these circumstances, as we know, is to want to analyse the present without having investigated it in the sole light of the past, and thus to fall into risky historical analogies, which often ignore that they are themselves forms of immediate memorialisation of the event.

Beyond this, the third and final question that inevitably arises is that of the articulation between individual and collective memories. How does the memorialisation of the attacks on a collective level influence our individual memory of them? Of course, this question is not new. But the novelty and complexity of the phenomenon under consideration here invites us to approach it from a new angle.

⁵ For a further discussion of trauma, presentism and memorialisation, see again the chapter by Arvanitis and Simpson included in this volume.

FROM IMMEDIATE TO LONG-TERM MEMORIALISATION: A THREE-LEVEL SOCIAL PROCESS

When it comes to the study of such a process of memorialisation of any event, terrorist or otherwise, it is indeed very common to distinguish between ‘individual memory’ and ‘collective memory’. But if I have not done so until now, it is because this distinction seems to me likely to obscure things rather than enlighten them. If ‘individual memory’ shall be diverse—each individual having their own, lodged in their brain—it is less clear for ‘collective memory’. Quite often, without any given precision, ‘collective memory’ is presented as a unique and singular memory, implicitly confused with national memory, especially in the work of some historians, since Pierre Nora’s *Realms of Memory*. How can one deny that there is an American memory of 9/11, and therefore probably also something like a French memory of 13th November 2015? But is such an American memory really the memory of all Americans?

That is a problem, so to speak, as old as sociology. Émile Durkheim tried in his own way to settle the question from the outset, by positing that the collective is a *sui generis* reality, distinct from the sum of the individuals that make it up. In this sense there is a ‘collective consciousness’, which would constitute the object of sociology in its own right and cannot be reduced to the individual consciousnesses tackled by psychology (Durkheim, 1982). Although this solution made it possible to establish sociology as an autonomous discipline, at least in France, it quickly reached its limits in the study of certain phenomena such as memory. Maurice Halbwachs thus undertook the task of softening and refining the Durkheimian epistemological framework to show how life in society influences all our memories, including the most personal and intimate ones. To this end, he developed an analytical perspective in terms of ‘social frameworks of memory’, which makes it possible to show how what we call ‘individual memory’ and ‘collective memory’ intersect and form a *continuum* (Halbwachs, 1992). There is no ‘collective memory’ that can be understood as anything other than a memory shared by individuals within a multitude of groups, and there is no ‘individual memory’ that is not influenced by the collectives in which we take part—the nation

being only one collective among others—and not necessarily the most influential.⁶

Thus, rather than reiterating this divide between ‘individual memory’ and ‘collective memory’, it is actually more useful to consider that the process of memorialisation combines since the very first moments after an attack not two, but three levels, where the four dimensions distinguished above are deployed and articulated. There is (a) the level of *official public memory*, defined and implemented by the public authorities by means of memorial policy instruments (ceremonies, public speeches, monuments, medals, etc.). This is mainly the dimension of what I labelled earlier as ‘institutional memorialisation’, but which can also be related to ‘cultural memorialisation’ (the Paul Greengrass’ movie ‘United 93’ and other TV-movies about this flight whose passengers rebelled against the terrorists’ feeds, for example, the official public memory of 9/11) or to heritage memorialisation (when an official memorial-museum is created). This level should not be mistaken with (b) the level of various *group memories* within society and even transnational, shared within a number of more or less formal and institutionalised social groups: victims and survivors’ associations, bereaved families, professional groups such as first responders or journalists, but also neighbourhood networks at the sites hit, etc. Traces of this can generally be found from the earliest manifestations of popular memorialisation (i.e. street memorials), but also in the products of cultural memorialisation (in particular the books published by representatives of some of these memory groups), and through the occasional contestation of official public memory (through the organisation of competing ceremonies or the creation of alternative memorials, to gain public recognition of particular group memories). Finally, there is the level of *individual memories*, i.e. the memories that each individual in the affected society and beyond may actually have of the terrorist attack, whether they were a direct victim or witness or experienced it through the media. Analysing the interactions between these three levels while paying attention not to reify them, but rather to highlight the way in which they constantly influence each other over time, through the four dimensions I

⁶ Unfortunately, Halbwachs’ work is not yet widely available in English, despite its fundamental importance for the study of memory. A complete edition in English of his books on the subject is currently being prepared. For a more detailed defence of the importance of Halbwachs’ work in the study of the memorialisation of terror attacks and other tragic events, see: Truc (2012).

identified before: this is what constitutes the very object of a sociology of memory, in my opinion.

The Halbwachsian problem of the ‘social frameworks of memory’ refers very directly to the interaction between group memories and individual memories. In this case, it invites us to understand how our membership of different social groups influences our memories of terrorist attacks—the fact that we remember certain attacks more than others, and certain circumstances or aspects of an attack more than others—and how these memories are constantly reconstructed and reworked on the basis of the memory narratives that circulate in the communities of memories in which we take part. At the same time, it invites us to recognise that for every attack, group-specific memories exist only insofar as they are shared and maintained by individuals, and which may therefore evolve or even disappear as new individuals enter, and others leave such groups. For example, there is a memory of 9/11 that focuses on the heroic deaths of over three hundred firefighters in the collapse of the World Trade Centre towers, held by both the New York Firemen’s Professional Association and the parishes to which many of the deceased firefighters, who were Catholics of Irish or Italian origin, belonged. The same is true of the 13th November attacks in Paris: the memory kept by the Bataclan survivors grouped within the ‘Life for Paris’ association is not the same as that of other victims, struck on the terraces of Parisian cafés or at the Stade de France that same evening. More generally, it is likely that rock music fans and concert hall regulars were more marked by the Bataclan attack than by the other events of that evening, while for some residents of the affected neighbourhoods, it was rather the attack on a café or a restaurant that was familiar to them.

When it comes to the public commemoration of an attack, it is the interaction between these different group memories and official public memory that is at stake. It is increasingly common for the public authorities of Western countries hit by terrorism to turn to victims’ groups to ask them their needs and demands in this respect, or even to simply give them control over the organisation of ceremonies. Thus, the main ceremony publicly commemorating the 13th November attacks takes place every year on the square in front of the town hall of the 11th arrondissement of Paris on the initiative of ‘Life For Paris’, now in partnership with the association ‘13Onze15’, and when political representatives take part in it, they are not allowed to speak, in accordance with the wishes of these

associations, who are concerned with not politicising the memory of the event.

However, giving them such control over public memory presupposes that there is a minimal consensus among the victims on how the event should be commemorated, which is neither obvious nor systematic. On the contrary, it is not uncommon for conflicts to arise around public memory of a terrorist attack between groups, including victims, who have not only different but rival memories: this is what I directly observed in Spain after the 2004 Madrid bombings, where people could be seen arguing in the audience of the first official commemoration ceremonies and where commemorative events were organised by memory groups on the same day and at the same hour as official ceremonies (Truc, 2011; Truc & Sánchez-Carretero, 2019). Commemorative events can therefore be used by certain groups to challenge the official public memory of an attack and to question public authorities. This can happen when such groups feel that not enough light has been shed on the causes of the attack or that justice has not been properly rendered to its victims, as for example in the case of the 1994 AMIA bombing in Buenos Aires or that of the 1980 Bologna massacre in Italy (Tank-Storper, 2019; Tota, 2002). Therefore, it is also possible that public authorities deliberately avoid maintaining the memory of an attack or do it in the most discreet way possible (Heath-Kelly, 2016).

Since 9/11, however, the most frequent case, at least in Western societies, is where attacks are the subject of a ‘duty to remember’. Assessing the scope of such an injunction leads to a consideration of the interaction between official public memory and individual memories. While the study of the other two interactions I have previously mentioned can be carried out using traditional methods of investigation, such as semi-structured interviews or ethnographic immersion in associative groups, this one is more difficult to grasp. To question individuals head-on about their relationship to the memory of an attack within the framework of public commemoration leads in fact to nothing more than, at best, conventional answers on the ‘importance’ of that memory, which simply echo the official memorial discourse. This is what we would see in, for example, a television report on a commemorative event of an attack when journalists ask members of the audience why they are there.

In order to understand the ordinary relationships to the memory of attacks that are under public injunctions to remember, it is therefore important to opt for methods of investigation that minimise the

risk of the injunction being overstressed by the investigation protocol itself. This is what I tried to do with two colleagues, Sarah Gensburger and Sylvain Antichan, in our study of the memorialisation of the 13th November attacks. On the second anniversary of these attacks in 2017, while commemorations were taking place in Paris, we proposed that our students to go in small groups to meet passers-by on the Nanterre University campus, in the centre of Saint-Denis (not far from where the police assaulted the presumed terrorists five days after the attacks) and in the vicinity of the commemorative ceremonies in the centre of Paris, using two different methods: either an informal interview, or a projective test in which the respondents spoke from an iconographic support, a method already used in the field of memory studies by Marie-Claire Lavabre (Lavabre & Dos Santos, 2017). In the first case, it was a matter of engaging passers-by in conversation by simply asking them about the day's date: 'Hello, do you know what day it is?' In the second case, they were asked to take a moment to share their reactions to a series of photographs, representing various commemorative actions, some linked to the Paris attacks and others not, and ending with a photograph of a military patrol in an urban crowd. In both cases, the investigators had to be careful not to recall the 13th November attacks themselves from the outset.

The first finding of this mini-survey was that, apart from those people interviewed in the vicinity of the commemorative ceremonies, none of the respondents spontaneously made the link between the date of the day and the attacks of 13th November. This surprised our student interviewers, who were very aware of the public injunction to remember, especially as only two years had passed since the attacks at the time and the media were still covering their commemoration to a large extent. In the face of the projective test, it was also the case that some of the people interviewed did not see at all what the photographs of previous commemorations of these attacks corresponded to. The second observation we were able to make was that, as soon as the attacks of 13th November were mentioned, very precise memories came back to some respondents but not to others, generally depending on their relationship to the places hit by the terrorists that evening. For instance, a mathematics and physics teacher in his forties, interviewed on the Nanterre campus, explained to us that he had never been to the inner centre of Paris and confessed his embarrassment at 'not feeling concerned' by the attacks. Similarly, some students began to explain: 'I'm too lazy to go out in Paris, I prefer to stay in my suburbs',

or ‘I don’t hang around the Bataclan or in those areas, I don’t hang around République. I’m not a Parisian’. Others, on the contrary, who lived in Paris or were more used to going out for leisure, detailed how much the memory of these attacks had affected them and the fear they had felt afterwards of being targeted in turn, whether it was during a visit to Eurodisney or on their way to the Sorbonne.

FROM (THE MEMORIALISATION OF)
AN ATTACK TO (THE SOCIAL RESPONSE TO)
ANOTHER: A NEVER-ENDING PROCESS?

In the same way as our lifestyles and living spaces, the memory we have of certain past attacks, more than others, directly determines the way we respond both individually and collectively to new attacks in the present. It is this idea that I would like to conclude with, to come full circle. What I mean by this is that the memorialisation of certain attacks is also a resource when we try to make sense of a new terrorist attack that occurs suddenly—and in this manner it has a very direct influence on the way we respond to it. This is particularly true for cultural memorialisation: books, films, TV documentaries, songs, etc., which make certain attacks stick in our minds more than others, and with a certain narrative, certain details and certain images, more than others. That was very clear, for instance, when a major European city, in this case Madrid, was hit by a mass attack for the first time since 9/11 in 2004. This attack, which is still the deadliest that Europe has ever seen on its soil, was immediately presented in the media both in Spain and in other European countries, particularly France, as a ‘new 9/11’, a Spanish and European 9/11. This says as much about our immediate reaction to this event as it does about the place occupied by 9/11 in our memories (Truc, 2017: 38–56).

9/11 itself, when it occurred, was interpreted in the light of a historical event that was deeply rooted in American memories: the attack on Pearl Harbor. 2001 marked the 60th anniversary of that attack. Its public commemoration was massive at the time, and the blockbuster of the year in cinemas was ‘Pearl Harbor’, produced by Disney Studios and starring Ben Affleck. It thus seemed obvious to most Americans that 9/11 was a ‘new Pearl Harbor’ (Chéroux, 2009).⁷ The fact that it was

⁷ For a summary and review of this book in English, see Truc (2010).

perceived as such implied that it was equated with an act of war, and therefore determined social reactions to this attack in a bellicose mode. However, there were other possibilities to imagine: as I explain in the first chapter of my book *Shell Shocked*, at the same time in Europe, this historical analogy with Pearl Harbor did not hold, and the 9/11 attacks were instead experienced as a ‘crime against humanity’, calling for a concerted global response within the framework of international law, concerned with preserving world peace (Truc, 2017: 22–37).

When Paris was hit by Islamist terrorists for the first time since 9/11, with the massacre of the editorial staff of the newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* on a January morning in 2015, the reference to the memory of 9/11 again made headlines. The newspaper of reference *Le Monde*, in particular, ran the headline ‘Le 11-Septembre français’ (The French 9/11)—with the immediate effect, whatever one may say or think, of implicitly equating the event with yet another battle in a war that the West and Islamic terrorists have been waging since 11th September 2001. The analogy caused quite a bit of debate, including within the newspaper’s editorial staff, until the attacks on 13th November occurred a few months later. Because this time they were simultaneous indiscriminate attacks, rather than targeted assassinations, occurring in the heart of the French capital, and because they killed ten times as many people, some people felt that these attacks were the real ‘French 9/11’, and not the *Charlie Hebdo* attack. The lexicon of war was omnipresent in November 2015, both in the discourse of the media and that of political representatives, starting with the head of state (Truc et al., 2018; Veniard, 2018). Since then, the polls we regularly conduct in the framework of the ‘November 13 research program’ to find out which attacks the French remember most indicate that the attacks of November 13 tend to eclipse the memory of September 11.⁸

If tomorrow, therefore, by misfortune, a new mass attack were to strike France, it is not impossible that we would speak of a ‘new November 13th’, as we once spoke of a ‘new September 11th’... This is how our societies live with the peril of terrorist attacks, from the immediate responses these attacks provoke to their memorialisation, and vice versa.

⁸ See the reports available here (in French): <https://www.memoire13novembre.fr/content/les-attentats-du-13-novembre-2015-un-marqueur-de-la-m%C3%A9moire-collective>.

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20 Years On. A Walk Through the Memorialisation of the 11M Attacks

Mireya Toribio Medina

11 MARCH 2004, MADRID

Madrid shuddered on 11 March 2004. A shock of violence and terror caused scars that, although no longer visible on the walls and floors of the train stations and railways where the bombs detonated, will be present for generations to come. As Zweig (1927/2002) wrote, there are moments that endure over time and define the course of generations and peoples. Dates, hours, minutes, destined to persist in time. Moments that sink their roots in the past and extend their impact into the years to come. Over the three minutes between 7:37 am and 7:39 am on Thursday 11 March 2004, ten bombs detonated on four trains on Madrid's public transport network. 191 people, mostly workers and students, lost their lives on the trains they had boarded that morning as they passed through Madrid's Calle Téllez and the Atocha, El Pozo and Santa Eugenia railway stations. A further 1,841 people were injured to varying degrees (Audiencia Nacional, 2007: 174–175). A few days later, on 3 April, a policeman

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was killed and 34 others were injured in a blast caused by seven of the perpetrators of the 11 March massacre who, when surrounded by the police in the house they were staying in the Madrid town of Leganés, committed suicide by detonating several charges of explosives (Audiencia Nacional, 2007: 172 and 710–711). The minutes between 7:37 am and 7:39 am on 11 March 2004 constitute one such moment that will endure.

No event takes place in a vacuum. New happenings are intertwined with previous occurrences and have an impact on future developments. A variety of geopolitical and social factors interwove the paths that led to the events of 11M and to the various reactions these events provoked. The violence experienced over the previous decades at the national and international levels largely influenced the way in which these attacks were understood and responded to. In turn, such reactions have had and continue to bear an impact on the way Spanish society remembers the past and anticipates potential acts of violence in the future. One of the ways communities respond to these traumatic events is by memorialising the victims through the creation of spaces of remembrance. Memorials allow the expression of feelings of solidarity, mourning or outrage. They also serve the purpose of formulating demands such as that the events should not be repeated or that the authorities take certain measures. The elaboration of spontaneous memorials in the early stages and of permanent spaces of remembrance later on, marks the first stages of society's management of trauma, but also its further evolution. The study of these sites can reveal a number of issues related to this collective grief and remembrance. Today, a walk through the city can serve as a tool for understanding the impact that the events of 11M have had on the country.

Reactions to the 11M attacks were mixed. Initial public displays of mourning in public spaces were soon followed by politically charged demonstrations. Beyond the trauma caused by the massacre, the bombings had a major political impact. The attacks took place just three days before a general election. The conservative *Partido Popular* (PP, People's Party in English) had been in power for two terms and was the favourite in the upcoming elections (El País, 2004). One of the most pressing domestic problems in Spain at the time was the violence perpetrated by terrorist organisation *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA, Basque Country and Freedom in English). Another political issue was the government's controversial decision to send troops to Iraq. As ETA had been carrying out terrorist attacks in the country for four decades, it is not surprising that many people suspected the Basque separatist group behind

the attacks. However, the ruling party continued to blame ETA when evidence began to point in a different direction. Part of society, meanwhile, saw the attack as a direct result of the then Prime Minister's decision to send Spanish troops to Iraq, thus joining the US-led 'war on terror'. This dissonance materialised in demonstrations in front of PP headquarters the day before the elections. Despite the conservatives being the favourites in the polls, the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party in English) emerged as the winner of the electoral process (El País, 2004). It was against this background that several conspiracy theories were formulated, revolving around the involvement of ETA or foreign secret services in the elaboration of 11M (Fernández Soldevilla, 2021: 365, Avilés Farré, 2008), which were then spread by journalists and of which some traces remain. Political representatives, social groups and part of the media went so far as to question the police and judicial investigation (Alonso, 2008: 124). Such theories were later discredited both by the court ruling (Sentencia de la Audiencia Nacional 4398/2007, 2007) and by subsequent academic research (Reinares, 2014). The causal link between the attacks and the sending of troops to Iraq has also been rejected (Reinares, 2014). The commemoration of the events of 11M has been equally contested.

INITIAL REACTIONS: GRASSROOTS MEMORIALS

In the immediate aftermath of the traumatic event, waves of spontaneous mourning emerged, driven by the public's urge to express feelings of solidarity, grief, pain or anger, and the need to attempt to make sense of the devastation, thus initiating the process of coming to terms with the violence experienced. Grassroots memorials were created in the locations where the bombs had detonated, turning the public space into a stage for mourning. In a context where the aftermath of the attack merged with an imminent general election, these spontaneous altars were composed of words of solidarity, letters, photographs of the victims, drawings, religious offerings and other objects conveying mourning, as well as politically charged messages.

With the aim of preserving, describing and digitising these initial manifestations of grief, which due to their temporary nature and circumstances tend to disappear, a group of researchers from the CSIC (Spanish National Research Council) launched a project focused on the study and conservation of these initial displays of mourning: *El Archivo del*

Duelo (The archive of mourning). The project included two aspects: a scholarly and an archival one. On the one hand, a book entitled *El Archivo del Duelo* (Sánchez-Carretero, 2011) compiled the work that resulted from their research. On the other hand, they ensured that the collection of almost 70,000 documentary units gathered by the project was deposited in a place accessible to the public. Thus, this documentary collection, named after the project and the publication, was handed over by the CSIC to the *Fundación de Ferrocarriles Españoles* (Spanish Railways Foundation) for its management and conservation.

Within two months of the attacks, the decision was made to remove the grassroots memorials from the stations driven by issues such as the size they had grown to and the maintenance they required, but also by the desire to restore the stations to their normal life. As has been reported, station workers found these memorials too adversarial to be faced on a day-to-day basis (Tanović, 2019: 149). These altars were replaced by a virtual alternative called *Espacios de Palabras* (Word Spaces). These consisted of virtual screens placed in the lobby of Atocha and El Pozo stations that displayed the messages left by citizens. They also allowed for new messages of condolence or remembrance for the victims to be added until the construction of a permanent memorial (Tanović, 2019; Truc, 2011; Ortíz, 2008). It was also possible to leave such messages on the website www.mascercanos.com. Grassroots memorials thus became, since 9 June 2004, an institutionalised memorial (Sánchez-Carretero, 2011: 21).

In the year following the attacks, a range of socially initiated memorialisation took place. On 12 March 2004, the Rafael Alberti bookstore in Madrid invited poets to send them their poems or testimonies of the attacks. The booksellers set up the shop window as a platform to pay tribute to the victims and the citizens who had come to their aid. The window was filled and their initiative ended up becoming a book: *Madrid, Once de Marzo. Poemas para el Recuerdo* (VV.AA, 2004). Sánchez-Carretero (2011) has written about this and other examples. Valuable samples are other publications such as the compilation of poems and testimonies *11-M. Palabras para el recuerdo* (Asociación de Vecinos, 2004) by the *Asociación de Vecinos y Amigos del Pozo del Tío Raimundo* association, the artistic project *Trazas y puntadas para el recuerdo* (Traces and stitches for remembrance), as well as other publications and creative initiatives including graphic novels, photography projects, journalistic works and musical compositions (2011: 22–23).

INSTITUTIONALISATION OF REMEMBRANCE: OFFICIAL MEMORIALS

On the institutional side, several memorials were also erected in different locations throughout both the city and the autonomous community of Madrid. In addition to the most prominent ones, such as the memorial at Atocha station and the *Bosque del Recuerdo*, a commemorative site in Madrid's *El Retiro* park, several others have been set up in different places. Monuments exist at the other three points where the bombs were detonated. At El Pozo del Tío Raimundo station, a fountain with 192 spouts and ceramic figures commemorates the victims. So does a sculpture called *Ilusión Truncada* (Truncated Illusion) at Santa Eugenia station. Calle Téllez, the last of the locations to have its own tribute (2019), features an olive tree and a plaque dedicated 'to the victims of the jihadist attack on the train next to Calle de Téllez on 11 March 2004' (translation by the author). Other commemorative monuments can be seen in the Madrid towns of Valdemoro, Alcalá de Henares—from where 27 of the victims came from—Getafe, Leganés—5 of its inhabitants were killed—or San Agustín del Guadalix. The latter, placed in 2005, was initially installed in the local sports centre and, years later, relocated to the vicinity of the Civil Guard barracks. In 2018, a plaque displaying the names of the 248 Civil Guards killed by terrorist violence in Spain—210 of whom were killed by ETA and 38 by other organisations—was placed on it. That is, it was relocated and resignified. This practice, which responds to the lack of agreement on whether these monuments should memorialise some or all of the victims of terrorism in Spain, has not been exclusive to this particular one. There, a plaque reads 'En memoria de las víctimas de los atentados del 11 de marzo de 2004 que fueron trasladadas al hospital de campaña que se estableció en esta Instalación Deportiva Municipal Daoiz y Velarde. Como muestra de solidaridad de los ciudadanos de Madrid y en agradecimiento al coraje y generosidad de todos los servicios y personas que acudieron en su socorro' (In memory of the victims of the 11 March 2004 attacks who were taken to the temporary hospital that was set up in this Daoiz y Velarde Municipal Sports Centre. As a token of the solidarity of the citizens of Madrid, and in gratitude for the courage and generosity of all the services and people who came to their aid). Another such memorial plaque is placed at Madrid's Real Casa de Correos (headquarters of the regional government) on which the following message is inscribed: 'Madrid agradecido. A todos los que supieron cumplir con

su deber en el auxilio a las víctimas de los atentados del 11 de marzo de 2004 y a todos los ciudadanos anónimos que las ayudaron. Que el recuerdo de las víctimas y el ejemplar comportamiento del pueblo de Madrid permanezcan siempre' (Grateful Madrid. To all those who knew how to comply with their duty in aiding the victims of the attacks of 11 March 2004 and to all the anonymous citizens who helped them. May the memory of the victims and the exemplary behaviour of the people of Madrid always remain). Other tributes exist both within and beyond the capital. In the digital tool *Espacios para la memoria* (spaces for memory) accessible from the website of AROVITE (Online Archive on Terrorist Violence in the Basque Country), an interactive map with the monumental landmarks dedicated to the victims of terrorist attacks in Spain is available (AROVITE).

This overview will focus on the two major memorials in the heart of the capital: the *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Forest of Remembrance) and the Atocha memorial. Both can be explored along a short walk between *El Retiro* Park, home to the first, and the nearby station which hosts the latter (Image 3.1).

THE FIRST MAJOR OFFICIAL MEMORIAL: *EL BOSQUE DEL RECUERDO*

The itinerary thus begins in *El Retiro* Park, one of the largest—1.4 square kilometres—and most emblematic public parks in Madrid. The grounds, located a few metres from Atocha station, are home to the *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Forest of Remembrance). It consists of a mound with 192 trees—, one for each of the fatalities of the 11 March attacks and the 3 April explosions (Image 3.2).

The memorial was unveiled at its current location on the first anniversary of the bombings. Prior to that, it had been placed on a different site. A little over two months after the bombings, on 22 May 2004, the wedding of the then-future King and Queen of Spain took place. The then mayor of Madrid stated that the city would ensure that the victims of the terror attacks were not forgotten during the wedding celebrations. 'We want Madrid to be a feast, albeit not from oblivion, but from the tribute to the memory of the 192 victims, who will be present on the route' (translation by the author), he declared according to the press at the time (ABC, 2004). For this reason, the memorial originally named *Bosque de los Ausentes* (Forest of the Absent) was initially placed in the



Image 3.1 Signs throughout the park indicate the direction of the *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

Atocha roundabout: close to the station and within the route that the future monarchs would take following the ceremony. According to the plan, the ensemble of trees would be placed around the fountain in the roundabout and returned to the municipal greenhouses once the event was over. It was later decided to rebuild the forest in the nearby *El Retiro* Park. Following the plea of victims and relatives who argued that those killed in the attacks would always remain present, the name of the monument was changed to *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Forest of Remembrance) (Tanovic, 2019: 150).

The *Bosque del Recuerdo* today is composed of 192 trees—olive and cypress—arranged on a mound along a circular ascending path leading to its summit. The hill is surrounded by a stream of water that is crossed by small bridges, composing a space that invites the visitor to a walk secluded from the city noise. During a visit, it is common to see visitors strolling along the path or sitting on one of the benches placed in the space (Image 3.3).



Image 3.2 Front view of the *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

As the visitor approaches *El Bosque del Recuerdo*, two different inscriptions can be seen on the frontside of the memorial. One to the left of the entrance to the monument and the other to the right. The first was placed on 11 March 2005, marking the first anniversary of the attack. It reads ‘En homenaje y agradecimiento a todas las víctimas del terrorismo cuya memoria permanece viva en nuestra convivencia y la enriquece constantemente. Los ciudadanos de Madrid, 11 de marzo de 2005’ (In homage and gratitude to all the victims of terrorism whose memory remains alive in our coexistence and constantly enriches it. The citizens of Madrid, 11 March 2005). The inauguration ceremony was presided over by the King and Queen of Spain and attended by a number of international dignitaries. The monarchs laid a wreath with two ribbons: one reading ‘A todas las víctimas del terrorismo’ (To all the victims of terrorism), and one with the colours of the Spanish flag. The second inscription, located symmetrically to the right of the access to the mound, was placed in 2022 by the Madrid City Council (PP) and reads ‘Monumento construido como homenaje a las víctimas de los atentados del terrorismo yihadista del 11 de marzo de 2004. Ayuntamiento de Madrid. 2022’ (‘Monument built as a tribute to the victims of the jihadist terrorist attacks of 11 March 2004. Madrid City Council. 2022’). While the first commemorative plaque, placed to mark the first anniversary, refers to all victims of terrorism, the second, installed eighteen years later, refers specifically to the victims of the jihadist terrorist attacks of 11 March. This is another example of a memorial to these events that was first relocated and then assigned two different significations.

The *Asociación Víctimas del Terrorismo*—Association of Victims of Terrorism (AVT)—, one of Spain’s leading associations of victims of terrorism, holds an annual commemorative event at this site every 11 March, which marks the anniversary of the bombings in Madrid as well as the European Day for the Victims of Terrorism. This group has traditionally been associated with the conservatives, with which it has demonstrated greater alignment on counter-terrorism policy. However, there have also been disagreements between the two organisations on these matters. In particular, concerning penitentiary issues. The association’s presidency flatly rejected the plan to transfer ETA prisoners to Basque prisons announced by the Conservative government in 2012. On 11 March 2014, the date marking the tenth anniversary of the attack, the AVT paid tribute to the victims in the Forest of Remembrance. They were accompanied by a large representation of public officials including representatives of the government and other associations. The *Asociación IIM*

Afectados por el Terrorismo was not present. This is one of the examples of the discrepancies that surround the commemoration at the institutional level, but also in terms of the approach to counter-terrorism.



Image 3.3 The path into the *Bosque del Recuerdo* (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

THE BIG PROJECT: THE ATOCHA STATION MEMORIAL

Due to the major impact of the massacre, the idea of creating a permanent official memorial was conceived. After considering the planning of two separate monuments, the national (PSOE) and local (PP) governments opted to tackle the project jointly. This agreement was accompanied by disagreements. Once again, one of the most prominent disputes revolved around the question of which victims the memorial should commemorate: whether it should pay homage to the victims of the 11M attacks or whether it should encompass all the victims of terrorism in Spain. Those who defended the latter option referred in particular to those killed by ETA, the organisation with the most fatalities in Spain, which had caused 841 deaths since the 1960s until then. These victims were not commemorated in a national memorial. Neither were those of other groups which, albeit in smaller numbers, had also caused fatalities in recent decades in the country. To give an example, the president of the AVT was of the opinion that the victims of ETA must also be commemorated in the new national monument, while the then mayor of Madrid, Alberto Ruiz-Gallardón (PP), was of the opposite view. Furthermore, disputes arose over the project. The monument, whose location in the Atocha station area had been agreed by consensus, was eventually chosen from among the proposals received by an official jury. The memorial was to be inaugurated on the first anniversary but was not unveiled until three years later.

Leaving *El Retiro* park behind, down Alfonso XXIII street, the Atocha train station is less than a kilometre away. Upon approaching the area surrounding the station, a cylindrical structure 11 metres high and 9.5 metres in diameter rises on the horizon (Image 3.4). It is the external part of the Atocha memorial. Next to it, the station building can be seen with reddish columns. Inside, descending into the building, is the inner part of the memorial.

On reaching the square between the cylindrical structure and the entrance to the station, another landmark attracts the attention of pedestrians: a monument named *El Día y La Noche* (Day and Night), by sculptor Antonio López. It consists of a pair of pieces portraying two children's heads, one open-eyed and another with its eyes closed representing two different states: wakefulness and sleep (Image 3.5). It was



Image 3.4 View of the Atocha memorial as seen from the outside (grey cylinder in the centre of the image). The red structure on the right is part of the station (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

commissioned before the attacks (2002) to mark the remodelling of the station. Influenced by the later bombings, the artist decided that it should be resignified as a memorial to the victims. It too underwent changes in its location. The sculpture was originally erected in the arrivals hall at Atocha station in 2008 and was later moved to its current location in 2010. According to the information available on the official website of Madrid's Heritage, the author's intention was to convey the idea of the passing of time accompanied by the passing of trains; seeking to comfort travellers with hope, rather than the fear or anguish that comes with remembering the attacks (Dirección General de Intervención en el Patrimonio Cultural y Paisaje Urbano). Here we are faced with another sort of re-signification. In this case, a previously planned project was later marked by the events of 11M.



Image 3.5 El Día y La Noche. Another monument, resignified, located in the square in front of Atocha station (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

The Atocha station memorial was finally inaugurated on 11 March 2007, on the third anniversary. It consists of two parts: the cylindrical structure visible from the outside and an inner space, housed inside the station. Its design has also undergone modifications. The cylinder consists of a structure made of glass bricks. After entering the station, and descending through the mechanical ramp, a signal indicates the direction to the entrance to the memorial. Soon after, a long blue hall comes into sight on the other side of the translucent glass wall that separates it from the rest of the station area. The first impression is that the space goes unnoticed by travellers. Moments later, however, the employee in charge of the memorial explains that they receive visitors on a constant basis. Sometimes larger groups. Sometimes a steady trickle of guests. The memorial is accessed through a double-door system. On entering the first door, the visitor finds oneself in a small vestibule. The first thing that comes into view in this first space is an illuminated panel with the names

of the victims who lost their lives in the attack. When entering the second door, a wide, deep intense blue space opens up before the observer. The borders between the walls, ceiling and floor are not perceptible. The light coming through the central cylindrical structure through its translucent material acts as a point of attraction. On approaching it, it invites to look up. Gazing upwards, the visitor is able to see the interior of the structure that rises up towards the sky. There, one can read the messages inscribed on its inner walls. These are the texts, in multiple languages, that citizens wrote on the impromptu memorials in the aftermath of the attack. The combination of the design of the space and the absence of noise offers an intimate and serene space, isolated from the hustle and bustle of the station and the city. Reading the messages leads the observer to the feelings expressed in the spontaneous memorials created in the aftermath of the attack (Images 3.6 and 3.7).

At first, the messages inside the cylinder were engraved on a large plastic bubble that was held in the air with the help of an air compressor. Two years after the inauguration (2009), the upper part of the monument suffered a breakage. Its deterioration generated strong criticism from victims' associations. By the end of 2015, the bubble had fallen to the ground up to five times due to the malfunctioning of the mechanism holding it in place. By November that year, the bubble had been on the ground for over two months. The external part of the monument had turned a blackish colour as a result of the fumes emitted by the constant flow of traffic at the roundabout (El Periódico, 2015). According to the press, its poor condition was largely due to the quarrels between the administrations that were in charge of taking care of its maintenance (Gualtieri & Olaya, 2015). In 2019, a major renovation of the monument was undertaken by the Madrid City Council (left-wing party *Ahora Madrid*) following a request from some of the 11M victims' associations. 'For us, the conservation and maintenance [of the monument] is fundamental, because it means preserving the memory of the victims' (translation by the author) stated the president of the *Asociación 11-M Afectados del Terrorismo* as quoted by El País (Costantini, 2018). Changes were made to the design and lighting. The commemorative messages were permanently engraved inside the cylindrical structure. Some victims' representatives hoped that the reform would also be accompanied by changes to the external space where the 11-metre-high structure emerges and the creation of green areas with the future remodelling of the station. In July 2023, however, the permanent



Image 3.6 Interior of the memorial at Atocha Station (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

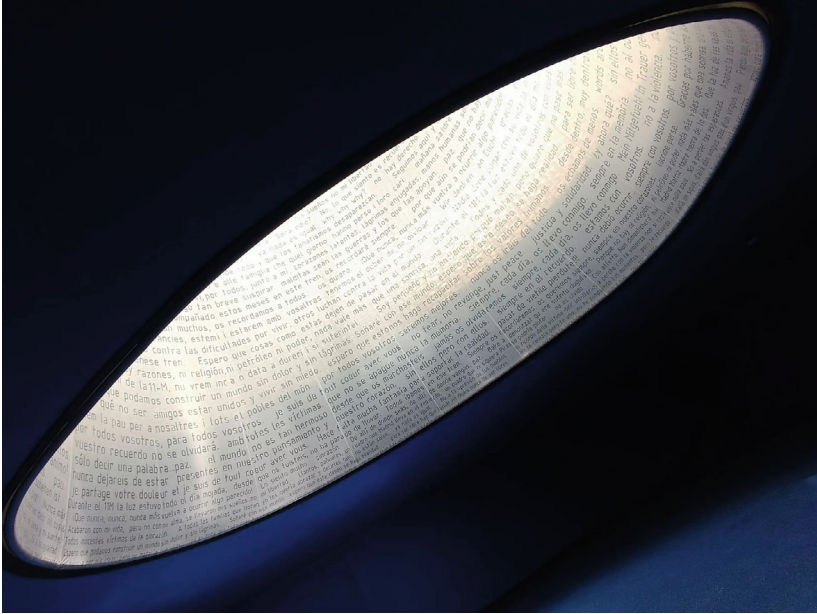


Image 3.7 Inside the cylinder are inscribed messages written in various languages by different individuals in the aftermath of the attacks (Photograph by Mireya Toribio Medina)

removal of the memorial on the occasion of the works to be carried out as part of the reform of the metro network that will affect the Atocha station was announced by the regional government (PP) (Peinado, 2023). This time we are presented with a site of memory whose development was addressed jointly by two different administrations but which has been fraught with controversy.

The memorial at Atocha station has been the space where the *Asociación IIM Afectados del Terrorismo* has organised its annual acts of homage to the victims. This association was started in the aftermath of the 11M attacks on the initiative of several of those who were affected by the attacks. According to the statement on their website, it arose against the deficiencies in the care provided by public authorities and pre-existing associations, and with the aim of demanding ‘the various administrations to fulfil their commitments so that all those affected receive the medical,

psychological, social and legal support they are entitled to' (translation by the author) (*Asociación 11-M Afectados del Terrorismo*, 2004). It has been associated with the political centre-left. It is worth pointing out that in addition to this organisation and the aforementioned AVT, there are other associations of victims of terrorism in Spain, both dedicated to the victims of 11M and to victims of terrorist violence of different origins. Some have also played important roles in the political and memorialisation processes following the Madrid bombings.

AFTER NINETEEN ANNIVERSARIES: ANATOMY OF THE LAST TRIBUTE TO DATE

The last anniversary before this publication was sent to print, the nineteenth, reflects what has already been outlined throughout this text: the contested nature of the memorialisation of the 11M attacks. In addition to the tributes that would take place in various localities in the Madrid region, several different ones were held in the capital, making visible, as would also be the case in previous years, the lack of consensus. On 11 March 2023, the acts of homage began early in the morning at the *Real Casa de Correos* de Madrid—headquarters of the regional government (PP)—with a ceremony in which the president of the region and the mayor of the city (PP) placed a laurel wreath next to the commemorative plaque that stands there, followed by the tolling of the bells of the churches of Madrid and a performance by the regional orchestra and choir. Shortly afterwards, a homage took place by the memorial at Atocha station. This second tribute organised by the *Asociación 11M Afectados del Terrorismo* consisted of a minute's silence and the release of 192 white balloons. Under the slogan '11M Living Memory', other neighbourhood associations would replicate it in the other locations where the bombs exploded. On the other hand, the *Bosque del Recuerdo*, would once again host the tribute organised by the *Asociación de Víctimas del Terrorismo* in which its president was accompanied by different political representatives among whom were the president of the region (PP), the mayor of Madrid (PP), the president of PP, the government delegate (PSOE) and some representatives of other conservative political parties. In the tribute, reference was made to both the victims of the 11M attacks and those of ETA. During the event, the government's (PSOE) policy of transferring ETA inmates to prisons in the Basque Country was criticised. There were also protests against the acts of homage with which

these former prisoners are often received when they return to their places of origin after serving their sentences. Both have been some of the most controversial issues linked to the terrorist organisation after its dissolution in 2018. The resignation of the minister of internal affairs (PSOE) was demanded. The Prime Minister (PSOE), meanwhile, issued a message from an event he was attending outside the capital: ‘a heartfelt remembrance to the victims of the biggest terrorist attack in our history’ (translation by the author) (Europa Press, [2023](#)).

20 YEARS ON. FINAL REFLECTIONS ON A CONTESTED MEMORIALISATION

The processes of commemoration of traumatic events are inherently complex. They intertwine intimate and collective mourning experiences that are not straightforward processes. Added to this equation is the difficulty of managing these processes for official institutions. The Madrid attacks took place in a country that for the past four decades had not ceased to count fatal victims of terrorist violence. Mainly caused by the activity of ETA, but also to a lesser extent by other groups of different ideological persuasions. At that time, the differences in anti-terrorist policy between the two main political parties (PP and PSOE) and their social bases were the substratum of the permanent disagreement over approaches to terrorism. This was combined with the authorities’ handling of the aftermath of the outbreak of violence at a key moment: on the doorstep of a general election. The public’s response to these attitudes was influenced by the recent outcry against Spain’s participation in the war in Iraq, which came to be seen as the cause of the attacks by part of society. This climate of confusion and conflicting political interests gave rise to conspiracy theories that contributed to the confrontation of different social sectors. Subsequent police and legal investigations would later be questioned by part of society and some political representatives and media outlets. It was from this foundation that institutionalised commemoration initiatives were to begin.

The immediate aftermath of the 11M attacks in Madrid was characterised by expressions of solidarity and mutual support. Yet, an impending general election and the complex pre-existing political landscape together with the questionable initial management of the situation by authorities fostered political controversy. The institutions’ handling of both the aftermath and the subsequent memorialisation has been fraught with

contestation. These disagreements have been, and continue to be visible, both in the processes of creation of spaces of memory, and in the commemorative events that are annually held around them. The first is perceptible both in the complex decision-making processes surrounding the determination of which victims are to be commemorated in these spaces—visible in the habitual re-signification of these sites—and in their lack of appropriate maintenance. The latter is observable in the ongoing tensions that exist in the commemorations on anniversaries in which different groups autonomously organise events in distinct locations across the city.

The attacks of 11 March constituted a moment that would mark the political and social dynamics of collective remembrance in contemporary Spain. Twenty years after the violence, its consequences are still tangible. The forthcoming disappearance of the official memorial at Atocha station means the loss of a place of remembrance but also an opportunity for the future. Successful memorialisation processes must meet the objective of being appropriate for their users. Their development needs time and the cooperative involvement of different stakeholders in balancing multiple interests. The opportunity offered by a new memorial project should not be missed to take into account the lessons learned over the past twenty years.

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Memory as ‘Temporal Loop’ in the War on Terror: Using the Past to Secure the Future (and Failing)

Charlotte Heath-Kelly and Tom Pettinger

Our chapter reflects on how commemoration and ‘the past’ have become implicated within national security practices which anticipate and act upon future insecurity. Across public inquiries, coroners’ investigations and memorialisation, there is an in-built assumption that societies (and security practitioners) should be able to learn from disastrous events. For

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example, public inquiries and coroners' reports¹ produce formal recommendations for change, based on identified failures leading to past events. Concomitantly, commemoration and memorialisation fulfil an educational role—bringing closure to an event by identifying the 'lessons' (often values of resilience and heroism) from which future generations can learn. This places the past in direct connection with the anticipated future; the past is processed, narrated, and made readable through inquiries and other practices—before its 'lessons' are extrapolated and projected onto the potential future.

This produces a temporal loop between the past and the anticipated future, where memory—directly and indirectly—comes to serve as a component within national security architectures. In academic studies of memory and security, it is rare for this cross-working to be picked up. After all, security is predominantly characterised by the anticipation of threats-to-come, which often estranges its study from the topic of the past. The small existing literature on the entanglement of security and memory covers the canonisation of particular narratives of national history, alongside the delegitimization and even outlawing of competing narratives by the state (Mälksoo, 2015). Here historical memory, as a crucial component of political identity, can be securitised by political actors and even extend into 'memory wars' over the ontological security of the state (Belavusau et al., 2021). Meanwhile, memorialisation can also be integrated directly into national security practice, with commemoration being factored into contemporary disaster response policies of states to mitigate the traumatic resonance of events (Heath-Kelly, 2016; Lundborg, 2012).

Our chapter builds and expands upon the latter trajectory of research, where retrospective 'stock taking' exercises and commemorative performances are integrated—intriguingly—within anticipatory practices of security. Aradau and van Munster (2012: 98) have pointed out that the imagination of the 'next' catastrophe is central to national security efforts. Our contribution here is to show that this imagination of 'the next' is simultaneously reliant upon knowledge of *past* events, their locations, their constitution, and the failures that allowed them to happen.

First, we focus on examples from the UK where commemoration has become a 'stage' in disaster recovery. Commemorative church services

¹ Specifically, Prevention of Future Deaths reports (in the UK).

and memorials are presented in policy guidance as ways to soothe the reverberation and impact of traumatic events. Their use tames the potential for *future* public disorder and malcontent, it is suggested. In recent visceral examples of this interconnectedness of commemoration and anticipation, the UK Home Office has begun staging 'spontaneous' memorial reactions to terrorist attacks, sending its staff (particularly people of colour) to the Westminster Bridge and Manchester attack sites with pre-organised slogans about unity between British Muslim and White British communities. The government deploys covert 'spontaneous memorialisation' to act upon the potential for future disorder.

The invocation of the past to secure the future is also vividly apparent in other attempts to learn from disaster events. Inquiries into disasters and terrorist attacks, as well as 'Prevention of Future Deaths' reports by coroners, all construe and functionalise overlap between past and future—where recommendations from past events can, it is assumed, improve security performance in detecting, preventing and mitigating the next. We conducted interviews with senior disaster response and planning officials in 2021 who told us about practices of 'learning' within these professions, which rely on rigid expectations that past response efforts (particularly mistakes) can inform future responses. Indeed, 'learning' is a fundamental component of state processes surrounding unexpected death. *However*, our respondents reflected (some consistently, some intermittently) that these linear 'learning efforts' fail to capture the real nature of 'emergence/y'. The past refuses to be leveraged neatly as a tool with which to anticipate the future. They told us that extrapolating 'lessons' from the Bataclan attack did not mobilise the political will to protect UK venues (despite the prediction of more arena attacks); that learning from previous terrorist attacks in the UK could not prevent responders forgetting triage cards or other key materials; and that repeated findings of inquiries on failed radio inter-operability between emergency services have consistently failed to bring about change.

In this second section of the chapter, we reflect on the failures of linear 'learning' between disaster response efforts, integrating Karen Barad's thought on relationality to understand how the entanglement of humans and non-humans during an emergency event belies any attempt to 'read' the future through the past. The professional experience of disaster response and recovery practitioners probes us to reflect on the efforts of

government to link commemoration and past events with anticipation—questioning whether it is appropriate to rely on the past when planning for the future, and what modernist ontologies characterise such assumptions.

MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATION AS A ‘STAGE’ IN RESILIENT RECOVERY

Memorialisation is sociologically functional: it *does things* in society. The noted scholar of memorialisation, Kenneth Foote, has shown that—in the US—there exist four types of landscaping response to violent events: sanctification; designation; rectification; and obliteration (Foote, 1998). Memorialisation sits within his category of ‘sanctification’; it takes the ‘lessons learned’ from a violent event and displays them, in a commemorative design, to present and future generations. ‘Designation’ is the response suited to violent events which are culturally understood to have fewer ‘lessons’ for the future, and results in a more modest plaque acknowledging the occurrence of an event upon a site. ‘Rectification’ and ‘obliteration’, however, result from the societal perceptions that nothing can be productively learned from a past event—leading to either the rectification of the surrounding built environment on the site (rectification) or the decision to leave a site completely unmarked and barren, given the horrors of violence committed there (from which no learning can be identified) (obliteration) (Foote, 1998).²

Memorialisation, then, is all about communicating a lesson from the past to current (and future) generations. It is the manifestation of an entanglement between the past and an anticipated future. The ‘lessons’ centralised in the architecture of memorials often rely upon heroic depictions of sacrifice, to commemorate the dead of war, in order to refresh and consolidate the bond between subjects and their sovereign; they are

² Intriguingly, there are examples of violent events (like the bombing of Kuta, Bali, in 2002) where sanctification and rectification drives sit alongside each other. As Heath-Kelly (2015) explains, commemorative architecture has little place in Balinese culture which instead centralises animism and reincarnation. When the heavily touristed Kuta area was bombed in 2002, the Balinese quickly built a memorial to the dead—honouring the customs of the Australians who visit the island in great numbers, and who were heavily affected by the atrocity. However, there were two bomb blasts on the night and the first site (Paddy’s Bar) has experienced swift rectification as a surf-shop. This creates a certain tension between the memorial, the (unreconstructed) site of the Sari Club blast, and the ‘rectified’ shop which stands upon the Paddy’s Bar site.

profoundly ideological and interpolating sites (Edkins, 2003; Kishore, 2015).

In the twenty-first century, memorialisation and commemoration in Europe were attributed further functions by policymakers. Not only were they to bind the population to their nation through interpolation in a lesson about sacrifice and/or heroism, but the UK and EU began to envisage both—pre-emptively—as strategies to be deployed against future terrorist attacks and plots. In 2005, the Home Office and Cabinet Office created guidance for disaster recovery in the UK (Home Office & Cabinet Office, 2005). This guidance was particularly important because it treated recovery as a ‘stage’ in the emergency, complementing the Civil Contingencies Act of 2004. Emergencies became viewed as a predictable, mitigatable, series of linked phenomena—viewed holistically from their inception to their lingering presence in memory at anniversaries (Heath-Kelly, 2016).

The UK Guidance dealing with commemoration and disaster recovery (Eyre, 2006; Home Office & Cabinet Office, 2005) deals with spontaneous memorialisation, commemoration services and anniversaries of the disaster. It frames the state’s responsibility as one of care, that enables victims and survivors to grieve while providing a respectful structure for events and tributes.

What is fascinating about the incorporation of commemoration and memorialisation into disaster recovery policy is that memorialisation becomes an *anticipatory device* in this rendering. It is positioned within an anticipatory policy frame, waiting for the next disaster event to strike so that it can be used to quell the effects of trauma. The future trauma from an event is anticipated as a problem. This reveals something very interesting about uncoded approaches to memorialisation. Most countries do not integrate plans for commemoration or memorialisation into policy guidance. While many states and international organisations provide schemes for memorialising *specific* events (like the Covid 19 pandemic), few have a codified general policy on when (and how) to memorialise. Policies oriented at specific events are, naturally, retrospective. Their associated memorials are imagined through a retrospective lens, looking back at the crisis/disaster. A generalised memorialisation and commemoration strategy, however, is not retrospective. Rather, it looks into the future, *anticipating* events which might require resolution. In such generalised policy, remembrance and anticipation fuse. This creates a temporal loop

around the management of disaster events; anticipation and commemoration lose their usual temporalities and fuse around the mitigation of events.

The period of the twentieth century known as the ‘War on Terror’ focused international security actors and organisations on terrorist threats, particularly lone actors, but also produced innovative uses of memory as a security tool. Commemoration extended beyond the interpellation of citizens into national belonging, and beyond a tool to apply in disaster recovery to mitigate trauma; it became part of the Preventing Violent Extremism repertoire in Europe. How is historical memory used to help societies to identify and deter future extremists?

The Radicalisation Awareness Network is a significant EU network of counter-radicalisation practitioners from member states, who share knowledge and best practices (Melhuish & Heath-Kelly, 2022). It was founded in 2011 but expanded after 2015 to include more ‘working groups’ (formed around social policy areas where local frontline staff and municipality officers might be able to counter-radicalisation). In 2017, the RAN VoT (Victims/Survivors of Terrorism Working Group) emerged, bringing the topic of victims and survivors of terrorism into the EU’s work on counter-radicalisation. Its work is centred upon improving the support available to victims and survivors of terrorism and the potential for affected parties to set up their own support networks (RAN VoT, 2017). Originally, then, the RAN VoT was concerned with supporting victims.

Building upon the work of the RAN VoT, in 2021, the European Commission published a unique study of the value of memorials to Preventing Violent Extremism efforts (which was authored by members of the RAN expert pool). This acknowledged the traditional function of memorials in binding societies together around historical narratives, but supplemented this with a direct contribution to national security (European Commission, 2021). Memorials to victims of terrorism, the paper argues, actively assist efforts to combat polarisation and therefore radicalisation:

Memorials may have at least three purposes: they serve as spaces for the victims, their families and the affected communities to mourn; they serve as spaces addressed to a broader audience, like students and youth, to raise awareness of a historical event; and, as the third function, they can serve to

prevent violent extremism when they take on the role of dialogue spaces aiming to disrupt polarisation. (European Commission, 2021: 4)

The paper argues that memorialisation efforts across Member States have rehumanised the victims of terrorism—who are dehumanised in terrorist and extremist rhetoric—and intervened in cases of divided histories and societies to offer a wider variety of narratives about conflict. In intervening in the representation of victims, memorialisation (it is argued) contributes to counter-radicalisation by countering the dehumanisation narratives used by extremist groups.

This is a fascinating articulation of memorialisation and memory which directly links both to an anticipatory, national security function. Here, memorialisation can indirectly play a role in preventing terrorism through countering polarisation. This is a profoundly looping temporality, whereby the representation of the past is utilised (in theory) to secure the future. In this account of memorialisation and security, the past, present, and future are no longer understood as distinct phases on a linear model of time, but radically interconnected. All merge around the articulation of proper governance of the social, so that extremist groups cannot feed upon lingering grievances, exclusions, or injustices in the polity.³

This European working paper sketched a relational account of time, where commemoration is directly implicated in the prevention of future terrorism. Incredibly, this linkage has been put to practice in the UK. In 2019, it was revealed that the UK government actively prepares hashtags and ‘spontaneous’ commemoration activities, in advance, for future terrorist attacks (Cobain, 2019). Speaking with insiders on contingency planning teams within government, the journalist Ian Cobain unveiled that—since the administration of Theresa May, which saw rioting in British cities—government has taken interest in pre-planning PR responses to disaster events so that public reactions can be ‘nudged’ away from anger and blame, towards ‘Princess Dianaesque grief’ (Cobain, 2019). This is referred to in Orwellian terms as ‘controlled spontaneity’.

To direct public opinion, contingency planning teams pre-design imagery (such as the ‘heart’ backdrop used on banners and posters

³ For further reading on how ‘the social’ has been posited as the terrain upon which extremism must be battled in International Security (replacing previous frames such as the ‘failed state’ discourse), see: Daniel (2023).

commemorating the Manchester and Plymouth attacks) and hashtags—around generic, imagined, future events. When a disaster event occurs, the team needs only to fill in details of the location. After the London Bridge attack in 2017, a team of men arrived in an unmarked van and were admitted behind the police cordon. They began to plaster the walls with images of London as well as hashtags that were circling on social media like #lovewillwin and #turntolove (Cobain, 2019). Cobain also notes that these men did not answer questions from journalists about their identities; nor were the men challenged by the police—who stood by and allowed the flyposting (a minor offence in British law) to continue. When the area re-opened to the public, passers-by found themselves surrounded by apparently spontaneous calls for solidarity, public defiance and unity.

Beyond the use of images on posters, billboards and social media, the Home Office also *stages* ‘spontaneous’ commemoration events. A day later, a council leader from the affected borough was told by the Home Office: ‘we’re sending you 100 imams’. As promised, 100 imams and community leaders appeared on London Bridge the next day. They read out a condemnation of the attacks and stood together on the Bridge in a supposedly spontaneous demonstration of unity, condemnation, and togetherness (Cobain, 2019). As if this were not enough ‘controlled spontaneity’, a (supposedly self-organised) group of British Muslims called ‘1000 roses’ gathered on London Bridge the following weekend—to distribute a rose to all passers-by (Worley, 2017). One of the organisers, Zakia Bassou, said: ‘After the events of last weekend we are making a symbolic gesture of love for the communities affected by the attack. The whole concept is we are not going to let London Bridge, or any bridge, fall down’ (Worley, 2017). The reporter spoke to recipients of the roses who, visibly emotional, testified that it was lovely to see that ‘it is not everybody in the Muslim community carrying out these attacks’ (Worley, 2017).

Of course, the event organiser was employed by the law enforcement division of the Home Office and this event is categorised as one of many staged ‘spontaneous’ demonstrations after terrorist attacks (Cobain, 2019). Disaster recovery has been integrated within the PR strategy of response agencies and government departments, who anticipate post-attack moments where intervention can steer public opinion. In so doing, they deploy an innovative temporality where they imagine the failure of future efforts to prevent terrorism—and plan their interventions accordingly (see Heath-Kelly, 2015 on other attempts to ‘Secure

through the Failure to Secure’). Interestingly, however, the attempt to deploy ‘I *heart* Salisbury’ t-shirts and posters after the Novichok attack of 2018 was rejected by locals who instead emphasised that emergency responders should focus on getting the nerve agent cleaned up. A local informant told Cobain that sites like Manchester have a lot of young people who will engage with the ‘hashtag game’, but that Salisbury has significant numbers of ex-military in the community who are more practically minded (Cobain, 2019).

What is the significance, and ethics, of staging fake-spontaneous events and hashtag campaigns in disaster recovery? These interventions are informed by behavioural science and aim to covertly manage public reactions in desired directions. They are, effectively, psy-ops used upon a domestic population by their own government. This speaks to their significance. They reflect the changing governance of emergencies, such that disasters are no longer understood as exceptional, discrete moments that appear without warning. The use of ‘controlled spontaneity’ speaks to an overlapping, relational temporality of disaster. Even when a disaster is not occurring or thought to be imminent, governments deploy contingency planners to imagine what event could come next—and which responses might control the damage it inflicts, both physical and in the realm of morale, public communication, and media.

Similar to the examples of pre-planned commemoration services in the UK, and the deployment of memorialisation and memory in Preventing Violent Extremism by the RAN VoT group, the past and the future profoundly overlap in these models. Rather than the past comprising a set of discrete events, and the future comprising unimaginable future events, the two are understood as overlapping and influencing one another. Memory informs the imagination of the future (according to what should be planned for, and how); whereas anticipation brings about the pre-preparation of commemoration and response events (which exist in template form, for the future failures to prevent events, with only the location of the disaster needing to be inputted).

Policies of disaster recovery and planning present this overlap as a smooth space, where learning from the past (if not, the past itself) can help us to divert and mitigate unwanted futures. But how do practitioners of emergency response and recovery experience their work, the presentation of an interconnected past and future, and the demands that learning from the past should prevent future deaths? We now move to discuss our interviews with emergency planners and responders on this topic, which

powerfully invoked different ontologies of past and future. Some interviewees thought it should be possible to treat the future as liable to repeat the past, and therefore that learning from disaster events could practically avert future disasters. Others, however, applied (implicitly) a more relational understanding of the world where our efforts to measure the past will never successfully help us to secure the future—given that emergencies are not subject to our hubristic demands for understanding, control, and omniscience. Causality, in these accounts, was less linear, and replicated relational understandings of the world linked to quantum physics and its reception within humanities and social science disciplines.

THE LINEAR AND QUANTUM WORLDS OF EMERGENCY PLANNERS AND RESPONDERS

The previous section has explored multiple ways in which governments and practitioners embed the past (especially ‘lessons learned’) within their efforts to avoid repeating it. Commemoration, staged displays of social unity, and public inquiries featured heavily here as practices which effectively ‘bent’ linear time, by constructing a loop between remembrance and anticipation. But what does it mean to ‘learn from the past’ *in practice*? What can practitioners of emergency response and planning tell us about the use of the past in the anticipation of the future events?

When speaking to emergency planners and responders, we became immediately aware that each had different opinions about the extent to which learning from disaster events is possible. Some understood events as discrete, knowable phenomena, which could be measured and learned from. Others diverged significantly from this understanding, leaning more towards an emphasis on the emergency as—by definition—that which emerges unforeseen. In this latter reading, learning from disaster events becomes more problematic—if not impossible. In analysing our conversations with emergency planners and responders, we began to lean towards Barad’s relational ontology (written around the implications of quantum mechanics for social theory) to frame what we were being told.

First and foremost, to learn from the past, one has to be able to measure the past event, to diagnose what happened, and to identify the causal relationship between factors which led to the disaster. As such, learning from the past relies upon our ability to measure. This is more difficult than it sounds because, since the early twentieth century,

quantum mechanics has demonstrated significant problems with measurement. In classical physics, by contrast, objects are classified and fixed. They don’t radically change their properties. And established scientific laws explain the interaction between forces which may move, transform or obliterate such fixed objects. Quantum mechanics has problematised all these realities and shown that they do not apply to the subatomic realm (Barad, 2007; Brandimarte, 2022; Overman, 1991). Instead of being fixed, quantum phenomena are fundamentally ambiguous and are represented through the mathematical probabilities that might take on the qualities of waves or particles. This is called wave-particle duality.

Fascinatingly, it is the *practice of measurement* which intervenes in this potentiality—causing the ‘wave function’ to collapse into particular outcomes. By measuring subatomic reality, we both shape the potentialities of the wave function (through experimental design) and then force them to collapse into a particular outcome (Barad, 2007; Brandimarte, 2022; Wendt, 2015: 235). Measurement does not objectively reflect upon a fixed world but rather is profoundly involved in creating that which it measures, in quantum physics.

As Italo Brandimarte succinctly realises,

The social scientific conception of measurement, heavily indebted to deterministic science, is premised on the importance of fixity and abstract classification. In quantum theory, measurement is instead inherently related to ambiguity ... The interaction between the measured object and the measuring apparatus produces an “entanglement,” which blurs the epistemic boundaries between the two and frames them as a single system. (Brandimarte, 2022: 9)

Philosophy has been dramatically affected by the quantum revolution in science. With varying degrees of success, social theorists have appropriated aspects of quantum theory to speak about the world. The most productive reflections on quantum mechanics centralise the problem of measurement and the resulting importance of recognising relational ‘entanglement’ between material, human, and environmental forces. This relationality problematises any linear or classical relationship of causality between them, instead centralising their mutual constitution of each other. For Karen Barad, the philosopher (and theoretical physicist) primarily responsible for bringing quantum insights into social theory, any attempt at observation, measurement, or knowledge production ‘cuts’ into this

entangled world—placing some relations within the sphere of attention, but others outside (Barad, 2007). Her relational ontology tries to counterbalance this problem by attending to entanglement as intra-activity as an inexhaustible dynamism which configures and reconfigures space–time–matter (Barad, 2007). In effect, the world is being dynamically and continually constituted through entangled relationships, between matter and ourselves.

Relational ontology is uniquely insightful when discussing emergency recovery, emergency planning and the possibility of learning from the past. We came to relational ontology when trying to understand the divergence between accounts given by three senior practitioners. Our three interviewees have all advised UK government agencies on emergency planning and management, and maintain different levels of engagement with on-the-ground emergency response. From our conversations with them, we estimate that one (or more) have likely been present at each and every major incident occurring in the last twenty years in the UK. Expert #1 maintained a view that learning from disaster events is definitely possible, and that organisational failures of learning are responsible for mistakes in emergency response repeating. This replicates a modernist ontology where time flows in a linear direction and events are fixed moments in time, making learning from the past possible. Expert #2, however, offered a very different testimony—articulating that the world is dynamic and that emergencies are, by definition, unexpected, uncontrollable, occurrences. While there are codes which should inform disaster response, Expert #2 believed that the complex interplay between material factors always brought a significant amount of chance into play—meaning that ‘learning’ from past mistakes will never serve as a prophylactic to prevent future disasters. Expert #2, then, is positioned far closer to a relational ontology where it is not always possible to learn from past events in a meaningful way—as events will always take us by surprise. Finally, Expert #3 echoed many aspects of Expert #2’s testimony. They emphasised the overlapping relationships between terrorist attacks (rather than positioning them as discrete, fixed events to be learned from) and how—even when experts could sense that Manchester would be targeted after the Bataclan massacre—professional knowledge remained insufficient in preventing the attack. Rather, government policy works upon the ‘tombstone imperative’ (they argued), such that an attack must already have happened in order to generate the political will to enact measures which might have stopped it. Experts #2 and #3 both highlighted the complex,

quantum temporalities between disaster events—testifying that learning from disaster events is a highly complex process, often precluded by the realities of public administration.

The conventional approach to disaster planning and recovery is familiar to us all. It is epitomised by the public inquiry approach—where a government minister commissions a major investigation to explore the failures which led to a disaster, and which complicated efforts to mitigate it. Importantly, a public inquiry cannot attribute civil or criminal liability (HM Government, 2005: 2.1). Rather its function is associated with ‘preventing recurrence’ through collecting evidence, taking witness testimonies, and analysing what can be done to prevent such an event happening again (Institute for Government, 2018). Here, it is centrally posited that the Newtonian Laws of physics apply; events are objectively measurable, causation is linear, and lessons can be drawn from this fixed moment that can be applied to future moments. As Expert #1 put it:

These are predictable and preventable events. Realise that all these events were predictable and preventable, if not in their timing then their eventuality [...] I’m passionate about the evidence base and doing the right thing and knowing that it works. (Expert #1)

This conviction that ‘disaster events are predictable and preventable’ runs up against the continued happening of disasters, of course. How can the continuation of contingency be explained, when one adopts the Newtonian ontology? This was quite simple for Expert #1, who explained that the failure to prevent disasters does not stem from any deficit in our understandings of events and causation; rather, the failure to prevent is associated with the *communication and implementation* of lessons learned. Inquiries can point to the factors which led to a disaster and exacerbated its impact but, unless these lessons are integrated within revised practices of the emergency services and government agencies, our ‘lessons’ will not be ‘learned’. In Expert #1’s view, the problem is not the diagnosis of causal factors leading to disaster events, but in their ‘learning’ by responder and government agencies:

Learning would be not just identifying a lesson but actively implementing it; sharing it would be good, and lessons *are* shared but there are issues around how lessons are shared (whether it’s implemented into local resilience forums and further down across organisations). So there’s still

a question about whether it's implemented. So, there's identifying the learning, there is learning it by sharing it and implementing it, and then reviewing it and testing it and seeing that it's actually learned. (Expert #1)

Expert #1 consistently applied the Newtonian ontology of learning from past events and understood the repetition of disastrous mistakes as the result of deficient implementation within responder agencies and government departments. In a way, the solution to disasters did not require the rethinking of linear causality, temporality and knowing for Expert #1, rather the *expansion* of this linear model of learning would solve issues of repetition.

Initially, our interview with Expert #3 began on very similar terrain. For example, they stated:

We do a number of things in emergency planning: we prepare, we respond to the incident, and then we get ready for the next incident based on our learning from the response [...] what I think we're finding very, very difficult, quite emotional are the parallels between the Manchester bombings and the London bombings. And what would appear outwardly to be a failure to learn lessons is actually a reluctance to fix difficult things. (Expert #3)

But very soon afterwards, the expert began invoking repetition and overlaps between different disasters—making clear that they saw the ‘parallels’ between the Manchester and London bombings within a cyclical (or at least, non-linear) temporality. Attending the inquiry into the Manchester bombings led them to suddenly re-experience a parallel moment in the July 7th inquest; for example:

I have a very photographic memory for something like the July 7th inquest, so I can remember key days of that. And then you're watching the Manchester Inquiry. There are days in that – there was one day recently where actually both the Manchester inquiry and Grenfell were raising *exactly the same issues* [...] the big thing I did a lot of work on was communications: I'd analyse for the Cabinet Office 30 previous disasters (not terrorist attacks entirely, although July 7th was in there, Lockerbie was in there). So we analyse public inquiry reports and they all have the same phrasing around communications. It's always the radio failures, and literally language failures. And what you would see is the fire brigade and the police try and fix that via new kit. (Expert #3)

The recurrence of radio failures transported Expert #3 between inquiries, creating a spatio-temporal loop between them. They articulated being ‘transported’ between public inquiries, given their overlapping content, emphasising the sudden coming together of two timelines in one room. This is interesting because inquiries are targeted at preventing the recurrence of issues in disaster response and prevention. For thirty disaster investigations to identify radio compatibility issues between emergency responder agencies as an issue, and for it to keep coming up, shows a significant issue with understanding disaster prevention and response as a linear field. Rather, recurrence and ‘haunting’ permeated the field for Expert #3.

Expert #3 also made profound reflections on practitioners *knowing Manchester would be next*—after the Bataclan attacks:

We had been exercising for Manchester for months. So, we knew it was likely in Manchester, and I was tired of exercising for it. Rather than trying to stop it or trying to understand it, we were just readying to be there. And that became very draining [...] The Manchester thing, we knew it was coming, we had a very strong sense it was coming. And we were exercising for some of that, all the time. (Expert #3)

Expert #3 came back to this point several times in our conversation—emphasising that the emergency planning community *knew*, from attacks prior, that Manchester would be next. Their professional habitus, refined by decades of experience, told them that Manchester would be attacked. This recalls the statement of Expert #1, that all disaster events are predictable in their eventuality—if not their timing. However, it goes far beyond the generality of that statement. Rather than identifying the potential for an attack based on identified vulnerabilities in a structure or system, Expert #3 describes a field-wide intuition that a specific city would be next—provoking a series of planning exercises for responder teams. The knowledge that Manchester would be next was, again, ‘haunting’ the emergency planning teams.

Was this knowledge disregarded? And if so, why? Expert #3 frequently returned to the assertion that disaster learning is very disjointed. Despite the practitioners’ intuition that Manchester would be next, this could not and did not affect government action. Rather, to act on the anticipated disaster, Expert #3 told us that governments rely on the ‘tombstone imperative’—*they need the event to happen before they can legislate for*

its prevention. When we asked Expert #3 if the Protect Duty (the legal responsabilisation of medium to large sized venues for terrorism contingency planning, in the aftermath of the Manchester Arena bombing) had been long in the making, they replied:

I believe it has been (obviously, not their more recent changes), but yes. The consultation, I suspect, was what we would call a tombstone imperative. We were ready to go there, but we needed the incident to make it happen. So, the types of venues that we were starting to worry about in 2015-2016 very much fit with the new consultation around venues. (Expert #3)

This is indicative of a looping temporality in emergency planning, whereby the fact that emergency planning systems were clearly indicating that Manchester was next was not enough to generate practical change. Only rehearsals for the anticipated bombing could be staged. Change could not be enacted without the hard evidence of the bombing actually happening. Only then could action be taken. The previous learning in the system (from terrorist attacks past) was not considered sufficient as an evidence base to make change happen; rather, the ‘next’ attack had to materialise in order that we could learn from it and take action. Anticipation is grounded, it seems, in retrospection as well as expectation then.

Expert #3 invoked the presence of this looping temporality frequently. They also indicted the Home Office’s turn to ‘nudge’ style behavioural management, in these terms. Rather than directly engage the kinds of ideologies that produce terrorist violence, and ‘adopting the surveillance powers needed to act upon them’, Expert #3 opined that a behavioural science technique of ‘nudging’ had become common in disaster management. They referred back to the ‘controlled spontaneity’ of staged commemoration (discussed earlier in the chapter), as well as the applause for health professionals during every Thursday of pandemic lockdowns in the UK, as a natural continuation of the looping temporality of disaster management. Planning exercises skip ahead to ‘recovery’ (controlling the social reaction to disaster) rather than actively trying to avert the disaster itself.

The temporality of this emergency response is not a linear one then, where one fixed, discrete event can be measured objectively and learned from in order to prevent the next. Instead, Expert #3’s testimony spoke to

a looping, overlapping space-time where events ceased being distinguishable from each other, where traces of future events lingered in advance of their materialisation, and where the anticipation and retrospection were inevitably bound up in each other.

Finally, Expert #2 gave a compelling and emotional testimony which accentuates many of these quantum strands in the world of disaster planning—however, that was not their intention. Expert #2 cognitively subscribes to the modernist, Newtonian ontology where learning from disaster events should be possible. They spoke very highly of some innovations in disaster response practice, such as JESIP principles (joint-working principles for multi-agency emergency responders), stating that they were so good that ‘even if you threw them out, you’d come back to the JESIP principles’ (Expert #2). However, Expert #2 became increasingly agitated by the failure to learn lessons and implement changes from disaster events. This is when, inadvertently, their testimony came to emphasise the non-linear, relational world of emergency management where—against all efforts to the contrary—learning from previous events does not manifest.

Expert #2’s testimony highlighted the chaos of the emergency. The emergency is, necessarily, unexpected, mutating in scope and scale; complex, sudden and unexpected. When it manifests, it places responders on an emergency footing where—under immense stress—they can make mistakes or forget things. For example, invoking the moment of disaster, Expert #2 asked:

Can you make those connections in your head, that you understand ‘this I’m confronted with, this is the thing I was doing in that course three years ago, Christ this is it!’ Or do you just use your muscle memory? You just use fast-twitch thinking, when you’re faced with something. The night of the Arena, it was all fast. And it fucking worked, because there were a lot of *really experienced* people there, who are being dragged over the coals now. But their experience allowed them to make critical decisions on the night. I stand by the Kerslake findings. I stand by them really strongly. Because what we didn’t look at was ‘survivability’, and that’s what’s coming in. And to have those medics being hauled over the coals for decisions they made in those hours is really uncomfortable for me. Because I wouldn’t have wanted to be there. And yet I can’t think of a better advanced paramedic to have been going into that city room than [name of paramedic removed]

that night. And he forgot his cruciform cards.⁴ Fucking hell, how many times do we forget things? I forget whether I've locked the door or not! He left his car, going towards a major incident, constantly dynamically risk assessing as he walked up the stairs into that City Room. He forgot his cruciform cards, and then he couldn't go back for them. And that probably had an effect on the way that some of those casualties were treated. But can he be blamed for that? (Expert #2)

Expert #2 was discussing the Kerslake inquiry into the Manchester Arena bombing, confronting all expectations of linear learning from past events with the searing reality of a mass casualty incident. They didn't go so far as to say that the emergency *defies* learning, as it is implicit within their professional role that the business of learning be centralised and achieved, but the emotional tenor of the discussion did highlight significant distress and dissonance about this. The expert is professionally committed to learning from disaster response, but is simultaneously aware that the moment of the emergency comes unexpected, by definition, and naturally provokes mistakes from responders in a high-stress environment. The emergency will not come in the same form as it did previously.

Additionally, Expert #2 manifested an (unintentional) relational take on emergency planning in their views on the Protect Duty—the responsibility of venues for counterterrorism risk assessment and planning, after the Manchester bombing. When asked about the potential impact of Protect on emergency planning, Expert #2 hastily cut into the discussion proclaiming that:

It'll move the threat. It'll move the threat to an unprotected area. [Laughs incredulously.] Because that's how they [terrorists] do it. Because they're ingenious. And they think about soft targets. So they'll just find a soft target. (Expert #2)

Unlike the linear Newtonian expectations of learning from events, Expert #2 was sufficiently versed in the reality of disaster planning and response to know that previous events do not determine the next. Rather, an extensive array of material and human factors dynamically interacts in the production of any moment or event. By introducing a legal duty

⁴ Cruciform cards are provided to emergency responders and quickly summarise a medical assessment of the casualty's priority for medical treatment, as either 'immediate', 'urgent', 'delayed' or 'dead'.

for venues to risk assess their events, Expert #2 deftly articulated that terrorists would simply respond by choosing other targets.

Emphasising the complexity of a relational understanding of events, Expert #2 also undercut the narrative that protective measures (such as the Protect Duty, and the empowerment of security guards and officers to challenge the perpetrator) would have prevented the attack. The 'learnings' from the Manchester bombing would not—if transposed in time—have prevented the attack. Rather, Expert #2 opined that people still would have died and been injured, as a result of the perpetrator detonating his device when challenged (Expert #2).

These comments require significant analysis. Here the interviewee is transposing the post-Manchester 'learning' onto the pre-Manchester environment, arguing that it would change the impact of the bombing but not prevent it. This is a remarkable simulation of multiple realities, all co-existing; it is a profound articulation of relationality and the possibility of multiple co-existing parallel worlds that quantum mechanics predicts.

Finally, Expert #2 emphasised the looping temporality of disaster learning—which also characterised the testimony of Expert #3. Training in disaster preparedness and response now anticipates failures in emergency response, and the inquiry which will respond to those failings. The MAGIC (multi-agency gold incident command) courses for emergency services commanders now incorporate 'defensibility' as a central aspect of emergency response. It trains commanders, in advance of a major incident, to make decisions and then *defend them*—as if being grilled by an inquiry (into failure):

It's something that's done in the MAGIC course, the advocate comes in and challenges people who're on the MAGIC course. So that created its own little bit of the market. You've got these advocates that come in and do their day of shouting at senior officers, which is great because that's what it's like. That's real experience. 'You made a decision; now, defend it.' They really put you through it [...] And I'm not surprised because that's what it's like in court, or an Inquiry, and that's what we're seeing. It's bloody hard! So the MAGIC course [...] It prepares you for what is going to happen. (Expert #2)

Emergency response training now invokes the post-disaster inquiry—folding the failure of future disaster response into that event's own dedicated training. Anticipation here incorporates the prospect of its own

failure, based on the retrospective knowledge of all previous failures to learn from events.

This emphasises that the past is incorporated within anticipatory security practice. ‘Learning’ proves remarkably challenging at all stages of emergency planning and response. In practice, ‘learning’ is the name given to remarkably complex, relational, temporalities that permeate the anticipation of disasters. Indeed, training sessions for emergency managers now incorporate their own future failure into scenarios—embedding the failure of a future emergency response into *its own planning*, on the basis of this having happened so many times before. This complexity of time-space reflects more of the quantum ontology (with overlapping entanglements of the past, present and future) than it does Newtonian mechanics.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this chapter, we have explored efforts to anticipate disaster events in the UK and other countries in Europe. The turn to pre-emptive security agendas during the War on Terror has long been noted by scholars of Critical Security Studies, who have analysed the projections of risk that this involves as well as rights violations in the present. Our contribution here has been to explore how the past, commemoration and memory figure in such pre-emptive agendas.

Primarily, the relationship of the past to pre-emptive security politics occurs through the invocation of temporal stages of disaster (planning, preparedness, response, recovery)—which situate commemoration and memory in the ‘recovery’ stage of disaster mitigation—as well as through efforts to ‘learn’ from past events. ‘Learning’ from disasters (and mistakes made in disaster response) manifests in surprisingly complex ways, which frequently appear to have more in common with relational ontology than traditional linear methods of measurement. For example, our interviewees suggested that policy changes after a disaster cannot be understood as ‘learning’ that contributes to prevention, because they often alter the relational arrangement between structures, forces and people in society—meaning that the next emergency will manifest in once again unpredictable ways. Also, they showed us how emergency planning has entered into a relationship with its own failure—such that it trains responders around the spectacle of their future failure (on the basis of repeated past failures), and that the ‘tombstone imperative’ limits the anticipatory

capacity of security professionals (because policy action cannot be taken until that event itself has manifested).

This complex overlapping of temporalities and relational fields led us to analyse our expert interviews through the lens of relational ontology, where the insights from quantum mechanics have entered social theory. Relational ontology helps us to understand why, in the UK, for example, emergency planners work to prepare templates for the next disaster response effort (‘controlled spontaneity’)—which, in-and-of-itself, implies the failure of anticipatory efforts to prevent an event. Pre-emption is bound up with the past, because the past provides the scenarios with which anticipation can imagine futures. The irony, however, is that pre-emption can never imagine its own success. As Expert #2 told us, any effort to close down a range of potential targets just moves terrorists onto other easier targets. This is a practical example of relational ontology, whereby our entanglement with the world produces an inexhaustible dynamism which configures and reconfigures space-time-matter (Barad 2007). Our actions—including measurement—alter the world around us; meaning that our strategies are always outdated schemas, based on a past image of the world.

INTERVIEWS

- Expert #1: 21 July 2021, interview conducted on video conferencing software.
- Expert #2: 24 September 2021, interview conducted on video conferencing software.
- Expert #3: 8 September 2021, interview conducted on video conferencing software.

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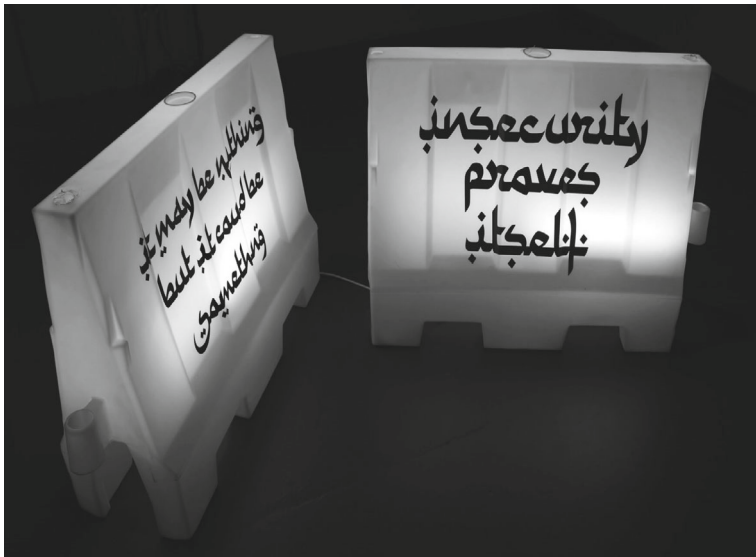
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Barriers and Prevent Cakes

Faisal Hussain



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“The set of illuminated bollards is representative of the reordering of cities for ‘protection’; repositioning and reconceptualizing their purpose and function. The text chosen evokes emotive responses and questions the terminology and often racialised nature of the legislation.”

Terrorist violence is ubiquitous, we hear and read about it daily in the media and so are encouraged to think about it constantly, some of us have been directly affected and in urban environments, we are all potential targets. How are we to respond to this ‘substantial’ threat?

Often the solution offered is more surveillance, more concrete bollards, and barriers, and more counter-terrorism measures. Like many cities, Birmingham has responded to the terrorist threat with a range of urban counter-terrorism architectures and preventive security measures.

Some of these are highly visible, for example, steel and concrete barriers in the city centre, others less so, for example, *community engagement that seeks to ‘prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’.*

Faisal Hussain, about the barriers that he created as part of the project ‘It may be nothing, but it could be something’. Source: <https://www.faisalhussain.com/works/it-may-be-nothing-but-it-could-be-something/>.



Prevent Cakes

2017 | Eggs; Flour; Sugar; Distaste; Icing

The ‘Prevent’ strategy offers money for ‘anti-radicalisation’ programmes promoting ‘British Values’, which raised suspicion of a 3-year-old child for drawing a picture. One of the four governmental counter-terrorism strategies; teachers have accused ‘Prevent’ of stigmatising Muslim pupils and human rights groups have said that it ‘foments resentment’ within Muslim communities. Symbolic of the strategy’s positive facade but harmful core, ‘Prevent Cakes’ are a seemingly generous offer as luring promotional materials often are, but whose presentation disguises an inedible acrid taste.

Faisal Hussain is a British artist. His work has been shown at the Royal Academy London, Urban Nation Berlin, Birmingham Museums, SOAS, and numerous public spaces in the UK. He has spoken at the Museum of Immigration in Paris and the CPDP, Brussels, and many UK universities about his practice. Photograph by Faisal Hussain.

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PART II

Silences



CHAPTER 6

The Green Tent Forever

Endre Ruset and Harry Man

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The green tent forever
 changed into some light-blue
 impact boots, forever changed
 into a Fair Isle pullover that
 sleeps out in the rain.
 The mobile oven in the
 path forever changed
 into the rain-soaked paper
 erback, forever chan-
 ged into a butterfly
 carrying that slips from
 a left earlobe. The shattered glass
 es forever changed into
 strands of hair, forever changed into
 the extinguished campfire that holds
 its breath. The hair elastic changed fore-
 ver into a black snail, changed forever into a pony
 tail that stopped mid-flight. The microphone on the *utes*
cenen changed forever into a neglected football, changed
 forever into the wet slippery rock agape to this day. The panic
 changed forever into silence from the freshwater crayfish and
 the sleeping princesses. The grief forever changed into vines
 overflowing with roses. The grief changed into a decade of
 sleep while the roses climbed the asphalt, spread along the
 concrete, floor by floor, growing in the broken windows.

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Contested Memories
and the (Re)Construction of Violent Pasts
in the Basque Country: A Critical
Examination of the Memorial Centre
for the Victims of Terrorism
in Vitoria-Gasteiz

Itoiz Rodrigo-Jusúe

INTRODUCTION

The Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism opened its doors in June 2021 in Vitoria-Gasteiz, the capital of the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), in an act attended by the Spanish monarchs, Felipe VI and Letizia, the President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sánchez, and the *Lehendakari* (the President of the Basque Government), Iñigo Urkullu. The State-sponsored Centre finds its origin in the Recognition and Comprehensive Protection of Victims of Terrorism Act (2011) which

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contained a mandate to establish a National Victims of Terrorism Memorial Centre in the BAC. The Memorial Centre, located in the city's historic quarter, is mainly composed of a museum and a documentation centre although it also funds research projects and participates in national and international dissemination activities. The foundation was created with the aim of 'preserving and disseminating the democratic and ethical values embodied by the victims of terrorism, building the collective memory of the victims and raising awareness among the population as a whole for the defence of freedom and human rights and against terrorism' (BOE n.229, 23 November 2011, article 57).

Nonetheless, the creation of the Memorial Centre has not been exempt from controversy and its opening has not been celebrated by all actors. During the inauguration event, hundreds of people gathered near the Memorial Centre to show their rejection of the Centre and denounce its 'discriminatory' character (eitb.eus, 2021). The protest was organised by *Memoria Osoa* [the Whole Memory] which is a network that brings together fifteen victims' and memory associations from the BAC and Navarre. According to *Memoria Osoa*, the Memorial Centre constitutes 'an attack on coexistence' because it excludes 'thousands of victims of police or State violence' and addresses the collective memory in a 'fragmented' way by banishing from it a large part of the suffering (*Memoria Osoa*, n.d.). Besides reflecting the social unrest that the Centre generates in some individuals and communities, the polemical inauguration also illustrates the political character of institutional processes of memorialisation.

Drawing on memory studies literature, this chapter begins by introducing memorials and museums as powerful sites of 'inscription' (García González, 2019: 145) and conflict 'curation' (Reeves & Heath-Kelly, 2020; Sylvester, 2019). These sites are understood as devices that construct an official memory (or a *mnemonic hegemony*, Molden, 2016) through various mechanisms including the production of particular narratives and frameworks. Then, the chapter explains how the adoption of a discourse analysis approach is useful to investigate the role of language in the exhibition panels and audio-visual pieces that constitute the memorial site. This section also highlights the importance of analysing absence and omission to better comprehend the crucial role of silence in the (re)construction of (violent) pasts. Thus, the analysis of the memorial centre simultaneously draws on a discourse analysis of the exhibition panels and audio-visual materials as well as on an analysis of silence based

on the ‘typology of silences’ proposed by Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi and Chana Teeger (2010: 1104). The last part of this section also includes notes on auto-ethnography as a valuable approach in exploring the ‘multisensorial stimulation’ that the memorial space offers to visitors (see Reeves, 2018: 112) and reflecting on the researcher’s subjectivity and positionality.

The following section shows how the memorial museum seeks to construct an official memory through the establishment of the *terrorism vs. democracy* framework to comprehend the past and imagine the future. The analysis shows how this framework is strategically produced through the employment of particular vocabularies and narratives, the use of ‘overt’ and ‘covert’ silences (Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2010: 1108), and multisensorial experiences. The chapter argues that this construction of the past aligns memory with an ‘orthodox’ counter-terrorism framework (Franks, 2009) and the recent development and globalisation of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) policies (Kundnani & Hayes, 2018). My analysis reveals that the memorial museum curates the past in a manner that paves the way for the continuation of a (global) counter-terrorism approach and implementation of whole-of-society extremism prevention policies. The chapter concludes with the examination of some counter-memories and/or vernacular mnemonic initiatives and their potential to disrupt the official memory and create alternative ways of understanding (violent) pasts. The overall idea is that different manners of remembering and/or curating the past will offer us different ways of dealing with present (and future) political conflicts.

JUST A MEMORIAL MUSEUM?

Museums and memorials have traditionally been regarded as ‘cultural’ rather than ‘political’ elements, and therefore, have most often been ignored and/or marginalised in political analysis. In long-established (Marxist) interpretations, culture has been comprehended as a realm where political and economic conditions are reflected upon rather than constituted and/or negotiated (Turner, 2005). Nonetheless, moving beyond the traditional conceptualisation of power that underpins this approach, cultural theorists and memory scholars describe memorials and museums as key sites where particular knowledge(s), power relations, collective identities and memories are constituted and negotiated (see

Bratich et al., 2003; Reeves, 2018; Sylvester, 2019). From this perspective, the analysis of memorials and museums not only gains importance, but becomes indispensable in the task of investigating (past) conflicts and examining broader political processes. Thus, museums and memorials have a significant political role, as in the controversies following the inauguration of the Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism and the ongoing plans for the creation of other museums and memorials in the Basque Country demonstrate.

This chapter departs from the idea that memorials and museums are important (socio-political) venues where ‘public truths’, discourses, and narratives about the past, but also about particular realms such as war, peace, and security are established (Sylvester, 2019: 45). An analysis of memorials and museums involves questioning ‘whose memories [...] feature in public displays’ and whose memory is ‘sidelined or ignored’ (Sylvester, 2019: 45). A critical examination of a memorial museum requires us to question whose voices and experiences are being heard and whose perspectives, knowledge, and experiences are being cast as valid and valuable within the mnemonic walls. Drawing on Segato’s analysis of law, Andrea García González describes museums and commemorations as ‘spaces of inscription’ where some experiences of violence obtain institutional and public recognition and some actors are ‘inscribed’ a particular ontological status in the aftermath of a violent conflict (2019: 145). By showing and narrating particular experiences of harm and pain, memorials and museums inscribe the subjects who fit in the displayed definitions of violence as ‘victims’, while they exclude other actors from this category and the official narration (García González, 2019). Thus, by inscribing some actors as victims and others as perpetrators, by giving voice to some accounts of the past and by actively silencing others, we could say that memorials and museums ‘curate’ conflicts (Reeves & Heath-Kelly, 2020). The curation of a conflict then depends on which actors, experiences, and memories are included and how they are portrayed. As Reeves and Heath-Kelly (2020) warn, the way in which a conflict is curated does not only impact on the constitution of collective memories of the past but will also have important consequences for present and future politics.

For this reason, memorials and museums have been referred to as key ‘mnemonic device[s]’ through which political elites attempt to use the past to serve their present interests (Teeger, 2014: 69). For Teeger (2014), museums, monuments, and rituals illustrate the efforts of national and other elite actors to build a collective memory that benefits their

political agenda. This thesis was previously defended by John Bodnar (1992) who distinguishes between ‘official’ and ‘vernacular’ cultures. According to Bodnar, cultural leaders try to establish an ‘official culture’ by orchestrating commemorative events that ultimately serve to eliminate the existence of ‘social contradictions’ and alternative views and memories (1992: 15). Thus, cultural leaders craft official accounts of the past with the aim of promoting values, emotions and ideas that will reinforce the status quo and serve to regulate individuals’ political behaviour (Ibid.). Recent memory studies literature also stresses the social and individual impacts of the representations of the past (see Reeves, 2018). For instance, Teeger’s research shows how individuals actively use ‘collective representations of the past to construct their present-day beliefs [...] and attitudes’ (2014: 70). A governmentality studies perspective also insists on the impacts of commemorative events and memorials on an individual-scale and proposes to view them as ‘techniques of government’ that create and promote particular identities and patterns of individual behaviour (Antweiler, 2023: 4).

It is from this theoretical framework that this chapter presumes that, far from disinterestedly re-telling the past, the Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism plays a key role in the so-called ‘battle of narratives’ that is being fought in Spain and the Basque Country, particularly since ETA announced a permanent ceasefire in 2011.¹ As Alvarez-Berasategi and Hearty note, in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country where debates about ‘how to deal with the past [...] remain a burning issue in the process of conflict transformation [...] the past has become war by other means’ (2019: 20). This ‘battle’ is not only a ‘struggle to determine what happened in the recent past’ (Sagardoy-Leuza, 2020: 304), but as memory scholars remind us, memory also speaks to the present and future (Achugar, 2008). As Schacter puts it, memory is composed of tales and/or ‘products of what we recall from the past, believe about the present, and imagine about the future’ (1996: 308). In other words, the construction of a collective and/or social memory is an active and dynamic process in which different actors attempt to establish a dominant or hegemonic account of the past, as in Molden’s (2016) *mnemonic hegemony*, which has significant social and political implications both in

¹ Throughout the chapter, the term ‘Basque Country’ refers to the BAC and Navarre in Spain and the Northern Basque Country in France.

the present and future. As a result, an examination of the representation of the past in the Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism gives an account of the dynamic and political character of the processes of memorialisation and enables us to critically inquire into the interests of political elites and actors. It also enables us to scrutinise how particular lenses to read the past prescribe and/or legitimise determined politics. The following section explores the value of a discourse analysis approach and an analysis of silence to investigate the official reconstruction of the past and its political implications.

INVESTIGATING WORDS, SILENCES, AND THE RESEARCHER'S PRESENCE

The Memorial Museum consists of exhibitions and commemoration spaces that have been carefully designed with particular presentations, written text, audio-visual materials, and art. For this reason, an analysis that encompasses different mediums requires a flexible methodological approach able to grasp different devices (such as information panels, objects, and artefacts) as well as how they speak to each other (the whole picture). This section explains how a discourse analysis approach is combined with an examination of the use of silence to investigate the construction of the past in the Memorial Museum. The section also contains ideas on auto-ethnography as an approach for affirming and reflecting on the presence of the author in the research process.

A Critical Discourse Approach (CDA) enables me to explore how written and spoken language is used to signify the past and constitute identities, practices, relationships, politics, and knowledge in the Memorial Museum (Gee, 2010). Challenging the assumption that language is used to objectively describe the world, CDA stresses its constitutive character and its role in constructing reality (Barker & Galasiński, 2007; Fairclough, 1992). On this basis, a critical analysis of the language employed in the exhibition panels and audio-visual materials sheds light on how the Memorial Museum actively produces particular objects, identities (such as the terrorist), and knowledges of the past. As literature on critical studies on terrorism reveals, analysing discourse provides us with insights on how the employment of particular terms and narratives can result in particular ways of understanding political violence, the acceptance of determined policies, and production of social consensus (see Bogain, 2017; Jackson, 2005; Lule, 2004). From this perspective, the

chapter approaches the written and spoken text (which constitutes one of the main mediums of the Memorial Museum) as one of the main mechanisms through which memory is constructed.

However, sometimes looking at the words and narratives employed in mnemonic representations of the past is not enough, since its opposite (lack, absence, and/or silence) also plays a key role in the construction of collective memory (Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2010). This is also the case in the Memorial Museum, where next to various devices I could see many absences and hear strident silences. Silences can serve to ‘set the limits on what is speakable or unspeakable about the past’ (Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2010: 1107) and curate conflicts. Silence plays an important role in the constitution of events and actors and actively shapes the memory and understanding of the past, present, and future. My analysis of the memorial museum employs the ‘typology of silences’ proposed by Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger (2010: 1104) as an analytical tool to explore which public truths and collective memories are being established about the violent past, and particularly about (counter)terrorism.

In the classification of silences, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger (2010) distinguish between overt and covert silence. Whilst overt silence is easier to identify because it is characterised by a literal absence of speech and narrative on a particular topic, covert silence is harder to identify because it is covered and/or veiled by mnemonic talk and representation. Covert silence is a more sophisticated mechanism to enhance forgetting (or remembering in a particular way) that occurs when narratives about the past are simplified (for instance by silencing certain interpretations of the past) to enable the acceptance of a particular narrative by a broader public (Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2010). Thus, while overt silence could be translated into not addressing the elephant in the room, covert silence would be characterised by addressing it, but in a way in which its importance and magnitude get minimised and/or lost (Ibid.). Nonetheless, the authors also highlight that on some occasions, such as sacred and ritualised minutes of silence, overt silence can also be used to enhance remembering.

Listening to certain silences and detecting some absences already reveals the fact that our ways of knowing and researching are ‘embodied’ and ‘based on past experiences and life trajectories’ (Reeves, 2018: 113). Carrying out a critical analysis of the Memorial Museum also shows a personal interest in and a preoccupation with the subject. Instead of

concealing this fact, an autoethnographic approach re-affirms the ‘presence of the author’ (Fitzgerald, 2015: 170) who is frequently ‘written out of research despite the fact that they are central to the production of knowledge’ (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010: 784, cited in Fitzgerald, 2015: 169). An autoethnographic approach acknowledges that social research is always historically, culturally, and politically situated (Reeves, 2018). As Edward Said put it, knowledge is not non-political, but it ‘is produced by scholars [who] cannot detach themselves from the circumstances of life’ (Said, 1978, in Garcia González, 2019: 56). Audrey Reeves’ work also stresses the usefulness of this method to explore the affective experiences and multisensorial stimulations that curators and designers carefully crafted in museums (Reeves, 2018: 122). Since my visit to the museum did not consist of an emotionless walk through the exhibitions and memorials (nor reading texts and looking at photographs without feelings), my research required me to make an effort of consciousness and try to elucidate the affective stimulations and emotions that all these devices, particularly commemorative spaces, sought to produce on me as a visitor.

When I walked into the memorial museum in April and November 2022, I did it as a social scientist interested in the intersection between politics and memory, but also as an individual who has a particular life trajectory and experiences about the past in the Basque Country. I looked at the exhibitions as an individual with a particular social position, and a set of beliefs, knowledge, and desires. I walked through and analytically looked at the exhibitions and memorial spaces as an individual who has listened to, witnessed, and lived experiences directly related to the so-called Basque conflict, but also other meaningful episodes external to it. Taking an autoethnographic approach encouraged me to reflect on how my personal circumstances determined the experience of my visit to the memorial as well as my analysis of the site. Instead of regarding this subjectivity as cause of a flawed analysis and an obstacle towards creating valuable research, auto-ethnography contends that a first-person account of the Memorial Centre in Vitoria/Gasteiz might provide an opportunity to challenge ‘dominant discourses’ (Gupta, 2017: 451), ‘speak back (and perhaps differently)’ (Denshire, 2014: 845) and, ultimately, to ‘generat[e] dialogue’ (Gupta, 2017: 451) or contribute to ongoing discussions.

BUILDING A ‘MNEMONIC HEGEMONY’: DOMINANT (RE)CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

This section starts with a brief description of the museum and its main exhibitions and commemorative spaces with the aim of providing the reader with an overview of the Memorial Museum.² The analysis and discussion that follows is divided into two sections. The first section explores the political framework ‘*terrorism vs. democracy*’ identified in the analysis of the exhibitions and commemorative spaces, and the second discusses its socio-political implications, particularly the legitimisation of counter-terrorism and introduction of a radicalisation prevention approach.

The Museum

The museum occupies two floors in the Memorial Centre building which was originally constructed to host a new branch of the Bank of Spain in 1920. The first floor is divided into four main spaces; as the visitor enters, there is a memorial space where images and videos of reports of different terrorist attacks carried out in Spain and people narrating their memories and reflections about these events are projected on three walls. On both sides of these walls, by the ramps, there are two interactive spaces: on one side, visitors are encouraged to leave notes and reflections of their visit at the ‘Messages’ table’ and on the other, there is an area with computers where visitors are invited to play a game (this is discussed further in the following section). This memorial space leads to a room titled ‘The History of Terrorism’ which consists of a timeline (mainly composed of text and illustrated with few pictures) that goes from 1960 to ‘Terrorism Today’. This space gives access to an installation that recreates the place where Jose Antonio Ortega Lara (a former prison officer) was held captive by ETA activists between 1996 and 1997 and to an additional commemorative installation. This commemorative space consists of a long and narrow dark tunnel in which medals that represent the ‘victims of terrorism in Spain’ hang from the ceiling and pictures of the underaged victims are projected at the end. The second floor is

² More detailed information about the museum can be accessed at Centre’s website which also offers a virtual visit (Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo, n.d.). Alternatively, a map of the museum is available at Memorial VT (n.d.).

divided into four main sections. First, visitors access a room titled ‘Hate Speeches and Practices’ which is divided into four subsections dedicated to different types of terrorist organisations: ETA and radical nationalist terrorism; the extreme right and vigilante groups; the extreme left; and Jihadist terrorism. This room leads to another main exhibition on the second floor titled ‘The Response to Terror’ which contains sections such as ‘the political response’, ‘the social response’, and ‘the judicial response’. This is followed by a space titled ‘Victims’ Voices’ where visitors can listen to and read testimonies of mainly family members of victims of terrorist attacks, and a final space that hosts temporary exhibitions (which, due to its changing nature, is not included in this analysis).

The Terrorism vs. Democracy Framework

The memorial museum actively participates in the ‘battle of narratives’ (or ‘conflict of narratives’)—which scholars (Alvarez-Berastegi, 2017; Garcia González, 2019; Murua, 2017a; Zenova, 2019) have often referred to in the context of the ‘Basque conflict’ over the last years—by actively framing the (violent) past in terms of *terrorism vs. democracy*. In this discursive battle where multiple views and perspectives exist, overall, two dominant and antagonist interpretations pervade. According to one interpretation, not only past violent actions but, more generally the past (and present) should be comprehended in terms of an (ongoing) political conflict in which different actors are (and have historically been) involved.³ In this account, the main actors of the conflict are often divided into two big groups, with those who claim the Basque Country’s self-determination and/or seek independence from the Spanish and French states on one side, and those who oppose it and defend a unified and indivisible Spain and France on the other. Yet there is another perspective within this approach that stresses the inner dimension of conflict, i.e.,

³ Some typically date the origin of a national/political conflict in 1512 when the Kingdom of Navarre was invaded by the Castilian-Aragonese army, while others situate the birth of the “Basque conflict” in the seventeenth century (Mees, 2020). The Carlist wars of the nineteenth century are also identified by some scholars as clear indicators of the existence of a “Basque conflict” over two centuries ago, while others stress Sabino Arana’s ideas on Basque nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century as key to understand the development of a conflict that still persists today.

between Basque actors and within the Basque Country (Mees, 2020)⁴. According to the other main narrative, the past should not be understood in terms of a ‘political conflict’ but rather through the lenses of terrorism. Exponents of this narrative identify ETA’s existence as the only struggle/trouble at the same time that they ‘deny the existence of, or dismiss the importance of, a political conflict as a source of ETA’s existence and persistence and regard the Basque group as a purely terrorist issue’ (Murua, 2017b: 94). Understanding the existence of these main positions in the ‘battle over the narrative’ is important because this section details how the memorial museum re-produces the second interpretation (the socio-political conflict denialist) and seeks to construct a collective memory through the logic of *terrorism vs. democracy*.

The construction of an official memory shaped by the *terrorism vs. democracy* lenses is executed mainly through the constitution of two oppositional and antithetical identities: the terrorists and the democrats/victims. This is done through written (and spoken) text and a strategic employment of silences and affective stimulations. The discourse employed in the exhibition panels (re)produces this dichotomy by repeatedly referring to terrorists as fanatics and enemies of democracy. In contrast, victims are represented as the categorical opposite of terrorism and as the ‘embodiment’ of democracy and freedom.⁵ The construction of this dichotomy becomes notorious when in the ‘History of Terrorism’ exhibition, ETA is still characterised as the ultimate expression of anti-democracy and violence even if during the 1960s and part of the 1970s, the activity of the organisation occurred in the context of a fascist military

⁴ Feminist anthropologist Andrea García-González (2019; 2023) also provides an interesting analysis of the so-called post-violent conflict by highlighting the existence of ‘multiple violences’ that are often ignored in the hegemonic accounts in the context of armed conflicts. She stresses how these other violences which are structural, normalised and invisibilised, remain very much alive during the so-called post-violence and/or peaceful period.

⁵ This has been publicly contested by several individuals and organisations who have questioned whether Francoist and other violent actors killed by ETA, such as Luis Carrero Blanco (the president of the Francoist government and main candidate to succeed the dictator) should be honourably regarded as (innocent) victims and receive a place in a memorial. Furthermore, the inclusion of Meliton Manzanás (a high-ranking police officer during the dictatorship and known Nazi collaborator and torturer) as a respectable (ETA) victim rather than a perpetrator in the memorial has led many to refer to the Memorial Centre as the ‘Melitonium’.

dictatorship. Curating the past through the *terrorism vs. democracy* framework requires hiding and dismissing the antidemocratic and violent nature of Franco's dictatorship. This is the reason why the 'History of Terrorism' timeline starts in 1960, in the middle of a violent and repressive dictatorship, instead of with the military coup in 1936 or the establishment of Franco's regime in 1939.⁶

The *terrorism vs. democracy* discourse is not only discursively crafted but it is constructed with the simultaneous employment of overt and covert silences. Overt silence occurs when the violence exerted during different historical periods, particularly during the military coup, the civil war, and the dictatorship is absent from the exhibition's timeline and the museum's commemorative spaces. Inscribing ETA and other non-state organisations (such as DRIL) as the only violent actors who employed terror demands hiding the tens of thousands of executions, tortures, incarcerations, and forced disappearances committed from 1936 to 1975 from the sight of national and international visitors.⁷ Establishing the 'terrorism against democracy' framework also involves an overt and covert use of silence aimed at denying and/or dismissing the importance of the violence committed by the Spanish State (and organisations with links to it) during the so-called 'transition' period (1976 to 1982).⁸

⁶ This point has been also made by *Memoria Osoa*: 'This date [1960] is completely random in the midst of the Franco dictatorship and does not correspond to the violations of rights caused before and after by state terrorism in its many forms: executions, extrajudicial executions, torture...' (*Memoria Osoa*, n.d.).

⁷ 'The absence of explicit files, the irregularity in the executions and the notorious interest of the Francoist authorities in making the traces of their repression disappear' are some of the factors that hinder the investigation of Francoist crimes (Egaña, 2009: 63–64). Nonetheless, 'at least 6,018 Basques were killed by Francoism over the months and years after initiation of the coup d'état in July 1936. It is estimated that around 45,000 Basques were imprisoned after the Francoist coup, and between 100,000 and 150,000 were exiled' (in Murua 2017a, 2017b: 63). In addition to that, after 1939 Basque people experienced a harsh cultural and political repression; 'any expression or symbol of Basque political or cultural particularism was brutally persecuted. The Basque language was forbidden in all public spheres, and Basque political and cultural symbols such as the flag, *ikurriña*, were banned.' (*ibid.*). On crimes during Franco's dictatorship see also Marco (2017) and Kazyrtski (2022).

⁸ Recent research shows that during the so-called 'Transition' (1976–1982) 134 individuals were killed at the hands of state officials (an average of one citizen every 18 days and a half) and hundreds were incarcerated and tortured (Ballester, 2022). This period was also characterised by far-right paramilitary violence. See also Etxeberria et al. (2017) and Sánchez-Tostado (2021).

The use of silence to successfully build the *terrorism vs. democracy* framework critically requires that numerous and systematic acts of violence and human and civil rights violations committed during the democratic period are written out of the memorial (such as the systematic use of torture by the state security forces) and/or their magnitude is minimised. This is the case of the GAL (a right-wing paramilitary group and/or death squad established by officials of the Spanish government to fight ETA and repress the Basque independentist movement from 1983 to 1987) whose presence in the memorial is nearly anecdotal, despite its seriousness both from a political and a humanitarian perspective (covert silence).⁹ Thus, it is only by actively concealing the political violence exerted by the state during the authoritarian and democratic periods that an ‘orthodox terrorism’ (Franks, 2009; Jackson et al., 2011) discourse (reproduced in the oppositional binary *terrorism vs. democracy*) can survive.¹⁰ This has far-reaching consequences for the numerous victims of these acts of political violence who are not mentioned and/or recognised (inscribed) as victims and whose lives are not *grievable* (see

⁹ An extensive research project and report promoted by the Basque Government’s Peace Plan and endorsed by the United Nations demonstrates 4,311 cases of torture between 1960 and 2014 against individuals in the BAC and 1,068 in Navarre (see Etxeberria et al., 2017; Iriarte 2022; Pego 2022). On political violence and violations of human rights committed by the state officials during democracy (including police mistreatment, torture, mass-arrests, mass-surveillance, exceptional penal regimes, and impunity for those who committed state terrorism and/or police abuse) see also Amnesty International (2007, 2009a, 2009b); Carmena et al. (2013); Dañobeitia (2022); Fernandez-Elorz, (2022); Makazaga-Urrutia (2009).

¹⁰ The concept of *orthodox terrorism* (Franks, 2009) and/or the ‘new terrorism discourse’ (Stampnitzky, 2014: 140) refers to the globally dominant explanation and understanding of terrorism particularly since 9/11. According to Stampnitzky (2014), while the previous counter-insurgency literature [1960s] ‘characterised individuals involved in political violence as rational players with political motivations and goals who employ terrorism as a tactic or a tool which can also be employed by the state, the new terrorism discourse questioned the very existence of political goals in terrorism and re-defined terrorists as non-rational evil actors. While the first approach did not rule out the possibility of resolving political violence by addressing the grievances that caused it, the highly moralised terrorism discourse consolidated during the late 1970s actively excluded this approach by casting terrorism as a psychopathology. During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, a view took shape that understood terrorism as an ‘identity’ rather than as a ‘tactic’ that might be employed by a group while, at the same time, any focus on state terrorism vanished (Ibid.). From this perspective, terrorists are absolute evil and irrational actors who are driven by their terroristic nature rather than by particular interests or political motives’ (in Rodrigo-Jusú, 2021: 2).

Butler, 2009) in the commemorative space. While their memory is wiped out from the Memorial Museum and the memory of the visitors, the guarantees of justice, repair and non-repetition are thwarted too. To this end, it is noticeable that the confluence between overt and covert silences, i.e., how the concealment of violence (overt silence) is aided by the simplification of narratives that makes an account of the past more acceptable and/or palatable for wider audiences (covert silence).

The production of a *terrorism vs. democracy* framework to remember the past not only requires that the museum does not identify the dictatorship and state violence as ‘terrorism’, but importantly demands that the violent acts of organisations identified as ‘terrorist’ are treated as essentially different from those committed by the state. This is because according to the ‘orthodox’ conceptualisation of terrorism (Jackson et al., 2011) and/or the ‘new terrorism discourse’ dominant since 9/11, terrorism is an *identity* rather than a rational political *strategy* that can be employed by different actors including states (Stampnitzky, 2014: 140). As a result, in the same way that some actors cannot escape or transcend their terrorist identity (i.e., they will always be the Other ‘unspeakable Evil’ [Zulaika & Douglass, 2008: 32]), others (no matter the similarity of their actions) can never be considered terrorists.

The museum’s subscription to this dominant understanding of political violence becomes apparent when a panel informs the visitors about the existence of four waves of terrorism since the nineteenth century (identified as anarchist/nihilist; nationalist/anticolonial; new left; and religious fundamentalism) while state terrorism—which has posed far more serious problems than non-state terrorism in terms of human and material destruction (Jackson et al., 2011: 175)—is categorically excluded. Interestingly, far-right terrorism is not mentioned either in this historical summary of global terrorism nor in the ‘New security challenges in the twenty-first-century’ panel which exclusively focuses on ‘Jihadist terrorism’. While the ‘Hate Speeches and Practices’ exhibition dedicates a brief space to ‘far-right terrorism’, it only mentions attacks committed in foreign countries which problematically inscribes far-right’s political violence as something from the past and/or external.¹¹

¹¹ On the banalisation and normalisation of the far-right in Spain, see Fernandez de Mosteyrín and Martini (2022).

POLITICS FOR THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE: COUNTER-TERRORISM AND A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY COUNTER-EXTREMISM APPROACH

This section explores the political implications that the Memorial Museum's construction of the past has for present and future politics. As Charlotte Heath-Kelly and Laura Fernandez de Mosteyrin indicate, over the last years the past has been interpreted through contemporary ontologies of terrorism (i.e., the new terrorism discourse and/or the orthodox framework) with the aim of legitimising 'the introduction of new policies' in Spain (2021: 10). This section contributes to this thesis first by showing how the (re)construction of the past through the *terrorism vs. democracy* framework results in the reinforcement of counter-terrorism as the only possible option to respond to (violent) political conflicts. Second, by discussing how this curation of the past smooths the path for the introduction of counter-extremism policies and advances a whole-of-society radicalisation prevention approach as the next logical step.

Lessons from the Past: A Global Counter-Terrorism Approach

The homogenisation of different organisations that employ(ed) political violence and indistinguishability of their actions and victims in exhibitions and commemorative spaces (which are largely dedicated to the 'victims of terrorism' without providing any further contextualisation) has two important effects. First, it problematically decontextualises and depoliticises insurgent groups/armed organisations and second, it supposes that every conflict and expression of political violence should be met with the same (counter-terrorism) strategy. In other words, by eliminating the differences between organisations labelled 'terrorist', the Memorial Centre proposes a common understanding of all these groups/actors and their acts and a common response to all of them. Encompassing and reducing all the actors and their acts to the label of 'terrorist/terrorism' involves decontextualising both the actors and their acts, ignoring and/or regarding as unimportant aspects their origins, socio-political characteristics, grievances, aims, internal disputes, historical developments, transformations, and relationship with other national and international actors, organisations, and historical events and processes, etc. The oversimplification of complex historical and socio-political contexts and the merging of actors and events results in the depoliticisation of political

violence. This is also done discursively by explaining to visitors that ‘all terrorist organisations have a number of elements in common: political intent, fanaticism and the use of violence to terrorise their opponents’ (Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo, n.d.c). Although the memorial concedes that terrorist organisations differ in their ‘ideology or their tactics’, this is considered a trivial/unimportant detail when it comes to the application of a common (global) counter-terrorism response (ibid.). Otherwise, it would not make sense that the exhibition that examines different ‘types’ of terrorist organisations is followed by a unique ‘Response to Terror’ gallery.

The representation of terrorism as a ‘global phenomenon’ constitutes another essential component in the Memorial Museum’s reconstruction of the past. Even if the memorial focuses on events that took place within the Spanish State, the museum manages to frame these events and actors as part of a ‘global phenomenon’ (global ‘waves’). By framing terrorism as essentially global, ripping it out from its local roots, history, and logics, the Memorial Museum makes a global response to terrorism—an international counter-terrorism strategy aligned to the Global War on Terrorism military campaign initiated by the US in the aftermath of 9/11—to be seen as the only alternative. Thus, this construction of memory establishes counter-terrorism as the only possible response to political violence.

This is also done through the employment of overt silence: First, the museum, and particularly the exhibition ‘Responses to Terror’, actively ignores the existence of reconciliation and peace processes (such as in Northern Ireland and Colombia) as examples of peaceful (and durable) violent conflict resolution strategies. Second, the museum hides from the viewers the existence of key local processes and events—such as the Declaration of Brussels (March 2010) and the Donostia-San Sebastian International Peace Conference (October 2011)—in which important local and international figures (including former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and well-known individuals with long experience in the resolution of political conflicts, such as the Irish and South African cases) promoted a (political) resolution to the Basque conflict that would also end with the political violence. Even if these events have been regarded as milestones in the consecution of ETA’s decision to announce a permanent ceasefire and its dissolution (see Mees, 2020; Murua, 2017a; Zabalo & Saratxo, 2015), the Memorial Museum does not consider episodes like this (external to the counter-terrorism logic) relevant enough to be included in the reconstruction of the past. For instance, this is illustrated with the exhibition’s

insistence on the importance of the counter-terrorism cooperation with France which is regarded as a key factor in ETA's defeat. The *terrorism vs. democracy* framework, ultimately, does not see conflicts that can be negotiated and peacefully resolved, only enemies who must be defeated.

Reading the Past/Future Through the (Counter)Radicalisation Discourse

This section explores how the official memory is also being constructed through terrorism prevention discourse which, as it is discussed, has important political implications for present and future politics. The exhibition panel explains to the visitors that the cause and origin of all the terrorist organisations is a 'similar radicalisation process' (Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo, n.d). Furthermore, the museum reproduces stereotypes of the radicalisation discourse by portraying terrorism as the result of 'manipulation' and terrorists as individuals who have been mentally/ideologically abused by their 'family, friends, the internet, a political faction or a combination of these factors' (see Kundnani, 2012; Rodrigo Jusué, 2023). For instance, a panel states that 'terrorist organisations usually have ideologues sympathetic to their cause who [...] justify violence, defend those who use it and help create a community of followers' (Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo, n.d.c). As critical literature on counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation policies shows, by focusing on individual cases of radicalisation, the radicalisation discourse eliminates social conflicts and legitimises mass-surveillance initiatives in everyday spaces including the workplace, the family home, and schools, such as the British Prevent Strategy (see Baker-Beall et al., 2016; Heath-Kelly, 2016; Rodrigo Jusue, 2023).

Depicting terrorism as the result of a 'radicalisation' process seeks to legitimise and create social consensus towards counter-radicalisation and counter-extremism policies and strategies (CVE) developed over the last fifteen years or so (Kundnani & Hayes, 2018; Martini and Fernandez de Mosteyrin, 2021). This construction of the past not only proposes to extend counter-terrorism to new spaces, but also promotes the multiplication of counter-terrorism actors under the argument that, since radicalisation happens everywhere, everyone should play an active role in preventing it. Victims in particular are fabricated as key counter-terrorism actors and their testimonies regarded as the most effective counter-narratives (Heath-Kelly and Fernandez de Mosteyrín, 2021). But this

narration of the past not only seeks to recruit the victims in the counter-terrorism industry, the whole-of-society approach is palpable when visitors are repeatedly demanded to become active in countering terrorism and become part of what the exhibition panel calls ‘the righteous’.¹²

It is not a coincidence that in the area that invites visitors to play a video game, terrorism is depicted as a ‘mental control virus that spreads quickly’. The game contends that anyone can become ‘vulnerable to sympathise with terrorist ideas’ and thus, encourages visitors to prevent the spread of the virus in a High School. This idea of contagion is also reproduced in the exhibition panels which explain that other nationalist organisations in Spain emerged because they sought to ‘imitate’ ETA, suggesting that armed organisations are created due to an irrational contagious reaction. Thus, it is evident how the radicalisation discourse generally re-depoliticises conflicts and political violence in particular. It is important to note that the introduction of a radicalisation prevention approach focused on countering extremism would pose serious obstacles to Spanish democracy and the resolution of the Basque conflict. Since in this framework in which terrorism is understood to be an identity (rather than a violent strategy), the introduction of an *extremism vs. non-extremism* counter-terrorism approach would result in the criminalisation of individuals, organisations and segments of the society that hold and defend political ideas and/or projects associated with terrorist organisations (i.e., independentism, Islam, socialism, the protection and promotion of the Basque language, etc.).

Whilst this would not entirely constitute a new phenomenon—the so-called ‘everything is ETA’ strategy widely applied from the 1990s already resulted in the banning of political parties, closure of Basque media outlets, and macro-summaries against individuals who were part of cultural organisations, such as the 18/98 (see Letamendia, 2011)—the introduction of counter-extremism policies would signify a clear commitment to the revival of this approach. The criminalisation and persecution of activities, individuals and organisations would fan the flames of unresolved conflicts, once again polarise society, and reinstate a scenario of repression that favours the violation of human and civil rights. In other words, refocusing the national security lenses towards countering ‘extremism’ (for instance, targeting what the exhibition panel labels as

¹² On the responsabilisation of citizens in national security duties see Rodrigo-Jusúe (2022).

‘separatist radicals’) as the Memorial Centre seems to encourage would risk not only prolonging and intensifying long-existing conflicts (in which there is ‘terrorism without terrorists’, see Sagardoy-Leuza, 2020), but would also pose serious obstacles for democracy, negatively impact on the fragile trust between actors, and endanger coexistence.

CONCLUSION: ALTERNATIVE MEMORIES AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF THE PAST

A critical analysis of the Memorial Centre for the Victims of Terrorism reveals its role as a key site where particular knowledge(s) about the past, but also about the present and the future, are constituted. Analysing the employment of discourses, silences, and multisensorial experiences in the exhibitions, the inquiry shows how the Memorial Museum should be comprehended as a locus of political relevance where conflicts are ‘curated’ (Reeves & Heath-Kelly, 2020) and actors are ‘inscribed’ a determined ‘ontological status’ (García-González, 2019: 145). In other words, the Memorial Centre seeks to establish a *hegemonic memory* (Molden, 2016) according to which the past should be read through the lenses of an *orthodox terrorism* discourse (Franks, 2009; Jackson et al., 2011). Setting up this frame not only requires the employment of over-simplified narratives and the concealment of determined (violent) acts (particularly those committed by state officials) and victims who do not fit into the institutional representations of victimhood, but also implies the negation of the existence of political conflicts (and complex political processes). The analysis shows how this reconstruction of the past proposes a (global) counter-terrorism logic and response as the only legitimate and effective way to approach (violent) conflicts. Importantly, the analysis also reveals how this mnemonic space lays the foundation for the introduction and normalisation of counter-radicalisation and extremism prevention policies. Actively ruling out alternative ways to understand and deal with (violent) conflicts (such as negotiation, reconciliation and peace processes), a counter-extremism and counter-radicalisation approach extends counter-terrorism to new physical (such as the workplace, home, and education centres) and temporal (pre-criminal) spaces, with the aim of recruiting civilians to a national security project (a whole-of-society approach). This move arguably risks polarising society and reinstating a scenario of criminalisation and repression that not only would endanger coexistence but would also favour the violation of human and civil rights.

Nonetheless, silences can be broken, narratives challenged, and ‘official’ memories contested. Street protests against the Memorial Centre call into question its neutrality and have the capacity to generate dialogue about the past and the role of memory in the present. The existence of counter-memories, ‘alternative public memories’ (Sylvester, 2019: 54) and/or *vernacular* memories (Bodnar, 1992) in the Basque Country becomes evident by the burst of grass-root memory initiatives over the last years. These initiatives include street performances and demonstrations, murals, guided visits, artworks, music, films and documentaries, workshops, historical archives, documentation centres, and research projects. In the absence of the establishment of a Truth Commission that would ‘analyse the causes and consequences of the conflict and violations which took place as part of it’ (in Zernova, 2019: 661), a wide range of projects by numerous organisations including the platforms *Memoria Osoa*, *Euskal Memoria Fundazioa*, *Egiari Zor Fundazioa*, *Memoria Gara*, and *Foro Soziala* have been launched in the Basque Country. For instance, the Permanent Social Forum (2018) created a ‘comprehensive cartography of suffering’ with the aim of fostering coexistence, ‘contributing to the peace process and facilitating the resolution of the consequences of the conflict’ (Foro Soziala, 2018: 5). This report identifies multiple experiences of pain which are often forgotten and/or dismissed from hegemonic accounts of the past, providing valuable knowledge to understand violent conflicts and their consequences (see also García González, 2023). *Martxoak 3 Elkarte* [3rd of March Association] also illustrates the potential of grassroots memory associations to challenge official accounts of the past through popular initiatives in the public space and disseminate collective memories that demand truth and justice.¹³

Some of these initiatives have also been promoted by public institutions, such as the research project to investigate and recognise (state) crimes and compensate the victims of torture and ill-treatment committed between 1960 and 1978 in the BAC and Navarre (see

¹³ *Martxoak 3 Elkarte* has been an exceptionally active grass-root association that since 1999 has carried out memory initiatives in Vitoria-Gasteiz including mass-attended annual demonstrations, dissemination activities, a mural that occupies the facade of a nine-storey building, popular guided tours that explain the impacts of Franco’s dictatorship and particularly focuses on the police inflicted violence that took place in the city in 1976, a compilation of songs about the events, as well as other initiatives including a project to convert the church in which the violent events took place in 1976 into a memorial space. See <https://martxoak3.org/>.

Carmena et al., 2013; Etxeberria et al., 2017). Currently, there are also new memorial spaces being developed, including *Martxoak 3* memorial to remember the massacre in which five workers were killed and over a hundred were injured by the police during a general strike in Vitoria-Gasteiz in 1976, and *Gogoragunea* exhibition space and memorial promoted by the Basque Institute for Memory, Coexistence and Human Rights (*Gogora*) in Bilbao. All these initiatives reveal the dynamic and political character of memory as well as the crucial role of alternative and vernacular memories in the process of ‘democratising the past’ (Zernova, 2019: 661). Since memory and memorials shape the ways in which the past and present are understood and the future is approached, it is necessary to investigate the potential of counter-memories and/or vernacular memories to create (alternative) understandings of the past that enable social change and enhance coexistence and peacebuilding.

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Hanau/Main: Topography of Immigration, Taboo, and Terror, and Lieu de Mémoire

Karin Yesilada

19 FEBRUARY 2020: RIGHT-WING TERRORISM PUTS HANAU ON THE MAP

Until February 2020, Hanau at the River Main was just a small town in close proximity to the global financial capital of Frankfurt, rather unnoticed in the shadow. This changed when the terror attack of 19 February 2020, suddenly put Hanau on the map. In the space of a few hours, a male, white, right-wing extremist shooter deliberately killed nine people, in central Hanau and the nearby quarter of Kesselstadt, and then returned home and shot his mother and himself later that night. Once again, and similarly to incidents in Munich in 2016 and in Halle in 2019, a right-wing extremist shooter killed people of colour who were German citizens, the majority of whom were born in Germany, but were suspected ‘migrants’ to their murderers. As in many other cases, questions arose surrounding the incident: why was the emergency exit of the Shisha bar, where the shooting happened, locked? Why did police appear so late at the site of the killing? As the research group Forensic Architecture later

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proved, police had difficulties entering the house of the killer, where he finally shot his mother and then himself, raising questions about the role of the shooter's father in this scenario.

To this day, the perpetrator's father denies his son's crimes and refers to the victims as people who do not belong in Germany. He stalks and threatens the victims' families, even under the risk of arrest (Haschnik, 2023). Racism also was to be found among the police, since some of the police officers involved in the case had previously expressed racist beliefs. Meanwhile, Hanau's mayor stressed that racism had no place in his town. His political statement stood in contrast to the history of the town. Hanau played a central role in the Third Reich, as will be demonstrated later, and yet the community of Hanau seems to be unaware of this particular past. This may come as no surprise, since the place lacks any sites to memorialise the town's Nazi past. There is no memorial to the victims of the Shoah like the 'Topography of Terror' museum in Berlin. There are, however, memorial sites highlighting Hanau's role as the birthplace of the Brothers Grimm. How can this void in relation to the memorisation of Hanau's Nazi past be explained? And even more so, with respect to the 2020 terrorist incident, the question is: how does a place remember racist terror?

HANAU, LIEU DE MÉMOIRE? WHOSE MEMORIES ARE AT STAKE?

French historian Pierre Nora developed his concept of *lieux de mémoire* (i. e. memory sites) in the mid-1980s with reference to French history and the ways in which memory manifests itself in physical and abstract places and sites. For example, the Parisian Arc de Triomphe serves as a physical memorial site, while the Marseillaise activates (or binds) collective memory immaterially, through song. According to Nora, the *lieu de mémoire* is defined in three senses: material, symbolical, and functional, regardless of the degree in which these categories are present. A *lieu de mémoire* crystallises collective memory. Nora later extended his original concept to immaterial concepts of memorial sites (such as the Marseillaise) and has developed it further with regard to French history as perceived and remembered in the present. His concept has been critically discussed, adapted, and recontextualised beyond the original French context, although its application to other countries does not come without certain problems. In the German context, Jan and Aleida

Assmann's works on cultural memory have set a new standard. Still, German 'memory sites' ('Erinnerungsräume') mostly refer to the German majority, while excluding the cultural memory of minorities. The history of the 'guest worker' immigration from the 1950s to the 1970s still has no particular memory site in Germany, apart from a small section in the 'Haus der Geschichte' museum in Bonn.

This does not mean, however, that the Turkish community in Germany has no memory culture. On the contrary, since the early 1990s, Turkish-German literature and film have played a key role in the generation and proliferation of memory discourses. Turkish-German author Zafer Şenocak reflects on the notion of memory-making in his 1990s poems about Berlin and Istanbul. He does this by constructing a lyrical 'I', a contemporary flâneur, and at the same time tries to detect remains of forgotten histories in places, sounds, and objects of each city. In Berlin, for example, it is a broken mirror reflecting the (denied) Nazi past, whereas in Istanbul, the 'vertical' sea conceals tales about the long forgotten (denied) Ottoman past. The lyrical 'I' acts like an archivist who discovers unspoken narratives behind the official narratives. The lyrical 'I' collects mosaic impressions and puts them together, thus forming an archive of memories that undermine the official memory discourse of the cities. Şenocak wrote his 'Metropolenlyrik' in the 1990s, after the German reunification, when Berlin was once again the German capital and was undergoing major changes. At the same time, Istanbul (and Turkey) faced new times with the first Islamic Mayor and Islamic Party Leader, which meant a strong break from the secular traditions of the Turkish Republic.

Literary scholars like Leslie A. Adelson (2005) or Michael Hofmann (2013) have explored how Turkish-German literature opens new and often taboo discourses in German literature. Authors like Zafer Şenocak (1998) and Nuran David Caliş (2011) wrote novels dealing with aspects of the Armenian Genocide and the role of Turkish and German politics. Both authors thus reintroduced an almost forgotten subject, confronting the discourse of German-Turkish immigration with new and controversial positions. Their literary figures struggle with their identities, as what is believed to be merely 'Turkish' identity by the German public is really a combination of intricate aspects of ethnicity, including Turkish, Armenian, and Kurdish; and aspects of religion, including different versions of Islam (Sunnite, Alevite), or Christianity.

Being a Turkish-German literary scholar myself, who has worked extensively on the impact of racist terror on the cultural production of

Turkish-German artists (Yeşilada, 2012b), I find it somewhat hard to keep an academic distance concerning the topic of the Hanau terror incident. Why is that?

Hanau is not any place to me. I was born and grew up in Hanau. How does terror affect childhood memories of a place? As a cultural studies scholar, I generally look at facts and analyse fiction, like I did, for example, in regard to the poems about right-wing arson attacks of the 1990s (Yeşilada, 2012a). This time, though, the fact that the killing had happened in my own hometown, somehow got under my academic skin. It changed my way of looking at things and brought back memories. These memories stood against the manifold voices claiming that Hanau was ‘no place for racists’, in the aftermath of February 20, 2020. My memories told me otherwise.

In his novel *Gefährliche Verwandtschaft/Perilous Kinship* (1998), Zafer Şenocak writes of Berlin-Türk Sascha Muhteschem, whose family relations represent something unfamiliar, since he is the son of a German-Jewish mother and a Turkish father, carrying with him a multifaceted burden of guilt. The simultaneousness of the experience of the victim (concerning his Jewish family who survived the Nazi terror in the Turkish exile) and the experience of the perpetrator (through his Turkish grandfather who was actively involved in the Armenian genocide) in his own family tree forms a ‘perilous kinship’, forcing him to deal with being Turkish, German, Armenian and Jewish at the same time. These conflicting positions undermine Muhteschem’s effort to clarify his family relations, and push him to admit that his memory work can only be imaginative. Consequently, he relies on what he refers to as ‘twilight’—or blurred—memories to trace back his own writing about the secret story of his lost grandfather.

Being the daughter of a Turkish father who immigrated to Germany in 1962, and of a German mother who fled from Silesia to Western Germany in 1945, my own kinship seems, to me, somewhat complicated. Taking on the concept of listening to the unspoken, I find myself confronted with my own ‘twilight memories’ of the town I grew up in, and with an unsettling feeling that the terrorist act of February 2020 somehow, and in a very peculiar way, ‘made sense’ to me. Against the background of my own experiences in Hanau, I was only mildly surprised that Hanau, too, found its place within the national German topography of far-right terrorism. Again, I find myself asking why. Exploring varied reasons, my paper addresses blurred memories, corresponding with thoughts, and turns into a freely written essay.

In his essay ‘Dialog der Dritten Sprache’ (‘Dialogue about the Third Language’), Zafer Şenocak depicts two different Turkish identities. In the essay, a Turkish newspaper seller and a German-Turkish newspaper buyer discuss the impact of belonging through language (Şenocak, 1992: 89). Rather than excluding the German-Turk from the Turkish society, the Turkish girl at the newspaper stand embraces his double-natured Turkishness, and the two agree on what they call a third language additionally to German and Turkish: a third language crafted from the deaf and dumb, from the broken sounds, a bastard language that transforms misunderstandings into comedy and fear into understanding (Şenocak, 2000: 35).

Considering the intricate relationships of things German, Turkish, Silesian, and racist in my own biography, I can relate to Şenocak’s metaphor, especially to the transformation of ‘fear into understanding’, and I choose an academic ‘third language’ to reflect on the subject. Neither strictly academic, nor fictional, it allows me to weave personal aspects into this paper as regards the topography of terror in my childhood home, Hanau. In what follows, I will address the underlying memories behind my scientific dealing with the Hanau terror attacks.

Whereas the facts of terror are more or less clear in the light of day, memories of the racism I witnessed during my childhood in Hanau emerge in a blurred way, which cannot be scientifically proven. Following Walter Benjamin’s suggestion to brush history against the grain, I will critically look at my own biographical history. In doing so, I will demarcate these twilight zones in my chapter with *italics*, for clearer differentiation.

Places of my life form peculiar statistics with regard to terrorism: I grew up in Hanau*, studied and completed my PhD in Marburg (11 years), studied in London* (6 months), worked in Istanbul* (4,5 years), lived and worked in Munich* (11 years), and currently live in Paderborn. Each of the cities marked with an * has been struck by terrorist attacks in the last two decades, either in the form of Islamist or far-right terrorism. In 2023, living with extremist terror and threats seems to be the new norm, no matter which city you live in. Looking at my personal history, another peculiarity, as regards racism and anti-racist activities in my life so far, is revealed. I was raised mono-lingually and rather mono-culturally German but had Turkish nationality. Despite being raised as a German with a focus on my German heritage, and being ‘half’-German by blood, I was not a German citizen according to German law. Thus, I had

to apply for an ‘Aufenthaltsgenehmigung’ (residency permit), and later for an ‘Aufenthaltsberechtigung’ (residence permit) in Germany (1978–1987). In 1985, I applied for German citizenship and in 1987 I became a German citizen. As a result, I was forced to give up my Turkish citizenship under German law, which denied (and still denies) double citizenship for Turkish citizens (whereas EU and US citizens are allowed to carry two nationalities). Asking for a residential permit as a young person left behind unsettling memories. The residence permit of the time defined different types of Aufenthaltsgenehmigung and Aufenthaltsgenehmigung; the latter could be granted and withdrawn on grounds of minor administrative offences (‘Ordnungswidrigkeiten’).

At the age of 15, I had forgotten to re-apply on time, exceeding the expiration date by two days. The clerk, a middle-aged, white male, then informed me he could easily have me reported and withdraw my residence permit.

“Ich könnte dich jetzt anzeigen, dann wärest du vorbestraft und würdest sofort ausgewiesen werden. Aber das mache ich mal nicht, gell.”

“I could file a police report, which would result in a criminal conviction, and then you could be expelled immediately. But I will not do so, right.”
Transl. KY)

Being told that I could easily be reported, criminalised, and expelled from the country of my birth, from my German mother’s, my whole German family’s home-country, just because I reapplied for my residence permit two days later than I should have, sent a crucial shockwave through my body and soul. This was the first real racial attack I experienced, forming a traumatic experience in my life. I believe that it had an impact on my scholarly work, which focuses on immigration cultures.

At the time I was born, the law did not grant German women the right to pass down their nationality to their children, meaning I was of Turkish citizenship exclusively. Applying for German citizenship meant an incredible amount of paperwork. It involved an expensive fee (of around 1,200 DM at that time), and I was denied the possibility of a double citizenship. I remember having to literally hand over my Turkish passport to the clerk at the immigration office (‘Ausländeramt’, ‘Ausländer meaning’ ‘foreigner’), who then—before my eyes—destroyed it by pressing holes into it with a machine. He handed me the cancelled Turkish passport back, saying: ‘So, nun ist Ihr türkischer Pass entwertet und gilt nicht mehr.’ (‘Now your

Turkish passport is invalidated and no longer valid.’) It was only years later that I learned that no country is allowed to invalidate another country’s passport. I could and should have filed a lawsuit against the German immigration office. Instead, I am still denied dual citizenship, because one of the nationalities is not European, or Swiss, or American, or socially very important.

Being confronted with this kind of racism in my early life has made me sensitive towards cultural productions and structures dealing with otherness, language loss, and identity, and adopting strong anti-racist positions, ever since. Hanau’s racism has changed me. I look back on more than 40 years of racism in my biography, and on 30 years of academic anti-racist work. Counting from the first deadly arson attack against Turkish homes (Mölln 1992, which coincided with the start of my academic work), it is over 30 years of pogroms and terror against the Turkish community in Germany. Mölln 1992, Solingen 1993... and now Hanau. Mal wieder, once again. Now, I don’t have to explain anymore where Hanau is. I no longer say: I am from “near Frankfurt”. Because everybody knows Hanau from this attack. Mal wieder.

‘Once again’ implies the repetitiveness of attacks from the far-right against racialised minorities in Germany. It is yet another attack against immigration itself, in a country that has denied the fact of immigration for over 50 years. German-Jewish writer Esther Dischereit (2022) expresses the notoriety of right-wing terror in Germany in an article that hints at the deliberate passivity of the state.

I am writing about Hanau two years ago on February 19, 2020, about Halle, about the attack at the Munich Olympia-Shopping Centre, about Rostock-Lichtenhagen, about Hoyerswerda, about the NSU-murders and bombings. Others wrote about Mölln and Solingen and the Oktoberfest bombing, about the double-murder of Shlomo Levin and Frieda Pöschke, and about the death of Oury Jalloh in a police station in Dessau. (Dischereit, 2022. Translation into English by K. Yeşilada.)

Dischereit, who was also one of the observers of the first parliamentary inquiry into the right-wing terrorism of the NSU (short for ‘Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund’, ‘National Socialist Underground’) in 2012 and 2013, marks the repetitiveness, or rather: the omnipresence of right-wing terrorism in Germany. By listing the topographies and incidents, she

also implies criticism of the state's reported failure to prevent right-wing terrorism and dismantle its intricate network structures.

My own memories concerning race and ethnicity during my first 18 years in Hanau are somewhat blurred, yet certain words and phrases have remained clear. When my mother applied for a flat in what she believed to be a well-maintained, rather civilised building ('ein ordentliches Wohnhaus') owned by her employer German Post (Deutsche Post) in the mid-1970s, she was rejected at first. She was confronted in public by one of our future neighbours, Herr Müller. What he said to her, and what she told me, stuck with us for the rest of the time: 'Wir wollen keine Türken im Haus!' (We don't want Turks in our house)'. We moved in, eventually, but were harassed by this neighbour from that moment on.

My father, a former military reserve officer with two engineering degrees, who had worked as taxi driver for a long time, once told us about an incident he witnessed during his taxi nightshift in the 1980s: During an arrest in the middle of the street, German police officers kicked a Turkish man, who was lying on the ground, handcuffed. They deliberately kicked his kidney area. My father was shocked by this, but we just would not believe him. Already then, he would say: 'Die größten Feinde der Deutschen sind die Türken!' (Germans make Turks their worst enemies!)' This phrase was and still is the mantra of a Turkish man, who came to live in Germany for most of his lifetime (in 2016, he moved back to Turkey after 55 years in Germany), and who is still desperately in love with this country.

WRITINGS ON THE WALL

'Türken raus aus Deutschland!' ('Turks out of Germany!') or simply 'Türken raus!' is a slogan deeply burnt into my memory. I myself saw these slogans on walls in Hanau and elsewhere. Besides the anti-Semitic slogans (e.g. on the synagogue of Cologne in 1959), this was an explicitly post-war racist graffiti appearing Germany-wide in the 1980s (additionally, it was a song by the punk band Böse Onkeltz), and came back into use after the discovery of the NSU attacks (Albay, 2021). This slogan first appeared during the reign of the Social-Liberal coalition in the 1980s. In 1983, Christian Conservative politician Helmut Kohl won the parliamentary elections, among other reasons, because he promised that once in power he would 'reduce the numbers of Turks living in Germany by 50%' (Seisl, 2013). Indeed, in that same year, his government presented the new 'Rückkehrförderungsgesetz' (RückHG). The intention was to

relieve the tight German economic situation (with an unemployment rate of nearly 10 per cent and 4.6 million foreigners in Germany, out of which 1.5 million were from Turkey). Ongoing procedures of ‘luring away’ Turkish employees willing to return to Turkey were now legally supported. The law created an atmosphere of hostility against Turkish migrants in Germany. This was met with huge support within Germany’s population, Germany’s industrial society was experiencing major changes, including the 1973 oil crisis, the growing unemployment rate, and rising immigration numbers. At that time, public discourse focused increasingly on the so-called ‘Ausländerproblematik’ (problem of foreigners).

The extent of the resulting public uncertainty could be seen from the constantly rising xenophobia in the German Federal Republic at the beginning of the 1980s, a xenophobia which increasingly involved xenophobic violence. (Hunn, 2005b: 452. Translation by K.Y.)

Hunn states that less obviously, yet effectively, a new culturalization and ethnicization of the ‘foreigner problematic’ was installed by political and media discourses during the 1980s, establishing a new focus on the so-called ‘Türken-Problem’ (‘problem of Turks’). Consequently, the introduction of a law enforcing the ‘return’ of Turkish ‘guestworkers’ back to Turkey seemed to be common sense. Even though the actual effects of the ‘Rückkehrförderungsgesetz’ were rather disappointing, as Hunn (2005a) points out, the effect of stigmatising the Turkish minority as a ‘problem’ had a profound impact.

‘Wann gehen Sie zurück?’ / ‘When do you return?’ has become a common question towards people with Turkish names, ever since then. In fact, even though I was born in Germany to a German mother and spoke German with my family, I had to answer the ‘Ach, Türkin? Und wann gehen Sie zurück?’ question many times. This was especially so during my working period as university lecturer for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Istanbul: Germans at the Turkish embassy or at home in Germany were all convinced I should not belong to ‘their’ country. I always felt the intricate distortion between belonging and exclusion behind such conversations.

In 2013, German media appeared to be very ‘surprised’ by a newly emerged secret protocol from Britain detailing Helmut Kohl’s ‘repatriation’ plans (Seisl, 2013). Turkish-Germans, however, were not surprised, and never were, as for them German institutional racism is a lifelong experience.

When, in 2018, a new formation of far-right extremists under the name of ‘NSU 2.0’ started attacking Turkish-German people, political activists, and institutions, threatening them with murder or bombing, ‘Türken raus’ graffiti reappeared on walls, this time signed by the NSU 2.0. In 2021, though, a graffiti by the NSU 2.0 stating ‘Turks out!’ in Witten, a small town near Bochum in North Rhine-Westphalia, was removed quickly. Moreover, neighbours put up a sign contradicting the extremist ban by saying: ‘No! They are our neighbours!’ (Albay, 2021). This solidarity met with the fact that the NSU 2.0 affair soon revealed another scandal, as the terrorists had collaborated with individual members of the police in Frankfurt. It shed more light on the far-right problem within the institution of German police. In the case of the Hanau attack, some of the police officers involved in the incident shared far right beliefs (Weizmann, Andrizou & Trafford, 2021).

PORTRAITS ON MURALS—#SAYTHEIRNAMES

The general imperative ‘Türken raus!’/ ‘Turks out’ anonymously addresses all Turks, while at the same time denying them their individual identities. This same intention works with any act of mass terrorism that targets victims as an anonymous mass rather than as individuals. The Hanau shooter aimed his gun at what he believed to be ‘migrants’, or ‘Ausländer’. Through mass killings, the perpetrators intend to take not only the lives of victims, but also to destroy their identity, whilst hoping to make a name for themselves through their act of terror. In a certain way, they almost succeeded, because each terror act is related to the place where it took place: we speak of ‘Hoyerswerda’ (1991), ‘Mölln and Solingen’ (1992 and 1993), of ‘Berlin Breitscheidplatz’ (2016), ‘Munich 2016’ (as opposed to Munich Olympia-Attentat 1972, or Munich Oktoberfest 1986), we locate ‘Halle’ (2020), and ‘Hanau’ (2021). Through the relation of the terror act and the name of the place, terror defines the place and creates a memory site in Nora’s sense of the *lieu de mémoire*—often to the dismay of the respective cities and their representatives and inhabitants. For the victims, or the minority groups who consider themselves in solidarity with victims, these names represent the memory of a collective trauma. While literary texts often present a voice that ‘speaks back’ to the perpetrators, standing up as subjects rather than victims (see, for example, the poetry ‘post Solingen’, Yeşilada, 2012b), the public space lacks sites or objects with such a function.

In Germany, there are hardly any memorials bearing the names of victims murdered by (right-wing) terror acts. When Vietnamese-German scholar Kien Nghi Ha listed the names of all the victims of right-wing terrorism in his book ‘Asiatische Deutsche’ (‘Asian Germans’) in 2012, he was one of the first and few publicists to honour the victims by saying their names. It is different when it comes to the names of the arson attack victims from 1992 and 1993, and the victims of the NSU killings: names like Bahide Arslan, Mevlüde Genç, or Halil Yozgat ring a bell. Still, they remain exceptions within the vast number of nearly 200 unremembered victims of right-wing terror.

However, since the terror attack of 2020, something has changed: now, specific Turkish (and other) names and faces are to be seen on a wall in Frankfurt. Thanks to the initiative ‘#SayTheirNames’, a huge mural located under the Friedensbrücke (Peace Bridge) in Frankfurt displays photographic sketches and names of all the nine victims of the terror attack from 19 February, 2020.

Relatives and friends of the Hanau victims immediately, i.e. a day after the shooting, posted names and pictures of the nine victims on social media under the hashtag #SayTheirNames. The intention was to overshadow the terrorist’s name with the names of the people he had killed.

With the help of the Amadeu-Antonio-Foundation, information about all nine people was soon at public disposal. In line with the foundation’s policy of documenting right-wing hate crimes and preserving and honouring the memory of the victims, the Hanau victims were brought back into memory:

Regardless of the important discussion about the attack in Hanau on 19 February 2020, the remembrance of the victims must not fade into the background. It is their names that are to be remembered. (Brandorff, 2020, translation by K.Y.)

Co-funded by the Governmental programme ‘Demokratie leben’/ ‘Living Democracy’, this initiative explicitly seeks to actively keep the memory of the victims alive by saying their names. Therefore, the initiative supports projects nationwide in Germany, through an annual competition of anti-racism projects among other means. A poster with pictures and names of all the victims could be downloaded from the foundation’s website.

The mural was presented to the public just four months after the attack. Several (Turkish-German) artists forming the ‘Kollektiv ohne Namen’ (‘Collective Without Names/a Name’) contacted the families of the victims, as well as the city of Frankfurt, in order to depict a 27-metre-long mural in a well-frequented spot in Frankfurt.

This mural, in this dimension, is in a public space. You can’t just click it away or turn off the TV. People also have to deal with it even if they don’t want to. We want to change society and build a better tomorrow for all the people. It just can’t go on like this. (Kollektiv ohne Namen, 2023. Translation by K.Y.)

The artist’s intention was to confront people with the victims’ personal stories by presenting their portraits. They also wanted to disrupt the ‘wall of silence’ surrounding each and every terror attack from the far right. In particular, the collective silence surrounding the NSU terror killings, until the disclosure of circumstantial evidence revealed the true extent of the group’s crimes in 2011, created significant trauma among the German-Turkish community. The artists from Kollektiv ohne Namen turn the situation around, by determining the way in which terror victims are presented in public. In this way, they also exercise a level of control over the discourse around the commemoration of their lives and identities.

Seda explains what is driving the group: ‘Unfortunately it has been common in Germany to forget right-wing attacks quickly, to return to business as usual. Then, the next attack happens. This is how it has been for decades. You have to feel uncomfortable to feel the need to change something. If you forget, you don’t change anything.’ (Kollektiv ohne Namen, 2023. Translation by K.Y)

What the artist refers to is the repetitiveness of both terror acts and their tolerance by a society only too willing to forget them. This echoes Esther Dischereit’s frustration of having to list yet another topography of German far-right terrorism. Interestingly, a group of intellectuals, among them Zafer Şenocak, had published an article headlining ‘Es reicht!’ (‘Enough!’) in the newspaper *Tageszeitung*, a day after the second arson attack on Turkish homes in May 1993. They even demanded Chancellor Kohl’s resignation (Şenocak, 1993). Nearly three decades later, nothing seems to have changed. While the newspaper headline from May 1993 was forgotten the very next day, the Frankfurt mural from 2020 lasts

longer. The artists from Kollektiv ohne Namen had the same intention as the generation before them, but they chose different ways to establish a public site of commemoration of the victims. What both generations have in common is the feeling that the German state passively acts as a bystander, not preventing extremist terrorists from openly pursuing their murderous agenda. Chancellor Kohl, in 1991, played down racist terror by calling the perpetrators ‘Jugendliche Wirrköpfe’ (‘young scatterbrains’), thus diminishing their racist agenda. Neither did he attend the victims’ funeral after the Solingen arson attacks in 1993 (he refused to participate in what he called ‘Beileidstourismus’/‘condolence tourism’ (Prantl, 2013)). He did not even send the then-minister of family affairs Angela Merkel to the funeral. He embodied what Dischereit later called the ‘passive state’, which could also be translated as the ‘complicit state’ (‘der untätige Staat’). Turkish-German director and author Nuran David Calis goes even further, accusing the political establishment of encouraging terrorism: The murderer knows he is not alone if leading politicians from the amidst society can spread National socialist ideas publicly in parliaments and media.

In the discourse around right-wing terrorism, authorities often stress the fact that the terrorist was a ‘lone perpetrator’, (‘Einzeltäter’). This serves to play down the impact of National-socialist ideologies spread among far-right groups. During anti-racism demonstrations in Hanau 2020, banners were shown stating ‘Deutschland du Einzeltäter’ (‘Germany, you lone perpetrator’), ironically reversing the lone perpetrator theory in order to hold society as a whole accountable.

It must have been in the late 1980s, when my father grumbled once again about German racism against Turks. ‘One day’, he said, ‘one day, they will shoot Turks in the middle of the street, right into their heads, you will see.’ (‘Eines Tages werden sie den Türken auf offener Straße in den Kopf schießen, du wirst sehen!’) God, how I resented him, then. How could he say things like that? In 2011, when the NSU terror attacks came into light, his words came to my mind.

During a discussion about racism at school, in the mid-1980s, a (dear) school friend told me this: ‘If you lot will be targeted one day, don’t count on my support’, (‘Wenn es irgendwann mal gegen euch geht, werde ich nicht zu dir halten.’). With ‘you’/‘euch’ he referred to my Turkish identity.

These blurred memories from my youth in Hanau have always been with me and rang a bell each time Turkish immigrants were killed by far-right terrorism in Germany.

According to one of the artists of Kollektiv ohne Namen (2023), the work on the Frankfurt mural had been their biggest emotional challenge yet, and the artists cried a lot while painting since most of the murdered Hanau victims were of the same (young) generation. Their initiative to present and conserve a visual memory in a public space is supported by the victims' families.

In addition to this physical site of memory, a public website, provided by Hanau's community, presents the digital memory under the slogan 'Hanau steht zusammen' ('Hanau stands together'), and another, privately initiated website also preserves the digital memory of the victims. The latter represents the families and friends of the murdered and injured victims of the attack. Unlike the official Hanau initiative, the group behind 'Initiative 19. Februar' Hanau (2020) takes a victim-focused, critical perspective on the ongoing Hesse Parliamentary Commission Inquiries and claims political visibility.

We create a space of trust. We want political solidarity and visibility. We represent diverse, civil society. **Hanau is our town, our home. This is how it is and how it will remain.** This is where the relatives, families, and friends of the victims and injured live. They have to be heard. We will stand by and support each other during the next weeks, months, and years. And we will see to it that consequences will be seen—and that nothing will be forgotten. (Initiative 19. Februar 2020. Translated by K. Y.)

All in all, these initiatives can be seen as a means of empowerment through which the families of the victims receive public attention, thus shifting attention away from the attacker, who is formally remembered as 'Tobias R'. Both official representatives of the city and private initiatives stand together to defend the victims' families, e.g. against the perpetrator's far-right extremist father, who continues to offend and threaten the victims' families. This official support also seeks to minimise the physical and symbolic space that the perpetrator's father can claim to express his own and his son's racist beliefs. For example, each of his demands that the families of the victims leave Hanau and return to their home countries is contradicted immediately by statements of inclusion and belonging, making a point that Hanau stands together and is the families' hometown.

In this sense, Hanau has become a *lieu de mémoire*, not only for the murderous, terrorist attack by a single white man, but rather a *lieu*

de mémoire of the empowerment of multi-ethnic civil society standing together—at least, so it would seem.

A glance at Hanau's history shows that immigration and diversity are at the core of its civil identity. What impact does it have on today's civil, immigrational society?

And what does it mean for me as a Turkish-German academic in the aftermath of the Hanau Attack? What do I remember? Which memory sites, both material and immaterial, are linked to 'my' Hanau?

HANAU, THE GRIM(M) CITY

Hanau at the river Main, founded by the Earls of Hanau, today is best known as the birthplace of the Grimm Brothers, and, to the soccer world, as the birthplace of Rudi Völler. With nearly 100,000 inhabitants, and its vicinity to Frankfurt, it became an important industrial location in the twentieth century. Hanau was an important political and cultural location from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. In other cities, there are a lot of streets named 'Hanauer Straße' (Hanau Street).

In fact, the terrorist shootings from 'Munich 2016' happened in several locations on Hanauer Straße. To me, yet another strange coincidence.

The Earls of Hanau joined the Hesse-wide positioning in favour of Protestantism and invited French Huguenots to immigrate to Hanau, thus establishing important economic structures. The immigration of these religious refugees brought new infrastructure and wealth to the prospering city (Iding, 2020). Hanau's vernacular is still full of Frenchisms and French names (e.g. Schamp/Duchamps) from that period. The impressive late mediaeval Goldsmiths' House in the old Marketplace stands for the prolific Goldsmith Art brought by the Huguenots and Waldensians, making Hanau the Goldsmith City.

My father, the Turkish immigrant, prides himself on having studied at the famous Hanau Academy of the Arts, and having exhibited his silversmith crafts and artwork in the Hanau Goldsmiths' House, a symbol of the wealth brought to the city by French immigrants 400 years ago.

Hanau was heavily bombed and destroyed during the Second World War (19/03/1945), which is well documented on the city's official website. US-American Allied troops marched into Hanau on 28 March 1945 and established extensive barracks (Fliegerhorst, marking an area of 340 hectares) in and outside the city soon after. When they retreated at

the end of 2008, there were still 1,200 soldiers with their families, in addition to 300 American and 300 German civilians working for the troops (plus at least one Turkish civilian, my uncle Ahmet Yeşilada).

Hanau, to Me, is a Place—or Rather a Lieu de Mémoire—of US-American Presence.

Before learning about how and why American Allied Troops were stationed in Hesse, I integrated them into my life: In the 1970s, my Turkish-German family already ate at Kentucky Fried Chicken, long before it became part of German eatery culture. We had peanut butter in the house, long before it was available at German supermarkets, and the legendary Wrigley's Chewing Gum was something normal, because my Turkish uncle brought it to our house. The two Turkish brothers often fought, because one—my father—followed the traditional Islamic rules of alcohol abstinence, and the other—my uncle—took up drinking and consuming cannabis from his American colleagues. These were the 'cultural divisions' I grew up with.

We attended 'Deutsch-Amerikanische Volksfeste', German-American folk festivals, where we happily enjoyed corn on the cob, although keeping a good distance from the GI's.

There are discomfoting memories of the US Army in my childhood: due to the American presence, there were, apart from the barracks and military territories as such, certain 'no go areas' for children and youngsters in our town. One was a nearby forest, Bublau, which was 'haunted' and thus to be avoided (two women had been murdered here by an American GI). The other no go areas for teenagers were the northern Lamboy Viertel (Lamboy District), as well as the central 'Heumarkt' quarter, with bars and brothels, mostly frequented by the US Military.

The Shisha Bar of the Hanau shootings is situated in the Heumarkt Viertel.

During his time as a taxi-driver, my father witnessed a lot of trouble with the Americans. He was often cheated and sometimes physically attacked by 'the Amis'. I especially recall one night, when he came home with his shirt torn, and blood on his face, and he angrily complained about the bad morals of the 'occupiers'—'Why do you put up with them, but complain about us Turks? Turks work here, they don't occupy!', he angrily shouted. Witnessing this as a teenager, it made me feel very uncomfortable, partly because I perceived the Allied forces as a threat to my personal freedom.

There were gangs of Turkish youngsters in Hanau, too, harrassing both German girls and boys. They once tried to beat up my brother, because

according to them, he was ‘not Turkish enough’. My German girlfriends from school and I perceived these children as a threat, too.

GRIM SITES IN THE GRIMM CITY

Among others, Hanau had three major industrial plants: DUNLOP, LEIBOLD-HEREAUS, and DEGUSSA. In the 1960s, these companies recruited large numbers of so-called ‘guestworkers’. Did these migrants know about the history of the German industry during the Third Reich?

I grew up in Hanau, just three blocks down from the huge industrial site of the DEGUSSA. My father told me about the infamous past of the DEGUSSA. Otherwise, I had never heard about it, neither at school nor anywhere else.

The DEGUSSA, Deutsche Gold- und Silber-Scheide-Anstalt, founded in 1873, originally specialised in industrial chemicals. It gained importance during the Third Reich and profited a great deal from expansions through Aryanization and forced labour. The DEGUSSA not only melted Jewish gold (such as, for example, gold teeth from the victims of the gas chambers), but also produced and sold Zyklon B through its subsidiary DEGESCH (Leyendecker, 2010). In other words, the deadly chemical, used for the mass killings in Auschwitz and elsewhere, came from Hanau—Shoah, made in Hanau.

Degussa also produced special masks for the SS Divisions and contributed to Hitler’s atomic plans with a special research programme. ‘Nearly no other [German] company has such an NS past’, states Süddeutsche Zeitung editor Hans Leyendecker. DEGUSSA themselves only started acknowledging this part of their history in the 1990s, commissioning a research study about their cooperation and complicity with the Nazi regime (Hayes, 2004). DEGUSSA CEOs were among the founders of the foundation Foundation ‘Remembrance Responsibility Future’ (Stiftung Erinnerung Verantwortung Zukunft). They have pledged to compensate former forced labourers under the NS regime, and ‘to keep the memory of National Socialist persecution alive, to accept responsibility in the here and now, and to actively shape it for the future and for subsequent generations’ (Stiftung Erinnerung Verantwortung Zukunft, 2023).

In my school-time in the 1980s, there was no information whatsoever about this part of grim history in the ‘Grimm city’, even though NS-history was part of our school curriculum. To me, it still seems ironic that my

Turkish father knew about this and we did not. Back in the 1970s/80s, he must have been close to sources dismantling the well-kept taboo of Hanau's dirty history. Due to his memory, this industrial neighbourhood was part of an uncanny topography.

In his essay *Thoughts on 8 May 1995*, Zafer Şenocak reflects on the implications of German capitulation and the end of World War II for both Turks and Germans. Writing about his own father, who, as a young man, had witnessed the war only through his radio in Turkey, he considers the fact that his father was 'neither victim nor perpetrator' a 'vantage point' (Şenocak, 2000: 59). Critically commenting on German memory rituals in the 1990s, he demands laying a stronger focus on the perpetrators, drawing a line to contemporary racism in united Germany.

United Germany is that country in which four thousand to five thousand attacks and transgressions against 'foreigners' (*Fremde*) take place annually. The foreigners in Germany, most of whom have been here for a long time, barely bother to reflect on the history of the Germans. (Şenocak, 2000: 60. Translation by Leslie A. Adelson.)

My father reflected on Germany's history and often referred to National socialist ideology as the source of contemporary racism. In this way, he was also very critical of my German grandparents' 'Mitläufertum' (meaning they were passive followers) during the Third Reich. His children—my brother and me—would not relate this directly to their German grandparents, though, because of the familial taboo around addressing the topic. We knew about my grandfather's 'Ent-Nazifizierung' and degradation during the denazification process, but we never knew what he had done as a soldier in Russia. There were tales of grandma 'defending her Jewish help', but no tales about what happened to that Jewish woman in the end.

'You should marry a German', a drunk relative from my German family once told me, 'Then it will diminish in the mendelizing process.' (Du solltest einen Deutschen heiraten. Dann mendelt sich das wieder aus.') She said that some weeks after the murderous Solingen attack had happened.

For me, personally, Hanau's Nazi past was simply not present, whereas the Nazi past in my family was a taboo. It was only after the Hanau attack in 2020 that things changed for me, since yet 'another' terrorist attack happened to take place in my hometown, triggering personal feelings and memories. Blurred memories reemerged, and separate bits and pieces of both personal and collective Turkish-Migrant memories fell into place. Combined

with my academic work on the migrational culture and memory formed a new conscience, which I find mirrored and echoed in writings about Hanau. I suffered and raged with each racist attack and terrorist act that has happened since 'Hoyerswerda', 'Mölln' and 'Solingen' (which sums up to a timeline of over three decades). But it culminated into a 'coming out' when it came to Hanau. 19 February 2020, brought about a fusion of individual and collective memory for me, personally, which I intend to productively transform and integrate into my academic work.

HANAU, TOPOGRAPHY OF TERROR AND EMPOWERMENT

'Never Again!'—(,Nie Wieder') is a motto and a firm belief of contemporary German society to never again repeat the crimes of the Nazi period. Yet, the number of racist attacks on Jewish and migrant people in Germany is constantly rising. Meanwhile, far-right political parties, especially the 'Alternative für Deutschland' (AfD), constantly and significantly grow in terms of members and votes. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's dictum of the lone-wolf perpetrator (Einzeltäter) committing a crime that does not count and, as a result, can soon be forgotten, seems to have been proven wrong by such statistics in the younger history of United Germany. His memorable banalisation of the far-right perpetrators through coining the term 'scatterbrained youth' ('jugendliche Wirkköpfe'), seems even more shallow and mistaken than in its time in the 1990s.

Germany of the 2020s is a country of immigration and a society formed by millions of cross-cultural biographies. Even if they form a minority, it is through the confrontation with terrorist attacks and incidents that this minority, or rather, these minorities form their own special cultural memory. Being attacked on racist grounds by far-right extremists addresses aspects of ethnicity and contexts of belonging and exclusion as 'a group'. It addresses concepts of exclusion as 'a minority', as suspected 'migrants' who can 'return to their home-countries'. In claiming belonging and participation, these groups refer to their specific migrant memory, which is formed of individual memories of immigration, coping, arriving, and settling. This individual process is reflected in the cultural production of numerous literary and theatrical works, movies, installations, and performances. Through cultural production and reception, migrant memory slowly enters the German collective memory, inscribing migrant memory into German memory (Adelson, 2005).

Through dealing with each terrorist attack, this process is further enhanced. Unlike in the 1990s, when racist attacks were conceived more as an affair migrant communities had to deal with on their own, attacks from far-right extremism seem to have shifted to the centre of German civil society. Given the public and official political response to attacks in Halle or Hanau, things seem to have changed since 1991. This process started with the ‘discovery’ of the NSU terror in 2011, shedding light on the dubious role of state institutions in the matter. But the ‘NSU’ covered several places in Germany, whereas ‘Hanau 2021’ once more stigmatised a certain place as a place of memory. Hanau as ‘yet another’ place of racist terror marked a specific change in dealing with the fact that the name of the town became a *lieu de mémoire*. It sparked a significant reaction of self-empowerment among the migrant community. Civil society—represented by the families and friends of the victims who formed an Initiative, and represented by artists of the ‘Kollektiv ohne Namen’—formed an alliance with the political state (represented by the German government and the Hanau Administration), which sends a clear and publicly visible message: ‘Hanau stands together’. And this seems to go beyond the generally shallow promise of such messages. Hanau’s administration seeks to file complaints and defend the families against the perpetrator’s father, and when German filmmaker Helmut Boll announced an unauthorised project on the Hanau attack, Hanau’s Mayor intervened (together with the victims’ families) publicly with an open letter (Kaminsky et al., 2021).

The artists of the ‘Kollektiv without a Name’, with their mural, have made sure that the names and portraits of the murdered victims of the Hanau Attack are honoured and remain present in the public space. They have made it their claim to secure the (murdered and surviving) migrants’ position firmly at the heart of ‘their’ migrant society, in ‘their’ home country, Germany. Through this act of standing against the ideological aims of the racist perpetrator, they contribute to the formation of a shared history and a shared memory, defining Hanau as a memory site, a *lieu de mémoire* that focuses on the future, rather than on the past.¹

(For Hasan Yeşilada and Ilse Yeşilada, born Reinhardt)

¹ It will be subject to future research to discuss recent cultural productions such as Tuğsal Moğul’s Theatre Play ‘And now Hanau’ (2023) or Helmut Boll’s Documentary Fiction ‘Hanau’ (2022) in the light of a cultural memory work. *And maybe I should try and write my own novel on ‘Akademistraße 9 in Hanau’, transforming personal memories of my lieu de mémoire Hanau into fiction.*

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PART III

Presence and Absence



CHAPTER 9

Remembering and Forgetting Terror in Berlin

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Photographs by Katharina Karcher

If Leonard Cohen is right, there is a crack in everything. Berlin now has a famous one. It runs through Breitscheidplatz, a square in the heart of the city. On 19 December 2016, Anis Amri drove a stolen truck into a

Christmas market at this very spot, killing 11 and injuring dozens. The names of the victims are: Anna Bagratuni, Georgiy Bagratuni, Sebastian Berlin, Nada Cizmar, Fabrizia di Lorenzo, Dalia Elyakim, Christoph Herrlich, Klaus Jacob, Angelika Klösters, Dorit Krebs, and Peter Völker. The twelfth victim of the attack, lorry driver Łukasz Urban, was shot by Amri nearby. In December 2017, the names of the victims of this terror attack were engraved into the stairs leading to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church at the centre of the square. Only the name of the thirteenth victim of the attack is missing: Sascha Hüsge was badly injured while providing first aid to victims of the attack and died from his injuries in 2021.

After being almost completely destroyed in the Second World War, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church has remained in ruins to act as a permanent reminder of the destructiveness of war and conflict. Almost all physical traces of the attack on 19 December 2016, by contrast, have disappeared. But there is an unusual memorial: a crack (filled with a golden bronze alloy). Every day, hundreds of tourists and locals walk over the memorial without noticing it. Others, especially those who have lost loved ones in the attack, come here to remember. Some of these visitors leave candles, photographs, flowers and other objects on the stairs to the church.

The memorial for the victims of the Berlin truck attack has won a prestigious German design award. The jury considered it a courageous and sensitive choice by design firm Merz Merz to avoid tall, monumental structures and to opt instead for a design that makes the wounds of the attack visible while simultaneously repairing them. Perhaps more than any other memorial for victims of terror attacks in Europe, the golden crack was designed with the intention to highlight the dynamic interplay or collective practices of remembering and forgetting.

The subtle approach taken by the designers of the monument for the victims of the Berlin truck attack contrasts sharply with the security infrastructure surrounding the annual Christmas market at the Breitscheidplatz since 2016. To access the market, visitors have to navigate through a complex arrangement of bollards and barriers, including some with a large 'truckBlock' logo. Founded in 2019, truckBlock is one of the hundreds of companies specialising in barriers and hostile vehicle mitigation. Once visitors reach the market, most of the barriers are hidden by Christmas teas. Now they can enjoy Glühwein, Bratwurst and Stollen at a historical location in Berlin without being forced to think about the brutal attack

in 2016. Nobody seems to notice the crack, but some visitors stop when they see the photographs, candles and flowers on the steps.

Leonard Cohen is right. There is a crack in everything. That is how the light comes in. Time will tell whether that applies to golden cracks, too.

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Making, Sharing and Extending Presence in Spontaneous Memorials. The Case of the 2017 Manchester Attack

Kostas Arvanitis and Robert Simpson

INTRODUCTION

Spontaneous memorials (also termed grassroots or temporary memorials or shrines) are practices that emerge after tragic events such as terrorist attacks and natural disasters. They often consist of thousands of notes, flags, t-shirts, soft toys and other objects. These memorials are often seen as a form of collective mourning and remembrance that provides solace and solidarity to affected communities. Literature on the relationship between spontaneous memorials and the notion of *presence* often focuses on two main aspects: firstly, on the loss and absence of the deceased (Banks, 2006; Santino, 2006; Yocom, 2006). In this context, spontaneous memorials represent and materialise the presence of absence. Secondly, as a result of the above, the presence of the bereaved is expressed and felt

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in and through the space and items of these memorials (Clark & Franzmann, 2006; Westgaard, 2006). They are, as Santino (2006: 12) calls them, ‘places of communion between the dead and the living’.

Both of these approaches put much emphasis on the function of spontaneous memorials as the (re)presentation of a relationship between the deceased and the people who participate in spontaneous memorialisation. Again, as Santino (2006: 13) argues, ‘spontaneous shrines place deceased individuals back into the fabric of society, into the middle of areas of commerce and travel, into everyday life as it is being lived’. Or as Hartley (2006: 297) puts it, ‘shrines, temporary as they may be, help crystallise that memory by establishing a visual marker for those not present during an event’. Similar assertions have been made by other scholars, such as Margry and Sánchez-Carretero (2011), and Gardner and Henry (2002), who reiterate that presence refers to the felt sense of being in the presence of the deceased, of the affected community, and of the event itself.

This chapter builds on and extends the argument of spontaneous memorials as places of communion with the bereaved to discuss how spontaneous memorials construct and communicate presences by and for the living too. Presences are about the individuals involved in the making of the spontaneous memorials and their participation in the sociality of those memorials. In turn, we argue that it is those presences (rather than solely, or necessarily, the presence of the absent deceased) that shape the rationale, value and use of those memorials when collected by museums and related cultural organisations.

We draw on theories of presence to discuss how spontaneous memorials construct embodied, performative, participatory and social presences. Accordingly, we propose three types of presence: *Making Presence*, which articulates the materiality-focused creativity involved in making memorial items; *Sharing Presence*, which focuses on the social experience of presenting those items to the spontaneous memorial site and being co-present with others; and *Extending Presence*, which argues that the previous two types of presences are reconstituted in the space of the museum that collect spontaneous memorials. We apply this theoretical framework to the case study of the spontaneous memorialisation in Manchester after the Arena bombing (22 May 2017). In the aftermath of the bombing, St Ann’s Square in Manchester city centre was transformed into a spontaneous memorial site, which took over most of the square over a period of a few weeks. In early June 2017, the square was cleared and most of the items of the memorial site were transferred to

the Manchester Art Gallery, forming what is now known as the Manchester Together Archive (MTA), which the Gallery has since been looking after. Our analysis includes both the *Making* and *Sharing Presence* at the memorial site and the *Extending Presence* in the Manchester Art Gallery.

The chapter starts with an overview of the theoretical and methodological framework, followed by a discussion of how presence has been examined in the context of spontaneous memorialisation. Following that, the chapter turns to an analysis of the three types of presence that we are proposing, drawing on the case study of the spontaneous memorials in the aftermath of the 2017 Manchester attack. The chapter's key argument is that spontaneous memorials construct an embodied presence, which is expressed through creative materiality, physical journeying and social sharing. In turn, it is this embodied presence that is collected and 're-presented' in the space of the museum. This proposition makes an original contribution to academic scholarship on the motivations and purposes of spontaneous memorialisation in the aftermath of disasters and mass violence. Also, it advances current theorisations of presence in spontaneous memorials and offers museums and related cultural organisations a new conceptual framework that can inform their strategies and practices of collecting, curating and managing such memorials.

PRESENCE, LOSS AND MEMORIALISATION

Presence Theory and Methodology

The chapter draws on three main theoretical approaches of presence. Firstly, we build on Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's notion of 'presence culture', which highlights the centrality of the human body in experiencing the world, in 'being-in-the-world' (Gumbrecht, 2004: 46; Gumbrecht's discussion is based on a reading of Heidegger). For Gumbrecht, presence is an embodied and sensory experience, whereby the body is the site of experience and the senses create a sense of immediacy and intensity. We use Gumbrecht's approach to presence to articulate *Making Presence*, namely the relationship that is formed in the interaction between people and their production of the spontaneous memorials' materiality and creativity.

Secondly, we turn to Social Presence Theory (SPT), to talk about *Sharing Presence*. SPT (Lowenthal, 2010; Short et al., 1976) broadly

suggests that individuals feel present when they perceive other individuals as being present too. SPT has been largely applied in digital communication studies and focuses on the interpersonal relationships and communication patterns that facilitate the sense of presence in mediated environments. Here we draw on it to talk about the production and sharing of social presence in spontaneous memorials. Social presence is, in this case, the outcome of what Émile Durkheim (1995) called ‘collective effervescence’: the experience of collective energy and heightened emotional intensity when people come together to participate in shared rituals or events. Our argument is that, in the context of spontaneous memorials, people may experience a sense of collective effervescence when they gather together to mourn and remember those who have been lost, and when they engage in collective rituals such as the lighting of candles or the laying of flowers. In turn, this produces social presence: people feel present because they see other people being present, by participating and contributing to the construction of and performativity around the spontaneous memorials.

Finally, we return to Gumbrecht and his notion of ‘broad present’ to discuss *Extending Presence*, the third type of presence at play in the aftermath of spontaneous memorialisation. Gumbrecht (2004: 121) argues that a broad present is ‘where we don’t feel like ‘leaving behind’ the past anymore and where the future is blocked. Such a broad present would end up accumulating different past worlds and their artefacts in a sphere of simultaneity. We propose that the concept of the broad present can help understand the role, value and use of spontaneous memorials in museums or related cultural organisations that collect them. According to this, collections of spontaneous memorial items extend the presence that is made and shared in the sites of spontaneous memorialisation. An extended and broad present moves away from the temporal and temporary dimension of the spontaneous memorials. Instead, it collapses notions of past, present and future into a continuous presence of the memorials’ materiality, performativity, sociality and embodied immersion in the space of the museum.

In this chapter, we adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining methods from social semiotics and material cultural studies. The joint application of these methods is designed to combine observation and documentation with semiotic analysis. In other words, to use material, artefactual evidence to tease out contextual factors to interpret how the construction and meaning of collective presence at St Ann’s Square can

be understood as part of an evolving process of social codes and practices in public mourning rituals. From a social semiotic stance, there must be an acknowledgement that all semiotic phenomena are diachronic, and that ‘the base line for the interpretation of any diachronic chain (such as spontaneous memorialisation) is its intersection with the material world’ (Hodge & Kress, 1988: 35). The use of such methods allows us to consider how these objects would function in their social and cultural contexts and asserts that the meanings they communicate are ‘inscribed in their forms’ (Appadurai, 1986: 5). The chapter draws, also, on a qualitative interview with Amanda Wallace, Senior Operational Lead of Manchester Art Gallery (23 August 2018). Amanda, who at the time of the 2017 Manchester attack was the acting director of the Gallery following the departure of the then director, led the collecting of the spontaneous memorials and the formation of the MTA. Also, the chapter makes a brief reference to interviews with other members of the Gallery staff (2018–2023), although these are not discussed in detail.

Spontaneous Memorialisation and Presence

Memorials have come to be an expected societal response to tragedy and are, often, born out of a growing cultural shift to materialise, negotiate and give presence to collective grief (Brennan, 2014). Often formed in response to unexpected, shocking and violent deaths that have occurred in public ‘safe’ spaces, most memorials are built at or close to the site of the event, as a way to instigate, as Rosenberg argues (2007: 55), ‘a particular kind of remembering grounded in the physical space of our present situation’.

The enactment of asserting presence around memorial sites is by no means a new phenomenon and relates to well-established, old practices of small-scale roadside shrines (Petersson, 2009). Such examples include wayside crosses and *offerkast* shrines, both of which are common across Scandinavia, as well as cairns, which can be seen across the British Isles. These examples can be traced back to Mediaeval mourning practices of the eleventh century and include material expressions of grief that are, like contemporary understanding of spontaneous memorials, inherently commemorative and performative (Santino, 2006). In the case of *offerkast* shrines, travellers would cast or throw an offering (typically a stick or small stone) upon the sites of unexpected, tragic deaths as a way to both honour the dead and to contest the acknowledgement of loss

and absence by asserting their own living presence (Petersson, 2009). Similarly, Klaassens et al.'s (2013) visual content analysis of photos of 216 spontaneous and permanent roadside memorials in the Netherlands argues that the memorials aim to demonstrate and symbolise the fragility of existence and lost innocence, serve a social function of reminding of the toll of road accidents, establish continuing bonds with the deceased and function as a social and material statement to the outside world that they will be remembered.

However the large-scale spontaneous memorials that seem to temporarily take over public spaces are a sign of changing practices in the way that communities express mourning (Clark & Cheshire, 2004). Such memorials embody a tradition of mourning that is rooted in the process of making memories at a 'communal, often national, level' (Jonsson & Walter, 2017: 406), by seeking to frame traumatic events as narratives that reflect on loss and absence as a means of coping with, and making sense of, the present. To date, there is a range of literature concerned with the paradox of absence/presence, through which the notion of presence is described as a process of reconstituting loss by continuing bonds and connections with the deceased (Dimcheva, 2023; Doss, 2008; Jonsson & Walter, 2017; Kerler, 2013; Maddrell, 2013; Miceli-Voutsinas, 2017). Maddrell explores this paradox in relation to memorial artefacts, spaces, and performances, by drawing on the 'apparent oxymoron' that in death and grief an absence can have a presence (2013: 508). Here, absence-presence not only acknowledges death as an absence, but it also acknowledges a continued presence of the deceased, upheld by ongoing, still-existing bonds and relationships, which are expressed through spontaneous memorial items (Maddrell, 2013). Even more, according to Clark and Franzmann (2006), the belief in the presence of the deceased is a key factor in giving people (usually family members) the authority to create roadside shrines and memorials. This interpretation of the spontaneous memorial sites as places of communion with the deceased has impacted how the role and value of the memorial items are perceived. That is, they are seen as 'memory objects' or 'linking objects' (Hallam & Hockey, 2001; Maddrell, 2013) between the living and the dead.

In this chapter, however, we propose that the sense of presence found and created in spontaneous memorials often moves beyond reconstructing the absence of the deceased and instead creates opportunities to construct a range of presences for the living (Brennan, 2015; Neimeyer, 2000; Paliewicz & Hasian, 2016). Such memorials can, for instance, help

re-establish connections to places affected by tragedy. As Jackson and Usher (2015: 94) observe, when violent and sudden shock occurs in the places and spaces people identify as home, they ‘might be abruptly reminded of their own mortality and might feel intensely violated’. The sense of helplessness felt through such violation can ‘create a need to do something; a need to reclaim spaces’ by asserting a social presence over affected places (Jackson & Usher, 2015: 94).

Such memorials can also help assert a sense of belonging and solidarity by bringing people together. For example, Truc (2018) argues that embodied participation in shared, communal grief helps communities work through their trauma in a more positive, socially conducive way. According to Truc (2018), studies have shown that by simply being present at and taking part in demonstrations or spontaneous memorials (he refers specifically to the Madrid bombings in 2003) individuals feel better and are able to adopt a more positive perception of the notion of social cohesion. Participants prepared to assert a physical presence and to show and express their mourning in public fora, are better able to move forward with a positive sense of hope and security about their environment, leaving them feeling better equipped to deal with the impact of trauma (Truc, 2018).

Finally, spontaneous memorials can also create opportunities to address social issues and call for social action. As Santino (2006: 7) suggests, makeshift public memorials are ‘dramatic social enactments’ that are transformational; they call out for social action and change by asserting an often unplanned, informal public (sometimes global) presence. As a performative act, the range of presences created at spontaneous memorials can strengthen social solidarity by bringing communities together, encouraging communication and creating collaboration (Haney et al., 1997).

As such, spontaneous memorials should be interpreted as more than an expression of mourning; they are social and performative events in public spaces where the enactment of embodied presence can ‘trigger new actions in the social or political sphere’ through shared dialogue and participation (Margry & Sánchez-Carretero, 2007: 1). As Margry and Sánchez-Carretero (2007: 2) suggest, the performance of mass memorialisation has the power to instigate public ‘political demands’ by streamlining social action and mobilising public feeling. They refer, for example, to the political unrest surrounding the murder of political protestor Carlo Giuliani (2001), the murder of Dutch politician

Pim Fortuyn (2002) and the deaths of nearly 200 young people in the Cromagnon disco in Buenos Aires (2004). For each of these examples, the poignancy of social and political unease was felt more strongly through a growing, embodied presence of individuals and communities and through the formation of memorial sites in the places of those people's deaths (Margry & Sánchez-Carretero, 2007).

MAKING, SHARING AND EXTENDING PRESENCE OF SPONTANEOUS MEMORIALS

The literature review above highlights that spontaneous memorials are often conceptualised as a reference to absent people; a material and performative presence of absence. However, this limits the understanding of people's motivations in employing their creativity to make things, to journey to the memorial sites and to participate in their formation and shared experience. Also, it does not adequately explain why museums and other cultural organisations decide to collect and document spontaneous memorials.

To address this gap, we draw on notions of the embodied and broad present as theorised by Gumbrecht (2004) and social presence theory (Lowenthal, 2010; Short et al., 1976) to discuss the creative, social and museological presences constructed in and with the spontaneous memorials in Manchester in the aftermath of the Arena bombing in 2017. Through this analysis, our goal is to articulate expanded understanding of the kinds of presences produced in such memorialisation, which can shed light on the role, value and legacy of spontaneous memorials.

Making Presence

Gumbrecht (2004) argues that in a presence culture people inscribe their bodies into the world. In this sense, presence is experienced in and through our bodies. Gumbrecht is referring to those intense moments of having e.g. an aesthetic epiphany or some other lived experience that connects us with the world and its objects. Contrasting presence culture with meaning culture, Gumbrecht (2004: 126) warns us that:

in the long run, it may be impossible for us to refrain from attributing meaning to an aesthetic epiphany or to a historical object. But in both cases [...] I have argued that our desire for presence will be best served

if we try to pause for a moment before we begin to make sense – and if we then let ourselves be caught by an oscillation where presence effects permeate the meaning effects.

When it comes to the creation of spontaneous memorial items, such as written notes, painted rocks and pebbles, knitted hearts, handmade condolence cards, etc., there is a strong link between the notion of creativity and Gumbrecht's meaning culture, which in this case translates to the process of reconstructing meaning in the aftermath of a traumatic event. For example, Brennan (2015: 294) posits that 'creativity can enable individuals to reconstruct meaning in the wake of loss and 'serve to transform existing reality' (see also Dimcheva, 2023 in this volume). Our hypothesis and proposition, though, is that the relationship that is formed in the interaction between people and their production of the spontaneous memorials is first and foremost a creative and material expression of Gumbrecht's call to 'pause for a moment before we begin to make sense'. It is an action that mobilises people's bodies, turning their emotions into a material creation. This process leads individuals, to use Gumbrecht's words (2004: 137), to an 'intense quietness of presence',

by singling out [...] strong individual feelings of [...] sadness – and by concentrating on them, with our bodies and our minds; by letting them push the distance between us (the subjects) and the world (the object) up to a point where the distance may suddenly turn into an unmediated state of being-in-the-world.

In other words, the creation of spontaneous memorial items bridges people's emotional and psychological state with the perceived shared world of fellow mourners. Irrespective of the meaning attributed to those items (e.g. by bystanders at the memorial site, the media, the collecting institutions, etc.), this creative and embodied engagement *Makes Presence*, which in turn can give agency to social recovery, by unlocking salutary methods of making sense of trauma and loss. As Mollica (2006: 157) argues, 'the act of healing is (in itself) a form of artistry' in the sense that participants actively seek to create something positive out of something destructive. On a public scale, journeying to, witnessing and taking part in shared, creative enterprise embodies a therapeutic response to the

complex emotions of coming to terms with grief and loss, by giving physicality and presence to that which has been made absent, as well as to that which survives (see also Morgan, 2018; Truc, 2018).

On this basis, St Ann's Square's spontaneous memorial embodies the interactive, physical and material engagement of people with the traumatic event. These objects can be viewed as materialised evidence of individual, yet also shared and public feelings; in the days that followed the 2017 Manchester attack, various individuals, groups and communities came together in an act of resilience and solidarity that can be characterised as socially reparative. From the carefully written notes, letters and poems, artworks, and jewellery; to decorative painted pebbles and stones, handcrafted messages on wood, quilted blankets and knitted love hearts, the memorials represent the value and prominence of creativity and community togetherness and co-presence in times of uncertainty.

The drive to make presence through creativity is reflected in the care and artistic consideration taken throughout the design process of textile hearts. One example from the MTA supports this observation well and communicates the importance of asserting presence in the face of loss. This large object (measuring 175 cm in length) is presented as a garland of 22¹ individually hand-stitched hearts of varying colours and sizes. The hearts are collectively bound together by a single piece of white ribbon. Where the hearts themselves may represent love, condolence and grief for the 22 lives lost in the attack, the ribbon, which extends across the entire design, may represent the homogeneity and unity of mourners; that those affected, moved, or touched by the attack are simultaneously brought together and unified by common purpose. To further support the connection between creative engagement and mourning, this object also includes part of a poem, which is written in black capitalised ink and spans the entirety of the ribbon (Image 10.1). This text appears as followed:

WHEN GREAT SOULS DIE. AFTER A PERIOD PEACE BLOOMS
SLOWLY AND ALWAYS IRREGULARLY. SPACES FILL WITH A
KIND OF SOOTHING ELECTRIC VIBRATION. OUR SENSES.
RESTORED. NEVER TO BE THE SAME. WHISPER TO US. THEY
EXISTED. THEY EXISTED. WE CAN BE AND BE BETTER FOR
THEY EXISTED.

¹ This references the 22 people that were killed at the Manchester Arena bombing.

Taken from the last stanza of Maya Angelou's (2015) poem 'When great trees fall', these words aptly deal with themes of grief and bereavement, while offering hope that time will heal the painful wounds of loss. Despite their literary provenance, the sentiments expressed here do not seem out of place in the context of the public memorial at St Ann's Square. As they stretch across the ribbon, these words feel socially relevant, forward-thinking, and positive. While they acknowledge tragedy and death, they also give weight to the process of healing. The expressive, natural image of 'peace (blooming) slowly' suggests recovery, growth and development; that from the destruction and violence of an attack, something socially positive and unique can be nurtured. And such spaces, which fill with 'a kind of soothing electric vibration', appear to cultivate the therapeutic value of shared, collective grief. Taking this space to be representative of St Ann's Square, this image could be interpreted as a response to the energised and intense presence that built around the memorial and how such stirring scenes of public unification can be



Image 10.1 A garland of 22 individually hand-stitched hearts in the Manchester Together Archive, Manchester Art Gallery (Photograph by Robert Simpson)

engaging, appealing, almost attractive, with its supportive, ‘social energy’ and creative, effervescent atmosphere (Kroslowitz, 2007: 249).

We accept that our analysis above is, de facto, an attempt to apply interpretative meaning to this item; a meaning culture over a presence culture, in Gumbrecht’s terms. But our argument here is that the spontaneous memorials are in their essence a material expression of a need to engage one’s body with the post-attack world (which will be further supported in the next section). We would take the argument even further by stating that the importance attributed to those memorial items relates to their material presence, rather than their interpretative meanings. This explains why the timing of removing and collecting of spontaneous memorials most often relates to weather conditions that affect their material presence. As Grider (2001: 2) notes, ‘spontaneous shrines lose their emotional impact and symbolic integrity when they become soggy, windblown, and tattered’. People *Make Presence* through their material spontaneous memorials and, as will be further discussed later on, it is this embodied presence that drives and explains museums’ decisions to collect them.

Sharing Presence

At spontaneous memorials, presence is asserted not just through the above-discussed creative engagement with memorial objects, but also with journeys taken to gift such objects and people’s participation in the spaces of the memorialisation. Scholars have talked about the leaving of items as sign of presence: Caffarena and Stiaccini (2011) refer to the leaving of messages as a sign of people’s presence in the space; Revet (2011) perceives the donation of objects as a communion with the survivors (rather than the dead); and Puccio-Den (2011) approaches people’s presence on the site as bearing witness. Similarly, research has also highlighted the participatory nature of spontaneous memorialisation (Milošević, 2017; Santino, 2006). Yocom (2006: 79) outlines this aptly with regard to the spontaneous memorials at the Pentagon after 9/11:

If people did not come to protest or to mourn the Pentagon building, the mementos they left suggest that one of the reasons they came was to be present at the site, both as individuals and as members of a group of mourners. Being present, though, is not a simple act. It was so important to many people to be present, for example, that if they couldn’t come in person, they sent a tracing of their hand or foot instead. Being present

involves many acts of attention available to memorial visitors, among them doing, seeing, caring and forming both individual and shared memories.

We would like to focus on this public, performative and social aspect of presence at the site and acknowledge the social value of journeying to and participating in such memorials. We argue that this participation can be viewed as a symbolic and meaningful attempt to create an ameliorative and therapeutic presence over shared traumatic experiences by *Sharing Presence*. We draw on Social Presence Theory (SPT) (Lowenthal, 2010; Short et al., 1976) to discuss how the participants in the St Ann's Square memorial constructed a shared presence, by feeling co-present with others in the space.

Research has documented how social sharing of emotions (in the form of in-person and online conversations) heightens after disasters or related traumatic events (Garcia & Rimé, 2019; Pennebaker & Harber, 1993; Rimé et al., 2010). This social sharing of emotion in events of collective trauma leads to what Garcia and Rimé (2019) call social synchronisation, which draws on Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence (1995), the synchronisation of thoughts and actions among members of society. Garcia and Rimé (2019: 617) suggest that 'it is not despite our distress that we are more united after a terrorist attack, but it is precisely because of our shared distress that our bonds become stronger and our society adapts to face the next threat'. Indeed, the shared, performative element of spontaneous memorialisation acts as a means of asserting a public, physical presence in an act of solidarity and encoding people's memories to reflect on the social meanings and commemorative symbols connected to material objects and places (public spaces temporarily opened up as places of sacrality).

This builds on Gumbrecht's embodied presence and extends it to the proposition that people experience a shared embodied presence in spontaneous memorial sites. Westgaard (2006: 156) notes that grief can often 'create a feeling of community and solidarity among the grieving'; that through their shared response to unexpected death and tragedy, 'relations are established among people [...] through the common loss they have suffered'. In the event of a terrorist attack, this sense of common loss is felt tangibly and pluralistically across communities, so the act of coming together itself forms an important part of the social healing process; where shared behaviour represents a public response to the stress and

trauma caused by acts of terrorism (Taylor, 2006). Spontaneous memorials capture the sense of a collective ‘embodied experience’ through the act of coming together to express grief openly and publicly (Ingold, 2011: 148; Davies, 2015; Maddrell, 2013). Ingold (2011) contends that our lives are like lines that form knots where they intermingle and collide with other lines; that our encounters and interactions with people and places form an accumulation of ‘meshworked’ events, attachments and bonds that ‘constitute our life experiences’ (Ingold, cit. in Davies, 2015: 231). Accordingly, we could argue that when these lifelines and knots are somehow damaged or disrupted by an unexpected tragedy, a need arises to create a sense of shared presence, as a way to restore and repair severed bonds so that those lives, connected to one another by and through embodied experiences, can feel safe, supported and able to return to normality. As Taylor (2006: 273) observes, ‘one of the most striking aspects of the human stress response is the tendency to affiliate [...] to come together in groups to provide and receive joint protection in threatening times’. Indeed, such performances of social presence indicate a social need to close an open wound ‘inflicted on the whole group’ (Sánchez-Carretero, 2007: 8).

This form of togetherness is immediately visible in the notes and messages left at St Ann’s Square, where (on the whole) both the linguistic use and tone of plurality appear to work in conjunction with positive, inclusive, affiliative language, to bring people closer together, to nurture social bonds and to express care and support (Park et al., 2016). For example, phrases such as: ‘the city unites with hope and peace’ or ‘together we unite [...] our bond is strong but our love is stronger’. Both examples here indicate how the language of plurality formed an important part of the collective response to the 2017 Manchester attack, by representing the extent to which terrorism pluralistically affects whole societies. With this in mind, the pluralistic, social encounters that grow around spontaneous memorials can be understood as conscientious expressions of affiliation; where the need to share, affiliate and come together stands as the moral imperative in the process of post-trauma recovery and reconstitution. In other words, the swell of activity surrounding makeshift, public memorials signifies a tear in the social meshwork, wherein severed knots need to be repaired and reconstructed in light of social cataclysm and grief (Davies, 2015; Ingold, 2011). As previous studies have noted, spontaneous memorials can prove socially beneficial in their ability to seek out social change by providing a platform for members of the public to work

together collectively to challenge both the destructiveness and divisiveness of terrorism (Margry & Sánchez-Carretero, 2007; Truc, 2018).

Furthermore, the physical process of journeying, or pilgrimage; of walking to and around, of placing, displaying and laying objects at spontaneous memorials, can serve as a valuable form of memory-making, enabling mourners to either constructively act out their continued bonds with the deceased, by generating new memories and reminders, or strengthening their ties and bonds with the living, by asserting their presence and participation in the process of public mourning (Jackson & Usher, 2015; Jonsson & Walter, 2017; Maddrell, 2016). The notion of pilgrimage is a ritualistic form of journeying, connected to mourning practices. As Chan and Stapleton (2019: 391–392) discuss, pilgrimages have been ‘used for centuries all over the world to form a direct link between place and experience’, and can be understood as ‘meaningful’ performances, in that they ‘engage people [...] through physical and spiritual participation’. This view is especially useful here, in that it helps broaden the discussion about why spontaneous memorials are so often successful in bringing such large crowds of people together in one place. Such memorials are highly concentrated, collectivised events, which represent a mass acknowledgement to embrace the process of expressing grief publicly, through a series of physical encounters with people, places and objects. Collectively, these experiences emphasise the phenomena of participation and remembrance, of asserting a physical and social presence over loss and absence.

In the case of the St Ann’s Square memorial, we position the physical journeys to and around the site itself as integral to the process of creating an individual and collective presence. Such responses indicate a social agreement to quantify shared feelings in material ways, in order to incite action and recovery; that the enactment of collectivised mourning needs to be made visible and palpable, in order to be publicly acknowledged and understood. Such physical and social encounters can be observed in how the layout and structure of the memorial accumulated around the needs of mourners. Generally, people did not arrive and stand motionless. Instead, people asserted their presence by wanting to move and walk, ideally around the mass of objects that lay before them. Thus, the growth of the site expanded in line with this requirement, so that it could always accommodate people walking around the site to visually engage with the objects. With this in mind, it is also interesting to note the actions and responsiveness of Manchester City Council with regards to the public’s

need to journey to the memorial site and to be able to move around comfortably. Most notably, between 22 and 25 May 2017, a spontaneous memorial began to materialise at Albert Square (located outside Manchester's Town Hall), where members of the public began leaving items such as flowers, cards, balloons, and placards. However, a decision was quickly taken by the City Council to relocate this rapidly growing memorial to St Ann's Square; not only to make way for the second, formal vigil service (which took place outside the Town Hall on 25 May 2017), but also to create a more extensive and appropriate location, where the memorial could continue to grow.

This notion of movement and walking 'shifts the burden of memory onto the individual—on the ground—stressing the ethical dimensions of remembering as an active, participatory practice and engaging us with the world' (Rosenberg, 2007: 67). Thus, the embodied physical encounter with the memorial at St Ann's Square elicits 'collective experience', which expands 'beyond a single human perspective through the shared experiences of many individuals in a single journey' (Chan & Stapleton, 2019: 392). With this in mind, we position the process of journeying to spontaneous memorial sites as a form of wayfaring; of navigating through social trauma as one would navigate through grief, by creating a sense of social presence.

In the MTA, one box stands out as an obvious example of this observation. In comparison to other boxes, this box is relatively empty and contains just 25 hand-painted pebbles. Of these 25 objects, 22 of them have been designed by the same creator, namely 'Lost Moose Creations'. These pebbles (see Image 10.2) are similar in design and typically include motivational or inspiring quotes. All are brightly coloured, with a variety of pastel pinks, yellows and blues, making them aesthetically appealing to look at. They also include a clear varnish finish, which not only ensures added protection from the elements but also strengthens their material relevance as symbols of endurance. On the back, each pebble contains the slogan, 'keep, give, leave'. In the context of public grief and mourning, these words take on a different meaning. Thus, the notion of 'keep me' implies remembrance; of taking something away from the memorial experience, as a keepsake or memento; a reminder. 'Share me' (or 'give me') on the other hand, endorses the value of social exchange and mutual interdependence as proactive routes to recovery. Finally, the instruction to 'leave me' signals the act of parting, with its implications of 'letting go'. Many of the objects within this group are small and compact; objects

that can be easily carried, shared and left at memorial sites. This may suggest that the size and portability of some memorial items accommodate the notion of letting go of grief in recognition of the cathartic value of leave-taking.

In sum, the performative journeying and participating is designed to create a social presence, which in turn facilitates social remembrance and



Image 10.2 A few hand-painted pebbles in the Manchester Together Archive, Manchester Art Gallery (Photograph by Robert Simpson)

healing as necessary public mourning rituals. This can be seen in the visible care and time that is taken to create and design painted pebbles and textile hearts. It is clear that these objects were not made on site, but were instead handpicked, painted, designed (in some cases varnished) and thought about carefully before the creator embarked on their journey. Such actions suggest planning and premeditation as an acknowledgement of the cathartic and therapeutic value of journeying and sharing in the presence of loss.

Embarking on the physical journey to a memorial site (and attaching memory and meaning to material objects left) serves to connect participants not only to the event itself but with other individuals who have gathered to experience the swell of social presence built around the site, thus positioning such objects as both ‘a material form of dialogue’ and a marker of collective involvement (Kroslowitz, 2007: 247). Through such engagement, individuals and communities unlock opportunities to collectively make sense of tragedy and loss, by allowing a platform of sharing and remembrance to form as a way to navigate through social trauma.

Extending Presence

What is then collected, stored, conserved and valued in collections of spontaneous memorials in museums and related cultural organisations? And what notions of presence do such collections construct? To address this, we return to Gumbrecht and employ his concept of ‘broad present’. Broad present avoids the division of historical and contemporary present (and presence), instead placing things in a state of simultaneity. Understanding the museum legacy of spontaneous memorials through the lens of a broad present can help articulate the role and value of the material, creative, and social presence of spontaneous memorials in shaping their collecting and curating. In practice, this suggests that collections of spontaneous memorial items extend the *Making* and *Sharing* of presence. The spontaneous memorials demonstrate the individual and community’s need to create, participate in, share and experience presence through their own bodies and actions. In turn, it is the presence of the living (rather than solely of the deceased) that is represented and felt in the Manchester Art Gallery. In other words, the MTA embodies and extends the sense of presence people co-created and co-experienced in St Ann’s Square.

To discuss and evidence this *Extending Presence*, we examine the following two aspects of the MTA: firstly, right from the outset, the

Gallery approached the spontaneous memorials as a public response to the event and its victims, rather than solely a memorial to them. Or, to put it differently, this memorial was seen as being comprised of thousands acts of creative and material engagement. To quote Wallace, ‘the material was essentially a single memorial, with thousands of constituent parts: from notes written on scraps of paper and thousands of cards and letters, to poems, pictures, soft toys, school art projects, football shirts, and personal tributes’ (interview with Amanda Wallace, 2018). This standpoint was significant, as it prompted the Gallery to consider the items as an active and creative expression of people’s need to give their emotions a material form. In turn, this informed how the Gallery approached the cataloguing and documentation of the collection. For example, this is being done on item level, whereby each item is catalogued separately, acquiring a unique catalogue number. This reflects the Gallery’s emphasis on the creativity, materiality and uniqueness of each item. Also, the use of fields such as ‘creator’, ‘type’ of object and a detailed description of the material characteristics, medium and design of the objects demonstrates that the Gallery views and values this material as the evidence and embodiment of people’s agency in *Making Presence* in the spontaneous memorial sites.

Secondly, the size and perceived completeness of the MTA have transformed the Gallery’s space into an extension of St Ann’s Square’s memorial space. Early on in the process, the Gallery decided to keep all the items deposited in the spontaneous memorial in the square (with the exception of the flowers and plants, which were respectively composted and re-planted; and of about 2,000 soft toys, which were donated to charities; see Arvanitis, 2019). Reflecting on this, Wallace states:

It was all significant. Actually, what was significant about it was the completeness of it, the fact that it was everything from amazingly intricate pieces of art to small ephemeral things. Everything was equally important in terms of expressing a moment in Manchester’s history, as a really key moment when people came together [...] to express that sense of oneness. So, we made a deliberate decision to keep it all. (Interview with Amanda Wallace, 2018)

This decision not only further enhances the perception of the MTA as a ‘complete’ record of people *Making Presence* through their creativity and participation, but also contributes to a sense shared by Gallery staff and visitors alike that the St Ann’s Square memorial—the site where

people shared presence—is itself present in the Gallery’s space. This can be supported by the following points. When refurbishing the room to host the MTA, the Gallery’s team inadvertently built a layout that reminds visitors of the actual memorial site in St Ann’s Square (Arvanitis, 2019): most of the memorial items are in drawers and shelves in the middle of the room, allowing a circular movement around them (see Image 10.3), which is what people were also able to do in St Ann’s Square. From a researcher’s perspective, this is a welcomed accident, in that the functional and symbolic role of walking still features in the way one engages with the physicality of the MTA. The room’s layout, along with the use of enlarged images of the memorial site and the bright colours of the deflated balloons in clear boxes (Image 10.4) transports people to the square at the time. This sense of being projected to the memorial in St Ann’s Square is further heightened by the smell of the numerous scented candles that are present in the room. This contributes to a sensorial and embodied engagement with the shared presence experienced in the spontaneous memorial sites.

The above analysis supports the view that the MTA objects exist, in their post-memorial, museum setting, as a physical reminder of the embodied presence and performance of public grief, and can be viewed as artefactual evidence of a community’s response to public atrocity. In this context, an extended presence moves away from the temporal and temporary dimension of the spontaneous memorials in favour of a continuous presence of the memorials’ materiality, performativity, sociality and embodied immersion in the space of the museum. Bencard (2014), drawing on Runia (2006) and the notion of metonymy, argues that museums ‘transfer presence’ to the here and now. He calls that a ‘metonymically induced presence’ (Bencard, 2014: 37). He goes on to argue that ‘the museum is a storehouse of discontinuity—objects are torn from their contexts, removed from the flows that bore them, but the museum works to create continuity, to connect us to the past’ (2014: 36). In the case of the spontaneous memorial items at Manchester Art Gallery, the museum’s continuity lies in its aim to extend and manifest the physical, performative and emotional contexts and flows of the spontaneous memorial. Instead of the museum *representing* the spontaneous memorial, the latter continues to be *present* in and through the museum. In other words, the museum does not metonymically transfer the presence of the memorial in its (the museum’s) space; rather the museum space is transformed into the memorial’s embodied presence.



Image 10.3 The space of the Manchester Together Archive, Manchester Art Gallery (Photograph by Kostas Arvanitis)

Gardner (2011: 292), referring to the interpretation and exhibition by the New York Historical Society of ash-covered shelves of the Chelsea Jeans store on lower Broadway, states: ‘As those memorial materials became museum objects, they arguably ceased to be what they were, instead becoming part of our institutionalised memories, isolated from the dynamic in which they were created’. This chapter argues that one way to tackle this challenge is to approach those items as an extended manifestation and continuation of the spontaneous memorialisation. To return again to Gumbrecht, this *Extending Presence* collapses any clear and distinct boundaries between spontaneous and museum memorialisation. By capturing and injecting the museum space with the material and social presence that people constructed and experienced in St Ann’s Square, Manchester Art Gallery adopts the principle of Gumbrecht’s ‘broad present’ (2004: 121): the spontaneous memorial in the square is not left behind and its future is not blocked; it continues to exist in the



Image 10.4 Clear boxes that contain deflated balloons, scented candles, tea lights and other items from the spontaneous memorial sites in Manchester (Photograph by Kostas Arvanitis)

space of the Gallery. The memorial items do not cease to be what they were, are not becoming part of an institutionalised memory, and are not entirely isolated from the dynamic of the spontaneous memorialisation that created them. On the contrary, they extend the life and experience of this dynamic. As a result, the Gallery does not simply present or represent the memorials' materiality, performativity and sociality; instead, it *re-presences* them.

However, this re-presencing of the memorials in the museum space is not unproblematic. It runs the risk of inhibiting museum professionals and organisations from exploring the meanings of spontaneous memorial collections. Museums do not simply accumulate stuff; they construct meanings, tell stories and assign value to the objects they collect. Indeed, the very act of collecting contains meaning. In Gumbrecht's terms, museums take 'action', namely, they put meanings into things. So, when

a museum takes ‘moments of intensity’ (Gumbrecht, 2004: 98) and preserves them as such in its space, this raises a number of issues. Firstly, it demonstrates the nervousness and uncertainty that museum professionals often experience when they face the task of collecting and curating spontaneous memorials, which fall outside their usual practice and frame of reference (Arvanitis, 2019). Secondly, it prolongs this sense of professional numbness, which does not help with taking a critical view of the meanings present or absent in the collected items. And thirdly, it can prevent, or at least hinder, fully embedding this collection into the organisation’s life, practice and policy. Longer-term, this can be problematic: focusing solely or mainly on the dynamism of the collection’s original context can potentially undermine the process of engaging dynamically with the evolving meanings, value and uses of the collection.

Indeed, these are issues that Manchester Art Gallery has faced. Following an intense first year of collecting, conserving and storing in 2017–18 (Arvanitis, 2019), the work on the MTA gradually slowed down. When the cataloguing of the material started in 2018, it was decided that the MTA would sit outside the Gallery’s core collection. Also, over the last six years, the team that led the MTA did not expand to include more Gallery staff, which meant that over time the MTA has been seen as the direct responsibility of only a handful of people. Furthermore, the creative and dynamic practice that Manchester Art Gallery followed in forming the MTA (see Arvanitis, 2019) did not, until recently, translate into institutional policy guidelines. In interviews with Gallery staff, it has become clear that one of the main reasons preventing them from fully integrating the MTA into the life of the Gallery is the ongoing nervousness around how to treat this material, which so vividly extends in its premises the *Making* and *Sharing Presence* expressed and experienced in the spontaneous memorial site. In other words, the more Manchester Art Gallery (not necessarily intentionally) approaches the MTA as a ‘relying’ of the spontaneous memorialisation, the more ‘sacred’ this material becomes and the more removed from the Gallery surroundings and day-to-day life it stays.

CONCLUSION

Maddrell (2013: 517) argues that ‘memorials symbolize and evoke the dead as an absent presence as well as situating absence-presence and acting as a conduit for the practice of continuing relationship’. This chapter has

shown that spontaneous memorials evoke the living too, through a presence made up of their individual creativity, social sharing, and embodied participation. Spontaneous memorials construct an embodied presence, which is expressed through creative materiality, physical journeying, and social/communal sharing. In turn, this embodied presence is reconfigured in the museum. The MTA material in Manchester Art Gallery is not simply a representation of the material and social response to the absence of the people that were killed, but a more-than-representational manifestation of, and emotional engagement with, the embodied presence performed in St Ann's Square's spontaneous memorial. The spontaneous memorial is produced by the embodied presence of people, their material creativity and their performative sociality.

Gumbrecht's broad present as employed in this chapter allows for this intense, lived experience of spontaneous memorialisation, the 'pause for a moment before we begin to make sense' (Gumbrecht, 2004: 126), to be extended into the museum space. This is important because it acknowledges and responds to the significance of the events that led to such public, collective and shared reactions. But, even in Gumbrecht's understanding of presence, this pause is followed by a process of making sense, namely an active engagement with the meanings, values and gaps constructed through collections of spontaneous memorials. The challenge for museums and other cultural organisations faced with the task of collecting and curating spontaneous memorials is to combine both: respond to the task by documenting the materiality, performativity and sociality of the memorials; and using this experience to develop a curatorial practice that engages actively and dynamically with the changing significance, meanings and uses of the material. Through a critical analysis of the usefulness and translation into practice of embodied, social and broad present/present theories, this chapter has offered a framework for understanding the role of *Making, Sharing and Extending Presence* in shaping museum practices of spontaneous memorials.

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Resilience or Reconstruction? A Psychoanalytical Approach to Urban Space After the Attack on the Promenade des Anglais (Nice, 14.07.2016)

Frédéric Vinot

When a 19-ton truck drove onto the Promenade des Anglais in Nice at 10.35 pm on 14 July 2016, it caused mass deaths. Along the truck's route, which was just under 2 km, 86 victims died, many children (20% under 15 years old), and entire families were decimated. In June 2019, almost three years later, the father of a deceased child 'died of grief', and was declared the 87th 'direct victim' of this attack (Le Figaro, 2019). This event still marks the city of Nice, its inhabitants and its urban planning, every day.

The contents of this chapter, in whole or in part, must not be used freely outside the context of this book.

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It is from this observation that the Idex research programme #14July2016 aimed to address, in a multidisciplinary way, the links between space, trauma, and mourning in the context of the attack on the Promenade des Anglais. It aimed to identify the ways in which traumatic grief modifies spaces and conversely how spatial modifications can constitute markers or resources for the work of mourning. The multidisciplinary research team (9 researchers, 6 disciplines, 3 laboratories in Nice) made it possible to work on different types of spaces affected by the attack: urban, digital, scriptural, or artistic. The team collected data in the form of various publications (newspapers, written testimonies, books), but also from interviews with users of the Promenade, people who work there (e.g. road workers, café employees), municipality staff (municipal police officers, Director of Transformation Works, or the Municipal Archives), and finally interviews and meetings with people bereaved as a result of the attack. Since 2018 we have also walked along the Promenade every year around 14 July, surveying all the deposited spontaneous memorials. A previous publication presented the first results from a multidisciplinary perspective¹ (Emsellem et al., 2021). Building on this work, this chapter will explore how traumatic mourning in its unconscious part uses and modifies the urban space. The reference to psychoanalysis and structuralism distinguishes this research from other works on memorial topography (Antichan et al., 2017).

When the chaos of the attack differentiates everything (urban space, bodies, and words), what forms of differentiation appear, and how do they arise? In the aftermath of the attack, we have been able to identify multiple forms of spatial modifications and differentiations, whether they are the result of political decisions (urban and security reorganisations) or individual ones (spontaneous monuments). As we will show using several examples, these modifications confront the bereaved with two types of loss: a traumatic loss (the absolute void left by the other in their brutal death) and a symboligenic loss (which contributes to the reconstruction of urban symbolic differentiations). This chapter proposes a theoretical articulation of these two types of loss thanks to the psychoanalytical concept of mourning, which also makes it possible to identify movements of resistance to this doubling of loss. Finally, I will conclude with the hypothesis

¹ This previous publication represents a starting point for this original work, in which I deepen the psychoanalytic dimension of what happened in Nice.

that the Freudian concept of construction would make it possible to envisage a theoretical alternative to resilience thinking.

UN-UNDIFFERENTIATED AND UNDIFFERENTIATING MASS DEATH

To the horror of a multiple death, the attack added the further horror of a death that was not only undifferentiated but also undifferentiating, in the sense that the individualised bodies were touched, torn apart, and sometimes mixed together. The dehumanisation of mass death has been joined by the dehumanisation of dismembered, indistinguishable bodies (Vimal, 2019: 41). To put it in terms of the three categories used by Jacques Lacan (Symbolic, Imaginary, Real),² the symbolic dimension—understood in its structuralist meaning as the articulation of oppositional distinctions—was transitorily annihilated, taking with it all possibility of mobilisation and imaginary recognition, in an experience that some specialists call sideration or shell shock. From a psychoanalytical point of view, this traumatic sideration can be defined as a confrontation with the Real.

² This presentation refers to the three categories used by Jacques Lacan to think about all human experiences: the symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real. I offer here a brief summary. Symbolic: the Symbolic is language, but in the sense that Lévi-Strauss thought that the relations of kinship and the exchange of goods were structured like a language. From this language, Lacan retains the signifying elements and extends, beyond the elements of language, the possibility of treating as signifiers everything that can be constituted as a set of oppositions and be characterised by a kind of autonomy with respect to the subject. The Symbolic category can be conceived as the network of oppositional distinctions that are organised between them (and therefore also spatial). Imaginary: a category that proceeds from the constitution of the image of the body insofar as it appears as recognisable and unified. It is therefore to be understood from the image. It is also the register of the specular, the lure and the semblance. Like Hume, Lacan sees in the Imaginary the origin of all sorts of illusions: that of embracing the totality, that of carrying out syntheses, of positing phantasmal autonomies, in particular that of the ego. Lacan envisages the relationship of the Imaginary to the Symbolic as, in language, that of the signified to the signifier. Real: category of what is impossible to imagine and to say. The Real is not only opposed to the Imaginary, it is also what stands beyond the Symbolic. The Real is to be distinguished from reality (the representation of the external world) which is ordered by the Symbolic or by the Imaginary. While the Symbolic is a set of discrete and differentiated elements, the Real is, in itself, undifferentiated. The Symbolic thus has the function of introducing all sorts of cuts into the Real. For Lacan, every trauma is an experience of confrontation with the Real without the mediation of the Symbolic and the Imaginary (Leader, 2000).

The symbolic capacity to produce differentiation has thus been affected at multiple levels. Here are 4 of them:

1. loss of language capacity in the traumatic shell shock;
2. transient loss of social links of urbanity in the flight movements of the crowd;
3. loss of bodily differentiation allowing the victims to be identified;
4. as for space, it is an absolute disfigurement. One of the first aiders to arrive on the scene said: ‘The Prom doesn’t look like anything we know anymore. Nothing you can imagine. It is the apocalypse’ (Magro, 2017: 73).³

However, for each of these losses of differentiation, we have observed the appearance, more or less rapidly, of new signifiers, new formations of differentiation. Where chaos has reigned (Real), erasing distinctions, the human symbolic capacity—individual or collective—responds, by producing or inventing signifiers in order to recover these capacities of articulation (Symbolic), and to allow the return of forms with stabilised and recognisable contours that allow social life (Imaginary). If we take up the four levels mentioned above, what are these forms of response?

1. At the language level, it is the difficult work of speaking, which accepts to come up against this enigma: how to continue to speak in the face of the unspeakable?
2. At the social level, not only were there more or less spontaneous forms of organisation that had to be set up in the emergency, but also the rapid and disconcerting resumption of some of the activities typical of the Promenade des Anglais (jogging, sunbathing, swimming).
3. At the level of the bodies, of the remains, it is the counting, which takes on all its importance here—the counting as a response to the dismemberment, as a restarting of the accounting of the one by one, a restarting of the nominative and symbolic functions (articles in the newspapers about each victim, etc.)
4. What about space? What spatial differentiations have emerged and, above all, how do they arise? It is striking that many of the spatial

³ Translation by the author.

responses to loss, which aimed to inscribe new differentiations, also involved other forms of loss. It is this process, at the heart of the links between space, mourning and signifier, that will be discussed.

REAPPEARANCE OF SPATIAL DIFFERENTIATION, NOT WITHOUT NEW LOSSES

Even before the attack, embellishment work was already planned, but a week later the mayor placed an order to integrate a ‘security and sanctuary’ infrastructure. The political choice was to prevent a similar scenario to the one already experienced: the device should block a 19-ton truck. Thus, as of February 2017, the scene of mourning gave way to a construction site. The 2 km of road travelled by the truck became impassable and was populated by construction crews and machinery. The traces of the attack were to be erased, the fear eliminated, the death contained as quickly as possible (no public consultation was carried out). For the decision-makers, the Promenade had to remain ‘the same’ (interview of Head of Works, 2019). The security system had to be ‘invisible so as not to oppress’ (Head of Works, 2019). A system of cables and retractable anti-intrusion pillars, and the installation of palm trees separating the soft traffic from the car lane and underlining the curve of the Baie des Anges were chosen. The colour white was adopted for this new street furniture in order to ‘make it transparent’ (Head of Works, 2019), in harmony with the blue of the sea. The pavement has been completely redone. The same waterproof asphalt, chosen for its comfort and fineness, now covers the entire length of the beautiful avenue. Traffic lanes have been marked out: white borders, black asphalt for cyclists and red for pedestrians. When questioned, the head of works was pleased to see the Promenade smooth and unified along its entire length, whereas before the attack it was—according to him—irregular and made up of different sections: a ‘stained patchwork’ (Head of works, 2019). We can see how the urban transformation is achieved by articulating new spatial signifiers (corridors, barriers, studs, types of pavement, colours, etc.) with a desire for smoothness and imaginary unification (the Promenade, one and the same).

In an interview with a father who had lost his daughter, he told us of his confusion about not being able to find the place where his daughter had been hit by the truck after a few weeks. ‘It’s subtle because it’s almost

like before, but you can't find the places anymore. Everything has been covered up, buried. I feel it's like buried Roman ruins, another civilisation that has gone over it at breakneck speed. It doesn't exist anymore'. Thus, as this bereaved father expresses it, this urban transformation was the occasion of a new loss. Beyond the traumatic loss, there are other forms of loss that have occurred as a result of the work itself, of the urban response, i.e. the reconstruction of an urban discourse.

It is in this situation that, alongside this profound transformation of the Promenade, a smoothing out of security, spontaneous memorials have appeared. These are testimonies left first by the crowd, and then in the longer term, by relatives or people who felt concerned. These are discreet, often ephemeral practices that are inserted into the folds and interstices of the new urban order. Deposits of objects, flowers, messages, ephemeral traces of ritual and temporary recollection. These memorials thus form new appearances that punctuate and differentiate the Promenade in its space by inscribing marks upon it, but also give it a rhythm in its temporality, in a rhythm of appearances and disappearances, due to their transitory and provisional character. If certain marks are meant to be more permanent (glued or cemented cobblestones on the ground, or plates glued to a bench), they only further emphasise their transient nature: they will inevitably be peeled off, erased, leaving a residue of glue or cement on the asphalt that will itself disappear... In other words, these marks demonstrate a lack, and will themselves become missing, promised to disappear. These new losses are found at the articulation of the singular and the collective. For example, the bereaved father mentioned above, whom we met in January and February 2020, told us that a Christmas tree was put up on the Promenade every year in honour of his daughter, where relatives could leave small notes. When we asked him how the tree was removed afterwards, he suddenly realised that, while in previous years he had called on the services of the town hall for this purpose, this year he had completely forgotten to take care of it! Beyond the tree that disappears, it is also the very idea of the tree that is forgotten and repressed.

Moreover, our anthropologist colleague Pr. Agnès Jeanjean conducted interviews with staff of the public works department (cleaning, gardening), and all of them, in relation to these various tokens left on the Promenade, say that they 'don't touch them'. There is a sacred dimension (in the etymological sense of *sacer*, of the separate) that emerges in these objects or creations, a sacredness that is not necessarily religious but that

gives form to absence, mourning, and that also creates absence, holes in the profane space of the Promenade. From a clinical point of view, this doubling of loss is eminently individual, but individual does not mean private. Spontaneous memorials are situated precisely at the articulation of the individual and the collective. They address the social. In so doing, they participate in the effectuation of this doubling of loss at the collective level. The question is how?

DOUBLING THE LOSS IN SPACE

One of the key points in these observations is that following the spatial chaos ('the Promenade is no longer recognisable, it resembles nothing known'), the appearance of these new forms of spatial differentiation contains in itself an act of erasure or loss. There is thus a doubling of loss in the process of reconstruction. Why speak of doubling? On the one hand, there is a traumatic, frightening loss, the absolute void left by the other in his or her brutal death; on the other hand, there is a loss that would be linked to the very fact of reconstruction, we could speak here of a symboligenic loss, a loss that participates in the reconstruction of symbolic differentiations. In other words, the reconstruction of differentiations is not a simple positive fact (e.g. where there is nothing, there is now something). No: in order for there to be something from now on, the nothing must also be renewed, the nothing must be refabricated, hence loss: loss participates in the fabrication of the something. How can we understand this question from the spatial and psychic point of view?

Michel de Certeau, in his approach to spaces and the urban matter already considered that any positive spatial fact was based on a loss. His approach was based on the persistence of a certain negativity at work in the very act of inhabiting. Structuring negativity: as a subtraction from the positive order of functionalist, urban texts and procedures, a subtraction that would be at the very centre of the symbolic system of discursive and linguistic networks that govern and organise spaces. He called the effectuation of this negativity 'practice'. To characterise what the practices of space do to the built order, Certeau uses the metaphor of the sieve: 'The created order is everywhere punched and torn open by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning: it is a sieve-order' (2011: 107). To practise a space is therefore to dig holes in an order that has already been spatially planned by urban planners, architects, politicians... If we follow de Certeau's thinking, to practise a space is to subvert meaning, to dig

or recreate, to create or recreate a bit of ab-sense, to use Lacan's term (2001: 452).

Ab-sense is an invention to indicate a hole in the language, an impossibility of saying death (and the sexual relationship). Ab-sense can thus be defined as 'the impossibility of determining an ultimate sense; this is seen as an effect of subject structure, subordinated to the intrinsic limitations of the symbolic order' (Koren, 1993: 143). In other words, as far as a patient can follow the meanderings of his or her associations, as far as the analyst can push an interpretation or a construction (cf. below), the discourse inevitably encounters a stumbling block where meaning vanishes, a point where there are no more words, no more signifiers to say... the thing, the Real. In a way that is both close to and different from Wittgenstein, it is a question of identifying 'a lack of meaning, which is not nonsense, but an absence in meaning'⁴ (Rigal-Granel, 2013: 117). Michel de Certeau's hypothesis thus consisted in understanding practices as the creation of places of ab-sense in the urban text.

In 'Empire of Signs', Roland Barthes writes something very similar about Tokyo, and the Residence of the Invisible Emperor, which makes it its 'precious paradox': the city 'does have a centre, but this centre is empty [...] to give to the entire urban movement the support of its central emptiness, forcing the traffic to make a perpetual detour' (Barthes, 1982: 30). We find here again this idea of a lack which participates in the establishment of space, but I insist on the word detour which means the action of diverting from the usual path. What is done on the scale of a city like Tokyo can be seen on the scale of the Promenade's practices: when we come across a spontaneous memorial on the Promenade, we can only go around it, it makes us branch off from our path as walkers, it digs holes of loss in the asphalt of the Promenade. In the same way, the road workers who say that they 'don't touch' the objects, flowers and messages left on the Promenade, make them into something sacred that breaks the order of the public surface. The urban space is therefore a practised place and these practices dig into it, constructing it, producing it against a background of absence and loss.

⁴ Translation by the author.

DOUBLING OF LOSS IN MOURNING

This double loss (traumatic loss/symbologenic loss) also evokes the psychic process at work in mourning. Jean Allouch, in his essential book *Erotics of Mourning in the Time of Dry Death*, written following the death of his own daughter, writes this: ‘mourning is not only losing someone, it is losing someone by losing a piece of oneself’⁵ (Allouch, 2011: 349). How can we understand the part of ourselves that we lose when we lose a loved one? To answer this question, we must first define what a loved one is (or someone we will feel concerned for).

According to Freud (1923) the relationship to the object of love (a loved one) is psychically conditioned by libidinal investment: in other words, my body cannot ensure its satisfaction on its own (this would then be auto-eroticism) and it thus seeks in the objects of love that which can ensure a certain satisfaction. Lacan (1977) argues that, if I hold the other as an object of love, it is because I suppose that it contains something that my body lacks, another object, which Lacan names with an enigmatic letter ‘object *a*’: the missing object that causes desire. This ‘object *a*’ is already lost by the subject, which is why it is the source of his desire. This ‘object *a*’ is not only already lost to the subject (which is why it is the source of his desire), but also unnameable (it is out of language, out of symbolism, unlike the object of love which is nameable). The ‘object *a*’ is thus fundamentally missing and unspeakable: the subject’s desire is marked by absence and ab-sense. But mourning complicates this first approach by showing that this lack must be understood in a relationship of reciprocity.

Indeed, what Freud called ‘mourning work’ is a partially conscious and largely unconscious process. In Psychology, mourning is widely regarded as a conscious and controllable process. However, in psychoanalysis, this term designates the unconscious process of which the subject undergoes the effects without being able to control them. This mourning work is triggered when ‘reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object’ (Freud, 1917: 244). Disinvesting the object allows the libido to be brought back to the ego in order to be

⁵ Translation by the author.

able to desire another object, called a substitute.⁶ This requires time and psychic energy because the task must be accomplished in detail, in the first instance with an over-investment in the lost object: ‘Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hyper-catheted, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it’ (Freud, 1917: 245). In a way, biological death is followed by a second act of death, actively and in detail perpetrated on each of the memories and hopes that bound the departed. The images proliferate before being abandoned. However, for Freud, this second death may be accompanied by some possible compensation: the abandonment of the object investment may be resolved through a strengthening of identifications with that object.

But for Lacan, there is a problem in speaking, as Freud did, of an identification with the lost love object at the end of the work of mourning, because beyond the love object, there is also the ‘object *a*’. Let’s start again. I have lost an object of love, that is, already the image of the beloved, invested with my libido—an image that Lacan notes *i(a)*. But what I have lost that is precious in this other, which I suppose is hidden under his or her image, I do not know it, and yet this is what I must produce in order to separate myself from it. This time it is not only the object that the other was for me, but above all the object of desire that I was for the other, that in which ‘I was his or her lack’ (Lacan, 2016: 166).⁷ This is why lack must be understood in a relationship of reciprocity. ‘I was his or her lack’ means that I was his/her object of desire. The paradox, in relation to common sense, is therefore that it is not only a question of knowing what the other was as an object for me, but what I was as an object for him or her, which implies the question, necessarily enigmatic, of his desire. Enumerating my memories of him or her one by one thus serves to constitute, through the reliving of all these detailed links to the image of the disappeared, the object of desire that I was for them. The work of mourning consists in identifying this object, ‘object *a*’, in order to be able to separate from it later.

⁶ This Freudian position, which implies a possible substitution, has since been criticised and surpassed, notably by the work of Lacan, because it is also necessary to think of what remains irreplaceable in the lost being: the non-substitutive dry loss.

⁷ ‘We only grieve for someone from whom we can say: I was his (or her) lack’. Lacan, Jacques. 1962–1963. *Le Séminaire, Livre X, L’angoisse*. Paris: Le Seuil, p. 166. Translation by the author.

Thus, in mourning, the loss of the object of love is doubled by a renewal of the loss of the object *a*. The human experience of mourning points to this doubling of the loss that each person experiences in their erogenous body. This is why psychoanalysis is attentive to what the bereaved person loses again of him or herself in the mourning process. I quote again Jean Allouch: ‘it is only by being itself lost, graciously sacrificed, that this piece of self satisfies its function of making possible the loss of this someone who has been lost [...] Thus, it ceases to possibly appear, like a ghost or a hallucination’⁸ (Allouch, 2011: 351). So there is a part of me that I lose with the loss of the other, and this second, renewed loss has a symbolic effect, it allows me to separate myself from the dead. We know that the rituals of mourning aim first of all to give a place to the dead, a burial that separates them from the living. In the same way, for the bereaved, the question is to find a place for their desire, the empty place of a lack, when the lost being has come to represent and therefore to block this lack for a time.

This approach also allows us to understand the collective dimension of mourning triggered by terrorist attacks. If we feel concerned by the deaths of people we did not know, if we leave an object as a token, if we participate in marches or public ceremonies, it is because these acts concern and mobilise our being as an object of desire. I participate in these events to remain alive as an object of desire, to be able to continue to say, ‘where terrorism seeks to reduce me to a dead object, I am still someone’s lack’. In a way, this is how we could conceive of the terrorist act from a psychoanalytical point of view: as that which denies the human being his fundamental and constitutive⁹ status of being an object of desire, of being someone’s lack.

All mourning thus confronts the irreducibility of the occasional loss but also the irreducibility of a more fundamental lack. It is precisely these two levels that form the basis of this doubling of loss. In our observations, it seems that this redoubling of the loss is found both at the level of the construction of space and at the level of mourning, like an underlying link that would articulate the two.

⁸ Translation by the author.

⁹ For psychoanalysis, what specifies the human subject is its relationship to desire, which it discovers only because it has first been the object of the Other’s desire.

MOURNING AND SPACE

This is an idea that we can also find in Freud's text *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1909). Freud refers to the monuments in London (the column at Charing Cross, or the one called The Monument), both of which were built to remember tragic events (the death of a queen, a great fire). But, Freud tells us, the function of these monuments must give way to the imperatives and pleasures of the present: which means that we end up mourning the monument itself! Here, the monument disappears as such. We can therefore understand the potential fate of the monument, which would become a political fetish precisely because it cannot erase itself, because it cannot recognise this ab-sense of which it could be the holder-place, preferring instead to oppose it (see our two examples below). One wonders if all thought of space is not thought of mourning, or if all production of space is not in itself mourning.

This is in line with the thesis of Mumford Lewis in his great book *The City in History*: 'Mid the uneasy wanderings of palaeolithic man, the dead were the first to have a permanent dwelling [...] the city of the dead antedates the city of the living'.¹⁰ Thus, mourning and space are much more closely linked than by a mere contextual issue, in our case the attack on the Promenade. In the same way that we can speak of a work of mourning (in the sense that the work is never finished), we can speak of a work of space. To produce, to construct space, is to experience a loss, a founding lack: ab-sense that allows the construction of meaning and spaces. In a way, all construction is a reconstruction. And faced with this background of ab-sense, all sorts of responses come to the fore, consenting to it to a greater or lesser extent, as we shall now see.

¹⁰ 'Mid the uneasy wanderings of palaeolithic man, the dead were the first to have a permanent dwelling: a cavern, a mound marked by a cairn, a collective barrow. These were landmarks to which the living probably returned at intervals, to commune with or placate the ancestral spirits [...] The city of the dead antedates the city of the living. In one sense, indeed, the city of the dead is the forerunner, almost the core, of every living city' (Mumford, 1961: 7).

TWO EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIONS TO DOUBLING THE LOSS

While some emergencies double the loss and thus possibly contribute to the mourning, others, on the contrary, seem to oppose their own loss. Let us take up our two fields: on the one hand, the urban modifications of the Promenade, and on the other, the spontaneous memorials.

As part of the official safety work, a safety cable and bollard system was installed, so that it is as invisible as possible. However, the official discourse that accompanies this installation, still 5 years later, is that it is strong enough to block a 19-ton truck. In other words, while wanting to make the site safe, the official discourse never ceases to remind us of the ghost of the lorry, of its possible emergence, even though a strict repetition is impossible. Not only is traumatic repetition not far away (the device recalls the image of the truck in a strange temporal stasis), but we can also wonder about the possibly anxiety-inducing effect of this discourse, which suggests the imminence of the lack of the lack.¹¹ Thus, where spontaneous memorials excavate absence in their very presence, the discourse on the cable never ceases to remind us of a possible presence where it would be necessary to circumscribe the absence. The urban response and its security discourse imposes its own objection to the collective dimension of mourning, its own opposition to the doubling of loss. But from the point of view of psychoanalytical urban anthropology, the central question remains whether and how each ‘user’ of the Promenade, each walker, will allow himself or herself to practise the cable, that is to say, to pierce this discourse, to divert it, to transform it.

In the same way, our research team followed the astounding fate of the spontaneous memorials left by the crowd following the attack. All the cities hit by these massive demonstrations of mourning have their own way of reacting to them and managing them (Faucher & Truc, 2020). In Nice, these deposits were quickly moved: first to the adjacent medians and pavements, then grouped together on 18 July 2016 under a nearby bandstand. There, they remained in the open air, accumulating for 6 months, after which they were transferred to the municipal archives. It was therefore under the ephemeral memorial of the bandstand in the Jardin Albert 1st that the majority of the testimonies accumulated, throughout the

¹¹ According to J. Lacan, the anxiety affect is not due to the fear of a lack, but on the contrary when an imaginary psychic object would come to fill the subject and make him fear the lack of the lack, like a psychic suffocation (Miller, 2016).

autumn of 2016, then during the Christmas holidays. Specialists agree that this situation is unprecedented in the context of an attack, as tributes are usually quickly and carefully archived. However, left outside for 6 months, all the written messages were erased by the bad weather, and all that remained were objects, mainly stuffed animals, infested with vermin and insects which, once evacuated from the public space, almost contaminated the Municipal Archives, which were literally cluttered with 90 boxes of stuffed animals, to the great dismay of its Director (Duvigneau, 2018).

Thus, the very impossibility of removing objects of significant value—destroyed by time—has led to their disappearance: one loss follows another. Where the classic work of the archivist involves sorting, eliminating, cleaning, then classifying, describing and normalising (it should be noted that all these actions are precisely a technical and symbolic treatment of the loss), it is the weather that has caused the loss, and in an indiscriminate manner. But on the other hand, all that remained were ineliminable objects that carried abjection and chaos with them, as if they carried an embodied part of the Real, overflowing and saturating the Archives. Stuffed animals, so often taken as a paradigmatic example of the transitional object¹² by D. W. Winnicott (1969), can no longer circulate, or transit. The transitional object, whose initial role is to enable separation, becomes here a frozen, saturating object, which can no longer pass through and which, here too, we can ask ourselves what difficulties in the collective mourning process it reflects. Here we discover the variety of responses that consent to or deny this background of ab-sense around which the urban discourse is framed.

In these last two cases (safety cable and boxes full of stuffed toys) we see how the frozen becoming of these objects attempts to object to their own loss. It is here the second loss that is somehow ‘prevented’

¹² According to Donald Winnicott, the transitional object designates the first material object possessed by the infant, but which the latter does not recognise as belonging to external reality, even though it is not part of its own body. Winnicott specifies that it is not the object that is transitional but that it represents the transition. This is shown by the progressive loss of all meaning of these phenomena, associated with the disinvestment of the object. While essential, it is therefore destined to disappear once the work of separation has been completed. What is transitional, then, is the child’s use of the object because ‘it frees the child from the need for the mother herself, becoming ‘more important than she is’. This point is crucial: it is the use that the urban discourse makes of these objects, the fate it reserves for them, that indicates its capacities for separation.

or constantly postponed. Thus, by working on several forms of this redoubling, we can synthesise our conclusions as follows:

1. As a result of spatial chaos, the appearance of these new forms of spatial differentiation contains within itself an act of erasure or loss.
2. These symboligenic losses, although called upon each time, are not necessarily due to the same causes and therefore may not always reflect the same process. It is as if they are possible variations of the spatial forms of the doubling of the loss. Thus, the return of spatial productions would differ both in their positive manifestations, their forms and in the types of loss with which they appear.
3. Finally, this second loss is itself the subject of tensions, of resistance showing the ambivalence in the work of mourning.

TO CONCLUDE: RESILIENCE OR RECONSTRUCTION?

I would like to conclude with a question for debate. The importance of the work of redoubling the loss in mourning, as I have presented it here, seems to be precisely what resilience thinking tends to ignore. Indeed, the concept of resilience is nowadays used both in the field of psychology and in the field of urban research (we speak of urban resilience, or resilient city). Urban resilience is generally considered to be ‘the capacity of the city to absorb a disturbance and then recover its functions following the disturbance’ (Toubin et al., 2012). It is immediately apparent that absorbing and recovering are two operations that do not involve the assumption of loss. Thus, many researchers—sociologists, philosophers, psychoanalysts—question the epistemological foundations and implicit ideologies to which the concept is linked: cult of adaptation, imperative of performance, denial of vulnerabilities, and even political instrumentalisation (Gefen, 2020). Is the need to adapt an obstacle to any subversion? As the philosopher Michael Føessel (2015: 19) writes, ‘if desolation does not call for a return to the past, it does, on the other hand, give rise to the invention of new discourses, new practices or alternative attachments that take their source in the recognition that something has been lost and is missing. It is precisely this recognition that the imperative of resilience obscures’. It is therefore possible that resilience thinking, whether urban or psychological, ignores the creative effects of subjectivising lack and the necessity of this doubling of loss.

Conversely, it is the reference to the ab-sense that allows us to link the urban reconstruction to the psychoanalytical construction in Freud's sense. In a famous text from 1927, Freud notes the difficulty of obtaining a total recollection of the patient due to infantile amnesia concerning the first years. He then distinguishes between two types of intervention by the psychoanalyst: interpretation and construction. If *interpretation* always concerns the detail (missed act, slip of the tongue), Freud proposes the term *construction* to name elaborations that aim to reconstitute and then communicate to the analysand a much wider panorama concerning 'a piece of his early history that he has forgotten' (Freud, 1927: 261). It is precisely because the analysand cannot remember everything (there is also a Real here) that the analyst is led to construct what has been forgotten, whether it be events of reality or fantasies. Freud then compares the work of the psychoanalyst to that of an archaeologist: 'His work of construction, or if it is preferred, of reconstruction, resembles to a great extent an archaeologist's excavation of some dwelling-place that has been destroyed and buried or of some ancient edifice [...] As the archaeologist builds up the walls of the building from the foundations that have remained standing, determines the number and position of the columns from depressions in the floor and reconstructs the mural decorations and paintings from the remains found in the debris, so does the analyst proceed when he draws his inferences from the fragments of memories, from the associations and from the behaviour of the subject of the analysis. Both of them have an indisputed right to reconstruct by means of supplementing and combining the surviving remains' (Freud, 1927: 259). The analyst therefore works with fragments, with signifying shards and debris. Like the archaeologist and like in mourning, he cannot counter the loss, but he makes do with it. Every construction involves mourning. When he communicates a construction to the patient, the essential thing is not the eventual accuracy, but the effect that this intervention provokes, especially if it allows the appearance of new associations and revives the work of the analysand. It is therefore not a question of forcibly recovering a faithful and exact *picture* (Freud, 1927: 258) of the first years of the patient's life, but of helping him/her to better link together elements that keep repeating themselves and that structure his/her desire, that is to say, his/her relationship to lack. Here again, the construction is therefore meaning that is elaborated around an unspeakable lack: the ab-sense.

Let us think of the example of psychoanalytical construction that Freud writes in his text: 'Up to your nth year you regarded yourself as the sole

and unlimited possessor of your mother; then came another baby and brought you grave disillusionment. Your mother left you for some time, and even after her appearance she was never again devoted to you exclusively. Your feelings towards your mother became ambivalent, your father gained a new importance for you,... and so on' (Freud, 1927: 261). This example of construction of which Freud speaks thus consists of a narrative of a traumatic time when the subject was placed in front of the Other's ab-sense, and the intervention proposed by Freud, while naming the Real of the ab-sense, gives it a meaning in order to veil it—and not fill it. This is also what subjective and/or collective spatial practices do, which reconstruct differentiations after their traumatic erasure, which construct or reconstruct a place. Each, in its own way, engages in a process that may or may not favour the renewal of loss and thus pay a tribute to absence and ab-sense. We might add that construction in the Freudian sense refers to the analyst's work of elaboration on scattered pieces, fragments that need to be assembled, in a bricolage (Lévi-Strauss, 1962), not to fill in the lack but to define it in a different way. Many spontaneous memorials are also part of this bricolage practice, which reveals their possible function of psychic and ritual reconstruction.

Clinical attention to this ab-sense necessary to the act of construction would propose an alternative to the thought of resilience, by remaining sensitive to the doubling of loss as necessary to reinvention, but also sensitive to all the responses that are made to it (whether they go in the direction of this doubling of loss or, on the contrary, attempt to counteract it). These responses do not all open the way to the act of mourning in the same way. Urban space is a privileged terrain for observing and hearing the work through which spatial differentiations reappear, the mourning they summon and allow, that is to say, the types of loss with which they appear.

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CHAPTER 12

Vertigo

Harry Man and Endre Ruset

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Vertigo

The loss of equilibrium, a

sense the body has been destabilized.

It can be 'objective', the feeling the body is

revolving in

space, or 'subject

ive', where

objects revolve

around the

body. *Dysacusis*

The loss

of the ability to

process

sounds.

Walking rounds

When a

clinician

leads a group

of staff

to visit the pa

tients for

whom they are

jointly

responsible. *Wind*

chill

The loss of heat

when the body

is struck by

wind at a given

speed, a given temp

erature or humidity. *Aph*

onic speech The loss in the

ability to speak louder than a

whisper. *Veiling glare* The loss of

contrast due to light scattering

within a lens system, as in an x-ray image intensifier. *Ageusia* The loss of a sense of

taste. DAPRE (Daily Adjustable Progressive Resistance Exercises) A programme

of isotonic exercises to allow for individual differences in the rate at which a

patient may regain the strength of an injured part of their body. *Akinesthesia* The

loss of the body's sense of movement. *Helplessness* Symptoms may include the loss

of the ability to make autonomous choices. *Damages* The losses compensated finan

cially by the defendant to the plaintiff. *Anapnea* Following a period of halted resp

iration, the restoration of regular breathing. *Approximate* Drawing two tissue sur

faces closer together as in the repair of a wound, or when drawing together the

two bones of a joint as in physical therapy. *Family Integrity* Family members'

behaviours that collectively demonstrate cohesion, strength and emotional bond

ing. *Reconstitution* The ongoing repair of damaged tissue. *Grief* A kind of love you

can't fall out of.

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PART IV

Victimhood and Trauma



Hands

Alejandro Acin and Darryn Frost

So, he fell down on the bridge on his front, and I jumped in just grabbed his wrists and I lay on his back. People came and started hitting him and punching his head and I was shouting, “No, don’t hit him, don’t hit him”.

I shifted my body weight to protect Khan’s head. And that was an interesting thing because reflecting on that I’m really proud of that, because we had isolated the threat and it’s just barbaric to hit a man who can’t defend himself.

Darryn Frost is a survivor of the London Bridge Attack 2019 and a co-founder of ‘Own Merit’. In 2023, he received a Queen’s Gallantry Medal for his brave actions on 29 November 2019. On that day, he risked his own life to stop an armed attack by Usman Khan. Despite the horrific

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nature of the attack, Frost continued to see Khan as a human being. When police arrived at the scene, they shot the attacker.



Photograph by Alejandro Acin, Visual Artist, Designer and Educator, www.alejandroacin.com.

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Temporal Conflicts and the Victimhood Communities (Un)Bound by Memory

Ana Milošević

INTRODUCTION

Does time really heal everything? Time, of course, is not a healer, yet it is believed that a painful and difficult situation will seem less bad as time passes. How can we capture and explore the role of time in the experiences of the victims? How do relationships between the past, present, and future, inform, manifest in, and shape the lives of those affected by terrorism? Is the memory of trauma suffered frozen in time and minds like a photograph, immune to the passing of time? This chapter will engage with questions of the temporality of victimhood within communities bound by memory as a shared experience. It will analyse time as a fluid, rather than static, and multifocal, rather than narrowly perceived category reflected in victims' experiences.

A terrorist attack is an unexpected act of violence, a watershed moment that shatters the continuity of one's existence. The 'trauma' is thought to emerge from the shattering events themselves, creating a reaction of 'being traumatized'—experienced as an immediate and unreflexively given

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response (Alexander, 2012: 7–8). Such a rupture caused by terrorism manifests in both dimensions of memory: that of the lived experience (private) and the acquired knowledge about the past (public). Over the course of this chapter, I will look at how private and public memories forge, dissolve, or inhibit the formation of victim communities as groups of individuals aggregated around a shared trauma. How does the passing of time affect memory on personal and public levels? How do the victims perceive time in their experiences and their public manifestations? With time, what kind of meanings and values do these victim communities assign to trauma?

Exploring time and temporality is critical to move beyond the supposed linearity of post-terrorism processes and override the assumption that time leads directly to dealing with the past, healing, resilience, gaining truth, justice, or ‘closure’. This study will point out the alternative temporal frameworks that shape victims’ everyday experiences and contestations around memory and trauma. Drawing on a study of 36 cases of terrorist attacks in Europe over the last 50 years, I trace temporal dimensions of victimhood and temporal conflicts between the needs and demands of society as a whole and those of the victims themselves: needs to restore a sense of peace and security, and needs to find paths towards dealing with the trauma. Those temporal conflicts, as this chapter will show, are multiple; both internal and external. They are visible not only in different perceptions of time between the victims and society, but also in the work of victims’ organisations. Similarly, each victim in his or her way faces the internal temporal conflict in grasping the meanings and extent of trauma and placing it on his/her temporal plane of life.

Temporal conflicts are ‘differences in experiences, constructions and uses of time amongst people, groups, societies or institutions that can give rise to or legitimate power relations’ (Mueller-Hirth, 2017: 6). More specifically, I engage with temporal conflicts as a source of divergent timelines, expressing the length of time the victims have or need to have in order to focus on or address the causes and consequences of their victimhood. Moreover, the complex and intersecting timelines that come with the experience of victimisation over time affect their future. By examining victims’ perceptions of the future, influenced by the meaning and sense-making of their trauma, I will point out the fragility of memory itself.

In applying a temporal analysis specifically to the issue of victimhood after terrorism, I will analyse how (in)direct victims of terrorism perceive

their experiences and consequences of terrorism over time. This analysis will allow us to trace and theorise three key temporal dimensions of victimhood starting from the traumatising incident—the ‘moment zero’. In doing so, the chapter will explore the factors that shape temporal dimensions of victimhood such as age, gender, the existence of previous trauma, degree of acquired agency, and the extent of harm suffered. What this temporal causal modelling of victimhood attempts to highlight are the key causal relationships in time series data coming from more than 100 interviews with (in)direct victims of terror attacks from 1969 to 2022.

In contrast to the supposed linear temporality of personal and societal recovery from the trauma of terrorism, the consequences of past violence continue to impact victims’ lives and are exacerbated by contemporary experiences of victimisation. Witnessing or even hearing about new terror attacks can often rewind the clock, setting off the victims’ personal progress of recovery. In this study, I identify several areas of temporal conflicts: the speed of collective/individual healing and its associated objectives, such as e.g. ‘resilience’; (immediate) state securitisation of memory/(gradual) victims’ claiming of ownership over memory; permanence/impermanence of public memory; and the pace of social and personal transformation. This temporal analysis of victimhood thus not only highlights the mismatch between victims’ needs and political and cultural expectations of closure, but it also draws attention to the temporality of memory itself—mutable and not immune to deterioration with the passing of time.

METHODOLOGY

This study included more than 100 interviews and 8 focus groups conducted over 6 years of research and follow-up with the victims of terror attacks between 1969 and 2022. The selection of cases and interlocutors allows for a temporal analysis of victimhood. Interviewees range from the descendants of direct victims of the attacks of The Piazza Fontana bombings in Italy (1969) and victims of *the Troubles* in Northern Ireland in the 1980s to local residents witnessing the bow and arrow attacks in Kongsberg, Norway (2021). The multitude of cases examined reflects the variety of motives and methods used by the perpetrators (either as ‘lone wolves’ or of a more organised nature).

The motives behind terror attacks in this study are multiple and sometimes compounded: ethno-nationalist, far-left, far-right, antisemitism, homo- or transphobia, and Islamic extremism. Equally, the methods employed by the assailants are patently diverse, including explosives and bombings, stabbings, mass shootings and killings with different types of cold arms and firearms to hostage-taking situations, and mass murder using motorised vehicles (e.g. car, cargo trucks). In terms of victims' groups, the data comes from 19 countries predominantly in Europe. Cases from the US, New Zealand, Mali, and Tunis are included in the analysis to deconstruct methodological nationalism of rights-based interpretation of the victimhood. I intentionally sought to include EU and non-EU victims of the attacks regardless of the location where victimisation occurred, their access to justice, and the presence or lack of restorative justice instruments.

All interviews were conducted in person. Participants were recruited either through victim organisations or through personal contact through my work with the *Radicalisation Awareness Network* and the DG Home Affairs (European Commission), in my capacity as a memorialisation expert. Interviews were semi-structured, addressing themes such as the impact of time on personal memory, victim identity, access to compensation and justice, the role of media, personal expectations regarding public memorialisation. In addition, interviews explored public expectations towards 'healing' here operationalised as 'closure' and 'resilience', as well as prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE), and other forms of meaning-making of trauma in the present and the future. Over six years of data collection, I have conducted 8 focus groups within the same pool of participants (cases presented in Table 14.1) and practitioners, policymakers, and media representatives that operate in the narrow field topic at hand. For instance, while discussing the role of media in the construction of victimhood, journalists were invited to engage in the discussion.

Table 14.1 Breakdown of cases examined in this study 1969–2022 (Table by Ana Milošević)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Terrorist incident</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Ideology/Group considered responsible</i>	<i>Primary method</i>
1969	<i>Piazza Fontana</i>	ITALY	Domestic far right	Mass murder, bombing
1983	Turkish Embassy	PORTUGAL	Armenian Revolutionary Army	Bombing, explosives
1987	Zaragoza barracks bombing	SPAIN	ETA	Car bombing
1993	Warrington bombings	UNITED KINGDOM	Provisional IRA	Bombing
1998	Omagh bombing	NORTHERN IRELAND	Real IRA	Bombing
2000	The Buesa assassination	SPAIN	ETA	Car bombing
2001	The September 11 attacks	USA	Islamic extremism	Airplane hijacking, Suicide attacks
2004	Atocha train station	SPAIN	Islamic extremism	Bombing
2005	London attacks	UNITED KINGDOM	Islamic extremism	Bombing
2011	Oslo and Utøya	NORWAY	Domestic far right	Mass shooting, bombing
2014	The Jewish Museum	BELGIUM	Islamic extremism, antisemitism	Mass shooting
2015	Bamako hotel attack	MALI	Islamic extremism	Hostage taking, mass shooting
2015	<i>Charlie Hebdo</i>	FRANCE	Islamic extremism	Mass shooting
2015	Bataclan & <i>Stade de France</i>	FRANCE	Islamic extremism	Mass shooting, bombing
2015	Hypercacher kosher supermarket	FRANCE	Islamic extremism, antisemitism	Hostage taking, mass shooting
2015	Copenhagen	DENMARK	Islamic extremism, antisemitism	Mass shooting
2015	Bardo Museum attack	TUNIS	Islamic extremism	Hostage taking, mass shooting
2016	Brussels attacks	BELGIUM	Islamic extremism	Suicide bombing, mass murder
2016	Nice attack	FRANCE	Islamic extremism	Cargo truck mass killing

(continued)

(continued)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Terrorist incident</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Ideology/Group considered responsible</i>	<i>Primary method</i>
2016	Berlin Christmas market	GERMANY	Islamic extremism	Cargo truck mass killing
2017	Manchester Arena	UNITED KINGDOM	Islamic extremism	Suicide bombing, mass murder
2017	Barcelona attack	SPAIN	Islamic extremism	Minivan mass killing
2017	Westminster attack	UNITED KINGDOM	Islamic extremism	Vehicle ramming, knife
2017	Stockholm truck attack	SWEDEN	Islamic extremism	Cargo truck mass killing
2018	Strasbourg attacks	FRANCE	Islamic extremism	Mass shooting
2019	Christchurch mosque shootings	NEW ZEALAND	Right wing, Islamophobia	Mass shooting
2019	London Bridge	UNITED KINGDOM	Islamic extremism	Stabbing
2020	Vienna attack	AUSTRIA	Islamic extremism	Mass shooting
2020	Hanau attacks	GERMANY	Domestic far right, racism	Mass shooting
2020	Lugano	SWITZERLAND	Islamic extremism	Stabbing
2021	Kongsberg	NORWAY	Lone wolf perpetrator	Bow and arrow killings
2022	Bratislava	SLOVAKIA	Domestic far right, anti-LGBT	Mass shooting

Several ethical safeguards were included in the research design of this study from the initial research idea to the dissemination of its results. While working with the victims of terrorism, efforts were made to adopt preventive measures to avoid redundancy and oversampling, consider the vulnerability and sensitivity of the interlocutors, and importantly, to avoid potential re-traumatisation that might occur as a result of participation in this research. Some interviewees for instance were victimised twice in two different and unrelated terrorist attacks. The physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of the victim must not be negatively affected by intrusion into the grief and other coping processes that might change and evolve over time.

When attempting to recover the memories of victimisation itself, I first researched the availability of video and audio documents of previously given testimonies. If the victim/survivor decided to share their own story, necessary time and space were given to enable the interlocutor to do so at their own pace. The identity, age, gender, and extent of psychological, physical, and emotional damage to the individuals are reported only in their wording and with their consent. Although all research participants were over 18, several interviewees were minors at the time of their victimisation. This aspect of participant selection allows us to better understand the temporality of victimhood, and to better grasp its evolution and eventual temporal conflicts that might emerge from it.

To complement the data from desk research, interviews, and focus groups, the analysis included field notes from attended commemorations (national and the EU), visits to attack sites and other places of memory—identified as important in the construction of private and public memory of the attacks. For instance, I have visited annual commemorations in front of the Bataclan theatre for six years in a row to capture the ritualised expression of commemorations and the agency of victims. The analysis is informed by a constructivist grounded theory approach, emphasising the reflexive meaning-making and meaning-interpretation of research participants and researchers as well as the subjective experiences and narratives of participants (Charmaz, 2006).

TEMPORAL DIMENSIONS OF VICTIMHOOD

Do you sometimes have the feeling of entering a loop? We carry out the weight of the past—so painful—like a backpack full of stones. We try to move towards a new future and sometimes we seem to have a glimpse

of it. We manage to open a window and a breath of fresh air enters and renews our energy. But then... the ghosts from our closets and the force of the destruction of that unresolved past pull us back. We return to the exhausting loop, to the same unanswered questions, to the knot in the stomach that becomes a ball of yarn, a tangled skein that we do not know how to undo. The sensation of turning repeatedly on the same wheel to the fatigue of our spirit and our hopelessness... The life that was not possible projects its shadows over us, over the future that wants to emerge, yet it brings us back to the one that was taken away from us.

(Sara Buesa [daughter of Fernando Buesa, assassinated by ETA in 2000])

Memory is a trigger that activates and re-activates lived experience, with all its perceived and lived impact both in the present and for the future. For many victims, the process of thinking back to that specific moment is in itself an unwelcome and painful experience and a path they wish to avoid at all costs. Some victims, like Sara, have revealed that they involuntarily replay the traumatic incident in their minds, or are only able to talk about the traumatic incident, entering a sort of a loop. It goes without saying that every traumatic experience is different. How we cope with such experiences largely depends on our own personalities, identities, and many other factors that can potentially amplify the consequences of trauma such as a prior trauma, disability, or even our own gender and age. These internal factors shape alternative temporal frameworks, reflected in victims' everyday experiences and the ways they process trauma.

Yet, before it becomes a memory, the trauma of 'becoming a victim' creates a rupture in one's own personal plane of existence, affecting not only the body and the mind, but influencing the individual's past, present and the future, and their own personal identities to the core. Victims,¹ indirect and direct, often refer to the traumatic incident as a moment 'frozen in time'. 'Time stands still'² for those who personally experience and witness violence as well as for those who are struck the most by its consequences. As such, a terrorist attack is felt not only individually by (in)direct victims, but also by the 'shell-shocked' collective (see Truc,

¹ They are seen both as direct victims (those who suffered the harm) and indirect victims (those affected by the crime).

² Interview with Jorgen Watne Frydnes, the managing director of the Utøya island, 11 March 2020, Paris. Full interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUY9HC RIMUM>.

2018). Society members ‘feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever, and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways’ (Alexander, 2004: 7–8). Yet, the time, while being endless, is felt by everyone differently.

Psychologising trauma’s impact on social groups and even nations suggest homogenising different trauma-related experiences and projecting their varying effects and consequences from the level of individuals to the level of a collective. Firstly, this is due to the organic understanding of memory as something natural and biological, a universal human capacity. In addition, memory is seen as a universal right of both individuals and ‘the collective’—a social group based on similarities (e.g. religious, ethnic, sexual) that ignites ‘a collective consciousness’. Such an organic bond is often thought of as being immune to the passing of time. Thirdly, defining terrorism as an attack on the state implies that victims of terrorism, although innocent and ‘with unblemished moral capital’, are seen as a randomised sample of the main target—the collective (Schmid, 2012). This makes their experiences particularly vulnerable to the collective appropriation of trauma.

The complexity of manifestations of trauma and memory on both the individual and collective level is, however, far more nuanced. They are situated somewhere in between the capacity and willingness to remember, voluntary and involuntary action, visible and invisible consequences. Memory is above all a product of personal experience before it is a public knowledge about the past or a collective trauma. As such, private memories and the type of victimisation experience itself have a profound impact on victims’ self-understanding, which affects their life and identities in multiple ways. In addition, these play a crucial role in victims’ positioning in the legal-judicial quest for truth, justice, and reparations. Legal interpretations of victimhood³ are quite narrow in defining who the victim is, and what the rights and needs of the victims are. In the legal interpretation of victimhood, memory has a witness-bearing quality that attests the causality between the perpetrators (those who inflict harm) and the victims (at the receiving end). Yet, legal systems, trials, and compensation

³ During trials, for instance, the testimony of a victim can be supportive of establishing a timeline of events that led to the victimisation experience and illustrative of the extent of the consequences suffered.

Temporal dimensions of victimhood

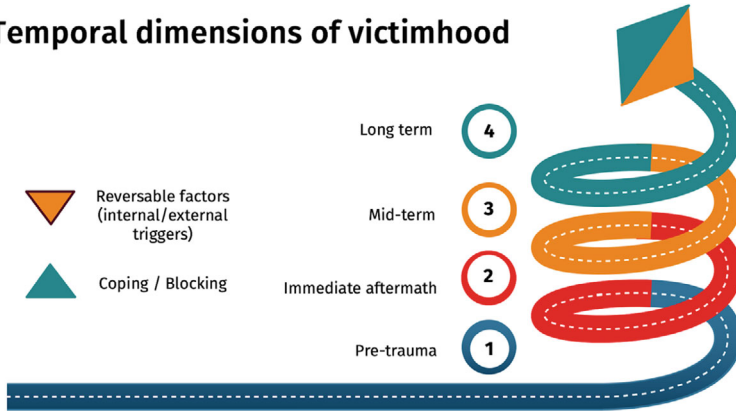


Image 14.1 Temporal dimensions of victimhood (Graphic by Ana Milošević)

schemes are not equipped to deal with the temporality of victimhood and its conflicts.

How do (in)direct victims of terrorism perceive their experiences and consequences of terrorism over time? The analysis based on Image 14.1 suggests that on a personal level, we can trace and theorise three temporal dimensions of victimhood by connecting the past, present, and the future: the year zero (immediate aftermath to 1 year); mid-term (1–5); and long term (5–+). In what follows next, I will present a detailed discussion of the perception of time and its effects on victimhood. I will point out the temporal conflicts that characterise victims' experiences in dealing with the trauma over time.

THE YEAR ZERO

The traumatic incident itself is a 'moment zero' inciting a reaction: absorbing the shock of experience and immediate consequences of victimisation. In the immediate aftermath both (in)direct victims and society absorb the shock of terrorism, yet the modality and the intensity of collective and individual responses to harms suffered are patently diverse. The mother of a young boy killed in the Brussels attacks (2016) explains this

quite succinctly: ‘It was a breaking point of my life’, as ‘the foundation of my life has been destroyed’.⁴ Guillermo Pérez, brother of Pablo, killed in the 2017 La Rambla attacks, testifies of his ‘flashbulb’ memories (Brown & Kulik, 1977)—a sequence of actions performed—efforts to reach out to his brother on the phone, travelling to Barcelona with his family to identify the remains of his brother behind a screen. Yet, over the first days and weeks came the realisation and acceptance that Pablo was really gone. It was then that the anxiety, loss, and grief concentrated in Guillermo’s memory created, in his own words, ‘an interior rupture’.⁵

Loss and violence can produce immediate but also delayed and prolonged consequences on individuals. An immediate consequence is, for instance, a sudden loss of some or all physical or cognitive capacities. Walter Benjamin, a victim of the Brussels attacks (2016), woke up after the blast at the airport to a devastating image: a man next to him was headless. At that moment, Walter realised he had lost his leg (Benjamin, 2018). Like Walter’s, physical recovery of direct victims can be very long and complicated, resulting in long stays in hospital beds, sometimes even years, due to numerous surgeries and further medical complications. Importantly, delayed reactions can emerge over the course of days and even years after a trauma occurred.

Psychological consequences can be severe, and recovery is protracted, leading towards destructive behaviours and actions (self- or other-oriented). Victims suffering from extreme forms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) caused by traumatic incidents have been known to seek refuge in drugs and alcohol abuse and engage in other forms of self-destructive behaviours. Yet, from a psychological perspective,⁶ most people interviewed in this study (around 80%) over the years reported having experienced some mild, transient distress such as sleep disturbance, fear, worry, anger, or sadness. Some of them returned to ‘normal’ function without any treatment. Others with more persistent symptoms of distress sought community-wide support and professional help, a process that is still ongoing and which over time often involved many setbacks.

⁴ Field notes: Public testimony given at the EU Commemoration, Brussels, 10 March 2021.

⁵ Field notes: Guillermo Pérez, testimony given at the EU Remembrance Day for victims of terrorism. Brussels. 12 March 2022.

⁶ A licensed trauma psychologist helped formulate the questions, assisted the focus group meeting and the interpretation of these results.

The anniversary of a traumatic event, especially the first, is a moment of ‘settling scores between the expectations and reality’—particularly in terms of the perceived success at gaining public recognition, truth, justice, compensation, and adequate (or any at all) assistance⁷ as a victim of a terrorist crime. On a personal level, the first anniversary creates a temporal conflict—a crossroads between the past and the future. As explained by one of the Utøya survivors, a minor at the time of his peers’ mass murder in 2011: ‘By the first anniversary, either you define the event, or the event defines you’.⁸

‘It is *the day*’, a young girl⁹ who survived the bombing in Brussels said to me, as we were taking the staircase of the Maalbeek metro (2017) to the exact location of the attacks. ‘The day’ was the first time she was returning to the place where, precisely one year before, she was suddenly confronted with the possibility of dying. Returning to the location, at the origin of trauma, is emotionally hard for the victims and survivors. For many, it is a rather unwelcome experience they are not ready or willing to face, especially not such a short time after the attacks. ‘Christmas time is such a terrible moment for me’, shares Astrid Passin, who lost her father in the Christmas market attack in Berlin (2016). The fear of reliving those moments, of memory ‘flooding in’ and ‘overwhelming’ her is very strong.¹⁰ Others who chose to return shared that they came back ‘different persons’¹¹ than they were a year ago.

The degree of those consequences, their eventual reversibility or management, and ways in which assistance is provided over the first year

⁷ *Field note, Brussels, 10 March 2023.* A major issue in the attainment of victims’ rights has been related to the issue of non-residents. If the victim does not legally reside on the territory of the State where the terrorist act occurred, that State should co-operate with the State of residence in ensuring that the victim receives assistance and is eligible for compensation. The Spanish Minister for Home Affairs, Fernando Grande-Marlaska, during his speech at the European Remembrance Day for Victims of Terrorism in Brussels, announced that Spain will promote the application of measures to improve the situation and care for cross-border victims of terrorism, i.e. those who suffer from an attack in one Member State but are nationals or residents of another. Of course this would still include all victims who are non-residents from non-EU countries.

⁸ Interview, Bjørn Ihler, survivor of the Utøya attacks, Milan, Italy. 29 May 2022.

⁹ Interview, anonymised female subject, Brussels, Belgium. 22 March 2017.

¹⁰ Interview, Astrid Passin, survivor of the Berlin Christmas market attack. Brussels, Belgium. 10 March 2019.

¹¹ Interview, anonymised, Brussels, Belgium. 22 March 2017.

are crucial for the psychological, physical, and emotional well-being of the victims. The intrusion into the grief and mourning by the media in this phase, eager to communicate about the terror as a spectacle, can negatively affect the victimisation experience and leave permanent marks. Pressuring a victim or a witness to give a video testimony under emotional duress or publicly sharing an image of the victim in visible distress (crying, hurt, naked) creates a ‘permanent reminder’ of that state of shock. It is indelible evidence of the traumatising experience. Some materials were taken without consent. Yet, even if consent was given, the victims often feel that their overall emotional and psychological well-being has been abused for the sake of newsworthiness.¹²

Temporal conflicts emerge also as a result of societal and political efforts at closure and installation of public memory through commemorations and monument building. Fast or untimely removal of spontaneous memorials made by society in the aftermath can interrupt the collective mourning process, by taking away a public canvas for the expression of emotions (e.g. Milošević, 2017). In addition, locations where the attacks unfolded are situated in the urban environment such as supermarkets, theatres, metro stations, or airports quickly reassume their initial purpose, leaving little if any trace of violence. By the first anniversary, there is an important acceleration of time with a pressure to ‘return to normality’ (Milošević, 2018): politically reassuring the public of their safety and security, giving promises of non-repetition and the certainty of penalty for the perpetrators. Yet, societal and political expectations about closure evolve along different timelines than those of the victims.

This is visible in criticism surrounding the installation of first anniversary monuments and state-led commemorations, seen as ‘a rushed

¹² This finding is derived from the examined terror attacks that unfolded after 2011, with e.g. victims reporting learning about the death of loved ones from the media (Norway, Belgium) and being harassed on twitter and on the phone while the victimisation was still ongoing (victims of the Utøya attacks). In 2021, Survivors Against Terror (SAT) published a report based on a survey of 116 survivors of terror attacks including those at Manchester Arena, London Bridge, Westminster Bridge and Parsons Green in 2017, the mass shootings at a Tunisia tourist resort and a Paris concert venue in 2015, and the 7/7 London Tube and bus bombings in 2005. The report found that 59% experienced what they considered to be media intrusion, half of which (48%) came within 24 hours of the attacks.

attempt of the authorities to give a closure – set in stone'.¹³ State memorials, often very imposing architectural structures, are made with the intent to commemorate by leaving a permanent footing in space and time (Milošević, 2023: 235). However, public memory cannot be considered in isolation from political attempts at sense-making and inscription of meanings the event has for the society. State securitisation of memory, with its meanings and values, might not be necessarily aligned with those of the victimhood communities. Over the first year, victims' own making-sense of trauma takes only slow and fragile shape. Instead of 'memory set in a stone' as an aspiration of a monument at the permanence and immutability of memory and imposition of its meanings, the victims are initially more prone to engage with memorials that appeal to the aesthetics of 'nature' (see Heath-Kelly, 2018). One such example is the memorial created by the architect Bas Smets in collaboration with victims of the Brussels attack. In the Sonian Forest in Brussels, a tree is planted for every direct victim. Such a memorial emphasises the passing of seasons and the progression of time, enacting two temporalities through the representation of both the past event and subsequent societal and personal recovery (Milošević, 2023: 236).

Symbolic recognition by the state and the public remains crucial for the victims to feel part of society again. Yet, it demands a degree of victims' ownership of memories and active participation in the process of memorialisation. The year zero is the most sensitive period for the victims and compounded with strong emotions of loss, grief, anger, and sadness, to name a few. In the first year, many victims do not feel empowered or ready to share their experiences publicly through testimonies, or to participate actively in the creation and implementation of memorial initiatives made in their honour. The (perceived) lack of victims' agency and authority in the process of state-led memorialisation tends to lead to the feelings of alienation and abstraction of the image of the victims. In other words, the first-year anniversary reflects divergent timelines in the recovery from the attacks. For societal actors, it is an attempt at closure; for the victims, it is a moment when those visible and invisible wounds come to the surface.

¹³ Interview anonymised, the Brussels attacks victim, Brussels, Belgium. 11 January 2017.

MID-TERM (1–5)

Coping with the consequences of victimisation is reflected differently in victims' everyday experiences and contestations around memory and trauma. While the passing of time and its effects on victimhood is subjective, most of the interviewees in the focus groups agree that the second temporal dimension lasts a minimum of 3–5 years. Mid-term, victims are confronted with the realisation that time does not stand still. Life does go on, and it puts pressure on the victims and survivors to explore and find meanings and give sense to their experiences. This can be traced in the self-perception of the victims themselves and the words they chose to depict their experiences as well as in their actions of claiming ownership of their experiences and narratives. Both revolve around the personal processing of trauma—ranging from many stages of denialism or alternatively acceptance, propelled by claiming one's agency in the process.

From a distance of almost 20 years from a traumatic incident, Sudhesh Dahad, a survivor of the 7th July 2005 attacks in London, can segmentalise the temporality of his victimhood and illustrate how the passing of time reflects in his own experience. Sudhesh explains how over the first two years he tried to disengage with his experience by immersing himself in work. 'I tried to distract myself and convince myself that everything would be ok if I just got on with my life. Two years after it happened, I found myself promoted to a rather high-pressure role just because I'd been heavily immersing myself at work and managed to achieve quite a lot. But the high pressure was the tipping point – I absorbed it for about three years without realising the impact it was having on me'. He suffered from constant anxiety over everything—work, home life, health, and finances, affecting his sleep until 'the whole thing became one vicious circle'. By 2010, five years after the attack 'I began to realise this and took a different role at work that would give me a little breathing space'.

The passage of time can put important pressure on individuals to deal with, engage, or disengage with a traumatic experience, the memory, and the consequence of it. Given the complexity of becoming and being a victim, it is not surprising that the consequences of these experiences have prolonged effects. The issue of recovery and temporality of victimhood is also compounded with time.

Every time something new comes along, it is difficult to heal the old wounds when you have to start coping with new challenges. For many survivors, their home becomes the only place they feel safe, so when my home was burgled in 2011, it compounded the trauma that I was still trying to recover from. Now nowhere felt safe. In the following years, I also had to deal with the sudden death of my father and my marriage's ending. It all gets thrown into the mix and then you don't know which emotions are due to what. It becomes quite complex for mental health professionals to disentangle what is really going on and how best to treat you.

Some victims decide to move out of the country, change their lives, and start over by never speaking of their trauma again. Sudhesh shares that he is 'not sure it gets easier with time if you still feel like you have to be exposed to the same environment day in, day out. Some of my fellow survivors left London or even left the country altogether to start new lives because it just wasn't getting any easier for them'. By suppressing memories, keeping silent to avoid stigma and the 'victim' label, as well as changing of the surroundings, some victims seek to restore the normality that was violently taken from them. Some, like Virginie, who survived the attack in Zaventem airport, needed seven years just to be able to reach out to other victims. Opting for anonymity rather than oblivion, some victims choose to disengage from their victimhood identities seen as an obstacle for living a life as free as possible from the burdens of the past.

It is not uncommon to learn from young survivors, some of them minors at the moment of victimisation, that victimhood can be a source of stigma preventing them from succeeding in the job market. Others, over time, choose privacy like the family members of two youngsters killed at the Utøya, who did not permit the use of their children's photographs in *the 22. juli senteret museum* in Oslo (created to commemorate the victims the tragic events of 2011). For some, media presence is remembrance work against oblivion—a way of keeping the public eye on their plea for memory and justice. The family of young Ferhart Unvar, killed in Hanau in 2020 by a far-right extremist, is one such example of how indirect victims become active memory agents in promoting tolerance, and condemning hate and racism. The work of the education campaign *Bildungsinitiative Ferhart Unvar* testifies to the crucial role that grassroots initiatives play in breaking the static image of 'the victim' by shedding light on individuals, on people who lost their life to terrorism.

Some victims display reluctance to identify with the word ‘victim’ due to its connotations of passivity and vulnerability. They tend to choose alternative wording to describe their experience, such as survivor (see Milošević & Truc, 2021). Self-perception and self-validation are seen as more important than terms that come with legal definitions and rights bestowed. Reflecting on their understanding of victimhood, some of my informants could identify the exact moment of their transformation from a victim to a survivor. Matteo Dendena, a relative of a victim in the Piazza Fontana attacks in 1969 Italy, believes that a moment arrives ‘when one decides to take ownership of their own story’. For another young man from Norway, the traumatic experience affected his self-understanding and that of his experience. The trauma he suffered has had a transformative effect. ‘Before the attacks, I was an introvert. But I felt the need to speak out about my experience. I dared to speak out. It is important not to be a victim, I would like to be called a survivor. I want to contribute; I don’t want anyone to feel sorry for me’.

This kind of thinking is not unique but shared by many victims and survivors of terrorism I worked with over the years. Reclaiming one’s agency is crucial for sense-making about the experience of victimisation and its life-altering consequences. Yet, how the victims perceive their own traumatic experience and what label they want to use to describe themselves is a deeply personal issue. Sometimes, it’s a matter of choice based not only on their personalities, but also affected by their experience of victimisation.

LONG TERM (5-+)

‘Time goes too fast’, says Florian Henin, who lost his father in the 2015 Bamako attacks when he was only 16. And with the time fleeting ‘there is a fear of forgetting or leaving behind’. The greater the distance from the ‘moment zero’, the higher the possibility that the victimised individuals assign a more permanent meaning to their experiences either by means of (non)acceptance or sense-making. ‘For years I denied that there was any effect on me’, but ‘rarely a day goes by without me thinking about the events of 7/7. It’s not that I think about the day itself but more about the consequences, and the consequences if something like that should happen again’.

Over time, a traumatic experience and the associated loss, pain, and grief settle gradually into memories and identities of the victims, but

often such feelings can reemerge. Sudesh's testimony, like Sara's (quoted earlier), illustrates time as a spiral rather than linear category, and memory of a trauma as a trigger that resets the measurement of time passed. 'Sometimes the fears fade away and the complacency sets in again. And then something might happen to trigger those fears again. The attacks in Manchester, Westminster and London Bridge are examples of such triggers. They remind me of our vulnerability and then push me back into the mode of being hyper-vigilant when I'm in crowded places'. Long term, there is a realisation that the clock cannot be unwound. It is then when the ghosts of *ifs*—unlived futures, unlived lives, unfulfilled expectations, and dreams, and missed moments and chances start to weigh in. 'I wish that my father could see me graduate', 'I wish that my daughter could meet her niece', 'I wish my parents were here'. The victims share that on a personal level, memory of trauma remains a deep wound, with time being a slow and unpredictable healer.

'The worst thing that can happen is to forget', explains Philippe Vansteenkiste, the leader of V-Europe, an association of victims formed after his sister Fabienne lost her life in the Brussels attacks. 'Not forgotten means to be seen, which means the victims are getting recognition for their experience, which restores a sense of self'. In the long term, the role assigned to memory bears historical witness to the attacks and their victims. This is particularly visible in the work of victim organisations that become 'gatekeepers' of that memory and who strive to maintain public interest in their work of remembrance. Keeping the public's interest in their plea for memory and justice after terrorism becomes very difficult with the passing of time and dissolving political and societal interests. 'Memory is a civil responsibility. It is the responsibility of everyone. Yet, stories of attacks that happened a long time ago are hard to make relevant, the attack might not resonate as much with younger generations, but the idea behind it can. A terror attack is an attack on democracy, it can still take place today'.

Interviewees are very resolute about the transformative power that a traumatic event has on their future. For instance, Bjørn Ihler, in his own words, went through 'a transformation from a personal storytelling to a subject matter expert'. Over more than 10 years, Bjørn's professional trajectory builds on his work with former violent extremists and his own experience as a survivor of the 2011 terrorist attack in Norway. Long term, community engagement and peer-to-peer support are among the priorities for many victims as a means of sharing their own stories and

experiences and making-sense of their trauma. Many parents, relatives, and friends of the people who lost their lives in terror attacks are active memory agents working in the field of prevention and countering of violent extremism. Their professionalisation as subject experts due to their experience comes as a result of work and engagement with victim organisations which provide testimonies in schools and prisons, and engage in memorialisation work.

The passage of time, importantly, also affects the physical and symbolic remnants of memory and the ways these are used. Monuments are not only a tool for remembering the past, they are also put in service of present needs (for resilience building, reconciliation, dealing with the past, anti-radicalisation) and the future (promises of non-recurrence, awareness raising, knowledge transmission). Utøya, for instance, is one such hybrid example. It is a thriving space for learning about democracy as well as a mass murder location and an open air museum. The site has gone through a heritage-making process aiming to preserve the authenticity of the cafeteria—a still image of the tragedy that bears witness to the bullet holes in the walls and lives of those left behind. In Italy, more than 50 years after the Piazza Fontana attack, however, there are no memorial reminders of the bombings that took place in one of Milan's most central squares.

Utøya and the Piazza Fontana are two contrasting examples, yet many locations have undergone some sort of light transformation to publicly accommodate the memory of the atrocities that took place. For instance, in Madrid's Atocha station, there is a memorial bearing witness to the 2004 attacks. In Brussels' metro, artistic installations (announced weeks after the attacks) and a wall with citizens' messages bear testimony to the attack in 2016. Other places such as the Bataclan theatre, or the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris have memorial plaques installed on the external walls of the buildings. In Nice, where in 2016 a perpetrator drove a lorry into the crowds walking down the Promenade des Anglais, for five years a temporary monument stood enclosed in a front garden of a museum, Villa Massena, also used as a luxurious event location. For the 6th anniversary a permanent memorial was unveiled right on the Promenade.

Not only the creation but also the maintenance of these places of memory and monuments can give rise to criticism by the victims' groups as being unmindful of their memorial needs and the dignity of the victims (e.g. 'hidden from sight', errors in names on plaques, or no names at all) (see RAN & Milošević, 2021). When authenticity and

recognition of victims' memories are threatened by the passage of time, new temporal conflicts emerge. The passage of time increases the invisibility of places of memory in the urban space. Remnants of past(s) lose their visibility as citizens become accustomed to their presence—they become decorative rather than significant. The impact of time on memorial spaces is manifested also through their gradual deterioration. The physical deterioration is accentuated by poor maintenance and diminished interest. Marble stains, dirt and dust accumulate, and names and numbers fade. Without public engagement with these places of memory and monuments, the memory itself becomes invisible. Ironically, it begins to symbolise forgetting, something that the victims and their descendants are fighting against.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has theorised and analysed the impact of time and temporality on memory of and for the victims and survivors of terrorism. For the victims, time travels in a spiral rather than in a linear manner. The chapter has demonstrated that three temporal dimensions of victimhood can be traced in the experiences of victims/survivors. The first, beginning with the traumatic event itself and ending with the first anniversary. The second, mid-term, lasts up to 5 years on average before the third, reflecting the long term, sets in. All three dimensions are plagued with temporal conflicts that affect victimhood in a myriad of ways. However, the relationship between time and victimhood is not measured and viewed as linear, having a beginning (trauma) and an end (healing, or other forms of trauma resolution). In contrast, the temporality of victimhood is not following a straight line but rather it is seen as a spiral, in which time and victimhood at times come close, or alternatively collide.

The key argument is the issue of temporality of victimhood in relation to society and the victims themselves. Private and public dealings with the memory of terrorism follow different timelines and are burdened by irreconcilable uses of the past and meanings assigned to trauma. Public memory's aspirations at durability and immutability, as endless and timeless, are fickle. The constellation of political and societal actors that manage the process of memorialisation is changing frequently, and loyalties and affections change as well as the utilitarian value of the past. As

such, public memory is at odds with temporality of experienced victimhood as, over time, such memory spirals back to the pre-trauma stage, transforming into knowledge about the past.

Almost instantly after the attacks, society, seen as a collective victim of terrorism, bounces back with resilience, healing, and recovery objectives exercised through ‘duty of memory’. Yet, these are the long-term objectives for those who suffered the harms directly. In the immediate aftermath, for the victims, memory is an unwelcome but unavoidable experience: it is raw, undefined, and an emotionally burdensome manifestation of trauma. Over time, that traumatic experience deeply penetrates all spheres of life, not only the body and the mind but also personal identities, influencing both the present and the future. The memorial objectives of state-led memorialisation, in contrast, start by defining that future, inscribing in stone the permanent, derived meanings that trauma has on the collective and for the victims themselves. For the direct victims, the meanings of trauma are neither static nor linear. The past, present, and the future co-exist in every experience of victimisation, and every path towards grasping those temporal realities is different. As one of the survivors explains: ‘Time may not be healing all wounds. There will be things in life that will always hurt or be tender. Yet, I am releasing the idea that I must get over things to find peace. I can again be happy and still have some things in my life that hurt’.

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‘He Must Continue Living Through Us’: The Role of Living Memorials in Continuing Bonds with the Deceased in the Aftermath of Terrorist Violence in France (2015–2016)

Yordanka Dimcheva

INTRODUCTION

On 11 March 2020, during the first national day of tribute to the victims of terrorism, the President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron announced the creation of a Memorial Museum of Terrorism in Suresnes, in the immediate proximity of the historically laden ‘Memorial to Fighting France’ dedicated to the French fighters in the Second World War. Both the symbolic location of the future memorial site and the political will to ‘pass on to future generations the recognition of the victims of terrorism’¹ point to the desire to create a place that evokes national resilience and resistance in the face of extremist threats (L’Élysée, 2021). The project for

¹ Translation by the author.

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the Memorial Museum is only one example of the numerous commemorative practices that have emerged after the two deadliest terrorist attacks committed in France in the new millennium—the 13 November 2015 simultaneous Paris attacks and the 14 July 2016 lorry ramming attack in Nice. Spontaneous grassroots memorials and survivor groups' campaigns have eventually led to the installation of memorial plaques at the site of each targeted venue in Paris, a project for a memorial garden in tribute to the victims that will come into effect in 2025 (LANDEZINE, 2022) in the French capital as well as a permanent memorial on the Promenade des Anglais six year after the terrorist attack (RFI, 2022).

While the role of permanent memorials and public forms of memorialisation in mediating death and shaping communal experiences of loss on a societal level has attracted significant scholarly attention (Davies, 1993; King, 1998; Winter, 1995, 1998; Young, 1994, 2000), individual memory-making commitments and affective practices of remembrance in the aftermath of terrorist violence have often remained in the shadow of grand commemorations (Allen & Brown, 2011). Only few studies have considered the impact of public memorials on advancing individual recovery and the role of memorialisation in channelling collective emotions in reaction to traumatic events (see Milošević, 2017). Moreover, little attention has been paid to the role that affect-laden forms of memorialisation play in supporting bereaved families in finding meaning in their experiences of loss and coming to terms with grief. Drawing on in-depth interviews with bereaved parents in the aftermath of terrorism in France, this chapter aims to expand our understanding of the role of memory-making activities and living memorials in giving a deceased loved one a place in the hearts and on-going lives of the living. The chapter will argue that, in contrast to permanent memorials whose unveiling could be experienced as a symbolic 'ceremony of separation' with the deceased (Attig, 2002: 103), living memorials hold an inexhaustible capacity for memory.

While for much of the twentieth century, therapeutic discourses have considered attempts to continue bonds with the deceased an indicator of pathology in grief, Klass et al. (1996) study has offered new understandings of grief. They demonstrate that by finding places for the dead in their on-going lives, bereaved individuals can rebuild their lives in a healthy way. There has also been an increasing interest in the social and cultural diversity in grieving and remembrance, such as fostering

links with the deceased that hold a variety of personal meanings (Bradbury, 2001; Valentine, 2008), which challenges the dominant therapeutic model of 'severing ties' (Freud, 1917). For instance, Allen and Brown's (2011) qualitative study of the commemorative practices after the 2005 London bombings presents an embodied form of remembrance, which they coin a 'living memorial'. They follow Esther Hyman, who dedicated herself to continuing the memory of her sister Miriam, a victim of the 7/7 attacks, by founding a charitable foundation in her name. By emphasising the embodied acts of caring in enacting remembrance and commemoration of the lost loved one, Allen and Brown (2011) demonstrate how living memorials allow for the loving give-and-take to continue after the death and thus represent a lasting source of bonding with the deceased.

Drawing on Klass et al. (1996) insight into the role of continuing bonds in the grief process and Allen and Brown's (2011) concept of living memorials which enact commemoration through affective labour, this chapter will offer a phenomenological analysis of the meaning that diverse memory-making commitments hold for bereaved parents in the aftermath of terrorist violence and loss. The study also aims to expand upon the lived experience of grieving and explore how 'living' forms of memorialisation challenge what is commonly understood as commemoration. A novel focus on the affective could change how we think of inert memorials, such as memorial plaques and even gravesites, and challenge the traditional scholarly view of the solace and reconciliation they offer in the aftermath of violent loss.

Based on semi-structured interviews with two parents—Stéphane Sarrade and Anne Murrís—who lost a child in the 13 November 2015 Paris attacks and the 14 July 2016 Nice attack respectively, the chapter will analyse how bereaved individuals find value and meaning in such embodied and affective practices of remembrance. Following Allen and Brown (2011), the chapter promotes a broader understanding of memorialisation than a memorial space or a gravesite and stresses the embodied and relational dimension of keeping memory alive. The memory-making activities and living memorials in focus in this chapter differ in form, time of occurrence, and meaning attributed to them. However, similarities emerge in the affective function of those living memorials and their role in continuing bonds in light of the loss of a child. By outlining the ways in which living memorials differ from grand state or communal projects for commemorating victims of terrorism, the chapter will argue that affective

memory-making labour does not only contribute to the enduring remembrance of the lost loved one, but also presents a way of continuing bonds with the deceased as part of the individual grief process.

AFFECTIVE REMEMBRANCE AND CONTINUING BONDS WITH THE DECEASED

The experience of losing a family member as a result of terrorist violence represents a watershed moment for individuals and bereaved parents in particular, as forgetting often proves to be impossible and their lives are irreversibly split into ‘before’ and ‘after’. The traumatic loss of a child is also characterised by a perception that one has lost control over the trajectory of one’s life, while feelings of helplessness, passivity, and heightened anxiety overwhelm the bereaved individual (Attig, 1991: 386). The loss and traumatic damage caused by the attack cannot be encapsulated, nor can life go on as usual. The choicelessness of death and bereavement triggers feelings that the world is beyond one’s control, and the bereaved often experience themselves as powerless in the face of the unravelling of major life events following their loss (Tennen and Affleck 1990, cit. in Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995: 17). The impossibility to reverse such events or change their consequences has the potential to trigger a complicated grief, which consumes the bereaved person’s whole life and being and, as a result, could negatively impact their psychological well-being and social role (Altmaier, 2011).

Death, especially when caused by violence which the bereaved experience as senseless, has a profound impact on meanings as parents are suddenly faced with the violent rupture of an intimate connection, the traumatic renouncement of unfulfilled hopes for their children, and the painful ‘what if’ that is integral to untimely death. In such instances, grief could be particularly challenging and protracted as it ‘opens all parent meanings to question’ (Rubin 1993, cit. in Rosenblatt, 2000: 187). Parents may be faced with a crisis of meaning and begin to question their place in the social and professional world, the meaning of everyday activities, and even their capacity to simply wake up and be productive and capable of caring for others (Rosenblatt, 2000: 187). Neimeyer (1998: 83) argues that the attempt to reconstruct a world of meaning is central to the experience of grieving. This view aligns with Gilbert’s (1997: 103) claim that coming to terms with grief and finding a resolution is intertwined with attributing meaning to loss. However, when the death of a

loved one is sudden and violent, attempts to make sense of the loss might often be unsuccessful and protracted (Currier et al., 2006). Moreover, expressing feelings and finding the right words to describe one's emotions in the immediate aftermath of trauma might be particularly challenging as bereaved individuals tend to feel distant, numb, and severed from reality in the early stages of mourning (Schick, 2011: 1848). Finding a creative, non-verbal expression of these feelings could thus be particularly helpful in those moments as a way to counteract the silence and isolation of the experience.

Traumatic loss and subsequent denial can trigger an urge for creativity and a search for ways to recreate the lost loved one. Creativity, as embodied by diverse commitments to remember and pay tribute to victims, is often used by survivors as a form of an inner struggle for mastery over grief-ridden trauma. In addition, creative memory-making activities do not only hold the potential to bear witness to loss, but also affirm the enduring meanings of the lost loved one's legacy in the on-going lives of the living (Attig, 2002: 28). The creativity deriving from loss could be appreciated as an investment of life with meaning and purpose, which affectively embodies the memory of the lost one. Allen and Brown (2011) have coined the concept of 'living memorials' to designate creative memory-making commitments of survivors and bereaved families in the aftermath of extremist violence. These differ from conventional inert memorials in their affective function of weaving 'thick relations of care and emotion' with the lost one at the level of life rather than that of symbolic commemoration (Allen & Brown, 2011: 312). Examples of such memory-making commitments that commemorate the life of the lost ones, instead of commemorating their death, can be founding an educational bursary, getting a memorial tattoo, or dedicating oneself to charitable projects that recall the personality and legacy of the deceased. The affect, care, and emotions imbued in living memorials constitute an affective labour which underpins the continuing relationship with the intimate one lost to terrorism (Allen & Brown, 2011: 325). Unlike passively experienced violent loss and traumatic recollections, a living memorial requires an active engagement, a self-commitment, and a socially engaged agent who makes active choices in the goal of keeping the memory of a lost loved one alive. Allen and Brown (2011: 316) thus refer to the affective labour of remembrance as a 'felt relation' which links past and present and transforms memories into 'an ongoing, living project'.

As a result, the care labour of the bereaved individual is transformed into a medium which enduringly commemorates the deceased.

The act of memorialisation is also thought and felt as a way of caregiving and preserving a connection with the dead through the active commitment to their memory and keeping it alive. The enactment of commemoration through a living memorial thus not only aims to preserve the memory of the lost one, but also the very embodied relations with the one being remembered. The most significant feature of living memorials is therefore their capacity to draw tangible links between lives and bodies and to affectively connect victims and others who, despite the fact that they might be strangers, will continue in some way what the deceased are no longer able to. As a result, the embodied act of remembrance envisions both a commemoration of the dead and a possible transformation of the lives of the living (Allen & Brown, 2011: 319). The relationship between remembering and caring at the heart of living memorials makes the two purposes overlap and emerge in a single, transformational one. In those lines, the living memorial does not merely preserve the legacy of the deceased, but also symbolically prolongs and expands it beyond the life-death boundary (Allen & Brown, 2011: 323–324).

By contrast, psychological models of grief have emphasised the importance of acknowledging and facing the loss as a prerequisite for coming to terms with trauma and moving on in life (Bowlby, 1980; Freud, 1917; Worden, 1991). For the majority of the twentieth century, it has been considered that achieving an emotional detachment from the dead person—by allocating them a place within one’s biography in the form of memory—would allow the bereaved individual to ‘resolve’ grief, move on to the present and envision a future again (Howarth, 2000: 127). Freud’s (1917) view of mourning as a precise psychical task requiring the bereaved individual to detach themselves from hopes and memories they used to hold for the dead, however, has been challenged by Klass et al. (1996) cross-population study. They made the impactful argument that mourning could be achieved when the bereaved develop ‘continuing bonds’ with the deceased (Klass et al., 1996). Their study has thus come to replace the previously dominant model of grief in the academic discourse of ‘severing ties’ (Freud, 1917) with the lost one as a condition for the bereaved individual’s ability to reinvest themselves in new attachments. Howarth (2000) builds upon the insight of ‘continuing bonds’ (Klass et al., 1996) with the aim of revising what is commonly understood as ‘the boundaries between the living and the dead’ and (re)introducing

a more fluid perception of the diverse forms of remembering to which bereaved individuals turn as a way of integrating the lost loved ones into their lives.

While contesting the marginalisation of continuing relationships between bereaved individuals and their deceased relatives by discourses and practices of modernity, Valentine's (2008) study of 25 bereaved individuals and their narratives of grief points out the complex nature of human attachments which may continue in the aftermath of loss. Her study makes the compelling argument that 'letting go' and 'keeping hold' of the deceased person are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Valentine, 2008). Valentine's (2008: 162) work also illustrates how attempts by bereaved individuals to continue bonds with the deceased testify not only to an enduring personal attachment to the lost loved one, but also to profound, far-reaching, and complex social events that allow memory to acquire a new, independent meaning. Reflecting on the complexities and tensions inherent to grief, Worden (1991: 51) stresses the need for different individuals to follow a distinct path in their grieving process in order to be able to find an emotional place for the deceased in their lives. Instead of relinquishing the relationship with the dead, the bereaved individual should be encouraged to find an emotional place for the deceased in their life in a manner which does not preclude them from new emotional investments. In light of the challenges to the dominant psychological discourse wherein 'grief work' requires the severing of ties with the deceased, Worden (2008) refines his notorious 'tasks of mourning'. The latest edition of his book prescribes that in order for the bereaved to complete the mourning process, they should pass through the stages of acknowledging the reality of loss, work through the pain of grief and consequently find an enduring connection with the deceased in the midst of embarking on a new life (Worden, 2008: 50).

BEREAVEMENT THROUGH A PHENOMENOLOGICAL LENS

This chapter, then, offers an interpretive phenomenological analysis of the lived experiences of two parents who have lost a child in a terrorist attack to provide an in-depth understanding of how the bereaved reflect upon their loss, grief, and the contingent nature of their post-attack worlds. The choice to focus in particular on those two interviewees has been inspired by their lasting commitment to transforming the physical absence of their children into an enduring connection with them by reinscribing

the legacy of their lives into a living memorial. In addition, what is of particular interest for the purposes of this chapter is the parental commitment to keeping the memory of the deceased alive, which has not only transformed the way they deal with the pain and anguish of bereavement but also their post-attack world, by ‘bestowing’ on them a new mission that they ‘inherit’ from the deceased. The search for meaning and the importance that bereaved individuals attribute to different forms of remembrance and commemoration will be discussed in light of their experiential significance for the individuals.

The choice of method is underpinned by the phenomenological belief that we can best understand human beings from the experiential reality of their lifeworlds (van Manen, 1997: xi). By using experience as a starting point, the phenomenological study aims to acquire an understanding of the bereaved parents’ lived experience of loss and subsequent commitment to keeping memory alive. My research involves a close analysis of the parents’ bereavement narratives, produced during interviews (conducted online and in person) and our sustained contact over time. Simultaneously, I am aware that the words spoken during the interview encounters, follow-up email exchanges, and in-person meetings can never fully convey the actual sensibility of the lived experiences of loss, and that those reflections on lived experiences are always recollective (van Manen, 1997: 10). The method’s distinct perspective towards experience and language thus revolves around the nature of bereavement ‘not as a problem to be solved but as a question of meaning to inquire into’ (van Manen, 1997: 36). It aims to offer a textual expression of the contingency of bereavement and its impact upon parents.

The qualitative, open-ended interviewing thus produced highly personalised narratives of finding oneself at loss of meaning after the death of a significant person, facing protracted grief and waking up to a commitment to continue bonds with the deceased child through memory-making activities. The phenomenological approach also allowed research participants to move backwards and forwards between the traumatic experience of the past and the continued battles and commitments in the present, in a manner which offers insight into the depth of human experiences of a challenging nature. During a fieldwork trip to Nice in November 2021, I had the chance to recontact Stéphane by email and to meet Anne in person. The renewed contact provided me with an insight into their immediate responses to the challenging task of preparing to testify at the

historical trials in the Palace of Justice in Paris and recalling the memory of their deceased child while facing the accused in the dock.

The cyclical process of re-reading and re-thinking the interviews and ethnographic data during the data analysis aligns with the ontological assertions of the study; that lived experiences are highly subjective and that the interpretive understanding of phenomena is theoretically infinite (van Manen, 1997). The choice of an interpretive phenomenological analysis is also underpinned by my intention to highlight and critically engage with the challenges of intersubjective understanding in emotionally charged research encounters, instead of dismissing affective recollections, silences, and trauma-induced repetitions as unscientific. I therefore consider my active presence and subjectivity not as a hindrance, but as a means through which to engage with the experiential lifeworlds of research participants through empathy and to offer them a space to remember their child (Howarth, 1998: 4). Moreover, the process of contacting, interviewing, and re-encountering Stéphane Sarrade and Anne Murriss during my data collection in France confirmed for me the importance bereaved parents attribute to talking about the life and memory of the deceased person as a way of regaining a sense of the child's tangible and active presence in their lives (Walter, 1996: 12–15).

SEARCHING FOR MEANING IN THE AFTERMATH OF A VIOLENT LOSS

Meaning is an inextricable part of people's life and sense of purpose, and yet profoundly traumatic events can cause the shattering of individuals' sense of control, purpose, and connection to the outside world. When senseless violence causes a loved one's death, bereaved individuals often feel that the violent blow has stripped life's meaning and purpose away from them, along with their perception of safety and security. This is particularly relevant in the cases of bereaved parents who have suddenly been confronted not only with the shock of a violent loss and the resulting trauma, but also with the loss of private hopes and imagined futures for their child. The experience of loss and complicated grief explains the bereaved parents' searching behaviour and their difficulty in coming to terms with the reality of death (Moos & Schaefer, 1986: 11; Neimeyer, 2000: 549–550; Worden, 2008: 67). One of the most difficult tasks in resolving any loss is to make sense of it (Boss, 1999: 118). In the face of the violent rupture of the parent–child relationship and the unsettling

feeling that one has lost control over how one's life unravels, bereaved parents demand that their loss is not meaningless.

When Stéphane Sarrade learns of the death of his son, Hugo Sarrade, at the age of 23, in the terrorist attack against the Bataclan concert hall in Paris on 13 November 2015, he finds himself at loss to come up with any logical explanation or meaning behind the indiscriminate violence that has taken the lives of 130 people and led to the long-term physical and psychological trauma of hundreds of others. The loss of his son confronts Stéphane with the daunting challenge of finding meaning in an event that has eroded his sense of purpose overnight and turned his world into a disordered and unsafe place. The disorientating and painful experience of loss suddenly comes to challenge the foundations of his world, founded upon logic and reason—as demonstrated by his over 30-year long career in the sciences and research as Director of Energy Programs at the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA). The challenge of the traumatic lived experience and the complex process of meaning-making that Stéphane is grappling with transpire through his struggle to come to terms with the violent loss of his son. Years of trying to understand, dozens of encounters with other bereaved parents and counterterrorism experts, and working on himself were necessary for Stéphane to be able to integrate the experience of loss within his inner world built upon order, rationality, and meaning. The overwhelming grief, anger and trauma caused by the simultaneous terrorist attacks, which, in Stéphane's words, 'have brought France to its knees', quickly come to haunt him and take on an all-consuming part in his life.

I was like you, educated at university and trained to try to understand, to find meaning in things. On 13 November 2015, which is when I lost my son Hugo who was 23 years old at the time, I was confronted for the first time in my life with something that did not make sense. (Stephane Sarrade)

Stéphane's account highlights the impossibility of rationalising the violent loss of a child that formed an integral part of his lifeworld. The significance of this is eloquently demonstrated in the loss of his sense of self in the aftermath of Hugo's death. Stéphane's efforts to recover meaning and a sense of purpose thus stand for an attempt to recover the part of self that has been constructed through the parental relationship

with his son (Bradbury, 1999: 176). The violent 'removal' of the young person who has been murdered inevitably implies a loss of future and raises an awareness of the painful discrepancy between the world 'after' and the one that 'should be'. Stéphane's struggle to 'relearn the world' (Attig, 1991: 393) in the aftermath of loss finds expression in his desperation to attach meaning to the event and in his dedication to prevention of radicalisation and fight against obscurantism. In embarking upon a search for coherence and purpose in the life profoundly transformed by the endured loss, Stéphane's grief constitutes a process of 'reconstructing a world of meaning' in the aftermath of a sudden, traumatic death (Neimeyer et al., 2010: 73).

During my entire life and especially in my work with students, I try to teach them to find meaning in things. There was also deeply inside me this vision of saying: 'But it's incomprehensible! How did young boys, who were generally the age of Hugo and who were born in France, find themselves with weapons in this concert hall on 13 November? How did they end up killing my son?' This is something that quickly haunted me and on which I had to work. [...] And then, in parallel, there was this work of memory 'He must continue living through us'. This is the reason why I started talking to different media soon after Hugo's death. (Stephane Sarrade)

The grief over the sudden loss of a child is bound up with the sense that they might be forgotten and that their loss may be meaningless as states and societies fail to address the violence and injustice at the heart of such losses. When the terrorist attack on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice on France's National Day in 2016 takes the life of Anne Murriss' daughter, she finds her life shattered within seconds. Camille Murriss is only 27 years old when a 19-ton cargo truck is deliberately driven into the celebrating crowds on the symbolic for the French Riviera walkway. The disarray and profound suffering inflicted by the violent death of her child and the insensitive way in which the judicial police announce the tragic news to the family push her mother Anne into a complicated and protracted grief. At the same time, the shock of death and the impossibility of seeing the body due to its physical state reveals how the missing corpse has turned into an impetus for the bereaved parent to search elsewhere for the child's affective presence. The love for her daughter Camille and the refusal that others should go through the violence of such experiences give Anne the strength and lucidity to gradually transform her trauma and grief

into a memory-making commitment that draws a powerful connection with Camille even after death. Between the painfulness of memory and the unbearability of forgetting, Anne chooses to make keeping Camille's memory alive her life's mission.

The process of meaning reconstruction for Anne thus entails preserving the relationship with the deceased child in a manner which ensures a thread of Camille's affective continuity in the life of the living. Anne's individual battle for memory and prevention of radicalisation quickly takes on a collective dimension when she commits herself to keeping alive not only the memory of her daughter, but also of all victims to the terrorist attack and transform the immeasurable loss of human lives into something that counts and carries meaning for society. Each time we spoke, Anne's eyes filled with tears and her voice began to shake at the very thought that the loss of her daughter and many others might count for nothing. By investing herself in the victim support organisation established very soon after the terrorist attack, Anne is able to symbolically counterbalance the horror she has been through and gradually regain control over her life. Beauty, art, and creativity become Anne's tools in her attempt to not only come to terms with loss, but also to regain a sense of self and purpose by reinvesting her life with meaning and resilience that extremist violence has sought to shatter (Aberbach, 1989: 21).

After the loss of my daughter, there was something that crossed my mind. I refused that she died for nothing and I said to myself that I must fight as a person and as a mother, a mother who holds the memory of her daughter. There is a continuity between her existence and my fight. [...] So, I went into this fight for memory and prevention and sought to add an artistic side of beauty and elegance to it. It was always my theme. For me, it's more soothing. When I immerse myself in certain things that are important such as the judicial trial, it's painful and distressing for me. It makes me angry. I have to be able to rebuild myself as best as I can. I have to be in themes that allow me to transform my suffering instead of leading me to additional suffering. (Anne Murriss)

Klass et al.'s (1996: 212) argument that part of the resolution of parental grief is 'making the pain count for something' is confirmed by the bereaved parents' efforts to ensure that the affective presence of the deceased child continues in their on-going lives. The loss of the physical presence of the loved ones pushes both Anne and Stéphane to look for

memory-making commitments that would allow them to make 'a transition from loving in presence to loving in separation' (Attig, 2002: 116). The parental commitment to ensure that loss is not an end in itself, but that it means something, allows them to recover and reconnect the pieces of their lives shattered by intense grief and trauma. It also gives Anne and Stéphane the inspiration and strength to look for an enduring place for the dead in the personal and social worlds of those they have left behind.

TRANSFORMING LOSS INTO A LIVING MEMORIAL

In the stark reality of the loss of a child, the funeral does not mark an end to parents' grief, nor can grand commemorations or the judicial proceedings alone resolve grief. The parental need for memorialisation is underpinned by some vivid and unique memories they keep of the loved lost one and the time they have spent together. The recollection of unique personality traits and fond memories offers Anne and Stéphane purpose and creative resources to commit themselves to memory-making activities that aspire to intellectually bring back the deceased in all their complexity and idealised individuality. At the same time, the commitment to remembering the loved lost ones and continuously reinscribing their legacy in the lives of the living does not stand for a progressive coming to terms with loss nor aims to eventually relinquish the ties with the deceased as promoted by stage theories of grief. Instead, this chapter argues that the parental commitment to a living memorial represents an attempt to continue the bonds with the deceased and eventually find an affect-laden way of celebrating the part of their loved one that is still present and mourn the part that is lost. By committing themselves to initiatives which are inspired by the life of their children and what mattered the most to them, both parents symbolically continue to 'have' what they have 'lost', albeit in a transformed relationship (Attig, 2010: 189). In this sense, the commitment to a living memorial responds to the central challenge in grieving which is 'learning to love in a new way, to love someone in separation' (Attig, 2002: 330).

Obviously, in all my actions, I want to restore Camille. Camille was a young woman who was very invested on a humanitarian level, who was very altruistic. [...] She did a Master's degree in a Business School and was the president of the humanitarian association in it. During her holidays, she would travel abroad to participate in humanitarian missions. This was

something really powerful in her life. After her studies, she was the head of a marketing project in a Parisian marketing agency, but she quit her job to do what was more important in her life – helping others, helping children. [...] So, somehow, my investment for the memory of all the others was a way to continue everything that Camille was in her lifetime. There is a main reason – it is my fight for survival, for resilience. It is also the continuity of who she was. (Anne Murris)

The affective presence of Camille embodied by the multiple photos in Anne's office indicated to me the continued parental involvement with the deceased and the need for a tangible reminder of the passionate and dedicated young woman, whose contagious positivism and altruism have made a difference for many children in South America. The photographs simultaneously mark an absence and testify to a continued affective presence in the thoughts, mind, and the everyday environment of the bereaved parent. Yet, it is Anne's unwavering commitment that interweaves her life with the life of Camille and grants her an affective afterlife through the continuation of Camille's projects. In order to pay tribute to her and to promote her values, Camille's family entrusted 'HOPE', a humanitarian organisation promoting equality, with the continuation of a humanitarian mission to help children in need in South America, a cause which was particularly close to Camille's heart. By making Camille's legacy her own, Anne experiences the transformative power of her daughter's affective presence, and it offers her solace and a purpose in the midst of her mourning. Thanks to Anne's investment in keeping Camille's memory alive, the values and meanings of her legacy will remain untouched by death. Camille's affective presence will hopefully be discovered and integrated into the lives of young people for whom her altruism has made a difference. The continuation of Camille's humanitarian projects also demonstrates how the social being of the deceased does not necessarily come to an end with death. The affective labour of the bereaved parent provides a powerful source for the on-going substantial and precious connection with the deceased child.

Another telling example of continuing bonds through the affective commemoration of the deceased child's life rather than death is Anne's involvement in Noël Smara's project to place 86 pebbles in tribute to the victims of the Nice attack at more than 6,000 metres above the sea level in the mountain range of the Himalayas. When Noël, a paramedic at the Nice University Hospital and president of the association 'Exploits

Without Borders', contacts the victim support association that Anne is at the time involved with, she immediately embraces his voluntary mission. The project not only aims to pay tribute to the victims and the rescue teams that saved human lives on the night of 14 July 2016, but also carries a charitable, civic, and educational value. The pebbles are painted in the colours of the French flag by disadvantaged children from the 'Saint-Éxupéry' School in L'Escarène. During the journey, clothing, school supplies, and computer equipment offered by the University Hospital Centre of Nice are distributed in the villages of high altitude in the Himalayas region. The vision, efforts, and active process of working together of all partners to the project transform what might at first glance be perceived as an abstract and unrelatable initiative, into a living memorial that, in Anne's vision, stands for memory, hope, and a future.

While other members find the idea to be lacking a concrete purpose apart from its humanitarian value, Anne's involvement in the memory-making project is affectively tied to her inner representation of her deceased daughter because it points to places and times that had been significant in Camille's life. Moreover, the voluntary project is experienced as a gift by Anne as it gives her a sense that the voluntary mission affectively recovers her daughter, and that her inner representation of Camille takes on an embodied form despite her physical absence. The inner recovery of the loved one through the living memorial sustains and deepens the affective connection between the deceased and the bereaved. In those lines, the living memorial helps make loss meaningful for the mourning parent as it captures unique characteristics of the deceased child and draws attention to the value of her life and irreplaceable nature. It also affectively links the parental trauma of loss to the impetus to remember and make life by transforming the experience of loss into something that counts.

As soon as I saw Noël's project, I cried. There you go. I want to be sincere with you. This project may seem pointless, pretentious and very personal, but reading about it reminded me of my daughter. [...] The last images I had of Camille were from her humanitarian trip to Argentina when she was in the highest village in the world. I see pictures of my daughter from this humanitarian mission. There was no running water there. She came down every day to see the children in the village. [...] When she was little, we called her 'pebble'. This word has a particular resonance in my head.

As soon as I saw this project, I said to myself: 'I need to invest myself in it'. (Anne Murriss)

The commitment to charitable projects, which, instead of marking a closure to grief, strive to maintain an affective presence of the lost loved one, is apparent in Stéphane's testimony as well. The university bursary that Stéphane has founded not only carries Hugo's name, but it will also allow students to do research in Japan, the country Hugo was amazed by after visiting it many times together with his father and where he wanted to do his PhD. While pointing at the wounded temporal dimension of trauma and the 'what if' of the life cut short, the living memorial dedicated to Hugo holds a powerful capability to mobilise an affective investment in and around trauma and create a space where the intimate rupture of a father-and-son bond transforms into a charitable action. By aspiring to fulfil Hugo's dreams through creating educational opportunities for others, the living memorial also embodies a part of the lost child and integrates his affective life into the parent's on-going inner life and social bonds. Thanks to Stéphane's living memorial in tribute to his son, other young people will now travel to Japan where he spent unforgettable time together with Hugo and where a strong bond was forged between them. The bursary thus encompasses both the strength and the vulnerability of their lives and directs towards the connection which remains despite the physical separation. In addition, the charitable commitment in tribute to Hugo forms a part of an on-going process of reflection in which the life of the deceased child is remembered, rediscovered, and its social presence is affectively continued in the lives of the living.

This scholarship is called 'Jiyuu-Hugo Sarrade' and it is for two students – one in Montpellier because Hugo was enrolled at the university in Montpellier and one in Paris, in the ParisTech Schools because he died in Paris. So, it's a scholarship that helps to send two students to do an internship in Japan. Why Japan? Because I was often travelling for work there. For three years, I was a Visiting Professor there and so Hugo came very, very often with me to Japan. He was 7 times in Japan. Just like me, he was in love with this country. He wanted to do his PhD there. (Stéphane Sarrade)

Like Anne Murriss, Stéphane keeps the memory of his son alive through a range of projects and embodied practices which essentially aspire to revive their connection and reclaim meanings in the midst of intense grief. His recourse to a visual expression of his loss, engraved upon his

skin in the form of a permanent tattoo, marks the time of deep connection with Hugo. Incised upon his chest, Stéphane's tattoo transforms the traumatic loss into a bodily sensation rather than a mere representation. While trauma can prove particularly difficult to express, memorial tattoos tell eloquently of one's loss in a non-verbal mode which communicates to others confessional and personal stories of loss. The tattoo which Stéphane gets after the death of his son is identical to the one he saw on his son's chest 15 days before the terrorist attack against the Bataclan concert hall. The shared interview encounter and the intimate nature of the parental testimony created a space where the foreignness between my interviewee and me gradually dissolved. When Stéphane unbuttoned his shirt to show me his tattoo, I was suddenly confronted with the visual image of a memorial reminder on his chest that indicates presence and, at the same time, stands for a permanent scar of endured loss and absence. The symbols on his chest gave an eloquent expression of the embodied memory of the deceased loved one that lives on as a bodily sensation.

This is Jiyuu. In Japanese, it means 'freedom'. Hugo got this tattoo just before he died. I saw him 15 days before, he had just come back from Japan and got this tattoo. In 2016, I went to Tokyo to the same tattoo artist to do the same tattoo. So freedom, that is what it stands for. Hugo, a young adult, like all young boys, he had difficulty finding himself. He had parents who had divorced. He told me: 'One day, when in my head I am free, when I know what I would like to do in my life, I will get this tattoo which means "freedom"'. I'm happy, because I saw him 15 days before his death and he had this tattoo. It was a symbol to tell me: 'There you go, dad. I am free of my demons and I want to move forward'. (Stéphane Sarrade)

The memorial tattoo counteracts the physical separation and the fragility of the human relationship that violence has destroyed by inscribing a constant, stable, and permanent physical reminder of the loved one turning it into a lifelong memorial (Lanigan 2007 cited in Swann-Thomas et al., 2022: 353). The inscription of the tattoo on Stéphane's skin enables him to mark the individual story of losing his son in a lasting way as it becomes an inseparable part of his body, just like the grief he carries with him every day (Sarnecki, 2001). The memorial tattoo also stands for a visual token of the continuing bond with Hugo and poignantly testifies to their enduring connection by giving an embodied and tangible place to his son in his continuing life (Ablin 2006 cit. in Swann-Thomas et al., 2022: 354). The symbolic paradox of the permanent physical absence of Hugo from Stéphane's life, and at the same

time, the affective presence embodied by the memorial tattoo on his chest eloquently points to how grief is continuously negotiated in the bereaved parent's life and how bonds are continued after death. The pain endured during the process of getting a tattoo refers not only to the psychological impact of the sustained violent loss, but also to the symbolic price of facing the trauma and transforming it into an enduring sign of attachment and resilience.

When I tell you this, it is to explain to you that I know both the price, but at the same time the worth of resilience. I will never get over the loss of my son. Losing a child is something that is unimaginable. It is against nature. We bury our grandparents. We bury our parents. We don't bury our children. It's hell. But beyond that, regarding the memory aspect, it is important for me to build things, to do things. (Stéphane Sarrade)

The commitment to founding a 'living memorial' constitutes an integral part of the process of affective symbolisation into which the bereaved parents come to make 'new' sense of their lives in the post-attack world, how they form relationships with others and find support in their search for meaning. After seeing their lives shattered, the bereaved can anew become subjects of their lives through continuing to care for something that embodies the life and values of the lost child and, at the same time, demonstrates resistance to forgetting and an enduring resilience to violence. Equally, the living memorial stands for a re-engagement with life's social and political dimensions, which are highly restricted in the aftermath of trauma. In this sense, living memorials play a key role in externalising trauma and integrating loss. The bereaved parents are no longer immobilised, and can finally begin to mourn the child that they survive.

THE LIMITS OF INERT MEMORIALS IN THE FACE OF GRIEF

Neither Anne nor Stéphane have returned to the site where their children's lives were taken. This highlights the contrast between the individual, embodied experiences of grief and the grand narrative of states which seek to wrap up the pain through the establishment of inert memorials and concrete places of memory as a way of demonstrating resilience and moving on (Milošević, 2017). In contrast to memorials which synthesise the pain and memory of loss and symbolically place a

distance between the bereaved and the lost loved ones, interviews with parents years after the attacks that took their children's lives show how flashback memories and pain come into their everyday lives unexpectedly, as raw as they used to feel in the immediate aftermath of losing a child. The trauma that binds bereaved parents to a temporality that they do not master supplies the true measure of their grief.

The accounts of Anne and Stéphane also challenge the intuitive belief that the inauguration of inert memorials successfully accomplishes memorialisation (Allen & Brown, 2011: 314) and allows for the resolution of grief. In addition, the affective act of remembering through memory-making activities is independent from the unveiling of a permanent memorial. While the former gives the deceased child's life a continuity that transcends death, the latter marks a symbolic 'ceremony of separation' (Attig, 2002: 103) and could sometimes trigger additional pain for the one grieving. Moreover, while both Anne and Stéphane consider permanent memorials in tribute to the victims of terrorism an important part of awareness-raising and remembrance, they are aware that the inert memorials are not for them as they can never forget. In their view, the memorial sites will speak to those whose knowledge and experiences of the attacks would blessedly be only vicarious. This realisation along with the emotional difficulty to return to the affect-laden sites of memory indicate that places are powerful bearers of meaning and that traumatic losses can turn these same places into inhospitable spaces overwhelmed with painful memories. The sites of the terrorist attacks where the life of a loved one has ceased are not only permeated with absence, but they also stand for 'repositories of pain' which can never again nurture life (Attig, 2002: 133).

As for the rest, I have not returned to the Promenade des Anglais. I don't go there anymore. It's very hard for me. The closest place to the Promenade I have been to is the temporary memorial [in the garden of Villa Massena]. When I'm there, I'm very uncomfortable, because I see it [the Promenade]. When I am interviewed by journalists next to the temporary memorial [during days of commemoration], I turn to the opposite side although the sun then shines straight into my eyes and almost blinds me. I prefer this to seeing what is behind me. It's very, very difficult for me.
(Anne Murris)

Stéphane's thoughts and reactions to cemeteries and inert memorials also contest the traditional understanding of graveyards as 'bounded' spaces which provide environments for peaceful reflection and sense of

timelessness in which to remember the dead loved ones (Francis et al., 2005: 6). Even years after the terrorist attacks, Stéphane's memories still feel too raw and painful for him to be confronted with inert memorials that point to and affirm Hugo's absence. The inert form that traces the contours of absence takes away the opportunity for him to speak to his son and laugh as they used to do together in Japan. This confirms that for bereaved parents the memory of the lost loved one is built into their daily activities. Stéphane's account demonstrates how visiting Hugo's grave or permanent memorials inaugurated by the state or local authorities may be rejected in favour of a personalised memory-making activity. While inert memorials serve to preserve the past in a fixed and spatially determined way, living memorials attempt to preserve the lost life through transformation that connects its force to other lives (Allen & Brown, 2011: 323).

Regarding the memorial aspect, I have not been able to go to the Bataclan or see the memorial which is in front of it. I struggle a lot with going to Hugo's grave in Montpellier. It has been six months since I went there for the last time although I am now here in Montpellier. I struggle a lot with these memorial places because, somewhere, they remind me that my son is dead. So I think that it will come later. I think it will come especially with Hugo's brother when he grows up. One day he would love to visit them and see. For me, the memorial places are the opposite, they remind me, they put me back in front of the reality of Hugo's death. Like his grave, in fact. His grave says to me: 'Look, he is there. He is no longer with us'. (Stéphane Sarrade)

The more I engaged with Anne and Stéphane's lived experiences of the loss they have sustained as a result of the terror attacks, the more I realised the extent to which they were introducing me to their children, their unique relationship, and the variety of ways in which they continued to be present in the lives of the living. The parents shared that talking about their son or daughter makes them happy, as if they are reliving cherished moments together and as if their affective presence always accompanies them. The imaginary conversations, sensory and intuitive knowing, or simply navigating through the ordinary daily spaces and objects associated with the lost children evoked the parental wish and need for presence, even if only an affective one.

My path is marked by these encounters with people who have helped me to understand, to move forward, who have shown me humanity. It's not something I'm making up. Often, when I talk to Hugo, I say to him: 'What did you get me into?' I found myself filming this scene with military veterans. Without the Bataclan, I would have never done such a thing! So, I make fun telling him: 'You made me do these things! Five years later, I find myself in situations that...'. Well, that's part of the complicity, of the bond between my son and me that we created between each other in Japan in particular. (Stéphane Sarrade)

The continuing bonds with the deceased child are located and sustained inwardly through highly personal memory-making activities, such as memorial tattoos, as well as outwardly through founding bursaries and other socially oriented activities. The meaning-making commitments inspired by the deceased child also emotionally locate the life cut short as a constant inner presence in the life of the bereaved, offering them solace and a tangible acknowledgement of the inseparability of the parent-child connection.

CONCLUSION

By focusing on individual embodied experiences of violent loss, the chapter has highlighted some of the limitations of inert memorials in bringing grief resolution and of linear stage-models to facing grief. The interpretive phenomenological analysis of in-depth interviews with two bereaved parents has sought to offer a more contingent perspective on how bereaved parents reflect on and negotiate the simultaneous absence and continuing affective presence of the lost loved ones. The chapter has explored how memories of the departed can be sustained, their legacies embraced, and the grief over them transformed into an enduring commitment so that they continue to play active roles in the everyday and inner lives of the living. Although the bereaved parents still miss their children each day, the living memorials have an impact on the way they experience the pain of missing them differently. The pain and deprivation turn into a unique grief that is somehow easier to carry.

The shared testimonies of Stéphane Sarrade and Anne Murriss also challenge the conventional understanding of grand memorial projects as contributing to grief resolution. Instead, their memory-making commitments convey the overwhelming parental search for meaning in the

aftermath of violent loss among other forms of remembrance which respond better to their need for affective presence and continuing bonds with the deceased. As the bereaved parents continue their engagement in living memorials, the stories and memories they keep of the deceased grow. Even in their absence, the parents come to know the loved lost one better. They have more of them to love. When, towards the end of our conversation, I asked Anne what gives her strength to continue her commitments, she told me: 'First and foremost, it is the importance of life for those who remain and staying alive for those who have left'. Anne's commitment thus fulfils the deceased child's desire that she lives well even in the shadow of grief over the lost loved one. In learning to live in the absence of a child, both Anne and Stéphane demonstrate how continuing bonds and memory-making activities allow for the deceased individual to remain alive in a social sense.

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Transition of an Ex-hostage: Trial of the 13 November 2015 Attacks in Paris and Saint-Denis

David Fritz Goepfinger

O. FLUCTUAT NEC MERGITUR

Discussing what drove me to scrutinise evil for such a long time without telling you what happened to me on 13 November, 2015, is practically impossible. I would like, one day, not to have to do it anymore, but the matter sticks to me like an indelible stain on my shirt.

Here is the void, year zero, nothingness.

On 13 November, I was taken hostage alongside ten spectators by two of the three terrorists who had massacred ninety people in the Bataclan concert hall. The hostage situation lasted for a total of two and a half hours. The assault by the police of the Research and Intervention

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Brigade¹ in the cramped little service corridor of the concert hall where we were confined put an end to the macabre dance of death. I came out of it bruised, with burnt hair, partially deaf, and with a deep scar in my mind and soul.

I. VACUUM IMPLERE

As I write these words, it will be almost a year since the verdict of the trial of the 13 November 2015 attacks in Paris and Saint-Denis resounded in the grand wooden courtroom of the Palais de Justice in Paris. Being aware that my unique journey through the trial has taken me through several transitional phases, I understood, at the moment when the President of Court Jean-Louis Périès's microphone went silent, that my transformation had come to an end. As François Jullien writes in *The Silent Transformations*, citing Plato's reflections on existence: '*How can I transition*', he wonders, *'from non-being to being, or from immobility to mobility? I am sitting, and then walking. How will I grasp this passage or this in-betweenness?'*² I walked onwards. Suddenly, without being able to grasp the mechanical movement that compelled me to act during the trial. For ten months, not only did I immerse my pen in the ink of justice, but I also submerged my camera in it. Although it may be too early to describe the psychic transitions that have occurred in my unconscious mind, I know, however, that at their core lies my ardent desire to retake control of my life. Indeed, my rationale to describe the primal urge that drove me to keep a journal of the trial is quite simple. However, I did not know the parameters or any of the ins and outs that the completion of such an act would constitute, nor the real commitment that it would entail in my daily life. Once the microphone switched off, I discern in this act the end of habits and routines, the end of our presence in the corridors of the Court, this ancient temple of the Île de la Cité. I drag my feet as I leave the courtroom for the last time, without casting a final glance behind. Routines have allowed me to solidify my lived experience in a literal sense, but they have also contributed to giving substance to my daily life by pushing me to my creative limits, revolutionising my writing and photography.

¹ The Research and Intervention Brigade (BRI) of the *Police Nationale* is one of the special intervention units in France, along with RAID (police) and GIGN (gendarmerie/military).

² Author's translation.

Jean-Didier Urbain writes in *Performative Habit* or ‘Creative Routine’: ‘A habit can also be a constructive and creative force. In an expression like “Don’t worry, I’m used to it”, it no longer refers to previous meanings, but rather to the positivity of past experience or skills. It signifies auxiliary knowledge, endurance, or know-how. It reassures to such an extent that habit becomes what enables and guarantees action, countering the handicap of inertia, repetition, paralysis, or obsessiveness commonly attributed to it. It no longer stops the world; it facilitates it. Tames it or domesticates it...’³

Each of these new creative routines has gradually disrupted my perception of the terrorist event I experienced years ago. It was these routines that kept me going from the opening of the trial on 8 September 2021 until its closure. They tirelessly dug up the previously reassuring certainties about the thirteenth. Habits, routines, I had unconsciously erected as the only tangible materials of the trial, in a simple creative reflex, in an outward gesture. I was no longer the victim. I was now the actor of my own existence, casting off inertia, finally moving.

II. WHO AM I?

I was born in Chile in 1992, but it was years later, in the Paris suburbs, that I had my first encounter with photography. I was five years old when I saw someone holding a camera for the first time. It was my mother. She would occasionally buy a disposable *Kodak* camera, not by choice, but because we couldn’t afford more than that. In my family, there were no artists per se, and no one really understood what I meant when I declared, during my teenage years, that I wanted to become a photographer. To truly understand, one must know why and where my mother would photograph us. First, the ‘where’: here and there in the city, in front of monuments, memorials, parks, beautiful roundabouts, flowers, and as a family. We were facing eviction, ready to go back to square one: Pucón, my hometown. It was a tragedy that my mother tried to cope with by burning through as many 24 × 36 films from disposable Kodak and Fujifilm cameras as possible. We had to hold onto the promised land that didn’t want us. But fate had other plans. Just a few weeks before we were to be escorted to the border, the deportation order was cancelled, and our French life began. My genuine interest in photography started

³ Author’s translation.

around 2005 when a friend introduced me to the works of JR—I was captivated. As I delved deeper into it, I found myself attending a photography school in the 15th arrondissement of Paris, learning the ropes. The image of my mother standing before my brother and me will never fade from my memory.

At the dawn of the trial, I became aware that I had never embarked on a subject so significant to me and, as I would soon discover, to society as well. It should be mentioned that I had given up all hope of being a photographer in the 2010s, following a dreadful experience in photojournalism. Subsequently, I wandered for years, until I found solace in a new pursuit: bartending. This newfound passion, however, was shattered by the emergence of terrorism in the very place where I felt most comfortable: rock concerts. This led me back to aimless wandering, accompanied by my suffering, post-traumatic stress as my closest companion, and my phone camera as a substitute for my original one. It was the mounting bills that compelled me to put an end to my nomadic existence. But it pained me deeply to return to a profession that had previously yielded no rewards; I simply had to work to make a living, as that was all I knew. I emphasise the word *'work'* because it was more akin to being a photographic labourer than an artist—I was too wounded to see clearly. From 2018 to the start of the trial, I worked as a freelance photographer for communication companies in the wine industry and for a few winemakers. But I had lost my passion, and I was not only dealing with the work, but also the waves of trauma that would crash upon me each day. When I presented the idea of a journal to the editorial team at FranceInfo, I immediately emphasised the photographic aspect to distinguish myself from the multitude of journalists covering the trial (several dozen, of various nationalities). Nothing was prepared; the journal had neither a structure nor purpose, nor an editorial plan. It was simply a matter of being present, writing, and taking photographs. It was the first time in history that the press gave a voice to a victim of terrorism to recount their trial within its pages. It was the first time I wrote in the columns of a press organisation. I am neither a journalist nor a photojournalist, simply the actor of my own victimised existence. On 8 September, the first image I published on Franceinfo's website depicted a corridor in the Court in black and white. At the time I captured it, the place had not yet been adorned with the appropriate signs to guide us, the victims, to the grand wooden courtroom dedicated to the trial. I wanted to make an impact by

showcasing the contrast between the buzz of the first day and the emptiness of the preceding months leading up to the trial, not only within the Courthouse walls but also in our lives. I continued in this manner until the final day. As the trial progressed, I discovered my favourite spots, the ones where I felt comfortable and where, despite the harshness of the trial, I managed to extricate myself from the cloud of traumatic dust in which we were floating. On certain days, depending on the angle of the article I was writing, I would photograph specific locations or individuals in an attempt to put things in order. There were days that left a mark, like the one when I photographed Sophie Dias, the daughter of the only victim who died in the attack at the Stade de France, or the day when I took portraits of the lead singer of Eagles of Death Metal, who came to testify at the trial.



Photograph by Arthur Dénouveaux

III. FOLLOWING THE LIGHT

Coherence was crucial for the cohesion of the journal that I had envisioned. From September to late October, I photographed dozens of victims each day as they came to testify in court. One person was absent during the first round of testimonies: Jesse Hughes, the lead singer of Eagles of Death Metal, scheduled to testify in May 2022. Arthur Dénouveaux, President of the victims' association of the 13th November attacks, 'Life For Paris', is part of my closest circle of friends connected to the attack. He is the one with whom, for several years, I have engaged in profound reflections on the status of victims, and it is also in his company that I spent many hours during the trial. By coincidence, Arthur knows Jesse, and I could propose the idea of photographing him months before his visit to France. Jesse and his lawyer agreed to a photo session exclusively reserved for me. It is a mild day, and I meet my friend near the Court of Justice, where both of us have an appointment with Jesse and Eden Galindo, also a member of Eagles of Death Metal, on 13 November. It is now May, and I have developed all my courthouse routines. People recognise me and know 'who' I am, and I now take pleasure in doing what I do. Little did I know at the time that deep in my mind, all the triggers of my psychological transformation had already been pulled: I was in the process of shedding the garment of victimhood. If I want to present these two photographs, it is because they represent, in the purest form, the illustration of the journey I was undertaking. A photograph of a cruise. A photograph of an airplane in the sky. I define myself more as an instinctive photographer, far removed from the meticulous setups of those who operate behind closed blinds in studios where artificial lighting overshadows natural light. There is, in my experience, a kind of ultimate poetry to be captured in the moments that unfold before us. A gesture, a gaze, a posture—only photography allows for this mystical capture, only photography freezes time. As I go about my jobs, I go hunting, capturing images of the subjects I photograph, but without planning anything; my eyes guide me. Like William Eggleston, who in his book *Mystery of the Ordinary* narrates his daily life through photography, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in America from the 1950s to 2000. I knew that I belonged to the group of photographers who chase light rather than wait for it. Jesse is much more stressed than me, perhaps because I am in a familiar environment. All of this is new to him—the rules of the Court, the gendarmes, the French judicial system. Unlike the other victims I have

already photographed during the first part of the trial in 2021, I came with my camera. The instructions given by the organising magistrate and Jesse Hughes' lawyer are clear: *'Hurry up!'* I quickly gather myself and say, *'Jesse, you don't have to pose. Just be natural and stand here, next to the handrail'*. At that moment, I didn't know that Arthur had slipped behind me to take a photo of me—a sort of terrible *mise en abîme*: the victim photographing the victim, who photographs the victim. I press the shutter and take about ten photos, including one with Arthur and another with Eden. Then I ran to the journalists' room to continue following the trial. Later, in front of my computer screen, I discover the sad face of a man marked by the ordeal. The features of someone who suffers from the same torments as the more than 1,800 civil parties involved in the trial. Jesse Hughes, as much of a rockstar as he is, wears the same dark veil as the victims I have photographed so far. This contrast between my mental image (that of a man with unwavering courage, a legend of rock and concert halls) shocks me and evokes the sharp memory of trauma—we are all in the same boat. To adhere to the pattern of the other victims' photographs, I decide to edit the image in black and white, increasing the contrast in order to further darken the marked face of the rockstar in suit.

The dizzying repetition in the photo taken by my friend almost scares me. This banner of victimhood, placed into the context of who we are at this moment of the trial, becomes a marker of our collective transition, to which the staircase leading to the courtroom bears witness. It is while preparing this text that I finally managed to confront these two photographs and, in the process, reflect on the transitional journey I had undertaken during those ten months. The morning after my testimony in court, I woke up with a resounding question in my mind: *'Am I still a victim?'* This question rocks the entire universe I had been confined to for the past six years. What does it truly mean to be a victim? After the shock, I decided, for the rest of the trial, to place this question at the centre of my internal dialogues and to no longer see my work through a single lens—that of the testifying victim, but instead through a new one—that of the individual who speaks out. That is how I continued with my journal until the day of the verdict.



Photograph by David Fritz Goepfinger

IV. I AM

The trial and the journal have given me the opportunity to openly express my mental and physical state. They have shown the world the daily life of a victim who follows *his trial*, but at the same time writes between the lines, revealing how it has also healed him. In retrospect, the trial was practically a pretext, an exercise to prove to myself my ability to be a photographer, to be an author, and to understand that I was no longer and would never be the person I was before. That ghost, whom I had been chasing until that moment, obstructed my vision, preventing me from seeing the man I had become through the battles in the trenches of my trauma. The trial, through the process of repair and the balance of justice, returned my voice, my sight, and my capacity to Be. Until then, I believed that the hostage-taking I experienced on 13 November had vanquished and hardened the flexibility of my existence. I had mourned my professional life and that young 23-year-old man. However, he never ceased to exist. He knocked on the door of my home every day, checking if I was ready to resume my dialogue with him, to reconnect with that forgotten shadow I left in the one-metre-thirty by six-metre-long corridor of the Bataclan.

Jean-Paul Sartre said, regarding individual responsibility and freedom of choice in shaping one's identity: '*What is important is not what happens to us, but what we do with what happens to us*'.⁴ The journal of the trial of the Paris attacks is the witness to this transition, this connection between the former '*me*' and the new '*I*'. Having become the subject of my own life, I no longer say '*I am a victim of*' but '*I was a victim*'.

⁴ Author's translation.

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PART V

Literature and Creative Imagination



CHAPTER 17

Inside the Car

Endre Ruset and Harry Man

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Inside the car,
 the policeman, the
 priest. Inside the word, the
 experience, the prayer. Inside the
 text m essage, the unmanage
 able decisions. Inside
 the di gnified, the b
 eauti ful, the painful,
 the brutal. Inside the
 art gallery, the shock
 of anti-hista
 mi nes skating
 acr oss the floor.
 Inside the enquiry, my anger
 like a poster still
 in its t ube. Inside the
 crate that drips chunks of snow, the
 harness, the mon ument. Inside the Women's
 Sprint Gold Me dallist, us skiing back to the gates
 to the park and me applauding while falling. Us laughing. In
 side the words *ettertanke* and *fortsetter* the scars to cross, the oceans
 — the dunes. Inside the hand that feels for my shoulder, the fear
 fulness, the greeting, the room-temperature coffee, the journeys
 we are all on to keep hoping—the coughing—the keeping warm
 and feeling. Inside the rustle of jackets, the prayers, the experiences,
 the murmur, the painful, the truthful. The following the rim of the
 coffee mug with our fingers, the painful, the beautiful.

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The Realm of Change

Harry Man

At 15:25 on the afternoon of 22 July 2011 a 950 kg bomb was detonated in Regjeringskvartalet, the government quarter of downtown Oslo and home to the Office of the Prime Minister and the Headquarters of the Norwegian Labour Party. Eight people were killed in the blast and a further 209 were injured.

Fleeing the scene, the same perpetrator, an extreme right-wing terrorist, then drove 23 miles north to the island of Utøya where the youth wing of the Norwegian Labour Party, the AUF, were holding their summer camp. There he shot and killed 69 people on the island, most of whom were teenagers. These teenagers had come to the island to engage in political discussions and debates, in workshops, to meet with former and current members of the Storting, the Norwegian parliament, and to listen to live music as well as partake in the typical activities of any summer camp—playing football, camping under the stars, swimming and even

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going to an evening disco set up by the organisers. The AUF's annual summer camp is an opportunity for young people to see how they can make a positive difference in the world around them and many go on to lives of public service themselves.

Initially many at the camp mistook the sounds of gunfire for fire-crackers, only to realise, as they were met with a wall of children and adults running toward them, that this was something altogether different. There are innumerable stories of teens and adult supervisors deliberately setting off in the opposite direction, towards the sound of gunfire to try and stop whoever was responsible. Most notably among them Chechen teenagers Rustam Daudov and Jamal Movsar, who threw stones at the extreme right-wing terrorist's head and successfully struck him in the face. Daudov is also separately credited with saving 23 lives, ushering children into the sanctuary of a cave. He was 16. Across the water from Utøya are both a set of campsites and secluded rental properties. Holidaymaker Marcel Gleffe drove his small motorboat across the water while under fire. He managed five trips, pulling struggling teenagers from the water before the police asked him to stop. He is known to have saved 25 people, but that figure is likely higher. All three men are alive today. Some of the attack's survivors have converted their experiences into more political action, originally from Sri Lanka, Kamzy Gunaratnam dived into the water in 2011 and swam to safety. In 2015, she became Oslo's youngest ever deputy mayor and at the time of writing has recently won a by-election and is now a member of parliament. Lisa Marie Husby's TEDx talk on surviving Utøya and her journey after 22 July has racked up more than 20,000 views and is a potent reminder that even as the news cycles move on, the wounds remain, and it is contingent upon the survivor to make the difficulty known.

During the course of a televised trial at Oslo District Court in 2012, the perpetrator was tried and convicted of mass murder and acts of terrorism and sentenced to 21 years in prison, the equivalent of a life sentence in Norway. Following the sentencing the 22 July Commission, responsible for reviewing the police and security failures that led to the attacks said that these were, 'the most shocking and incomprehensible acts ever experienced in Norway' (Norges Offentlige Utredninger, 2012).

The population of Norway is about three million less than the entire population of London. Norway's inhabitants primarily live on the peripheral, with the majority of housing around the country's jagged coastline, in ports and inlets and bays, tucked into hillsides in close quarters.

This meant that the destruction wasn't local to Oslo and known to members of the AUF, but it affected communities across the country and deeply and resounds to this day. In her poem 'Straff' ('Punishment') Norwegian poet Cecilie Løveid described the bedtime songs no longer sung (2013: 3) just as the absence stretches beyond the front door and into classrooms with empty desks. Norwegians talk about the presence of counsellors at schools, the fact that it was the friend's son or daughter who used to babysit for the neighbours, the cousins at Christmas who, rather than come over to exchange presents, drove to the cemetery instead and still do. The Crown Princess's step-brother, the island's security guard, was among the victims, shot in the back, while walking up the hill, to check the perpetrator's fake police ID. The tragedy was felt in every corner of Norwegian society. As I talked to my co-author Endre Ruset about it, it was clear that the subject was impossible not to address in literature, it would have been like forgetting to wake up in the morning or ignoring some vital condition of living. Writing in the *New York Times* 'Our task', said the novelist Karl Ove Knausgaard, is 'to allow the weight of reality to break through the picture and correct it'.

These poems come from *Deretter* ('Thereafter') a series of elegies four and half years in the making. It was Endre Ruset who invited me to work on this book in 2017. Previously he had published a highly influential poem called 'Prosjektil' ('Projectile') which turned the attention away from the perpetrator and back to the victims. The poem is created from found material, a list of injuries suffered in Oslo and on Utøya Island that made what Endre Ruset called the most desperately saddening poetry he had ever heard, a profoundly affecting and seemingly unending litany.

Deretter itself is comprised of three movements, the first of which is 'Saken' ('Matter'), a visual poem charting the change over time in the effects of PTSD on those who were caught in the blast of the Oslo bombing. In 'Saken' the viewer stares into the poem, a fractured window, with documented experiences scaled according to their distance in time from detonation to now, using an underlying map of the image of heat distribution throughout the universe taken by NASA's WMAP probe. The second section is 'Deretter' itself, a sequence of concrete elegies that have been referred to variously as 'face poems' or 'portrait poems'. These are 69 poems in the shapes of the faces of the 69 people who lost their lives on Utøya Island. In the centre of the book is 'Prosjektil' cutting through both the destruction of the bombing and the intimate damage of the

shooting—a single projectile of truth, one long sentence in detached, anatomising language.

To be invited to work on a subject of this magnitude was something far outside anything to be reasonably asked. There is no template and no calculus for another's sadness, worse still, it can feel very hopeless when the reasoning behind an injury is based on misinformation and easily disprovable conspiracy theory and is therefore groundless and senseless. We were both warded away from writing about the subject by writers we both respect and admire and hoped, as we wrote, beyond the more reasonable expectation of failure.

All of those questions enter your mind about being an outsider in someone else's hurt and pain, and whether a poem would be more insulting than consoling and I did all I could to listen closely and to work respectfully. I was concerned about my own credentials. The question also entered my mind of if not you then who? If everyone feels the subject is too impossible to write about with sensitivity and care and to do the subject justice, then no-one will attempt it. Although I would have to shelve my own writing, it squared my thinking and I made my decision.

I spent several years, through the pandemic and working night shifts at a supermarket, researching on my breaks and weekends, reading everything I could about the families, the survivors, the bereaved and their journeys. I read through the eyewitness testimonies in English and Norwegian and frequently found myself sobbing at the computer, or dreaming of being in the woods in the dripping, soaking, thin summer rain, often in the Sisyphean act of pleading with ghosts. Although I have been through significant counselling to avoid the threat of secondary trauma, my night-time mind will periodically take me back to it. Working with a collaborator, both Endre with me and me for him, we were able at least to always have another person on the other end of a Whatsapp or a Zoom call when the material and our own sense of outrage, sadness, futility and frustration was at its toughest. We had to keep the project under wraps and that made the process even more isolating. As we worked, we were able to garner feedback from both survivors and casual readers and writers in Norway to get their impressions of the work. We were fortunate too, to have feedback from Heidi Williamson, who had recently authored an exceptional collection *Return by Minor Road* on her memories of Dunblane.

In Norway, Norwegians learn poetry from Norway (and in Norwegian dialects), Germany, France, Denmark, the UK, Ireland and the US.

The support for literature nationally is taken far more seriously than it is in the UK—from the diverse range of schools of literature on the national curriculum to the subsidised support of working, professional writers. Norwegian writers see themselves as being in conversation with these international influences. Culturally, therefore, the Norwegian general reader's taste is more contemporary, more radical and international. To my own English sensibilities, I felt that using concrete forms was pushing the limits of the general reader's tolerances. This, however, was counterbalanced by the emphatic, dynamic re-presence that the form opens in the reader. Like an ambigram or an optical illusion, the mind is caught between states of either reading or viewing the text and becoming alert to the face while still remaining semantic rather than asemantic ('asemic'). In other contexts where poetry operates in this space, this re-presenting state is intentional—sura, or verses, that are inscribed so beautifully that they form swirls on the interior of the dome of the Blue Mosque in Istanbul are both art and the text of the Qu'ran. They are designed to be contemplated and to evoke the sacred, the divine and metaphysical. Some of the founders of concrete poetry, the de Campos brothers, described this as using the 'graphic space as structural agent' (Comp & Barnstone, 1968) in a concrete poem, freeing it from strictly 'linear-temporalist development'. In a concrete poem the reader-viewer can spend time as they would with a painting in a gallery, to gaze, to follow their own thoughts in concert with what they are observing and arrive at some new, transcendent experience of the original text. The triangular shapes of George Herbert's 'Easter Wings', that we associate in the UK with visual poetry are concerned with the spiritual direction of the individual, with death and resurrection as Herbert's speaker says, 'With thee/O let me rise'. Ancestors of both examples are found among the visual poetry of Simias of Rhodes, whose poems were designed to confer immortality from subject to poem, and by extension, from poem to reader, like Shakespeare's lines of, 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day...' ('Sonnet 18') in which the final lines say, 'When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:/So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,/So long lives this, and this gives life to thee'. The concrete elegy as a portrait offers a state of contemplation and eternal and sacred remembrance.

If the ultimate goal is to write poetry of witness with the honest intention of recentring the lives of those who were lost and to speak to Norwegian sensibilities and to console, then surely that is very high-minded and the test of that achievement is to see what the reaction is from

the public. *Poesis* has its roots in the Greek meaning ‘the thing made’ and as a poet that means your artwork is not simply something that can belong and act as a chronicle on its own in space in the present, but that past participle, ‘made’ it has been ‘made’ already, indicates to my mind that the poem’s destination—as well as the poet’s role—is inherently one of reflection.

When we tentatively first presented some of the poems to survivors in mid-2019, they were very moved and unprompted, they wrote some of their own poems in response to the events for the first time. The feedback that the poems were clear-eyed and didn’t shy away from the violence and that they highlighted the struggles they had been through and that are ongoing was appreciated. That was a watershed moment for both Endre and I, where we realised that the poems had worked to chronicle and reflect in some way. At the same time, while it was enormously validating, this is not a saviour narrative. No response was ever going to be perfect and will always be inherently flawed. It is not a success story therefore, but it is a human story. There have been countless news specials, television documentaries, films, plays and even semi-fictional novels written about the attacks. People who lived this reality, along with the difficulties they have to endure because of it, must have the option to live with privacy. Survivors today talk about an ever-changing parade of fears, of anyone wearing a police uniform, simple things like someone dropping a car bonnet shut for example, others fear any physical contact, the sudden, irrupting panic attacks at home and in public—that can be in the park or on the tram, or anywhere, flashbacks, insomnia, suicidal thoughts and deep depression. These all have a very steep impact on their relationships personally and professionally. In his essay, ‘Blood and Brexit’ in the *New York Review*, the poet Nick Laird (2019) spoke of the generational effects the Troubles continue to have long after in Northern Ireland with ‘high rates of abuse of all kinds, and addiction to drugs and alcohol ... the use of antidepressants (at almost three times, say, the rate of England)’. In this situation, survivors find it very hard to know where to turn or how to ask for help and that can be even more ostracising. When a new artistic response emerges, the right to privacy and the right to engage or to leave the work behind is entirely and rightfully at the discretion of those directly affected. With this in mind, survivors and the bereaved highlighted to us that removing names from the portraits would be a supportive step. Many had received death threats in part through the publicising of the perpetrator’s motivations. While congratulatory and pleased at the arresting

nature of the poems, they also raised concerns that biographical details in the poems might be identifying in a similar vein. Based on this feedback, we swapped out details and re-worked the poems, creating more of a collage of lived experiences. It is also illustrative of the human story—implicitly any artwork about an atrocity—has to be a work of two faiths; first your empathy and fidelity around the experiences of your subject and secondly the respect for the artistic *telos* or aim of artwork itself. This is the difference between having teenage actors with American accents jumping from cabin windows on the one hand, and on the other, asking parents to talk to camera in Norwegian and at their own pace about how it is now and what they wish people knew about their children.

A poem is atomically—that is to say indivisibly—as well as inescapably a communicative art rather than a therapeutic tool though it can be used effectively in that context. Maritain (quoted by Eliot for a similar purpose) said, ‘it is a deadly error to expect poetry to provide the super-substantial nourishment of man’ (Maritain, 2016). Similar to the rhyme on a tea towel or a fridge magnet, the earnestness of a poem endangers its ability to challenge and actively engage the imagination of the reader. It will endeavour to explain rather than chronicle, instruct rather than reflect and as such it can escape the reader, unchanged or act as a kind of rhyming summary and confirmation of the known. But poetry that tells the truth will often do so by devious means. It will change form to become part of the orchestra in the symphony of their own thinking. As Atwood said, the poem, ‘must be brought back into the land of the living and allowed to enter time once more—which means ... the realm of readers, the realm of change’ (2003). It is this change that we wanted to inspire.

With ‘The green tent...’ the original poem was written in Norwegian. Throughout the book we had been writing poems separately, but using one another’s work as both call and response, picking up on vocabulary, themes and ideas. Like the Labour Party in the UK, the Norwegian Labour Party also uses the rose as its primary symbol. This took on new meaning, when in the aftermath of the attacks huge crowds gathered to mourn outside Oslo District Court, holding roses. In Ruset’s poem, he repeats the word ‘forvandlet’ meaning to ‘transform’ or ‘convert’. In English both have an aspect of ongoing mutability; a chest of drawers can be ‘transformed’ by a bold choice of colour, or a barn ‘converted’, though the physical dimensions of both might remain unaltered. The etymology of ‘forvandlet’ in Norwegian shares the English word ‘for’ with the Greek

and which means ‘one’ or ‘man’—so together this makes a kind of for-one-ing. Single or multiple things are ‘changed’ immutably into this one thing. Working closely with Endre Ruset, I inserted the adverb ‘forever’, keeping the labio-dental fricative sounds of ‘f’ and ‘v’ through the word ‘forever’ as well as preserving his desire to painfully echo responses to the events. In ‘The green tent...’ we see the campsite on Utøya island and the stillness of it, the deflated football, the hair elastic and the fire pit, in the aftermath before we then cross the water, to shift our attention to ‘the decade of sleep’ to the bombed out front of the Labour Party Headquarters where the roses climb ‘floor by floor’ up the windows.

‘Inside the car...’ had its origins in a Ted Hughes poem called ‘The Amulet’ (Hughes & Keegan, 2005). In the poem Hughes makes a list of the characteristics of the wolf to detect and to know the world around it. The poem has a circular structure, like the *mise en abîme* in which a person holds a portrait of themselves holding a portrait of themselves holding a portrait of themselves, smaller and smaller ad infinitum. In Hughes’ ‘The Amulet’ the poem uses a similar technique, the wolf’s attributes are compared to heather on a mountain, to a ragged forest and a stony horizon, all of which are contained within the North Star, which is itself like the wolf’s fang which is like the heather on a mountain. This circular narrative encompasses and contains the poem like a cure or a charm. It is Hughes at his most animist and shamanic. I wanted a poem that could have the effect of this charm to untie the reader from conventional linear time and to start thinking of grief more for what it is: unpredictable, primal and capricious. In previous years, the Kübler-Ross model of grief described five distinct stages of grief, but we now know this to be outmoded and outdated—grief is a journey without any recognisable landmarks. Just as the unpredictable powers of the wolf are contained and handed to the reader under tightly controlled conditions and strict instructions, where they can be safely examined, so too, grief can be temporarily contained and examined. This might be through the carefully chosen words of police and priests and the circle of a person’s own experience, the circle of group therapy, the circuit of a snow-ridden park and the circle of a coffee mug which all act as containers for powerful and charged feelings. During a consultation in 2013 with the public about a memorial at Hole, members of the 22 July National Support Group were asked to come up with single words that they associated with the 22 July. These included ‘ettertanke’ (‘contemplation’ literally ‘afterthought’)

and ‘fortsetter’ (‘continuing’ or ‘ongoing’ (Hjorth & Giermshusengen, 2018)).

When we cut ourselves, we heal, if we have a cold, we recover and we might infer from this that we can be just as easily healed when we experience grief. The old adage ‘time heals all wounds’ comes to mind. This was coined long before what we know now, which is that, we learn to live better with the grief we have, but there is no finite ending. The sum we were before, minus the person we’ve lost no longer adds up to the same person we were before. We have to find a new way to solve ourselves and who we are now. Grieving is both an extension of our love for that person when they were alive and the means by which we honour them. We can intellectually process this idea, but our emotions feel more like the time traveller caught between two times—the time in the past when the person we loved was alive and incomprehensibly, the time now where they are just a memory. Painfully and frequently it seems we also possess the ability to forget which time we are in (especially in our dream-life). Psychotherapist and author on grief, Julia Samuel, described this aspect of grief as having ‘its own momentum’ (2018). We swing in and out of different times and emotions and associations.

In 2013 Simon Shimson Rubin co-authored a seminal book on working with the bereaved that outlined a two-track approach—to address (i) the connection to the person we have lost, and (ii) how, in grief, we will continue to function in society. It is in this context that the contemporary elegy might retire some of its traditions and be renewed in line with modern understanding. Traditional English elegy tends to be filled with hyperbole and classical imagery. In poems like Milton’s ‘Lycidas’ or Shelley’s ‘Adonais’ or even in Tennyson and Auden, we want to resurrect the dead in some more comprehensible arcadian vision, to divorce the mind from a more gruelling, purely felt and upsetting reality. In the poem ‘The Strand at Lough Beg’ by Seamus Heaney, he describes anointing the body of his cousin with dew. Later in his career, he wrote about his concern that he may have made the scene too precious in *Station Island*, and ‘confused evasion and artistic tact ... whitewashed ugliness’ (1984) rather than speaking more of what it meant.

In the poem ‘Vertigo’ I was looking for clear, pathological language. I read through various medical encyclopaedias and dictionaries and looked up anything I could find that contained the word ‘loss’ in the definition and cross-referenced these with my research into some of the symptoms prevalent among those with PTSD and more specifically those recovering

after the attacks in Oslo and on Utøya. I wanted to write a kind of dictionary of survivors' experiences to show how they fell between the cracks of a simple pathology. In the bombing the perpetrator had added shrapnel to the bomb to inflict the maximum amount of bodily harm, similarly on Utøya the perpetrator used modified bullets and a great number of the injured still live with metal from either ricocheted bullets or blast material in their bodies. Similar to the previous poem, dictionaries have no narrative and no chronology, they also, strikingly, had no definition for 'grief' or 'love'. Quite a few of the descriptions in the court documents and in particular in the indictment of the perpetrator describe how a person is treated in situ and thereafter transferred to a hospital, or following treatment, thereafter, is discharged home (Oslo District Court, 2012). The word they use over and over in each description is also how we arrived at the title for the book, 'deretter'. In many senses, part of the afterlives of each of the victims takes place in the imagination of the reader and, in good faith, offers solace, as well as hope in that solace as much as it offers an opportunity for reflection and contemplation.

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Terrorist Trials Under Literary Scrutiny: Literature as Counterterrorist Response

Ingvild Folkvord and Jean Lassègue

INTRODUCTION

Judicial trials are a crucial step when modern societies are trying to come to terms with terrorist attacks. And yet, trials are not processes that can settle the matter of justice once and for all. In her book *The Faces of Injustice* (1990), American philosopher Judith Shklar draws our attention to a broader social understanding of justice by distinguishing between ‘validated injustice’ and other forms of injustice that do not ‘match the rule-governed prohibitions’ (Shklar, 1990: 7). In this respect, trials can be conceived as a necessary, but not sufficient condition for justice. They constitute an interval in a broader social dynamic in which literature also plays a part. What this part can be, and what literature can *do*, is precisely what will be discussed here.

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Contrary to trials, the aim of literature is not to reach a final decision that will be enforced by public constraint but to shed light on what is still to reflect upon and maybe even to contribute to reparation. Three literary texts belonging to three different national traditions, Norway, France, and Germany, will be analysed in the following pages. This diversity aims at introducing several degrees of variation: between languages and judicial cases as well as between literary genres and ways to proceed once judicial justice has been done.

One might think that these literary texts come definitively too late: after the attacks, after the outpour of collective emotion and the public demonstrations, after the trials, after the pain, the despair and the grief. Only derisory words in the aftermath of ruthless violence. But if the goal of terrorist attacks is to violently discourage any political dissent through fear in order to reinforce unanimous polarisation, literature is on the contrary a place where multiple voices can be heard. It is this capacity to restore and develop further place for speech and common elaboration that is at stake here. Literature has indeed many roles and functions, but it can be one of these extra-judicial means. By transforming the very idea of judicial justice into an ongoing reflection on what justice and injustice do to individuals and groups, it contributes in its specific way to deepen the notion of justice, making it restorative in yet another way.

The three authors under scrutiny here, Endre Ruset with the poem *Prosjektil* (2012), Yannick Haenel with the autobiographical narrative *Notre solitude* (2021), and Kathrin Röggla with the theatre play *Verfahren* (2022), continue to elaborate on materials, questions, and unsolved problems that come from the judicial trials on terror after the judicial judgement has been passed. ‘We are not done yet’, they all seem to claim.

ENDRE Ruset—FORENSICS MADE POETRY

Endre Ruset¹ is a Norwegian poet whose long-poem *Prosjektil* relates to the terror attacks perpetrated in Oslo and Utøya in 2011.² It was on 22 July 2011 that a 950-kg fertiliser bomb exploded close to the

¹ In this volume Endre Ruset’s poetic writing on the 22 July terror attacks is represented through texts from Utøya thereafter (2021) by him and the British author Harry Man; see chapters 6, 12, 17, and 18 in this volume.

² Our analysis is based on the Norwegian publication from 2012, and we have slightly modified the English translation as it appears in Man and Ruset (2021) to keep the structure of verses and stanzas from the 2012 Norwegian text.

government building in Oslo. Eight people were killed and many more were injured. Some hours later a massacre began on the island of Utøya, where the Labour Party Youth League was holding its annual political summer camp. Sixty-nine people were killed there, most of them youths or children, and many more were wounded and traumatised.

The perpetrator of both attacks was a Norwegian citizen, Anders Behring Breivik, at that time 32 years old. In his manifesto, distributed on YouTube and by email shortly before the attacks, he declared that his aim was to protect Norway and its Christian values against the threat of Islam. He pointed out that terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Baader-Meinhof Group were sources of inspiration for him. He explained that the Norwegian Labour Party was targeted because they had contributed to the spreading of multiculturalist ideas and to allowing migrants into the country. Breivik was convicted of mass murder and terrorism and was sentenced to the maximum penalty of 21 years of imprisonment in a trial that took place in the Oslo district court from April to June 2012.

Endre Ruset takes material presented in court which was instrumental in elaborating the final legal decision as the base for his literary work. He uses the forensic reports from the trial as the only material for his own poem and this extraordinary feature may explain why the poem was so little circulated. The author himself read the poem at several public events, but only abroad, not in Norway, and both him and the Norwegian publisher kept a low profile related to this part of Ruset's writing. When he was asked directly about this, Ruset explains it as rooted in his own feeling of anxiety to be perceived as speculative or as capitalising on a terrible disaster through literature' (Folkvord, 2020: 142). His concern seems to be that the very use of sensitive material for literary purposes could be conceived of as disrespectful.

But once *Prosjektil* has been read and experienced, it becomes clear that violence is its main theme. The poem foregrounds the vulnerability of the victims, but it also, we will argue, allows for a reflection on what is socially binding and how this becomes recognisable through literature. Ruset's poem was first published in 2012 as one little black book, and we are quoting from its beginning:

through the neck
 in the back, penetrating the right lung
 into the upper part of the chest
 straight through the brain

into the back, through the chest
 and the left lung
 further into the left section of the throat
 through the base of the skull
 into the left ear
 out of the right side of the chin
 re-entering via soft tissue in the upper chest (Ruset, 2016: 1)³

Through the title of this ‘long-poem’, which is the label Ruset uses himself, these short verses are already embedded in a larger structure: *Prosjektil* paratextually names the impersonal agent of the poem. It is the movement of a projectile, in and through a fragile human body which is depicted, verse after verse, page after page. Eleven new verses follow on the next page, operating according to the same pattern, rhymeless verses with no apparent lyrical I:

into the left side of the abdomen
 passing through the stomach and the lung on the right side
 leaving through the chest wall
 on the right side of the chest
 through the right lung
 out at the right side of the back
 through the left cheek
 into the right cheek
 through the brainstem
 and the upper vertebra
 through the head and out at the left side (Ruset, 2016: 2)

The poem continues over 26 pages. The structure is the same: on each page ten to 14 verses, most of them opening with a preposition which is then followed by the naming of the part of the body that the projectile has gone into, through, out of, or via. The descriptions of how a bullet penetrates body tissue, bones, and organs are all taken from the forensic report on the Utøya massacre and reorganised into this literary text which was first published as a little black book with silver letters that resembles a traditional book of prayers (Ruset, 2016).⁴

³ The pages of the Norwegian publication are not numbered, but for this purpose we refer to the first text-page as number one and quote from other pages in this work accordingly: Ruset (2016: 1).

⁴ For an analysis of Ruset’s poem in broader contexts see Folkvord (2020: 136–144), and Folkvord and Lassègue (2022).

The forensic report as it was presented in the trial dealt with the victims of the massacre individually, one by one. In the report, the persons were anonymised, but kept separate by a number, then followed by their year of birth and a short description of the site where he or she was found. For instance: ‘N024 born 0.0. 1994. She was in front of the Café building and was shot twice in the head’ (Oslo Tingrett, 2012). Ruset’s literary transformation leaves everything out except the three last words, ‘in the head’. This minimisation confronts the reader with the violence as a sheer penetrating force. The forensic report is already scarce, technical, and standardised, but the poem reduces it even further. By leaving out all the textual markers that relate body parts to individuals and to places, and by connecting the large amount of textual sequences that have in common that they all describe how a projectile penetrates bodily parts, Ruset creates a densified literary text that is hard to read in one go. The massive violence depicted in the poem is simply difficult to endure. It is experienced as something that just keeps going on, and it is as if the projectile penetrates something that is not the bodies of individuals any longer, but a larger self in which the reader is comprised.

The aesthetic effect is generated through the very changing of institutional frames—from law to literature—and in the monotonous and repetitive descriptions of violence. The poetic principle, the minimising montage technique, can be conceived of as a work on a collective trauma, and the poem *does* something: it exposes the reader to violence without making the violence spectacular, and develops its own aesthetic efficiency without drawing any attention to the perpetrator. The latter has been an important issue in the attempts to come to terms with contemporary terrorist attacks, in Norway and elsewhere.⁵

The poem ends with the verse ‘into the rear chest wall’ (Ruset, 2016: 26). It is as if the projectile remains within a body, which is no longer the body of this girl who was listed in the forensic reports, killed on the shore on the southern part of Utøya, at the age of seventeen. Whereas contemporary definitions of terrorism emphasise how the violent acts reach beyond the immediate victims and also target ways of living together and by this seek to destabilise the entire society that is attacked (Schmidt, 2011: 86f), Ruset insists on the violent negation of the other as the core aspect. Through this *use* of the forensic reports, after the trial has ended,

⁵ For a broader discussion of this aspect, see Ghetti (2008).

one gets the impression that his literary intervention re-opens the case towards another sense of justice. He insists on a transformation into a social dimension of what first seems to belong to a purely objective one. Beyond the objective description of bodies penetrated by a projectile lies a connectedness with others, a social tie, and the literary work on the violent event makes this painfully perceivable.

YANNICK HAENEL: HOW TO DO JUSTICE WITH WORDS

Yannick Haenel is a well-known French novelist as well as an occasional journalist at the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. On the day of the terrorist attack against *Charlie Hebdo* (7 January 2015), Haenel was not attending the editorial meeting in the newsroom and he survived the attack, while eight people from the newspaper's editorial staff did not. Before the trial started in September 2020, he had agreed with Laurent Sourisseau, 'Riss', the then director of *Charlie Hebdo*, that he would follow the trial for the newspaper and report on it daily. His columns would appear every day on the website of the newspaper until the end of the trial in December 2020. They were also published later as a book together with the drawings François Boucq had made during the hearings, as no photographs were allowed in court (Haenel & Boucq, 2020). But Haenel found himself compelled to write again once the trial was over and this is precisely on this dense and very personal autobiographical text, *Notre solitude*, published in October 2021, that we will focus our attention on.

Haenel explicitly asks *why* he felt compelled to write about the trial again although he had written about it for so many days. At the beginning of this essay, which consists of eight numbered parts, he recalls that at the end of the first week, he read the notes he had taken during a particular trying day again. The CCTV videos of the massacre at *Charlie Hebdo*'s offices had been shown for the first time in court, and he realised that it was impossible for him to write about what he had seen, that is the very moment when his colleagues, some of whom his friends, were shot at close range by automatic rifles:

Violence paralyse language – it ridicules the words. [...]. I was not going to describe the bodies and their impacts. There are things that are

better left unsaid, details that should be forgotten: sometimes precision is obscene. So how to do it? Write what? (Haenel, 2021: 19–20)⁶

Contrary to Ruset, Haenel does not make use of the judicial material that documented the violence in the literary text itself. For him, this material belongs to the world of the dead. This world exists only as ghostly traces in the recorded images. On the contrary, one gets the impression that *Notre solitude* is an attempt to come back from the world of the dead that had been publicly shown in court. Haenel's goal is primarily literary, namely, he tries to bring back into language what for him seems to be definitively lost to it and he describes this as a process of restoration: '[T]hrough the daily account of the trial, I was trying to develop an ethics of speech, so that we could recover from the crime' (Haenel, 2021: 129). This is where ethics as much as literature comes into the picture. Haenel takes the opposite view of Wittgenstein's famous motto and declares: 'what you can't say, you have to say it anyhow', so that 'the crime does not have the last word' (Haenel, 2021: 129).

The whole book project was thus triggered by classified forensic material (CCTV videos) that served as evidence disclosed in court for the first time. But in Haenel's perspective, it is not the evidence as such which is central, but the consequences these videos have on his capacity to reintegrate an unnamable act into the circle of speech through writing. Having started the essay by describing the intense crisis that paralysed his writing the day he saw the images of the massacre in court, he goes so far as to say at the end of it that, should he had diverted his attention from the trial for even an hour while it was held, the whole case would have been dropped (Haenel, 2021: 129).

The format of the column was not suited for his deeply literary purpose. Aimed at the daily report of the trial development, the column lacks the distance and the space for reflection made possible by an essay to further explore how literary writing can contribute to a definition of justice in its own way. Through this re-appropriation of judicial material, *Notre solitude* manages to see something different from evidence in the various testimonies made in court: the feeling of being overwhelmed by these deadly images can be warded off. For Haenel, this is a contribution to the experience of justice that literature makes possible, and he is well

⁶ Our translation.

aware of his own almost insane ambition when he sets out to rescue the dead through writing:

I had had the feeling, admittedly a little crazy, that there had to be, in addition to the judicial narrative, another narrative, an instance entirely devoted to the invisible, which would welcome [the dead] in its filigree, protect them, transport them to the end of the trial. This narrative, which went beyond the strict dimension of the facts, and which perhaps escaped reason, or at least the evidence that supports it, was for me to write. (Haenel, 2021: 22)

Confronted with the silence which was imposed on him after watching the damning images, Haenel relies on the *possibilities of narration*. He does not invest himself in a trauma-framework which is very common when terrorism is dealt with in literature- and culture studies. As pointed out in several critical approaches, this is a frame that draws our attention to the individual psyche in ways that can limit the social and political understanding of the phenomenon.⁷ Yannick Haenel explores the capacity of narration to contribute to justice and resistance:

By asking themselves the question of the proper use of speech, the narrators displace the notion of justice: it is experienced through sentences. The desire of criminals is that all speech should die, because only speech escapes crime and prevents it from reigning over the world. (Haenel, 2021: 129)

Something similar could be said of Endre Ruset and of Kathrin Röggla as well. We are dealing with three authors who, in a way, appear to be ‘writing back’ after politically motivated violent acts that aimed at silencing and polarising. But as far as finding the right words is concerned, Yannick Haenel’s repertoire is significantly different from the two others: one gets the impression that anything goes, from the realistic rendering of the trial proceedings to the back-stage mobilisation of magical rituals and the use of religiously laden figures.

Haenel first recalls that, after this doomed day in court where videos were shown, he was in a state of total panic at the idea of betraying the promise he had made to the remaining staff of *Charlie Hebdo* that he would write a daily column in order to honour the dead. He describes

⁷ See i.e. Illner and Winkel Holm (2016: 60) and Erll (2011b: 101).

how he, unable to deliver the piece on time, ended up completely drunk in the garden of his house the following night. But there was enough energy left in him to practise an unprecedented ritual he had imagined on the spot to find a way towards writing:

I went to the fig tree, under which I dug a small hole with a spoon; the cat came closer to smell the damp earth. I poured in a little water, some milk, a few drops of wine; and before the mixture was completely absorbed by the earth, I don't know what came over me (I probably felt that an act was needed), I tore the page from Kafka's *Trial* into small pieces and dipped them into the little crater, then made a ball of it and put it in my mouth. I looked at the moon while chewing on this ball of paper. It was difficult to chew such a paste, I took a glassful of wine by holding the neck of the bottle and Kafka's text slipped out by itself: that's how I swallowed the parable of the law. (Haenel, 2021: 64–65).⁸

The ritual in the garden is centred on a text by Kafka. Literary scholars have pointed out how canonised literary texts and established genres serve as cultural resources in the sense that they are 're-read' and 're-written' in new social and historical contexts (Erl, 2011a: 177), but Haenel moves beyond these modalities of textual reception by *incorporating* the page from Kafka's novel, he actually eats it. In a state of frenzy, after a ritual which appears as a mixture of Christianity and black magic, he is then able to write the long-awaited column at full speed which can be sent early enough the following morning for the *Charlie Hebdo* webmasters to publish it. The nightly ritual appears as an invention there and then, the only observer is Haenel's cat, but with some temporal distance, and through writing, this back-stage ceremony can be shared with others. What is then shared is an intense struggle to find ways of speaking after violence.

Haenel would also find ways to use testimonies given in court, not as pieces of evidence but as signs of life (Haenel, 2021: 155). Where Ruset's minimises and displays the death as a way to get access to vulnerability and social bonds, Haenel explicitly addresses the reader when he expands on the basis of the testimonies that were given by survivors of the attacks. 'I move from testimony to testimony, through a chain of words that pass

⁸ Here, 'the page' does not refer to any page but one taken from the chapter 'In front of the Law'.

on their trust. The word, you feel it with me, is what passes between the worlds; it is what makes the connection' (Haenel, 2021: 154).

One of these testimonies has a special place in Haenel's narration, that of Zarie Sibony. She was one of the two cashiers at the 'Hyper Cacher' supermarket where another terrorist, before being shot down, had carried out a hostage-taking operation that was linked to the first attacks. After escaping being shot by the terrorist herself, Zarie Sibony managed to engage with him and keep him away from the basement of the supermarket where some customers had been hiding, thus saving many lives. In his essay, Haenel describes her as a saint, a supernatural figure able not only to stop the spread of evil but to keep it within herself and testify: 'And not only did she live through this fight, but she won it, and she came back to tell us about it' (Haenel, 2021: 156). He finds the reason for this courage in Sibony's own Jewish faith, but he himself also mobilises the Greek mythical figure of Persephone who would return from the world of the dead. Through this mythical figure, Zarie Sibony can be understood as somebody who came back from the world these deadly images gave a glimpse of, and made speech possible again.

Notre solitude is the second step in Haenel's writing about the trial, as he first reported from it in the already mentioned columns for *Charlie Hebdo*. In this second step he does not take writing for granted, to say the least. On the contrary, he shows the readers what kind of ordeal it is to try and design a language that would fit the task of making the dead speak again. For Haenel, this is the literary definition of justice in a case like this one:

I had sworn to myself never to forget the dead. I saw in this the secret purpose of justice, perhaps even its true nature: not only to judge faults and to right wrongs, but to put oneself in the place of others, the accused, of course, the survivors, but also the disappeared, and so deeply that through the repetition of testimonies one could hear their hearts beating and find their voices. That was what thinking about the dead was all about: doing the right thing, to the point of granting them the existence that the crime had taken away from them. In the end, it was a way of mourning: the way you put yourself in the place of someone who has lost a loved one is the measure of the progress of justice in yourself. You may think this is impossible - a 'demented presumption', as Hegel would say - but it is also the beginning of ethics: supporting the mourning of others. Listening to the dead: this ethics of silence is called literature. (Haenel, 2021: 23)

In this sense literature appears to be part of a collective memory work which is at the same time work for justice. We are inclined to think that speech has a natural capacity to refer to absent things or people. But as Haenel points out, this is not the case, and in *Notre solitude* he manages to clarify something of the matter by exploring how we might refer to this absence. This capacity is only possible if it is first grounded in an instituted framework in which dialogue as an intersubjective performance is the foundation. The capacity to speak has therefore to be thought of as first grounded in a relational attitude which allows everyone, even the dead, to speak and be heard. According to Haenel, doing justice through literature consists therefore in using language to bring the dead back into the field of speech, making it possible to tell what happened to them and to suggest how they should be remembered.

KATHRIN RÖGGLA: WAITING FOR THE RULE OF LAW

Kathrin Röggla's theatre play *Verfahren*, which was first put on stage in Saarländisches Stadttheater in Saarbrücken in April 2022, relates to the judicial trial against the extremist right-wing terror cell 'Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund' (NSU). In contrast to the poem by Endre Ruset and the essay by Yannick Haenel, the play relates to attacks that took place over a longer period of time, between 2000 and 2007. During this period, the NSU-terror cell carried out a series of attacks in different German cities. They killed nine civilians, all of them with migrant backgrounds from Turkey and Greece, and one German policewoman. The violence was motivated by racism and the perpetrators also robbed banks and conducted assaults and bombings that injured many more civilians.

The title of the play can simply mean 'trial' and refer to the legal trial itself, but without a determining article as in *das Verfahren*, it can also refer to something stuck or derailed, which conveys the notion of an unsuccessful trial. This double entendre makes sense: unlike the trials after the 22 July terror attacks in Norway and the Charlie Hebdo, Montrouge and Hyper Cacher attacks in Paris, the lengthy NSU-trial that lasted from 2013 to 2018 did not create a collective sense that the criminal offences had been sufficiently investigated and dealt with. There are several reasons for this. Both the investigation and the judicial trial itself left the impression that the victims of the attacks were seen as suspects and made responsible for the violence they had been subjected to. The

lengthy proceedings were disturbed by several interruptions and ambiguities related to access to case documents and impartiality. Most dramatic for the public, however, was the uncovering of far-right networks within branches of the German police and the ‘Verfassungsschutz’, that is, the office for the protection of the Constitution.⁹

In the traditional legal drama, we get involved in the assessment of causes and questions of responsibility, justice, and guilt, whether in ancient dramas such as Aeschylus’ *Eumenidia* or in contemporary plays such as Ferdinand von Schirach’s *Terror* (2015), in which the audience is invited to vote for a decision in the end. In order to be able to evaluate and judge, the audience gets information about conflicts that have taken place prior to the trial. Röggl’s *Verfahren* is different in this respect: the murders of Süleyman Taşköprü, Mehmet Turgut, or any of the other victims of the NSU terrorist cell are never explicitly described. Neither is anything further said about Beate Zschäpe nor about the other defendants, their background and motives. Kathrin Röggl relies on the audience already knowing the story of the NSU-terror and centers her piece on a group of people, seven of them, who have in common that they are all spectators to a trial.

The temporality of the play is ambiguous. Sometimes one gets the impression that the characters on stage are witnessing a trial that is still ongoing. At other times, they seem to comment on a judicial process that has already ended. But simultaneously, the dialogues and the interaction that take place between them are experienced as a process in itself, and this process does not really make any progress. It does not seem to move towards anything that could be felt like an ending. In Röggl’s work on the NSU-trial, this lack of progression appears as a crucial dimension of her literary attempt to redirect the public attention to the NSU-terror. She draws our attention not towards the suffering of victims or the motives of their perpetrators, but to fellow citizens as observers, stuck with a drama that has not found an end yet.

‘What do we hope for when we think of the court’ (Röggl, 2022: 1)¹⁰ asks the legal servant in the prologue to the play. When *Verfahren* was put on stage in Saarbrücken in 2022, the role was played by a young

⁹ For a broader account of these aspects, see e.g. von der Behrens (2018).

¹⁰ Our translation.

Black woman and the play was performed on and around a white, multi-level stage that emphasised her Blackness and the whiteness of the place. In the centre of the stage was a large white dress that she occasionally put on as a shell that stands on its own on stage and was moved around. She would herself put a white wig on and be the one who called for order, but sometimes she would pass the wig on to one of the others as if roles and functions were interchangeable. The impression of interchangeable roles was taken one step further when the legal servant moved around on a bike. Through the bike she is connected to the stories of perpetrators who would leave the crime sites on bikes. Hence, the theatrical play with roles relates to one of the most problematic aspects of the historical NSU-trial, namely that the State itself appeared to be involved in racist networks, in ways that could not be sufficiently clarified through the trial.

In addition to the legal servant, there is a ‘court-granny’ and a ‘court-grandpa’ on stage, a leftist blogger, a lawyer, a ‘so-called-foreigner’, and a woman from the Turkish embassy (Röggla, 2022: 1). These figures all appear as types. They are observants and commentators with characteristic modes and ways to relate to the trial, be it the court-granny with her eagerness to grieve and her ‘constant amazement’ about ‘nazis’, or the lawyer who is defending the trial and is tired of ‘judicial bashing’ (Röggla, 2022: 1). In the dramatic text Röggla points out how similar types constitute the real theatre audience. According to the theatre text, the audience consists of law people and people from the State Criminal Investigation Office but is also described as mental types such as ‘know-it-alls’, ‘nitpickers’, ‘indignants’, ‘expectants’, and ‘transformables’ (Röggla, 2022: 1). Thus the audience, be it in Saarbrücken or elsewhere, is made part of the play, while the players on stage also constitute an audience.

As in her previous work on the NSU-trial, in the radio play *Verfahren* (2020), Röggla’s theatrical work stages the role of observers and dramatises the NSU-trial as something that is still ongoing. One gets the impression that it *has to* go on because it has not been concluded in a satisfactory way, but also because justice is a never-ending social process. The trial ‘is NEVER finished’ (Röggla, 2022: 39), the woman from the Turkish embassy says, referring to the everyday racism and the Nazi-jokes in German companies. She points to social problems of another order from the murder cases that were dealt with in the trial, and yet in Röggla’s *Verfahren* symbolic and physical violence are interconnected.

Throughout the two hours of the theatre play the seven persons discuss and debate how to relate to the trial. One can recognise typical ways of

thinking about the NSU-trial as it has been debated in the German public: for instance the critique of its shortcomings and flaws versus the counter argument that one expected too much from it, more than any judicial trial could have fulfilled; the claim that the trial was biased versus the argument that a judicial trial should not be politicised, the need to move ahead, put the violence behind versus the feeling of being haunted by a past that invades the present.

Critics have pointed out that *Verfahren* gets boring and ‘tiring’ (Erdmenger, 2022). One could criticise this as a weakness of the play itself, or maybe as a shortcoming resulting from Marie Bue’s direction. But the boredom, or the *ennui*, can in this case also be taken as an aesthetic effect and a way to problematise a specific post-trial reality. According to Kathrin Röggl, a literary work on the NSU-trial might have to free itself from the very expectation that the theatre should show its audience something ‘exemplary’, and instead try to uncover discursive entanglements and knots (Röggl, 2017a).

In *Verfahren*, some of these entanglements are presented through the exploration of specific expressions related to the legal domain and their social impact. One example has to do with the very notion of equality before the law and is brought to the fore by the ‘so-called-foreigner’. The presentation of his person is already twisted right from the beginning since he is ‘called’ as someone different from what he is. He is a German citizen of Turkish origin, but the label put onto him makes him somebody who does not quite, at least not for everyone, belong to the country in which the NSU-trial took place. He tells how he was struck by the violence, that something like this could happen to ‘meinesgleichen’; ‘my equals’. At the same time, he is struck by his own use of language, the expression ‘my equals’: ‘I hated it right away. I wanted to get rid of it immediately’ (Röggl, 2022: 13).

A friend urges him to go to the trial, to see what ‘the Germans’ are doing there (Röggl, 2022: 13). He goes only once, but similar to the man from the countryside in Kafka’s fable ‘Before the Law’, he has difficulties getting access to the law. Whereas Kafka presents the law in an allegorical way, and as some kind of riddle, Röggl’s ‘so-called-foreigner’ operates in a more realistic setting. From the context one gathers that it is due to his Turkish origin that he runs into difficulties getting into this specific trial, and in this sense the law appears as an institution unable to recognise its own citizens as citizens. In this sense the trial, in Röggl’s work, is never primarily revelation, it always takes part in a

precarious ‘Unsichtbarkeitsproduktion’, a production of invisibility also (Röggla, 2016).

Thus, the ethnic bias is thematised, but in a different key than in several of the other literary and filmic pieces that deal with the NSU-trial. In Fatih Akin’s *Aus dem Nichts* (2017), for instance, there are victims shouting out their complaints to the legal authorities and to the audience, and the movie ends with Akin’s own statement, that the fictional plot relates to the victims of the NSU-terror, victims who were themselves suspected of being perpetrators, due to their ethnic background (Akin, 2017). In Röggla’s *Verfahren* nobody shouts out, we don’t hear affectively charged ‘individual voices of injustice’ in the sense pointed out by Judith Shklar. Shklar emphasises how such voices ‘cry out in anger’, but also how they can ‘ring loud and true’ through literary texts (Shklar, 1990: 83). In Röggla the sense of injustice is made available through the subtle (and sometimes boring) depiction of a group of citizens struggling with forms and institutions, that divide society into ‘us’ and ‘them’ and of their lacking capacity to produce something that would be more just.

The theatre text is dense, and it plays, in a variety of ways, with the possibilities to belong to a social group and to a society, and so did Marie Bue’s seemingly plain dramaturgy when *Verfahren* was put on stage in Saarbrücken in 2022. At times it is as if the white stage holds the seven actors together, and in Röggla this very capacity of assembly seems to be recognised as a social resource, both in the trial and in the theatre: it makes it possible to gather and explore a problem collectively, and in her own poetic reflections Röggla describes the contemporary literary interest for the ‘judicial’ as a search for ‘residues of the enlightenment’ (Röggla, 2017b). In Bue’s dramaturgy several of the figures tried to leave the stage, or were about to fall off it, but one got the impression that they had to return. Also in this way, the play on stage conveyed an impression of a community under pressure, and that there was no easy way out. Thus, there is something deeply relational and realistic about Röggla’s take on the NSU-terror and the question of justice. The rule of law appears as something citizens tend to locate in an external institution they are not directly part of. But at the same time, the law is here explored as part of deeply rooted social imaginaries and thereby as part and parcel of our interaction with fellow human beings.

CONCLUSION

Even if the final decision of a terrorist trial is in some respect already known because the perpetrators, dead or alive, have claimed responsibility for their acts right from the start, there is still more to investigate if one wants injustice to be acknowledged and not only justice to be done. For the harm done to victims is also a harm done to the social capacity to relate to one another in a community, and if living together is a shared concern, this has to be restored too. Literature, in the broadest sense, plays a fundamental role for that purpose.

One of the most striking features of the three texts we have looked at is the literary capacity to use the various documents, images, and situations that were first part of the judicial trial in a completely different way. In our context we would go as far as to consider this capacity to work and re-work pieces and versions of reality as a specific literary capacity to *appeal* for a revision of judgement. This appeal takes various forms. In Ruset's poem it is about transforming the forensic report into a novel way of making the violence directly perceivable to the reader. It produces an intensification that accentuates the social dimension, the vulnerable 'we'. Haenel's literary approach involves evoking the dead observed in CCTV footage. He thereby delves deeper into the notion that, in his view, the true significance of the trial is something that cannot be fully conveyed through the formal legal proceedings but demands other, more expressive dimensions. Røggla's way of interpreting the notion of an appeal could be understood as a more traditional critique of the law, since she points out that the historical NSU-trial, as it was held, has been thoroughly unsatisfactory. More specifically, it has failed to deliver answers: too many questions were left open and in the theatre play, a new form of discourse has to follow suit by staging the shortcomings of the trial as well as the expectation that there could be something worthy of being called justice.

The comparative study of such attempts to come to terms with terrorism generates a focus on literature, not first and foremost as an aesthetic experiment, but just as much as a social resource and a tool for restoration and reflection. This also has consequences for the 'law and literature' divide. In the expression 'law and literature', literature sometimes only appears as a supplement to the soul, the real thing being the judicial dealing of the case. We have argued that this is not the case. The 'and' in the expression 'law and literature' shows how one supplements

the other by deepening the concepts of justice and injustice without which the very sense of community is damaged. Law and literature are instituted practices and genres with different social functions and aesthetic affordances. They are therefore symbolic forms in their own right: they both intertwine tradition and innovation in order for collective norms to be maintained and reworked according to unexpected crises such as terrorist attacks.

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Out in the Open

Jose Ibarrola

For some time now I have not been able to see umbrellas as mere umbrellas.

I believe that there is something deeply mysterious and incomprehensible in our perception of objects.

The illogical coexistence of things. That is a paradox. For example: an umbrella is, in itself, a curious paradox; for although we think we are sheltered, it only protects us from the rain and yet we always end up wet. The umbrella we beg for when it starts to rain is of no use to us when the storm breaks. It simply makes us feel covered in the open.

I think I only paint images that narrate my sentimental heritage, that place of my own that haunts memories to recover them from the abandonment imposed by oblivion.

The contents of this chapter, in whole or in part, must not be used freely outside the context of this book.

This chapter was translated by Mireya Toribio Medina.

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I also paint to heal the wounds I don't want to forget.

Sometimes an image traps us like a spider's web. Its presence accompanies us imperceptibly in the labyrinth of our memories. And one day, without warning, it claims the limelight. It is a curious mechanism that always surprises me. It seems as if memories need a slow maceration before they become their own entity and only then, digested with sufficient time, can they exercise their specific function in our memory.

A fact: a real image of a real friend. It is the image of a man and his umbrella left together, orphaned, at the edge of a thick red puddle. The umbrella, open on the ground and swaying at the mercy of a relentless wind, foreshadows the definitive absence of the person lying next to it. It looks with its round face and points its single finger at all those who dare to look. And it seems that the drops slip down its canvas like tears.

And I one day, later on, paint an open umbrella to speak of that absence. I discover that it is a metaphor and a tribute.



'Memoria'. Jose Ibarrola. Mural. 200 × 600 cm. Centro Memorial de las Víctimas del Terrorismo, Vitoria (Basque Country, Spain).
Image provided by the author.



Jose Ibarrola (1955, Bilbao) is a Spanish visual artist. His work, which speaks for itself, is even better understood in connection with that of his father, the painter and sculptor Agustín Ibarrola (1930, Bilbao). Both have been persecuted by political violence from groups of different ideologies. Agustín was a political prisoner during Franco's regime because of his communist militancy. Both their work was later attacked by extreme right-wing terrorists, during the dictatorship, and by ETA and its entourage, radical Basque nationalism, during the democratic period. Bodyguards accompanied the family for years.

In 2000, Jose Ibarrola learned through television of the murder of the family friend Jose Luis López de Lacalle at the hands of ETA. He had

also been a political prisoner of Franco's regime due to his left-wing militancy. In the footage, an open red umbrella lay next to the lifeless body of the victim. Was it his or had someone placed it there to shelter him from the rain that poured down that morning? What is the point—thought the artist—of protecting him now when we had not done so when it was possible? Following his assassination, graffiti appeared in his village, Andoain, reading 'Jose Luis de Lacalle jódete' (Jose Luis de Lacalle, fuck you). Sometime later Jose Ibarrola would create his series 'Memory and Umbrellas' to speak about objects, images, remembrance, absence, emotions, metaphors, and tribute. As the artist declares: painting, for him, is an exercise of memory.

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